

The Effectiveness of Performance of Teachers in Government Aided Secondary Schools: Evidence from Uganda

Chrispo Maali

Directorate of Graduate Studies, Research and Innovations, Bishop Stuart University

Abstract

In this study centered on the Kasese district in western Uganda, we investigated the effectiveness of instructors in government-aided secondary schools. Employing a post-positivist research paradigm, a cross-sectional research design was utilized. The study involved 18 education stakeholders and 234 secondary school teachers from 25 government-aided secondary schools in Kasese. Both probability and non-probability sampling methods were employed for participant recruitment. Quantitative data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 24, with results displayed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative findings were analyzed through content analysis and presented using verbatim excerpts. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST), building upon initial clearance from the Research Ethics Committee of Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST-REC). The results indicate a commendable performance by teachers, with an average score of 4, nearing the maximum score of 5. A gap was observed between quantitative and qualitative results, revealing high performance based on quantitative data but contrasting findings qualitatively. Enhancing teacher performance in Kasese and other regions in Uganda demands improved inspection, remuneration, and human resource practices.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Performance, Teachers, Government-aided Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Teacher performance significantly influences educational outcomes in Uganda, with factors such as compensation schemes playing a crucial role (Jackline, 2018; Kigenyi, Kakuru, & Ziwa, 2017; Zikanga et al., 2021). Effective teacher performance entails the successful communication of knowledge and skills to students in a consistent and appropriate manner to enhance learning and achievements (Bashir et al., 2018). Teachers are expected to exhibit expertise, employ effective pedagogical strategies, and cater to student preferences and abilities (Hoque et al., 2020; Kigenyi et al., 2017). Addressing teacher absenteeism, enhancing teaching quality, and focusing on effective pedagogy are key to improving teacher performance (Bashir et al., 2018). Despite government investments in secondary schools, performance in rural areas, like Kasese District, remains inadequate, impacting educational quality (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2017; Barrera-Osorio et al., 2020). The persistent challenges in teacher performance in government-aided secondary schools highlight the need for continuous improvement efforts by education authorities (Jackline, 2018; Mugizi et al., 2022).

Objective

To explore the effectiveness of teachers' performance in government aided secondary schools in Kasese district.

Methodology

Research design, population and sample size

This study utilized a post-positivist research paradigm and a cross-sectional study design to investigate the effectiveness of teachers in 25 government-aided secondary schools in Kasese District, Western Uganda. The research engaged 601 secondary school teachers, with a sample size of 234 individuals determined using Krejcie and Morgan's method (1970). In addition to the teacher sample, eighteen education stakeholders were purposively chosen to participate, reaching a point of saturation in the sample. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed in participant selection.

Data collection methods and measurements of tools

Quantitative data was predominantly collected using closed-ended questions in a standardized questionnaire, rated on a five-point Likert scale where 5 denoted 'strongly agree' and 1 denoted 'strongly disagree'. Furthermore, qualitative data was acquired through semi-structured interviews with education stakeholders, board of governors' representatives, and student leaders' representatives to gain in-depth insights.

Data management and analysis

Survey data was meticulously coded, verified, and analyzed using SPSS version 24. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to present the findings. Qualitative data gathered from interviews underwent content analysis to derive themes and key points, supported by narrative coherence and direct quotations.

Ethical consideration

Approval was granted by the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology via the Research Ethics Committee of Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST-REC). Participants provided informed consent prior to inclusion, and steps were taken to ensure confidentiality, anonymity, and honesty throughout data collection, analysis, and reporting processes.

Results

Level of Teachers Performance in Governance Aided Schools in Kasese District

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Performance

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Performance, Total Score	234	4	0.2	3.5	4.7

On a scale of 1 to 5, the mean performance score was 4 with standard deviation of 0.2. The result on Table 4.4 indicates that the performance of teachers in Kasese district is relatively high as manifested by the mean of 4 which is close to the highest score of 5.

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative data was collected from various education stakeholders. Interviews were conducted with representatives from the Board of Governors (BOG), students' leaders, Inspectors of Schools, the District Education Officer, and student representatives, focusing on preparation, content delivery, and

assessment as key subthemes. The summarized results of the educational stakeholders' interviews are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of findings from educational stakeholders' interviews

Themes	Sub themes	Categories
Performance	Preparation	Timely scheming of work
		Lesson planning
	Content delivery	Use of appropriate teaching methods
		Use of teaching aids
	Assessment	Routine assessment
		Keeping of students' records

Theme I: Performance

Results under this theme indicate that teachers' performance in government aided secondary schools is influenced by three dimensions: preparation, content delivery, and assessment.

Sub-Theme I: Preparation

Through interviews, it was revealed that timely scheming of work and lesson planning are crucial aspects of preparation in the teaching and learning process.

Timely Scheming of Work

Research findings showed that many teachers do not draft schemes of work, and those who do often reuse the same set for several years. A key educational stakeholder remarked on this issue:

“From our observations, it has been noted that a majority of teachers in secondary schools do not create schemes of work. Among the few who do, they tend to prepare only one set and continue using it for an extended period, ranging from three to five years”.

“Sharing her perspective, a member of the PTA highlighted the shift in obtaining schemes of work, noting that teachers now acquire pre-made schemes from computerized sources in Kasese town. These schemes are then submitted to either the head teacher or the Director of Studies, depending on the school's structure. However, uncertainty lingers on whether these modern schemes are as effective as the traditional ones”.

Lesson Planning

It was found that there is hardly any willingness to lesson plan among secondary school teachers. Most teachers prefer to use lesson notes as opposed to lesson plans. This view was emphasized by one of the educational stakeholders who had this to say:

“It has been observed that there is a lack of enthusiasm for lesson planning among secondary school teachers. Instead, they tend to rely on outdated lesson notes rather than developing comprehensive lesson plans. This reluctance towards lesson planning was underscored by an educational stakeholder who criticized the persistence in utilizing outdated materials without adapting to current educational trends”.

“Similarly, a student leader attested to the prevalent use of lesson notes as the primary instructional resource, highlighting the persistent reliance on these materials by teachers, limiting exposure to updated content and teaching methodologies”.

Sub-Theme II: Content Delivery

Content delivery emerged as a crucial aspect of teacher performance in secondary schools, with a spotli-

ght on appropriate teaching methods and the utilization of teaching aids. Notably, science subjects like chemistry, biology, physics, and agriculture were emphasized for their emphasis on practical learning through the use of teaching aids, particularly in laboratory settings.

Moreover, the adoption of various teaching methodologies was acknowledged as essential by most teachers to enhance the learning experience. Despite facing challenges, teachers strive to incorporate diverse teaching methods to engage students effectively.

Use of Appropriate Teaching Methods

The research out that most teachers try to use various teaching methods while executing lessons since its necessary and they cannot do away with them. This was emphasized by one of the stakeholders who had this to say:

Most teachers try to use various teaching methods while executing lessons. This is because a lesson is one of the aspects that these teachers tend to respect, they can't dodge it, even if they would so wish.... (From A 49 year old male, District Inspector of Schools).

The Use of Teaching Aids

It was found out that the use of teaching aids varies from one subject to another and most of them do adequately use them. This was expressed by one of the educational stakeholders who was quoted in the following verbatim.

When it comes to the use of teaching aids, a teacher comes with one or two apparatuses, stands before the class and you find others fidgeting to observe what he/she is trying to explain. Really, on the use of teaching aids, I find it problematic in most of our government aided secondary schools. (From A 49 year old male, District Inspector of Schools).

On the same view, another participant was quoted expressing the following views on teachers' use of teaching aids in government aided secondary.

What I have observed is that science teachers and those of languages have tried to use teaching aids but those of arts are better in the use of teaching aids. (From A 38 year old female, Area Inspector of Schools).

Sub-Theme III: Assessment

Assessment plays a pivotal role in evaluating teachers' performance in government-funded secondary schools within Kasese District. The study highlighted the significance of routine assessment practices and the maintenance of students' academic records as essential components of the assessment process.

Routine Assessment

It has been observed that the assessment of students varies depending on the subject being taught. Teachers instructing science and language subjects typically conduct routine assessments in contrast to those teaching arts subjects. This observation was confirmed by feedback from a participant quoted as follows:

"There are specific subjects where assessment is frequent, such as mathematics, English, and a few other science subjects. Many arts teachers, on the other hand, mainly focus on delivering notes and rely on end-of-term examinations, for instance, in history." (A 54-year-old male, Area Inspector of Schools).

Adding to this perspective, a student leader shared their insight on the matter:

"With the exception of mathematics and English, other subjects are not assessed regularly. Teachers

teach, and we await mid and end-of-term exams for assessment." (From a 19-year-old female student).

Keeping of students' records

Research findings highlight that students' grades are crucial records maintained after assessments. This is in line with the sentiments expressed by an educational stakeholder:

"Regardless of whether assessments are routine or not, students ultimately sit for examinations. It is the responsibility of all teachers to maintain records and produce end-of-term reports for each student. These records play a vital role in evaluating the performance of both students and teachers." (From a 49-year-old male, District Inspector of Schools).

Regarding the maintenance of students' records, a member of the PTA noted how the shift in the curriculum has necessitated efficient record-keeping practices in schools. She commented:

"The current curriculum dictates continuous assessment from Form 1 to Form 4, making record-keeping mandatory. Unlike in the past when UNEB only considered final exams at the end of O and A Levels, the focus now is on every class activity throughout Form 1 to Form 4. This emphasis has heightened teachers' awareness of maintaining records and enhancing continuous assessment." (A 41-year-old female PTA member).

Discussion

This section evaluates the effectiveness of teacher performance in government-aided secondary schools, drawing insights from previous global research projects. The study revealed that aspects such as curriculum, lesson planning, teaching aids, assessment strategies, exam results, cooperation, policy adherence, and professional development are key indicators of teacher performance, as supported by the respondents' concurrence with these claims.

These findings align with Waweru (2016), who emphasizes that effective teaching entails preparing, using appropriate aids and methods, and employing excellent assessment techniques to provide a quality learning experience for students. Moreover, Kigenyi et al. (2017) stress the importance of various aspects of teaching, including instructional materials, methods, assessment, lesson planning, pupil assessment, fieldwork, sports participation, assembly attendance, and guidance and counselling, in defining teacher performance.

In the context of government-aided secondary schools in Kasese District, teacher performance was noted to be impeded by inadequate compensation, including limited accommodation, meals, and overtime allowances. Schools that provided adequate facilities ranked higher in teacher performance and overall school performance, whereas rural schools lacking these amenities exhibited lower teacher performance and school rankings due to challenges like absenteeism and ineffective teaching practices. These rural schools, predominantly situated in the highlands of Kasese District, face harsh working conditions that hinder teachers from delivering quality education through well-prepared lessons, appropriate teaching methods, and effective assessment of students.

According to the study's findings, there is a significant lack of emphasis on schemes of work and lesson planning among teachers, as highlighted by educational stakeholders in detailed interviews. A majority of teachers rely heavily on lesson notes during the teaching process, raising concerns about whether their performance aligns with the standards set by the Directorate of Educational Standards in the Ministry of Education and Sports. The study revealed that most teachers only prepare schemes of work during holidays and neglect lesson planning during the term. Assessment practices were uncommon, particularly in arts subjects, with only a few teachers routinely assessing students in languages and some

science subjects. This deviation from integrated teaching methods may lead to prioritizing grades over true comprehension. These results concur with Neema-Abooki's observations, emphasizing the detrimental impact of misaligned learning objectives and assessments on student engagement and understanding. The effectiveness of teaching, learning, and assessment practices relies not solely on teachers' competencies but also on various external factors.

Awards were distributed based on merit, fostering healthy competition and enhancing overall teacher performance. Examples cited include remedial teaching allowances, a common form of incentive in government-aided secondary schools in the Kasese District, and assessment bonuses for end-of-term examinations. Increasing allowances based on performance could potentially elevate teacher performance levels in these schools, reinforcing Horner's assertion that proper incentivization is crucial for promoting desired behaviors. Disparities exist in the remuneration structures across government-aided secondary schools in Uganda, with varying categories of monetary benefits reported, indicating a lack of uniformity in teacher compensation policies.

The study exposed variations in teacher performance across schools, particularly evident in the rural-urban divide within the district. Urban schools in areas like Kasese Municipality and Bwera town council, benefitting from more affluent parent communities, exhibited superior teacher performance compared to schools in remote, economically disadvantaged regions such as Kyabarungira, Buhuhira, and Maliba Sub Counties. The socioeconomic disparities between these areas, combined with deficient infrastructure and inadequate teacher support, contribute substantially to the contrasting performance levels observed. The absence of teacher housing and poor school infrastructure further exacerbate the disparity between urban and rural government-aided secondary schools in Kasese District.

A substantial number of teachers were discovered to overlook schemes of work and disregard their utilization during the teaching-learning process. This observation aligns with previous studies in the region, reflecting a general disinterest among secondary school teachers in Uganda towards preparing schemes of work, lesson plans, conducting practical lessons, or offering remedial support to struggling students. These pedagogical shortcomings have repeatedly resulted in poor student performance in national examinations. The prevalent practice of teaching directly from textbooks and reliance on lesson notes instead of adhering to professional standards underscores the necessity for future studies to evaluate the impact of these approaches on students' competence and academic outcomes.

Conclusion

This research identified that teachers' performance in government-aided secondary schools in Kasese district was above average. In terms of qualitative aspects, it was observed that teachers excelled in lesson planning and student assessment. However, a decline in interest was noted among teachers towards creating schemes of work.

Recommendations

An observed challenge is the inadequate adherence of teachers to lesson planning and the development of schemes of work as part of their preparation for teaching. To address this, there is a need for rigorous supervision by head teachers and school inspectors to discourage this trend.

This study employed a cross-sectional research design, potentially leading to limitations in the interpretation of results. To enhance the validity of findings, a longitudinal study is recommended. Additionally, conducting similar analyses on two distinct groups - those previously rated high versus

low - can offer deeper insights.

Furthermore, while the study utilized comprehensive data from diverse schools with varying socio-economic backgrounds to draw generalizable conclusions, it was limited in examining how school-level differences impact teacher performance. Therefore, future research should capture school-level characteristics to investigate their influence on teachers' performance in government-aided secondary schools.

There were identified gaps related to lesson planning and scheme preparation as mandated by educational policies, necessitating the establishment of robust inspection mechanisms and motivational strategies to improve adherence to these standards.

References

1. Barrera-Osorio, F., Galbert, P. D., Habyarimana, J., & Sabarwa, S. (2020). The impact of public-private partnerships on private school performance: Evidence from a randomized controlled trial in Uganda. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 68 (2), 429-469.
2. Bashir, S., Lockheed, M., Ninan, E., & Tan, J.-P. (2018). *Facing forward: Schooling for learning in Africa*. Washington D.C: World Bank Publications.
3. Hoque, K. E., Kenayathulla, H. B., Subramaniam, M. V., & Islam, R. (2020). Relationships between supervision and teachers' performance and attitude in secondary schools in Malaysia. *Sage Ope*, 10 (2), 2158244020925501.
4. Jackline, B. (2018). *Motivation and teachers' performance in public secondary schools: A case study of Kasese municipality, Uganda*. Kampala: Nkumba University.
5. Kigenyi, E. M., Kakuru, D., & Ziwa, G. (2017). School environment and performance of public primary school teachers in Uganda. *International journal of technology and management*, 2 (1), 14-14.
6. Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and psychological measurement*, 30 (3), 607-610.
7. Maali, C., Ainamani, H. E., & Rwekaza, A. M. (2020). The Relationship between Remuneration and Teacher Performance in Government-Aided Secondary Schools in Kasese District. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 9 (12), 1401-1406.
8. Ministry of Education and Sports. (2017). *Education Statistical Abstract 2017*. Kampala: Ministry of Education and Sports.
9. Mugizi, W., Natumanya, E., & Ampeire, K. H. (2022). Perceived Support and Teacher Engagement in Secondary Schools in a Rural District in South-Western Uganda. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 5 (4), 103-119.
10. The World Bank. (2018). *Africa Can Tackle Its "Severe Learning Crisis," Needs to Focus on Access and Quality, Says World Bank*. Washington D.C: World Bank Group.
11. UWEZO. (2016). *Are our children learning? Uwezo Uganda 6th Learning Assessment Report*. Kampala: Twaweza East Africa.
12. Waweru, H. W. (2016). *Influence of teacher qualifications on teaching performance in public primary schools in mukurweini subcounty, Kenya*. Karatina University.
13. Zikanga, D., Anumaka, B. I., Tamale, M. B., & Mugizi, W. (2021). Remuneration and job performance of teachers in government aided secondary schools in Western Uganda. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Education Research*, 3 (2), 10-22.