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Tutors' Effective Teaching and Students' Pass Rates in Teacher Colleges in Tanzania

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Tutors' Effective Teaching and Students' Pass Rates in Teacher Colleges in Tanzania

Sylivester John Buyobe

Abstract- Scholars and education practitioners agree that a teacher (tutor) is an important factor in education and training. Teachers organize and guide students in their learning experience and interaction with the content of the curriculum and at all times promote students' initiatives and readiness for their own learning (Nuthall, 2004). Multiple group and different people in the society react in a different way from what is happening in Teacher Colleges. Sometimes Tutors are blamed for poor performance of students in national examinations. In this paper two objectives guide the study: to find out the relationship between interaction styles and students' examination pass rates and to establish the relationship between instructional procedures and students' examination pass rates. The data for this paper were collected in 2013 through questionnaire survey. The samples of the participants were 120 tutors from Mpwapwa and Morogoro Teacher Colleges respectively. Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to measure the strength and direction between the correlated variables. Statistical tests were used at a two-tailed test of significance at $P<0.05$ probability level of confidence. The finding here are part of Master Dissertation on Tutor' effective teaching and students' examination pass rates in Teacher Colleges in Tanzania.

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I. Introduction

Effective teaching is the foremost influential together with quality curriculum in terms of its influence on student learning and performance (UNESCO, 2004 & Nuthall, 2004). Adeyami & Adu (2012) indicate that, the level of performance in any education institution is intimately related with the commitment of educators to teach effectively. So, a tutor is a prime input into the Teacher Colleges constituting important aspects in students' learning.

In recent years however, Teacher Colleges in Tanzania were blamed for ineffective teaching and fluctuating students' examination pass rates (Haki Elimu, 2012). Communities have been putting more pressure on how students are prepared and how tutors engage effectively on the teaching process. National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) (2010) shows low students' examination pass rates by 66.9% in 2010, students referred to repeat the examination that year was 31.3% and 1.8% failed students. This was a high examination repetition and failure rate by seven years than that of 2007 where pass rate was 98%, repetition rate 1.5% and failure rate was 0.5% only. This signifies that curriculum implementation in teacher colleges began to deteriorate in a sense that tutors instructional procedures and styles are inappropriate.

The fate of tutors' ineffective teaching in this era of globalisation and advanced technology is by necessary means need to be fixed. One possible way is by improving tutors' instructional procedures and interaction styles so as to facilitate learning to the optimal realization of learning outcomes. This correlate with Liu (2002) with other things addresses that teachers/tutors should contribute most to the educational enterprise and therefore should ensure that learners are engaged appropriately with the instructional materials. As Walls, Nardi, von Minden & Hoffman (2002) point out, tutors should have better developed schema for classroom teaching, with strong acquaintances between the subject matter and ways to teach it; to be more effective lesson planner and curriculum implementer and yet be more flexible and reflective in meeting students' needs and facilitating student social and academic growth.

This paper argues that effective teaching is likely to be achieved when tutors are acquainted with a deep understanding of subject matter, learning theories and student differences, lesson planning, classroom instructional strategies, knowing individual students and assessment of student understanding and proficiency with learning outcomes. This goes hand in hand with mastery of interaction styles/ teaching techniques for enhancing successful instructional design, clearly establish a learning objective through lesson planning (Grosser, 2007; Barry, 2010).

Despite effective teaching being a prime factor into students' learning and performance, literature has shown that, teachers/tutors are rarely engaging instructional procedures and interaction styles in their teaching routine (Haki Elimu, 2012; Mushashu, 2000: NECTA, 2010). This paper therefore reports the findings a study that was carried out to determine the relationship between effective teaching by tutors and students' examination pass rates within teacher colleges in Tanzania.

II. Hypothesis of the Study

When doing this study, the research had the following hypotheses

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Null hypothesis (HO): There is no significant relationship between tutors' effective teaching and students' examination pass rates in teacher colleges in Tanzania.

Alternative hypothesis (H1): There is significant relationship between tutors' effective teaching and students' examination pass rates in teachers" colleges in Tanzania.

III. Purpose of the Study

This study aimed at examining if there is an existing relationship between tutors' effective teaching and students' examination pass rates in teacher colleges in Tanzania.

a) Specific objectives

The study specifically intended to;

i. Find out the relationship between teaching strategies/interaction styles and students' examination pass rates
ii. Establish the relationship between instructional procedures and students' examination pass rates

b) Research Questions

i. What relationship exists between teaching strategies/instructional styles and students' examination pass rates?
ii. What relationship exists between instructional procedures and students' examination pass rates?

c) Literature Review

The literature surveyed show that the main challenges that teachers/tutors face in the classroom worldwide include motivating students to learn, classroom management and assessing student work (OECD, 2009). However, the positive and negative behaviors that a teacher exhibits determine to a great extent their effectiveness in the classroom and ultimately the impact they have on student achievement.

A teacher is a foremost input into the educational system, constituting important aspect in pupils"/students" learning. This contestation concurs with the idea of Adeyemi and Adu (2012) who argued that „the level of performance in any school is intimately related with the commitment of teachers to teach effectively. Walls, Nardi, von Minden, & Hoffman (2002.p.5) explains that effective teachers;

Appear to have better developed schemata for classroom teaching with strong link between subject matter and ways to teach it; to be more effective lesson planners and implementers, and yet be more flexible and reflective in meeting student needs and facilitating student social and academic growth.

Similarly, Allington (2002) notes that effective teachers manage to produce better achievement regardless of which curriculum materials, pedagogical approach, or reading program they use.

In school/college setting a tutor is considered to be committed to teach effectively if has more to do with; scheme of works and lesson plan preparation, have competence in subject matter and clearly present lessons in classroom settings, is rich in using teaching strategies that elicit learning among learners, and is enthusiastic to students in a manner that provides tasks in term of questions, assignment which enable students to acquire problem solving skills. Moreover, Bain (2004) in his book 'what the Best College Teacher Do' asserts that effective teaching begins with the relationships between the teacher and each individual students in his/her class. This can be with a reason that teachers do not teach a class but students in classroom. Acknowledging this statement, effective teaching comes to the building of a learning collaboration with an individual student: support and challenge.

In words of Bain, a student wants to be challenged to learn more through questions, quizzes, assignments, tests and examination, however, they want support from the teacher and his/her classroom learning environment that enable them to think that they will be able to meet the challenges. Mc Ber (2000) points out that, effective teachers, employ variety of teaching strategies and techniques to engage students and to keep them on task. The teacher presents lessons to students with a high degree of clarity and enthusiasm. The teaching techniques include; group discussion, presentation, questions and answers, lecturing which are interactive in nature and enable the teacher to control and manage the class for students learning progress. Questions engage students actively in the lesson and the teacher is able to monitor students' understanding and challenge their thinking by skillful questioning. According to McBer (2000) it is evident that effective teachers use sophisticated questioning approach ranging from asking many brief questions on main and supplementary point to multiple questioning of individuals to provide greater understanding and challenge.

In effective teaching the lesson to be learnt is presented clearly and with measurable learning objectives, which state specifically what students should know and be able to do as a result of the lesson. The teacher has to focus on the class as needed to maintain progress in completing the lesson and achieving the lesson objectives. This concurs with the idea of Hall, (2009) who addresses that teachers in classroom have to breakdown complex lesson activities/skills into a series of manageable steps, which aid students in mastering the learning objectives. Thus, using questions, assignments, homework or group work can enhance learning and increase task completion. This allows students to become successful in independent activities. Since the literacy meaning of effectiveness is good attainment, the implicit assumption is that the criteria used to measure performance reflect important educational objectives. Therefore, the literature suggest indicative performance of effective teaching as; lesson

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plans preparation which reflect important concepts in the discipline and accommodate relationships among concepts and skills, clear and accurate classroom lesson explanations, accurate answers to student questions, demonstration of mastered teaching strategies and techniques which allow interactive learning and completion of syllabi and curricula materials.

IV. Methodological Approach to the Inquiry

This study was drawn on the quantitative inquiry deploying correlational research design. It was conducted in Dodoma and Morogoro regions, Tanzania in 2013 including Mpwapwa and Morogoro Teacher Colleges respectively. The selected study areas were particularly useful because both Mpwapwa and Morogoro Teacher Colleges are government owned institutions and train diploma student-teachers, which met the requirements of data gathering for this study. 120 tutors from both Colleges returned the supplied questionnaires. Tutors were purposively chosen by virtue of their professional, knowledge and experience in the context of Teacher colleges in Tanzania as illustrated in figure 3.1

Table 3.1: Distribution of Tutors under Study

Teacher College	Location	Respondents		
		Male	Female	Total
Mpwapwa	Dodoma	51	9	60
Morogoro	Morogoro	31	29	30
	Total	82	38	120

The required data were collected through questionnaire survey. Tutors were supplied with closed ended questions in the questionnaire just to respond for the list of items about instructional procedures, interaction styles and students' pass rates.

Descriptive Statistics was used to analyze the data from returned questionnaires. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for various responses in order to determine the extent to which tutors were effective in their teaching. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the direction and strength of association between the correlated variables. Statistical test was used at a two tailed test of significance at $p<0.05$ probability level of confidence. The researcher had to state null hypothesis, which were either rejected if P-value was greater than 0.05 or accepted if otherwise. Cohen's (1988) guideline for correlation interpretation was used to interpret the effect size for this study where r= 0.10 to 0.29 or -0.01 to -0.29 = small; r= 0.30 to o.49 or -0.30 to -0.49 = medium and r= 0.50 to 1.0 or -0.50 to -1.0 = large of the effect size of the study. Moreover the strength of the association between the variables was interpreted using the rule of thumb provided by Gerber & Finn (2005, p. 69) in which correlation between 0 to 0.30 or 0 to -0.30 (absolute value) indicate weak relationship; 0.31 to 0.60 or -0.31 to -0.60 (absolute value) indicate moderate relationship; 0.61 to 1.0 or -0.61 to -1.0 (absolute value) indicate strong relationship. The collected data were nominal in character and expressed continuous scores of variables. All of these were done through computerized program called SPSS version 20.

V. Findings and Discussion

Presentation and discussion of the findings drew upon two research questions: (1) what relationship exists between instructional procedures and students' examination pass rates? (2) What relationship exists between teaching strategies/instructional styles and students' examination pass rates?

VI. Effective Teaching in the Investigated Teacher Colleges

A commitment to effective teaching is considered to be one of the most important qualities a successful tutor/teacher can possess. Variables in table 4.1 were used to measure effective teaching to tutors as follows.

Table.4.1: Components of Effective Teaching Studied in the Surveyed Colleges

ITEM	RESPONSE (N=120)					
	Low		Average		High	
	*N	%	F	%	F	%
Level of lesson planning and scheme of work preparation	25	21	14	12	81	67
Level of lessons presentation in the classroom	13	11	9	7	98	82
Level of tests administered	46	38	11	9	63	53
Level of assignments provision Level of syllabus completion	125	104	1317	1114	9598	7982

**N= Frequency*

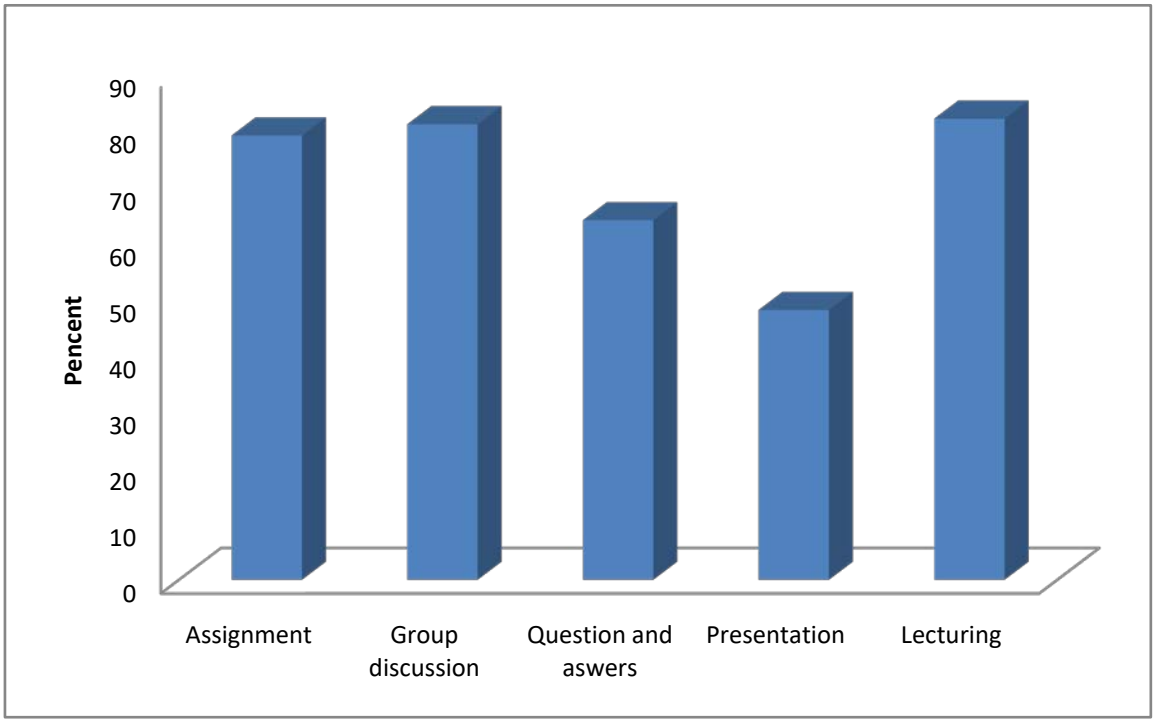
The findings in Table 4.1 portray that the levels of lesson presentation and syllabus completion are high at 82% in the investigated colleges. It can be concluded that high rates of lesson presentation/delivery in classroom indicates effective implementation of the syllabus of a specified class/program or course. Hirsch (2000) states that, effective classroom teaching is positively related to students" achievement because it maximizes students" time and engagement in learning tasks and encourages students" active participation during lessons. With this in mind, it can be said that effective teaching remains an important variable for effective learning facilitation, leading to good students' academic achievement.

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On the other hand, the findings revealed that the levels of assignment provision in the surveyed colleges are high at 79%. Assignments contain questions which make the students interact with a variety of sources like textbooks, supplementary books and the Internet for deepening their learning over a given problem (Hirsch, 2000). Table 4.1 shows also that there is a high level of lesson planning at 67 percent in the investigated teacher colleges. This shows that, before undertaking actual classroom lesson presentation, a tutor/teacher must plan a lesson to be delivered which specifically indicates the learning objective intended to be achieved in the class. It also helps tutors/teachers to suggest proper teaching techniques to be used while teaching so that the stated learning objective is achieved (Barroso and Pon 2005). Mantooth (2010) & Adams (2010) for example, called the teacher a professional question maker and claimed that the asking of questions is one of the basic ways by which the teacher stimulates students'' thinking and learning. Additionally, asking questions in a test or examination is one of ten dimensions for studying teachers' behavior in the widely used system for interactive analysis. Thus, textbooks and examination questions and assignments undoubtedly make a contribution to the learning process. The key function of questions relies on learning by doing with questions accelerating and deepening the learning process, which also includes self-questioning and reflection. Questions allow students to harvest learning.

VII. Teaching Strategies used by Tutors in Surveyed Colleges

Through questionnaires, tutors were asked if they use learner centered teaching techniques effectively. Figure 4.1 describes more in details, the teaching techniques which are commonly used in teacher colleges as follows.



Source: Questionnaire analysis (May, 2013)

Figure 4.1: Teaching techniques used in the surveyed teacher colleges.

The findings in Figure 4.1 reveal that although learner centered teaching is done in both colleges, the lecturing technique is still dominating. This could be for several reasons, such as it is less time consuming in terms of lesson planning and delivery since learning activities are fixed, it is effective for teaching a large number of students at one time and tutors may not have experienced or be familiar with other techniques. However, this reflects that there is no rule book on which teaching methods match up best to which skills and or content that is been taught. But Jacobs and Gawe (1996:208) state that;

The outcome of any method is determined by the teacher's motivation, the effort that has been put into the planning and preparation of the lesson, the motivation of the pupils and the ability of the teacher to create opportunities for pupils to participate in the learning process.

The key advantage of such teaching methods is that it allows interaction between the teacher and learner with the sole purpose of harvesting better learning

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outcomes. Additionally, group discussions, assignments, questions and answers and presentations are communicative teaching methods which provide a wide range of student participation in the learning process.

VIII. Relationship Between Effective Teaching and Examination Pass Rates

This paper has one hypothesis and the analysis is presented in line with the study hypothesis. The hypothesis was formulated that, "effective teaching and examination pass rates have a significant relationship." It was assumed that good examination results among students in teacher colleges are a result of tutors' efforts to implement the curriculum. The effectiveness of their teaching was measured using variables of actual classroom teaching/lesson presentation, lesson planning and rate of learning tasks provision, syllabus completion and mastery of teaching techniques used to teach in the classroom as shown in the table 4.2 below

Table 4.2: Correlations

ITEM CORRELATED (N=120)	r-value	p-value
Syllabus completion and high examination pass rate	.620	.016*
Tutors' lesson presentation and teaching techniques	.550	.006**
Learning tasks provision to students and accomplishment of syllabus	.416	.018*
Lesson presentation and lesson plans/schemes of works preparation	.625	.013*
Tutors' lesson presentation in the classroom and high examination pass rate	.713	.003**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*
***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)*

The findings presented in Table 4.2 depict that syllabus completion and good examination results have a strong positive association at r (120) = 0.620, which is significant at the 0.01 level (p = 0.016), because it is smaller than the critical value of p= 0.05. Using Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the effect size is large for studies in this area. This has the implication that the more tutors complete the syllabus, the higher the opportunity for improved examination pass rates. This correlation indicates also that two items are associated and can be grouped together by the factor analysis. This means, tutors who completed syllabus, their students tended to achieve better results in the national examinations. In 2006, Aiyepeku expressed that where a national examination syllabus is available, the school/college teaching syllabus should be based on it and should be completely taught so as to yield good results.

Tutors' lessons presentation was positively correlated with their lesson planning behavior. The findings show that tutors lesson presentation in the actual classroom and their lesson planning behavior has strong positive relationship at r (120) = 0.625 which is significant at the 0.05 level (p=0.013), because it is smaller than the critical value of p=0.05. This means that the majority of tutors tend to plan lessons before attending classes. Those who usually plan lessons are more likely to deliver structured and systematic lessons, potentially resulting in better learning outcomes for the students. Lesson planning has an important contribution in good learning achievement because it helps teachers/tutors to prepare relevant learning materials in a specified sub-topic and learning objective. It also assists teachers/tutors to decide on the appropriate teaching techniques and learning activities to be used in the course of lesson delivery in the class. Haki Elimu (2012) addresses the function of lesson planning that, it serves as a combination guide, resource and historical document reflecting teaching philosophy, student population, textbooks/references and, most importantly, educational goals for students. This implies that poor lesson planning causes unstructured lesson delivery in the classroom which results in lower learning achievement amongst learners.

Furthermore, the findings show that tutor's lesson presentation in teacher colleges and teaching techniques used by tutors have moderate positive relationship at r (120) = 0.550 which is significant at the 0.001 level (p=0.006) because it is smaller than the critical value of p= 0.05. This means that the better the teaching techniques used, the more effective the lesson presentation in the classroom. The implication is that good teaching strategies used in a lesson delivery, allows students to gain more learning from the lesson. Many studies suggest that a direct teaching approach serves the purpose of more than one aim of teaching. However, it is less interactive than might be anticipated, so fails to yield effective results. Bain (2004) explains that different teaching techniques are appropriate to different learning aims. Moreover the most important thing in effective lesson delivery depends upon the skills of a tutor/teacher in using teaching strategies to enhance learning.

Moreover, the findings in Table 4.2 show that providing learning tasks/activities in the class has moderate positive relationship with syllabus completion at r (120)= 0.416 which is significant at the 0.05 level (p=0.018) because it is smaller than the critical value of p=0.05. This means that the learning tasks/activities provided to students cover the topics and learning objectives of the syllabus of the specific subject. Moreover, activities which include group discussions, assignments, home-work, essay writing, project work and seminars are interactive learning strategies, which assist students towards better academic achievement. This indicates that tutors who are effectively provide learning activities in the class tend to complete the syllabi and their students tend to perform better in the

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examinations. Willin (2003) supports in his framework for task-based learning by explaining that learning tasks mainly focus on bringing real world contexts into the classroom. On top Prabhu (1987) maintained that learning tasks enable students to share opinions and the challenge for tutors/teachers is to provide learners with the opportunity to use tasks to solve academic problems. This entails that learning tasks are extracted from topics of a given syllabus of a specific subject. The effective provision of learning tasks leads to high rate of syllabus completion and as a result, students achieve better academic outputs/outcomes.

Finally, the findings in Table 4.2 show that lesson presentation in classroom has strong positive association with examination results at r (120) = 0.713 which is significant at the 0.01 (p= 0.003) because it is less than critical value of p =0.05. This means that the higher the efficacy of lesson presentation in the classroom the better the examination results. The study by Abayo and Mbwette (2000) explains that examination results, whether good or poor, measure the performance of tutors'/teachers'/lecturers' teaching performance. This is supported by Mensel, James and the Assessment Reform Group (2009) who accepts that public examinations are a powerful indicator of education standards used to judge individual and institutional performances as well as the extent to which children have learnt. Therefore the findings empirically reject the null hypothesis, which states that "there is no significant relationship between effective teaching and good examination results" and support the study hypothesis which states that "there is a significant relationship between effective teaching and good examination results". The correlated variables specifically support that there is a significant relationship between teaching strategies/interaction styles and students' examination pass rates. And also that, there is an existing significant relationship between instructional procedures and students' examination pass rates

IX. Conclusion

Generally, preparation of quality student teachers in Teacher Colleges in Tanzania depends on many factors, including effective teaching of the tutors. As such there is a need for the College principals to create motivational factors enabling tutors and students feel motivated to work hard. This study found that, relationship between effective teaching and examination pass rates is strongly exists. This is reflects on existence of strong positive correlation between instructional procedures and examination pass rates; existence of strong positive relationship between teaching strategies and quality student learning. Thus, tutors are encouraged to comply with instructional procedures and teaching strategies for improving students' learning performance.

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