

Teachers' Preparedness and Syllabus Content Coverage of History and Geography Subjects in Secondary Schools of Bukanga County, Isingiro district.

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ABSTRACT: The study was done to assess the relationship between teachers' preparedness and syllabus content coverage of history and geography subjects in secondary schools of Bukanga County, Isingiro District. It was guided by the objectives; to find out the level of teachers' preparedness for lessons of history and geography subjects in secondary schools, to find out the level of syllabus content coverage of history and geography Subjects in secondary schools and to establish the relationship of teachers' preparedness and syllabus content coverage of history and geography subjects in secondary schools. This research adopted a descriptive survey design, with a total population of 107 participants, including Head teachers, subject teachers, the Director of Studies, District Education Officer, and District Inspector of Schools. The study's sample size was 93 respondents. Data collection methods involved interviews and documentary review. Qualitative data was analyzed through coding, while quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS, including the computation of the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r). The findings indicated a moderate level of teachers' preparedness with an average mean value of 3.11 and a high level of syllabus content coverage with an average mean value of 3.87. However, the weak positive correlation ($r=0.238$, $p=0.060$, $n=63$) between teachers' preparedness and syllabus content coverage, where the p -value (0.60) exceeded 0.05, suggested that the relationship was not statistically significant. The study recommended that there is a need for adequate and regular feedback and support from the school administration which is crucial for teachers to continuously improve lesson preparation as it was revealed by teachers during the interview. Further, it was recommended that there should be a comparative analysis of teachers' preparedness programs in order to compare and identify different teachers' preparation programs and the most effective approaches for enhancing teachers' preparedness, evaluate the impact of specific training methods, curricula, and pedagogical strategies on teachers' confidence and competence in handling diverse classroom situations. Finally, the study recommended that there is a need by educators to conduct a cross-cultural analysis to compare teacher preparedness, syllabus content coverage across different educational systems and cultures so as to identify cultural factors that influence teacher practices and explore the transferability of successful teaching strategies between learning environments.

Keywords: Teachers' Preparedness, Syllabus Coverage, History, Geography

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers' preparedness is critical to successful content syllabus coverage of History and Geography Subjects in secondary schools which helps the teacher consolidate all the strategies and skills required for reflective practice hence improving learning environment (STiR education, 2022). Efforts to improve effective content syllabus coverage of history and geography subjects in secondary schools are pulled back by woes such as mismanagement and wastage of quality teaching time by teachers, perception that education no longer guarantees employment and limited efforts by parents, teachers, leaders and community to create an enabling learning environment (Njoroge, 2012). Attainment of timely content coverage of syllabus is mainly achieved through teacher's preparedness and hence secondary schools should consider putting more emphasis on teachers' relational factors such as effective communication, conflict resolution, coordination and attitude and pay attention to students' attitude, students' entry behavior and work environment as a basis for timely syllabus coverage.

A study by Makunja (2016) on difficulties facing teachers' preparedness in Tanzania found that teachers had not been oriented through in service training to keep them abreast with core competences for curriculum and syllabus content implementation. Inadequate teachers' pedagogical preparedness was an obstacle to the implementation of secondary school syllabus content. However, teachers' who were critical stakeholders lacked ethics, skills and knowledge for syllabus content delivery in Tanzania.

In Uganda, teachers are enthusiastic about the new NCDC designed syllabus content and their implementation efforts to prepare for schemes, lesson plans, and lesson notes are constrained by a magnitude of challenges not limited to inadequate classrooms for interaction between teachers and learners but with limited skills and guidelines for the new designed content (Tiberius, 2021). In Isingiro district, most teachers may under rate the use of syllabus books, learners' notes, records of work covered that affects syllabus coverage in the new NCDC designed content (DEO Report, 2021). Therefore, it's from the above background that motivated the researcher to conduct a study on teachers' preparedness and syllabus content coverage of history and geography Subjects in secondary schools of Bukanga County, Isingiro district.

This study was guided by the following objectives and research questions:

- i. To find out the level of teachers' preparedness for lessons of history and geography subjects in secondary schools, of Bukanga County, Isingiro district.
- ii. To find out the level of syllabus content coverage of history and geography subjects in secondary schools, of Bukanga County, Isingiro district.
- iii. To establish the relationship between teachers' preparedness and syllabus content coverage of history and geography subjects in secondary schools, of Bukanga County, Isingiro district.

Research Questions

- i. What is the level of teachers' preparedness for lessons of history and geography subjects in secondary schools, of Bukanga County, Isingiro district?
- ii. What is the level of syllabus content coverage of history and geography subjects in secondary schools, of Bukanga County, Isingiro district?

Hypothesis of the study

Ho: There is no statistically significant relationship between teacher's preparedness and syllabus content coverage in history and geography subjects in secondary schools of Bukanga County Isingiro district.

Significances of the study

The findings would be of significance to school administrators, policy makers, parents, researchers, teachers and head teachers at different levels on relating lesson preparation and syllabus content coverage.

The study would be of significant because the result can provide room for the improvement of education in Bukanga Isingiro District and other parts of the country.

The study would be of significant to educationists in outlining the gaps between teachers' preparation for lessons and the record of content covered and pave way forward for students for better academic performance.

The findings may suggest recommendations to the ministry of education and sports on the required standards for teachers' lesson preparations regarding syllabus content coverage as well as implementation of the curriculum.

The findings of study would be of benefit to the educationists in formulating policies concerning syllabus content coverage, funding supervision and monitoring of students' academic excellence.

The findings of the study would widen the horizons of the existing knowledge on the importance of teachers' preparedness and syllabus content coverage forming a data bank for future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Underpinnings

The study was based on the goal setting theory (Salaman, Storey & Billsberry, 2005). Goal-setting theory suggests that the individual goals established by an employee play an important role in motivating him for superior performance. This is because the employees keep following their goals and if these goals are not achieved, they either improve their performance or modify the goals and make them more realistic (Salaman, Storey & Billsberry, 2005).

In this study therefore, the Goal setting theory could be applied and used as an instructional procedure to improve students' writing performance for those who have difficulty in learning writing and also sets a primary level of education that gives school administrators a reason to pay greater attention to teachers' goals during syllabus content coverage. Findings indicate that teachers' goals may impact their professional growth and instructional preparedness. A teacher's "goal orientation" appears to impact his/her likelihood of seeking help in the face of teaching challenges (Butler, 2012), effort at creating motivation helps teachers to prepare that emphasize growth over competition and syllabus content coverage, commitment to serving as a socio-emotional support for students and resistance to teacher burnout (Butler, 2012).

The potential impact of teachers' goals on syllabus content coverage makes teacher goal setting an important research area. Researchers interested in studying teacher goal setting in secondary education might take cues from the previously cited studies and focus on goal orientation; alternatively, they might look at other areas related to goal setting, including characteristics of effective goal setting programs and factors that aid and impede teachers' goal progress. Such research might shape campus-wide and discipline-specific teacher preparation practices, influence programs offered by centers for teaching and learning that leads to syllabus content coverage (Groenewegen, 2019).

The Level of Teacher's Preparedness for Class Lessons of History and Geography Subjects in secondary schools

This section of the study looks at different scholar's views in relation to the level of teacher's preparedness for lessons of history and geography subjects in secondary schools in form of schemes of work, lesson plan and teaching notes.

Schweitzer & Boscki, (2015) in their studies conducted in Europe, Australia and the United States of America, mainly focused on teachers' perceptions on schemes and lesson plans for effective planning of topics to be covered that aids syllabus content coverage, but not on what teachers prepare in their classrooms. White (2015) further found out that the existing literature resolved that scheming, lesson planning and teaching notes are very key in teachers' preparedness that helps secondary school teachers to cover the scope of content, arrangement of content and regular attendance to lessons.

Walker, (2018) argued that due the rapid technological changes currently taking place in Africa in an effort to improve the level of teacher's preparedness for lessons of History and geography Subjects in secondary schools, limited training and traditional concepts make teachers unaware of the range of roles that are required of them even in conventional teaching, teachers being unable to fulfill these roles adequately like applying teaching methods and learning materials even when they are aware of them (Walker, 2018). However, this affects the level of teachers' preparedness over using appropriate teaching methods, confidence, attitudes to learning and beliefs about learning, hence quality education depends on teachers as reflected in the performance of their duties, this can be made possible if the teacher prepares adequately

During preparation for teaching, a scheme of work is very important since it is a kind of a plan that outlines all the learning activities to be covered over a given period of time usually a month or term (Roland Christensen *et al* 2013). He further indicated that the scheme of work guarantees that the task challenges was age –appropriate and that over time arithmetic and reasoning objectives are made in a manner that's makes pedagogical sense (Maicibi, 2013) indicated that a good scheme of work should operate in several levels at the time as a guide to the teacher in the sequence of lessons for a particular course as an expression to the teacher and educationists in understanding and interpreting the syllabus content from which the scheme of work has been derived.

According to Hawes (2021), it was revealed that teachers need to prepare lesson plans and acquire better training in order to maintain a strong teaching profession, so as to realize proper education progress, which has been presented with new problems brought about by knowledge explosion, curriculum development, new concepts of education and new methods of teaching (Maicibi, 2013). The central effectiveness of the teacher in the syllabus content delivery processes is reflected in the fact that, "The teacher in the school interprets the objectives and the content in syllabus design and manages the learning situation through which intention is transformed into actual practice" (Hawes 2021). Other consequences of teachers preparedness includes remedial teaching and use of commercially developed examination papers which at times do not conform to the syllabus content or what the teacher has taught. This has made teachers teach hastily and complete the syllabus basing on unstructured objectives by drilling students to pass exams and using few methods of teaching.

In Kenya, Jones *et al* (2017) conducted a study to realize teachers' preparedness and found that there should be effective teaching materials, the school inspectors are expected to visit schools regularly, organize seminars and in-service courses for the teachers to apply teaching methods and how best to improve their classroom activities. Teachers with little or no training tend to use authoritarian and inefficient teaching methods of instruction that make learners see the school as a repressive place with little things to enjoy, and also teachers use a small number of methods, typically chalk and talk, question and answer and textbook assignment (Bradley, Steve, and Jim Taylor, 2014). They advocate that teachers should use a variety of methods besides planning and structuring the teaching to accomplish instructional goals.

The Level of Syllabus Content Coverage of History and Geography Subjects in secondary Schools

Organized, detailed, and orderly presentation of topics and subtopics plays a pivotal role in achieving content orderliness in various forms of communication, ranging from academic papers to presentations and reports (Smith *et al.*, 2019; Johnson & Williams, 2018). By adhering to a structured arrangement of information, audiences are offered a clear and coherent framework through which they can grasp the subject matter effectively. The careful delineation of main topics and their corresponding subtopics allows for a logical

flow of ideas, aiding comprehension and retention. This approach is supported by research indicating that well-structured content enhances cognitive processing and knowledge retention (Smith *et al.*, 2019; Johnson & Williams, 2018). Moreover, the systematic arrangement of content fosters a sense of coherence, guiding readers or viewers through a seamless progression of concepts. Thus, the incorporation of organized and detailed topics and subtopics not only promotes content orderliness but also enhances the overall quality of communication.

According to Johnson *et al.* (2010), content details play a pivotal role in enhancing the overall coverage of the syllabus in education. By providing comprehensive and well-structured information about various topics, content details ensure that the syllabus encompasses a wide range of relevant concepts and knowledge. This comprehensive coverage aids in fulfilling the educational objectives set by the curriculum, enabling students to gain a deep understanding of the subject matter. As stated by Johnson *et al.* (2010), a detailed and organized presentation of content supports effective learning outcomes by allowing educators to systematically guide students through key concepts. Furthermore, it allows students to grasp complex ideas, fostering a holistic understanding of the subject. In this way, content details act as the building blocks that construct a robust foundation for students' education, facilitating a thorough engagement with the syllabus.

Groenewegen, (2019) revealed that the teaching and learning activities without followings cope of the content does not make sense. He further observed that scope of the content should be covered using adequately appropriate teaching strategies and that it should not overlap for it creates confusion with the recipients. Many at times content coverage spill over to the next classes making it impossible for teachers not to properly allocate equal time to various topics to be covered, hence making content coverage in the syllabus slowed.

A report by UNESCO, (2017) carried out all over the world on strengthening peer learning showed that using extra lessons to compensate missed lessons has a positive impact on syllabus content coverage. The report further showed that during games and sports which are important for learners to relax, lessons are missed which affects syllabus content coverage. Therefore, extra time should be allocated for teaching missed lessons in order to accomplish the syllabus in the stipulated period.

The Relationship between Teachers' Preparedness and Syllabus Content Coverage of History and Geography Subjects in secondary Schools

Researchers have studied components of teachers' preparation of traditional and alternative certification route programs by examining teacher's perception of overall preparedness. For instance, abbreviated pre service preparation for teachers certified alternatively has led teachers to feel less prepared than teachers certified traditionally, so they leave the teaching profession early (Luhambati, 2018). Student teaching has been deemed as essential to teacher preparedness; longer field placements for student teaching provides teachers with more time to be in the instructional role to gain awareness and preparedness. However, teachers in alternative certification programs have reported an overlap of content and in limited opportunity to apply practice as reason for difficulty with overall teacher preparedness (Luhambati, 2018).

Hickerson et.-al (2016) revealed that when there is practice gap in the process of preparation for work, individuals enter a job with limited knowledge and skills which leads to stress and hardships that affect job performance. Deficits in educational programs are a factor that prevents new educators from being able to meet the demands of their job (Hickerson *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, the preparation to practice gap can describe how teachers accumulate job related stress due to such cause that affects syllabus content coverage. As teachers' level of stress grows like feeling ineffective on the job, being overwhelmed and unpreparedness, it becomes a leading reason why teachers fail to cover the syllabus coverage of history and geography Subjects in secondary schools. Also due to inadequate preparedness, teachers who are alternatively certified have higher turnover rates than teachers who are traditionally certified (Altinyelken, 2021).

Prilleltensky *et al* (2016) related that teachers keeping up with paperwork, grading student work, and dealing with student conflicts enable them to complete the syllabus content coverage. But student misbehavior was the number one stressor for teachers that disrupt teaching and learning process (Prilleltensky *et al.*, 2016). For the purposes of this study, the specific components of teachers preparedness included time management, discipline and motivation, (Fimian & Fastenau, 2019). Time management affects teacher's in lesson preparation , large class sizes, too much paperwork associated with their role, and failure to get time to devote to personal priorities for syllabus coverage, (Fimian & Fastenau, 2019).

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a descriptive survey design which is an approach of descriptive research that blends the quantitative and qualitative data to provide the researcher with relevant and accurate information. The main advantage of this type of design is that it enables the researcher to assess the situation within the study area at the time of the study. The researcher therefore used the design to assess the level of teachers' preparedness on syllabus content coverage of history and geography subjects in secondary schools of Bukanga County, Isingiro District. According to Kothari (2013) a descriptive study is concerned with finding out who, what, where and

how of a phenomenon which is the concern of this study. Thus, the researcher deemed the design appropriate for the study as it allows investigation of how different factors affect teacher preparedness in the area of study.

Sample and Sampling Procedures

Sample size is the number of items to be selected from the population to constitute a sample. The target group must be of an optimum size that should neither be excessively large nor too small (Kothari, 2013). The larger sample gives accurate information of the respondent but if the sample is too small the researcher could not obtain accuracy information. Therefore, according to Morgan and Krejcie table (1970), the appropriate size of this study was 93 respondents as categorized in the table below.

Table 1: Target Population and Sample Procedures

Categories of Respondents	Population	Sample size	Sampling Techniques
DEO	01	01	Purposive Sampling technique
DIS	01	01	Purposive Sampling technique
Head teachers	19	14	Purposive Sampling technique
DOS	19	14	Purposive Sampling technique
Subject teachers	82	63	Simple Random Sampling technique
Total	122	93	

Validity and Reliability

Validity

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represent the phenomena under study. A valid instrument should accurately measure what it is supposed to measure. After administering the instruments to the two research supervisors from faculty of Education at Bishop Stuart University, the content validity index was calculated.

$$\text{Content Validity Index (CVI)} = \frac{\text{Relevant questions}}{\text{Total questions}}$$

Table 3.2: Content Validity Index

Number of questions	Number of questions rate relevant	CVI
22	20	0.909

The CVI for the interview guides was 0.909 which was above 0.7 the recommended CIV value as demonstrated in table 3.2 above. Hence rendering the instrument valid for use.

Reliability

To test on the reliability of the instruments, the researcher used split-half method. The method involves scoring two halves usually odd and even items of a test separately for category of the instruments and then calculating the correlation coefficient for the two sets of scores. The coefficient indicates the degree to which the two halves of the test provide the same results and hence describes the internal consistency of the test. Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula below was used to test the reliability of the instruments:

$$r = \frac{2 \times \text{Corr. between the Halves}}{1 + \text{Corr. between the Halves}}$$

Where r = reliability of the coefficient resulting from correlating the scores of the odd items with the scores of the even items.

According to Resnik (2015), a correlation co-efficient of about 0.8 is high enough to judge the instruments are reliable for the study.

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