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EFFECTS OF TEACHER SUBJECT MASTERY ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN JALINGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF TARABA STATE.

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Introduction

Effective learning in schools would require effective teaching to accompany the efforts of the learners. The need for free and compulsory education cannot be overemphasized. This is to ensure universal participation in education for national growth and development. This fundamentally, is dependent on the quality of education available. No nation/country can rise above the level of its teachers. A quality teacher is the major criterion for offering the quality education. Researches reveal that, of all factors under the control of a school, teachers are the most powerful influence on student

Abstract

This research work was carried out to study the effects of teacher subject mastery on the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo L.G.A. The main objectives of this study were to determine the effect of teacher subject mastery, teacher years of experience and teacher professional qualification on the academic performance of secondary school students in selected secondary schools in Jalingo, and their involvement in examination malpractice. Data were collected using Questionnaire. Five (5) schools were sampled, in each of the schools, ten (10) teachers were selected to participate in the study, making a total number of fifty (50) teachers in all. The data collected in this study were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and simple

percentage. In addition, mean and standard deviation were used to provide answers to the research questions. All research questions were answered at 2.5 level of significance. However, this study revealed that subject mastery significantly affects the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo. The study recommends that continuous training workshops and seminars should be organised for practicing teachers, school administrators should devise means to identify and tackle weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge; and subject mastery should be a criterion for recruitment of teachers in secondary schools.

Keywords: *Subject Mastery, Teaching experience, Professional, Academic Performance, Examination Malpractice.*

Success (Babu and Mendro, 2003; Sanders and Rivers, 1996). It is obvious that, if you are going to teach a subject, then you should really know a lot about the subject, certainly in secondary schools, where teachers often specialise into one or two subject areas, there is a real emphasis on the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter (Keith, 2016). Teacher competence needs to be very high in order for meaningful teaching-learning to take place (Segun, 1986). Being taught by an effective teacher has important consequences on student academic achievement.

Teachers matter more to student achievement than any other aspect of schooling. According to Tope, (2012), Teacher's competency enhances a teacher's ability to create an environment that is fair, understanding, and accepting of diverse students, ideas, experiences, and backgrounds. Teachers have been found to be the single most important factor influencing student achievement. According to Wright and Horn (2013), education can be improved by improving the competence of teachers. Competent teachers appear to be effective with students of all achievement levels, regardless of the individual differences in their classrooms.

Teachers are professionally trained and certificated to manage and control instructional process in the school. Teachers are the basic element that greatly influences the teaching-learning environment through their abilities, potentialities and professional competence. According to Mendro (1998), if students have a high-performing teacher one year, they will enjoy the advantage of that good teaching in future years. Conversely, if students have

a low-performing teacher, they simply will not outgrow the negative effects of lost learning opportunities for years to come. Competent teachers are the most critical element in improving student achievement and closing the achievement gap.

If teachers are not given the opportunities to improve practices in the classroom, it is the student's achievement that may be harmed as a result (Kishwar Naz, 2016). Subject knowledge by teacher not only inspires pupils/students and helps them to achieve, it also improves the quality of teaching as well. Mastery is very important in any teaching/learning process. This is so because a teacher only gives what he has. You don't give what you don't have. Teacher has a pivotal role to play in a nation's development. It is the teacher who constructs the pillars of nation building in the form of students' development. Modern society demands high quality teaching and learning from teachers. Teachers have to possess a great deal of knowledge and skills with regard to both teaching and assessment practices in order to meet those demands and standards of quality education (Ksenia, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The Nigeria education system has witnessed various setbacks in recent years. There is deficiency and poor academic performance of students in various fields of study especially at secondary school level and this could be traced to various teacher factors which include: lack of instructional materials, teacher attitude, lack of teachers' subject mastery, etc. An important role of the teacher in the teaching-learning process is to guide and direct the process so as to help the students to achieve the set goals of education. But it is quite disheartening that most teachers guide the students on how to cheat in examinations. Some teachers pay little attention to classroom teaching, at the end the pupils resort to cheating to meet up with those who have been taught adequately. It can be observed that in present time, many people who teach in secondary schools are not professional teachers in their various fields of specialization and hence lack the mastery to effectively discharge their professional tasks. This might be one of the reasons for the poor performance of secondary school students in external examinations, and the menace of examination malpractice plaguing our education system which this study intends to deal with.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study include the following:

1. To examine the effect of teacher subject mastery on the academic performance of secondary school students in selected secondary schools in Jalingo.
2. To determine the effect of teacher years of experience on the academic performance of secondary school students in selected secondary schools in Jalingo.
3. To verify the extent to which teacher professional qualification affects the academic performance of secondary school students in selected secondary schools in Jalingo.
4. To determine the extent to which the involvement of secondary school students in examination malpractice can be controlled by improved teacher subject mastery.

Research questions

1. What is the effect of teacher subject mastery on the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo?
2. To what extent do teacher years of experience affect the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo?
3. What is the effect of teacher professional qualification on the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo?
4. To what extent will the plague of examination malpractice be curbed in secondary schools by improved teacher subject mastery?

Significance of the Study

Many factors contribute to students' academic performance. But researchers suggest that, among school-related factors, teachers matter most. Improved students' achievement and performance is the dream and target of every school. One of the ways to achieve this goal is to understand the importance of teacher subject mastery as it relates to students academic performance. The results of this study will provide school administrators concrete basis for adoption of 'Subject Mastery' in the recruitment of teachers. This study will also encourage teachers to improve on their subject delivery through mastery and attending of organized training programmes for teachers, such as workshops, seminars, etc. The results of this study will also provide parents

with an insight of the need to take cognizance of the quality of teachers in a school before enrolling their wards in such schools. Improved teacher subject mastery is to the students' advantage, because quality teachers will always reflect in the students' academic performance. This study will also serve as reference point for researchers or students who may wish to carry out similar research in the future.

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Framework

William Sanders, founder of the Value-Added Research and Assessment Centre at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, examined the impact of quality teachers on student achievement (Haycock, 2003). Beginning in 1992, Sanders began tracking the progress of each student in Tennessee through a large database. This database included over 10 million records of test scores for all subjects at all grade levels with all teachers. The philosophy behind tracking the progress of each student lay in a term called "value added". Sanders believed that students had the right to progress in school at least at the same rate they had done in the past. In his research, Sanders found "low achieving students gain about 14 points each year on the state test when taught by the least effective teachers, but gain more than 53 points when taught by the most effective teachers" (Haycock, 2003). Sanders outlined a correlation between quality teaching and student performance. In their study, Darling-Hammond, Barnett and Amy (2000) supported these findings when they pointed to the importance of a quality classroom teacher to the success of students. In a paper submitted to Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis as a response to research on teacher quality conducted by Goldhaber and Brewer, (2000) they concurred that well-prepared, quality teachers have a powerful impact on student achievement.

Conceptual Framework

Concept of Subject Mastery

Mastery means command or authority in any particular field of endeavour. 'Subject Mastery' is the possession or display of great skill, technique or knowledge that makes one master of a subject. Subject mastery is the teachers' knowledge of his subject. The mastery of subject matter empowers the teacher with knowledge for critical thinking and the capacity to help their

learners to grasp the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The teacher's knowledge of the subject matter should go beyond the limits of the curriculum for them to be able to explain to the learners. According to Lydia, Nelly and Ruth, (2014), it is of necessity that teachers master the subject matter before imparting it to learners since it enables the teacher to adequately prepare for content delivery. A meta-analysis of current research on the impact of a quality teacher on student achievement by the Centre for Public Education as cited in Jaime (2008), defined dimensions of teacher quality such as content knowledge, teaching experience, professional certification.

Content Knowledge

Content knowledge is defined as teacher having a major or minor in the field in which he/she teaches. Secondary school teachers in particular, are pressured to obtain a bachelor's degree in a subject area rather than a general education bachelor's degree, thus emphasizing the importance of subject-area knowledge rather than pedagogy, (Lewis, Basmat, Nancy, Nicole, and Elizabeth 1999).

Years of teaching experience

This refers to the number of years of teaching a teacher has in the classroom setting. Through research, it has been found that years of experience can be correlated to student achievement, although sometimes it is a weak correlation. Research on this topic varies. On one hand, some researches indicated that teaching experience positively affects student achievement until years 5-8 (Rosenthal, 2007).

Fetler (1999) investigated the relationship between teacher experience and education and student achievement in mathematics. He stated, "Teacher experience, measured by the average number of years in service, is positively related to test results".

Professional certification

The teacher certification process refers to the academic preparation and competency testing required of public school teachers, (Karin, 2004). Teacher certifications applicable to Nigerian teachers include; Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), Professional Development in Education (PDE), B.Ed, M.Ed

and Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). All prospective public school teachers must attend a government approved teacher education program in order to obtain certification.

Concept of Academic performance

Academic performance, which is measured by the examination results, is one of the major goals of a school. Academic performance is a measure of how students have fared in various courses or subjects offered in an educational setting with which students can be awarded grades. Academic performance is commonly measured through examinations or continuous assessments but there is no general agreement on how it is best evaluated or which aspects are most important, (Annie, Howard and Mildred, 1996). For example, the Grade Point Average (GPA) is now used by most of the tertiary institutions as a convenient summary measure of the academic performance of their students. (Thornberry, 2000, cited in Oyeshiku, 2019). In recent times, there has been great reduction in the academic performance of secondary school students and this study intends to establish a relationship between this poor performance and teacher subject mastery.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Subject matter knowledge is another variable that is related to teacher effectiveness. In a major study conducted by Wenglinsky cited in Blair, (2000b) on the relationship between indicators of teacher quality and the performance of 8th graders, teacher educational backgrounds appear crucial to the student performance on the mathematics and science portions of the 1996 National Assessment of Educational Progress. Upon examining approximately 15,000 scores of 8th grade students' math and science performances, students whose teachers had college majors or minors in either math or science scored 39% higher than those whose teachers lacked such preparation. Also, Monk, as cited in Darling-Hammond (2000), using data on 2,829 students from the Longitudinal Study of American Youth, found that teachers' content preparation, as measured by coursework in the subject field, is positively related to student achievement in mathematics and science. While these studies appear to support the relationship between subject matter and teacher effectiveness, other researchers as cited in Darling-Hammond (2000) find that the connection between the two variables have

mixed results. Studies of teachers' scores on the subject matter tests of the National Teacher Examinations (NTE) have found no consistent relationship between this measure of subject matter knowledge and teacher performance as measured by student outcomes. However, Byrne (as cited in Darling Hammond, 2000) did thirty related studies between subject matter knowledge to student achievement. The results were mixed with 17 showing a positive relationship and 13 showing no relationship. Also, studies by Ashton and Crocker (1987) found only 5 out of 14 studies they reviewed to show a positive relationship between subject matter and teacher performance. According to [Keith](#) (2016), a meta-analysis of more than 1000 educational studies was conducted by Hattie which identified 138 different factors that influenced student learning. The required effect size for a student to make a year's progress was 0.4. According to Hattie, teacher subject-matter knowledge had an effect size of 0.19, meaning that it was far less effective than other factors like classroom management (0.52) or effective teacher feedback (0.75).

Summary of Literature Review

This chapter reviewed literatures that are related to this study. Majority of the works reviewed echoed that teacher quality among others is a contributing factor to the academic performance of students. This chapter reviewed also, the concept of examination malpractice, causes and ways of curbing examination malpractice in Nigeria as well as the theoretical framework and empirical studies related to this study. From the reviewed literatures, it was observed that there is a relationship between teacher subject mastery and academic performance of secondary school students, but the relationship between teacher subject mastery and examination malpractice among secondary school students which this study intends to establish was not captured.

Research Methodology

The study used a cross-sectional questionnaire survey design which involves quantitative survey of a large sample of the population. The questionnaire was designed by the researcher and administered to the respondents after due consultations.

Area of the Study

This study is focused on finding the effects of teacher subject mastery on the academic performance of students from five selected secondary schools in Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State. The selected schools include: Magami Government Day Secondary School Jalingo, Government Day Secondary School Nukkai, Government Science Secondary School Jalingo, Government College Jalingo and Salihu Dogo GDSS Jalingo.

Population of the Study

There are 34 secondary schools in Jalingo local government out of which five (5) schools were randomly sampled for the study. The population of this study includes all the 822 secondary school teachers of the 34 secondary schools in Jalingo local government.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

In each of the schools, a total number of tens teachers (10) were selected to participate in the study, making a total number of fifty (50) teachers in all.

Table 3.1. Sampled Schools

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	NO. OF TEACHERS SELECTED
1	Magami Government Day Secondary School Jalingo	10
2	Government Day Secondary School Nukkai	10
3	Government Science Secondary School Jalingo	10
4	Government College Jalingo	10
5	Salihu Dogo Government Day Secondary School Jalingo	10
	Total	50

A simple random technique as used by the researcher is considered a fair way to select a sample from a larger population since every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instruments used for data collection consists of a set of survey questionnaire which is composed of simple closed ended questions where respondents provided their opinions on directed questions as specified on the

questionnaire, (Lydia *et al*, 2014). The questionnaire was designed by the researcher and the items were carefully structured to elicit responses from the respondents. It consists of two sections, A and B. Section A sought demographic information of the teachers such as teachers' gender, qualification, years of teaching experience, school and class; while Section B, with 20 items, sought information on evaluation of teachers' mastery of subject matter, years of experience, professional qualifications and their effects on students' academic performance and involvement in examination malpractice. The questionnaire was fashioned along four point scale developed by the researcher whose scores were scaled with Strongly Agree (SA)-4 points, Agree (A)-3 points, Disagree (D)-2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD)-1 point attributed to the questions (David, 2012).

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected in this study were analyzed through descriptive statistics. Multiple responses to single items were thus accepted as unanswered. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentage. In addition, mean and standard deviation were used to provide answers to the research questions. All research questions were answered at 2.5 level of significance. To take decision, any item that has a mean that is greater than 2.5 was considered a positive response. And the grand mean was found. If it is 2.5 and above, it is considered positive as answers to the research question, otherwise it is considered as negative response.

Data Analysis

Demographic data were described via descriptive statistics which include simple percentage and frequency distribution table. Research questions were answered through the use of mean and standard deviation.

Data Presentation

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table: 4.1 Gender of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	23	46
Female	27	54
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 4.1 above shows that 23 respondents representing 46% of the respondents were male while 27 respondents representing 54% were female.

Table: 4.2 Professional Qualifications of the Respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
NCE	21	42
PDE	1	2
PGDE	4	8
B.Ed	15	30
Other	9	18
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 4.2 shows the qualifications of the respondents. 21 respondents had NCE, 1 respondent had PDE, 4 respondents had PGDE, 15 respondents had B.Ed and 9 respondents had no education qualification representing 42%, 2%, 8%, 30% and 18% respectively.

Table: 4.3 Years of Experience of the Respondents

Response (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0-4	28	56
5-8	10	20
9-12	1	2
13-17	6	12
18-Above	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 4.3 shows the years of experience of the respondents. 28 respondents had 0-4 years of experience representing 56%; while 22 respondents had years of experience of 5 years and above representing 44%.

Analysis of Research Questions

A=Accepted

R=Rejected

Research Question 1:

Table: 4.4. What is the effect of teacher subject mastery on the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo?

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Decision
1	Teacher mastery of subject matter affects students' academic performance	23	20	5	2	3.28	0.80	A
2	Adequate mastery of subject matter by teacher improves students' academic performance.	23	24	1	2	3.36	0.71	A
3	Poor teacher quality brings about poor performance and increased rate of failure among secondary schools students.	26	19	2	3	3.36	0.82	A
4	Mastery of subject matter makes the teaching/learning process more effective.	27	19	4	0	3.46	0.64	A
5	Mastery of subject matter should be a criterion for teacher recruitment in order to improve students' academic performance.	20	26	3	1	3.30	0.67	A

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Grand percentage:

Agree: 90.8%

Disagree: 9.2%

The result in table 4.4 above shows that respondents in items 1-5 accepted that the items listed in the table on teacher subject mastery affect students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo. This is backed by the mean scores of 3.28, 3.36, 3.36, 3.46 and 3.30 for respondents in items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively. The individual means scores are greater than the

average mean score of 2.5. Therefore, the respondents in items 1-5 accepted that teacher subject mastery affects students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo. This result is supported by a grand mean of 3.35.

Research Question 2:

Table: 4.5. To what extent do teacher years of experience affect the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo?

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Decision
6	Teacher years of experience do not significantly influence the teaching/learning process.	7	14	24	5	2.46	0.85	R
7	Teacher years of experience have no significant effect on the academic performance of secondary school students.	5	18	22	5	2.46	0.81	R
8	Students taught by teacher with more years of experience perform equally with students taught by teacher with lesser years of experience..	5	12	24	9	2.26	0.87	R
9	There is no difference between teachers with more years of experience and teachers with lesser years of experience in content delivery.	4	13	19	14	2.14	0.92	R
10	Years of experience should not be a criterion in teacher recruitment in secondary schools.	16	17	12	5	2.88	0.97	A

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Grand percentage:

Agree: 44.4%

Disagree: 55.6%

The result in table 4.5 above shows that respondents in items 6-9 rejected that the items listed in the table on teacher years experience do not affect students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo. The

respondents' rejection is supported by the mean scores of 2.46, 2.46, 2.26 and 2.14 for respondents in items 6, 7, 8 and 9 respectively. The individual means scores are less than the average mean score of 2.5. Therefore, the respondents in items 6-9 did not accept that teacher years of experience do not affect students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo. This result is supported by a grand mean of 2.33. However, in item 10, the respondents accepted that years of experience should not be a criterion in teacher recruitment in secondary schools, with a mean score of 2.88.

Research Question 3:

Table: 4.6. What is the effect of teacher professional qualification on the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo?

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Decision
11	Teacher professional qualification significantly affects the performance of secondary school students.	15	19	13	3	2.92	0.89	A
12	When taught by professionally qualified teachers, students' academic performance significantly improves.	26	21	3	0	3.46	0.61	A
13	Students' academic performance significantly reduces when taught by unqualified teachers.	21	18	7	4	3.12	0.93	A
14	There is a significant difference in classroom performance between teachers with NCE, PDE, B.Ed, PGDE and M.Ed.	24	19	5	2	3.30	0.81	A
15	Teachers with professional qualification in area of study (subject) perform better.	25	21	4	0	3.42	0.64	A

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Grand percentage:

Agree: 83.6%

Disagree: 16.4%

The result in table 4.6 above shows that respondents in items 11-15 accepted that the items listed in the table on teacher professional qualification affect students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo. This is backed by the mean scores of 2.92, 3.46, 3.12, 3.30 and 3.42 for respondents in items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 respectively. The individual means scores are greater than the average mean score of 2.5. Therefore, the respondents in items 11-15 accepted that teacher professional qualification affects students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo. This result is supported by a grand mean of 3.24.

Research Question 4:

Table: 4.7. To what extent will the plague of examination malpractice be curbed in secondary schools by improved teacher subject mastery?

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Decision
16	Sound teacher academic ability can reduce examination malpractice in secondary schools.	23	16	9	2	3.20	0.87	A
17	Adequate subject mastery by teacher reduces the rate of examination malpractice in secondary schools.	11	24	10	5	2.82	0.89	A
18	Students tend not to involve in examination malpractice when taught by professionally qualified teachers.	12	20	14	4	3.44	1.10	A
19	Rate of examination malpractice in secondary schools can be controlled by improved teacher quality.	17	27	6	0	3.22	0.64	A
20	Teacher subject mastery should be a criterion for recruitment of teachers in secondary schools to reduce examination malpractice.	12	27	11	0	3.02	0.68	A

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Grand percentage:

Agree: 75.6%

Disagree: 24.4%

The result in table 4.7 above shows that respondents in items 16-20 accepted that examination malpractice can be controlled by improved teacher subject mastery. This is supported by the mean scores of 3.20, 2.82, 3.44, 3.22 and 3.02 for respondents in items 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 respectively. The individual means scores are greater than the average mean score of 2.5. Therefore, the respondents in items 16-20 accepted that examination malpractice can be controlled by improved teacher subject mastery. This result is supported by a grand mean of 3.14.

Discussion of Findings

Results of this study show that teacher subject mastery is an important aspect of the teaching and learning process. 90.8% of the respondents agreed that teacher subject mastery affects students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo, with a grand mean of 3.35. This is in line with the findings of Olowoyeye and Sunday (2014) whose studies revealed that teachers' subject mastery is significant and necessary to students' performance in English language. This finding also corroborates Monk and King (1994) who reported that teachers' mastery of subject matter is significant to students' achievement. However, 55% of the respondents did not agree that teacher's years of experience 'do not' affect the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo. This means that teacher's years of experience affect the academic performance of secondary school students. This is supported by the findings of Fetler (1999); who stated, "Teacher experience, measured by the average number of years in service, is positively related to test results". Other studies support this idea. Darling-Hammond (1999) found that teacher experience had a greater impact on student achievement than did teacher certification or teacher degree programs. The study also revealed that 83.6% of the respondents accepted that teacher professional qualification affects students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo with a grand mean of 3.24. This is supported by the study of Karin (2004), who stated that 'Students taught by teachers with no certification exhibit lower average gain scores than students of teachers with standard certification'. In line with this, Strauss and Vogt (2001) opined that teachers' teaching qualification and experience are strong determinants of student academic achievements. Komolafe (1989) supported this in his findings stating that teachers' qualification and experience affect the performance of students. This study

also revealed that examination malpractice can be controlled by improved teacher subject mastery. This result is supported by a grand mean of 3.14. This is in line with the findings of George and Ukpong (2013), who linked the increasing rate of examination malpractice to poor teaching. This finding also corroborated The CWO Voice (2010) (as cited in Onyibe, *et al*, 2015) who links examination malpractice to lack of well equipped teachers and poor teaching by teachers who do not have the necessary pedagogy to impart the contents to the learners. This entails that improved teacher subject mastery will be significantly effective in controlling examination malpractice in secondary schools in Jalingo. However, the result of this study shows that teacher subject mastery really does affect students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jalingo.

Conclusion

Subject mastery improves the quality of teaching, inspires the students and improves their academic performance. Subject mastery extends to understanding the content of a subject as well as knowing how to teach the subject. Adequate knowledge of the subject matter helps the teacher to teach the learners correctly. Teacher subject mastery is an important aspect of the teaching profession. Subject mastery enables the teacher to simplify topics in the language that can easily be understood by the learners. From the findings of this study, it would be safe to conclude that teacher subject mastery significantly affects the academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo L.G.A.

Recommendations

This study recommends that teachers have mastery of their subject areas to ensure effective content delivery in the classroom. This can be done by using different resource materials about a particular subject in order to get a variety of information and interrelationships of concept and their usage.

Further, the study recommends that to enhance quality teaching, teachers should take time to plan and thoroughly prepare their lessons before going to the classroom in order to be able to handle effectively any difficulties that may arise during the course of the lesson.

School administrators should devise means to identify and tackle weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge, such as linking with partner schools, inviting

advanced skilled teachers or other experts and periodic organising of professional development programmes for teachers.

Lastly, this study also recommends that subject mastery should be a criterion for recruitment of teachers in secondary schools to improve students' academic performance and reduce the rate of examination malpractice.

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