
**FACTORS INFLUENCING POOR EXAMINATION PERFORMSNCCE IN
COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS**



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ABSTRACT

In Tanzania, during the 1970s, a programme that emphasised vocationalization of the ordinary level secondary school curriculum was implemented. This was in accordance with the Arusha Declaration's Education for Self-reliance Policy that was implemented in 1967. When individuals completed their education at this level, the goal of the policy was to have them ready for the workforce so that they would be self-sufficient and able to start their own businesses (Nyerere, 1967). As a result of the Arusha Declaration, the Ministry of

Education issued Circular No. 2 of 1972, which stipulated that secondary schools were required to provide students with the opportunity to study commercial topics, such as commerce and bookkeeping or accounts, which were considered to be among the more practical subjects (referred to as bias subjects). Another circular, known as National Education Circular No. 3 of 1974, was issued by the Ministry of Education in 1974. This circular provided greater elaboration on the disciplines that were considered to be practical (bias).

Keyword: commercial topics, secondary schools, Arusha Declaratio

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INTRODUCTION

This circular instructed teachers to train pupils in one of the four selected bias subjects, which were business, agriculture, home economics, and technical disciplines respectively. It was suggested that one third of the allotted time in class should be devoted to discussing bias-related topics. Education Circular No. 4 of 1979 in Pendaeli (1983) provided further refinement of the execution of the biases. This circular instructed that all pupils in form one and two should study all core topics regardless of the biases they were in. Political Education, Kiswahili, English, Mathematics, Biology, Geography, History, Physics, Chemistry, and Religion were some of the fundamental disciplines that students were required to study.

On the other hand, when pupils advanced to form three, they were required to study one additional topic in addition to the fundamental courses. As was discussed earlier, the objective of the Self-reliance Policy of 1967 in Nyerere (1967), the Ministry of Education Circular No. 2 of 1973 and the Ministry of Education Circular No. 3 of 1974 in Pendaeli (1983) was to educate students with a focus on practical training so that they would be able to support themselves after school. This study focused solely on the commercial bias, despite the fact that there were four other biases, namely agricultural, home economics, technical topics, and commercial subjects. In addition to the policies and circulars discussed above, a new policy known as the Education and Training Policy – ETP – (URT(a),1995) was implemented in the year 1995. This was done with the goal of ensuring that the educational system remains relevant to the sociocultural, economic, and technical demands of the 21st century. The expansion of the country's economy placed a significant emphasis on a variety of themes, including those dealing with light commercial activity. Because of this, the aims of the Commercial topics were The efforts that had been made up until that point by the Ministry of Education and Culture to implement a secondary education curriculum were met with a number of obstacles, one of which was that the curriculum contained an excessive number of subjects for the ordinary level of the secondary education assessment. In addition, the Ministry was of the opinion that certain topics, such as prejudice subjects, were experiencing a number of difficulties, the most significant of which was a lack of resources, such as teaching and learning materials and teachers.

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1.4 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE

The researcher has adopted the system theory input output model that was developed by Ludwig Bertalanffy in the middle of the 1950s for the purpose of this investigation. According to Koonz and Weirich's (1988) postulations, the theory postulates that a structured business does not exist in a vacuum but is instead dependent on the environment in which it operates. As a result, the business takes in inputs, changes those inputs into outputs, and then releases the outputs into the surrounding environment. The relationship between the model and my research is similar to a feedback loop. The school does not operate in a sterile environment. It is dependent on factors such as the surrounding environment, such as a firm. Students come to the school from all parts of the community. The process of teaching and learning begins for students the moment that they step foot in a classroom. In order for the teaching process to be successful, it is necessary to have instructors who possess strong teaching skills, teaching and learning materials, students who are interested in the subjects being taught, and school inspectors who can supervise the entire teaching and learning process. After everything is said and done, the desired outcome is to have successful test results and a solid overall performance. This is the goal.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Academic performance is defined by Adediwura and Tayo (2007) as the demonstration of knowledge acquired or abilities developed in school subjects as characterised by test and examination scores or marks awarded by the subjects' teachers. It is also possible to say that it refers to any term that is used to indicate the academic status of pupils. At the state level, academic performance is defined as an evaluation of a student's performance on standardised exams designed for certain ages and based on a set of accomplishments that kids in each age

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group are expected to fulfil. These examinations are also tailored toward specific ages (Bell, 2014). Aremu (2003), on the other hand, defines bad academic performance as a performance that is assessed by the examinee as falling below an anticipated level. This definition emphasises the importance of the examinee's perspective. The results of the national Form Four examinations in commercial topics are used as the basis for this investigation of academic achievement.

Study conducted by Hammond (2000) looked at the ways in which teacher qualifications and other school inputs were related to student achievement across the states in the United States of America. The study used data from a 50-state survey of policies, state case study analyses, the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS), and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) as its primary sources of information. Hammond (2000) found that there was a positive correlation between teacher qualifications and student achievement (NAEP). His evidence-based findings for the effects of teacher quality on student outcomes included the observation that characteristics of teacher quality, such as certification status and degree in the field to be taught, are positively and very significantly correlated with student outcomes. This was one of his findings. The percentage of teachers in a state who have earned advanced degrees is, year after year, the factor that seems to be the most reliable and important indicator of students' levels of success in reading and mathematics.

In his study, Okonkwo (2000) examined the instruction between two independent variables of teacher quality and instructional strategy on students' performance in secondary school science. He found that students who were taught biology by professional trained biology teachers performed significantly better on the genetic objective achievement 17 test than those students who were taught biology by non-professional biology teachers. Following an examination of the academic and professional credentials of the instructor in connection to the performance of the students, we will concentrate on the instructor's professional capacity to successfully interact with the students.

According to Nel and Müllers' (2006) paper on the limited English proficiency of final year student teachers enrolled for the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) at the University of South Africa (Unisa), it is asserted that teachers are responsible for an inadequate language input (language to which learners are exposed orally or verbally) as a result of their own

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limited English proficiency. Additionally, a teacher should discourse at a level of understanding that is appropriate for the student. This means that the learner should be able to comprehend what the teacher is saying (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Transference from one speaker's use of language to another speaker's use of language may be considered as a contaminating element in the use of a second language since it occurs when one speaker's language is used by the other speaker. When a teacher's own understanding of a second language is not up to an acceptable standard for the use of English as English proficiency, that teacher's incorrect usage and knowledge of the language will be passed on to the students (Stander, 2001). The findings of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study provide credence to the aforementioned arguments.

(PIRLS) of the year 2006 The study came to the conclusion that one of the factors that contribute to inadequate second language acquisition and academic achievement is inadequate language instruction provided by teachers whose own English proficiency is limited. This study is carried out once every five years with the participation of forty different countries, including South Africa. The results, which were based on the assessments of around 30,000 learners in grades 4 and 5, came as a surprise to the learners in South Africa's grades 4 and 5, who had scored the lowest mean scores compared to the learners in the other participating nations. According to the findings of the study, one element that contributes to inadequate second language acquisition and academic performance is inadequate language instruction provided by instructors whose own levels of English proficiency are low (Stander, 2006). After examining the connection between a teacher's ability to communicate effectively in the classroom and the success of their pupils, we will move on to the role that a teacher's motivation in their profession plays in determining how well their students do on tests.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research strategy, and it defends the adoption of a qualitative approach in this study, which focused on the variables that impact poor test performance in commercial courses in the secondary schools that were selected in the Ilala Municipality. The second portion provides an in-depth account of the processes that were followed throughout the research, including the strategies that were utilised to gather data and evaluate the results.

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DATA ANALYSIS

There is a correlation between the academic qualification of instructors and the performance of their students on examinations. The purpose of this study was to gather information on the academic qualifications of instructors who teach subjects related to business. In-depth discussions with professors of business topics on their educational and professional backgrounds, as well as an analysis of the administrative structure of the school documentary footage was utilised. The replies they provided were examined, and the results may be seen in Table 4.1.

Distribution of Commercial Subject Teachers and their Academic and Professional Qualifications

Masters- Ed	Degree-Ed	Dip-Ed	Dip-Ed failure	No training	Total
-	03	01	01	-	05

Source: Research data

It was discovered that three (3) of the teachers had earned degrees in education, while the remaining teacher just had a certificate in education. One of the educators, on the other hand, did not earn their certificate in education. Another instructor's A-level coursework did not include any business-related topics; rather, she focused on history, government, and politics. Are students who choose commercial courses more likely to have success on standardised tests if they are taught by these sorts of teachers? In addition, one may question how a teacher who has been unsuccessful in his or her academic subjects is able to instruct others in the same topic in which they too have been unsuccessful in their tests. It's likely that his or her product, which is pupils, will likewise be unsuccessful. Now, let's take a look at the academic credentials held by department heads of commercial subjects in comparison to those held by instructors of commercial topics. Interviews with department heads of commercial disciplines were conducted to gather information on their academic and professional credentials; data was also acquired through an examination of relevant school administration documents.

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School Library

An essential facility (resource) for the advancement of educational opportunities is a library. It cultivates a culture of reading among pupils as well as increases their capacity to search for relevant content. All of the instructors indicated that their schools had library facilities in response to a question concerning whether or not there was a school library to complement the lack of textbooks in schools; nevertheless, in one of the schools, there were no commercial textbooks in the school library. Whereas admitting that there was a school library, the teacher of commercial courses at one school bemoaned the fact that the library included only a small number of outdated and worn-out reference books on commercial topics, while it contained a large number of volumes on scientific topics.

On the other hand, a commerce instructor from a different school that we visited said the following: "The school library did not have any books on business topics, but there were numerous volumes on scientific and artistic topics."

Support from School Heads

When asked whether school managements assisted department heads in resolving department requirements, particularly those that affect student performance, only the department head of one secondary school (a non-government school) agreed to have the support from the management. This was in response to the question of whether school managements assisted department heads in resolving department requirements. The following is what she had to say: "I get assistance from the management." However, the response came from the head of the commercial department at a different high school. "I provide my school's head with the necessary information, but he does not take any action. Because of this, the department is currently suffering from a severe lack of textbooks and reference materials.

It is acceptable to question the capabilities of the head of the school as a manager if she is unable to assist the head of her department. Weakness in the management abilities of the school leaders effects negatively the management of commercial topics at both the department and classroom levels, which can result in low performance on examinations. Therefore, it would not be surprising to find heads of schools using this management style because, most likely, some were appointed to head schools but were not trained in school

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management, so they had to apply their own strategies in order to run their schools effectively. This is why it would not be surprising to find heads of schools using this management style. It is possible that this will impair the performance of the students. In addition to the topics of teaching and learning tools, we are going to talk about the enthusiasm that students have in studying commercial subjects.

Student Interest in Studying Commercial Subjects

An interest may be described as a condition characterised by curiosity, concern, or attentiveness toward a certain subject (2014). This term, when applied to a classroom setting, is stated as involving some form of liking for a school topic or for activities linked to that subject. As a result, interest might be defined as an inward sensation in completing a certain activity. It is the interest of the instructor in teaching a lesson that drives the interest of the students in learning. and colleagues (1993) discovered that students who were actively engaged in work that motivated them were significantly better able to recognise connections between their prior knowledge and new information. existing work at the institution, as well as future academic or professional aspirations. This main concept will be broken down into three separate topics of discussion.

- Students interests in studying commercial subjects
- Students mastery of subject matter
- Students mastery of medium of instruction (English)

The failure of school inspections in schools has an impact on the day-to-day execution of the curriculum in schools, particularly the teaching of courses related to business. As a result, this may affect the pupils' overall academic performance. Considering that not a single educator has been evaluated, commercial topics, instructors of commerce in one school had the following to say about having inspectors come to check them: "Inspectors should come to inspect us so that we may gain from their knowledge." We are unable to develop our manner of teaching (methodology) or acquire new information in our fields without being subjected to examination.

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A pattern that is comparable to the findings was uncovered in the performance report (CAG) (URT,(g),2008) on school inspection that was issued by the Controller and Auditor General. This report noted, among other things, that the inspectorate did not effectively communicate and follow up on the implementation of its recommendations and that it failed to monitor the effectiveness of school inspections. The findings in CAG are corroborated by a research that was conducted in 2004 by Sengerema. That study discovered that inadequate school inspection related to poor student achievement.

It is generally accepted as fact that school inspections contribute to improvements in schools, one of which is increased student achievement (Whitby, 2010; OFSTED, 2007). According to Faro (1996), school inspectors have a critical part to play in the professional growth of teachers. According to Fullan (1991), in order to guarantee progressive and efficient performance, educators require consistent support from both their peers and their bosses. Also, Nyaki (2006) asserts that the efficacy of the school inspection is mostly affected by the increased frequency, the form of advice and suggestions offered to those who are inspected, and the overall quality of the advice and recommendations. According to the findings of Ehren (2011), teachers' perceptions of inspected schools indicate that such schools have made greater adjustments in terms of quality improvement. On the other hand, Wolf et al. (2009) discovered that school inspection led to marginally improved school performance. They came to this conclusion after finding that student scores increased in areas where schools were examined.

According to the findings of this research project, there was no school inspection carried out for commercial topics since the inspection teams did not include inspectors qualified in commercial subjects. The schools were required to rely on their own system of internal oversight. This kind of inspection is comparable to the one known as "Peer inspection" or "School Site Supervision," in which classmates who attended the same school and were in the same grade were allowed to open classroom doors for interaction with one another. When the assistance of school inspectors is unavailable, this approach enables instructors to report problems to their fellow educators as their primary source of professional assistance and support (UNESCO, 2001).

At spite of the fact that instructors in one of the schools that was visited were responsible for

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their own internal monitoring, it is noteworthy to note that the teachers viewed the expertise of the inspectors as being valuable in enhancing both their teaching and the performance of the school. The findings lend credence to the conclusions of local studies that monitored the quality of education and found that instructors saw school inspectors as primarily introducing new ideas and making suggestions on how to improve teaching techniques (Mrutu et al., 2005). According to the results, it would suggest that instructors placed a high importance on the possibility that the work of inspectors had in improving both their own performance and the performance of their students. They may have had interactions with inspectors while teaching in other schools, or they may have observed the benefits that other teachers obtained when their subjects were examined. Both of these factors are likely the origin of their perspective. Schools that are examined by school inspectors have an advantage over schools that are not inspected because school inspectors bring to schools their knowledge and the experiences they have gained from working in other inspected schools in the area of professionally assisting teachers.

It is important to keep in mind that some of these subjects were among those that were eliminated temporarily. period was removed as a subject taught in secondary schools in 2004 as a result of guidelines issued by the Ministry.

It is highly concerning that the topics were not inspected, and the inspectorate department has to pay attention to this matter right now. In addition, it went against the standard that the Ministry of Education has established, which states that a school inspection (which includes assessing all topics taught in the curriculum that is being given) shall be carried out once for each school every two years (URT (f), 2010). The findings indicated that school inspection was ineffective in its role as an inspector, and as a result, it is expected to be among the factors that are likely to influence poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality. The findings were based on an investigation that was conducted. The findings, discussions, and suggestions derived from this research will be presented in the next chapter.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a synopsis of the research that was conducted. In addition to that,

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various inferences and conclusions are drawn based on the findings. Finally, recommendations are provided both for action and for additional study on variables that impact low test performance in commercial courses at ordinary level secondary schools in the Ilala municipality of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. These schools are located in Tanzania. In the first chapter, we discussed the history of the issue, a statement of the study, the purpose of the investigation, research tasks, and questions. The relevance of the study, as well as how it should be structured, was highlighted in this chapter as well. The researcher adopted the system theory input output model that was developed by Ludwig Bertalanfly in the middle of the 1950s for the purpose of this investigation.

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