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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PREPARATION, MOTIVATION AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN WARENG SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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#### ABSTRACT

Teachers are very important people in the education system. They play a central role at the school level, facilitating learning, planning, organization, leading and controlling the learning process. Many scholars attribute good performance to effectiveness and efficiency of teachers in teaching and proper utilization of material resources. This paper examines how teachers' preparation and motivation to conduct class work influence academic performance in primary schools. The paper is based on a study conducted in Wareng Sub-County in Uasin Gishu Caounty, Kenya. The study covered a total of 55 public and 17 private schools distributed evenly among the five education Zones in the District. The figures translate to 52% and 68% of public and private schools respectively. Data collection was by means of questionnaire administered to teachers and head teachers. The results on performance were collected from the District Education Office. Performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) was used because it is a national examination that is not biased. The duration covered three years, 2007-2009. The study found out that teachers in private schools prepare more adequately compared to those in public schools. The main areas that were examined were: syllabus coverage, assessment of pupils learning climate and provision of instruction materials. Except in the later, public schools trucked being private schools in all the rest. The study also revealed that private schools motivate their teachers with items ranging from house equipment to finance. It was recommended that signing of performance contract should be implemented in public schools. This would eliminate laxity among teachers. Through the study findings, the management and head teachers of public schools may be able to discover why they cannot challenge private schools academically and more so ensure maximum academic results at the end of each academic year.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Wareng is one of the 201 districts of Kenya. It is situated in the Rift Valley. It has two divisions and five education zones, with 105 public and 25 private primary schools. Most of them have all the primary grades of 1-8. Just like in other parts of the country, private schools outshine the public ones in performance in the area. The Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) results of 2008 ranked the top four schools in the District as shown in Table 1.

The table indicates that despite government efforts at equipping public schools, the private schools still lead in academic performance.

##### Teachers' effectiveness and performance

A teacher is a very important person in the education system. He plays a central role at the school level, facilitating learning,

planning, organization, leading and controlling the learning process. According to Aggarwal (1995), a teacher plays the role of independent variable. Students are dependent on him in the learning process. Accordingly, an effective teacher establishes a classroom atmosphere conducive for learning by means of good organization and carefully planned teaching-learning activities. The teacher uses a friendly humour and creates excellent teacher-learner relationship. Such teachers teach in a relaxed manner. They exercise good class control and discipline.

To achieve effective teaching and learning, students' discipline is of paramount importance (Musaaazi, 1986; Wolwa, 1987). However, there are individuals who take teaching naturally, with little or no preparation before they go to class. Due to unpreparedness, presentation of concepts is in most case haphazard. Hence, effective learning hardly take place. Scholars argue that effective teachers know their subject matter, are enthusiastic about teaching, develop deep rather than shallow knowledge, teach from known to unknown and are organized. The teacher plans, organizes and structures learning experience cruelly, maintains high interest of students,

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have high regard of students and detaches them with respect (Elizabeth, 2000).

**Table 1. Top Four Schools in KCPE 2008 – Wareng District**

School	Type	Percentage score	Position (%)
Solace Academy	Private day	66.40	1
Hill School	Private Boarding	62.32	2
Moi University	Semi private	59.25	3
Ngeria Hill Academy	Private boarding	58.62	4

Source: District Academic Recognition Magazine 2008-results

**Theoretical aspect**

Private schools seem to embrace the ideas proposed by Scientific Management Theory. Fredrick Taylor, the proponent of the Scientific Management Theory, has analyzed the management of workplace and came up with a number of elements. One of the elements was determination of standards performance. Taylor observes that prior to the scientific management there was no one who could exactly know how much work an employee was expected to do within a specified period of time.

Concerning evaluation, Taylor emphasizes that work must be evaluated by charging the results against the objectives. He further proposes that in organizations, workers who produce maximum output should be rewarded accordingly. This emerges from the fact that in most organizations, people perform extremely high but they are paid very low on the guise of having uniform payment. To get over this problem, Taylor developed the device of differential piece where the employee should be paid according to hours worked. This method of performance management is in many cases not upheld as it encourages extrinsic motivation while neglecting intrinsic motivation.

Under the Scientific Management Theory, workers are seen as motivated by both economic and non economic rewards. The economic rewards that motivate employees as put forward by Taylor include salary allowances, overtime packages and the pension scheme. The non-economic rewards, however, include the work itself, the nature of supervision and fringed benefits such as accommodation and medical cover scheme. Private schools seem to have borrowed a lot from the foregoing ideas of Taylor. Although they do not pay their teachers high salaries or attractive allowances, they instead tie their payment to the performance of the teachers. However, most private schools give their teachers the non-economic rewards such as accommodation, meals and scholarships in form of reduced fees to children whose parents work in the same institution. The non-financial rewards do not involve direct payment to the teachers but they help in reducing the cost of living expenditure which will eventually enhance motivation.

**The power of teachers' voice in student performance**

According to Sande Olocho (as cited in Education Watch, 2008), a research specialist in the field of social science, teachers have a huge influence on the lives of their students. He argues that the teachers' voice in particular has great influence on the way students' process oral information and questions.

This has a significant impact on the overall academic performance. Indeed, and as held by Olocho (ibid.), voice has been well utilized by traditional story-tellers, distinguished political and spiritual leaders to ensure maximum effect and guaranteed attention.

In teaching, whereas it may be easy to get the students physical attention, it is a daunting task to get the learners mental attention. Although classroom situation provide an environment where the recipient has most of the external distracters eliminated, the teacher still may not have the full attention of the learner because of internal competing distracters like day dreaming and stress. In dichotic listening experiments, Burgoon, Buller, Guerrero and Feldman (1994) have established that when a listener is exposed to two different messages simultaneously in either ear, the listener ends up shadowing one message and ignoring the other. The listener pays most attention to the tonal quality of the message. Experienced and successful teachers are aware of this and heavily depend on the voice to trigger and maintain the learner's state of alertness. Teachers with a well endowed electric topology coupled with a well endowed compendium of pedagogic language schema are usually liked by their students and their subjects are usually well performed. It is also of interest to note that good performance by private schools transverses across national boundaries.

**Teachers' preparation and conduct of their class work**

Many scholars attribute good performance to effectiveness and efficiency of teachers in teaching and proper utilization of material resources. Balassi (1996) defines teaching as a process of planning, securing material, presenting content, guiding discussing, giving assignment, checking work and evaluating achievement. Maxim (1995) argues that committed teachers go out of their way to plan meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences. They spend much energy and time determining the kinds of activities that have the greatest potential for success. Good teaching must be a deeply though process, with activities planned in advance as an effort to set up a conducive environment

Stoner and Wanke (as cited in Anthony and Govindarajan, 2007) define effectiveness as doing the right thing. They argue that in the world of education, nothing can be said about effective teaching without an effective teacher. That what a teacher does, makes a significant difference in what a student learns. Teacher effectiveness is used mainly to refer to the outcome of teaching learning process (Anderson, 1989). Teachers in private schools are among the most overworked and underpaid professionals. The excellent results that have catapulted some schools into the national limelight are products of their tireless toil. They start preparing for their workday at dawn in order to be in their stations on time as lessons begin as early as 7.00 a.m. Further, they spend countless hours in the institutions attending to the learners at the managers' whims.

**Motivation**

According to Education Watch (2006), after national examination results are out, some schools treat teachers to

sumptuous meals and drinks. Others sponsor teachers for trips where they can relax and enjoy. In other schools, teachers whose subjects record improved mean scores receive all sorts of awards ranging from clothes to utensils or hefty cash awards (Education Watch, 2008). It is indisputable that a well motivated teacher will strive for improved performance. Although the motivators awarded might not always motivate teachers, given the Maslow Theory of Motivation, in which different individuals are at different levels of needs, the misconceived motivators work wonders among lowly remunerated teachers like those teaching in private schools. The owners of most private schools are aware of such motivations and they always utilize them and unlike those in public schools. As a result, teachers in private schools work tirelessly not only to maintain their jobs but also to improve their earnings

In private schools, prefects are appointed on a platform of academic excellence, discipline and other leadership qualities. Prize-giving days are normally organized to reward students in academic leadership, sport and cleanliness. Hence pupils who are eager for such rewards must work hard mainly in class work.

Another major factor accounting for the success of private schools is the investment that the owners make. Some private school owners invest heavily in their institutions; as such, they have put up more magnificent structures like classroom, libraries, and dormitories for the case of boarding private school and well tended lawns which are environment conducive for learning. They own school buses or vans, facilities that do not only attract parents who are mindful of their children's comfort at school but also tend to motivate pupils in their academic performance. In the public schools, most structures are worn out and dilapidated. The government concentrates mainly in provision of funds for instructional materials. In general, motivation in private schools is at a higher level than in public schools

### Motivation and level of human needs

Head teachers and school committees seek ways of motivating their teachers. However, most of them seem to overlook the Maslow Theory of Motivation (1943). George Jakoyo (as cited in Education Watch, 2006, p. 27) – a national coordinator for School Library Movement and member of International Association of School Librarianship – argues that it is important to evaluate whether the way the teachers are motivated focuses on their needs, feelings, wishes, aspirations and expectations within the professional arena. He says that unlike the non-teaching staff, teachers' performance should be influenced by the manner in which the administration and employer take care of their interests in achieving higher order needs. Jakoyo (ibid.) believes that teachers will be motivated by policies that promote individual and professional development and pride in the area of responsibilities.

According to Parick Birgen (editor of *Teachers Image Magazine*) (as cited in Education Watch, 2008), a teacher's contribution is key to successful attainment of desired educational outcomes. A responsible, committed and energetic

teaching service whose principal task is to provide the nation with a well-educated population demands a contented and motivated teaching force. Birgen (ibid.) argues that teachers' confidence is to a large extent derived from a management that allows one to carry out their duties effectively and devoid of administrative hiccups. Indeed, effective teacher management mostly occurs at the school level. The head teacher, as a professional leader, can be a powerful influence on teachers' performance

### Statement of the Problem

Good performances in private schools have not only attracted many parents but also left the public wondering what secret could be behind their success. Despite government investing heavily in public schools, not much in terms of performance is yet realized. Most public schools, especially in urban areas, are well staffed. Teachers in public schools are better paid compared to those in private. The environmental conditions in some private schools are pathetic. Some learn in very small rooms while others are taught in rooms behind shops. Recreational facilities in most private schools are lacking. Despite all these variations, private schools still outshine public schools in academic achievements. The big question in the minds of many people is what could be causing the differences in performance between the two categories of schools as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Top Four Schools in KCPE 2008 – Wareng District**

School	Type	Percentage score (%)	Position
Solace Academy	Private day	66.40	1
Hill School	Private Boarding	62.32	2
Moi University	Semi private	59.25	3
Ngeria Hill Academy	Private boarding	58.62	4

This research was therefore conducted to establish the factors behind better performance in private schools as compared to public schools in Wareng Sub-County in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study majorly used descriptive survey research, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It aimed at establishing and analyzing managerial approaches applied in both public and private primary schools. Secondary data was gathered from published reports, books magazines and bulletins and it helped in collection of primary data. The main method used in data collection was the questionnaire. The study was based on the performance of Standard Eight pupils in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) in Wareng District. The duration covered the years 2007-2009. KCPE performance was chosen as a standard measure in performance between public and private primary schools because it is a national exam and therefore not biased.

Two sample methods were used; cluster and stratified sampling. The District is sub-divided into five educational zones. Each zone, therefore, was taken to be a cluster. The study covered four private schools in each zone except Cheptiret zone where there was no private school that

presented candidates for national examination. To ensure their participation, only two of their young private schools were involved. In total 17 private schools were covered. These translated to 68% of all the private schools in the District. In the category of public schools, Cheptiret, Kesses and Kapsaret zones had 12 schools covered in each while Tulwet and Timboroa had 9 and 10 respectively. In total, 55 schools were covered. This translated to 52% of all the public primary schools in the District.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Preparation to Conduct Class Work and Academic Performance in Schools

The study sought to establish the relationship between teachers' preparation to conduct class work and academic performance in both private and public schools. To ascertain this, the findings on performance were subjected to Pearson correlation. The data in Table 3 presents the findings of the Pearson correction (r). The analysis for private and public schools in the district were shown separately then combined. The purpose was to find the relationship between school management and academic performance.

Table 3 below shows the Pearson correlation results for private schools.

**Table 3. Correlation Coefficients of Academic Performance of Private Schools**

Correlation	Academic performance	Preparation to conduct class work	Motivational approaches	School management
Academic performance Pearson correlation	1,000	928	538	-093
Sig-(2-tailed)		-072	-462	-907
N	15	4	4	4
Preparations to conduct class work Pearson correlation	-928	1,000	-423	-260
Sig-(2-tailed)	-072		577	-740
N	4	4	4	4
Motivational Approaches Pearson correlation	-538	-423	1,000	-765
Sig-(2-tailed)	-462	-577		-235
N	4	4	4	4
School Management Person correlation	-093	-260	-765	1,000
Sig-(2-tailed)	-907	740	-234	
N	4	4	4	4

**Table 4. Correlation Coefficients of Academic Performance of Public Schools**

	Academic performance	Preparation to conduct class work	Motivational approaches	School management
Academic performance Pearson correlation	1,000	-374	-402	-269
Sig-(2-tailed)		-626	-598	-731
N	15	4	4	4
Preparations to Conduct class work Pearson correlation	-374	1,000	-021	-027
Sig-(2-tailed)	-626		-979	-973
N	4	4	4	4
Motivational Approaches Pearson correlation	-402	-021	1,000	-749
Sig-(2-tailed)	-598	-979		-251
N	4	4	4	4
School Management Person correlation	-269	-027	-749	1,000
Sig-(2-tailed)	-731	973	-251	
N	4	4	4	4

From Table 3, the correlation coefficient for teachers' preparation to conduct class work and academic performance in private schools was 0.072, which is very low. The correlation coefficient for motivational approaches and academic performance was 0.462, which is still below average. However, the correlation coefficient for school management and academic performance was 0.907, which is very high. This implies that the good academic performance witnessed in most private schools is due to high level of supervision.

The table below shows the Pearson correlation results for public schools.

From the evidence in Table 4, in the public schools the correlation between management and academic performance was 0.731.

According to *Teachers Image* (2004), teacher training colleges prepare teacher trainees to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for educating learners. Their functions involve classroom reaching, preparation of lesson notes, schemes of work, pupil assessment report, development and organization of teaching/learning materials, guiding and counselling, organizing of curricular activities and general management of schools.

Those teachers must possess all the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes and be ready to impart the same to learners if they have to produce good results. The foregoing are in line with the views of Aggrawal (1995) who states that the teaching is an important part of education process. Its special function is to impart knowledge, develop understanding and skills. Teaching is the complex process of guiding the learners through a variety of selected experiences towards the attainment of appropriate goals (Aggrawal, 1995). According to Fontana (1988), successful teachers have what are often referred to as desirable professional attitudes. This means that they have positive attitudes towards responsibility and hard work for good outcome. However, despite all the skills possessed by teachers in public schools, their academic performance is still low. This means that good performance is a function of good management.

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education attempted to introduce performance contracts for teachers in 2006 just the way other ministries introduced for their employees. The primary objective was to hold teachers accountable for the learning achievements of their pupils. The TSC and the Ministry of Education had noted that private schools in which teachers are in most cases poorly paid produced attractive performance simply because their employers insisted on excellent outcome for one to retain their job. Moreover, the fact that teachers in public schools worked with a lot of laxity and frequently absconded duties among other weaknesses had compromised the quality of service delivery, hence the poor performance. The move by the Ministry and TSC had good intentions but the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) strongly argued against it and finally had it withdrawn.

### Motivation Approaches and Academic Performance

The study further sought to establish the relationship between motivation approaches and academic performance in private schools. The findings of Pearson correlation on the influence of motivational approaches on academic performance were as shown in Table 3 and Table 4 for private and public schools respectively.

In Table 3, the correlation coefficient for motivation approaches and academic performances in private schools was 0.462, which is below average. In the public schools, the correlation coefficient was 0.598 which is slightly above that of private schools. Given these two, and the fact that academic performance in private schools is better than in public schools, it implies that motivational approaches are not a significant contributor to good performance. Their scores are just average.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

The study sought to find out how teachers in private schools prepared and conducted their class work compared to those in public schools. From the study, it emerged that teachers in private schools prepare more adequately compared to those in public schools. The main areas that were examined were: syllabus coverage, assessment of pupils learning climate and provision of instructions materials. The study found out that

private schools outshined public ones in the four items tested although with a small gap in the area of facilities and structures.

The study also sought to establish how motivational approaches are used in public and private school. The study revealed that private schools motivate their teachers with items ranging from house equipment to finance. In some cases, teachers who produced excellent academic results were awarded domestic animals. In some cases parties and tours were organized. These were accompanied with a lot of eating and celebrations.

From the findings of the study and the views of other scholars related to these finding, it is concluded that performance “rest squarely” on teachers. Moreover, it is clear that better remunerations cannot motivate teachers but rather the supervision by the management on the teachers that determines the teaching outcome. As such, since performance rests entirely on teachers’ work, signing of performance contracts should be implemented in public schools to eliminate laxity among teachers. Nevertheless, these performance contracts should be introduced in a way that will be more acceptable to teachers.

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