

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS' POOR MATHEMATICS PERFORMANCE

by:

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One of the most important subjects in the school curriculum is considered to be mathematics. According to Mbugua (2012), A nation's socioeconomic progress is greatly influenced by its foundation in scientific and technological knowledge. Enu et. Al. (2015) states that one discipline that has an effect on every aspect of human life on different levels is mathematics. Mathematics was described as a language by Kitta (2004). It supports our ability to explain concepts and connections derived from the environment. One can solve problems that would be impossible without the use of mathematics by making the invisible apparent. Without mathematics, science and technology cannot advance, and no country can become economically independent. Because of this, mathematics is one of the most important fundamental courses taught in secondary schools.

Despite the highly praised and acknowledged significance of mathematics and the fact that it is a prerequisite for most subjects, poor performance and a lack of interest among students in mathematics continue to be problems in both developed and developing countries' schools, colleges, and universities. Mathematics continues to be one of the most challenging subjects in schools, as perceived by students (Akhter 2018). It is believed that mathematics is complicated by its very nature. Most students have a fear of this subject because of this impression.

There were a lot of factors that led to poor performance by students in mathematics. The first factor is the attitude and perception of students towards mathematics. That is why this factor was consistently studied. In the studies of Enu (2015),

Kafata (2016), and Dayal (2013), they attributed difficulties in teaching mathematics to students' negative attitudes and perceptions, as they believe the subject requires effort to pass. Continuous worry and anxiety among mathematics students leads to a negative attitude that is relatively persistent in the future.

The second factor is the attitude and perception of teachers towards teaching mathematics. Can we just blame the student's attitude and perception towards mathematics? Uusimaki, L. (2004) asserts that teachers' unfavourable attitudes towards mathematics have a significant impact on their students' attitudes and mathematical achievement. Students' attitudes towards mathematics will depend on how they view teachers' personalities, according to Tuimavana (2017). Students' attitudes towards mathematics are influenced by the personal and professional traits of their teachers.

The third factor is the teaching methods used by teachers in teaching mathematics. Obikwere (2008) claims that teachers often use ineffective teaching strategies, which makes students dislike the subject in general. The author went on to say that teachers must employ innovative pedagogies and technologies to get learners interested in mathematics lessons if they want them to understand mathematics. Teachers may use modern technologies in teaching mathematics, such as games, puzzles, mobile applications, and others.

And lastly, the relevance of the mathematics curriculum is that there are too many competencies to complete each quarter, which causes teachers to focus excessively on completing competencies and preparing learners for exams. The mastery of the subject matter was not being prioritized.

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