

Assessment of Teachers' Knowledge and Methods of Teaching as Predictors Students' Academic Performance in Kisoro District, Uganda

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Abstract

The study investigates teachers' method of teaching and academic performance of students in Uganda Certificate of Education in Kisoro district. The objective is to establish the relationship between method of teaching by teachers and academic performance of students in Kisoro district, Uganda. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. One hundred and twenty (120) respondents (teachers) were drawn from one hundred and thirty (130) teachers using stratified sampling technique; and all the four (4) head teachers were selected using census. Questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data for the study. The content validity index of 0.83 was determined while a reliability of the instrument (questionnaire) was established with the use of pilot study and the value at 0.72 was obtained. There is a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between knowledge of the subject matter by teachers and academic performance of students ($r=0.526^{**}$, $p<0.01$) and a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between method of teaching by teachers and academic performance of students ($r=0.566^{**}$, $p<0.01$) in Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro district. The study recommended that there is need to regular supervision of both teachers and students by administrators and this would cause teachers to concentrate on improving academic performance; and that teacher's method of teaching be improved to change the academic performance of students in Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary school in Kisoro district.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Kisoro District, Method of Teaching, Teachers.

Introduction

Schools are usually rated according to achievement and success in a public examination. According to (Frank et al., 2023), schools are normally evaluated on the basis of student performance. (Victoria et al., 2023) confirmed that academic performance is determined by test and exam grades assigned by the subject teacher. (Kazaara et al., 2023) states that student performance means any term used to represent academic students. Meanwhile, James et al. (2016) reported that student academic achievement in secondary schools is an indicator of student experience and a major determinant of youth well-being (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022).

Stakeholders have expressed great concern about how students will obtain Ugandan certificates of education. Stakeholders desired better performance as it would give students an opportunity to further their education and a distinct advantage to land a well-paying job at any time as they appear to have employable skills (Emmanuel et al., 2023). Availability of adequate and well-trained teachers are the main determinants in achieving good student results. Teachers are indispensable in the daily teaching and learning of students. They must be prioritized and satisfied because a dissatisfied teacher would not be able to perform as expected (Christopher, Moses, et al.,

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2022). Teachers are the most important group of professions for the growth of any educational system and for the future of any nation. Among other factors, the quality of the outputs at the secondary school level would be ensured by the quality of the teachers. The Federal Government of Nigeria has decided that no educational system can exceed the level of its teachers (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022). It was further stated that poor working conditions, low salaries, heavy workloads, unrealistic expectations from managers, low expertise, organizational conflicts are factors that contribute to teacher dissatisfaction (Fenech, 2006). The quality of education of any nation determines the state of development of that particular nation (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara et al., 2023).

Because the purpose of education is to acquire knowledge, competences, cognitive abilities, literacy, skills and progress to higher levels of learning. The performance of students after graduation is a reflection of their performance in schools and is based on the quality of human resources and materials available in the school (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022). There has been a lot of debate about whether the school factor actually affects student achievement (Asikhia, 2010). Student academic performance has long been a major concern of parents, teachers, administrators and other stakeholders in Uganda (Faith et al., 2023). Almost every year the Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) releases the results, the public is asked about the performance of schools, children and the various subjects offered by their children. Many times; people wondered why some students did not perform well while others did so well. It is also worrying to find that students do not perform well in some subjects while

performing fantastically in others. (Paul et al., 2023) confirmed that student performance was considered a measure of educational performance. Olaleye (2011) found a relationship between teacher characteristics and student performance (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). According to Akinsola (2010), the availability of qualified teachers determined the performance of students in schools. Public secondary schools in Kisoro District performed extremely poorly in the Ugandan Certificate of Education with most students scoring poorly.

However, over the past five years, the academic performance of Uganda Certificate of Education students in public secondary schools in Kisoro District has been below average, as revealed by the District Education Officer's communication during the District Officers and Teachers Interface (DEO). The DEO reported poor results in Uganda's 2018 Certificate of Education public secondary school in Kisoro District (Moses et al., 2023). The eastern part of Uganda was reported to have a high teacher absenteeism rate of 23.9%. If measures such as the employment of qualified specialized teachers with rich experience and the use of modern teaching methods are not put in place, the level of education may continue to be compromised and student performance may ultimately decline (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022). This continued decline in student performance may prevent them from entering higher education institutions and their employment and job competencies will be affected. As a result, national productivity may be affected. For this reason, the researcher was called upon to conduct a research on teacher related factors as predictors of students' academic achievement in Uganda Certificate

of Education in Kisoro District Public Secondary School.

Table 1: Analysis of UCE Results for the Four Public Secondary Schools in Kisoro District from 2014-2018

Results in table 1 indicates that the performance of students in UCE in the area under study is generally poor. For year

S/N	SCHOOL	YEAR	ENTRY	DIV. 1	DIV. 2	DIV. 3	DIV.4	DIV. 7	DIV. 9
1	A	2014	100	0	3	21	67	0	9
		2015	80	0	3	13	62	0	2
		2016	126	0	9	21	66	0	30
		2017	106	0	9	15	62	0	20
		2018	132	1	8	19	53	0	51
2	B	2014	92	0	2	24	64	0	2
		2015	133	0	1	28	70	1	33
		2016	59	0	3	5	31	1	19
		2017	130	0	2	11	61	1	55
		2018	78	1	3	7	32	0	35
3	C	2014	181	2	8	24	126	0	21
		2015	172	1	14	21	98	4	34
		2016	151	0	5	26	72	2	46
		2017	135	1	6	29	78	0	21
		2018	167	8	7	18	77	0	57
4	D	2014	76	0	5	12	42	0	17
		2015	124	0	6	12	64	0	42
		2016	109	1	2	7	49	7	43
		2017	109	0	8	8	49	0	44
		2018	137	0	5	11	50	2	69

2014, 22.4% of the total number of students passed in Divisions 1, 2 and 3 while 77.5% of the students failed the examination. For year 2015, 19.4% of the total number of students passed in Divisions 1, 2 and 3 while 80.5% of the students failed the examination. For year 2016, 17.7% of the total number of students passed in Divisions 1, 2 and 3 while 82.2% of the students failed the examination (Mark, Kazaara, Deus, Julius, et al., 2023). For year 2017, 18.5% of the total number of students passed in Divisions 1, 2 and 3 while 81.4% of the students failed the examination. For year 2018, 17.1% of the total number of students passed in Divisions 1, 2 and 3 while 82.8% of the students failed the examination (Anthony, Kazaara, & Kazaara, 2023).

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Problem Statement

The study aimed at assessment of teachers' knowledge and methods of teaching as predictors students' academic performance in Kisoro district, Uganda.

Literature review

Knowledge of the subject matter is a variable that affects teacher quality as well as student performance. Students understand the lesson more and with great interest when the lesson is taught by a teacher who has a very good command of his subject/content. A teacher who is in control of his subject matter teaches very well. He is able to perform his duties effectively and efficiently. He is able to develop and implement the curriculum (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022).

According to Mehta & Malhotra (1993), mastery of relevant knowledge is one of the most important attributes of a teacher. They discovered that today's teachers must have a good command of the subject matter if they are to command the respect of students. Since the boundaries of knowledge are expanding every day and the level of students in general is also rising, the Hauschen teacher who wants to keep up in the field of specialization should not stop learning. (Richard, B, & T, 2022) stated that it would be very strange to expect a teacher to plan a lesson about writing a science report, for example, and assess related tasks if that teacher is unfamiliar with writing and science. The reason is the fact that the subject matter is a basic component of the teacher's knowledge. Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum can be influenced by the attitudes and expectations their students bring to the classroom. Teachers understand subject content to help students understand, helping students master the material

involves more than imparting facts and information (Mark, Kazaara, Deus, Nelson, et al., 2023).

In his study, Baquiran (2011) concluded that a teacher who is ignorant or uninformed about the content of the subject may convey inaccurate ideas to students, use texts uncritically, and even change inappropriately. He further argues that it will be extremely difficult for teachers to answer students' various questions about a particular subject if they have little knowledge about it (Godfrey et al., 2023). Understanding the material covered allows teachers to plan their lesson and also evaluate their assignments. The researcher further explains that the benefits of subject knowledge include teachers being able to teach well using different teaching methods, asking different and alternative questions and being able to clarify misconceptions about subject content. This helps the teacher a lot, especially when evaluating students. Nonis (2010) agreed with other researchers that if the content to be learned is incomplete, the acquisition of curriculum objectives will not be achieved (Micheal et al., 2023). Conclusions from studies conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2018 emphasize the importance of a teacher's knowledge of the subject matter and the positive effect it has on students' academic results. However, these studies were linked by aligning teaching methods such as the use of information technology which play an important role in the teaching and learning process as it provides students with an understanding of the skills and knowledge

necessary to improve the academic performance of students in Kisoro District, Uganda (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara and coll., 2023).

The teaching method used by teachers largely determines the performance of students. The main goal of teaching at any level is to bring about significant changes in students (Amin, 2005). The transfer of knowledge requires teachers to use an appropriate method and use a pedagogy that best suits students and meets the goal and desired learning outcomes. Many traditional methods focus on teachers being active for students, making them passive and therefore acquiring knowledge from teachers without increasing their involvement in the subject. Approaches that are more effective are more supported because they incorporate the concept of discovery learning (Christopher, Methodius, et al., 2022). Most teachers today adopt a student-centered approach to foster interest, analytical inquiry, critical thinking, and fun among students. Experiences with instructional methods in student learning have consistently generated considerable interest in the thematic area of educational research. These teaching methods have adopted modern technology and brought about huge changes in the field of learning (Richard et al., 2023). The poor academic performance of most students in various fields is basically linked to teachers applying ineffective teaching methods to influence students' knowledge, therefore teachers must be familiar with numerous teaching strategies (Akinsolu, 2016). Information and communication technology (ICT) has been shown to play an important role in the teaching and learning process, as it provides students with the skills and knowledge needed for scientific research,

thereby improving their standard of living. They also enable students to acquire problem-solving and decision-making skills that provide ways of thinking and inquiry with rapid use of ICT resources (e.g., offering students unlimited opportunities to demonstrate mastery of taught content (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022).

Baquiran (2011) further opined that teaching methods work effectively especially when they meet the needs of students because each student interprets and answers a question in a unique way, each student interprets and answers a question in a unique way. As such, matching instructional methods with student needs and preferred learning influences student academic achievement (Richard, B, Janice, et al., 2022).

Meta-analytic studies on the relationship between ICT and student achievement compared to traditional teaching have shown that ICT has a positive impact on student achievement levels. A meta-analytic study found that, on average, students who used ICT-based instruction scored higher than students without computers. These students learn faster; and they like it more when ICT instruction is included (Cand et al., 2022). The findings may also be obscured by teacher perceptions of ICT use and whether teachers were ICT compliant or trained. In addition, one barrier related to teachers' attitude and perception of ICT affects the integration of ICT in learning. Some teachers prefer the old traditional method due to fear of technology and lack of adequate skills. They may feel inadequate in using ICT and if they try and fail, they will be embarrassed and shunned, so they will use the old traditional teaching methods that they know. These

were the research gaps that this study sought to address (Racheal et al., 2023).

Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This section presents the results of data collected, analyzed, interpreted and the discussion of the findings. Results are presented in chronological order in line with the study objectives and research hypotheses. One hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires were administered to teachers and four (4) head teachers were interviewed to establish the relationship between teacher-related factors and students' academic performance in Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro district, Uganda.

Table 1: Teacher's matter can help student's performance in UCE

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	6	5.8
Disagree	12	11.5
Undecided	12	11.5
Agree	46	44.2
Strongly agree	28	26.9
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 1 indicated that majority (71.1%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that teachers content matter can help student's performance in UCE, 17.3% were in disagreement while 11.5% were undecided. This implies that Teachers matter can help student's performance in UCE in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district (Richard, B, Janice, et al., 2022).

Table 2: Teachers with subject matter help students to understand better

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	9	8.7
Disagree	18	17.3
Undecided	3	2.9
Agree	46	44.2
Strongly agree	28	26.9
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 2 indicated that majority (71.1%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that teachers with subject matter help students to understand better, 26% were in disagreement while 2.9% were undecided. This implies

that teachers with subject matter help students to understand better in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district

Table 3: Teachers subject matter knowledge may be affected by the attitudes students bring to the classroom

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	9	8.7
Disagree	6	5.8
Undecided	3	2.9
Agree	54	51.9
Strongly agree	32	30.8
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 3 indicated that majority (82.7%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that teachers subject matter knowledge may be affected by the attitudes students bring to the classroom, 14.5% were in disagreement while 2.9% were undecided. This implies that teachers with subject matter help students to understand better in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district (Richard et al., 2023).

Table 4: Students taught by teachers with more subject matter perform better than those taught by far less subject matter

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	5	4.8
Disagree	6	5.8
Undecided	30	28.8
Agree	30	28.8
Strongly agree	33	31.7
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

The results in Table 4 indicated that majority (60.6%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that students taught by teachers with more subject matter perform better than those taught by far less subject matter ,10.6% were in

disagreement while 28.8% were undecided. This implies that students taught by teachers with more subject matter perform better than those taught by far less subject matter in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district.

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between teachers' knowledge of the subject matter and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District

Variables	Computed index	Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter	Students' academic performance
Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter	Pearson Correlation	1	.526**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	104	104
Students' academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.526**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	104	104

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 5 revealed that the Pearson product moment correlation was applied to establish the relationship between teachers' knowledge of the subject matter and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District and the results show a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between teachers' knowledge of the subject matter and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools ($r=0.526^{**}$, $p<0.01$) (Nelson et al., 2023). Thus, rejecting the null hypothesis. This implies that there was a variation on students' academic performance due to changes in teachers' knowledge of the subject matter. The implication of the findings is that the teachers' knowledge of the subject matter was significantly and moderately related to students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools. During interviews, when most head teachers were asked about the influence of teachers' knowledge of subject matter on the students' academic performance, they revealed that (Brighton et al., 2023): Teachers knowledge of subject matter positively impacts on the students' academic performance in UCE Examinations in Public Secondary school in Kisoro District.

Table 6: Teachers who use guided discovery help to improve student's performance in UCE

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	12	11.5
Disagree	11	10.6

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Undecided	12	11.5
Agree	49	47.1
Strongly agree	20	19.2
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 6 indicated that majority (66.3%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that teachers who use guided discovery help to improve student's performance in UCE, 22.1% were in disagreement while 11.5% were undecided. This implies that teachers who use guided discovery help to improve student's performance in UCE in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district (Victor et al., 2023).

Table 7: Teachers who use question and answer approach help to improve students' performance in UCE

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	6	5.8
Disagree	6	5.8
Undecided	20	19.2
Agree	30	28.8
Strongly agree	42	40.4
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 7 indicated that majority (69.2%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that Teachers who use question and answer approach help to improve students' performance in UCE, 10.5% were in disagreement while 19.2% were undecided. This implies that Teachers who use question and answer approach help to improve students' performance in UCE in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district (Winny et al., 2023).

Table 8: Teachers who use chalk and talk method help to improve student performance at UCE

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	6	5.8
Disagree	6	5.8
Undecided	15	14.4
Agree	71	68.3
Strongly agree	6	5.8
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

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Results in Table 8 indicate that majority (74.%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that teachers who use chalk and talk method help to improve student performance at UCE, 11.5% were in disagreement while 14.4% were undecided. This implies that teachers who use chalk and talk method help to improve student performance at UCE performance in UCE in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district.

Table 9: Teachers who use discussion method help to improve students' performance at UCE

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	3	2.9
Agree	6	5.8
Undecided	27	26.0
Agree	45	43.3
Strongly agree	23	22.1
Total	104	100.0

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 9 indicated that majority (65.4%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that teachers who use discussion method help to improve students' performance at UCE, 11.6% were in disagreement while 14.4% were undecided. This implied that teachers who use discussion method help to improve students' performance at UCE' performance in UCE in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district (Frank et al., 2023).

Table 10: Teachers who use group discussion help to improve students' performance at UCE

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	9	8.7
Disagree	6	5.8
Undecided	9	8.7
Agree	52	50.0
Strongly agree	28	26.9

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Total	104	100.0
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Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 10 indicated that majority (76.9%) of the respondents (teachers) were in agreement that teaching who use group discussion help to improve students' performance at UCE 14.5% were in disagreement while 8.7% were undecided. This implies that teaching who use group discussion help to improve students' performance at UCE in their various public secondary schools in Kisoro district (Oromo et al., 2023).

Table 11: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between teachers' method of teaching and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District

Variables		Computed index	Teachers' method of teaching	Students' academic performance
Teachers' method of teaching	Pearson Correlation		1	.566**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000
	N		104	104
Students' academic performance	Pearson Correlation		.566**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N		104	104

Source: Results of the Analysis (2019)

Results in Table 11 revealed that the Pearson product moment correlation was applied to establish the relationship between teachers' method of teaching and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro district and the results show a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between teachers' method of teaching and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools ($r=0.566^{**}$, $p<0.01$). Thus, rejecting the null hypothesis. This implies that there was a variation on students' academic performance due to changes in teachers' method of teaching. The implication of the findings is that the teachers' method of teaching was significantly and moderately related to students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District (Faridah et al., 2023). During interviews, when most head teachers were asked about the influence of teachers' method of teaching on the students' academic performance, they revealed that: "Teachers method of teaching helps teachers have good class control, early coverage of teaching syllabus". Another head teacher said "Teachers' method of teaching allows learners to internalize concepts taught thus good academic grade". The primary purpose of teaching at any level of education is to bring a fundamental change in the learners (Godfrey et al., 2023). The poor academic performance by the majority of students is fundamentally linked to application of ineffective teaching methods by teachers to impact knowledge to

learners. Substantial research of the experience of teaching methods indicates that the quality of teaching is often reflected by the achievements of learners.

Conclusion

The study concluded that teachers' knowledge of the subject matter is capable of developing and implementing curriculum in their various public secondary schools, Teacher's matter can help student's performance in UCE and teachers with subject matter help students to understand better students taught by teachers with more subject matter perform better than those taught by far less subject matter. The study established that there is a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between teachers' knowledge of the subject matter and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro District.

Similarly, the study concluded that teachers who use guided discovery help to improve student's academic performance, teachers who use question and answer approach help to improve students' performance, teachers who use chalk and talk method help to improve student performance, teachers who use discussion method help to improve students' performance and teachers who use group discussion help to improve students' academic performance at UCE. The study established that there is a statistically moderate positive and significant relationship between teachers' method of teaching and students' academic performance at Uganda Certificate of Education in public secondary schools in Kisoro district.

Recommendation

The study recommended that there is need to regular supervision of both teachers and students by administrators and this would cause teachers to concentrate on improving academic performance; and that teachers method of teaching be improved to change the academic performance of students; and that teachers should use teaching methods that can actively involve students to participate or discuss concepts. Teachers should change their perception from old traditional method of teaching to modern ICT because currently the world in going dot com and most communication done in offices are computerized hence need to change the method of teaching in Public Secondary School in Kisoro district.

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