

Journal of Applied Geographical Studies (JAGS)

**Influence of Teachers' Attitude on Students' Geography
Performance in Public Schools. A Critical Literature Review**



**CARI
Journals**

Influence of Teachers' Attitude on Students' Geography Performance in Public Schools. A Critical Literature Review

Dr. Robert Kariuki

Kenyatta University, School of Statistics and Social Science

Corresponding author's email: journals@carijournals.org

Abstract

Purpose: The subject geography is taught with the objective that learners will acquire basic foundation skills so as to propel them towards making valuable contributions to the society. The overall objective of this study was to examine influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools. A critical literature review

Methodology: The paper used a desk study review methodology where relevant empirical literature was reviewed to identify main themes and to extract knowledge gaps.

Findings: The findings of the study concluded that learners choose the subject of geography because they love and understand it. The learners have in mind the careers that they intend to pursue in future when they choose geography. Geography's diversity and scope also appealed to learners as a reason for choosing geography. Friends have little influence in career aspiration choice. The teacher has an influence on the learner's choice for geography.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: Geography subject is relevant in understanding the major problems that face the society today. The subject also contributes in better understanding of the environment. Geography should be made compulsory among all the secondary school students because its importance in attaining a clean environment and sustainable development cannot be underestimated. The teacher should relate the problems faced in the society to the content that is being taught so that learners can have a real life experience on the aspects that they learn in class. This will boost the subject's importance in understanding the various problems faced in the society.

Keywords: *Examine, Influence, Teachers' Attitude, Students' Geography Performance, and Public Schools.*

INTRODUCTION

The term attitude has been defined as an organized disposition to feel, perceive, think and behave towards a refinement or cognitive object in favourable or unfavourable manner (Triandis, 1971). Gallmore (2016) claims that teaching is influenced by cultural practice and changing cultural practices. The negative attitude jeopardizes professional standards by influencing effectiveness of teaching methods and performance of students (Agwata, 2016). A teacher with negative attitude towards Geography, whether trained or not, affects the ability of students to acquire messages from the subject that they instruct leading to failure of achieving the objectives of learning. The achievement of learning objectives begins with the love of the subject and consequently the subject content (Okorodudu, 2018).

Clifford (2013) points out that the teaching of Geography has four aims. The primary goal is to prepare the young people by imparting essential knowledge to them which will consequently enable them to comprehend the place they live in and their interaction with people, physical environment. Second, teaching Geography aims to establish and enable the young people to develop the essential skills required to conduct geographical study entailing enquiries or research, map work and fieldwork. Third, teaching Geography aims at stimulating the interest of the young people in order to boost their courage and appreciation of the world around us. Finally, the content in Geography seeks to create a sense of concern of the surrounding environment, capability and willingness to take positive measures towards protecting the worthiness of the environment. Academic performance is one of the most important measures of learning attainment in education. It is through tests-both formative and summative that progress made by the students in their studies can best be gauged. Success in education is increasingly being equated with good performance. Education is the pillar for socioeconomic development which enhances the productivity of the society. Further, education assists to curb poverty by managing its impacts on population, health and nutrition. Reforms related to Education in African countries have fostered towards rendering education as the driver for national development (Wamutitu, 2021)

Students acquire and apply knowledge through classroom and laboratory experience, fieldwork and community participation (Macalester, 2019). However, students inherit the perception from teachers that other subjects are not important (World Bank, 2021). In a study involving secondary schools in Nairobi, Agwata (2016) revealed that students who had dropped economics heard that the subject was too difficult and abstract for their level.

It is often true that the outcome in national examination is affected by the attitude towards the Geography subject which may be caused by the abstract nature of its concepts and diagrams making it difficult to comprehend. As identified by Wamutitu (2021), the broadness of the Geography syllabus has been a challenge. In Achola's (2013) study, issues related to failure of completing the syllabus due to wide coverage was the major reported challenge by teachers apart from inadequacy of teaching and learning resources. Curriculum support is basic at the departmental, supervisory and administrative levels in schools. Inadequate curriculum support highly affects the

implementation of Geography curriculum which can only be changed by the headteacher (Maoga, 2017). Effective curriculum implementation needs a continuous support which can be accomplished by training of key personnel. Aydin (2019) revealed that negative attitude among headteachers, students and teachers towards Geography form a big issue in terms of commitment and motivation in learning. Geography has three broad branches and branches which are practical such as fieldwork, photograph, interpretation, mapwork and statistical methods. Thus, due to diversity of the content, Geography needs enough time, personnel, finances, teaching and learning materials for instructors to be able to combine theories, content and application together which most schools lack.

Based on the resources, Maoga (2017) notes that better equipped schools are more likely to enroll more students in Geography than those poorly equipped. The issues related to adequacy of resources can be associated to headteachers' effective allocation of funds. Lack of opportunities among teachers to enhance professionalism is a significant variable. Biddle (2015), found that lack of opportunity to attend seminars and register long-term training among Geography teachers is one of the biggest challenges facing the implementation of Geography curriculum in most secondary schools. Achola (2013) revealed that short courses through seminars are relevant towards effective learning and implementing the curriculum.

Statement of the Problem

Geography is important to study since the country's social economic development is crucial to the realization of vision 2030. Therefore, the choice of geography as an examinable subject stands out because of its role in the development of the country. The decline in enrolment of students in geography in secondary schools is of great concern among teachers, parents and education stakeholders. There is shortage of comprehensive factors influencing the implementation of geography in secondary schools. There is need to assess key factors that influence the student's enrolment in secondary schools and the poor performance. Factors such as availability of teaching and learning resources and teachers attitude. The study is set to investigate influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools.

Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to examine influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools. A critical literature review.

Significance of the Study

Geography curriculum was introduced to enable student's to acquire sensitivity and consciousness towards the environment and provide relevant knowledge of concepts and principles required in any sort of work so as to participate more actively in developing the economy. According to Owen and Ryan (2001), Geography aims at producing functionally literate graduate (manpower) who can participate in national planning and research especially in resources development and management, urban renewal and research on issues of policy. Renner (1997) affirmed that

degeneration of land, fresh water and marine resources will become more pronounced with the onset of global climate change while environmentally induced conflicts are likely to intensify if there will be shortage or absence of skilled personnel to handle matters of natural resources management and conservation. The attainment of these objectives is hampered by factors that affect student's enrollment in geography, a core subject in matters that deal with the environment.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The study will benefit from Locke's goal setting theory proposed by Locke (1990).

The study was guided by goal setting theory which was developed by Locke and Lathan (1990). The theory advocates that accomplishing goals relies on such useful elements as Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time bound (SMART). Based on task motivation and incentives, Locke stated that students are motivated by clear goals and effective feedback. Improved performance among students entirely depends on working towards the specified goals and motivational factors. Characteristics of successful goal setting was outlined and reinforced in Locke's.

To motivate, goals must have five principles: clarity, challenges, commitment, feedback and task complexity. In clarity principle, goals which are ambiguous and unclear are set measurable to enhance clarity. This is done to improve the outcome of a team. Based on the context of this study, reducing poor grades such as Ds and Es in exams or students should be encouraged to get quality grades such as SMART approach should be used to assist in making goals specific, measurable and time bound. The second principle is challenge which bears the trait of goals. More challenging and difficult goals are highly rewarded to increase motivation, enthusiasm and drive towards achieving the goals. Commitment is the third principle in goal setting theory. In this principle, goals ought to be comprehended and the individuals given chance to make their decisions. Students are likely to put more effort in achieving the goals if they are given opportunities to participate and contribute their ideas. The forth principle is feedback. Feedback gives chances to adjustments of goals after observations. It is, therefore, significant to provide a benchmark target to allow self-determination among individuals. Thus, SMART goals are measured towards creating clear feedback. Task complexity is the last principle in goal setting theory. A high level of motivation is created among the people with complicated work. Thus, a special care is taken to ensure that work doesn't become overwhelming for highly complex assignments. This principle reinforces that attainable part of SMART

EMPRICAL REVIEW

Muchiri (2021), conducted a study that sought to determine dresses the issue of teachers' pedagogical preparedness for the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Secondary Education Level (SEL). Consequently, the study sought to establish geography teachers' readiness, their pedagogical knowledge, technological skills and perceptions towards the implementation of CBC in Mwea East Sub-County SEL. The study adopted descriptive survey

design where the target population was limited to; 24 secondary schools, 24 head teachers and 100 geography teachers. From the findings of the study, majority of the respondents had not attended in-service training and therefore, were not conversant with the concept of the CBC. However, some teachers revealed that during their pre-service training under the 8.4.4 system of education, they were prepared and equipped with expository and heuristic teaching strategies to implement any curriculum. Nonetheless, in regards to digital literacy, majority of teachers expressed that they had not been exposed to ICT Curriculum and most of them felt incompetent as they lacked technological skills and knowledge. It was therefore, concluded that, a good number of them were struggling with the concept of the CBC and lacked the capacity demanded by the CBC framework. Nevertheless, factors like; limited seminars, workshops for continuous teachers' development, lack of digital devices and skilled computer instructors and parental engagement in teaching and learning processes were cited as factors that were likely to hinder effective implementation of the CBC in SEL. The study presented a methodological gap as it utilized explanatory research methodology while our study will be a desktop review approach.

Kimunto (2017), conducted a study to establish how geography is being implemented in public secondary schools. The study was conducted in Ganze Sub-County of Kilifi County, Kenya. The study findings showed that 96.2% of the teachers interviewed were not involved even though they believed teacher's role is important in curriculum implementation. The study revealed that such teaching and learning resources as textbooks, teacher's guides, photographs, maps were available in schools but were inadequate. Challenges which were collected include incomplete syllabus coverage, inadequate teaching and learning resources, lack of knowledge on how marking is done, inadequate time allocated to geography despite its wide syllabus. The study concludes that poor management in schools by the principals demoralized the students and geography teachers. The study recommends that fieldwork should be adequately budgeted for change of methodology. Teachers should be invited and trained to be KNEC examiners. The study presented a geographical gap as it done in Kilifi while our study will focus on influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools.

Langat (2016), conducted a study to investigate whether the educators and learners use instructional materials in practical geography. The study design used was descriptive survey. The study population comprised of Geography Heads of Department (HOD's), teachers and students in secondary schools. Simple and random sampling techniques were used in selecting the research participants. This included a sample of 5 schools, 300 students, 5 Geography HOD's and 10 Geography teachers. Students and teachers' questionnaire, interview schedule and checklists were used in data collection. Analysis of data was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as include frequencies and percentages. The collected data collected was coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used in data analysis. The results showed that 70 % of the schools had instructional materials yet only 22.5% of teachers utilize these resources while more than three quarters rarely

or never utilize instructional materials. Majority of Geography teachers had poor attitude towards utilization of instructional materials. The study also revealed that Maps were the most utilized resources in classrooms, the least utilized being radios and dramas. The study presented a conceptual gap as it focused on whether the educators and learners use instructional materials in practical geography while our study will focus on influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools.

Ngeno (2015), conducted a study to investigate the challenges facing effective use of learning resources in public secondary schools in Bureti sub-county. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The study's population comprised of forty five schools, fifteen thousand two hundred and seventeen students and seventy seven Geography teachers. Nine public schools were selected for study using purposive sampling techniques based on school categories and students' gender composition such as one county boy and girl and three mixed schools, one girls and three mixed sub-county schools. The study revealed that instructional resources like textbooks were used but they are inadequate. It also found that textbooks, globe and maps were frequently used while diorama, internet and radio were rarely used. The study showed that most of the teachers never used computer at all since most of them are not computer literate and for those who used, minimal time is allocated to them. The study however presented a methodological gap as it utilized descriptive survey design while our study will utilize desktop review approach.

Wafula (2015), conducted a study to investigate the relationship between field work and performance in the teaching and learning of geography in Kiminini Division, Trans-Nzoia County. The underlying theory in the study was based on the pragmatist Kneller (1971). The study used descriptive research design whose locale had 40% of the secondary schools selected from Kiminini. The data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) which involved mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentages. In conclusion, the geography teachers hardly utilized field study which affects performance. Teachers preferred other teaching methods to field work making it difficult for learners to conceptualize what the teacher covered in class. From the study, it was recommended that teachers should embrace utilizing field work. Lastly, more Geography lessons should be allocated to the discipline specifically for field work. The study presented a contextual gap, as it focused on the relationship between field work and performance in the teaching and learning of geography, while our study will be examine influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools.

Nyawira (2012), conducted a study that examined the role of Kenya's regional development policies and strategies in regional development. It adopted spatial equity to assess the success of regional policy. The study used various social and economic indicators of development such as housing, health, income, occupation, water supply and electric power supply selected on the basis of their appropriateness to Kenya's planning and the availability of data. Computer based techniques such as the derivation of summary statistics, cross tabulation of data collected from the field, the computation of an index of regional development and simple linear regression analysis

were used to analyze data. The study concluded that there are marked inequalities in regional development in Nakuru District, the most developed regions being the urban areas. The observed inequalities were attributed to Kenya's regional development policies and the strategies. The study presented a conceptual gap as it focused on the role of Kenya's regional development policies and strategies in regional development while our study will focus on influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a desktop literature review method (desk study). This involved an in-depth review of studies related to influence of Geography on various career choices in Africa. Three sorting stages were implemented on the subject under study in order to determine the viability of the subject for research. This is the first stage that comprised the initial identification of all articles that were based on influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools. The search was done generally by searching the articles in the article title, abstract, keywords. A second search involved fully available publications on the subject on influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools. The third step involved the selection of fully accessible publications. Reduction of the literature to only fully accessible publications yielded specificity and allowed the researcher to focus on the articles that related to influence of teachers' attitude on students' geography performance in public schools. After an in-depth search into the top key words (examine, influence, teachers' attitude, students' geography performance, public schools), the researcher arrived at 6 articles that were suitable for analysis. This were findings from:

Muchiri (2021), who conducted a study that sought to determine dresses the issue of teachers' pedagogical preparedness for the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Secondary Education Level (SEL). Consequently, the study sought to establish geography teachers' readiness, their pedagogical knowledge, technological skills and perceptions towards the implementation of CBC in Mwea East Sub-County SEL. The study adopted descriptive survey design where the target population was limited to; 24 secondary schools, 24 head teachers and 100 geography teachers. From the findings of the study, majority of the respondents had not attended in-service training and therefore, were not conversant with the concept of the CBC. However, some teachers revealed that during their pre-service training under the 8.4.4 system of education, they were prepared and equipped with expository and heuristic teaching strategies to implement any curriculum. Nonetheless, in regards to digital literacy, majority of teachers expressed that they had not been exposed to ICT Curriculum and most of them felt incompetent as they lacked technological skills and knowledge. It was therefore, concluded that, a good number of them were struggling with the concept of the CBC and lacked the capacity demanded by the CBC framework. Nevertheless, factors like; limited seminars, workshops for continuous teachers' development, lack of digital devices and skilled computer instructors and parental engagement in teaching and

learning processes were cited as factors that were likely to hinder effective implementation of the CBC in SEL.

Kimunto (2017), who conducted a study to establish how geography is being implemented in public secondary schools. The study was conducted in Ganze Sub-County of Kilifi County, Kenya. The study findings showed that 96.2% of the teachers interviewed were not involved even though they believed teacher's role is important in curriculum implementation. The study revealed that such teaching and learning resources as textbooks, teacher's guides, photographs, maps were available in schools but were inadequate. Challenges which were collected include incomplete syllabus coverage, inadequate teaching and learning resources, lack of knowledge on how marking is done, inadequate time allocated to geography despite its wide syllabus. The study concludes that poor management in schools by the principals demoralized the students and geography teachers. The study recommends that fieldwork should be adequately budgeted for change of methodology. Teachers should be invited and trained to be KNEC examiners.

Langat (2016), who conducted a study to investigate whether the educators and learners use instructional materials in practical geography. The study design used was descriptive survey. The study population comprised of Geography Heads of Department (HOD's), teachers and students in secondary schools. Simple and random sampling techniques were used in selecting the research participants. This included a sample of 5 schools, 300 students, 5 Geography HOD's and 10 Geography teachers. Students and teachers' questionnaire, interview schedule and checklists were used in data collection. Analysis of data was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as include frequencies and percentages. The collected data collected was coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used in data analysis. The results showed that 70 % of the schools had instructional materials yet only 22.5% of teachers utilize these resources while more than three quarters rarely or never utilize instructional materials. Majority of Geography teachers had poor attitude towards utilization of instructional materials. The study also revealed that Maps were the most utilized resources in classrooms, the least utilized being radios and dramas.

Ngeno (2015), who conducted a study to investigate the challenges facing effective use of learning resources in public secondary schools in Bureti sub-county. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The study's population comprised of forty five schools, fifteen thousand two hundred and seventeen students and seventy seven Geography teachers. Nine public schools were selected for study using purposive sampling techniques based on school categories and students' gender composition such as one county boy and girl and three mixed schools, one girls and three mixed sub-county schools. The study revealed that instructional resources like textbooks were used but they are inadequate. It also found that textbooks, globe and maps were frequently used while diorama, internet and radio were rarely used. The study showed that most of the teachers never used computer at all since most of them are not computer literate and for those who used, minimal time is allocated to them.

Wafula (2015), who conducted a study to investigate the relationship between field work and performance in the teaching and learning of geography in Kiminini Division, Trans-Nzoia County. The underlying theory in the study was based on the pragmatist Kneller (1971). The study used descriptive research design whose locale had 40% of the secondary schools selected from Kiminini. The data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) which involved mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentages. In conclusion, the geography teachers hardly utilized field study which affects performance. Teachers preferred other teaching methods to field work making it difficult for learners to conceptualize what the teacher covered in class. From the study, it was recommended that teachers should embrace utilizing field work. Lastly, more Geography lessons should be allocated to the discipline specifically for field work.

Nyawira (2012), who conducted a study that examined the role of Kenya's regional development policies and strategies in regional development. It adopted spatial equity to assess the success of regional policy. The study used various social and economic indicators of development such as housing, health, income, occupation, water supply and electric power supply selected on the basis of their appropriateness to Kenya's planning and the availability of data. Computer based techniques such as the derivation of summary statistics, cross tabulation of data collected from the field, the computation of an index of regional development and simple linear regression analysis were used to analyze data. The study concluded that there are marked inequalities in regional development in Nakuru District, the most developed regions being the urban areas. The observed inequalities were attributed to Kenya's regional development policies and the strategies.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The findings of the study concluded that learners choose the subject of geography because they love and understand it. The learners have in mind the careers that they intend to pursue in future when they choose geography. Geography's diversity and scope also appealed to learners as a reason for choosing geography. Friends have little influence in career aspiration choice. The teacher has an influence on the learner's choice for geography.

Recommendations

Geography subject is relevant in understanding the major problems that face the society today. The subject also contributes in better understanding of the environment. Geography should be made compulsory among all the secondary school students because its importance in attaining a clean environment and sustainable development cannot be underestimated. The teacher should relate the problems faced in the society to the content that is being taught so that learners can have a real life experience on the aspects that they learn in class. This will boost the subject's importance in understanding the various problems faced in the society.

REFERENCES

- Agwata, M. M. (2016). Availability and use of economics textbooks in teaching economics: A case study of four selected schools in Nairobi. Unpublished PGDE thesis, Egerton University, Kenya.
- Akinyi, J. (2017). Teachers Perception on the role of quality assurance and standard officers on quality of education in Nairobi public schools. Master of education project. Kenyatta University. (Unpublished)
- Aydin, F (2019).Secondary School students' Opinion about Geography Course: A Qualitative Study; Archives of applied science research ,2011,3(1):297- 305.Retrieved on July 2013 from www.scholarresearchlibrary.com
- Biddle, D.S. (2015). Paradigms and Geography Curricula in England and Wales (1882-1972). In Boardman, D. (Ed.), New Directions in Geographical Education. London: Falmer Press.
- Bishop, J.H. & Mane, F. (2013).The Impacts of Career Technical education on High Completion and Labor market success. Center for Advanced Human resources Studies. Working Paper Series, Cornell University, New York: Thaca.
- Brunner J.S. (2016) *The Process of Education*. London: Cambridge, Harvard University
- Clifford, B. (2013).Geography in the British school System. Retrieved March14 2013From Education Info centre. (2006).Kenya High Commission, Ottawa, Canada. Retrieved March 1 2008 from www.kenyahighcommission.ca/primary
- Egunyomi, D. (2016) "Access to Basic Education for Girls: The Nigerian Experience" in Oduaran, A and Bhola, H.S (Eds) widening access to Education as social Justice: Essays in honour of Michael Canolawa. The Netherland, Dordrecht: Springer Pp427-438
- Gitonga, E.K. (2012) Factors Influencing Students' Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Performance in Geography In Changanwe District, Mombasa County, Kenya. M.ED. University of Nairobi
- Nasibi, W. M. (2013). Instructional Methods: General methods for teaching across the . Nairobi: Strong wall Africa
- Ochieng, K. J. (2013) Factors Influencing Students' KCSE Performance in Geography in Public Secondary Schools in Migori District, Kenya. Masters of Education Thesis, Nairobi University (Unpublished).
- Roberts, M. (2016). "Teaching Styles and Strategies, in Geography", in: Naish, M. Slater, F. and Kent, A. (eds.). Education View Point on Teaching and Learning. Britain: Cambridge University

UNESCO (20015). Innovation: applying knowledge in development; United Nations Millennium project taskforce, UNESCO, Paris

Wamutitu, J. M. (2021) “Field Work Teaching In Geography in Kenyan Secondary Schools: A Study of Selected Schools in Kiambu and Machakos Districts.” Masters of Education Thesis, Kenyatta University (Unpublished).

World Bank. 2015. Expanding opportunities and building competencies for young people: A new agenda for secondary education. Washington DC: World Bank