



TO IDENTIFY THE DIFFERENCE IN TEST- SCORE OF THE STUDENTS TAUGHT USING ECLECTIC LEARNING APPROACH AND THOSE TAUGHT USING CONVENTIONAL METHODS IN CRE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MACHAKOS COUNTY.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess eclectic learning approach and its effect on students' learning outcomes in Christian Religious Education in public secondary Schools in Machakos County, Kenya. The specific objective was to identify the difference in Test-score of the students taught using eclectic learning approach and those taught using conventional methods in CRE in public secondary schools in Machakos County. The study was guided by Kozulin's Mediated Theory. The study adapted mixed methodology and a Quasi Experimental Research Design and to be specific the Solomon's Four Non Equivalent Control Group Research Design. The target population comprised of 21 principals, and 1680 Form Three CRE students totaling to 1701 in the 21 extra county schools in Machakos County. Two Extra County schools (one girl's and one boy's school) were selected using Stratified random sampling technique. Random sampling technique was used to select 160 Form three CRE students from the two extra county schools. Each school had two streams with each stream having 40 CRE students. Two principals were sampled using purposive sampling. The total number of respondents were 162. The study used students' questionnaires, and interview guide as tools for data collection. The research instruments were piloted in one Extra-County Girl's school and one Extra-County Boy's school in the neighboring Makueni County to ascertain validity and reliability. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of STATA Version 14. Presentation of data was done using tables. The study deduced that students' test score was significantly greater once students were taught CRE using eclectic learning approach compared to when they were taught CRE using conventional learning approach. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education ought to ensure that all secondary schools have a learning environment which stimulates strong learner performance towards their achievement goal; there is need to improve students' test-scores in their exams and that there is need for concerted efforts from the various stakeholders including the ministry of education, principals and teachers to integrate eclectic learning approach.

Key words: Conventional Teaching, test score, Eclectic Learning, Learning ou

Background to the Study

Eclectic approach is usually systematic in developed countries like the United Kingdom, France, and China, and the trainer should have knowledge of the approach in order to ensure that the method works out appropriately and efficiently in the classroom situation of the learning institution. The teacher has to adopt unique strategies while teaching where the students are able to gain the necessary knowledge on the subjects being taught. Eclectic learning employs a variety of methods that aid in the creation of a more comfortable learning environment for students (Baytar, 2016).

The eclectic method is usually different from the traditional and cognitive methods (Disvar and Tahriri, 2009). The approval covers knowledge construction, content integration, bias elimination, and competitive aptitudes empowerment. Trainers, who are also teachers, must accommodate and apply a new way of thinking in order to incorporate the changes. The concept of bilingual knowledge learning is based on the development of vision during the learning process. Teachers are able to advance in their multilingual learning applications. Teachers can assist students in gaining information in order to properly regulate them. Cognitive learning, on the other hand, is based on the abilities and knowledge they possess, allowing the teacher to commence learning on them. Knowledge should make sense in having an importance among the students with their inhaled knowledge when using cognitive approaches (Paul and Elder, 2008). This enables students to put their skills to use in resolving challenges arising from a real-life scenario.

A study conducted in Zambia by Mwanza (2019) on The Eclectic Method to language teaching: clarification and conceptual extensions, it was established that the methods which have been included in the continuum (combinations) are not prescriptive of what should constitute a single method, simple or complex eclecticism. The number and choice of methods are just an example of the possible combinations. With the eclectic continuum, the point is that teacher development through the use of the eclectic approach is continuous and progressive.

Learners in Kenya's educational system must be able to spend more time and effort in their studies in order to get excellent grades and acquire the abilities that employers need in future employment (Hammond, 2010). Students' learning outcomes at public secondary schools have a role in determining whether or not they will be allowed to continue their studies in higher education institutions, particularly universities. The learning outcome of a student also determines whether or not the student has received critical instruction at the learning institution. Learners with high-level learning outcomes are thought to have a better probability of living a happy life in the future. According to Barker and Gum (2014), Government's efforts are aimed at boosting academic outcomes, which are ascribed to a variety of interventions such as scholarships, teacher training, and infrastructural supply throughout the country.

In Kenya, the learning of CRE dates back to the beginning of formal education. Kenya's educational systems were examined in order to capture the country's cultural values. In 1964, a commission led by Prof. Simeon Ominde established and stated that CRE should be included in school curricula to ensure that knowledge and values are obtained during the learning process (Murray, 2011). Currently, the usefulness, weight, and applicability of CRE in personal development have faced numerous problems, which are expected to continue to grow over time (Ravindran, 2005). According to a KNEC Report (2020), schools should strive to foster moral and spiritual growth in students in

order to foster beneficial development that is associated with good morals. In order to increase the learners' personal development, this must be done in compliance with and adherence to national, social, and cultural objectives. As a result, CRE is viewed as an academic subject that could aid in the delivery of high-quality education.

Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in Test-score of the students taught using eclectic learning approach and those taught using conventional method in CRE in public secondary schools in Machakos County..

Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Kozulin's Mediated Theory proposed in 2002. According to the theory, for learning to take place there has to be some interventions between the material to be learned (content) and the learner (Kozulin, 2002). The Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) describes a special quality of interaction between a learner and a teacher, who will be called a "mediator". The function of a mediator is different from that of a teacher and the mediator will provide an intervention by use of eclectic learning approach.

Review of Literature

One of the most important aspects of students' learning outcomes is assessment. The evaluation of students' work is referred to as test score assessment. Similarly, evaluation may be defined as making a decision, recognizing a product's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the good and bad, as well as the right and wrong in some situations (Bailey, 2008). Educational evaluation is an important element of learning and the practice of teaching, and helps enhance learners' success via eclectic learning method. Changes in the skills and knowledge needed for success; in understanding of how students learn; and in link between assessment and teaching have prompted the shift in assessment techniques. Policy makers, educators, students, parents, and administrators in the educational community all have various perspectives on how to apply assessment techniques. Teachers have struggled with deciding which evaluation technique to use in evaluating learners' outcomes using an eclectic learning approach. (Hoke, 2008). Traditional assessment refers to the typical techniques of testing which usually produces written document, such as quizzes or examinations. Traditional evaluation includes standardized tests and most state achievement tests (Taras, 2015). These are examinations that teachers offer to students to see how much they have learnt in an eclectic learning style.

In an eclectic learning approach, there are two major concepts that describe students' learning outcomes: performance, which is defined as a student's active generation of a response that is observable either directly or indirectly via a permanent product; and authenticity, which is defined as the nature of the task and context in which the assessment occurs is relevant and represents "real world" problems or issues. Some essay examinations are performance-based, but there are many more, such as science experiments, making speeches, sending letters to newspaper editors, creative output, and conducting surveys (Taras, 2015). Portfolios are collections of student work that demonstrates mastery of task skill and expression. Student participation in material selection, merit grading standards, and evidence of student self-reflection must all be included in the collection. Portfolios necessitate a lot of input and accountability from the student due to their cumulative nature. A student portfolio for assessment purposes is a collection of reports, papers, and other materials, as well as the student's reflection on his or her learning and strengths and shortcomings as part of

an eclectic learning strategy. The test-score portfolio is created by a single student, either under the instruction of the teacher or on their own initiative. It may also include reports of grades, assessments, and examinations, and it is normally kept together in a binder or on a computer so that it can be quickly distributed to defined faculty for the purpose of evaluating an eclectic learning strategy (Jurcova, 2007)

Various assessment techniques, including as tutor rating scales and peer ratings, can be included in the portfolio to provide evidence of the student's performance in an eclectic learning strategy. According to Bailey (2008), traditional evaluations are mostly standardized. The majority of standardized examinations primarily examine the learner's lower-order cognitive skills. On this basis, Simonson et al. (2000) stated that traditional assessment frequently focuses on a learner's capacity to memorize and remember which lower-level cognitive skills are. Learners must exhibit their knowledge in a predetermined manner while using traditional test technologies. Students' learning outcomes and portfolio evaluations, unlike traditional assessments, are classroom-based and primarily test higher-order thinking skills. As a result, students can exhibit what they've learned by participating in hands-on activities as part of the eclectic learning approach (Rust, 2012).

Traditional evaluations are deceptive and unreliable (Bailey, 2008). In comparison to an eclectic learning method, standard evaluation is primarily one-shot, speed-based, and norm-referenced, according to Bailey (2008). Law and Eckes (1995) concur with Bailey's opinion that traditional assessments are one-time tests. That is, they assess what students can do at any given time. Test results, on the other hand, do not reflect a child's improvement. As a result, they have no way of knowing what problems the students had during the test. Students, on the other hand, have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge by undertaking meaningful and realistic tasks in performance and portfolio assessments. This allows for the monitoring of the student's development as well as a focus on the student's growth and performance through the use of an eclectic learning strategy. That is, if a learner fails to complete a task at a specific time, he or she can still demonstrate their ability at a later time and in a different situation. This suggests that, unlike traditional evaluations, which are one-shot, performance and portfolio assessments are longitudinal and continual. Because students' learning outcomes and portfolio evaluations are continuous and longitudinal, the teacher has the opportunity to assess the student's strengths and shortcomings in a number of areas and settings. Performance and test score evaluations are real in the sense that they allow students to show their understanding of the content in their own unique ways, drawing on a variety of intelligences. Learners get a chance to practice actual actions they would experience in real life. In an eclectic learning approach, these activities help them to transfer their skills to a variety of real-world scenarios (Simonson et al., 2010).

Methodology

The study employed Mixed Methodology paradigm, since it used both quantitative and qualitative methods. This methodology was suited for this study since the data which was acquired required both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Creswell and Clark (2007), observe that mixed methodology is of great importance because the combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches provides better understanding of research problem and complex phenomena than either approach alone. A mixed methods study design, according to Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and

Turner (2007), comprises the collection of both qualitative (open-ended) and quantitative (closed-ended) data response to reach questions or hypotheses.

Research Findings:

Descriptive Statistics for Posttest Scores in all the Groups

Sub-Category	Mean	Std. Dev.	Freq.
C1	48.45	21.583	40
C2	50.3	15.262	40
E1	57.8	17.864	40
E2	59.45	16.958	40

The Table presents data on the mean and standard deviation of posttest achievement of students in the two control groups (C1 and C2) and experimental groups (E1 and E2). From their mean score, it shows that the Control Group C1 posted a mean score of 48.45% and Control Group 2 obtained a mean score of 50.3%. Experimental Group E1 had a mean score of 57.8% and E2 had mean score of 59.45%. This finding indicates that both the Experimental Groups (E1 and E2) posted a higher mean score compared to the corresponding the control groups (C1 and C2).

T-test analysis of Posttest score of CLA and ELA

Groups	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	t-value	P-value	Decision
Differences							
CLA	80	49.375	18.5966	9.25	3.2550	0.0014	Reject null
ELA	80	58.625	17.3266				

In order to establish the difference in test scores of Students who were taught CRE using ELA and those taught using CLA, a two-sample t-test was conducted as shown in the table, based on the formulated null hypothesis, as follows

H₀: There is no significant difference in Test-score of the students taught using eclectic learning approach and those taught using conventional methods in CRE.

The table shows that teaching CRE using CLA had a mean Students' test score of 49.375 percent while using ELA had a mean Students' test score of 58.625 percent. The difference in the two samples was 9.25, with a computed t-statistic of 3.2550 whose associated p-value was 0.0014. Since the computed p-value was less than 0.01, it shows that the difference was statistically significant at the 1 percent level of significance. This indicated that experimental (ELA)

group had performed better than the control (CLA) group. Therefore, the null hypothesis that stated there is statistically no significant difference in achievement of students taught CRE using ELA and those taught using Conventional Methods was rejected. This implies that teaching CRE to students using eclectic learning approach had a statistically greater effect on students' test score compared to using conventional learning approach. The study findings conform to what was established in a study in Pakistan by Suleman & Ishtiaq (2016), that eclectic learning approach has positive effect on students' academic achievement and retention. Indeed, the eclectic learning approach was found to be more productive, effective and successful in teaching of English as compared to traditional learning approach at elementary level. This could attributed to what was established by Jebiwot (2014) in a study in Kenya that use of Eclectic Method in teaching made teaching innovative and enjoyable and learning objectives easily achieved.

Recommendations

In order to improve students' test-scores in their exams, there is need for concerted efforts from the various stakeholders including the ministry of education, principals and teachers to integrate eclectic learning approach.

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