

Effects of Training Gaps on the Effectiveness of the Novice Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract The present study investigated the effects of training gaps on the effectiveness of the novice teachers in public secondary schools in Mbita Sub-county, Homabay County, Kenya. The study adopted Convergent Parallel research design. The target population was 120 novice teachers, and a sample size of 120 novice teachers was obtained using census sampling technique while 12 principals were obtained using stratified sampling technique. Questionnaires were used to obtain data from teachers while interview guide were used to collect data from principals. In the present study, a reliability was ensured by Cronbach's alpha method and a coefficient value of $r = 0.792$ was reported. The data from questionnaires were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and also inferential statistics such as Pearson correlation while qualitative data from interview guide was analyzed using thematic analysis. The study used Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22 to aid in quantitative data analysis at 0.05 level of significance. Three null hypotheses were tested. The analysis revealed a strong significant ($n = 82$; $r = .650$; $p < 0.05$) effect of training gap on effectiveness of the novice teachers. School principals should provide comprehensive Induction programmes to the novice teachers in secondary schools. The School principals should provide mentorship to the novice teachers in secondary schools.

Keywords Training gaps, Effectiveness, Novice teachers, Public schools

1. Introduction

It has been realized that preparation, knowledge of the subject content, experience and the combined set of qualifications are some of the factors that define teacher's effectiveness (Hammond, 2006). Cruickshank and Haefele (2001) state that effective or simply good teachers have also been referred to as ideal, dutiful, analytical, competent, expert, satisfying, reflective, and diversity responsive. Effectiveness of a teacher has also been defined in three other basic ways: teachers' personalities; teacher to pupil interactions and; their impact on pupil's behavior. Moreover, Vajoczki, (2008) also observe that scheme of effective instructors; effective professional teachers' are characterized by their organization and clarity, their analytic/synthetic approach to teaching concepts, their enthusiasm and dynamism as well as group interaction. Mostly, Teachers' effectiveness is measured by their students' performance or output. However, the effectiveness of the instructors may be hindered by several factors in their line of duty.

The purpose of a beginning teacher support program is solely supportive with an emphasis on trust building and nurturing (Cartwright, 2008). Ingersoll and Smith (2004) clarified in -service programs very differently from pre-service training programs. In-service training is designed for individuals who have already received basic training and encompasses a variety of activities such as workshops, orientations, seminars, and especially mentoring (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). New teacher induction programs are supported by a plethora of research on best practices. Moir (2009) noted the best induction programs blend support for novice teachers with expertise from veteran teachers, creating collegial groups that benefit all teachers and all students. In the same vein, Hudson (2012) described a work-life balance, pedagogical knowledge, and an assigned mentor as elements of an improved school context.

This study was guided by Constructivism Learning Theory. Constructivism Theory is a theory of knowledge (Piaget, 1967) which states that human beings gain knowledge from interacting with own experiences and ideas. The originators and contributors of this theory are Piaget, Dewey (1859–1952), Rorty, Bruner and Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934). According to Bruner's Theory of Constructivism, the outcome of cognitive development is thinking. The intelligent mind creates from experience generic coding systems that permit one to go beyond the data to new and possibly fruitful predictions (Bruner, 1957). Thus,

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children as they grow must acquire a way of representing the "recurrent regularities" in their environment. This theory was important to this study owing to the roles a teacher plays as stated by the theory. The roles of the teacher as facilitator can only be achieved if the teacher is a good manager, has profound knowledge of the curriculum content, and able to provide information to the students on how valuable information is and make important decisions.

Literature on effects of training gaps on novice teachers' effectiveness is available. In USA, Marnie (2005) reported that High exposure teachers were better at instructional planning and analyzing their practice, were more likely to ask students higher-order questions, and were more likely to provide substantive, specific feedback to students. The students of teachers who engaged at a high level outscored the students of low engagement teachers by an average of 0.25 standard deviations across six standardized tests. Schonert-Reichl and Zakrzewski (2014) asserts that a new scan of teacher education programs reveals that very few teachers receive training in social emotional learning through college training. Another study conducted by Kim and Shelley Hymel (2011) from the University of British Columbia indicated that few teachers are actually receiving SEL training. The lack of SEL training to the professional teachers has consequences to the students. Those who have undergone the training are characterized by self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision making, relationship skills and social awareness skills. Olufunke (2016) indicated that graduates in Lagos State do not benefit from a recognized period of support or induction during their first and second years respectively. Degraft-Otoo (2012) in Ghana revealed that there were organizational issues such as lack of management support for training and development programmes, which constrained training and development. It was also found that training and development had positive impact on employees of the Polytechnic. Aidah Nassazi (2013) evaluated the effects of training on employee performance, using the telecommunication industry in Uganda as case study. Based on this sample the results obtained indicate that training have a clear effect on the performance of employees. In Nigeria, a study by Oshagbemi (2010) states that issues of performance associated with beginning teachers are related to the class room discipline, motivation, personal characteristics, students' performance, organization and instructional materials.

In Kenya, Simatwa (2010) outlines the areas the novice teachers felt they need to be inducted in if they are to deliver effectively. These areas are: knowledge of schools policies, acquisition of learning resources, time management, procedures on utilization of available resources, professional ethics, knowledge of the scheme of service and legal profession in education. It has been realized that several factors affect novice teachers' effectiveness. According to Gitonga (2015) study in Githunguri Sub -County, Kiambu County –Kenya, the study established that 50% of the

teachers are not aware of the existing TSC policy on induction and orientation of the novice teachers. On the same vein, Ajowi et al (2015) study in secondary schools in Kisumu county reported that no systematic induction process for newly appointed teachers was practiced in schools; the needs of newly appointed teachers were not considered and that a lot of disorganized information was given to newly appointed teachers in the first two days after which they are left to swim and sink. Gitonga (2015) established that 50% of the novice teachers are not aware of the existing TSC policy on induction and orientation of the novice teachers. Reports from Mbita Sub-County Education office, (2018) indicates that the performance of students in secondary schools at KCSE is still below average and the trend continues to worry. However, scanty of information was available on novice teachers in secondary schools in Mbita Sub-County Kenya. Yet, there are many novice teachers in the secondary schools in Mbita Sub-county of Kenya.

The research question was stated as follows:

- i. *To what extent do training gaps affect the effectiveness of the novice teachers in public secondary schools in Mbita Sub-county, Homabay County, of Kenya?*

2. Research Methodology

The study adopted a mixed method approach and within it the convergent parallel design, was used. The research process can be symbolized as (quantitative and qualitative) (QUAN+QUAL; Morse, 1991). A convergent parallel design entails that the researcher concurrently conducts the quantitative and qualitative elements in the same phase of the research process, weighs the methods equally, analyzes the two components independently, and interprets the results together (Creswell, 2014). The target population of this study consisted 35 secondary schools, 120 novice teachers (n=120) in secondary schools in Mbita sub-county (Mbita Sub-County Education office, 2018). The target population also included 35 principals in secondary schools in Mbita Sub-County. The study employed a census method to select all the 120 newly teachers from all the public secondary schools in the sub-county. Census sampling method was used to arrive at the 120 novice teachers from the three school categories respectively. In addition, 12 principals were obtained as this represents 30% of the target population of principals in the Sub-County using simple random sampling technique. The sample size was obtained using the 30% in accordance to Gay (2010) who observed that at least 10-30% of a given population is a representative sample.

The study used questionnaires to obtain data from the novice teachers and interview guide to obtain data from principals. The two instruments were appropriate in the present study due to their complementary nature. The questionnaires provided data that easily lead to generalizable findings while interview guide provides deep in-depth findings which reveal participants feelings and experiences.

Face validity and content validity are the validity issues most frequently reported in the literature (Parahoo, 2006). The comments and suggestions given the university lecturers in the Faculty of Education at CUEA in the research instruments were addressed after which they were taken as valid. The items on questionnaires were tested for reliability using the Cronbach Alpha method. In the present study, a reliability coefficient value of $r = 0.792$ was reported. This means that the questionnaires were highly reliable because if a correlation coefficient value of $r = 0.6$ and above is obtained, then the value of reliability is considered to be appropriate (Kothari, 2011).

The researcher used the descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages to analyze the data from questionnaires. Thereafter, inferential analysis by use of Pearson Correlation was used to ascertain the relationship between variables. Qualitative data analysis was analyzed using the thematic framework. There were consent forms given to the participants for voluntary participation requirement in research.

3. Findings & Discussions

3.1. Response Return Rate

The study sampled 120 novice teachers and 12 school principals in 12 secondary schools. The teachers were administered with structured questionnaires while the principals were interviewed based on the objectives of the study. The study response return rate is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Response Return Rate

| Response category | Number sampled | Number returned | Return Rate |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Novice teachers | 120 | 82 | 68.3% |
| Principals | 12 | 10 | 83.3% |
| Total | 132 | 92 | 69.7% |

From the response in Table 1, 82 novice teachers returned fully filled questions out of the 120 distributed thus giving a response return rate of 68.3%. As for the principals 10 out of the 12 who were identified for interviews provided interviews thus giving a response rate of 83.3%. Overall, the study obtained an average response rate of 69.7%. The high response return rate was achieved due to self-administration of questionnaires, provision of ample time to fill in the questionnaires and regular follow ups to ensure completeness of the questionnaires. Moreover, the researcher conducted face to face interviews with the principals. This was after an initial orientation to establish rapport and explaining the purpose of the study to the respondents. This turnout was considered adequate because according to Oso and Onen (2013) the acceptable response rate for survey questionnaire administered personally by the researcher is achieved provided the questionnaire return rate is above 65%.

3.2. Extent to Which Training Gaps Affect Effectiveness of Novice Teachers

To examine the extent to which training gaps affect effectiveness of novice teachers, the descriptive analysis was done on the questionnaire responses from novice teachers. The findings presented in Table 2.

Table 2. How training gaps affect effectiveness of novice teachers

| Training Gap | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Not at all | 1 | 1.2 |
| Not sure | 1 | 1.2 |
| To some extent | 52 | 63.4 |
| To a greater extent | 28 | 34.1 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

From the results in table 2, the study found that over two thirds of the respondents at 63.4% indicated that to some extent, training gaps affected effectiveness, 34.1% indicated to a greater extent, while only 1.2% disagreed that there was effect, as another 1.2% were not sure about the statement. This shows that training gaps affected highly effectiveness of novice teachers in their service delivery and students management. Similarly, McIntyre (2006); Egeberg, McConney, and Price, (2016) all assert that competent management of children behavior in developing excellence in multiple areas of "discipline" requires that a new teacher through training gaps, acquires knowledge in classroom design and arrangement; counseling and communication skills; instructional practices for teaching new behaviors; developing positive emotional bonds with students; setting up and running a comprehensive classroom management system.

During the interview session with the school principals, it was found that training gaps helps teachers to expand their current knowledge of a subject/phase/matter, develop new knowledge and engage with colleagues at their current school and other schools. Teachers may also become more conscious of strategies for change and curriculum development trends, as many teachers enter the profession without having received specific training for curriculum development. Principal 3 reported:

The goal of training gaps is to improve the knowledge skills, and commitment of teachers so that they become more effective in planning lessons using a variety of effective approaches in their teaching and monitoring students learning as well as in undertaking other school and commitment responsibilities (School Principal 3, 22nd October, 2018).

This shows that training gaps was important to teachers because it helps them to plan and develop their own work thoroughly. McDiarmid and Bright (2008) also asserts that teachers need to know, be able to do and care about knowledge including subject matter, pedagogical content knowledge, curriculum, pedagogy, educational foundations, policy context, diverse learners and their cultures,

technology, child and adolescent development, group processes and dynamics, theories of learning, motivation and assessment. He further suggests that teachers should be able to craft skills including planning, organizing and orchestrating instruction, using instructional materials and technology, disciplinary learners, managing groups, monitoring and evaluating learning, collaborating with colleagues, parents, community and social services agencies and dispositions including beliefs, attitudes, values and commitment. Marnie (2005) also reported that students of teachers who engaged at a high level outscored the students of low engagement teachers by an average of 0.25 standard deviations across six standardized tests.

3.3. Correlation between Training Gaps and Teacher Effectiveness

To establish whether there was any significant relationship between Training Gaps and Teacher effectiveness, the null hypothesis was stated as follows:

H_{01} : *There is no significant effects of training gaps on the effectiveness of the novice teachers in public schools in Mbita Sub-county, Homabay County.*

To test the null hypothesis, the p -value was used to make a decision on whether to reject it or accept it. When the p -value obtained was less than 0.05, then the null hypothesis was rejected, but when the p -value obtained was greater than 0.05, then the null hypothesis was accepted.

The researcher then computed Pearson's Product-Moment Coefficient of correlation between the scores of the two variables, and the results are presented in Table 3:

Table 3. Correlation between training gaps and Teacher effectiveness

| | | Training Gap | Teacher effectiveness |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Training Gap | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .650** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .001 |
| | N | 82 | 82 |
| Teacher effectiveness | Pearson Correlation | .650** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | |
| | N | 82 | 82 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the table 3, the analysis revealed a strong ($n = 82$; $r = .650$; $p < 0.05$) positive effect of training gap on teacher effectiveness. The findings show that p -value obtained (0.001) is less than the significance level (0.05). That is, $0.01 < 0.05$. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative one accepted. Therefore, training gaps affects novice teacher's effectiveness. This finding agrees with Kim and Shelley Hymel (2011), who found that teachers, who have undergone the training, are characterized by self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision making, relationship skills and social awareness skills. When a teacher is armed with the above skills then they are able to inculcate the same to the students as well as academic knowledge effectively. Similarly, Marnie (2005)

study revealed that teachers who were highly exposed were better at instructional planning and analyzing their practice, were more likely to ask students higher-order questions, and were more likely to provide substantive, specific feedback to students. In addition, Degraft-Otoo (2012) in Ghana also supports the findings that training and development had positive impact on employees of the Polytechnic.

4. Conclusions & Recommendations

The analysis revealed a strong significant ($n = 82$; $r = .650$; $p < 0.05$) positive effect of training gap on novice teacher's effectiveness. It can be concluded that training gaps is key determinant in influencing novice teacher's effectiveness in school. The Boards of Management in schools should develop structured induction programmes for the novice teachers to enhance their effectiveness. This is because the study findings revealed that there was a strong significant positive effect of induction programs on novice teacher's effectiveness. The School principals should provide mentorship to the novice teachers in secondary schools. This would enhance make them fit into their respective schools easily. This is because the study findings reported a strong significant positive effect of training gap on novice teacher's effectiveness.

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