

# Effect of learning resources on enrollment for higher education and career advancement in Kenya

Ruth Wahome

Mount Kenya University

## ABSTRACT

*The higher education space appears to have greatly evolved in the last two decades following a raft of reforms. Education and career growth are widely perceived to be intricately interlinked. Education leads to overall economic growth as well as increased income for the individuals. This has resulted to an increase in demand for higher education as individuals advance in their cognitive and social skills leading to development in human capital. However, the attainment of higher education is dependent on the quantity and quality of inputs which shape the outcomes. To address this gap, the paper examined the effect of learning resources on the pursuit of higher education and career advancement in Kenya. Career advancement increases individual's competitiveness and translates to deliberate progression in work and socioeconomic growth. The paper is motivated by the human capital theory which associates higher education to increase in productivity of human beings through improved skills, the social cognitive career theory which explains self-efficacy and academic efficacy to individual economic development as well as the input output theory which in this context links the learning resources as inputs in higher education and the acquired academic knowledge which is an output to career advancement of primary school teachers. Findings from the study revealed the significant role played by the available learning resources. The study recommends that the MOE, TSC and education stakeholders, leverage on the findings from the study when making decision regarding higher education in relation to career advancement and growth.*

**Keywords:** *Learning resources, career advancement, higher education*

## 1.0 Background

The global economy is arguably facing rapid transformation in the labour force given the huge investment in higher education which offers an individual an opportunity to be promoted and experience upward mobility in one's career. Career advancement is a process that helps economic agents use their skills to pursue new career and job opportunities. Higher education ensures that the country's competitiveness in implementing economic development goals and improving human capital is enhanced. In addition Career advancement is a basis of employee confidence and competence (Robbibs, 2010). In Kenya higher education has direct correlation to career advancement. Career advancement is appraised in terms of an individual job accomplishment through the effort of an individual to pursue personal career goals which mainly entails career growth and job promotions (Chanin, 2012). This indicates a positive relationship between higher education

and career advancement.

Despite this, teachers act as the backbone of the education system and play a critical role of enlightening learners and contribute directly towards an educated work force across all sectors of the economy. Due to this, the career advancement of teachers is important as teachers are vital resources in the teaching and learning process. Additionally, Lowe (2019) argued that higher education changes the lives of an individual, their family and the society. The personal benefits of education to individuals include favorable employment prospects, increase in salaries, better health, and improved quality of life, this enhances better living standards which leads to more savings and investments, which translates to economic growth and development of a country. The higher education added opportunities encourages teachers to advance in education which is believed to be a catalyst towards career growth. The TSC views career growth as a motivation tool and a way of teachers to enhance themselves in financial security. Okurame, 2012 noted that career progression is seen by employees as a tool that enables them to move up the organization ladder. In Kenya, the Universities have the mandate of enriching individuals and impacting them with the required knowledge. According to Oanda, Chege and Wesonga, 2008 higher education institutes are places of intellectual discovery and cognitive growth, a place that expose learners to new ideas and problem-solving research.

Obwogi (2011) in his study on factors that affect quality of teaching staff in universities in Kenya noted that institutions of higher learning lack adequate lecturers making them to offer similar courses. UNESCO, (2002) report on Open and Distance Learning Trend, Policy and Strategy cited that the development of internet has influenced university academics as it is used in virtual learning as well as distance learning. Moore (2007) noted that the study materials should be structured as per the wants of the learners. From the past study a gap on learning resources utilization in higher education was evident.

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

The need for career advancement by teachers as an influencer to career growth calls for engagement of quality labour force which will facilitate development of skills, career growth and development. This perception has led to majority of teachers advancing in higher education. The translation of an individual towards career advancement, however, is often affected by several factors including access to learning resources which include modern library, ICT infrastructure and skills, adequate classes and staff quality.

However according to Obwogi (2011) Boit and Kipkoech (2012) the institutes pf higher learning lack adequate lecturers making them to offer similar courses. UNESCO, (2002) report noted that the development of Internet has influenced university academics as it is used in virtual learning as well as distance learning. Moore (2007) noted that the study materials should be structured as per the wants of the learners. From the past study a gap on learning resources utilization in higher education was evident.

This study seeks to fill this knowledge gap by exploring the dynamics of higher education and their effects on career advancement among primary school teachers in Kenya. To address this gap, the paper examined the effect of learning resources on the pursuit of higher education and career advancement among primary teachers in Gilgil sub county, Kenya.

## **1.2 Genaral Objective**

The study seeks to assess the effect of learning resources on enrollment to higher learning institutions and career advancement among primary school teachers in Kenya.

### **1.2.1 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives as derived from the purpose of the study were stated as follows.

- i. To assess the effect of library resources on enrollment in higher learning institutions and career advancement among primary school teachers in Kenya.
- ii. To establish the effect of information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure e.g. computer laboratory, internet connectivity, on enrollment in higher learning institutions and career advancement among primary school teachers in Kenya.
- iii. To establish the effect of staff and class adequacy on primary school teachers pursuing higher education and career advancement in Gilgil Sub County, Kenya.

## **1.3 Rational of the Study**

This study contributes to the transformation of education policies in higher learning institutions by providing data on the various factors that affect career advancement and the link between education reforms and career advancement. In addition, the findings will guide the education stake holders who include the teachers, parents, TSC, MOE, parents and students on issues affecting advancement in higher education. The study concentrated on the cost incurred while advancing in higher education, the mode of course delivery, the course duration taken by the primary school teachers to advance in their career and the quality of learning resources. However this paper concentrates on the effect of learning resources. Career advancement will enable the teachers to get better remuneration and experience vertical mobility of labour in their workplace. The study was limited to primary school teachers both in private and public schools within Gilgil Sub County, who are pursuing higher education in Kenyan Universities and will also seek answers from, TSC sub county officer and Management of Mount Kenya University and Kenyatta University.

## **2.1 Theoretical Literature**

The paper is motivated by the human capital theory, the social cognitive Career theory and the input out theory. These theories highlight motivating factors that influence teachers to be involved in career advancement. Whereas the MOE and TSC have come up with policies that require the teachers to advance in career. The teachers must have specific education skills and achievements to teach in various levels in the education system. The teachers must also pass some education assessment in promotion. This has put pressure on teachers who keep on engaging in education as a way of advancing in their career as well as rise in the job group and salary scale.

The study was motivated by the input output theory as it guides higher education institutions in ensuring effective utilization of learning resources in order for the learners to achieve maximum outcomes in the education process.

## **2.2 Empirical Literature**

Coombs (1970) operationalized the input output theory in his study on influence of teaching and learning resources on students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. He noted that the input output theory apply in education as it consist of inputs and outputs. The inputs are the capital resource and outputs are the goals and benefits of education. In this paper the theory focused on the availability of learning resources. Where the input are adequate classes, modern library and technological innovation (ICT) these factors creates a conducive higher education environment that enables the teachers to enroll for higher education. These help them to improve on individual teacher's productivity. Which can be observed through promotion at work, improved performance which leads to increased salaries, access to better medical care and high social status.

Likewise Charles and Coombs (2010) noted that the learning resources leads to improvement inn academic performance. Furthermore Li Zhang<sup>1</sup> and Yu Luo<sup>2</sup> (2016) noted that in education economics investment in education is a productive investment as it involves inputs and outputs that leads to cost implications during study time despite the accrued benefits that include advancement in career which has direct impact on improved earnings, promotion at work, improved staff benefits such as housing.

The education system has the responsibility of supplying qualified labour force across all sectors of the economy in any given country. Primary school teachers play a crucial role of nurturing learners in their formative years as predicted by the human capital theories. Celikten et al., 2005 accounts that teachers are key in determining education philosophy and manpower. A person should be taught in a manner that is at par with transformation in the society and the world. This will be provided by qualified teachers who are employed in constructive, equilibrium and productive way in a conducive working environment. This study has reviewed some of the empirical work related to dynamics of higher education on career advancement among primary school teachers and summarizes the empirical literature along, the main objectives namely cost of higher education, learning resources, mode of delivery and duration of study. However this paper is limited to the effect of learning resources specifically library resources, information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure, staff and class adequacy on primary school teachers pursuing higher education and career advancement. Additionally learning resources refers to digital electronic and non-digital teaching and learning materials. This comprises the equipment and tools such as the reference materials, IT equipment, teachers who are engaged in delivering the lessons.

According to Keith, (1993) Moore (2007), study materials enable students to actualize current ideas in the books as per the wants of the learners. Similarly Chunk (2019) noted the learning resources include teachers and the teaching infrastructure that promote education. Furthermore Livumbaze and Achoka (2017) noted that availability of learning resources influences students' performance. This corroborated with Adeogun (2001) who noted that they is positive significance between the learning resources and academic performance thus in school with adequate learning resources students register improved performance. Additionally Johan (2004) echoed and stated that education outcomes are linked to utilization of learning resources. While Lyons (2012) emphasized on the importance of learning resources during teaching and learning process as it motivates learners.

This was supported by Mwangi (2010) who stated that learning materials are supportive services an institution should have for effective facilitation of learning. Availability of the learning resources and the design of instruction is vital for productive teaching and learning.

Availability of library with digital content affects career advancement of primary school teachers. According to (Gunawardena, 2005) autonomy increase flexibility of education. In higher education institutions lecturers provide guidelines to learners. The learner's source for additional materials from the library in line with their study area. Higher education institutions that provide education to primary school teachers will thus have to put into consideration how the said teachers will access library resources relevant to their course and mode of study on their own. These resources are in form of books, online publications, and digital resources. The library is essential during study and when the teachers are preparing for exam and during personal reading as it enhances knowledge. This enables the teachers to advance in their career.

According to UNESCO, (2002) the development of Internet has influenced university academics as it is used in virtual learning as well as distance learning. Additionally (Ramalingam, 2010) noted that electronic mail (E-mail) has replaced the traditional mails as it has been embraced in higher education as a mode of course delivery. Emails are cost effective, fast and flexible and can serve many students at once. This has allowed primary school teachers to study while at work since can receive learning material via email as well as send their assignment to lecturers via email. Internet has enabled learners and lecturers to interact through teleconferencing during delivery of content. This is done through audio, video and computer teleconferencing. This supports group learning, and the lecturer can pass knowledge to learners who are in different geographical areas. The use of internet has enabled the primary school teachers to save on time and resources and this act as a motivating factor to those who want to study and advance in their career. However, at institution level it can be limited due to its cost implication.

According to Ared (2007) adequate classes as learning resources are different and impacts on the procedure and processes when on use. However the physical component of classroom are in adequate in higher education due to increase of learners seeking higher education.

Obwogi (2011) noted that they is shortages of lecturers in the higher education institution. Wangenge-Ouma (2007) agreed to this and noted that higher education institution offer increased similar courses and programs which have contributed to shortages of lectures. Boit and Kipkoech

(2012) echoed this and noted that most universities are in critical shortage of academic staff. The study established that this is as a result of the cost implication of hiring tutors. This shortage of staff in higher education institution limit effective teaching and learning for primary school teachers who are advancing in their career.

The learning resources have cost implication and directly affect primary school teachers who have enrolled in higher education institution in pursuit of advancing in their career, since higher education institution may not provide enough resources to all learners. In this study the researcher paid attention to availability of a modern library, staff quality, availability of classes and internet connectivity.

### **3.1 Methodology**

This study employed both the descriptive and exploratory research designs. This enabled the researcher to ask questions that bring clarity on the dynamics of higher education. The researcher was able to reduce data into a manageable size that enabled one to represent the data in depth. The exploratory research design is particularly relevant in seeking new insights, asking questions, seeking clarification, generating new ideas and was used in formulating hypotheses to be used in future research. The study applied a simple random sampling technique in selecting respondents from both public and private primary schools in Gilgil sub-county, Kenya. This ensured that every element has an equal chance of being selected. The researcher questionnaire comprised of both open and closed ended questions and was administered to primary school teachers in Gilgil Sub County pursuing higher education in Kenyan universities. The researcher also conducted personal interviews to key informants and especially the Management of universities as well as TSC officials in Gilgil sub-county, Kenya. Secondary data was referenced. This enhanced validity and reliability of data collection and analyzing tools as well as the credibility of the attained results.

Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were employed to analyze the collected data. This included measures of central tendency such as mean, median and mode as well as measures of dispersion such as variance. In addition, correlation analysis and Chi-Square tests were explored to establish the relationships between the variables. To establish the effect of the explanatory variables on the dependent variable, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used and results presented using both tables and charts. The analysis enabled the researcher to understand the relationship between dependent and interdependent variables stored in the data files.

The dependent variable is career advancement while one of the independent variables was quality of learning resources. These variables are subject to control variables which were categorized into demographic characteristics, which include age of respondent, years in service, marital status, current salary, and grade. Institutional variables that will indicate the category of the school whether private or public as well as the location. The study benefited from 184 responses drawn from primary school teachers, university management, sub county director of education as well as county statistical officers.

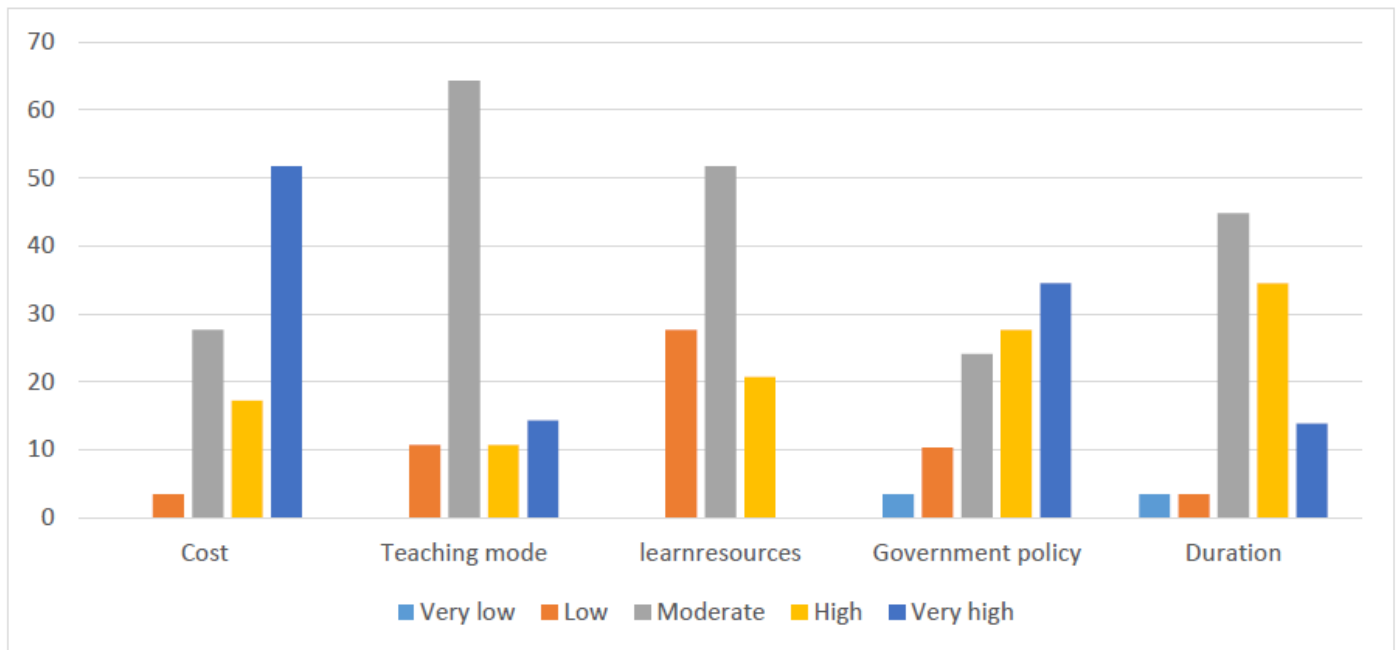
### **4.1 Summary of Findings**

To bring out the effect of the learning resources on the pursuit of higher education and career advancement in Kenya, the paper examined the effect of library resources, ICT infrastructure and staff and class adequacy. The study gave insights on how quality learning resources influences career advancement of the teachers. The results have been presented using tables and charts.



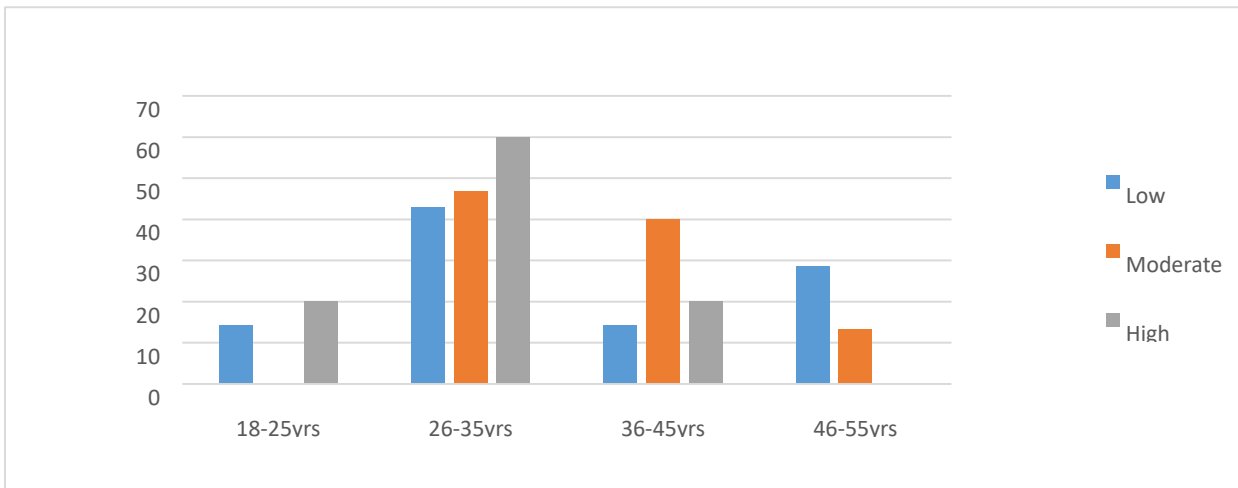
#### 4.1.1 Learning Resources

**Figure 1 Factors affecting enrolment for higher education**



From the findings in figure 1 on learning resources the impact to enrollment for higher education is 27.6% low, 51.7% the effect was moderate and 20.7% high. From these findings the respondents indicated that availability of quality learning resources have moderate impact on career advancement.

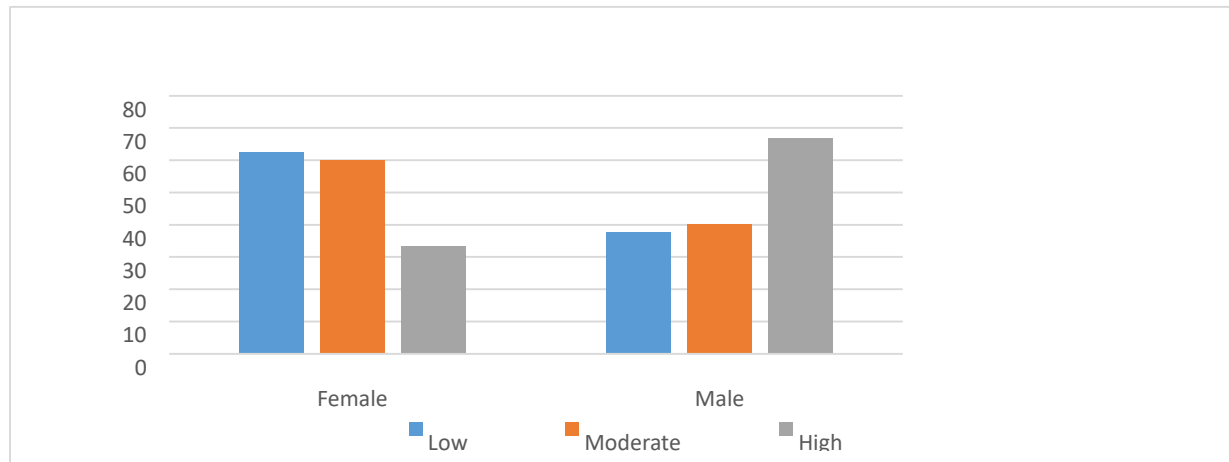
**Figure 2: Effect of learning resources on enrollment for higher education by age**



From the findings the respondents aged between 18-25years was 14.3% low effect of learning resources effect on advancement to higher education and career growth, 20% high. The teachers aged between 26-35 years responses were 42.9% low, 46.7%moderate and 60% high. This indicated majority of the respondents in this age group agreed that learning resources affect enrollment to higher education. Findings from respondents aged between 36-45years 14.3% low, 40% moderate and 20% high. The respondents in this age group moderately agreed that learning resources affect advancement of teachers in higher education. Teachers aged

46-55 years responses were 28.6low and 13.3% moderate.

**Figure 3: Effect of learning resources on enrollment for higher education by gender**

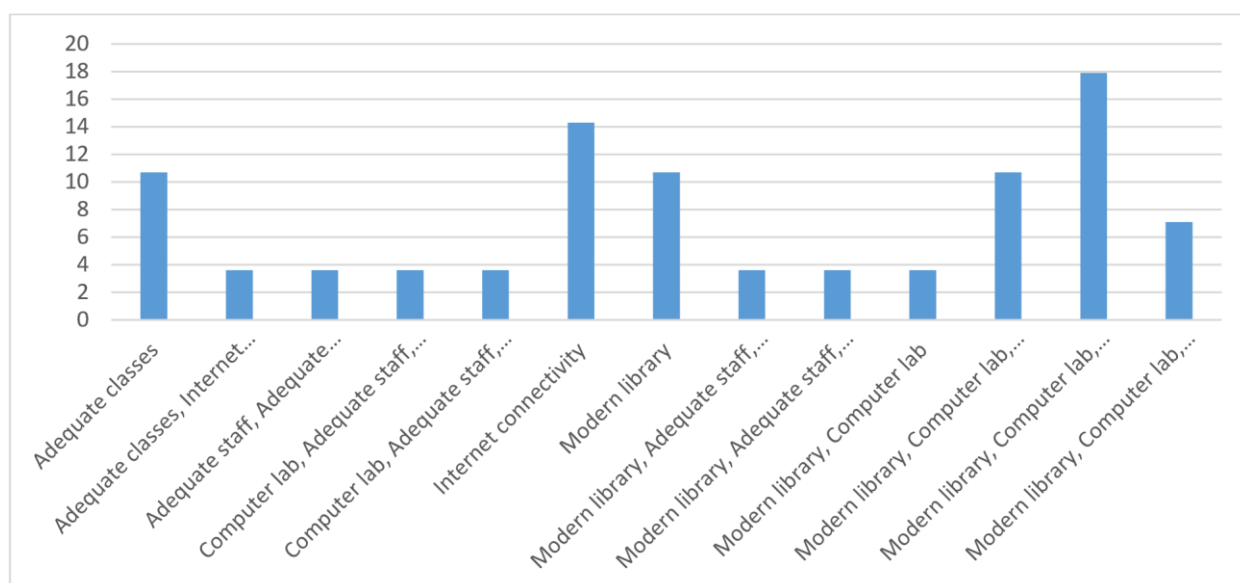


The findings based on gender 62.5% was low, 60% moderate and 33.3 high. From the results few female teachers agreed that learning resources affect enrolment for higher education. According to the male teachers indicated that learning resources affects enrollment to higher education as follows 37.5% low, 40% moderate and 66.7% high. This indicated that majority of the male teachers agreed that learning resources affects enrollment for higher education.

#### **4.2 Effectiveness of Learning Resources.**

The study sought to establish the range of learning resources that students pursuing higher learning are exposed to. This is summarized in Figure 4

**Figure 4: Range of learning resources**



From the responses access to learning resources is indicated by 10.7% of the teachers enrolled for higher education have access to adequate classes, 3.6% have access to internet connectivity and adequate classes

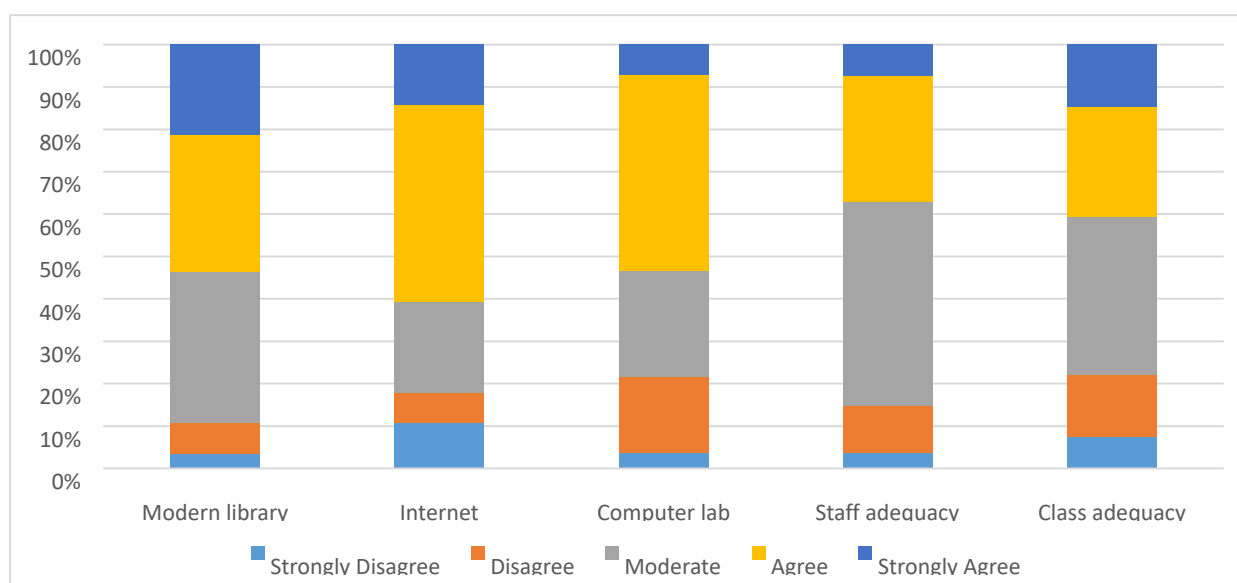


while,3.6% have access to adequate staff adequate classes and internet connectivity.3.6% of the teachers have access to computer lab, adequate staff and classes. 3.6% of the respondents have access to computer lab, adequate staff, adequate classes and internet connectivity.

From the findings 14.3% of the respondents have access to internet connectivity, 10.7% modern library while 3.6% have access to multiple resources that is modern library, adequate classes and adequate staff. While 3.6% of the students have access to modern library, adequate classes, adequate staff and computer lab. From the study 3.6% have access to modern library, adequate classes and computer lab.10.7% of the respondent have access to modern library, adequate staff and computer lab.17.9% of the respondents have access to multiple learning resources that is modern library, adequate staff, adequate classes and computer lab. While 7.1% have access to modern library, computer lab and internet connectivity

From this findings majority of the learners have access to learning resources as it relates to advancement in higher education and career progression . The study also sought to understand the extent to which you agree or disagree that the quality of learning resources in Higher learning institutions are of high quality. This is summarized in Figure 5

**Figure 5: Quality of learning resources**



Modern library 3.7 strongly disagreed, 7.1% disagreed, 35.7% were moderate, 32.1% agreed and 21.4% strongly agreed. This indicated that most of the teachers are neutral on the quality of a modern library as a learning resource. The modern library provides adequate reference materials that enables teachers advancing in higher education to enhance on clarity of content and have a wide scope of the learnt concepts specific courses. The teachers can do assignments and carry out research.

The respondents indicated preference of internet connectivity as follows 10.7% strongly disagreed, 7.1% disagreed, 21.4% moderate, 46.4% agreed and 14.3% strongly agreed. This indicated that most of the teachers agree that having internet connectivity is an effective learning resources as the teacher utilize it during study. The internet facilitates the teachers to access more information globally due to their web connectivity and

networked learning in area of study. Similarly, the teachers are able to be up to date with the current issues. The findings agree with UNESCO, (2002) findings that noted Internet influences university academics and is utilized in virtual learning and distance learning. Moreover, the findings echoed Ramalingam (2010) who noted that use of electronic mail has been embraced in higher education as a tool of passing educative materials between the learners and tutors.

Regarding computer laboratory the responses were 3.6% strongly disagreed, 17.9% disagreed, 25% were moderate, 46.4% agreed and 7.1% strongly agreed. This indicated that most of the teachers agree on effectiveness of having a computer laboratory as a learning resource as their study. The computers are being utilized by most of the teachers as a notebook, storage device and a research tool. This has been echoed by Okwakol (2008) who noted that the computers are utilized as notebooks, dictionary and files for students learning materials in higher education institutions.

The laboratory is relevant as the teachers and tutors can integrate ICT in teaching and learning.

This agrees with the Public University Inspection Board (2006) report that the quality and quantity of learning resources in specific the ICT has great positive impact on the quality of teaching and research in higher education institutions.

Regarding staff adequacy the responses were 3.8% strongly disagreed, 11.1% disagreed, 48.1% were moderate, 29.6% agreed and 7.4% strongly agreed. This indicated that most of the teachers are neutral on having access to adequate teaching staff during their study. The findings agree with Obwogi (2011) and Kipkoech (2012) findings that learners don't fully depend on tutors as higher education institutions have shortages of academic staff. Despite this the findings are attributed to fact that teaching staff assist the teachers advancing in higher education to develop in critical thinking and acquire analytical skills. The said knowledge enables them to advance in their career and increased social economic benefits.

From the findings responses on quality of adequate classes was as follows 7.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 14.8% disagreed, 37% moderate, 25.9% agree and 14.8% strongly agreed. This was an indicator that most teachers prefer to have access to quality classes as this provide a conducive learning environment.

For effective learning and teaching to take place teachers advancing in higher education there should be adequate learning resources in specific the access to internet connectivity, computer laboratory, modern library that will enable them carry out research and access current information in the study area. Additionally adequate use of learning resources enables the teacher's pursuing higher education to access learning materials while at work or home. This has greatly enabled most teachers to advance in higher education and advance in their career. The teachers are motivated, and the resources aid them in their academic work. Similarly, according to Abimbade (1997) learning resources make learners to learn more and retain the taught concept better as their promote creativity and knowledge retention. Additionally, Grant (1978) said that learning resources enables learning to be effective.

### **4.3 Availability of Learning resources**

Institutions of higher learning need to invest in education infrastructure as teachers advancing in high education prefer to have access to modern library, computer laboratory and internet connectivity. This are

capital intensive and direct cost in education. The resources are crucial to the teachers who are advancing in education and the government meet part of the cost.

## **5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

The objective of this study aimed at establishing the effect of learning resources on primary school teachers pursuing higher education and career advancement in Gilgil Sub County, Kenya. The researcher employed chi-square and established that there is cross relationship for enrolling to higher education and career advancement where respondents had access to modern library, internet and teaching staff.

### **5.1 Conclusions**

While availability of classes and staff had minimal significance to enrollment to higher education and career advancement. This implies that majority of teachers who access learning resources can easily enroll to higher education and advance in their career. Emanating from the findings of this study it can be concluded that most of the teachers are willing to enroll for higher education as it's a bridge to career advancement. The study revealed that the higher education institutions' have put in place modern library, computer laboratories, internet connectivity and ICT centers in the institution that enable the teachers to access educational learning resources and carry out research. Additionally, this has facilitated delivery of the courses through digital learning.

Teachers who have higher education are advantaged when it comes to career advancement as there are likely to have improved earnings, promotion at workplace and have access to improved staff benefits such a housing. The findings also showed that teachers who have acquired higher education are on a higher job scale.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

The government should support teachers to advance in higher education for them to benefit through improved staff benefits

Higher learning institutions should develop digital learning in a hybrid structure to accommodate teachers who are working and studying at the same time.

Primary school teachers should integrate ICT in teaching and learning as they embrace digital learning in the institutions of higher learning.

### **5.3 Areas for Further Research**

A comparative study should be done to investigate the extent to which availability of modern learning resources influence teacher's motive to advance in higher education.

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