

How Instructional Resources Influence the Performance of KCPE English Language in Kalokol Ward, Turkana Central Sub–County in Turkana County

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Abstract

The English language has continuously been adopted as the instructional media in most schools in developed and developing countries. The performance of English in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education is critical because it influences the performance of the other subjects considering that they are written in English with an exception of Kiswahili. However, the performance of the English language in Kalokol ward, Turkana Central Sub County, Turkana County has continued to decline. This study aimed to investigate the school-based factors with a specific interest in instructional resources to determine their influence on KCPE English performance in the Kalokol ward. The study was guided by input-output theory. A descriptive survey research design was employed for the study. A population of 698 respondents from all 23 public primary schools was adopted. Respondents comprised all the head teachers, 73 teachers, and 23 class 7 pupils amounting to 101 respondents. A proportionate simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the English language teachers whereas a simple random sampling technique was used in selecting one learner from each school. The data for the study was gathered through questionnaires, interview schedules, and focused group discussions. The validity and reliability of the tools was checked before being used in the study. Qualitative data was analyzed through the thematic technique whereas quantitative data were analyzed through correlation analysis using SPSS. Results of the study indicated that there was a decline in KCPE English performance in the last 5 years which was attributed to inadequate supplementary instructional resources. The schools lacked purpose-built libraries, multimedia resources storybooks, and digital information resources. The study indicated a statically positive significant relationship between instructional resources and performance of the English language in KCPE. This indicated need for the Ministry of Education to supply adequate books and improve policy regarding budgetary allocation to public schools for the purchase of supplementary books.

Keywords: *Instructional resources, Supplementary books, Performance of English language*

1.0 Introduction

The utilization of English as the language of communication has continued to gain attention globally; hence, the increased demand for learning English as a subject from basic primary education through secondary education (Roy-Campbell, 2015). Primary education forms the

foundation of the English language where learners are taught the basics of the language (Mulinya & Ordho, 2015). Globally, English language has been given a lot of emphasis owing to its advantages in technology, the medical field, and economic growth (Murunga, 2019; Kirkpatrick & Zang, 2011).

The performance of English language determines the general performance of the learners in primary and secondary schools. Whereas, in higher institutions, the performance in English language determines the course was taken and the employability rate (Demie, 2018; Song & He 2015; Kotut, 2016). Various methods have been adopted to assess the performance of English language globally including continuous assessment tests and main examinations whereas in countries like the Netherlands, an outcome approach was adopted where learner's performances are assessed based on their ability to complete given tasks (Song & Le, 2015; Sullivan et al., 2013). Factors that affect the performance of English language are categorized into home-based factors, school-based factors, teachers' factors, environmental factors, parental factors, socio-cultural factors, and psychological factors (Jeffery & Beuningen (2019). A few studies have been conducted globally on socio-cultural, psychological, environmental, and teachers' factors (Al-Zoubi & Younes, 2015; Murunga, 2019; Dogo, 2016; Lugulu & Nkruma, 2017) with limited focus on school-based factors; hence, the need for this study. Sullivan et al. (2013), Kristensson & Öhlund (2005), and Aro & Mikkila-Erdmann (2015) argued that in countries such as Finland, Sweden, Netherland, and Australia, the performance of English language was greatly influenced by the provision of learning and teaching resources.

In most African countries, English language has been adopted as the official language where it is commonly used for communication. This explains the use of English language in regional meetings and conventions across African countries. Studies linking the performance of English language to economic growth have been conducted in Africa by different scholars such as Dogo (2016) and Oguntuase et al. (2013). These studies reveal the commonly used methods of assessing the performance of English language in Africa which include continuous assessment tests and main examinations (Rea-Dickins & Yu, 2009; Dogo 2016; Oguntuase et al., 2013). However, the performance of English language continues to decline significantly in countries like Tanzania, Uganda, and Nigeria (Rea-Dickins & Yu, 2009; Dogo, 2016; Oguntuase et al., 2013).

Notably, English language is taught across all levels of education locally and main examinations remain the major ways of evaluating its performance at primary and secondary school levels. This study was mainly interested in English performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) in Kalokol ward, Turkana County. The Kalokol ward was chosen as it displayed poor performance in English language where only a few schools managed to score an average of 50 out of 100 on English papers (Turkana Central Sub-County Education Office, 2019).

Statement of the problem and purpose of the study

The Ministry of Education (MoE) plays a critical role in fostering the performance of English language in KCPE by providing instructional resources to public primary schools. This implies that public primary schools are expected to post good performance in KCPE examinations in all the subjects including English language (Akungu, 2014; Ministry of Education, 2018; Omuna et al., 2016). However, over the years, English language has continued to underperformed nationally across different places of the country (Onyara 2013 and Wanyama, 2013); of particular interest was Kalokol ward, Turkana County; where, a trend of poor performance in English language was displayed. The performance of English not only affects

the pronunciation of words (Mulinya & Orodho, 2015) but also affects the total score grade of learners and schools. Since learners spend a lot of time in school than at home, there was a need to examine school-based factors, specifically, the instructional resources that influence the performance of English in KCPE. This purpose was investigated according to primary data collected to test the underlying null hypothesis which concluded that instructional resources do not affect the performance of KCPE English language in Kalokol Ward, Turkana Central Sub-County in Turkana County.

Instructional Resources and Performance of English Language

Instructional resources refer to aiding materials in the teaching process. These aiding materials may take the form of teaching guides, that is, textbooks, stationery, and also digital resources (Omuna et al., 2016). A deeper understanding of Instructional Resources was informed by the input-output theory which was invented by James Dewey, Thomas Husted, and Lawrence Kenny (1998) which simply states that the output of a product is dependent upon the input components. The theory helped to explain how various inputs which in this case is instructional resources affected the academic performance of a learner which is the output. The theory also highlights that the level of output was greatly influenced by the amount of input applied. The higher the amount of inputs applied the higher the output whereas, the lower the level of input applied the lower the output). The input-output theory is of great significance for the current study as it helps in understanding how to achieve the desired English language performance in national examinations (output) with respect to instructional resources (input).

There exists a lot of studies conducted globally that underscore the relationship between instructional resources and performance of English language as significant. Sullivan et al. (2013) undertook a study in Australia on factors affecting pupils' academic performance. Jeffery and Beuningen (2019) indicated that the nature of instructional resources plays a significant role in academic performance.

In Africa, the case was similar where Adalikwi and Lorkpilgh (2013) revealed that schools with quality instructional and learning resources performed better than those with low-quality instructional resources in Nigeria. These findings correlate with Zikanga and Mugizi (2020) in Uganda. Few studies have been conducted in Kenya addressing the performance in secondary schools where instructional resources played a significant role in influencing academic performance (Omuna et al., 2016); Ngure et al., 2019). Nonetheless, these studies indicated the uneven distribution of instructional resources throughout the schools. The limited studies done in Kenya primary schools provoked the need for this current study.

2.0 Methodology

The study examined the extent to which instructional resources influence the performance of English language in KCPE in Kalokol Ward, Turkana Central Sub-County in Turkana County. A descriptive survey research design was utilized in exploring instructional resources. The method adopted was most suitable as the study required descriptions rather than just stating phenomena; hence, eliminating chances of biasness. The population for the study comprised all the 23 public primary schools in Kalokol ward, Turkana County which Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) described as elements with similar traits and which the researcher aims to study. All the schools participated in the study where 101 respondents were selected comprising of head-teachers, English language teachers, and standard 7 pupils. A proportionate simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting 73 out of 90 English language teachers whereas a simple random sampling technique was utilized in selecting one learner from each school.

The data for the study was gathered through questionnaires, interview schedules, document analysis, and focused group interviews. The questionnaires provided had a Likert scale format to facilitate the measurement of variables. A pilot study was done in Kerio ward in Turkana County where 2 head teachers and 5 English teachers participated. Kerio ward was selected due to similar socio-economic characteristics as Kalokol ward, Turkana County.

3.0 Results and Discussion

The reliability of the data obtained was tested using Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient and the result was above 0.7 hence the data was dependable. A total of 73 questionnaires were distributed to English language teachers out of which 56 questionnaires were returned from the sampled public primary schools in Kalokol ward, Turkana County. From those questionnaires, 3 were excluded from further analysis due to incomplete responses leaving the response rate at 72.6%. Consequently, the response rate of head teachers stood at 65.2% as 15 out of 23 head teachers were available for the interview schedule. The learners’ response rate was at 80% where 3 learners failed to turn up and the overall response was 76%.

The study sought to analyze the characteristics of the respondents’ background from three aspects, that is, gender, qualifications, and teaching experience. The results from gender indicated an imbalance where the number of female teachers was 34 (64.2%) exceeding that of male teachers which was 19 (35.8%). This result collaborated with Ngeru (2015) who reported on the imbalance in gender among English language teachers.

The study further analyzed the level of education of English teachers and their teaching experience in Kalokol ward, Turkana County, and the results were tabulated. The length of teaching experience was significant in establishing the relevance of teaching and learning resources on learners’ performance. The findings were tabulated as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Qualification and experience of English language teachers

Highest qualification of a teacher	Frequency	Percent
P1 Certificate	41	77.4
Diploma	6	11.3
B. Ed.	6	11.3
Total	53	100.0
Teaching experience of a teacher	Frequency	Percent
Less than one year	2	3.8
Between 1- 5 years	16	30.2
Between 6-10 years	23	43.4
Between 11-15 years	9	17.0
Between 16- 20 years	2	3.8
Over 20 years	1	1.9
Total	53	100.0

The findings result from Table 1 imply that the number of teachers with P1 certificates was 41, those with diplomas were 6 and the other 6 teachers had bachelor’s degrees. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the majority of the English language teachers 41(77.4%) in Kalokol ward, Turkana County had the minimum qualification which is a P1 certificate which is the minimum requirement for teachers in primary schools in Kenya. The existence of 6 (11.3%) English language teachers with bachelor’s degrees indicate significant professional development hence improvement in academic performance is expected.

Teachers with less than one year of experience were 2, those between 1 and 5 years were 16, between 6-10 years were 23, between 11-15 years were 9, between 16-20 years were 2 and one had an experience of over 20 years. The results from English teachers' experience indicated that majority of teachers, 35(66.1%) had the experience of 6 years and above. This indicated that the teachers had good experience hence they were familiar with the effective teaching practices.

Pupils KCPE Performance in English Language

The performance in KCPE by the learners from public schools in Kalokol ward, Turkana County was evaluated from the year 2016 to 2020. The results were tabulated in terms of mode, mean median, and standard deviation as tabulated below.

Table 2: KCPE English Language performance in public primary schools in Kalokol Ward, Turkana County, 2016 - 2020

KCPE English Language performance in public primary schools in Kalokol Ward, Turkana County, 2016 - 2020						
Year	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	Average
Mean	42.04	42.05	39.87	42.85	43.27	42.016
Median	42.04	39.8	39.32	42.71	42.71	42.04
Mode	44	39	37 ^a	40 ^a	40	40
Std. Deviation	7.442	8.208	5.385	4.611	5.103	6.1498

The results indicate that English language performance had declined significantly from 2016 to 2020 with the lowest mean in 2018 (39.87) and the highest mean in 2016 (43.27). This indicated that English language means performance was below 50%. The findings indicate that the mean for majority of the schools was 42 and the mode was 40. These findings collaborate with Ndungu (2016), Chepsiror (2020), Wandera (2019), and Omwenga and Nyamwaya (2021) who reported that the mean for English language of class eight students was within the range of 40-44 which was attributed by insufficient instructional materials among other factors. The results of English performance indicated different results for various schools which formed the basis of investigating school-based factors with reference to instructional resources.

An open-ended question was posed to the teachers on possible reasons for the decline in English performance in five consecutive years and provided possible solutions. The learners explored the same question through Focused Group Discussion (FGD). The causes of poor performance were listed to include inadequate instructional resources. Both the teaching staff

and learners suggested that to improve performance, all public schools required a well-equipped library.

Instructional Resources and the Pupils' KCPE English Performance

Instructional resources cannot be measured in a single aspect; hence, some aspects such as availability, usage, variety, and their implications on teaching were investigated and the findings were tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3: Instructional Resources

Statements on teaching and instructional resources (N = 53)	VSE(1)	SE(2)	ME(3)	LE(4)	VLE(5)	Mean	Std. Deviation
a) The availability of instructional resources improves the effectiveness of teaching English language in our school.	4(7.5%)	1(1.9%)	9(17%)	14(26.4%)	25(47.2%)	4.04	1.192
b) The use of a variety of learning/teaching resources stimulates pupils' mastery of English language.	4(7.5%)	0(0%)	10(18.9%)	23(43.4%)	16(30.2%)	3.96	.898
c) The presence of learning resources has built interest in learning English in our school and this causes a shift in the pupils' performance in KCPE examinations	5(9.4%)	0(0%)	16(30.2%)	19(35.8%)	13(24.5%)	3.75	.939
d) The school has a variety of print instructional resources for English language	5(9.4%)	17(32.1%)	20(37.7%)	10(18.9%)	1(1.9%)	2.72	.948
e) The school has a variety of storybooks	13(24.5%)	14(26.4%)	13(24.5%)	9(17%)	4(7.5%)	2.57	1.248
f) The school has a purpose-built library that through its services, there is a notable impact on the pupils' performance in the KCPE examinations	18(34%)	21(39.6%)	7(13.2%)	5(9.4%)	2(28.3%)	2.09	1.097
g) The school has a variety of digital information resources, multimedia, storybooks, and radio for listening to English stories	18(34%)	21(39.6%)	7(13.2%)	5(9.4%)	2(28.3%)	2.09	1.097
h) The school has a variety of multimedia English series	18(34%)	21(39.6%)	7(13.2%)	5(9.4%)	2(28.3%)	2.09	1.097

The aspects that played a significant role in influencing English language performance in Kalokol ward, Turkana County included the availability and usage of the teaching and learning materials. These were indicated by a mean of 4.04, 3.96, and 3.75. Furthermore, the results

indicated the moderate existence of print instructional materials, story books, digital information resources, and multimedia resources with a mean of 2.72, 2.57, 2.09, and 2.09 respectively.

The absence of libraries and inadequate information materials were contributing factors to poor English performance in Kalokol ward. The importance of libraries cannot be overemphasized as it holds the central position in any school hence its objective can be achieved if it is well-equipped and convenient for use for students at any time (Imbahala et al., 2019).

Lack of variety of learning and teaching materials such as digital information sources and story books also contributed to boredom as well as poor performance. Simba (2019) argued that the better and more instructional materials used, the better the performance. The incorporation of a variety of print materials, multimedia, and digital information resources facilitated the understanding of the language with ease (Kurgatt & Ouma, 2016; Njuguna, 2021).

Due to the shortage of instructional resources experienced in Kalokol ward, Turkana County, the head teachers were asked to explain how they were coping with the situation since public schools relied on the books provided by the Ministry of Education. The findings revealed that some English teachers improvised supplementary teaching books while others involved parents in purchasing books.

The remedies for inadequate teaching and learning resources included the availability of well-equipped libraries. However, many public primary schools in Kenya lack libraries (Ndiku et al., 2016; Rasto, 2015; Mwanasiti, 2019). Another recommendation was a budgetary increment in public primary schools for the purchase of story books and supplementary books to enhance the teaching process which will later increase the performance of learners significantly. The association between the two variables was further ascertained using correlation analysis. Results are as tabulated in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlations analysis of dependent and independent variables

		Y	X
Y	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
X	Pearson Correlation	.649**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	

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

**.. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The null hypothesis predicted that there was no statistically significant relationship between instructional resources and performance of KCPE English language in Kalokol Ward, Turkana Central Sub–County in Turkana County. The results indicated a Pearson correlation value of .649 and a P value that is less than 0.05. This shows a statistically significant positive association between instructional resources and pupils’ KCPE English language performance, ($r = .649$, $p < 0.05$); hence, the basis for rejecting the null hypothesis. The positive correlation implies that an increase in the instructional resources causes an increase in the pupils’ KCPE English language performance.

The existence of a positive relationship between instructional resources and pupils’ KCPE English language performance meant that adequate provision of instructional resources to teachers would improve their delivery and consequently the performance of learners would

improve. This is as explained by Kamutu (2018), Ndungu (2016), Simba (2019), Kotut (2016), and Waseka (2017) where adequate teaching and learning materials were extremely significant in influencing learners' performance. The results concurred with the input-output theory where an increase in instructional resources increased learners' performance.

4.0 Conclusion

The findings from the study indicated that there existed a positive and significant relationship between instructional resources and KCPE English language performance in Kalokol ward, Turkana Central Sub-County in Turkana County. The schools in Kalokol ward reported to have a moderate instructional resource and although many schools lacked purposely-built libraries, they had designated rooms where books were stored. The study also indicated that the public schools lacked a variety of teaching and learning resources as most schools relied heavily on books supplied by the government. The study concluded that the performance of KCPE English language was largely influenced by the inadequate instructional resources in Kalokol ward, Turkana County.

5.0 Recommendation

The Ministry of Education ought to increase the supply of supplementary reading and teaching materials as well as budgetary allocation to public schools for the purchase of supplementary teaching materials.

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