

Effectiveness of University Teacher Education Curriculum on the Secondary School Teacher Performance in Uganda: The Case of Kyambogo University

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the Kyambogo University teacher-education curriculum on secondary school teacher performance in Uganda. The study was conducted between 2008-2011. Questionnaires, focus group discussions, lesson observations and interviews were administered to Kyambogo University lecturers, university students, secondary school teachers and students. Results indicate that most lecturers and secondary school teachers use teacher-centred methods. Theoretical teaching was widely practiced in schools and university. Teachers attributed their use of teacher-centered methods to their training and pressure of national examinations. Suggestions to improve the effectiveness of the university secondary teacher education program are made and include: university curriculum review, reform of examination system, conducting pedagogical courses for university lecturers, teachers, and involving experienced teachers in supervising students on school practice.

Introduction

Realizing the importance of the Secondary School (SS) education in the country's development, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) through National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) has embarked on reforming the SS curriculum in order to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. A Road Map for this reform has already been developed (Clegg, 2009). The roadmap identifies weaknesses of the present SS curriculum and identifies improvement in teacher education curriculum as one of the reforms to address the weakness (pp 42-43). The Government White Paper on Education (MoES, 1992) and the Road Map (Clegg, 2009) stipulate the cognitive, affective and psychomotor competences and skills a SS graduate is expected to demonstrate.

The Uganda SS education has two levels. The first level, Uganda Certificate of Education, also referred to as Ordinary ("O") level, takes four years in which a student does sixteen subjects in Senior 1 and 2 (S1 & S2). The student registers for a minimum of eight and a maximum of ten subjects in Senior 3 and Senior 4 (S3 & S4). The second level, Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education, also referred to as Advanced ("A") level, (Senior five and Senior six), lasts two years where a student takes three subjects at

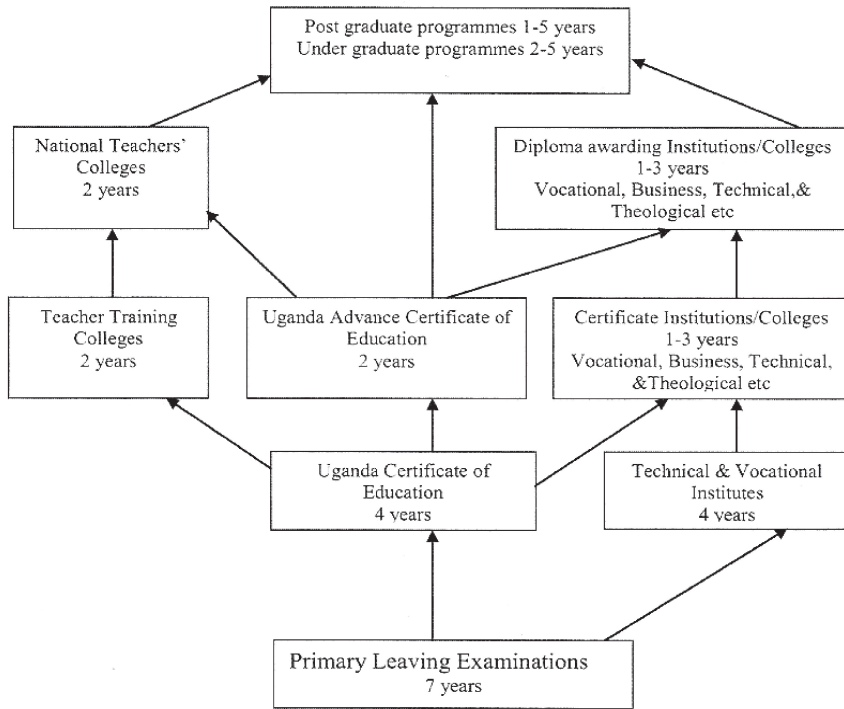


Figure 1: The Ugandan Education and Training system

(Source: Lubale G, (2010). *Higher Educational Programmes in the Development of a Nation*. Berlin, Lambert)

principal level (Figure 1).

Sciences are compulsory in all schools. Graduates of “A” level proceed to universities and other tertiary institutions. The “O” and “A” level students are rigorously prepared for the national examinations set and administered by the Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB). There is “cut-throat” competition among schools to attract more financially and academically capable students. This competition adversely impacts on the methods of teaching.

According to NCDC profile of SS graduates (Clegg, 2009) and the MoES (1992) aims and objectives of education, graduates should have acquired appropriate literacy, numeracy; moral, practical and scientific skills to enable them not only become self-dependent, but also job-creators (Okonye, 2007). However, there is an increasing general public concern about the behaviour and incompetence of some of these graduates in carrying out many of their daily activities (Opio, 2007). For instance, morally, many students do not measure up to society’s expectations. A study by Makerere University School of Public Health on SS students in S3-S6 found that one in every fifty female students had conceived and 21% of them had aborted (Nabatanzi, 2010). Core curriculum and school ethos had not fully helped these students to avoid such problems. Strikes, drug

misuse and abuse, theft and forgeries are some of the other immoral acts committed by some students.

Due to the “White-collar job” type of education inherited from the colonial period (Ssekamwa, 1997) students offering vocational subjects such as Agriculture rarely put into practice the skills they acquire. Similarly, the linguistic skills of many students are also wanting since many of them can hardly write a good application letter. Correspondingly, some university students cannot demonstrate intellectual ability that is consistent with excellent grades they obtained at “O” and “A” levels (Aguti, 2010). These, and many more concerns raise many questions about SS curriculum.

Factors Affecting Curriculum Implementation

Implementation of any curriculum is affected by many factors. These include the quality of school administration and the teacher-student ratio. Large classes of over 80 students, resulting from the introduction of free Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2007, reduce teacher effectiveness (Nakabugo, et al., 2008). Teacher effectiveness is also affected by job dissatisfaction, monetary and non-monetary de-motivation (Perrot, 1996) and inadequate teacher-support systems. The quality of training teachers receive from universities is yet another factor that affects their effectiveness. Although some of these factors are not directly related to university curricula, universities are being criticized for having the “Ivory Tower” mentality that hinders them from assisting and interfacing with teachers in the field (Kasozi, 2003; Maani, 2010).

The examination system has immensely influenced curriculum implementation (Weerhe, 2007; Odongo, 2007). Many teachers have abandoned effective methods of teaching and instead concentrate on drilling and “coaching” students in order to pass the national examinations (Okonye, 2007). Clegg (2009) being conscious of this suggests in the Roadmap that “The new secondary curriculum will require a new kind of teacher with skills not previously commonly taught in teacher education programs” (P.45). Many scholars agree with Clegg that in addition to academic subject content teachers (*and student-teachers*) need pedagogical skills to facilitate learning (Mcber, 2000; Oyenike, et al., 2009; Good & Brophy, 2008). One of such pedagogical skills that is not adequately handled in Ugandan education system is the Reflective Practice (MoES, 2007; Moon, 1999; Okonye, 2007). The curriculum component of Continuous Assessment is emphasized in the new SS curriculum to minimize the negative effects of national examinations (NCDC & Cambridge Education, 2012). Education at SS level is no longer holistic and has not adequately addressed concerns presented above.

Conceptual Framework

Educationists differ in their understanding of who an “effective teacher” is because of the many roles teachers play in providing holistic education to children (Goe, Bell

& Little, 2004). It is difficult to isolate any one factor that determines a teacher’s effectiveness because the teaching-learning process is affected by many factors. This makes teaching a complex activity (McBer, 2000). However, the quality of any University Teacher Education Programme should be assessed and improved upon as one of the measures toward improving the competence of SS teachers.

In addition to training teachers, universities have the potential to develop research-evidenced Continuous Professional Development (CPDs) courses (MoES, 2007). Apart from universities, SS education is influenced by many different institutions and agencies. Therefore no one institution should be solely blamed for inadequacies observed in the SS graduate teachers. Instead the interrelationship of these institutions should be regarded as synergy that can boost the effectiveness of the SS teacher. The relationship of all these factors is summarized in Figure 2.

According to the conceptual framework, in Figure 2, SS education is influenced by many factors, one of which is the university training. There is a challenge of ensuring the quality of university teacher graduates. The question is whether there a mechanism of following up these teachers in the field as a way of quality assurance. There is a cyclic pedagogical relationship between universities and secondary schools. Effective university teacher education curricula train competent teachers who in turn help universities admit academically and morally sound students that they (universities) “turn” into competent teachers.

Effective teaching is not just transmitting knowledge to learners as has always been traditionally understood (Bishop, 1985). Rather it involves setting tasks that enable

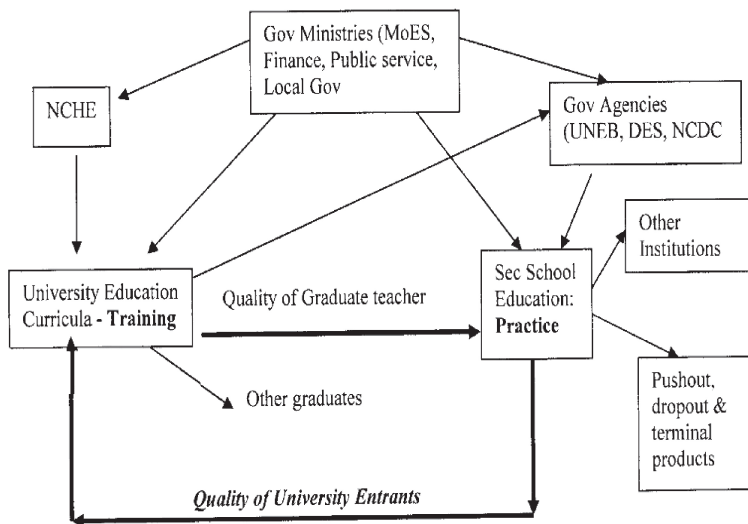


Figure 2: Interrelationship of factors that influence Teachers’ Performance
(Source: authors’ reflection)

learners actively contribute toward their own learning (Aggarawal, 2001; McBer, 2000). Other non-academic activities teachers are involved in such as co-curricular activities, guidance and counseling, mentoring and modeling are included in the broad definition of teaching (Weerhe, 2007).

For the purpose of this study, curriculum is defined as all activities that happen to a child within the school setting (Bishop, 1985; MoES, 2007). This definition therefore requires teachers to go beyond their teaching subjects and facilitate the holistic development of their learners. If all stakeholders have a similar understanding of these concepts, they would endeavor to enhance teachers' performance. At university level, lecturers should use and educate students about learner-centered methods (Aguti, 2010; Maani, 2010).

Objectives of the Study

The study investigated the effectiveness of Kyambogo University teacher education curriculum on secondary school teacher performance. The study concurrently covered the two levels because of their interlinkage. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. identify practices of an effective university secondary teacher education programme
2. establish the relationship between training at Kyambogo University and teacher practices in secondary schools

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the practices of an effective university secondary teacher education programme?
2. How is the Kyambogo University training related to teacher practices in secondary schools?

Methodology

This descriptive survey study used mainly a qualitative approach to explore various aspects of the teaching-learning process at SS and University levels. The study was carried out in the central region of Uganda, within Kampala metropolitan city area. This study area was selected due to its diversity of schools and teaching/learning environments. Sixteen schools from urban, peri-urban and rural settings were purposively sampled for the study. This sampling technique is consistent with Patton's (2002) argument that "the logic and power of purposive sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth" (p.169). Sixty-four teachers, drawn from different categories of subjects offered at SS participated in the study. From each school, two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

with students were conducted to share views about their learning experiences in their schools.

Kyambogo University was selected as a convenient sample and as a case from thirty-four nationally accredited universities in Uganda. Teacher education programmes offered in these universities, are approved and accredited by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). This therefore makes Kyambogo University a typical Ugandan university. Although a case study is an in-depth investigation of an individual group or institution, generalisability, to some extent, can be accepted once the institution is typical (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Best & Kahn, 1993). That is, much of what was discovered about Kyambogo University can be applicable to other Ugandan Universities because they are operating in the same education system. Fifty lecturers with teacher education background and currently teaching education courses participated in this study. Using stratified random sampling techniques, 100 Education students from 16 departments (belonging to four faculties) were identified to participate in the study.

Questionnaires with both closed and open-ended items designed to illuminate the various aspects of the teaching-learning process, such as appropriateness of the university curriculum, methods used by lecturers, prior training, use of instructional materials, and effect of examination on teacher effectiveness were administered to university lecturers, university students and SS teachers. Documents, including SS syllabi, teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans were analyzed. Typical lessons were observed and data were collected using lesson observation checklists and anecdotal records. Post-lesson conferences with teachers were held. Focus group discussions were conducted with students. Interviews were also conducted with SS teachers and university lecturers.

Responses from the open-ended items, FGDs and post-lesson conferences were coded, categorised and analysed thematically according to the objectives of the study. Quantitative data were expressed as percentages.

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of Kyambogo University teacher education curriculum on SS teacher performance. The study began at university, where teachers are trained.

Practices of an Effective University Secondary Teacher Education Programme

Lecturers were asked to state the practices that, if implemented, would enhance the effectiveness of the university secondary teacher education program. Results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Practices of an effective University secondary teacher education program

Practice	Response			
	Yes	%	No	%
Curriculum Review	50	100	0	0
CPDs	17	34	33	66
Instructional Materials Prep & Usage	45	90	5	10
School Practice	38	90	2	18
Participation in Co-Curricular Activities	10	20	40	80
Community Involvement	15	30	35	70
Research and publication	50	100	0	0
Reflection Practice	5	10	45	90

In Table 1, majority of lecturers agreed that curriculum review, research and publication, preparation and use of instructional materials (IMs), and school practice were the core practices of an effective teacher education program at Kyambogo University. Community involvement, participation in co-curricular activities and reflective practice were considered the least aspects of an effective university secondary teacher education program. Interestingly, one of the lecturers who did not support CPDs as a practice for an effective university secondary teacher education program claimed there was not much he would learn since he already had completed all the education ladders. He emphasized that “you cannot teach an old dog new tricks”. This is what he said:

“mmmm I’ve been teaching for the last 20 years here in KyU. I’ve had excellent training both here and abroad. There’s nothing new that I’ll get by attending your refresher courses. I know how to handle all types of students. So... I don’t need your CPDs. Besides, you cannot teach an old dog new tricks....”(UL20)

Reflection on one’s teaching is a way of making one aware of how one teaches. It is a method of self-assessment (Amuly, 2004; Clarke, 1995). Unfortunately, 90% of the lecturers in this study did not think reflection was an important practice of an effective teacher education program or were not familiar with the practice. This is contrary to the current studies (Rideout & Koot, 2009; Ferraro, 2004; Moon, 1999) that emphasize the role of reflective practice in teaching. Moon points out that reflective practice enhances an individual’s ability to ask the right questions, set tasks that challenge learners to integrate new learning into the previous learning and apply new learning to everyday situation. Similarly, a significant number of lecturers (80%) did not regard co-curricular activities as important in teacher education curriculum.

Relationship between Kyambogo University Teacher Education Curriculum and Teacher Practices at Secondary School Level

Generally, university lecturers and students, and SS teachers observed that the academic content covered at the university enables them teach competently (refer to Table 2). According to Table 2, 78% of the teachers in this study claimed they use teacher-centred methods partly because lecturers also used the same methods to teach them while at university. Teacher-centered approach in the context of this study refers to an approach where teaching/learning activity in the lesson is dominated by the teacher. The learner-centred methods “talked” about by lecturers and attempted by students on SP are not fully internalized and owned by university students. Even if students were fully convinced about the effectiveness of learner-centred methods, the status quo in the field, such as senior teachers’ influence, low morale, limited resources and examination pressure, few would gain the courage to use them in their teaching. The same arguments apply to the use of instructional materials in teaching. Therefore as universities plan to improve on their teacher-education curricula, other SS education stakeholders need to tackle other intervening variables over which universities have no control. One of such interventions is to help UNEB improve on the assessment and examining styles and strategies (Odongo, 2007; Weerhe, 2007; Okonye, 2007).

Table 2: University students’ rating of Kyambogo University Teacher Education Programme

Main component	Specific aspects	Rating (%) (N=100)	Remark
Curriculum content	Subject academic content is adequate	83	Good confidence building Professionalization is important
	Professional/pedagogical content is adequate	98	Hands-on needs beefing up
	There is a lot of theory in the training of teachers	83	Hands-on needs beefing up
Methods of teaching	Lecturers use a variety of methods	33	Ultimately teachers emulate
	Lecturers rely on lecture method	78	lecturers
	Lecturers ignore academic differences among students	84	Cause: big numbers and/or indifference
Instructional materials (IMs)	Lecturers use Instructional materials	23	More hands-on needed
	Lecturers theoretically talk a lot about IMs	93	on IMs to improve teachers’ effectiveness
	Lecturers should also use IMs	91	

Personality of lecturers	Lecturers are very professional	64	CPDs for lecturers is urgent
Examination	University exams demand critical thinking	53	Rote learning also exists at universities
School practice	SP gives us real taste of field experiences	69	More effort is needed on SP planning and management
	SS teachers should co-supervise university SP students.	65	More effort is needed on SP planning and management

University Teacher Education Curriculum Content

Many lecturers observed that the academic subject content students study at university was adequate enough to enable them teach confidently and competently at “O” and “A” levels. This is what two lecturers, (one Biology and one chemistry) asserted when asked what they thought about the relevancy of their curricula to teacher effectiveness: The Biology lecturer claimed:

“...our current biology curriculum here at University is based on the secondary education general syllabus recommended by the NCDC. We also spot the key and most difficult topics at A-level that teachers find hard to teach and we make sure we give our students enough background knowledge about how to handle these topics so that when they go out there, they’re comfortable” (UL9 Interv).

A chemistry lecturer had a similar observation:

UL15: “.... we concentrate on the topics that are really hard and often dodged by beginning teachers and much worse by students on SP.”

I: Which ones are these topics?

UL15: “...they’re organic chemistry, for example, and also inorganic chemistry. These are hard topics most teachers dodge them or give them to student teachers. So to help the situation, we go over these topics with our students before they go out for their SP.”

Majority (83%) of university students agreed with the lecturers’ opinion. A big number of students (98%) claimed that professional courses (pedagogy) enable them become competent professional teachers. For instance, one student claimed:

“ ... the psychology and methods courses are really helpful. The knowledge I obtained has enabled me handle the difficult students during my last SP When it comes to classroom management. I can handle the stubborn students well with the psychology skills...” (Interv. S10).

The academic content university education students cover was rated highly by lecturers and students themselves because the courses were designed and developed

in view of the academic content at SS level (NCDC, 2009; UNEB, 2005). Education students, therefore, unlike other non-education students offering the same subjects, are restricted to particular courses in those same subjects. Additionally, students' testimony should not be taken lightly because their memory of what was covered at SS is still fresh. Students also evaluated the relevancy of the university academic content they covered to the SS curriculum based on their first SP experience. Their evaluation indicated a positive relationship. For example: when asked to comment on the relevance of courses taken at university, one student asserted:

"... I think, the content we cover at university prepares us well to teach at both O and A levels."

I: How..Why? Give an example

S: "mmm ... In A level history, we teach about European history and the rise and fall of Napoleon and his contributions. Also here at University we do the same topics even in depth so that we really get to know the subject very well. This enables us to teach with confidence and much knowledge" (Int. S5).

Students complained about a heavy course load at university and suggested reduction of courses or extension of the programmes to four years from the current three years. Students' course load includes professional education studies courses, academic (teaching) subject courses and school practice. This is what they said:

S: "At university, we have too many course units."

I: How many is many?

S: "You see, in Professional subjects we've about six components... Research, psychology, econ of educ, philosophy,....; then in our teaching subjects, two of them, we also have a large number of course units.... This's too much. By the end of the day you're really tired."

I: How do you think we should address this challenge?

S: "Two options: reduce the number of courses and have only the basic ones or extend the length of the program from 3 to 4 years."

However, students' suggestions to reduce course load and extend course length may not be accepted by the University and NCHE. The minimum total Bachelor of Arts with Education (BA/Educ) course load of 180 credit units (CUs) is comparable to other programmes. Of the 180 CUs required for one to graduate, 30 CUs are for professional education courses while 10 CUs are for the two school practices (KYU, 2005).

The data gleaned from the questionnaires and interviews also shed additional light on the Factor that affect teacher effectiveness that may be beyond the university's control. These data are presented in the subsequent sections.

Other Factors Affecting Teacher Performance

Several factors affect teacher effectiveness. University lecturers and teachers were asked to enumerate the factors they considered affecting their performance. Their responses are summarised in Table 3. Among the several factors affecting their performance, previous training featured prominently among both teachers and lecturers. This emphasises the importance of university curriculum in teacher effectiveness.

Table 3: Factors Affecting Teacher Effectiveness

Factor	SS Teachers (N = 64)				Lecturers (N = 50)			
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
Large class size	62	96.9	2	3.1	33	66	17	34
Methods of teaching	0	0	0	0	32	64	18	36
Inadequate IMs	55	85.9	9	14.1	28	56	22	44
Poor infrastructure	45	70.3	19	29.7	50	100	0	0
Co-curricular activities	58	90.3	6	9.7	24	48	26	52
National Exam pressure	64	100	0	0	0	0	50	100
Lack of housing	50	78.1	14	21.9	0	100	0	100
Limited opportunities for CPDs	35	54.7	29	45.3	33	66	17	34
Crowded curriculum/heavy workload	60	93.8	4	6.2	15	30	35	70
School Practice	55	85	9	15	36	72	14	28
Inadequate support from community	30	46.9	34	53.1	24	48	26	52
Poor funding	44	68.8	20	31.2	33	66	5	34
Low salaries	64	100	0	0	50	100	0	0
Previous Training	57	89.1	07	10.9	42	84	08	16

Methods of Teaching

Lecturers and students were asked to name the common methods lecturers use during their teaching. Results are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Common Methods used by Kyambogo University Lecturers

Method	Lecturers(N=50)		Students (N=100)	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Lecture	74	26	78	22
Discussion	55	45	45	55
Demonstration	46	54	36	64
Group work	38	62	35	65
Practical & Projects	30	70	15	85

Table 4 indicates that the most commonly used method of teaching at Kyambogo University is the lecture method. In fact, 74% and 78% of lecturers and students,

respectively claimed that lecture method was commonly used in their classes. This is consistent with students' rating of Kyambogo University teacher education programmes presented in Table 2 in which 78% of students indicated that lecturers rely on lecture method. Responding to a similar view from their students Oyenike, et al. (2009) concluded that "teaching strategies need a lot of improvements" (Oyenike, et al., p.123). The lecture method is here used loosely to include dictation of notes, talk and chalk, uninterrupted and prolonged explanation and giving hand-outs. Lecturers defended the lecture method on the grounds of large classes (100 – 800 students) for Arts and professional courses and lack of equipment and materials for vocational and science subjects. This is what one Arts lecturer asserted in defence of lecture method:

...realistically, lecture method is my method of choice. In a situation where you've more than 800 students in any one lecture, you do not have enough space even to walk around but glued to the small space around the chalk board, you don't talk about using experimentation, group work ... because you can't just make it. Where will you get the space, materials, someone to help manage the groups? Yet you've to cover certain content, before the semester ends? So realistically, lecture method is the way to go (UL 20.)

A lot needs to be done on pedagogy because this is one of the factors that differentiate trained from untrained teachers and effective from ineffective teachers (McBer, 2000; Good & Brophy, 2008). Over the past few years, Kyambogo University has increased student intake by admitting privately sponsored students in order to give opportunity to more students to access university education. Day and evening programs run on campus. The available facilities have not increased to cater for the increased enrollment. This has therefore influenced the methods lecturers use in their teaching and could compromise the quality of their graduates.

Students expressed their dissatisfaction with the pedagogical aspect of their training in many ways. For example, they claimed that methods used by lecturers were inadequate to them to become competent teachers. This is what some of them said:

S27: We're just beginning to know what it is to learn how to teach. But some lecturers do not even teach us how to teach.

I: What do you mean?

S40: We need to be taught the methods that we can use to teach students, to enable us deliver content. Some lecturers just give notes notes and notes. So really we need much help here.

This shows that methodology is relatively given less attention. Students suggested that it should be only lecturers who were teacher-trained that should teach them. Students also claimed that teacher-centred methods cause lecturers to ignore academic differences among them. It follows that student teachers and SS teachers may ignore individual differences among their students because they themselves were not given individual

attention while at university. Students also suggested that “micro-teaching” be used to give them more practice before they go for school practice. This is consistent with Perrot (1996) who advocated for micro-teaching as a method of teaching how to teach.

Instructional Materials and Infrastructure

The use of instructional materials varies from faculty to faculty. The materials used (according to lecturers) are: chalkboard and chalk, charts, overhead projector, textbooks, internet and hand-outs. Instructional materials are mostly used by science and vocational studies lecturers. However, due to inadequate teaching materials, students do not get enough hands-on experiences as often as they should. The claim by lecturers that they use instructional materials, though modestly, was actually challenged by 93% of university students who revealed that there is a lot of theoretical talk about instructional materials by lecturers, particularly in Arts (humanities) subjects and professional education courses. Students suggested that lecturers should lead by example and use instructional materials during their teaching as they (students), emulate their lecturers on the use of instructional materials and teaching methods when they graduate. It is possible that during SP some students may try to use instructional materials for the sake of getting a good grade and abandon their use after graduation. Aggarwal (2001) and McBer (2000) emphasise the role of instructional materials in enhancing students’ learning since many abstract concepts, in any course or subject, can be (re)presented using illustrations, pictures or models. Arts related subject lecturers and teachers therefore have no excuse for not using instructional materials.

Co-curricular Activities

Teachers claimed that co-curricular activities affect their teaching in that they waste a lot of time that should have been spent on covering the syllabus. This is what one of them said:

“ ... you spend much valuable time in athletics or football instead of using it to make up for extra time to finish syllabus... remember, if students fail, my job’s on the line” (SST52 interv).

They suggested that these activities should be only for one or two days. Teachers’ attitudes toward co-curricular activities are contrary to the emphasis of MoES (1992). Interestingly while at university, many students admit that co-curricular activities are important in their curriculum, yet this is not the case after graduation.

School Practice

Lecturers and students regard SP as an important component of training. However,

there are many challenges associated with the Kyambogo University SP exercise. A summary of these challenges as expressed by lecturers and students are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Challenges encountered by Lecturers and student teachers during School Practice

Challenge	Lecturers (N=50)				Students (N=100)			
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
Length of SP	50	100	0	0	54	54	46	46
Large classes	40	80	10	20	94	94	6	6
Inadequate IMs	38	76	12	24	81	81	19	19
Administrators' attitudes	20	40	30	60	15	15	85	85
Lecturers' ability to supervise	10	20	40	80	31	31	69	69
Professionalism of supervisors	0	0	50	100	19	19	81	81
Knowledge of School Practice	43	86	7	14	31	31	69	69
Maintenance & Welfare/Allowances	45	90	5	10	94	94	6	6

The six-week period allocated to each SP is not usually fully utilized because of interruptions in the schools. According to some students, supervision by lecturers was inadequate. Students therefore suggested that school-based co-supervisors (senior and experienced teachers) be engaged to help them as it happens with other internship activities. Other factors include large and overcrowded classes, lack of instructional materials and equipment and lukewarm attitude by administrators towards subjects such as Fine Art, Home Economics and Agriculture.

Some lecturers (20%) wondered why they were not involved in the school practice supervision yet they have the experience of supervision. They therefore could not guide students competently on SP issues due to their lack of involvement. Students also complained that some lecturers do not conference with them before and after the lessons. They just observe, write their reports and leave them in their files.

“... two lecturers who came so see me were in a hurry.... They didn't even talk to me. They just burst into my class and sat down, wrote their reports and left them in my file and went away. I didn't even understand their reports...” (FGD 2.2).

On professionalism, some students complained that some lecturers favour students from their tribes. They claimed:

“... you see, lecturers can never be fair to all students. They are all biased. Some of them favour their own tribes, religions, and regions to mention but a few. So they give good marks to the favoured ones first. When they come to us, they just give us very bad and low marks. This happens all the time. I know it...” (interview excerpt).

Another challenge associated with SP is misinterpretation of the phrase “school

practice” due to limited knowledge by supervisors and students. Most students and supervisors alike, concentrate on lesson presentations (teaching practice) instead of looking at all issues in the schools. Kyambogo University should consider students’ suggestion about co-supervisors because their contribution can mean a lot to the improvement of SP (Sentamu, 2008). On maintenance during SP, both lecturers and students complained that the money the university pays them is inadequate to cater for their upkeep for the whole SP period. One student lamented: “... *the university pays us shs 2000 (approx. 1\$) per day. How do you expect us to rent, feed on this little money. We’re forced to beg...*” (US Int).

Lecturers were equally dissatisfied with the facilitation they receive from the university. “... *the exercise is for six weeks, but we’re paid for two weeks. You cannot adequately see all the students that are scattered all over the country in ten days... this is a joke...*” (UL8 int).

Despite these challenges, majority of students valued school practice preparation and experience.

Methods Currently used by Secondary School Teachers

Methods currently used by secondary school teachers in this study are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Methods used by secondary school teachers

Method	Sec Sch Teachers (N=64)	
	Yes (%)	No (%)
Lecture	74	26
Discussion	55	45
Demonstration	76	24
Group work	75	25
Practical & Projects	79.5	20.5

Data from the questionnaires and interviews with teachers presented in Table 6 show that majority of teachers claimed to be using learner-centred methods of teaching (Demonstration, Group work and Practical) and instructional materials. They theoretically justified the use of such methods and instructional materials. However, this claim could not be confirmed from the lessons observed. The post-lesson conferences held and observations made during the student FGDs did not provide any evidence of the use of learner-centred methods. Teachers largely lectured and dictated notes to students. They rarely used instructional materials. In one lesson where a science experiment was being demonstrated, about 50% (*researchers observation notes*) of students could not see what was happening because of overcrowding. Generally, the major reasons for using teacher-

centred methods were to produce good results in the national examination. Some claimed these were the methods university lecturers used to teach them.

Due to external examination pressure and desire to out-compete other schools, school administrators and teachers devise all sorts of strategies, some of which are unconventional, to enable students pass national examinations. Some of the unconventional methods include teaching before dawn and after dusk and expelling or causing students they consider weak to repeat classes. Teachers confessed that their jobs were at risk if school expectations were not met. In violation of Teachers' Code of Conduct (MoES, 1996) most teachers avoided making lesson plans and schemes of work as to them, it was a waste of time. Without lesson plans teachers cannot reflect meaningfully on their lesson presentation (Ferraro, 2004). Overconcentration on UNEB examinations has caused schools and teachers to ignore or underrate non-examinable aspects of SS curriculum such as co-curricular activities (Odongo, 2007; Okonye, 2007).

Conclusion

So far, results from this study indicate that teachers were academically well prepared by the university. There is a lot of theoretical teaching in Kyambogo University and in the schools. The Kyambogo University Secondary Teacher Education curriculum content is adequate but insufficient in methodology. Large class size and inadequate instructional materials impact negatively on teachers' and lecturers' methods of teaching. Due to pressure of national examinations, teachers use teacher-centered methods in order to cover as much content as possible with a view to improving students' grades. There is limited knowledge and practice of reflective practice among university lecturers and teachers.

Recommendations

In order to improve the university secondary teacher education programmes and therefore teacher effectiveness at SS level, it is recommended that: first, course units covered in each of the students' teaching subjects should be linked to pedagogy. Second, increase "hands-on" and "minds-on" activities in all subjects. Micro-teaching and demonstrations should be emphasized to enable student teachers gain and practise teaching skills. Third, university lecturers need more pedagogical training on reflective practice and school based supervision methods. Experienced practising teachers be empowered to supervise students in addition to university internal supervision. Peer supervision should be encouraged among student teachers. Finally, action research on effective methods of teaching at university and SS levels needs to be strengthened.

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