



PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS' ATTITUDE INFLUENCING THEIR PREPARATION OF TEACHING INSTRUMENTS IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract:

Teaching instruments are an essential component of teacher preparedness, lesson development, curriculum implementation and evaluation of instructional outcomes. However, although studies reviewed showed there was a relationship between teachers' attitude and their instructional practices, there was little information about any link between their attitude and preparation of teaching instruments and hence the focus of this study. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to evaluate the attitude of pre-school teachers' influencing their preparation of teaching instruments (PTI) in Kesses Sub-county, Uasin Gishu, Kenya using the descriptive survey research design. A sample of 17 (25%) public pre-schools/ headteachers out of 68 of them and 34 (25%) out of 136 pre-school teachers were selected. Piloting was done in four pre-schools and data collected using questionnaires for teachers and oral interviews for head teachers. To enhance the validity of the instruments, the study content covered all the study objectives while the split half technique was used to determine reliability at a correlation coefficient of 0.76. Data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques while chi-square test was computed to establish the significant influence of teachers' attitude on the preparation of teaching instruments. Although a number of teachers had problems with preparation of teaching instruments, the chi-test did not find a significant relationship between the two variables. The study recommended that a working partnership between teachers and stakeholders should be developed in order to establish a support system to help pre-school teachers in preparation of teaching instruments.

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1. Introduction

Teaching instruments are documents that teachers use to organize, guide and track the progress of instructional activities. According to Grimmer (2000), teacher preparedness can be traced back to the way they develop their lessons and the manner in which they implement the curriculum and evaluation of instructional outcomes. Similarly, American scholars, Reed and Michaud (2010) indicated that developing teaching instruments allows teachers to evaluate their own knowledge in the subject area to be taught and ensure adequate content mastery. Further, a study on teacher effectiveness in Makadara, Kenya by Egunza (2014) showed that teachers used their teaching instruments as pointers of areas that need further instructions or individualized teaching.

To increase efficiency, teachers on probation in Ireland were expected to prepare long-term plan of work (termly), short-term plan (daily/weekly), instruments relating to pupils progress in activity areas (Department of Education & Science, 2005) and inspectors of schools review these instruments to ascertain the competence of a teacher in curriculum planning. Regionally, Gama (2010) in Nigeria and locally Mugo (2016), KIE (2006); KIE (2008), Ayot and Wanga (1987); Bennaars, Otiende and Boisvert (1994) indicated that before and after training, teachers were expected to prepare the following teaching instruments, schemes of work, lesson plans, record of work and students continuous assessment, to ensure adherence to the syllabus and monitoring of content coverage.

2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper was to establish the influence of teachers' attitude on their preparation of teaching instruments.

3. Literature Review

In this study, attitude refers to pre-school teacher's preferences and feelings towards the preparation of teaching instruments. In a study conducted by Sucuoglu, Bakkaloglu, Karasu, Demir and Akalin (2014) attitude determined Turkish pre-school teachers' behaviour inclination to succeed or fail in the performance of classroom tasks. Prawat (1990) also revealed that the knowledge, beliefs and attitudes that teachers have,

influenced what they chose to do in their classrooms and that, this was the foundation of instructional practices, which have endured over time. Mafa (2013) also reported that teachers' attitude was a barrier to inclusion and teaching of children with disability in regular classrooms. Whereas these studies were concerned with how attitude influenced teachers' efficiency in the classroom, this paper concerns itself with the relationship between attitude and preparation of teaching instruments by pre-school teachers.

Research done in Nairobi and Mombasa in relation to teachers' attitude equally show that pre-school teachers' outlook influenced their effectiveness in teaching mathematics, as well as art and craft activities respectively as (Bitengo, 2005; Gumo, 2004), revealed in their studies. Ouko (2007) in a study on factors influencing the use of thematic approach by pre-school teachers in Kasarani Division of Nairobi Kenya, found that majority of pre-school teachers were not only aware of the thematic teaching method but also used it in class. However, a number of them had negative attitude towards the use of the method during instruction, a factor that raised the concern as to whether they were effectively prepared on how to develop the necessary instruments relevant for curriculum implementation. These studies showed a positive correlation between teachers' attitude and instructional practices. Thus in the current study, efforts were made, to find out the extent to which teachers' attitude influenced their preparation of teaching instruments in Kesses Sub-county, Uasin Gishu, Kenya.

4. Research Methodology

The descriptive survey design was employed for the study and it was preferred due to its appropriateness in generating accurate and detailed information about teachers' attitude from a relatively large number of them using questionnaires and interviews as Orodho & Kombo (2002) reveal.

Multi-stage sampling technique was used to randomly select 25% (17) pre-schools out of 68 in Kesses Sub-county while purposive selection of head teachers from these schools as well as random selection of 34 pre-school teachers (2 per school) was done. Data collection involved use of questionnaires for pre-school teachers and face to face interviews with the head teachers to confirm whether teachers' prepared teaching instruments.

Analysis of qualitative data was done by transcribing it into written texts and comparing as well as categorizing the notes taken per distinct themes as per the study objectives while quantitative data was grouped according to the research questions and analyzed through tallies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and frequencies.

Tables, pie charts, and bar graphs were used to present the findings while 2-tailed Pearson chi-square (χ^2) was used to test the hypothesis that stated: *There is no significant relationship between teachers' attitude and preparation of teaching instruments at 0.05 level of significance.*

5. Findings and Discussions

The objective of the study was to establish the relationship between teacher attitude and preparation of teaching instruments. Preschool teachers' attitude with regard to how they perceived the importance of teaching instruments was established. The teachers were expected to rate their perception about the importance of the teaching instruments using a four point Likert scale. Frequency computations were done for each instrument and results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution on Teachers' perceptions on Importance of
 Preschool Teaching Instruments

Instrument	Extremely Important		Very Important		Least Importance	
	Frequency	percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Attendance register	15	44.1	19	55.9	0	0.0
Timetable	12	35.3	22	64.7	0	0.0
Schemes of work	12	35.3	22	64.7	0	0.0
Lesson plan	11	32.4	22	64.7	1	2.9
Record of work done	8	23.5	25	73.5	1	2.9
Progress record	11	32.4	23	67.6	0	0.0
Mean	11.5	33.8	22.17	65.21	0.33	0.97

Data presented in table 1 shows that; the mean of teachers' perceived importance of all the teaching instruments indicated that majority of preschool teachers (65.21%) rated attendance register, timetable, schemes of work, lesson plan, instrument of work done and that of pupil's progress as very important during the teaching and learning process, while 33.8% rated these instruments as extremely important and only 0.97% rated them as having least importance. This means that majority of preschool teachers in Kesses Sub-County hold positive attitudes towards the importance of teaching instruments.

The pre-school teachers were also asked to rate themselves on a list of indicators reflecting their attitude towards the preparation of teaching instruments. The findings are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Pre-school Teachers' Attitude towards Preparation of Instruments

Attitude Indicators	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev.
Am more confident if I prepare instruments on time	1	4	1.29	0.463
Instruments preparation is boring	2	4	3.27	0.618
Instruments preparation is time consuming	1	4	2.65	0.884
Preparing instruments is tiresome activity	1	4	3.09	0.900
Preparing instruments is enjoyable and interesting	1	4	2.03	0.674
Am motivated if supervisor assess my instruments	1	4	1.82	0.673
Supervision of instruments preparation is annoying	1	4	3.32	0.727
Preparing instruments is old fashioned	1	4	3.21	0.946
Instruments contributes to effective teaching	1	4	1.63	0.597
Instruments ensure comprehensive syllabus coverage	1	4	1.59	0.500
Overall Mean	1	4	2.39	0.698

The results presented in table 2 indicate that the overall attitude of pre-school teachers towards preparation of teaching instruments in Kesses Sub-County is low (M=2.39). This means that majority of pre-school teachers in Kesses “somewhat” agreed that it was necessary to prepare teaching instruments. The results also indicate that pre-school teachers’ attitude varied across the attitude indicators. The highest ranked aspects were; supervision of instruments preparation was annoying (M=3.32), old fashioned (M=3.21), boring (M=3.27), tiresome activity (M=3.09) and it was time-consuming (M=2.65). These findings imply that majority of pre-school teachers disagreed that preparing instruments was: boring, time-consuming, annoying and tiresome.

The lowest ranked indicators were; about the pre-school teachers feeling more confident if they prepared instruments on time (M=1.29), preparation of instruments contributed to effective teaching (M=1.63), it ensured comprehensive subject coverage (M=1.59), they got motivated if supervisors assessed their teaching instruments (M=1.82) and preparing instruments was enjoyable and interesting (M=2.03). The results thus indicated that majority of them somewhat agreed that preparation of teaching instruments was related to; teacher confidence, effective teaching, comprehensive subject coverage, motivation and was an interesting teaching experience.

The study further sought to find out whether there was a statistically significant relationship between pre-school teachers’ attitude and preparation of teaching instruments. The null hypothesis stated as follows: *There is no significant relationship between teachers’ attitude and preparation of teaching instruments at 0.05 level of significance.* Pearson Chi-Square test was used to find out whether the relationship between pre-school teachers’ attitude and preparation of teaching instruments was significant. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between Teachers' Attitude and Preparation of Teaching Instruments

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	37.778 ^a	33	.260
Likelihood Ratio	30.645	33	.585
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.796	1	.180
N of Valid Cases	34		

Table 3 shows that the chi-square statistical result for teachers' attitude and preparation of teaching instruments was 37.778, with (33) degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.260 level of significance (2-tailed). The results denote that there was no significant relationship between pre-school teachers' attitude and preparation of teaching instruments. The null hypothesis that stated that; There is no significant relationship between teachers' attitude and preparation of teaching instruments at 0.05 level of significance was thus accepted ($p=0.260 > p=0.05$). This means that, whichever kind of attitude that the preschool teacher held, did not affect their preparation of teaching instruments.

Further, the study results show inconsistency with research conducted in Turkey by Sucuoglu, Bakkalogu, Karasu, Demir and Akalin (2014) which demonstrated that attitude determined Turkish pre-school teachers' behaviour inclination to succeed or fail in the performance of classroom tasks and activities. The current study findings also are in disharmony with the study conducted by Ouko (2007) which reported that attitude influenced the choice and use of thematically integrated teachings approach among pre-school teachers in Kasarani Divison. Similarly, the results are in disagreement with research studies conducted by Gumo (2004) and Bitengo (2005) which revealed a strong relationship between pre-school teachers' attitude and teaching of creative activities and math activities respectively.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study found that the teachers' attitude does not influence their preparation of teaching instruments. Therefore, there is no difference between teachers with positive attitudes compared to teachers with a negative attitude in their preparation of teaching instruments. However, preschool teachers' attitude towards importance of teaching instruments is relatively low. Therefore, the study recommends that preparation of teaching instruments requires a multi-sectoral approach and collaboration among the major stakeholders including Ministry of Education, Kenya institutes of curriculum

development, Teachers' Service Commission, the County Departments of Education and the Curriculum Support Officers for efficient curriculum implementation.

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