

EFFECTS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND GENDER ON SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE WRITING SKILLS IN NAKURU NORTH SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) annual reports over the years indicate a continued decline in learners' performance in English paper at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Among the three English language papers at KCSE, Paper Three which tests writing skills is poorly performed. Moreover, performance of boys has been lower than that of girls. This gender disparity is attributed to among other factors, the instructional approaches adopted by the English teachers. Although studies have been carried out on English language performance, the effects of Cooperative Learning (CL) on gender of secondary school learners in English language writing skills in Nakuru North Sub-county has not been done. This study therefore investigated the effects of CL on gender of secondary school learners' achievement in English language writing skills. Solomon Four Non-equivalent Control Group Design under the quasi-experimental research was used. The accessible population was all Form Two learners in co-educational schools in Nakuru North Sub-county, Kenya. Purposive sampling technique was used to select four schools with a total of 197 learners. The schools were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. All learners were taught the same English language content of imaginative essay writing. The experimental groups were taught using CL approach while the control groups were taught using Regular Teaching Approach (RTA). English language Writing Skills Achievement Test (ELWSAT) was used to collect data. ELWSAT was validated and then piloted before use to ascertain the reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient for ELWSAT was found to be 0.87. Data was analysed using t-test, one-way ANOVA and ANCOVA at a significance level of alpha (α) equal to 0.05. The results of the study showed that there was no statistically significant gender difference in learners' means when CL was used. The findings of this study may go a long way to reducing gender disparity in English language writing skills.

Key Words: Gender, Cooperative Learning, Achievement, English Language Writing Skills, Secondary Schools