

The Influence of School Physical Environment on Students Academic Performance in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania

Peruth Mathias Nyanda^{1*}, Jackson Kaijage²

^{1,2}Department of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences, Jordan University College, Morogoro, Tanzania

Abstract: This study sought in assessing the influence of school physical environment on student's academic performance in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. The study employed descriptive research design with mixed methods approach whereby the sample of 99 respondents comprising 60 students, 32 teachers, 3 WEOs, 3 head of schools and 01 District educational officer DEOs in Morogoro Municipality was drawn from the target population of 100 people. Purposive sampling technique and simple random technique were used in this study. Purposive sampling was used in selecting DEOs, head of the schools and WEOs, while simple random technique were used in selecting students and teachers. Interview, focus group discussion, Observation and questionnaire were used as tools for collecting primary data while documentary review was used to collect secondary data. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 and content analysis. The findings of the study revealed that, that the insufficient of school physical facilities in school is the source of overcrowded in the classroom, truancy and poor academic Performance. Therefore, measures like involvement of stakeholders, provision of school funds, building of school hostel, Management of School Physical Facilities, Construction of more schools, motivation for teachers and students, school should be well designed and construction of health rooms. Therefore, by addressing this issue comprehensively, Tanzanian society can improve the academic performance of students and future prospects of learners in the country.

Keywords: School physical environment, Student's academic Performance.

1. Introduction

School physical environment it is a place where teaching and learning takes place. It is a residence that keeps students safe up to the end of their learning program. The school physical environment encompasses the school buildings and all its contents including physical structures, infrastructure, furniture, and the use and presence of chemicals and biological agents, the site on which a school is located (Tanner, 2008). This definition implies that there are various school environmental variables and these may differ from one school to another. Mick Zais (2011) revealed that the physical environment is a crucial component of a student's life. In the school environment, there are things that positively influence students' performance. Such things include perceiving that teachers are caring and

supportive, believing that discipline is efficient and fair, participating in extracurricular activities, being a part of a school, and having a sense of belonging. Students become incorporated into their environment when they perceive that the adults in the school care about them as individuals and their learning.

The educational system is undoubtedly a system that produces different products and could be viewed as a factory that requires peculiar environment like physical facilities, school site, the buildings, equipment, machinery, furniture, electrical, money and water supply to aid production (Koroye, 2016). The findings also revealed that availability of resources play an important role in determining learning effectiveness. Similarly, the study done in Kenya by Nambuya (2013) revealed that provision of adequate learning facilities including equipment and human resources enhances the quality and relevance of imparted skills to learners. This is because learning involves interaction of students with the environment which includes the quality of classrooms, laboratories, libraries, playing fields and textbooks, among others. Indeed, physical resources go long way in creating conducive environment that promotes students' commitment toward learning. According to Kapinga (2017), there was an increase 5.1 percent in the number of students' enrolment in secondary schools for the year 2016. According to Fatima et al. (2019) this poor condition of the school physical environment slowed down the teaching and learning process of the students.

The recent study by Lyimo, Too, and Kipng'etich (2017) in Tanzania, was confined with the perceptions of teachers on the availability of instructional materials and physical facilities in secondary schools in Arusha region, it may be difficult to appropriately intervene the condition of school physical environment for effective improvement of the students' academic performance. Therefore, the current study intended to investigate on the school's physical environment and its influence on the students' academic performance in government secondary school in Morogoro municipality.

A. General Objective

This study investigated and assess the influence of school physical environment on secondary school students' academic

*Corresponding author: nyandaperuth@gmail.com

performance in Morogoro Municipality–Tanzania.

2. Methodology

A. Research Design

This study employed mixed approaches which are quantitative and qualitative approach, whereby the researcher used interview, focus group discussion, observation and questionnaire as tools of data collection. The sample of 99 people comprising of 60 students as main respondents, 32 teachers, 3 head of schools, 3 WEOs and 1 DEOs in Morogoro municipality.

3. Study Findings

A. Provision of Enough Funds

Therefore, provision of enough funds for school physical facilities maintenance, the researcher wanted to know if funds provided for school physical facilities maintenance can improve school environment, the response were as follows 29 (48.3%) strongly agreed with the statement, 24 (40.0%) agreed, 3 (5.0%) strongly disagreed and 4 (6.7%) disagreed. These findings revealed that there is a need for the government to provide enough funds for school physical facilities maintenance. And this implies that through the provision of funds in schools enables schools to make maintenance of old buildings and repairing of broken chairs/tables and make students study comfortably. Kapur (2019) suggested that members of educational organizations need to invest resources to improve school infrastructure. Similarly, the budget from the government should be allocated on time according to prevailing needs. This will enhance better academic achievement in secondary schools.

B. Involvement of Stakeholders

respondents suggested that it is very important to involve all stakeholders in suggesting areas for construction of new schools, because some of them are familiar with the environments. 32(53.3) % of respondents agreed, 17 (28.3%) strongly agreed, 5(8.3%) strongly disagree and 6(10.0%) disagree. For example, the Involvement of different stakeholders like, parents or community members, local authority leaders, and other can reduce the possibility of constructing schools far away from where student's resident and save them from walking a long distance from home to school, but also this can help to build schools in conducive location simply because some areas are not accessible when there is rain. Singh & Kumar (2017) suggested that good educational achievement, quality education and better outcomes are contributed by both parents and the government. Therefore, the responses obtained from the respondents shows that there is a need of involving all stakeholders to identify good locations of new schools before starting to build them, so that students can enjoy being part and parcel of their schools.

C. Building of School Hostel

Having school hostels/dormitories can help to improve school environment, because having them enable students to

live in schools and avoid walking a long distance, the responses obtained from the questionnaires showed that, 30(50.0%) Strongly agreed the statement, 22(36.7%) agreed the statement, 3(5.0%) strongly disagreed the statement, while 5(8.3%) disagreed with the statement. Therefore, the government should put more effort into constructing dormitories to save students by letting them stay near the school environment therefore from the findings it shows that Most of the students suffer because school has no dormitories to accommodate them, most of them walk a long distance to and from the school therefore having school dormitories is very important especially for girls, who are dropping out of school due to pregnancy, and this will influence academic performance for them. also it may help them and influence them to study more rather than when they back home they end up doing house chaos.

D. Management of School Physical Facilities

Management of school physical facilities is inevitable, because without managing them they will not stay longer and make the school environment non-conducive for students to learn. For example, when textbooks, chairs/chairs, and laboratory apparatus are not managed well they are likely to disappear in a short period of time. the responses obtained from questionnaire shows that 30(50.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed that when school physical facilities are managed well it can help to improve school environment, 25(41.7%) agreed with the statement, 2(3.3%) strongly disagreed. On the other hand, 2(3.3%) disagree the statement, responses management of physical facilities is one of the ways to improve secondary school Environment.

E. Motivation for Teachers and Students

The availability of good teaching and learning facilities in secondary schools encourages teachers and students to teach and learn with morale. Also, productive environments motivate teachers and students to teach and learn well in school. Teachers should be motivated by being given housing services that raise their morale to prepare good teaching in productive learning environment which will lead students to succeed in their subjects. This means that a productive environment encourages them to do their activity well, especially academic issues". Teachers and students are human beings who need a friendly environment in teaching and learning programs, not only that but they also need psychological motivation to make them feel better, desire to learn and teach and be taught more. Instruction and motivation are techniques or methods for teaching and learning students (Mubaya & Reisen, 2016).

F. Schools Should be Well Designed

To ensure a more attractive and practical school infrastructure, there must be a good design or standard school infrastructure according to the modern designs to motivate both teachers and learners for better achievement. Schools should be built in a modern style to attract learners and teachers. Also, provisions should be made for those with special needs; teachers' offices should be set up near toilets or with in-built toilets for better convenience. Offices should be built with specifications for the relevant departments. School halls should

be built to be used for different purposes such as during school meetings. Student toilets should be well constructed that have good water supply and electricity systems. Among the government's proposals for secondary education is to ensure the availability of standard physical resources (TIE, 2013).

G. Construction of Health Rooms

Health room construction is very important to every public secondary school. According to TIE (2013) emphasis is to ensure well-stocked dispensaries are available for boarding secondary schools and health rooms provided for day schools stocked with health facilities and services. A healthy student will read well since the body is fit, otherwise, he or she will not understand or retain what is taught. If healthcare is accessible, students will save time when they are in school. Abraham Maslow indicated in his pyramid that safety was an essential thing to human life. Therefore, Students also need safety in school in order to read well and have a healthy body. Therefore, the presence of a health room in every school will help students to learn well.

H. The Government should Construct More Schools

The government should construct more schools and classrooms to overcome the overcrowding of students in classes. For the issue of a large number of students enrolling in secondary schools, the government should construct more schools to reduce the overcrowding in classrooms, toilets and laboratories. We expect each class to have only 45 students so that the teacher can teach effectively and learners can understand better. TIE (2013) the classrooms shall not promote overcrowding given available tables, chairs, desks, overhead projectors and rulers.

4. Summary of the Study

The findings revealed that most government secondary school in Morogoro Municipality does not have enough school physical environment for both teaching and learning. And this made the increase of poor performance to the students, truancy and overcrowded in the classrooms, the study underscored the importance of involving of stakeholders, provision of school funds, building of school hostel, Management of School Physical Facilities, Construction of more schools, motivation for teachers and students, school should be well designed and construction of health rooms. Through the collaboration may enhance and improve the student's performance.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings gathered School management teams should work hard to improve the identified school environmental factors as the study revealed that proper school environment is essential for learning to take place. The identified students' commitment toward learning needs to be

rewarded for students to maintain such a spirit as it is a key factor for effective learning to take place also It is important for school administrators to work on the identified challenges to create conducive learning environment which has been found to have a positive effect toward students' commitment towards learning.

6. Recommendation

- The Government and education stakeholders should put in place arrangements for the construction of libraries for each government secondary school which do not have libraries. For schools with libraries, the Government should ensure that relevant resources are available including textbooks and other materials.
- Teaching and learning materials should also be distributed to schools to make teaching and learning easier and encourage students to study overtime even when they are alone. It will also build their lasting memory as they will learn by sight, touch. This will help to increase academic performance for students and schools.
- The government should make sure that the increase of student enrollment in schools goes together with the number and condition of the school physical environment available for each school. Moreover, the government may set up new schools to reduce student overcrowding in current schools. This will increase teachers' efficiency and give students the opportunity to achieve high academic performance in their studies.

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