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The Availability of Teaching Materials Alone in Tropical African Government-Aided Primary Schools has not Yet Facilitated Teacher Instructional Effectiveness

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Abstract- North of the Tropic of Capricorn and South of the Tropic of Cancer are the countries geographically known as the countries within the tropics. There are such countries in South America, Africa and Asia too. Those of Africa include: Ghana, Chad, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Eretria, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Uganda to mention a few. These countries visualize their development strategies through instituting strong education systems like it was with the already developed countries of the world (Nyenje, J. (2017).

It's believed that all countries' education systems are based on primary education. Further to this, the strength of a country's social- economic status explains how strong its primary education base is and therefore teacher instructional effectiveness is pivotal. Worldwide, it is believed also that Several factors like quality of teacher training, experience of teacher, teacher knowledge and collaboration, support supervision, attitude of teacher towards work and the environment in which work is conducted contribute to teacher instructional effectiveness (Lockeed & Vespoor, 1991).

Keywords: *Teaching Materials: Materials carefully prepared to facilitate the teaching- learning process.*

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Lubwama Joseph Ntege

Abstract- North of the Tropic of Capricorn and South of the Tropic of Cancer are the countries geographically known as the countries within the tropics. There are such countries in South America, Africa and Asia too. Those of Africa include: Ghana, Chad, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Eretria, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Uganda to mention a few. These countries visualize their development strategies through instituting strong education systems like it was with the already developed countries of the world (Nyenje, J. (2017).

It's believed that all countries' education systems are based on primary education. Further to this, the strength of a country's social- economic status explains how strong its primary education base is and therefore teacher instructional effectiveness is pivotal. Worldwide, it is believed also that Several factors like quality of teacher training, experience of teacher, teacher knowledge and collaboration, support supervision, attitude of teacher towards work and the environment in which work is conducted contribute to teacher instructional effectiveness (Lockeed & Vespoor, 1991). Also, according to Glickman & Tashmaro, (1980) learner motivation, attendance, collaboration and constant practical work will promote teacher instructional effectiveness. Teacher instructional effectiveness means the effectively and efficiently conducted teaching or instruction that takes place and results in learners achieving the lesson objectives, perform well in tests and national examinations and the skills passed on to them are interpreted and applied in day to day life situations. The term effectiveness means total achievement of what is intended to be done. Instructional effectiveness is not only a task for teachers and learners *par se*, but for all stakeholders in the school setting like parents and community members (Gruwe, 2000).

Teaching materials are those carefully prepared items used by the teacher to teach well and learners to comfortably understand what is taught to them. No teaching can be effective unless the teacher uncompromisingly uses appropriate teaching materials like teaching- learning aids, chalkboard, dusters, markers, science apparatus, appropriate tables and chairs, chalk to list a few.

In the Tropical African Primary Schools like in Uganda, there are mainly two categories of primary schools namely, the private and public schools. The private are individually owned but the public ones may involve several hands like the community, religious foundation bodies, central and the local governments. The public primary schools with local governments' involvement are called government-aided because of the funding facilitation by both local and central governments. In public primary schools the central government is the sole provider of most facilities except the land on which the school is built. The local governments mainly play the management and supervisory roles.

For teacher instructional effectiveness to happen, it's true, as according to Sembirige (2009), teachers have to perform their instructional roles and responsibilities inevitably with use of teaching materials. There are comparative arguments where some scholars suggest that teaching materials in a Ugandan government-aided primary school matter more than anything else in teacher instructional effectiveness (Hargreaves, 1995).

It is here concluded that while teaching materials are key and are useful in making learning effective, their presence alone is not enough to justify teacher instructional effectiveness. There is need for a combination with other factors like teaching materials, teacher training levels, classroom environment, supervision, peer relations, assessment, stakeholder participation, teacher expertise and experience, teacher preparedness to teach and attendance are all key complementary factors.

It is recommended that teacher instructional effectiveness can be achieved through not only teaching materials but other factors like effective classroom environments, effective supervision, appropriate teacher training levels, constructive peer relationships, assessment, effective stakeholder participation in the teaching – learning process, use of teacher expertise and experience but not the presence of teaching materials alone.

Purpose: This article assess whether the availability of teaching materials alone can facilitate teacher instructional effectiveness in Uganda government-aided primary schools.

Keywords: Teaching Materials: Materials carefully prepared to facilitate the teaching- learning process.

Instructional Effectiveness: The effectively and efficiently conducted teaching or instruction that takes place resulting into learners achieving the lesson objectives, perform well in tests and national examinations and the skills passed on to them are interpreted and applied in day to day life situations.

Teacher Preparedness: A state where the teacher utilizes the scheme of work and all appropriate course books to prepare a lesson for the next teaching

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session. Teacher preparedness calls for an appropriate learning environment and teaching materials.

I. Introduction

North of the Tropic of Capricorn and South of the Tropic of Cancer are the countries geographically known as the countries within the tropics. There are such countries in South America, Africa and Asia too. Those of Africa include: Ghana, Chad, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Eretria, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Uganda to mention a few. These countries visualize their development strategies through instituting strong education systems like it was with the already developed countries of the world (Nyenje, J. (2017).

In most of these countries there principally three languages besides the local authorized languages that are used for classroom instruction. These include: English, French, Arabic and the Portuguese language used in Mozambique to a small extent. Teaching, supervision and assessment are conducted in these languages which are either official or National languages (Nyenje, J. (2017).

For teaching to be effective, the teacher should facilitate it with appropriate teaching materials in the range of teaching- learning aids prepared so well to deliver home the purpose of the prepared and taught lesson, chalkboard, dusters, markers, science apparatus, tables and chairs, chalk to list a few. In other words teaching materials are those items used for enabling the teacher to teach well and learners to understand what the teacher presents to them. These materials are carefully prepared depending on teacher knowledge and expertise and following the aim and purpose of the lesson prepared (Aguti, 2015).

Teacher instructional effectiveness means the effectively and efficiently conducted teaching or instruction that takes place resulting in learners achieving the lesson objectives, perform well in tests and national examinations and the skills passed on to them are interpreted and applied in day to day life situations. The term effectiveness means total achievement of what was intended, MoES (2015).

Within the tropics for example, Uganda, there are mainly two categories of primary schools. There are private and also public schools. The private are individually owned but the public ones may have several hands in them like the community, religious foundation bodies and the central and local governments. The public primary schools with local government involvement are called government-aided because of the funding facilitation from both local and the central government, MoES (2015).

In public primary schools, the central government trains the teachers, pays their salaries and provides the funds for day to day management. It also provides textbooks and participates in the construction of classrooms and equipping them with furniture for learners and teachers to use. The local governments play the management and supervisory roles that see these schools execute their expected roles.

From the explanations made above, it's necessary to realize right away that although for instruction to happen teacher presence is key, teaching materials are profoundly needed for effective instruction. The question is whether teaching materials can stand independently or other factors are needed desperately for instructional effectiveness. This paper is here to discuss whether presence of teaching materials alone is enough for teacher instructional effectiveness.

This paper will scrutinize the relevance of the following factors against the presence of teaching materials alone for teacher instructional effectiveness:

- Teacher training levels
- Classroom environments
- Supervisions
- Peer relationships
- Assessment
- Stakeholders participation in the teaching-learning process
- Teacher experience/ expertise
- Teacher preparedness to teach
- Attendance

While it's believed that teaching materials are key in teaching, we may not necessarily believe that their presence or availability singularly is enough to have classroom instructional effectiveness. They will need to be in company with quality of teacher training levels (Aguti, 2015). Although the quality of teaching has many factors, many times, the teachers' training levels determine what quality of teacher is produced to deliver the desired quality of teaching. In the opinion of Nyenje (2017) how well a teacher is trained greatly determines how well such teacher teaches. Therefore, the availability of teaching materials alone is not enough but the quality of teacher to use these teaching materials is very key. The teacher uses the teaching materials well or badly depending on the level of training. Therefore as we look for teaching materials we need to make available well trained teachers who will appropriately use the teaching materials in order to achieve teacher classroom instructional effectiveness.

A classroom environment is the learning area where teaching takes place. This area must be in a room for effectiveness but in many tropical African countries like South Sudan teaching- learning is on many accessions conducted under a tree because of the unfriendly social – economical status of the country in this part of the world. All the same in an ideal classroom situation there ought to be a learning area with sitting facilities within, display space for teaching learning aids, learning corners, appropriate aeration,

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appropriate free moving space within and acceptable lighting. The classroom environment determines a lot the quality of teaching and learning. During heavy sunshine, wind or rain, learning may not be conducive under a tree shade. Similarly, the availability of sitting facilities that provide comfort during learning for example when writing facilitate enjoyable teaching – learning. If a desk meant for two learners has five using it this will make it so uncomfortable for the users to learn proper and readable writings (DunFord, 1993). This implies that a mere presence of teaching materials is not enough but has to be accompanied with a conducive learning environment. The learning environment should be proportionate to the number of learners or else a classroom meant for forty learners being packed with 200 of them will be so unconducive to learning even if the quality of teacher is so high and the most up to date teaching materials are available. It has to be a composition of the classroom environment and the teaching materials if we shall have teacher instructional effectiveness but not merely teaching materials alone being available.

Supervision, according to Aguti (2005), means monitoring the management of an activity. In supervision, the supervisor monitors what the supervisee does and provides guidance for better performance (Sembirige, 2009). Supervisors are well trained and have a rich expertise from which the supervisee benefits. Supervision not only oversees the quality of teacher deliverance but has to ensure that the teacher uses the teaching materials effectively, (Wanga, 1985). Where there are gaps in the use of teaching materials, the supervisor provides technical pedagogy to the teacher and demonstration lessons from which the teachers learns. Therefore, while the presence of teaching materials is important, we may not achieve teacher instructional effectiveness unless there is effective supervision over teaching/learning.

Peer working relationship among teachers aids the improvement of classroom instruction (MoES, 2016). In Peer working relationships, teachers aid one another in curriculum interpretation, scheming, lesson planning and interpretation, conducting assessment, conducting remedial lessons, sharing assessment results and managing class performance review sessions (Nyenje, 2017). Peer relationships will aid a weak teacher to learn from experts and those experienced teachers. They will be able to learn from their friends on the use of the teaching materials. Therefore a mere availability of teaching materials will not cause teacher instructional effectiveness if the teacher keeps out of company of those experienced and expertised teachers. Availability of teaching materials has to run alongside with teachers relating with others for acquiring expertise in the use the teaching materials, (Hargreaves, 1995).

Teachers are at different levels of expertise and experience and this benefits them during peer group meetings. This is equally important during capacity building workshops, seminars because weak teachers benefit from those with more knowledge and experience (Wanga, 1985). Through meetings of this kind the identification, preparation and application of teaching-learning materials can be discussed. This explains that merely the presence of teaching materials without making use of other teachers' expertise and experience is not enough for teacher instructional effectiveness to exist.

Assessment in teaching means that after the lesson, learners have to be assessed to determine their achievement levels (MoES, 2006, Sembirige, 2009). This is why it is believed that no teaching-learning process can end before assessment is done. The assessment results have to be shared and advice for remedial teaching provided. Assessment results will point out whether learners benefited from the teaching materials that were used. So from assessment results, the teacher will design better use of teaching materials. Therefore, while the availability of teaching materials is important, assessment for the achievement levels takes an upper hand in teacher instructional effectiveness.

Not only does the teacher facilitate the teaching-learning process but the participation of different stakeholders also contributes to instructional effectiveness. Stakeholders like the head teachers, teachers, parents, inspectors, education officers and the general public have a stake as monitors or experts in some fields where the teacher may lack sufficient knowledge. Through monitoring and participation in class performance review meetings, these stake holders provide advice that contributes to instructional effectiveness and also suggest better ways of using the available teaching materials. They also contribute to putting in place a better set of teaching materials, (Dun Ford, J. 1993).. Therefore, merely the presence of teaching materials without the participation of stakeholders in the teaching-learning process cannot singularly cause teacher instructional effectiveness.

Teacher preparedness to teach means the level of preparedness to teach at which the teacher is (MoES, 2016). Teacher preparedness includes making wide reading about subject content, scheming and lesson planning in which teaching materials are identified and collected, assessment of achievement levels and preparing the learning environment (Mmbado, 2015). Unless there is effective teacher preparation, the right teaching materials may not be gathered (Wanga, 1988). Therefore, teacher preparation to teach is the mother stage to gathering the appropriate and adequate teaching materials. So, teacher preparation is more cardinal than mere presence of teaching materials because they can be inappropriately used without preparedness.

Attendance in teaching and learning refers to both teachers and learners being readily available for

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learning whenever and as of when required (Wanga, 1988, Mwanazia, 1985). Classroom attendance is must for the teacher as leader and learners as recipients of the teaching- learning process. The absence of one of the set makes the teaching- learning process incomplete (Mwanazia, 1985). Therefore if teaching materials are available but the teacher or learners are absent, then teacher instructional effectiveness will not be realized.

II. Conclusion

It is here concluded that teaching materials are key and are useful in making learning effective but should be supported by other factors like teaching materials, teacher training levels, classroom environment, supervision, peer relations, assessment, stakeholder participation, teacher expertise and experience, teacher preparedness to teach and attendance.

III. Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that teacher instructional effectiveness can be achieved through a combination of teaching materials and other factors like effective classroom environments, effective supervision, appropriate teacher training levels, constructive peer relationships, assessment, effective stakeholder participation in the teaching – learning process and use of teacher expertise and experience

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