

**EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES ON ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:**

**A CASE STUDY OF KAKAMEGA MUNICIPALITY,
KAKAMEGA CENTRAL DISTRICT**

BY

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DECLARATION

I Muhindi Anjelyne Kavere, affirm that the work restricted to this report is by my hard work, and hence it has never been submitted for this award here in or any other institution of higher education.


Sign: . Muhindi

Muhindi Anjelyne Kavere
Student

Date: 30/04/2013

APPROVAL

This piece of work has been under my supervision and now it is ready to be submitted for examination.

Sign:  _____

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(Supervisor)

Date: 30/04/2013

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank my almighty God for his continuous support through giving me strength, power, life, wisdom and granting me this favor to be able to accomplish this piece of work.

Secondly, I would like to thank my parents, Charles Muhindi and Brenda Mikago for the support they have given me towards my education.

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May God reward you all abundantly.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the effects of communication difficulties on academic performance of learners with hearing impairment. The study was guided by specific objectives that included; identifying ways in which our communication can be improved to suit school performance, the effect of communication on school performance, roles of the school in reducing communication barriers.

The study was descriptive and analytical in nature where purposive sampling was used to select population. It employed 60 respondents. Data were analysed and presented using frequencies and percentages and were tabulated.

The major findings of the study were; most of the respondents were females. The study revealed the effects of communication difficulties on academic performance are; child abuse, poor performance and dropout of school.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

Communication is the process of transmitting and receiving ideas, information, and messages. The rapid transmission of information over long distances and ready access to information have become conspicuous and important features of human society, especially in the past 150 years, and in the past two decades, increasingly so (Microsoft Encarta 2005) Communication between two people is an outgrowth of methods developed over centuries of expression. Gestures, the development of language, and the necessity to engage in joint action all played a part.

Language is a communication among human beings that is characterized by the use of arbitrary spoken or written symbols with agreed-upon meanings. More broadly, language may be defined as communication in general; it is regarded by some linguists as a form of knowledge, that is, of thought or cognition.

Hearing is one of the five senses, the physiological process of perceiving sound. Mammalian ears may be subdivided into three parts: outer, middle, and inner.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite the rampage of communication in the area, the district authorities have never come up with any significant ways to address this problem. However to some extent the district! Stakeholders had come up with teaching aids to reduce the intensity of this problem to pupils with hearing impairment but this never yielded any success as little or no monitoring was done to see to it that the policy at hand was implemented.

This study intends to identify the impact of communication in Kakamega Municipality and the entire population will be asked to give their suggestions about what can be done within their midst to curb down this problem.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This research is directed by two sets of objectives;

1.2.1 General Objective

The purpose of this study is to examine Effects of Communication difficulties on academic performance of learners with hearing impairment in Kakamega Municipality.

1.2.2 Objectives of the Study

The study will be guided by the following objectives.

- i. Identify ways in which our communication can be improved to suit school performance
- ii. Effect of communication on school performance
- iii. Roles of the school in keeping reducing communication barriers.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. What are the ways in which communication can be improved to suit school performance?
- ii. What are the effects of communication on school performance?
- iii. What are the roles of school in keeping communication?

1.4 Scope of the Study

The research was conducted in Kakamega Municipality, Kakamega Central District. The study focused on the Effects of Communication difficulties on academic performance of learners with hearing impairment. The study was conducted in February and March, 2013

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study will be helpful to school administrators in inculcating scientific attitude among pupils.

The study will be useful to pupils who have poor performance or who always perform worst.

It is envisaged that the study will be useful in curriculum development and in formulating policies that can address the problems of poor performance in science.

The study will help to sensitize the general public about the causes, effects and mitigation measures of communication which is brought about as a result of conflicting noise from children, noise from nearby neighbours and among others.

The findings of this study will avail information to any scholar who may need the information for a related research.

Recommendations will be made from the findings which will be relevant to policy makers for the formulation of policies and implementation of future educational, health welfare and communication improving policies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter attempts to discuss different definitions of communication and to review related literature to the impacts of communication on school performance in different parts of the world.

To protect the interests of your schools, staff, and students a comprehensive education and analysis team is available to focus on specific communication problems and for the review of any case information that exists. We have experience with consulting to attorneys and educational departments.

We educate you to understand the subtleties of the multifaceted, complex, and specialized issues involved in the communication that include: language, teaching aids, ways how teachers teach.

2.1 Ways in which communication can be improved

Body language and person-to-person contact are particularly important aspects of communication for hearing-impaired students, but this kind of interaction is also considered vital in business transactions, interviews, and many other settings. Landrigan P. et al (June, 1999).

Building reading rooms for students with hearing Impairment: In schools reading rooms or libraries should be built so as to give a conducive reading communication difficulties for the pupils. We know that one cannot read in a noisy place so as to improve on the school performance.

Qualified Teachers: Winkins (1990) also says that a good and effective teacher should be able to deal with each student according to his or her own needs for the good performance.

Select a design team that has specific experience in dealing with the integration of day lighting and indoor air quality strategies into school projects. When qualifying firms ask them to provide you with examples of their successes in designing green schools. Have them

provide information on the computer day lighting and energy simulation tools that they use in the design process and what indoor air quality measures they typically employ.

Evans et al (1991) also argued that to rebuild a system, primary education must be improvised dramatically and that of course means and initial focus on substantially improving pre and up-grading training of teachers, this was from his book pre-investment study.

Mental and physical development: Schwartz, Wendy and Hanson, Katherine, (1992.) indicates that teachers must consider students' mental and physical development and the effect of their own attitudes and behaviours on girls' participation and performance in.

Personality: With this there are fast learners and slow learners in that a person is naturally weak in academics and Entwistle (1990) under study among first year university students that "introverts perform better than extroverts"

2.2 Effects of Communication on School Performance

Spitzer, Eliot, NYS Atty. Gen.(2000), we like to think schools are safe, healthy places that create an atmosphere conducive to learning, creativity and mind broadening experiences. In some cases, quite the opposite is true.

It is well recognized that hearing is critical to speech and language development, communication, and learning. Children with listening difficulties due to hearing loss or auditory processing problems continue to be an under identified and underserved population.

The earlier hearing loss occurs in a child's life, the more serious the effects on the child's development. Similarly, the earlier the problem is identified and intervention begun, the less serious the ultimate impact. The gap between the vocabulary of children with normal hearing and those with hearing loss widens with age. Children with hearing loss do not catch up without intervention.

Children with hearing loss have difficulty in understanding words with multiple meanings. For example, the word bank can mean the edge of a stream or a place where we put money. Children with hearing loss often cannot hear quiet speech sounds such as "s," "sh," "f," "t," and "k" and therefore do not include them in their speech. Thus, speech may be difficult to understand.

Children with hearing loss may not hear their own voices when they speak. They may speak too loudly or not loud enough. They may have a speaking pitch that is too high. They may sound like they are mumbling because of poor stress, poor inflection, or poor rate of speaking.

Children with hearing loss have difficulty with all areas of academic achievement, especially reading and mathematical concepts.

Children with mild to moderate hearing losses, on average, achieve one to four grade levels lower than their peers with normal hearing, unless appropriate management occurs. Children with severe to profound hearing loss usually achieve skills no higher than the third- or fourth-grade level, unless appropriate educational intervention occurs early.

The gap in academic achievement between children with normal hearing and those with hearing loss usually widens as they progress through school.

The level of achievement is related to parental involvement and the quantity, quality, and timing of the support services children receive.

Students with hearing impairments are likely to perform poorly as there are some teachers who don't care whether some one has understood or not. They just say that, "let's move with those ones who have understood and those who have not understood will ask their friends", without putting into consideration that there are some whose hearing sense is not good.

Some students end up doing things that they are not meant to do, if he or she has not understood what the teacher or instructor is saying thus resulting into drop out since a child can not be in a school without learning anything.

There is child to child abuse as some are always being teased as that they don't know anything or they can't hear anything even if someone comes near to their ears. This affects the child psychologically.

2.3 Roles of a School in reducing communication difficulties

Recent research indicates that children identified with a hearing loss who begin services early may be able to develop language (spoken and/or signed) on a par with their hearing peers. If a hearing loss is detected in your child, early family-centered intervention is recommended to

promote language (speech and/or signed depending on family choices) and cognitive development.

Continuous Improvement: The school causes the continuous assessment of all conditions affecting education and ensures that schools are accountable for results in student learning. Boards monitor student achievement, make program corrections as necessary, keep the public informed of the status of education programs and progress, and ensure that all functions of the school work together well.

Collaborative Relationships: Relationships are an important dimension in effective organizations. We know that when individuals work together effectively, the product of their efforts will almost always be superior to the efforts of any single individual. In the Information Age, relationships are not just important, they are critical. The quality of relationships in an organization will largely determine how well that organization produces.

Climate and Culture: Climate is an essential aspect of system culture. Climate is a by-product of culture and is dependent on it. Leading-edge organizations are very conscious of climate because of its powerful effect on behaviour. Effective school boards give priority attention to climate as well, because it factors importantly in what students and teachers are able to accomplish. Climate also is a critical determinant of how parents and others in the community view schools.

Alignment: Alignment is another key component of a systems approach to school. A critical role of the school is to establish high quality standards and system priorities focused on enhancing student achievement. The board is responsible to create the conditions under which excellent teaching and student performance will take place. The next critical step is to align the organization by harnessing the system's resources to the achievement of the system's standards and priorities.

Vision: The board envisions the community education future and then formulates the goals, defines the outcomes, and sets the course for its public schools. Vision is not about what we are, but what we want to be. Vision captures a critical dimension of dynamic systems. For school boards, it is about where we are going and what kind of school systems we are trying to create now and for the future.

Standards: Another major component of a systems approach is the establishment of standards for performance. In order to know whether we are performing in accordance with expectations, we need to establish specific and clearly delineated standards. Those standards need to be tied in realistic ways to the expectations of the community.

Assessment: Promoting outstanding student performance based on clearly delineated standards is central to the key work of school boards. The next step is to determine how well students are doing in meeting those standards. School boards need information in order to make decisions, not only about how well they are doing, but also about what may be needed in order to ensure that system goals will be met.

2.5 Relationship between communication difficulties and School Performance

According to Spitzer (2000), there is a positive relationship between communication difficulties and school performance.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter includes various sections that portray how the study was carried out. It presents the methods, techniques and procedures used in order to gather the required data for the study it comprises of several sub sections such as: - research design, research population, sampling methods, data, collection methods, and data collection instruments and data management.

3.1 Research Design

The study was gender based or focused where mainly pupils were studied. The design was basically quantitative. These quantitative methods were used in gathering and analysing data. This design was used because of its suitability in data collection because it enabled the researcher to study small samples in depth.

3.2 Area and Population of the Study

The study was conducted in Kakamega Municipality, Kakamega Central District.

3.3 Sample Framework

3.3.1 Sample size

Sixty (60) respondents were interviewed whereby 35 females and 25 males were selected to represent the whole population of Kakamega Municipality.

3.3.2 Sample technique

A purposively sampling technique was used in order to increase the precision of estimates. Purposive selection was used among the people who are to be considered as having key information to contribute and these included; headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents.

3.3.3 Sample Procedures

The researcher first defined the population, listed the elements of the population, determined an appropriate sampling methodology, decided an adequate sample size and selected a representative sample of 60 respondents.

3.4 Methods

3.4.1 Instruments

In order to achieve the objective of this study, the researcher used the following methods of data collection to get information on the impact of communication barriers on school performance.

(i) Questionnaire

The questionnaires were administered to pupils, teachers, parents and head of schools in order to get a clear view about the impact of communication difficulties on school performance. The methods enabled the researcher to generate enough information so as to make conclusions and draw conclusion appropriately to this issue.

(ii) Interview Method

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the headteachers, teacher and pupils.

(iii) Focus Group Discussions

The researcher used this to answer opinion questions like, how is the performance of pupils with hearing impairment? However it is very difficult to organize respondents for a meeting.

3.4.2 Sources of Data

(a) Primary Source

Data was got from the field by use of questionnaires, observation, and focused group discussion.

(b) Secondary Source

Text books and other related work of outstanding scholars either Published or not, Magazines, Newspapers were referred to so as to give more light on issues about the factors responsible for the effects of communication difficulties to children with hearing impairment on school performance.

3.5 Data Processing

Different data sets were used in analyzing data collected. Data was entered using Epiinfo and analyzing was done using SPSS. Bar graphs and other graphs were done in Microsoft Excel. Bar graphs were used to give a clearer outlook on the communication difficulty's impact on

primary schools' performance. Recommendations were made using the outcome of the result of the analysis

3.6 Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to analyse data that is bar charts and tables show the impact of communication difficulties on performance in primary schools and giving recommendations basing on results of the analysis.

3.7 Ethical Procedure

In collecting the data the researcher first got an introductory letter from the University, Department of CEODL. This letter was presented to the members interviewed.

3.9 Limitations to the Study

The research study was faced by a number of problems and constraints and hence may not adequately meet the intended objectives to the required level.

Problem of distance between the researcher and her supervisor while in the field impeded proper continuous assessment of research, thus research process could only be dictated when it's already late.

The unwillingness of the respondent's posed a problem to the research study.

However, the researcher tried her level best using various research skills and tactics to avoid the problems or at least to reduce their impact on the study.

There was use of unstructured interviews where questions were administered in form of conversation. This enabled the researcher to gather data without being known by the respondents.

The researcher mobilized funds from various sources that mainly included family members.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

In this section, core of the study is presented. Data collected from the respondents is analysed. The discussion is presented in accordance with research questions and objectives of the study

4.1 Socio-Demographic Background of the Respondents

4.1.1 Sex of the Respondents

Table 1: Sex of the respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	35	58.33
Female	25	41.67
Total	60	100.00

Source: Fieldwork 2013

Table 1 shows that female were more than males, Females 35 (58.333%) and male 25 (41.667%). The females were many since the area has more females than males.

4.1.2 Age

Table 2: Age of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
5 - 14	38	63.33
15-24	15	25.00
25-34	5	8.33
35+	2	3.33
Total	60	100.00

Source: Fieldwork 2013

From the study, it can be established that most of the respondents fell between 5-14 years with 63.33% followed by 15- 24, 25-34, and 35+ with 25.00%, 8.33% and 3.33% respectively as it is indicated in the table 2.

4.1.3 Marital Status

Table 3: The marital status of the respondents

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	12	20.00
Divorced	1	1.67
Single	7	11.67
Never married	40	66.67
Total	60	100.00

Source: Fieldwork 2013

From table 3, it is shown that most of the respondents have never married with 66.67%, followed by married, single, and divorced with 20.00%, 11.670%, and 1.67% respectively.

4.1.4 Education Background

Table 4: The educational background

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	33	55.00
Secondary	15	25.00
Tertiary	10	16.67
University	2	3.33
Total	60	100.00

Source: Fieldwork 2013

The study established that more academic background was primary with 33 responses (55.00%), followed by secondary, tertiary, and university with 25.00%, 16.67% and 3.33% respectively.

4.1.5 Occupation of the respondent

Table 5: The occupation of the respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Farmer	12	20.00
Civil Servant	20	33.33
others	28	46.67
Total	60	100.00

Source: Fieldwork 2013

Most the respondents were in others category and they were 28 with a percentage 46.67% followed by civil servant and farmers with 33.33%, 20.00% respectively. Others were many as this category included children who are still studying.

4.2 Ways to Improve communication

Table 6: Ways to improve school communication difficulties

Ways	Frequency	Percentage
Body language	12	20.00
Building libraries	3	5.00
Qualified teachers	9	15.00
mental and physical development	5	8.33
Teaching aids	27	45.00
Personality	4	6.67
Total	60	100.00

Source: Fieldwork 2013

From table 6, it can be concluded that using teaching aids is the leading way of improving performance and communication difficulties of the school with 45.00% followed by body language, qualified teachers, mental and physical development, and personality with 20.00%, 15.00%, 8.33%, 6.67% and 5.00% respectively.

4.3 Roles of school in reducing communication difficulties

Table 7: Roles of school in protecting communication difficulties

Roles	Frequency	Percentage
Continuous improvement	4	6.67
Collaborative relationships	17	28.33
Climate and culture	8	13.33
Alignment	6	10.00
Vision	3	5.00
Assessments	13	21.67
Standards	9	15.00
Total	60	100.00

Source: Fieldwork 2013

From the table 7, it can be identified that most of the respondents gave collaborative relationship as the leading role of the school with 28.33% followed assessments, standards, climate and culture, alignment and continuous improvement with 2 1.67%, 15.00%, 13.33%, 10.00%, 6.67% and 5.00% respectively.

4.4 Effects of Communication difficulties on School Performance

Table 8: Effects of communication difficulties on school performance

Effects	Frequency	Percentage
Child abuse	12	20.00
Dropouts	13	21.67
Poor performance	34	56.67
Others	1	1.67
Total	60	100.00

Source: Fieldwork 2013

From the study it was established that poor performance is the leading effect of communication difficulties on school performance with 56.67% followed by drop out with 2 1.67%, child abuse with 20.00% and others with 1.67% respectively.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussions and conclusions of the study

5.1 Discussions

From the study it was established that female were more than males, Females 35 (58.333%) and male 25 (41.667%). The females were many since the area has more females than males. Most of the respondents fell between 5-14 years with 63.33% followed by 15-24, 25-34, and 35+ with 25.00%, 8.33% and 3.33% respectively.

The study revealed that most of the respondents have never married with 66.67%, followed by married, single, and divorced with 20.00%, 11.670%, and 1.67% respectively. Most academic background was primary with 33 responses (55.00%), followed by secondary, tertiary, and university with 25.00%, 16.67% and 3.33% respectively.

Most the respondents were in others category and they were 28 with a percentage 46.67% followed by civil servant and farmers with 33.33%, 20.00% respectively. Others were many as this category included children who are still studying.

From the study it was concluded that using teaching aids is the leading way of improving performance and communication difficulties of the school with 45.00% followed by body language, qualified teachers, mental and physical development, and personality with 20.00%, 15.00%, 8.33%, 6.67% and 5.00% respectively.

It was identified that most of the respondents gave collaborative relationship as the leading role of the school with 28.33% followed assessments, standards, climate and culture, alignment and continuous improvement with 21.67%, 15.00%, 13.33%, 10.00%, 6.67% and 5.00% respectively

From the study it was established that poor performance is the leading effect of communication difficulties on school performance with 56.67% followed by drop out with 21.67%, child abuse with 20.00% and others with 1.67% respectively

5.2 Conclusion

The impacts of communication difficulties on school performance vary from community to community and affect the scientific performance of pupils. Out of school and in school factors have been shown to affect the performance.

The communication difficulties factors that affect performance include lack of teachers who can teach those with hearing impairment.

5.3 Recommendations

In view of the results of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations. The Education Ministry should mind about providing all the schools with the enough teaching and learning materials to favour the learners and help them perform well like text books.

The Education Ministry should train teachers hearing impairment and encourage teachers to teach well willing by increasing on the salaries of the teachers and paying them in time such that they also get motivated.

The Education Ministry should emphasize to teachers to encourage girls, and motivate them especially in sciences by rewarding good performances.

The Education Ministry should expand the enrolment of girls in science subjects and increase educational training opportunities for girls in sciences.

Teachers should provide continual assistance to students with hearing impairment especially in communication so that they are not out competed in class.

Teachers should ensure maximum discipline in school and good academic atmosphere in all aspects by instilling seriousness in learners especially girls.

There is need for more funding either from the Government of Kenya, other NGOs or even humanitarians within and out of the country for purchase of hearing aid and train teachers for teaching hearing impairment learners.

There is need to sensitize the community since they can help in improving communication conditions.

Provide additional capacity building for district level staff in planning and financial management to ensure the smooth operation of the communication activities. Improve the system of disbursements in all parts of the budget, so that ministries can make plans based on a predictable flow of cash.

Provide research, from a variety of sources and perspectives, on the expected impact of various financial reforms, with a focus on impact on the poor.

5.4 Area for Further Research

The study investigated the impact of communication difficulties on school performance. Though this study examined the roles of various stakeholders there are so many areas that deem relevant to this study that were not dealt with to establish the magnitude of the study. The researcher therefore recommends other researcher to also take further studies about this topic to make the subject more colourful.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: WORK PLAN

February	1 st week	Development of proposal
	2 nd week	Approval
	3 rd & 4 th week	Collection of data
March	1 st week & 2 nd week	Presentation, analysis of data collected
	3 rd & 4 th weeks	Submission

APPENDIX B: PROPOSED BUDGET

ITEMS	COST (KShs.)
Stationary	1,000/-
Printing / binding	2,000/-
Facilitation / meals	2,000 / -
Transport	3,500/-
Miscellaneous	1,000/ -
TOTAL	9,500/-

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

I am a student of Kampala International University, in my final year. I am carrying out a research study on the topic; Effects of Communication difficulties on academic performance of learner with hearing impairment: A case study of Kakamega Municipality in Kakamega Central District.

The purpose of this study is to collect data on the topic. Your response will be treated with confidentiality and the information obtained is strictly for education purposes.

Instruction:

This section concerns you, please tick the most appropriate boxes of your choice and fill in the space provided

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

1. Sex: (a) Male ☐ (b) Female ☐
2. Age of the Respondent: (a) Below 25-34 ☐ (b) 35-44 ☐ (c) 45+ ☐
3. Marital status: (a) Married ☐ (b) Single ☐ (c) Divorced ☐
(d) Never married ☐
4. Education Background: (a) Primary ☐ (b) Secondary ☐ (c) Tertiary ☐
(d) University ☐
5. Occupation of the respondent: (a) Farmer ☐ (b) Civil Servant ☐
(c) Businessman/woman ☐ (e) Others (specify) ☐

SECTION B: WAYS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

6. Are there ways to improve communication difficulties of the school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, then what are they?.....
.....
.....

**SECTION C: ROLES OF SCHOOL IN REDUCING COMMUNICATION
DIFFICULTIES**

7. What are the roles of school in protecting communication difficulties?

.....
.....

8. What do you recommend the government to stop it or prevent it?

.....
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION