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Teacher Preparedness in Use of Instructional Media and the Quality of Learning Outcomes in English Language in Public Secondary Schools in Mbooni East Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract

In Kenya, the performance of English language in national examinations has been below average. This prompted the researchers to establish teacher preparedness on use of instructional media in the teaching of English language and quality of learning outcomes in public secondary schools in Mbooni East sub-county. The study adopted Multimedia learning theory by Richard Mayer. The study used descriptive survey research design. The target population was 49 public secondary schools, 49 Heads of Languages Department, 111 teachers of English and 3130 form three students. Stratified random sampling technique was used to sample 12 teachers of English, 12 Heads of Languages Department and 313 form three students. Questionnaire was used as research instrument for teachers of English, written English test for the students and Interview schedules for the Heads of the Languages Department. Quantitative data was analyzed through descriptive statistics and presented in frequencies, means and percentages with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data was thematically presented in prose. Findings show that teachers of English in public secondary schools in Mbooni East sub-county are ill prepared concerning the use of instructional media. In addition, quality of learning outcomes in English language in the sub-county is slightly below average, sub-county schools perform poorer and female students outshine their male counterparts. It was concluded that instructional media enhance learning outcomes in English language. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education should train teachers on the modern teaching methodologies. In addition, the Quality Assurance and Standards officers and school principals should emphasize to teachers to use instructional media in teaching English language.

Key Words: Teacher preparedness, Instructional media, Learning outcomes and Teachers of English

Date of Submission: 03-02-2023 Date of Acceptance: 15-02-2023

I. Introduction

Language is an instrument of communication and social interaction. It is also an important aspect of literacy (Wamalwa, 2016). An invigorating language atmosphere is vital for the attainment of language skills. This environment can grow from accessibility of audio and audio-visual resources (World Bank, 2001). English language is the most popular Lingua Franca used all around the world in travelling, business and social media. It is the language of power, used formally and in educational systems. Due to its significance, English language has been considered a compulsory subject in the school educational programs of many countries. Mastery of English language is a prerequisite in job application in many countries in the world thus it should be deemed necessary to inspire learners to do their best in it (Fidanboylu, 2014).

The performance of English language in national examinations has been wanting in many countries. In the United States, Malinowski (1991) observed that there was poor performance in English proficiency

DOI: 10.9790/0837-2802052734 www.iosrjournals.org 27 | Page

examinations. He recommended that composition writing was a difficult skill to acquire but its acquisition could be made easier by using a variety of instructional approaches for teaching English language. In Indonesia, Silvi and Acep (2020) observed that there was dismal performance in the English language examinations offered in elementary schools. This was due to lack of resources and enthusiasm from the learners which hampered teachers of English from using instructional media in the classroom resulting to ineffectiveness in the English language classroom teaching activities. In Nigeria, most secondary schools have been registering poor performance in English language national examinations administered yearly by the West African Examination Council (WAEC). This results from teachers of English failure to use instructional media to enhance their lessons (Obeka, 2020).

The necessity for media use in teaching is emphasized by many scholars Fidanboylu (2014) avers that application of teaching aids in teaching can create learners' interest, arrest learners' attention during the learning process and improve comprehension of what has been taught. Henrich (1990) argues Learning aids improve methodology and reduces the teachers talk and chalk method of teaching and especially during the delivery of English lessons. Using instructional media provides learners with the opportunity to access content and maximize learning. This leads to improvement in the learning outcomes. Newby (2000) avers that teacher should amplify Learner participation in their lessons through use of instructional media. This will also assist the learner to form the right attitude towards English language subject. The Gachathi Report (1976) emphasizes that teaching resources mainly comprising of books are basic tools for development in education and thus their availability is very key. The delivery of standard education and instruction is dependent on availability of appropriate instructional media. The Kenyan secondary school English syllabus by KICD (2002) also underscores the importance of media use in instruction and learning to enhance retention of the content taught.

Effective teaching using media requires a lot of time and this makes many teachers unenthusiastic in application of media in teaching of English language and perhaps this may in due course influence their learners' achievement. Teachers must be equipped to make expert decision of when, what, with, whom, for what purpose and with what effect media are to be used. Media utilization requires knowledge of the strengths and limitations of different instructional media. Every application of instructional media should be guided by general principles of media use and learning. (Wandera, 2019). This calls attention to the issue of teacher preparedness on utilization of instructional media for quality learning outcomes.

In Kenya, the Kenya National Examination Council reports show that the educational achievement of students in the English subject is undesirable. The Performance has been below average nationally (KNEC English Report, 2019). Wamalwa (2016) avers that KCSE examinations grades have been dropping in the years. This may have been caused by factors such as attitude and ineffective use of instructional media.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite English being a mandatory subject in the Kenyan secondary school curriculum, the overall performance in the subject at National level still fails to meet the average score of 100(50%). The dismal performance in this subject has been of great concern to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology which believes that the causative factors have not been fully identified. Despite the fact that the causative factors may not have been fully identified, very little research has been done on the utilization of instructional media and quality of learning outcomes in the teaching of English language. Finding whether teachers of English in public secondary schools were prepared to teach using instructional media for quality learning outcomes was the problem that the researchers sought to address in the study.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The study's objective was to establish teacher preparedness in the use of instructional media and quality of learning outcomes in English language in public secondary schools in Mbooni East Sub-County.

II. Review of Related Literature

2.1 The Concept of Teaching English Language

Teaching of English language emphasizes the proficiency and attainment of the rudimentary skills in reading, listening, writing, and speaking. These are the cardinal skills taught in secondary school level of education in Kenya. The main goal in the instruction of English language is to develop learners' literary and mastery of the language. The four language skills are interdependent in many ways although they can be taught independently to some extent (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Speaking and writing calls for more dedication and attention than listening and reading. UNESCO (2005) established that teachers' qualifications, teaching experience, use of instructional media, beliefs, and the socio-cultural contexts of their practices are very influential in shaping and explaining how language skills are transferred and how learners perform in language subjects in assessments and national examinations.

Khalil and Semono (2020) believe that English language teaching has its challenges because most of the time the learner cannot pick up from their surrounding so the teacher should teach systematically and patiently for the learners to become confident in listening, reading, writing and speaking the language effortlessly. The teaching of English language has also undergone a lot of changes in technology and societal expectations. Thus, teaching of English language requires prowess and relevant instruction to satisfy the learners' discerned needs and ensure the attainment of the learning outcomes and thus improved performance.

2.2 Teacher Preparedness in Use of Instructional Media and the Quality of Learning Outcomes in English Language

Teacher preparedness refers to the readiness of a teacher to effectively deliver the lesson to learners in the classroom. It also entails a teacher being able to make sound judgments upon certain values in school setting situation (UNESCO, 2005). According to KICD Evaluation of integrated English curriculum (2012),teacher preparedness in teaching of English is characterized by the content, level and methodology to be used in classroom setting. Teacher preparation starts at pre-service training and it is a prerequisite requirement to become a professional teacher. The extent to which teacher preparedness (teacher qualification and experience, teacher materials, teacher performance contracting) does influence the effectiveness and quality teaching and learning is of great importance.

Adequate teacher preparation translates into adequate teacher preparedness whose outcome is productive teaching and learning process as reflected in quality of learning outcomes and learner performance in examinations. All investment put in teacher training and teacher career development is meant to translate into quality delivery of education and enhancement of learning (Wandera, 2019). According to the revised volume 1 and 2 (MOEST 2004), teacher training is under two categories: Pre-service teacher training for equipping teacher trainees with skills and knowledge for effective classroom teaching, while in-service teacher training are short term teacher training programs to improve teachers' classroom delivery and content understanding. Teacher trainee training in Kenya is institutionalized training activity centered in training colleges and universities; Teacher trainees attend an institution with a curriculum that covers pedagogy or institutional methodologies, content delivery, professional preparation and use of media in teaching. Wamalwa (2016) avers that teacher trainees are exposed to teaching using teaching aids during their microteaching and teaching practice.

Teachers must be equipped to make expert decision of when, what, with, whom, for what purpose and with what effect media are to be used. Media utilization requires knowledge of the strengths and limitations of different instructional media. Every application of instructional media should be guided by general principles of media use and learning. The knowledge of context in which those principles will be employed is also of great importance (Wandera, 2019). According to Adegbinja and Fakomogbo (2012), it is important that teachers should prepare the media before they use them. When this is done, the possibility of error will not occur because the teacher has done preparation before using the media in the classroom. Developing effective utilization of media requires time, a lot of time, and this makes many teachers unenthusiastic in application of media in teaching of English language and this may perhaps in due course influence their learners' learning. This calls attention to the issue of teacher preparedness on utilization of instructional media for quality learning outcomes.

Pamela (2016) investigated whether teachers where ready to teach English language. The findings revealed that teachers in the United States felt that they were inadequately made ready by their pre-service teacher training to teach English learners. Diah (2018) examined the implementation of instructional media in instruction of English in Indonesia. Her main focus was on teachers' belief and practice. The findings indicated that teachers were competently prepared to use instructional media in English language classroom. During the initial stages of instruction, the teacher displayed media to the learners in the classroom. The teachers explained the material (the subject content) using instructional media and did further explanation and illustration on examples in the lesson development. To summarize the lesson, teachers used instructional media to give exercises to the learners. The teachers believed that instructional media supported the learning process, increased students' interest and helped to achieve instructional objectives. The inquiry emphasized that that media selection must be based on the curriculum and the lesson topic.

In Africa Banji, Nutakar and Frimpong (2016) did research on how student-teachers of basic schools in Ghana used instructional technologies. The main focus was assessing the perceived level of capability in the use of teaching aids. The research established that teachers undertaking teaching practice in Ghana basic schools had limited proficiency in use of instructional media in teaching.

In Kenya, a study by Muvango, Indoshi and Okwara (2019) divulged that teachers of English did not include media while preparing their yearly/termly plan of work and lesson planning. From their investigation, ten teachers had termly plan of their work and only five teachers out of those had included instructional media in scheming and lesson planning. These points out those teachers do not assimilate instructional media during scheming and lesson planning. The study also divulged that lessons notes contained lesson objectives and

learning activities instructional media to be utilized were not mentioned. The study recommended in-service training for the teachers on instructional application of media should be implemented.

Wandera (2019) also did research to inquire on the link between teacher preparedness and learner academic achievement. The findings indicated that teacher preparedness significantly influence pupils' performance in KCPEEnglish language examinations. The study suggested that to address the unsatisfactory achievement in the English language, it was essential to intensify teacher preparedness. It also advocated for the augmenting of monitoring and evaluation of teacher preparedness in learning institutions in Kenya.

III. Research Methodology and Design

The study adapted Mixed Methods methodology in data collection. It applied descriptive survey which collection of information is done by giving out a questionnaire or conducting interviews to respondents. Kombo and Tromp (2012) aver that descriptive survey method can be utilized when gathering information about people's beliefs, characteristics, and habits or when dealing with diversified social or educational issues. This design was thus appropriate for this study since the inquiry sought to suggest measures and provide solutions that could be taken to upgrade the standard of learners' learning outcomes in English language.

3.1 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Stratified Random Sampling technique was used to sample 12 schools; 1 extra county school, 3 county schools and 8 sub-county schools. The sample comprised of 12 teachers of English, 12 heads of languages department and 313 form three students.

3.2 Research Instruments

The data collection tools were: questionnaire for the teachers of English, interview schedule for the Heads of Languages Department and written English language test for the form three students.

3.3 Instrument Validity and Reliability

The study utilized both content and constructs validity. The content validity was ascertained by the supervisors and other lecturers in the Education Communication Technology department in Machakos University. Construct validity was realized by arranging the items into segments guided by the objectives. Reliability was measured during piloting and Cronbach's Alpha technique was employed to calculate the internal consistency reliability of the instruments at reliability index of 0.7.

IV. Research Findings and Discussion

The research proposed to establish teachers' preparedness in the use of instructional media and the quality of learning outcomes in English in public secondary schools in MbooniEast Sub-county.

4.1 Quality of Learning Outcomes in English Language

The quality of learning outcomes in English language was determined using an English test questionnaire. The questions set evaluated the students' listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills. A total score was computed from the test which represents quality of learning outcomes in English. The test was marked out of 20 marks. Table 4.1 below indicates frequency distribution of the English test scored by the 313 form 3 students who took the test.

 Table 4.1: Form 3 Students Quality of Learning outcomes in English Language

| Test score Range | Frequency | Percent | | | |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|--|--|--|
| 0-5 | 41 | 13% | | | |
| 5-10 | 117 | 37% | | | |
| 10-15 | 140 | 45% | | | |
| 15-20 | 15 | 5% | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total | 313 | 100.0 | | | |
| Average Score: 10.10 | | | | | |

The scores show that the average score for the English test was 10.10 which is slightly above the 50% mark of 10. Most students scored between 10 and 15 marks. Further analysis indicates the only 49.5% (155/313) of the students who took the test scored above average, which means that simple majority scored less than average. The study also computed the test scores by school category. Findings are presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Form 3 Students Quality of Learning outcomes in English Language by School Category

| | <u> </u> | | | 0 0 0 | - 0 |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------|-------|------|
| Test score Range | School Category | | | Total | % |
| | Extra county | County | Sub-county | | |
| | Frequency | Frequency | Frequency | | |
| 0 - 5 | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 41(100%) | 41 | 13% |
| 5 – 10 | 3(3%) | 11(9%) | 103(88%) | 117 | 37% |
| 10 - 15 | 18(13%) | 60(43%) | 62(44%) | 140 | 45% |
| 15 - 20 | 5(33%) | 7(47%) | 3(20%) | 15 | 5% |
| Total | 26 | 78 | 209 | 313 | 100% |

The results show a relatively higher test score for extra county schools with 5/26 students scoring 15-20 while 7/78 and 3/209 students in county and sub-county schools respectively fall under the same range. These scores imply that quality of learning outcomes in English language is higher in extra county schools and lower in the sub-county public secondary schools in Mbooni East sub-county. Most students in extra county and county schools scored 15 marks and above as opposed to sub-county schools where majority of the students scored less than 15 marks. 41% of the students scored 0-5 and the students were solely from sub-county schools. Furthermore, 7.69%, 6.41% and 60.29% from extra county, county and sub-county public secondary schools respectively scored below average mark. This demonstrates massive failure in the English language test among form three students from sub-county schools.

Furthermore, a cross-tabulation of the test score and sex of the student was computed. Results are presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Form 3 Students Quality of Learning outcomes in English Language by Sex

| Test score Range | Gender o | Total | |
|------------------|----------|---------|-----|
| | Male | Female | |
| 0-5 | 23(64%) | 18(36%) | 41 |
| 5 – 10 | 63(54%) | 54(46%) | 117 |
| 10 – 15 | 50(36%) | 90(64%) | 140 |
| 15 - 20 | 3(20%) | 12(80%) | 15 |
| Total | 139 | 174 | 313 |

The results show that female form three students have a better performance in English than their male counterparts. This was demonstrated by slightly higher average scores. In fact, their mean score (10.81) is slightly above the overall mean score (10.10). The male students average score (9.23) on the other hand is below the overall mean of 10.10. In addition, female students posted higher scores (80%) in the English test than their male counterparts (20%).

In terms of the students who scored below average, slightly more than half of male student interviewed got less than possible 10 marks with 64% of the male students scoring 0-5 compared to 36% by the female students. These findings imply that female students in Mbooni East post higher learning outcomes in English language than male students.

4.2 Teacher Preparedness in Use of Instructional Media in Teaching of English Language

To establish teachers' preparedness, teachers of English language were asked to rate various statements using a scale of 1-5 where; 1=Never (N), 2=Rarely(R), 3=Sometimes (S), 4=Often (O) and 5=Always (A). Table 4.4 presents summary statistics.

Table 4.4: Summary statistics on teacher preparedness in the use of instructional media and quality of learning outcomes in English Language

| Variable N | R % | S % | O % | A % | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|--------|-------------|------------|--------|------|-------------------|
| I have attended in-service training on how to use instructional media 45.5 | 36.4 | 9.1 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 1.82 | 0.98 |
| to promote the quality of learning outcomes in English Language; | 50.1 | <i>)</i> .1 | <i>7.1</i> | 0.0 | 1.02 | 0.70 |
| I incorporate instructional media when making lesson notes to 0.0 | 36.4 | 36.4 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 3.00 | 1.00 |
| promote the quality of learning outcomes in English Language; | | | | | | |
| I incorporate instructional media when preparing lesson plans to 9.1 | 36.4 | 27.3 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 2.81 | 1.17 |
| promote the quality of learning outcomes in English Language; | | | | | | |
| I select instructional media for use in teaching English language to 0.0 | 27.3 | 45.5 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 3.09 | 0.94 |
| promote the quality of learning outcomes in English Language; | | | | | | |
| Universities/colleges adequately train teachers on how to use0.0 | 18.2 | 18.2 | 36.4 | 27.3 | 3.73 | 1.10 |
| instructional media to teach to enhance the quality of learning | | | | | | |
| outcomes in English Language; | | | | | | |

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| I prepare teaching aids to use in teaching English language to enhance0.0 | 36.4 | 36.4 | 27.3 | 0.0 | 2.91 | 0.83 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| the quality of learning outcomes in English Language; | | | | | | |
| I incorporate instructional media when preparing schemes of work to 0.0 | 27.3 | 54.5 | 18.2 | 0.0 | 2.91 | 0.70 |
| promote the quality of learning outcomes in English Language. | | | | | | |
| I know when to use instructional media in teaching of English9.1 | 18.2 | 36.4 | 18.2 | 18.2 | 3.18 | 1.25 |
| language to promote the quality of learning outcomes in English | | | | | | |
| Language. | | | | | | |

Mean: Never=1.00-1.80, Rarely=1.81-2.60, Sometimes=2.61-3.40, Often=3.41.4-20, Always=4.21-5.00

The results in table 4.8 show that 45.5% of the teachers have never attended in-service training on the use of instructional media to enhance learning outcomes followed by 36.4% who argued that they rarely attend such training and 9.1% who stated that they sometimes attended the training. None of the teachers interviewed always attends in-service training. The findings depict that 36.4% of the teachers rarely incorporated instructional media when preparing lesson notes, 36.4% sometimes incorporated the media which only 9.1% of the teachers of English always incorporated instructional media when preparing lesson notes.

In addition, findings indicate that majority of the teachers (36.4%) rarely incorporated instructional media when preparing lesson plans followed by 27.3% who argued that they sometimes incorporated the media. Concerning teaching English, findings indicate that majority of the teachers of English (45.5%) sometimes use instructional media in teaching English language while on the issue of university/college training, the study has established that majority of the teachers (36.4%) argued that universities/college often trained teachers on use of instructional media.

The study has also established that majority of the teachers of English sometimes (36.4%) and often (36.4%) prepared teaching aids to use in teaching English language to enhance learning outcomes while on the issue on schemes of work, most English teachers stated that they sometimes incorporate instructional media when preparing schemes of work (54%). This was followed by 27.3% of the teachers who argued that they rarely incorporate instructional media in their schemes of work. Finally, most English teachers (36.4%) sometimes know when to use instructional media in teaching of English language followed by 18.2% who argued that they always know when to use instructional media in teaching of English language to promote learning outcomes.

These findings are in congruent with those of Muvango, Indoshi and Okwara (2019) who divulged that teachers of English did not include media while preparing their yearly/termly plan of work and lesson planning. From their investigation, ten teachers had termly plan of their work and only five teachers out of those had included instructional media in scheming and lesson planning. These points out those teachers do not assimilate instructional media during scheming and lesson planning. The study also divulged that lessons notes contained lesson objectives and learning activities instructional media to be utilized were not mentioned.

4.2.1 Qualitative Findings on Teacher Preparedness in Use of Instructional Media in Teaching of English Language

The researchers also interviewed heads of languages department to assess teacherpreparedness in use of instructional media in teaching of English Language Qualitative interviews with heads of language departments on English teachers' preparedness reveals that apart from extra county school, teachers of English from both the county and sub-county schools are not well trained to use instructional media. In fact, the response to the question, "Are all teachers of English in your school adequately trained to use instructional media in teaching?"Was no for all the 11 heads of language departments in the county and sub-county public secondary schools.One head of languages department argued that;

"Teacher's preparedness in the use of instructional media depends on various factors like resources, and skills which are limited particularly in sub-county schools like this." (HOD08).

This imply that most teachers of English in Mbooni East sub-county public secondary schools are not adequately prepared to apply instructional media which are known to improve learning outcomes. Yet, another head of languages department added that;

"Many of our teachers of English are not prepared to use instructional media in teaching of English due to workload. A teacher requires more time to plan lessons with instructional media in mind." (HOD07).

The findings concur with UNESCO (2005) observations that the use of instructional media is influential in shaping and explaining how language skills are transferred and how learners perform in language subjects in assessments and national examinations. Thus, lack of proper preparation among English teachers in Mbooni East public secondary schools could affect learning outcomes in the subject. Similar observations were made in the United States of America (USA) where Pamela (2016) argued that teachers in the USA who felt that they were inadequately made ready by their pre-service teacher training to teach English learners reported poor performance in learning outcomes. Yet in another study, Wandera (2019) established that teacher preparedness influences learner academic achievement in the KCSE.

DOI: 10.9790/0837-2802052734 www.iosrjournals.org 32 | Page

V. Conclusion

The study concluded that, that quality of learning outcomes in English language in public secondary schools within Mbooni East sub-county is slightly below average. Sub-county schools perform poorly than county or extra county secondary schools. Consequently, female students outshine their male counterparts in the performance of English language

In addition, despite the use of instructional media being very important in the teaching of English language, majority of teachers in the sampled schools do not use them frequently as expected. A great percentage of the teachers do not incorporate instructional media when preparing their schemes of work, lesson plans and lesson notes this is in addition to insufficient in-service training on how to use these media. This is likely to have led to poor performance in the English test administered to the students. Thus, teachers of English in public secondary schools in Mbooni East sub-county are not adequately prepared in incorporating instructional media in the teaching of English language. As a result, there is poor quality learning outcomes in English language in the sub-county.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the study findings the research recommended that:

- 1. Both in-service and refresher courses for teachers should be emphasized and more resources should be directed at this noble course by the Ministry Of Education. Will is critical for updating the teachers on the modern teaching methodologies which are more efficient and effective.
- 2. Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) and school principals should emphasize on the application of instructional media in teaching by teachers to enhance teacher effectiveness.

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Rosalia M. Musau, et. al. "Teacher Preparedness in Use of Instructional Media and the Quality of Learning Outcomes in English Language in Public Secondary Schools in Mbooni East Sub-County, Kenya." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 28(2), 2023, pp. 27-34.