

Learning Assignment and Quality of Business Studies Textbook in Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract: Properly designed business studies textbook promotes effective and independent learning through appropriate learning assignments yielding achievement of learning objectives for sustained academic results in business studies. Learning assignments in business studies textbook offers learner with opportunity to develop skills and master requisite knowledge accelerating exciting learning process paving way for lively episodes of learning in and outside classroom. However, inappropriate or amorphous questions in core textbook limits realization of specific objectives blocking knowledge construction and as a result degrading learners' mean score in business studies. The study adopted exploratory research design through quantitative and qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. Counts, percentages, means, standard deviations, Chi square tests and content analysis were used for data analysis. Cross tabulation of results indicated that learning assignments significantly influence quality of Business studies textbook implying that appropriate learning assignment supports achievement of learning for sustained learning experience. Further analysis showed that subject goals, skill development and concept mastery influence quality of learning assignments encouraging knowledge retention and recall ability among learners. Therefore, it is recommended that relevant learning assignments be provided in business studies textbook in order to accelerate learning across the school system.

I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Properly designed Business studies textbook incorporates set of appropriate learning activities that are aimed at promoting mastery of concept boosting development of requisite skills and values in Business Education. In a study on teaching methods Bekele, Odundo, Mwangi and Ganira (2021) stated that incorporation of variety of learning activities in Business Studies promotes positive attitude encouraging reading and revision sessions ushering in achievement of self-directed learning resulting in maximization of learning outcome among learners in secondary schools. Individualized learning encourages construction of knowledge increasing academic success at school promoting learner's self-worth in class discussion. As opined by Anwar (2019) lesson objectives are achieved through well-structured learning activities in business studies textbook. Appropriately designed exercises enhance enthusiasm and hands on learning practice leading to ability to articulate question correctly uplifting interesting episodes of knowledge construction resulting in positive attitude and improvement of learner's mean score in business studies. As propagated by Ganira, Odundo, Ciumuari and Muasya (2019) well-designed business studies textbook takes into account

learner's cognition enhancing understand and mastery of concepts for improved academic results. This means that questions in textbook when meticulously constructed resonates with learner's cognition boosting achievement of subject goals through business studies textbook.

When adequate activities are incorporated in business textbook, lesson objectives are achieved. This is because learner's interest and enthusiasm in class is accelerated increasing rate of participation in reading for more insightful experiences. Another study by Oluoch, Odundo and Mwangi (2020) states that proper match between nature of assignment and learner's already learnt experiences ignites exploratory field of marvel to learn boosting morale in knowledge creation for increased erudition in schools. Whenever learner applies knowledge learnt in class in real life situation content is retained and so is mastery of concepts in business. Additionally study by Ganira and Odundo (2020) pinned that properly designed academic content coupled with appropriate teaching methods promotes development of self-directed learning thereby enhancing group discussion among learners accelerating realization of specific learning outcome. Effective discussion triggers early completion and timely submission of assignment leading to maximum knowledge construction for improved educational success in business studies. In the views of Lepik, Grevholm and Viholainen (2015) incorporation of exercises in core textbook enhances learners' understanding of key concepts thereby assisting achievement of intended goals. Well-planned text aims at widening scope of learning inaugurating development of learner's memory, resulting in increased learning outcome. In consonance with this, Vallejo, Rafael, & Ricardo (2020) assert that learners are likely to recall facts obtained through textbook, if relevant revision questions are pinned on every topic of study in the textbook. Question after every topic provide learner with opportunity to practice new concepts learnt hence accelerating skill development process. Accelerated knowledge creation process brings about growth in academic success among learners.

Appropriate topical questions are those that support achievement of subject goals resulting in positive attitude towards uninterrupted study session promoting learner mean score in business studies. According to Nguyen (2017) questions in business studies encourages independent learning through facilitation of articulation of knowledge learnt. In the process of learning through questions learners develop problem solving skill which enables them to systematically

verbalize the content learnt. However ambiguous question may lead learners into boredom limiting creativity and innovation in correctly handling topical revision questions. As propagated by Kent, Laslo, and Rafaeli (2016) learning assignment in business textbook provides balance between theory and practice creating self-awareness, knowledge acquisition and skill building by learner as a result facilitating think-pair and share among the peers even in the absence of the teacher. As learner learns through interacting with the immediate environment knowledge is retained and recall is possible hence yielding better academic grades in business studies. Better academic outcomes are triggered by mastery of concepts through in-depth study of content in business studies textbook. Further Jitpranee and Songsirisak (2019) denote that questions in textbook accelerate decision making among learners across school system encouraging learning through textbook. Mental growth and development enables one to be independent and be in control of his learning style increasing academic results through business studies textbook.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Business studies core textbook amplifies captivating activity based learning assignment which is appropriate for varied capabilities assisting learning satisfaction. Exercises that are activity based boosts learners cognitive and psychomotor skills encouraging active participation in learning process for improved learning outcome. Inadequate practice exercises limits learner's broad, explorable field of marvel and discovery in learning and acquisition of desirable skills consequently resulting in decreased mean score in summative assessment test. Properly designed business studies textbook boosts enthusiasm and synergy paving way for new discoveries promoting learner's aptitude for accelerated academic achievement in secondary schools in Kenya.

III. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to determine suitability of learning assignments in promoting quality business studies

textbook. This study established relevance of learning assignment, subject goals, concept mastery and skill development in promoting quality of business studies core textbook.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory supports the fact that learning can be achieved by learner through immediate support offered by core textbook. Lev Vygotsky (1978) denotes that zone of proximal development is distance between what learner can do without help and what he can do with help in order to achieve the desired learning objectives. The zone of proximal development (ZPD) comprises of series of activities too challenging for learner to achieve on his own, however learning is likely to be achieved through support of business studies textbook without necessarily consulting with subject teacher. As propounded by Vygotsky (1978), zone of proximal development has very simple level, proximal development level and extremely difficult level. The zone of proximal development contains series of activities that aids in knowledge construction. Margolis (2020) used Zone of Proximal Development in his Study entitled Zone of proximal development in teaching practice and found out that the greater the level of abstraction available to learner the less spontaneous initial concepts remained in them. In other words activities enhance building of learner's zone of proximal development for increased academic outcome. The theory is relevant to this study as it focuses on textbook as support tool for learning experience in business studies.

V. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Through appropriate teaching and learning environment results in achievement of learning objectives propagating mastery of concepts yielding sustained learning outcome in secondary schools.

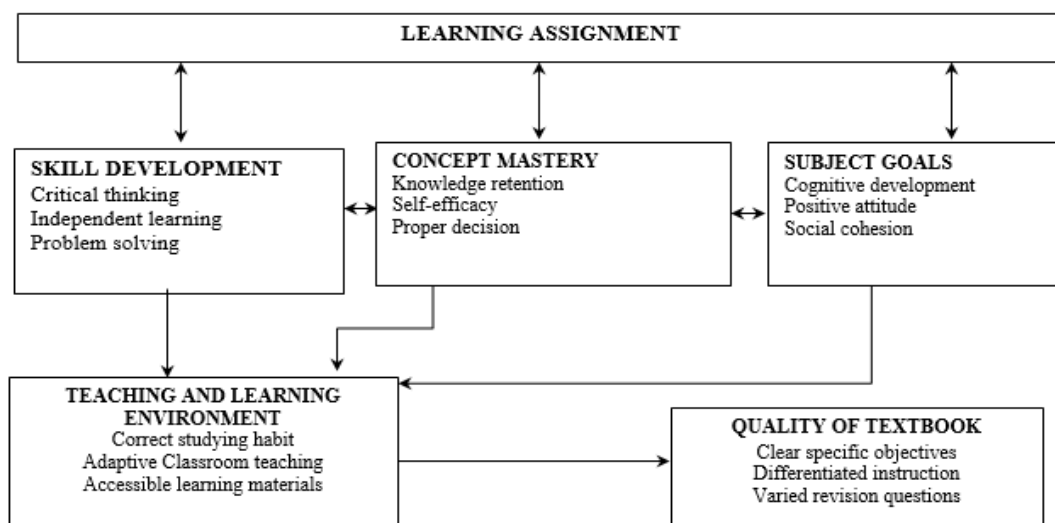


Fig.5.1 Hypothetical relationship between independent and dependent variable

VI. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted exploratory research design through quantitative and qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. Counts, percentages, means, standard deviations, Chi square tests and content analysis were used for data analysis.

VII. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings of the study are discussed in order of objectives of the study; Skill development, concept mastery and subject goals and quality of business studies textbook.

7.1 Learning assignment, skill development and quality of Textbook

Table 1 Learning assignment, skill development and quality of textbook

	SA		A		N		D		SD		Mean	SD
	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	f		
Skill development												
Learning assignment boosts skill development in business	33.3%	4	33.3%	4	16.7%	2	16.7%	2	0.0%	0	2.2	1.1
Questions enhance acquisition of business management skills	16.7%	2	66.7%	8	8.3%	1	8.3%	1	0.0%	0	2.1	0.8
Testing in the textbook reflects blooms technique of evaluation	16.7%	2	66.7%	8	16.7%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	2.0	0.6
Set of activities promote creativity and independent response.	16.7%	2	58.3%	7	16.7%	2	8.3%	1	0.0%	0	2.2	0.8

NB: % in Table 1 denotes percentage

From Table 1 66.6 % agreed that learning assignment in business textbook boosts skill development. Teachers that agreed further stated that core textbook is well structured, elaborate with learning activities at the end of every topic reflecting concepts learnt enhancing understanding and acquisition of requisite skills. In addition, it is also noted that learning assignment is relevant to curriculum and aids in achievement of learning through textbook. Still from Table 1, 83.4% of respondents were in agreement that inclusion of questions in business studies core textbook enhances acquisition of business management skills. The respondents indicated that questions in core textbook serve key role in cultivation of management skills and that tests supported learners to develop critical thinking skills, psychomotor skills, comprehension skills and equip learners with accounting skills increasing learning achievement for higher learner mean score. The results imply that business studies textbook were adequate in terms of subject goals and skill development.

It can also be established from Table 1 that testing in core textbook reflects blooms technique of evaluation as indicated by 83.4% of respondents. The core textbook adopts both low order thinking question and high order thinking question enhancing learner's ability to interpret and answer the questions paving way for inquiry based learning promoting problem solving skills. In a study on instructional content Bekele *et. al.* (2022) pinned that involving metacognition skills of learner enables development of learner's ability to comprehend most abstract concept in core textbook leading to increase in learner mean score. Questions are essential tool in promoting instruction content in business studies textbook.

A well generated question in business studies textbook enhances critical thinking. Ganira and Odundo (2020) further stated that topical questions provided in business studies textbook promotes skill development enabling learner to reflect on content learnt accelerating ability to recall encouraging learning achievement. The reflection gives learner opportunity to cement knowledge acquired thereby increasing memory retention enhancing acquisition requisite skills in business studies. Inadequate opportunities for reflection discourage knowledge retention hence interrupting development of critical thinking for enhanced academic outcome. In the process of learning with questions the learners acquire a critical thinking skill which enables them to systematically verbalize the content learnt.

Moreover, as shown in Table 1 75.0% of business studies teachers agreed that set of activities in business textbook promote creativity and independent response while 8.3% did not agree. Teachers that disagreed noted that learners are not able to relate content learnt to real life business environment limiting creativity in learning process discouraging knowledge construction through textbook. In order to enhance learning assignment, business studies teachers suggested that answer sections to topical questions and revision questions be provided to enable learner to attempt questions and evaluate themselves even in absence of instructor. The result agrees with Ganira and Odundo (2020) in that revision questions facilitate skill development for accelerated learning outcome in business studies across schools in Kenya.

7.2 Learning assignment, concept mastery and quality of Textbook

Well-structured business studies textbook strikes balance between theory and practice. Mastery of concept enables learner to acquire skills through practice of concept learnt in class in their immediate surroundings. Application of knowledge acquired provide learner with opportunity to cement concept learnt as a result boosting learner memory. Kent, Laslo, and Rafaeli (2016) states that balance between theory and practice create self-efficacy, knowledge retention and informed judgment for effective learning outcome. In order to promote concept mastery business studies textbook adopts industrial visits as one of the extended learning activity outside school. Teaching and learning with well-planned core text aims at maximum knowledge retention inaugurating

development of learner's memory, resulting in increased learning outcome.

Table 2 Learning assignment, concept mastery and quality of Textbook

	SA		A		N		D		SD		Mean	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f		
Concept Mastery												
Questions are an aid in mastery of concepts in business studies	41.7%	5	41.7%	5	16.7%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.8	0.8
Examples support understanding of topics	33.3%	4	33.3%	4	25.0%	3	8.3%	1	0.0%	0	2.1	1.0
There are worked out illustration to promote mastery of concepts	16.7%	2	66.7%	8	16.7%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	2.0	0.6
Questions are elaborate and adequate	16.7%	2	50.0%	6	25.0%	3	8.3%	1	0.0%	0	2.3	0.9

NB: % in Table 2 denotes percentage

From Table 2, 83.4 % of business studies teachers agreed that inclusion of questions in core textbook is an aid to mastery of concepts in business studies. Those who agreed further indicated that use of questions allows learners to think more and read more widely facilitating understanding of concept in business studies curriculum. Questioning is an important activity in teaching as it determines whether or not learning has taken place. Questioning is one of the most effective ways to get learners participate in construction of knowledge promoting enhanced learning outcome contributing to excellence in academic performance. By asking questions, teachers can engage students to think about content of the subject and simultaneously get feedback from students to demonstrate effectiveness of teaching strategy for increased learning achievement.

From Table 2 It can also be established that presenting examples in textbook support understanding of critical concepts as agreed by 66.6% of respondents. The respondents indicated that use of examples in business textbook further enhance understanding of key concepts. Use of examples in core textbook is generally considered to be reliable tools providing creditable information that supports and enhances students' understanding of critical concepts. Examples act as illustration of what is required of learners and thus very helpful in comprehension of rather complex concepts among learners. Result coincide with findings of Kent, Laslo, and Rafaeli (2016) that sophisticated concept can be mastered through discussion of questions, brainstorming, discussing, questioning and answering and critiquing each other's opinion through core textbook leading to cementing knowledge learnt.

Moreover, Table 2 shows that 83.4% of business studies teachers agreed that worked out illustration in core textbook promote mastery of concepts. They indicated that use of worked illustrations enables learners to make a follow up on correct methods used to solve mathematical or accounting based questions. Worked illustrations act as guide to learners in absence of teacher to understand critical concepts taught in

class. Ndinda, Barasa and Omulando (2017) noted that textbook illustrations are useful guides to learners when solving questions. Teachers should therefore strive to explain to learners some of illustrations in their texts especially during reading lessons in order to make them relevant to learners and enhance understanding of the written material. Illustrations in business studies textbook promote educative value contributing to acceleration learning outcomes.

Finally, Table 2 shows 66.7% of respondents agreed that questions in core textbook are elaborate and adequate. Business teachers, who agreed, indicated that inclusion of topical revisions aid mastery of concepts. The results imply that appropriately structured questions in business textbook are comprehensive and adequate to capture key concepts of content being presented. Asking questions is an integral tool enhancing meaningful learning yielding mastery of concepts. Development of a good question contributes to growth of creativity and innovation among business studies students. Result agrees with Ndinda, Barasa and Omulando (2017) who propagated that adequate examples arithmetic questions facilitate mastery of concept through providing firm foundation for self-efficacy and knowledge retention for maximization of learning outcome.

7.3 Learning assignment, subject goals and quality of Textbook

Properly designed business studies textbook represent syllabus content enhancing appropriate implementation of curriculum goals and aims for achievement of desired attitude, social cohesion and cognitive development leading to effective group discussion for achievement of learning objectives. As opinionated by Bekele *et al* (2022) in study a on instructional policy variety of activities and experiences aids in construction of knowledge and acquisition of skills in business yielding learner centered classroom promoting self-directed learning for increased rate of knowledge construction.

Table 3 Learning assignment, subject goals and quality of textbook

	SA		A		N		D		SD		Mean	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f		
Subject goals												
Revision exercises aids in achievement of subject goals	41.7%	5	41.7%	5	16.7%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.8	0.8
Questions promote achievement of learning	33.3%	4	50.0%	6	16.7%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.8	0.7
Exercises promote understanding of topics	41.7%	5	41.7%	5	16.7%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.8	0.8
Questions aid in acquisition of requisite skills	16.7%	2	75.0%	9	8.3%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	1.9	0.5

NB: % in Table 3 denotes percentage

From Table 3 it can be established that 83.4% of business studies teachers agreed that revision exercises aids in achievement of subject goals. For those business teachers who agreed, they indicated that the inclusion of topical revisions aid mastery of concepts. The results imply that provision of revision exercises in textbooks aids in the achievement of subject goals. Revision exercises promote critical thinking of the regarding what has been learned. Some of textbook exercises are more like test; brief checks to see whether the learner knows something or not, rather than frameworks for extended and interesting rehearsals of different aspects of the subject. Revision exercises provide much of stimulation which motivates them to become more independent in their learning. This can be done by encouraging learners to think for themselves around these exercises and discuss it with others. In addition, from Table 3, 83.3% business studies teachers noted that questions promote achievement of learning. Business teachers agreeing with this indicated that the book tries to create a balance of structured and analytical questions. They also indicated that the questions are well structured and they aid in in the achievement of subject goals. In addition, the learning assignment is relevant to the curriculum and aids in the achievement of learning. The results supports the work of Bekele *et al* (2022) that questions incorporated in textbooks facilitate in-depth understanding of learned concepts facilitating skill development for prolonged learning experience.

When teachers cover topics about which they are well-prepared, they encourage student questions and discussions, spend less time on unrelated topics, permit discussions to move in new directions based on student interest, and generally present topics in a more coherent way. Table 3 shows presence of exercises in business studies textbook promotes understanding of key topics as agreed by 83.4%. Teachers who agreed indicated that questions at the end of topics test general understanding of content encouraging attainment of subject goals. Exercises are component of textbook most heavily used by teachers and pupils to gauge understanding of what was learned. The results affirm study by Palavan (2020) that integrating exercises in textbook enhances learners' content understanding of key topics. Teachers may or may not use the textbook during lessons; they may simply use it as a source of exercises or they may utilize full potential of materials presented in textbook.

Exercises presented in the textbook also serve as the main source for learners' homework.

Moreover, from Table 3 it can be noted that inclusion of assignments in textbook aid in acquisition of requisite skills as indicated by 91.7%. Teachers who agreed indicated that use of questions aid in comprehending concepts and also develop more skills and knowledge as learners' attempts to answer questions by referring to content in textbook enhancing reading habit among learners. Questioning is one of the most regularly used teaching strategies by teachers and textbook developers triggering academic success through textbook. These results agree with Munyao, Odundo and Ganira (2022) by stating that good quality and cognitive appropriate questions leads to deeper understanding of concept promoting knowledge construction and skill development in business studies. However, while texts in textbooks have become tailored to needs of learners and more interactive tasks are included in reading sections, to ascertain whether or not they were learning and to see if they were paying attention in class.

Questions are critical in promoting mastery of concepts through learning process. Because of this, core textbook need to plan questions carefully as per topics in order to enhance skill acquisition. Basing on results from observation checklist, results revealed that business studies textbook provided appropriate assessment tests, provided exercises sequenced systematically, provided precise exercises easily understood equipped learners with essential skills and helped learners apply concept. The outcomes correspond with Bekele *et.al*. (2022) stating that questions in textbook are structured in such a way that it resonates with cognitive level of learner enhancing achievement of subject goals.

7.4 Cross tabulation between learning assignment and quality textbook

A cross tabulation table of learning assignment categorized as adequate and inadequate was tabulated against quality of business textbook categorized as satisfactory and unsatisfactory. Table 7.4 shows the cross tabulation table of learning assignment and quality of Business textbook.

Table 4 Cross tabulation between learning assignment and quality textbook

		Quality of Business Textbook		Total
		Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	
Learning assignment	Inadequate	4	1	5
	Adequate	1	6	7
Total		5	7	12
Chi-square	(χ)	5.182		
	P-value	.042		

Cross tabulation results in **Table 4** shows that adequate learning assignment result to satisfactory quality business textbook while inadequate inclusion of learning assignment in business studies textbook result to unsatisfactory quality of business textbook. The influence of learning assignment on quality of business textbook is statistically significant as supported by a chi square of 5.182 and a reported p value of $.001 < 0.05$. This implies that learning assignment significantly influences quality of business textbook.

The hypothesis was tested using p value calculated where if p value > 0.05 we fail to reject the $H_{03} < 0.05$, the H_{03} is rejected. The null hypothesis (H_{03}) was that there is no significant relationship between learning assignment and quality of textbook. Cross tabulation results indicated a Chi-square of 5.182 and p-value of $.042 < 0.05$. The null hypothesis (H_{03}) was thus rejected and conclusion made that learning assignment do promote quality of textbook. The results concur with findings of *Lau et al.* (2018) that inclusion of learning assignment in business textbook is essentially important. Learning assignment are revision questions in business studies textbook involving learners in construction of their own knowledge.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Moreover, textbook concepts have to be created and presented in logical manner through integration of learning activity in business textbook which stimulates understanding of key concepts taught during the lesson and enabling mastery of concept for effective problem solving and decision making among learners. Incorporation of hands on activity in business studies textbook is viewed as an instrument of increasing concept understanding and comprehension of curriculum content among students.

It is further concluded that subject goals, concept mastery and skill development are critical aspects to be included in business textbook for acceleration of learning and development of skills in business studies. In terms of subject goals, quality textbook has to contain revision exercises to promote achievement of learning through enhancing understanding of topics and acquisition of requisite skills. Concept mastery is facilitated through question that includes examples to support understanding of topics and worked out illustration to promote mastery of concepts. In terms of skill development, the textbooks should contain questions to

enhance acquisition of business management skills and set of activities to promote creativity and independent response.

Recommendation for Practice

There is need for Core Textbook to Include varied and adequate revision questions whose answers can be obtained at the back for affirmation to increase individualized learning.

For policy

Increase periodical evaluation to ascertain quality of revision questions

For further studies

Influence of learning assignments on learner attitude in class.

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