

**THE EFFECTS OF HIGH STUDENT:
TEACHER RATIO ON ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE IN UNIVERSAL SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN UGANDA: THE CASE STUDY-
MBALE MUNICIPALITY**

AUTHORS

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INTRODUCTION

- “Universal Education” refers education for all
- In terms of Universal Primary Education (UPE), Universal means that all school going age children of primary age have access to free education.
- Indeed, primary enrolment rates in Uganda, at 92% are average for Africa, one of its few successes against the Millennium Development Goals.
- In Uganda’s policy on Universal Secondary Education (USE), every child who passes the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) has a right to free Secondary education.

Introduction cont.....

- Following the introduction of Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2007 in Uganda, there was massive rise in students' enrolment in all USE schools. Uganda came up with a policy on Universal Secondary Education (USE) as a result of the UN resolutions on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) introduced in 2007.
- Middle class families do not prefer to educate their children through the UPE or USE schemes, due to the overcrowding problem.
- Uganda is placed among the bottom 10 countries worldwide for gross enrolment in Secondary Education (27%) and tertiary education (4%).

Introduction cont....

- EFA Global Monitoring UNESCO (2010) reported that Uganda had a poorly educated workforce .
- According to the UNESCO, 85% of the youth population in Uganda was unemployed.
- Its for this reason that many wish the educational system to provide knowledge, information, and skills instead of theory alone.

Statement of the problem

- The USE programme has played a reasonable role in supporting children from poor family backgrounds.

- However, with a high influx of students in Secondary schools, the student-teacher ratio has increased (Overseas Development Institute report, 2010).
- This has now resulted in reduction of individual attention, poor work, inadequate use of teaching aids, and teachers being overstretched in managing big classes thus deterioration in the academic performance (Wanyama, 2011).
- To solve this challenge, government has partnered with over 640 private schools countrywide to allow some children to enroll in their schools.
- But because of inadequate teaching space & material, shortage of teachers, and late disbursement of government funds, private schools have not helped much.

Statement of the problem cont.....

- This study was therefore intended to establish the effect of high student-teacher ratio on students' academic performance in Secondary schools under the USE programme

Purpose of the study

- To establish the effect of student-teacher ratio on students' academic performance in USE schools.

Research objective

- To establish the effect of high student-teacher ratio in selected Universal Secondary schools in Mbale municipality.

Significance of the study

- Results of this study will provide a deeper insight on the existing teacher-student ratio in USE schools for appropriate intervention.
- will aid in making the life of the teacher easier thus most likely to influence good teacher service delivery.
- It will contribute to the existing body of knowledge concerning the promotion of student academic performance.
- **Study Area:** This was in Mbale municipality, Eastern Uganda.
- **Data collection instruments:** The questionnaire and interview schedule.

METHODS

- **Data Quality Control:** The tools were first subjected to a pilot study before being applied in the study
- **Data analysis:** Both the qualitative and quantitative analysis technique was done using Epi-Info and Microsoft excel.

Ethical consideration:

- Before the research was conducted, permission was sought from the University research and ethical committee and national council for science and technology.
- During data collection, respondents consented before participating in the study.
- The research findings were treated with utmost confidentiality. And Privacy of the respondents was observed.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS OF RESULTS

The teacher-student ratios in selected Universal Secondary Schools in Mbale Municipality

- The study established an average of 1:150 of teacher-student ratio

Knowledge about USE

- The study sought to establish whether the respondent knew about USE, therefore they were asked whether they had heard about USE and the responses from the three research tools showed that all of them had heard about USE.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

No	Categories	Expected response	Actual response	Response rate (%)
1	Head teachers	5	5	100
2	Teachers	50	48	96
3	School P.T.A members	25	23	92
4	Students	82	81	98.7
	<i>Total</i>	<i>162</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>96.9</i>

- ***Table 1: The response rate***
- **Source: questionnaires**

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

School enrolment in 2006	School O	School P	School Q	School R	School S
School enrolment in 2013	925	3016	1156	1391	1261
Increment	207	1668	539	313	250

Table 3: The number of students in each school before and after the USE programme

Source: Mbale Municipality Education Department 2013

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

School Class Enrolment	School. O	School. P	School Q	School R	School S
S1	328	712	278	165	170
S2	266	725	267	342	287
S3	220	820	342	436	364
S4	200	819	362	513	497
Total	1014	3076	1249	1456	1318

Table 4: Number of the current students in each of the classes of sampled schools from S1-S4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

Effects of high student: teacher ratio on students' academic performance in selected Universal Secondary Schools in Mbale Municipality

- The study sought to establish whether there was any effect of high student/teacher ratio on the students' academic performance

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

Issue	YES	NO
High students-teacher ratio affects students' academic performance.	145 (92.9%)	11 (7.05%)
teachers are able to look through every student's note books during the lesson	8 (5.1%)	148 (94.8%)
Teachers are able to address each student's learning needs in the school	25 (6.0%)	131 (83.9%)
Teachers in USE schools have time for each student	9 (5.7%)	147 (94.2%)
Slow learners are attended to during the teaching/learning in UPE schools	14 (8.9%)	142 (91%)
There is no important relationship between student-teacher ratio and student achievement	18 (11.5%)	138 (88.4%)
fewer students per teacher gives more opportunity for interactive and effective learning	129 (82.6%)	27 (17.3%)
The class size has some effect on teachers and students performance	144 (92.3%)	12 (7.6%)

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

- The majority of the respondents indicate that the high students-teacher ratio affects students' academic performance (92%).
- The findings also indicate that teachers are not able to look through every student's note books during the lesson. However, for those who responded that teachers were able to address students' needs might have been those few ones who were so committed to their work and went an extra mile.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

Reasons for teachers not being able to address each student's learning needs in the school:

- The result indicates that teachers are not able to address each student's learning needs as indicated.
- There is lack of time, crowded classrooms, much work load, lack of motivation, teachers' absenteeism absent and students being unable to freely express themselves.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

Whether the existing teaching/learning aids were being used effectively for the learning activities:

- Results 145 (92.9%) said no while 11(7.0 %)said yes. The interview results also indicate that the teaching/learning aids were too few as compared to the number of students and could not be effectively used for demonstration as the classes are too big for such student to see or feel the teaching /learning aids properly.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS CONT'D

- Further the existing teaching/learning aids were not being used effectively for the learning activities due to their scarcity and the big numbers of students. This makes it hard for learning practical subjects or topics that demand more illustrations and examples in order for students understand hence affecting the learning process.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The big number of students in classes affects the quality of learning since the teachers hardly identify the strength and weaknesses of the individual students for better support.
- Assessments are not properly made and the effectiveness of learning cannot be properly increased. It was nearly impractical to effectively assess a high class during the lesson therefore most students go on with their mistakes without being corrected by teachers

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is hard to identify some of the learning needs of the students because they are too many and only those with extreme situations like the very bright, stubborn or having striking physical features are noticed by the teachers. The reasons for the teachers not being able to address each student learning needs were; lack of time, too many students, much work load, lack of motivation, teachers are always absent and students being unable to freely express themselves

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The existing teaching-learning aids were not being used effectively for the learning activities due to their scarcity and the big numbers of students.
- As much as the teachers would be having the desire to address their students' learning needs, they are constrained by the big numbers of students and time to support them.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- increasing the teachers' salaries so that they don't take most of their time in private schools.
- give teachers special allowance to make them put more effort in teaching students
- Ministry of Education should recruiting more teachers.
- Government to construction more classes/ construction and equipping them.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

CONT'D

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 years	28	17.9
4 – 7 years	122	78.2
8 – 11 years	-	-
More than 10 years	-	-
Not sure	4	2.5

Table 2. Responses on duration of the USE programme in the school

Source: Questionnaires

Conclusion

- There was a big increase in student enrolment in all the schools made study. The high number of students need to correspond with increased numbers of teaching staff and infrastructure like classrooms, libraries, toilets and laboratories. The average
- teacher-student ratio in the selected schools was 1:150 which is high according to the Ministry of Education and Sports standards that recommend the teacher student ratio of 1:40.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The government should Increase the number of teaching staff to reduce the teacher/student ratio to the mandatory 1:40 ratio.
- Government to increase the number of scholastic resources like classrooms, desks, laboratories, libraries among others so as to create a conducive learning environment.
- Teachers to be motivated by both the Government and parents.
- The Government of Uganda should start double shift teaching sessions in secondary schools, and construct more USE schools

RECOMMENDATIONS CONT'D

- District Education Officials should provide quality support supervision to the academic staff and school management and Boards.
- The government to provide accommodation for teachers.
- head teachers and education administrators to stop harassing and intimidating teachers
- Provision of sufficient laboratories and libraries facilities to cater for the increasing number of students

PROPOSED AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Examination of the effectiveness of Government support to the USE programme.
- The effect of the USE on Uganda's education standards.
- The factors affecting teacher efficiency in the implementation of the USE programme in Uganda.

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