



Original Article

Teachers' Qualifications and Their Performance in Primary Schools in Buyanja Sub-County Rukungiri District, Uganda

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This study investigated the relationship between teachers' qualifications and their performance in Buyanja sub-county primary schools, Rukungiri district, Uganda. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design on a sample of 190 respondents. Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire, an interview guide, and an observation checklist. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics that were frequencies, percentages and means, and inferential statistics, then correlation and regression. The study found that there was a moderate positive relationship between teachers' qualifications and teaching staff performance in primary schools in Buyanja Sub-County Rukungiri. It was recommended that the school managers and administrators should always deploy the teachers depending on the level of performance rather than the level of qualification.

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INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, teachers' qualifications can be traced from the industrial revolution in European countries and managers throughout the world have used it to enhance workers' performance since then (Kaur, 2012). According to Arena (2013), the concern for teachers' qualifications and the experience was an effect of the industrial revolution on workers' working conditions. In Africa, according to Usman (2017), a qualified teacher can be defined as one who holds a teaching certificate, owns at least a bachelor's degree from a three-year institution and is well qualified in his/her teaching subjects. Moreover, Usman quotes the South African Ministry of Education officials who described a qualified teacher as one who possesses knowledge of the subject matter, human growth and development, ethical values, instructional planning and strategies, assessment, learning environment, communication and advocacy, collaboration and partnership, continuous professional development, code of conduct, and skilful use of information communication technologies.

Teachers in Uganda are of different cadres. In the primary sector, the minimal qualification for a primary school teacher is a Grade III Teachers' Certificate (Wandera, 2018). However, the teachers have the opportunity to upgrade themselves to diploma and degree levels in National Teachers' Colleges and Universities, respectively. This tends to bring differences in performance though not empirically supported; it is due to the attitude that the community have towards these teachers. The majority of the teachers with Bachelor's Degrees are in administrative capacities. It should be noted that the school administrators such as Deputy Headteachers have teaching loads as well as administrative responsibilities. Despite the efforts put forward by the government to employ qualified

teachers in government schools, it has not scaled down the poor performance of teachers as well as their pupils in the same schools. The researcher therefore sought to examine the relationship between teachers' qualifications and teaching staff performance in selected primary schools of Buyanja Sub County, Rukungiri District.

Purpose of the Study

To investigate the relationship between teachers' qualifications and teaching staff performance in selected primary schools of Buyanja Sub-County, Rukungiri District.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This research was guided by the human capital theory of Schultz (1993). According to Schultz (1993, p. 15), human capital states that "education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of cognitive stock of economically productive human capability, which is a product of innate abilities and investment in human beings". Schultz (1993) argues that both knowledge and skills are a form of capital and that this capital is a product of deliberate investment. He further explains that investment in human capital must focus on supporting individuals in acquiring education. To sustain competitiveness in an organisation such as the school, human capital, that is to say, the teaching and non-teaching staff, becomes an instrumental professional initiative in order to increase productivity. The term human capital, according to Schultz (1993) and Rastogi (2000), refers to processes that relate to training, education, and other professional initiatives to improve the levels of knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and social assets performance which lead to the employee's satisfaction and performance, and eventually, to firm performance in this case school performance. The human capital theory is relevant

to this study because it assumes that teachers with higher qualifications, more so in education are likely to perform their job better than those with lower qualifications. In other words, the human capital theory emphasises the importance of human resource development, thus the essence of this study.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive cross-sectional survey research design was adopted with both qualitative and quantitative approaches as a way of enhancing the quality of the findings of the study. The study was cross-sectional

because the researcher picked a cross-section of respondents over a short period of time, and follow-up of respondents is not necessary.

Target Population

The target population for this study consisted of 21 head teachers of primary schools, 240 primary school teachers, 21 chairpersons of SMCs and 4 District Inspectors of schools.

Sample Size

Sample size is an important feature of any empirical study in which the goal is to make inferences

Table 1: Summary of the target population and sample size

Category	Target population	Sample size
Inspectors of schools	4	4
Headteachers	21	19
Chairpersons of school management committees	21	19
Teachers	240	148
Total	286	190

The researcher used Morgan and Krecjie's (1970) table to guide her in the determination of sample size as shown below:

Sampling Techniques and Procedure

The researcher used simple random sampling to select the schools to take part in the study. The head teachers and chairpersons' school management committees were selected by purposive sampling. The teachers were selected using simple random sampling. The researcher used a convenient sampling method to select the inspector of schools to participate in the study.

Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaires were used by the researcher to collect data from head teachers and teachers. The researcher interviewed chairpersons of school management committees of the selected primary

schools to supplement the questionnaires. The researcher also used documentary analysis to get data from relevant management records like minute books, teachers' attendance books, class registers and progress charts, and any other relevant document that may be availed.

Data Quality Control

To ensure validity, the research instrument covered all the dimensions of the phenomenon under study as clarified in the conceptual framework. The questionnaire was discussed with colleagues and supervisors to assess its structure, contents, clarity and consistency, and relevance in relation to the research objectives. To ensure reliability, the researcher constructed a questionnaire with appropriate wording that is simple, direct, and familiar to the respondents. Items in the questionnaire and interview guide that were double-

barrelled, leading and based on assumptions were avoided.

Data Analysis

The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms in data analysis for the purpose of methodical triangulation in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the study findings. The researcher employed statistical data analysis to analyse data obtained from the field. Responses were coded for easy identification, tallied, computed into frequency counts and expressed into percentages. The researcher used statistical methods to determine whether there is no statistical significance between teacher qualifications and staff performance in the selected

primary schools of Buyanja Sub-County, Rukungiri District.

RESULTS

The study findings in *Table 2* below show that 55.8% of the respondents were certificate holders, and 16% of them were Diploma holders. 12% of them indicated that their highest level of Education was Bachelor’s degree, and 4.7% of them indicated that their high level of education was postgraduate. The majority of the respondents indicated that their highest level of education obtained was a certificate. The researcher further argues that the majority of the teachers were newly qualified and had not upgraded themselves.

Table 2: Respondents’ highest level of education.

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Postgraduate	09	4.7
Bachelor’s Degree	19	12.0
Master’s degree	10	5.2
Diploma	31	16.0
Certificate	106	55.8
Others	15	7.9
Total	190	100

Source: Data generated from the field

From *Table 3*, most of the respondents (125.2, 59.5%) disagreed with items concerning teachers’ performance levels, while 64.1 (41.2%) agreed.

This implies that there was moderate teachers’ performance.

Table 3: Teachers’ assessment of their performance level at different aspects.

Statement	SA		A		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Teachers scheme in time	3	15.8	1	5.3	10	52.6	5	26.3
Teachers always make lesson plans timely	2	10.5	4	21.1	9	47.4	4	21.1
Teachers are extremely good at subject matter delivery to learners	4	21.1	0	0	13	68.4	2	10.5
Teachers normally manage their classes effectively	8	42.1	2	10.5	4	21.1	5	26.3
Teachers are good at selecting, developing, and using lms	1	5.3	4	21.1	7	36.8	6	31.6

Statement	SA		A		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Teachers always assess and evaluate learners' performance	0	0	5	26.3	11	57.9	3	15.8
Teachers always guide and counsel their learners	3	15.8	2	10.5	5	26.3	9	47.4
Teachers are good at making and keeping learners' records	5	26.3	2	10.5	12	63.2	0	0
Teachers actively participate in co-curricular activities	6	31.6	5	26.3	3	15.8	5	26.3
Teachers always attend staff meetings	10	52.6	2	10.5	7	36.9	0	0
Total	42	22.1	27	14.2	82	43.2	39	20.5

Key: SA = Strongly agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree

Source: Data generated from the field

The results in *Table 4*, the 2-tailed significance test, showed that the correlation coefficient was 0.393, which indicated that there was a moderate positive relationship between teachers' qualifications and teaching staff performance in primary schools in

Buyanja Sub-County Rukungiri. The p-value of 0.000 indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and teaching staff performance in primary schools.

Table 4: Relationship between teachers' qualifications and teaching staff performance in primary schools in Buyanja Sub-County Rukungiri

Correlations		Teachers' qualifications	Teaching staff performance
Teachers' qualifications	Pearson Correlation	1	0.393**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	190	190
Teaching staff performance	Pearson Correlation	0.393**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	190	190

***.* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

DISCUSSION

The majority of the respondents had attained a certificate as their highest level of education. Few had attained an education level higher than a diploma. This occurrence is due to the fact that the majority of the respondents were classroom teachers in primary school. According to the Uganda national teachers' policy 2019, the minimum requirement for a primary school teacher is grade III teacher's certificate after attaining an Uganda certificate of education (Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze,

2019). This is why the greatest number of respondents' highest level of education was a certificate. The teachers were required to comment on the level of teachers' qualifications. More teachers were in agreement that the majority of teachers in primary schools in the Buyanja sub-county are more highly qualified than those who were in disagreement. However, only a few were not sure. The researcher does not concur with the findings and explains that the extent to which they are highly qualified is challenging. It is recalled that a Grade III Teachers Certificate is the basic

requirement for one to be registered as a primary school teacher (Ministry of Education and Sports (2011); Hand Book on Teachers /Instructor Education and Training Policies, (2011). There were very few participants who had attained a master's degree, which is only 3.2%. These constituted the inspectors of schools and the District Education officer. A Master's degree is a requirement for one to be a District Education Officer, one has to possess a Master's Degree in Education or a related field. The researcher notes that apart from the Grade III Teacher's certificate, other qualifications are not a necessity for one to be a primary school teacher in the Education system of Uganda.

The greatest number of the head teachers who took part in the study rated their teachers as either excellent, very good, or good at performing various tasks in the selected primary schools of the Buyanja sub-county Rukungiri district. The findings reveal that in most cases, the teachers are either excellent, very good, or good in scheming on time, making lesson plans timely, subject matter delivery, class management and control, developing and using instructional materials, keeping learners' records, guiding and counselling learners. This replicates the teachers' rating in table 4 and is a reflection of Tramphard's (2014) explanation.

The greatest number of teachers who took part in the study either strongly disagreed or disagreed that there is no statistically significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and teaching staff performance in the selected primary schools of the Buyanja sub-county Rukungiri district. A total of 65.7% of the teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statements, whereas only a total of 24.1% either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. This is an indication that 10.1% of the teachers were not sure. Besides the above study findings, the greatest number of the chairpersons of school management committees of the selected schools in the Buyanja sub-county Rukungiri district either strongly disagreed or disagreed with

the statement that there is no statistically significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and teaching staff performance. None of them either was sure or agreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

CONCLUSION

The majority of the teachers in the selected primary schools in Buyanja Sub-County are not highly qualified but meet the minimum qualifications to be recruited as primary school teachers. Those who upgrade to higher levels are in leadership positions in the education sector. The majority of the teachers in the selected primary schools in the Buyanja sub-county Rukungiri districts perform their tasks relatively well. There are some teachers whose performance record in class management and control, guiding and counselling learners and participating in co-curricular activities was not good but fair. There were no poor-performing teachers in the selected primary schools in the Buyanja sub-county Rukungiri district.

Recommendations

School managers and administrators should always deploy the teachers depending on their level of performance rather than their level of qualification. Teachers should continuously upgrade themselves in order to be promoted from one level to another.

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