



AVAILABILITY AND USE OF ECONOMICS

TEXTBOOKS IN TEACHING ECONOMICS:

A CASE STUDY OF FOUR SELECTED SCHOOLS IN

NAIROBI, KENYA.

BY

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B.A. (ECON) HONS.

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MARTIN MOGAMBI AGWATA

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DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for any degree or diploma in any University or College.

Signed



MARTIN MOGAMBI AGWATA

This Project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University supervisor.

Signed



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1996

DEDICATION

To my parents, Mr. & Mrs J.O. Agwata, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that we, myself, my brother Peter and sisters, Eileen, Caroline, and Susan, get the best education possible. They gave me alot of encouragement and support while undergoing my P.G.D.E. Course.

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(iv)

ABSTRACT

Economics as a secondary school subject in Kenya offered at the form 3 and 4 level is threatened with extinction from the curriculum mainly due to the poor performance exhibited in the national examinations (KCSE) since its introduction at secondary school level within the 8.4.4 curriculum.

Many researchers in the field of economics have tried to identify the contributing factors to this poor performance in economics.

This research specifically sought to investigate the availability and use of economics textbooks in teaching economics and their appropriateness for this purpose. The problem is that most schools still use textbooks meant for form 5 and 6 in the former 7.4.2.3 economics curriculum and would therefore not be appropriate in the present 8.4.4 curriculum.

The study was conducted in Nairobi Province, where only 5 out of a possible 97 schools in the province offered the subject at form 3 and 4 level. The respondents included economics teachers and students in secondary schools offering the subject.

Several limitations were faced in this study and mainly the lack of enough time and finances which limited the conduct of a more comprehensive study. Most schools have dropped the subject since the introduction of the 8.4.4 system of education.

Out of the 5 schools in Nairobi province offering the subject, the researcher was denied permission to administer the questionnaire in one school since the students were sitting for their end year examinations and KCSE examinations.

From the research a number of factors became apparent to the researcher.

1. Most of the students taking economics had access to an economics textbook and used them during instruction.
2. The available economics textbooks were frequently used in classroom instruction.
3. The content in these books is not too difficult for the students.
4. Suitable illustrations are used in the textbooks to illustrate the various concepts and ideas of economic theory.
5. The language used in the textbooks is not too difficult for the students.

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CHAPTER I

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Economics is an important subject touching on many areas of life, it contains valuable components of knowledge which contribute to the development of both the individual economist and the society in which he lives as he subscribes the ideas he has acquired to the development of his society.

However, performance in economics has not been satisfactory nationally (KNEC). This has led to the subject being considered as 'hard'. Moreover it is an optional subject in the 8.4.4 system of education and therefore many students opt for other subjects perceived to be 'easier'.

The poor performance may be attributed to many factors such as lack of adequate teaching materials, classroom interaction between teachers and learners and also availability and use of economics textbooks which constitutes the single most important factor in determining effective teaching and learning of the subject.

This research therefore considered the question of availability and use of economics textbooks in the teaching of economics in selected schools in Nairobi Province.

Economics is a new subject taught at secondary school level in the 8.4.4 curriculum. It is offered at forms three and four. Previously in the 7.4.2.3 education system, economics was offered

at the advanced school level, forms five and six. It was a very popular subject among high school students and there was a wide range of textbooks available in the market adequately covering the economics curriculum then. However, since the 7.4.2.3 curriculum was phased out in 1985 and the 8.4.4 curriculum introduced, few textbooks have been developed to be used in the teaching of economics at secondary school level.

Textbooks provide valuable support for teachers in their day to day work in classroom instruction. Das (1985):140 pointed out that most of our teachers will be at a loss without a textbook. Textbooks provide a structure within which work in economics can develop and provide ideas for alternative approaches. However, in choosing which textbook to use, the teacher must distinguish which one suits the varying needs of different students and select the most appropriate one for teaching economics at a particular class. Parents, teachers and the school administrators need to be well informed about the various textbooks available and their usefulness in preparing students achieve set economics objectives.

Textbooks available in most schools are those left over from the previous 7.4.2.3 system of education, some which may not be suitable in the teaching of economics at secondary school level in the 8.4.4 curriculum.

Another issue is whether the available textbooks are being put to good use both by the teachers and the students in the teaching/learning of economics.

Bearing this in mind, we need a systematic research in order

to establish the availability and use of economics textbooks in the teaching of economics in secondary schools since the use of economics textbooks remain a crucial ingredient in the teaching and learning process of economics.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Performance in economics at the KCSE level has been very poor generally since the inception of the 8.4.4 system and the problem faced by many schools in the teaching and learning of economics is the lack of suitable textbooks to be used in instruction.

Since economics is a new subject offered at the secondary school level, in the 8.4.4 curriculum, introduced in 1985, not many textbooks have been developed to cover the curriculum adequately.

The aim of this study, therefore was to investigate the availability and use of economics textbooks in teaching economics and their appropriateness for this purpose. Also the study aimed at ascertaining whether the books available were actually being made use of in instruction in the schools.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were as follows:

1. To identify the textbooks available for teaching economics
2. To ascertain whether the available textbooks were actually being used.
3. To ascertain whether the content of the said textbooks conform to the syllabus presented for the particular class (form 3).

4. To find out whether illustrations found in the textbooks were appropriate for the intended purpose.
5. To confirm whether the language used in these books is appropriate to the students and teachers.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To guide the study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Do the schools have an adequate number of economics textbooks for the teaching and learning of economics?
2. Were the available textbooks being used for classroom instruction?
3. Does the content of the textbooks conform to the syllabus prescribed for the particular class (form 3)?
4. Were the illustrations given in the book appropriate in the teaching of economics?
5. Is the language used, in the textbooks appropriate for the students and teachers?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research aimed at verifying the availability and use of economics textbooks and their appropriateness in the teaching of economics in secondary schools.

The secondary school economics curriculum has been criticized as being inadequate in meeting the needs of modern times. There was therefore need for systematic research so that revision of the

curriculum could be worked out. The preparation of suitable textbooks and other teaching materials is also basic to any attempt of curriculum improvement.

It is hoped that the findings of this study would be of great help to curriculum developers as well as teachers, students, parents and school administrators who wish to purchase economics textbooks to be used in teaching and learning of economics. With the correct choices and use of appropriate textbooks it is hoped that this would result in improvement of performance in economics at secondary school level.

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to the low number of schools offering the subject, the researcher managed to get data from 4 schools of the 5 offering the subject in Nairobi Provinces, (Appendix E). In one of the schools, the school administration denied the author permission to conduct the study in the school.

Another limitation was the number of students enrolled for the subject at form 3 level which was very low compared to other subjects. This is due to the perception that economics was a 'hard' subject and the students therefore opted to other subjects. Like commerce which are perceived to be 'easier'.

Under these circumstances therefore, generalizations may not be accurate.

Lack of adequate funds and enough time limited the conduct of a more comprehensive study.

The study were conducted towards the end of third term when most schools were busy with end year examinations that is late October and early November. The form fours could not be approached to fill the questionnaires as at the time they were busy with the KCSE examinations, this left form three's to fill the questionnaires.

1.6 ASSUMPTION UNDERLYING THE STUDY

Various basic assumptions were made in this study, namely that:

- a) The students gave honest information without the influence of their teachers. Their responses were assumed to be genuine and without bias
- b) The students are homogenous and that information obtained from the selected schools could be generalized to be representative of the whole of Nairobi Province.

The researcher feels that the findings should not be generalized to the whole country since this would require testing to a larger scale before generalizations can be made.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 STATUS OF ECONOMICS' EDUCATION IN KENYA

The introduction of the 8.4.4 education system and its curriculum prescriptions initiated some innovative changes across the entire education spectrum in Kenya. One of the curriculum design elements that has undergone for reaching changes is content at all levels of the education structure. Certain subjects have been introduced at education levels where they were not taught before. Similarly, the content of most of the subjects had to be modified with the aim of meeting the learner's capabilities and experiences. This however, has raised more questions than answers.

One such subject is economics in secondary schools.

Prior to 1985, economics had remained a subject taught in forms 5 and 6 of the high school segment of education. The syllabus used and mode of examination remained a replica of those that were used in Britain for a large part of this period.

The expansion on the teaching of the subject in Kenyan schools in the 1960's and 1970's faced problems such as shortage of trained teachers for the subject, argument against introducing the subject below university level and the general feeling of prospective students that economics was a difficult subject to study.

Following the introduction of economics at form 3 and 4 in 1985 in the 8.4.4 education system, a phenomenal expansion in the

number of students taking economics was originally witnessed. The 1990 KNEC examination report put the enrolment figures to be 25,385 taking economics out a total candidature of 131,809 students at the KCSE in 1989. This figure, according to the same source, rose to 26,130 out of 133,240 total number of candidates.

From these figures it can be noted that the number who took economics was 19.2% in 1989 and 19.6% in 1990.

However, these numbers later drastically dwindled to an insignificant number as schools started dropping the subject. Bosire (1991) points out that economics seems to be a thorn in many schools that are offering it. Most teachers seem to be quite uncertain on whether to offer it or not. Statistics indicate that a fairly large number of schools have abandoned the subject. Very few students have risked to opt for it. The few students studying economics, and the few teachers teaching it, seem to be having so far unresolved problems touching on the instructional methodology to use and the scope of content to cover. Most of those who have dropped the subject, or are contemplating to do so, argue that the subject is too difficult, too abstract for that level of education and that age of students.

Examination results - 1989 and 1990 seem to confirm such allegations.

Table 2.1 KCSE Performance in Economics in 1989 and 1990

YEAR	PAPER	CANDIDATURE	MEAN SCORE %	STD. DEV.
1987	1	25,265	19.38	9.09
	2	25,255	13.13	7.79
1990	1	26,130	16.69	7.99
	2	26,115	8.88	6.99

Source: 1990 KCSE examination report.

From the above results, one would wonder whether its the examination items that are off-tune with the content/syllabus, or could there be a problem in the teaching or content perse or the textbooks use in teaching the subject.

This poor performance is what has led most schools to drop the subject given that it is an optional subject in group IV with French, Music, German, Accounting, Commerce and Typewriting. Students of form 3 and 4 can take one subject from this group.

Bosire (1991) points out that given such optional conditions, there is a high mathematical probability that not many students might opt for economics. This is further enhanced by the current fear and belief among students, teachers and headmasters that economics is a hard subject and meant for higher education levels. Headmasters would therefore opt to abandon the subject so as to

improve or maintain their reputation in the national examination merit grading.

This view is also shared by Akamporia (1988:vii) who says

"...economics is certainly an interesting subject but I must caution the students that it is by no means an easy one"

Such sentiments are reflected in the performance of economics in the 8.4.4 curriculum and arguments have been put forward that the reason for the poor performance lack of appropriate textbooks which have yet to be developed to cover the form 3 and 4 syllabus adequately.

According to Lee (1975:125) on new subjects:

The reality of the situation in schools is that new subjects have a difficult time becoming established and unless strong and valid claims are made for the subject, it is unlikely that it will find widespread favour among educationists for its inclusion in the common course.

This could explain the problems faced by economics as a new subject offered at forms 3 and 4 in the 8.4.4 system of education.

2.2 VALUE OF ECONOMICS AS A SECONDARY SCHOOL SUBJECT

Kerich (1990) noted that economics is valuable because of its body of knowledge, facts and concepts which provide tools for economic analysis such that learners are able to understand the economic environment in which they live, as well as interpret the consequence of various results within his environment.

Kerich (1990) continues to add that economics has some value in preparing one for a vacation by equipping him with an understanding of the fundamental economic problem of scarcity and the need to make sound choices between alternatives.

Economics provides rigorous intellectual training since it has a distinct content and method of inquiry.

At secondary school level, teaching economics provides a base for further education in economics and related disciplines. At the same time it directly contributes to citizenship training in the economic dimension.

Economics gives the student an understanding of the world outside school as well as imparting on him an understanding of the insistent present.

Economics acts as a bridge between the pure arts and the pure sciences thus making students more diversified in thinking and capable of deductive reasoning, and testing propositions empirically by adopting methods of inquiry typical in both the physical Sciences and pure arts.

Other scholars have also pointed out various other values of economics. One of the strongest reasons for introducing economics, according to Lee (1975) is in order to foster understanding of the pupil in the economic dimension of the environment in which he lives as a consumer and at the same time as a producer. The educational and civic values of economics for everyman have won international acceptance.

Amacher (1983) also pointed out that economics deals with

vital current problems such as inflation, unemployment, monopoly, economic growth and so on. It is a problem based social science and the problems with which it is especially concerned are among the most disturbing in our age. They fill the newspapers and pervade our politics. The relevance of economics goes on to relate to personal problems such as one's job, wages, unemployment, cost of living and so on.

Economic theory forms the basis of political decisions the world over, such that, world leaders need to have economic advisers to enlighten them on the economic issues they deliberate on and these affect every person in their countries. Wrong economic decisions can sometimes spell out a lot of problems to the governments involved. Politicians therefore need to understand the profound effects the economic issues have on the world.

Economics, being a very valuable subject, then, all efforts should be made to increase its popularity and solve the problems that now threaten the subject at secondary school level in Kenya with extinction.

2.3 TEACHING ECONOMICS

Both the 1964 Ominde Commission and the 1976 Gachathi report noted and stressed the value of economics for secondary school students. Whereas the former recommended for the introduction of the subject in high schools to prepare students for administrative and managerial functions in the economy, the latter seemed more preoccupied with the role the subject could play in the vocational

and technical education in the proposed system of education.

The aims of teaching economics as suggested by Lee (1975) include intellectual training, preparation for citizenship and vocational training for a business career.

The methods of teaching any subject would be dictated to a considerable extent by the nature of the subject and the aims for teaching it. Economics educators, like other educators, have increasingly come to recognize the need to actively involve the learners in the learning process. There is also a growing appreciation that for effective presentation of the materials to be taught, teaching aids or resources must be incorporated by teachers in their instruction. There is certainly no single teaching method nor teaching strategy that could be prescribed for all economics classes.

Ryba (1975) asserts that no formula for teaching success could ever be offered, no teacher who sought to depend exclusively on the advice of others could reasonably hope to make the best of his situation.

On the same note, Oliver (1953:28-29) noted that on many occasions, learning is not so much a process of adding to former experience as it is a process of re-organizing and rebuilding these experiences.

Instructional aids also play an important role in any teaching. Thus economics textbooks used play an instrumental part of any bid to teach the subject. However, Binning (1952) noted that although it may be stated that the texts presented a meager

treatment of the subject, this may be conceived as an opportunity for the teacher to enrich and supplement it. At the same time it is important to note that for effective teaching, economics teachers need to refer to local examples in order to concretize the economic concepts being taught.

Economics teachers need to 'put their best foot forward' in their quest to teach the subject in order to ensure better performance and thus revitalize the subject in secondary schools in Kenya.

2.4 USE OF ECONOMICS TEXTBOOKS IN TEACHING ECONOMICS

The textbook is considered synonymous with schooling. It is the most influential factor in determining the content and the approach of teaching. As Das (1985) put it, most of our teachers will be at a loss without a textbook. The textbook helps the teacher in teaching systematically.

However, some educationist disapprove of the use of textbooks because of their misuse and overuse. Overdependance on the textbook limits the advantage of its use. Therefore the textbook should never be allowed to dominate any teaching programme and should be looked at as one of the many devices available to the teacher to aid his teaching.

Das (1985:141) asserts that

... a textbook, however carefully prepared, cannot be perfect and it is impossible to incorporate all the aspects demanded. Moreover, a textbook is apt to get

out-of-date if not revised regularly.

This fact is specially true for a science textbook since scientific knowledge and its application increases everyday. The same goes for economics which has been said to be a science, as Reynolds (1985) put it that economics is a semi-solid subject, not as precise as the natural sciences, but more so than most nonscientific subjects. The solidity according to Reynolds (1985) comes from the fact that economics deals with relations among quantities, which are usually measurable and quantitative relations lend themselves to mathematical expression.

The caveat "other things being equal" has always been used as a shield to insulate economic theory, science as it may be, from the real world, thus seriously restricting its usefulness. As the number of "things being equal" dwindles in the face of today's complexities the realism of the theory declines in parallel. Thus the growing complexity of our domestic economy and the increasing interrelatedness of the world's many economies are steadily eroding the applicability of much of our existing economic theory.

Economics is therefore plagued with constantly changing application of concepts, some of which become abstract in the present times. This means that economics textbooks need to be revised frequently, at least after every 5 years, in order to be currently applicable with the times.

Textbooks teaching together with lecture method are the two oldest procedures in teaching. However today the lecture method is generally held in disrepute especially at secondary school level.

Textbook teaching has also been criticized because it is associated with the memoriter method of learning. As Binning (1952:52) put it

... the method used was to insist that historical material be firmly fixed to the memory..." in this method, mere memorization of subject matter was the chief end of education and little or no attention was given to comprehension or understanding.

Generally the type condemned today is the one in which pupils recite to the teacher the facts memorized from the book, such that the facts become ends in themselves and not means to an understanding. This is according to Binning (1952) while Das (1985) agrees that the text book is a means to an end and not an end by itself.

Thus the text book should be used to gain understanding of concepts in economics and not to be used solely to teach since other aids to teaching should be employed as well.

The role of the text book in an economics class cannot be underplayed. It is a major factor in determining what topics are taught and how they are taught. The textbook often dictates the scope, sequence and even the pace of the economics programme. Besides being a powerful tool in determining whether new topics are included, its importance increases if instruction is inadequate. Curriculum is not determined on the textbooks but materials in textbooks should come from the curriculum. In some cases the textbook becomes the key in class instead of becoming the servant of the teacher, this is however not an ideal situation.

The role played by the economics textbook in teaching of economics is very important because it provides reference for necessary instruction that cannot be provided by direct experience or by visual aids and classroom instruction. It also aids the teacher to plan, prepare and write complete merits and daily lessons as well as providing a useful aid to sequential approach in the study of economics. The textbook provides the basic and sometimes the only resource to those many schools which are limited in resources such as library books, periodicals, journals, concrete aids, and so on. Finally, the textbook acts as a storehouse of economic facts, theories, formulae and definitions to which reference can be made frequently.

Being a very crucial instructional aid, Binning (1952) has suggested better ways of using an economics textbook. In his suggestions, one plan is that in which the pupils and the teacher study the textbook together. The teacher can show his class how to use and get the most out of a textbook.

Another plan is to use the textbook in a topical procedure. In this, the pupils study the lesson in order to master topics. Almost all classroom teaching methods can be used with the text as a basis of study.

Much good teaching has been accomplished with the used of a single textbook, some have advocated the use of more than one textbook in the subject.

2.5 THE USE OF A SINGLE TEXTBOOK

It is sometimes argued that good teaching is impossible if the pupil is limited to a single textbook. It is true that supplementary and collateral reading can be of great value to the pupil, but it is also true that much excellent teaching has been done with a single textbook.

The use of one textbook has been criticized on many grounds, one of the chief objections, according to Binning (1952) is that it tends to inculcate in the children a reverence authoritativeness of the printed page. Pupils will accept the authority of the book as final and will form a habit of accepting without question everything they see in print.

This view might however be due more to poor teaching than to the use of a single textbook.

Each teacher should be an authority in his subject and his pupils should regard him as such, Binning (1952) suggests that the teacher should himself have a viewpoint other than that of the textbook which gives a single view point. The teacher should therefore be able to challenge any inaccuracies in the text and give various interpretations of other authors. In this case, more good would probably be done than exposing the pupil to 2 or more textbooks.

The root of the trouble lies in the fact that teachers themselves follow the texts too closely. In teaching economics, therefore the teacher must avoid too close adherence to the text.

It may also be claimed that the texts abound in vague

generalizations but it is the teachers duty to see that these are made plain to the learners.

Another is that it may be stated that the text presents a meager treatment of the subject, this may be conceived as an opportunity for the teacher to enrich and supplement it.

After all objections have been considered, the conclusion may be that most of them must be laid on the door step of poor teaching rather than accounted for by the use of a single textbook. Even with the best text, the teacher will have to bear in mind constantly the aims that he has set up for his course. With the text at hand and the aims in mind, he will map out his work for the year, laying strategies of achieving his objectives using the text and any other supplementary material that may be available.

It should be noted that most schools lack resources and will thus not be able to afford a number of textbooks and therefore the teacher has to make do with those at hand to achieve his objectives and aims in teaching economics.

2.6 THE USE OF SEVERAL TEXTBOOKS

There is a tendency today in part of some teachers to make use of several texts and references especially so when they are available to the teacher. Here, no one book is emphasized to the disadvantage of others.

Many advantages are claimed for this plan. The first is that it overcomes the objections of pupils regarding the textbook as a final authority as well as ensuring a better treatment of the

various topics as no textbook adequately treats every one of its divisions or topics. This however calls for a teacher with extraordinary organizing ability to succeed. On the hands of the average teacher, the results may prove unsuccessful coupled by the fact that teachers have a heavy workload of any one time.

there is the danger of learners, especially at secondary school level, being saturated with, as Binning (1952:77) ... calls it, a super - abundance of facts that may confuse rather than enlighten them. He continues to say

"... new material becomes significant only when the learner is able to integrate it on the background he already has".

The background of a secondary school pupil is often insufficient so that he cannot assimilate the many facts with which he is confronted. Economics being a subject offered at form 3 and 4, it can be noted that the business education course taught at forms 1 and 2 lays an insufficient background for economics in form 3 and therefore pupils become mentally confused and disgusted with the subject since they meet abstract concepts in economic theory which are largely divorced from reality.

In using several textbooks, the teacher should, at the beginning of the course, take some time to discuss the content and the readings to be made from the various books and point out the most important readings and what combination is best. This will increase the prospects of a better classroom discussion since there are many texts to read and authors differ in their approaches to different topics. The teacher should take precautions not to give

pupils material which is beyond their comprehension. He should have a wide knowledge of economics and plan carefully in order to succeed.

2.7 SELECTION OF ECONOMICS TEXTBOOKS

A wide selection of textbooks available poses problems for the teacher. In order to select the recommended text, the teacher needs to give serious consideration to the qualities a good economics text should have in order to come up with one or two which the learners can be asked to buy or the school to buy. This is an expensive venture and requires objectivity when evaluating these texts. In the past, the selection of textbooks was generally influenced by the personality of the textbook salesman, the general appearance of the book, the price of the book or a subjective evaluation of it. This is according to Binning (1952:78) while Lee (1975) has come up with some criteria for evaluating these textbooks. He suggests that in selection, the teacher could rely on book reviews which appear in newspapers and journals. However, there are some drawbacks and the most important deficiency of reviews as prime guides for the teacher in this case arise out of their brevity and in particular the virtual absence of comparisons between the book under review and existing competing texts.

Desirable qualities of a good economics textbook which the teacher might need to consider include:

The topics should be appropriate in terms of interest, difficulty and usefulness to the learner as well as being in

harmony with the correct curriculum emphasis. In this case they should be those that will attain the objectives of the course and fit the sequence, building on the previous course and preparing for the course to follow.

On the other issue of coverage Less (1975) asserts that the coverage of a textbook must primarily reflect the syllabus of the examining body, as well as the type of examination for which pupils are being prepared.

The economics content must be correct, the structure of each topic should be clear and concise. The level of rigour and precision should be appropriate to the course. The content according to Das (1985), should be appropriate for the age level of the pupils and should conform to the syllabus prescribed for that particular grade. He continues to add that the content should be up to date and be related to the everyday life and experiences of the pupils. The content selected should be consistent with the pupils needs interests and previous background and shouldn't be too difficult for the majority of pupils. The topics should be illustrated with diagrams, pictures and charts plus include local examples to enhance better understanding by students.

The narrative or language should be readable and comprehensible. With abstractions and symbols made meaningful. This should be interesting and provoking with definitions and explanations stated using only those terms that the students can be expected to understand.

On the treatment of content Lee (1975) suggests the qualities

that a good textbook should possess are lucidity, accuracy and suitable ordering and the treatment must be stimulating for the reader. However, it is important for the teacher to note that lucidity and clarity may be obtained at the cost of oversimplification which is undesirable. The quality of lucidity, *per se* is, moreover, essentially one of style, on which opinions must be expected to vary and hence here there is the subjective element of assessment.

The question of the order in which material is presented is one upon which opinions may reasonably vary and there is a presumption in favour of a text which offers the most flexibility for the individual teacher. It is worth emphasizing that the question of order of treatment is not unrelated to whether a student finds that a particular book stimulates his interest in economics. As Lee (1975:303) put it "... the sooner and the closer economics can be related to the experience of a student the more interested he is likely to become in what he is learning

Other considerations that must be made in textbook selection include design features such as spacing and headings. Many learners naturally tend to favour extensive use of headings, sub-headings and summaries, Lee (1975) holds that even so apparently superficial a matter of the way in which the subject matter is divided up this can be of immense importance. Illustrations in the books must be clear, accurate and directly related to the textual paragraph in which they are fully explained. Statistical tables should also be carefully presented and their relevance to textual

arguments made absolutely clear. The textbooks should also have a good index in articulation. A close look at an index often provides a fair guide to the care taken by an author.

Since a good textbook provides not only the contents but also determines the method of teaching, a textbook therefore occupies an important place in the classroom situation. Therefore, economics teachers should be familiar with the purpose and function of a textbook and the principles of selecting a good textbook. Das (1985) points out that a good textbook saves the teacher much time and energy preparing his daily lessons, it stimulates thinking in the mind of the learners besides supplying necessary information. One of the important purpose of using a textbook is to enable the pupils to gain the power to understand and interpret facts and ideas presented in economics textbooks. This also helps in self education by indirectly cultivating the reading habit.

Indeed as Das (1985:142) asserts, A bad textbook is detrimental to the effective learning of science, its better not to have any textbook rather than a bad one. this can be applied in the teaching and learning of economics, more so at secondary school level.

Binning (1952) has given a simple but comprehensive scale for evaluating textbooks in social studies which can greatly aid economics teachers as they evaluate the textbooks available for teaching economics. Refer to appendix D. If used, this can aid in the selection of economics textbooks in order to be used in the process of economics instructions.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

This research project involved a survey of the available economics textbooks, and their use in economics instruction in secondary schools in Nairobi Province.

The population constituted all the 97 secondary school in Nairobi, while sampling was done through non-probability sampling centering on the schools offering the subject at form three and four. This was done to alleviate the problems mentioned earlier of few schools offering the subject.

The sample was drawn from 5 schools namely

- 1 Jamuhuri Secondary school
- 2 Parklands secondary school
- 3 Aga Khan High school
- 4 Nairobi school
- 5 Saint Mary's school Nairobi

However, data was not collected from the last school due to administrative difficulties.

The research design used was survey research using questionnaires, on the availability and use of economics textbooks.

From an intended sample size of 60 students, responses were got from 48 students from the four schools aforementioned.

The various textbooks used were then examined to compare the

content with the required coverage from the syllabus.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUMENT

The instruments used were questionnaires targeted at students and teachers this was developed by the author and approved by the supervisor of this projects ensuring validity and appropriateness.

Besides the questionnaire, informal interviews were conducted with the teachers of economics in the schools visited.

The questionnaires were administered on students and teachers and entailed the following sections.

First was the background information on the book used by the students for economics instruction. As well as whether the students had a copy of the textbook mentioned or had access to one.

Secondly the frequency of use of these textbooks was examined.

The third part evaluated content of the textbook with four items, the responses were based on a 5 point scale of strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree.

The fourth section sought information on whether the illustrations used were appropriate in teaching/learning economics. The responses varied form excellent, very good, good, fair and poor.

Finally the questionnaire had a section on the language used in the textbook. This section had 4 items as well, on a 5 point scale of strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree.

The respondents were required to tick against the most

appropriate space provided.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The first step here was a visit to the Deputy Provincial Inspector of schools who provided a list of schools in Nairobi and identified those which offered economics as a subject at secondary school level.

The researcher then visited the schools identified and sought permission to conduct the research from the respective school administrators. Where permission was forthcoming the researcher went ahead and administered the questionnaire personally in liaison with the respective economics teachers within the schools.

The researcher explained of the intent and purpose of the study to the headteachers and the teachers who were asked to explain to the students the same. The researcher then administered the questionnaires as soon as they finished.

The researcher took time to talk to the various teachers of the subject in the schools to finding out any other issues that may not have been covered in the questionnaires.

The completed questionnaires were then gathered ready for analysis.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Raw data obtained from the field was organized in tabular form and percentages calculated. Each item in the questionnaire was analyzed on its own, due to differences in the mode of response.

Items based on the same concept were grouped together and analyzed together. The findings therefore follow the systematic order of the research questions.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION FROM THE STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

The students questionnaire was divided into 4 sections, namely:

- A: Availability of Economics textbooks for teaching economics and for classroom instruction
- B Content of Economics textbooks used for instruction
- C Illustrations used in the textbooks
- D Language used in the textbooks

4.1 Availability of Economics textbooks for teaching Economics in secondary schools.

The first item in this section sought to find out the economics textbooks used in the schools for teaching and learning purposes. The main texts used by students were as given in table 4.1 below

Table 4.1 Economic textbooks available in schools.

Title	No. of students	Percentage %
1. KIE (1990) <u>Secondary Business Education- Economics</u> : Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation	18	37.5
2. Saleemi N.A (1981). <u>A textbook of Economics</u> : Nairobi; N.A. Saleemi publishers	12	25
3. Hussain A. (1986). <u>A textbook of Economics</u> : E.A. Educational Publishers, Nairobi	7	14.6
4. Akampurua G.B (1988). <u>Certificate Economic</u> : Oxford University Press; New York	4	8.3
5. Livingston.I & Ord H.W. (1980) <u>Economic for Eastern African</u> ; Heinemann, Nairobi	6	12.5
No Book	1	2.1
Total	48	100

Source: Author of this study

From the table we see that only one student said that he had no access to an economics textbook and this was reflected in item two which sought to find out whether the students had a personal copy of the textbook or whether it was provided by the school or shared with a friend. This reflected that 97.9% of the students had access to an economics textbook. However, since the textbook is the chief aid in teaching and learning economics, as well as being the major source of information and ideas and with an adequate number of economics textbooks for teaching and learning economics we are left to wonder then why the poor performance noted in the KNEC Examinations at secondary school level. Logically therefore, it is safe to assume that the poor performance in examinations is due to some reason(s) other than the availability of textbooks used for instruction.

4.2 The use of Economics Textbooks for Instruction

Item 3 of the students questionnaire sought information from students on how often the economics textbook, identified in item one, was used for classroom instruction. The responses are tabulated in table 4.2 below based on a 4 point scale in very often, often, hardly and not at all.

Table 4.2 Use of Economics Textbooks for Instruction

	Number of students	Percentage %
Very often	14	29.2
often	17	35.4
Hardly	9	18.8
Not at all	7	14.6
Total	47	97.9

Source: Author of this study.

Table 4.2 shows that economic textbooks are by and large used for classroom instruction. Only 14.6% of the students responded to the negative while the rest to one extent or another responded positively that they used economics textbooks for instruction, that is a total of 85.4% of these 64.6% said the books were often or very often used for instructions. One student did not respond to this item.

Since textbooks are a crucial input in any subject, the use of those textbooks of economics is very important if performance is to be satisfactory. In fact it has been said that most teachers will be at a loss without a textbook but still, overdependence on or over-use of the textbook limits the advantages of its use. As is the case here we can say that the textbooks are not being over-used since only 29.2% of the respondents say they were used very oftenly. So in this case the teachers are not overdependent on the

textbooks. With a higher percentage of students saying that the textbooks were often used (35.4%) we can safely assume that the textbooks do not dominate the teaching programmes wholly. However, with this good use of textbooks, it is still a mystery why the performances should be poor as surely we should expect better performance with good use of the textbooks. Therefore we should look into other areas for reasons for this.

4.3 Content of Economics textbooks used for instruction

In this section, respondents were required to give information on the content of the textbook used for classroom instruction. There were 4 items in this section that sought for the following information

- Item 1: whether the concepts or ideas in the book are too difficult for the students
- Item 2: whether the content in the book is consistent with students needs, interests and previous background information.
- Item 3: whether the book contains tests and exercises that students can do without difficulty
- Item 4: Whether the content of the textbook conforms to the syllabus prescribed for the learners class

The statements were based on the 5 point scale of, strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. the responses are tabulated in table 4.3 below

Table 4.3 Students opinion on the content of the textbooks.

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4
Strongly disagree	10	5	6	2
Disagree	18	9	8	5
Undecided	11	7	10	9
Agree	6	17	11	19
Strongly Agree	3	10	13	13

Source: Author of this study

From this table we see that in item one most students felt that the concepts and ideas presented in the textbooks were not difficult for them, that is, 28 out of 48 (58.3%). 11 (22.9%) were undecided in the issue while 9 (18.8%) felt the concepts and ideas presented in the textbooks being evaluated were difficult for them. These results would sound contrary to the notion that economics as a 'hard' subject as well as economic theory being abstract, the case here is that the student don't find the concepts and ideas presented in the textbooks difficult in general and can be understood without much problems. Consequently performance should reflect this by having students passing with good grades but this is not the case.

Item two results show that 27 students (56.3%), who constitute a majority, felt the content of the textbooks was consistent with their needs, interests and previous background

information, 7 (14.6%) were undecided while 14 (29.2%) felt otherwise. Accordingly we can deduce that the content of the textbooks builds upon concepts developing ideas such that a sequential approach is used. Also the books build on previous background information to introduce new concepts to the learners as well as taking into account their needs and interests. This would also reflect on the application part of the subject since what interests learners is usually concrete and related to their everyday life experiences. This would mean that these students generally felt that the books provide a good account of the subject which is not withdrawn from their everyday experiences. It is important to note here that the examination at form 4 (KNEC) is application oriented. It is therefore hard to understand why the results should continue to be poor in the subject. We can also imply from the findings that the content in the textbooks is stimulating and instructive. The background information learnt in business education in forms 1 and 2 lays a good background for learners who opt for economics in forms 3 and 4.

item three: In general in this item responses were fairly distributed such that there was no inclination on either side. We had 24 students (50%) who felt the tests and exercises contained in the book could be done without difficulty, 10 (20.8%) were undecided and 14 (29.2%) disagree with this aspects. From these findings we can say that there is some level of difficulty in the subject. It is not at all easy. That is if the exercises and tests contained in the books are anything to go by. However we

still remain with 50% who feel that the tests and exercises are not difficult. This contrasts with the idea that the subject is a difficult one. The conclusions from these findings would be that the performance in examinations can be expected to be average if we are to use the tests and exercise as an indicator of performance in national examinations in which case they need to be of a similar nature.

Item four: Here 32 students (66.7%) felt that the content of the textbooks conform to the syllabus prescribed for them. 9(18.8%) were undecided while only 7 (14.5%) felt otherwise. Conformity to the syllabus is a very important aspect any valuable book should adhere to. In many cases this will ensure that learners and teachers concentrate on areas that are useful for their propose and ensure better performance in the subject at national examinations.

In summary its worthwhile to note that having a good book is one thing and adequately using it is another. Therefore teachers should teach their students on how they can make the best use of a textbook, so as to attain better grades in the terminal examinations, (KCSE). A reading culture should be cultivated in the students to ensure good use of the textbooks and especially so since they form a very important instrument or aid in the process of instruction

4.4 Opinions of students on the illustrations used in the textbooks.

Results on the views of students on illustrations used in the

textbooks were as follows in table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Opinions of students on the illustrations used in the textbooks

Premises	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	4	8.3
Very Good	12	25.0
Good	10	20.8
Fair	16	33.3
Poor	6	12.5

Source: Author of this study

It is evident from table 4.4 that the illustrations used in the textbooks are fairly good. Only a few (6- 12.5%) felt that the illustrations were poor.

These results would imply that the textbooks contain good illustrations that are clear, accurate and directly related to a textual paragraphs in which the illustrations are fully explained. It also implies good draughtsmanship behind the diagrams.

These are invaluable in teaching economics as they help the students concretize otherwise abstract concepts presented in economic theory. They also help in revision as the concepts presented in diagrams can easily be understood without having to search for a full explanation in the text.

In the above situations therefore and in relation to the

findings, we can say that with good illustrations the students are able to understand economic theory easily using these and logically therefore examination performance should reflect this. However this is not so since we find that examination performance in economics is generally poor, we are left to wonder why.

4.5 Opinions of students on the language used in the textbooks.

Here respondents were required to give their judgement on the language used in the textbooks use for economics instruction. On a five point scale of strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree the responses are tabulated in table 4.5

Table 4.5 Appropriateness of language used in Economics textbooks

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4
Strongly Disagree	6	1	5	3
Disagree	23	9	8	8
Undecided	7	8	9	8
Agree	8	27	20	15
Strongly Agree	4	3	6	13

Source: Author of this study

Items above sought to establish information given as follows:

Item 1: The book is difficult and student cannot use it without teachers constant supervision.

Item 2: Students can understand most of the terms used in the

definitions

Item 3: Readability of language used. Whether its comprehensible, interesting, accurate and understandable.

Item 4: Illustrations of topics with diagrams, pictures, charts etc, which enhance understanding of content and retention.

Results show:

Item 1: The results here revealed that most of the students found the language used to be easy and they could easily read the textbooks without teachers constant supervision. 29 (60.4%) could easily use the book compared to 12 (25%) who found it difficult. The rest were not sure 7 (14.6%).

In item 2, most students agreed to the point that they could understand most of the terms used in the definitions. 30 (62.5%) agreed. While 10 (20.8%) disagreed. The other 8 (16.7) were undecided. Thus, the terms used were generally understandable to the students.

In item 3, the language used was thought to be readable, comprehensible, interesting, accurate and students understand most of the concepts presented in the text books. We had 26 students (54.2%) agreeing with this, 13 (27%) disagreeing and some 9 students (18.8%) undecided.

The last item in this section dealt with the fact that many topics are illustrated with diagram, pictures, charts etc and this enhances the students understanding of concepts. Again most students agree with this statement, 28 in number (58.3%) while 8

(14.7%) and 11 (22.9%) were undecided and disagreed respectively.

From the findings, most students are largely, in favour of the textbooks used with respect to the language used in these books. The books are not difficult and can be used without teachers supervision, the terms used are easily understood by the students, the language is readable, comprehensible, interesting, accurate and the concepts are understood. At the same time most of the topics are illustrated with diagrams, pictures, charts and so on and this enhances the students understanding of the concepts presented.

Consequently therefore the students should not have any problems understanding the concepts and ideas presented in economics since they have a proficiency in language in this case.

4.6 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS FROM THE TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

The teachers questionnaire was divided into 3 sections namely

- availability and use of economics textbooks
- content of economics textbooks
- language used in the textbooks.

4.7 Availability of economics textbooks for teaching economics in secondary schools.

In the first item in this section teachers identified the main textbooks they use during instruction. These are given in table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Economics textbooks available schools.

Title	Number of teachers
1. Saleemi N.A (1981). <u>A textbook of Economics</u> : Nairobi: N.A. Saleemi Publishers	6
2. K.I.E (1990), <u>Secondary Business Education, Economics</u> : Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta foundation.	4
3. Livingstone I. & Ord H.W. (1990) <u>Economics for Eastern Africa</u> : Heineman: Nairobi	2
4. Akamporia G.B. (1988). <u>Certificate Economics</u> : New York: Oxford University press.	1

Source: Author of this study

All the teachers who responded to the questionnaire had a personal copy of the text used for instruction.

From table 4.7 above it is clear that KIE and saleemi textbooks are the most popular economics textbooks used for instruction by teachers of secondary economics.

This was also reflected by the students where the two books were used by 72.5% of the students.

From this we can infer that the main economics textbooks used

are KIE and Saleemi books and that they are largely available to the student as well as their teachers. Therefore the poor performance exhibited in the subject is not due to lack of textbooks but another reason.

Item 3 sought to establish how often these textbooks identified above were used for classroom instructions. 10 of the 13 teachers responded positively that they use the textbooks often, and only 3 said they hardly use them.

The identified texts are therefore available to the teachers as well as students and are often used for instruction.

4.8 Content of Economics Textbooks used for instruction

In this section, the teachers were required to give information about the content of the textbooks. This was a comprehensive evaluation of the textbook content and was covered in two parts. In the first part the information required was as follows:

- Item 1: whether organization of topics is in their psychological sequence in terms of level of difficulty.
- Item 2: whether there is a carefully structured development of topics of interest to the pupils
- Item 3: whether there is a simple logical presentation of ideas and concepts supported by a careful organization of examples.

The results were as shown in table 4.8 below. On a 5 point scale of excellent, very good, fair and poor.

Table 4.8 (a) Content of economics textbooks used

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3
Excellent	0	0	2
Very good	1	2	2
Good	8	4	3
Fair	4	5	5
Poor	0	2	1

Source: Author of this study.

From the table we see that the teachers felt the organization of topics is in this psychological sequence in terms of level of difficulty. Most responded felt this was good.

Item 2 also shows a positive attitude towards the development of topics, most felt this was fairly well done in the textbooks used.

Item 3 on presentation of ideas and concepts responses varied from excellent to poor. However most felt this is fairly well done in the textbooks they use.

In the second part of this section, the teachers were asked to give their judgment on a 5 point scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, about the content touching on 7 issues.

Item 1 - the content is upto date and concurs with the syllabus

Item 2 - the concepts imparted are not too difficult for majority of pupils

Item 3 - content is consistent with pupils needs interests and previous background

Item 4 - the books contain topics that will attain set objectives of the course.

Item 5 - the books contain adequate tests and exercises

Item 6 - the books contain extra materials

Item 7 - illustrations given in the books are appropriate in teaching and learning economics

The results are tabulated below in table 4.8 (b)

Table 4.8 (b) Content of economics textbooks

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7
Strongly disagree	0	1	1	1	1	2	0
Disagree	4	7	6	1	5	4	6
Undecided	1	0	2	4	1	1	0
Agree	7	5	4	7	4	4	7
Strongly agree	1	0	0	0	2	2	0

Source: Author of this study

From the table it is clear that the teachers feel that the

content in the textbooks is upto date and concurred with the syllabus. Since 8 out of 13 agree to items 1. In item 2, 8 teachers disagree, thus showing they feel the concepts are not too difficult for majority of pupils. In item 3, 7 teachers disagreed showing the content selected is not consistent with pupils needs, interests and previous background. In item, 4, 7 teachers agree that the books contain topics that will attain the set objectives of the course. However 4 were undecided on this issue, while only 2 disagree. Item 5 reveals an equal number 6, disagreeing and agreeing that the books contain tests for evaluation of achievement and exercise are adequate and of the level the meet students abilities. This point did not come out clearly going by the results. Item 6 on whether the books contain extra materials to provide for an enrichment course and encourages teachers to try out fresh teaching methods, similarly an equal number, 6, agreed and disagreed to this. Item 7 shows more teachers, 7, who felt the illustrations given in the books were appropriate in teaching and learning of economics. 6 felt otherwise.

On the whole it becomes clear that the content in economics textbooks used is appropriate to the learning of economics.

4.9 Language used in economics textbooks

In this section of the questionnaire teachers were required to give their judgement on the language used in economics textbooks. In table 4.9 below on five items, the information required was as follows:

Item 1 - whether the book used is difficult to read and cannot be used without teachers constant supervision

Item 2 - terms used in the definitions are those students can understand

Item 3 - The language is readable, comprehensible, interesting, accurate and at the level of students

Item 4 - Many topics are illustrated with diagrams, pictures, charts etc.

The results were as follows:

Table 4.9: Language used in economics textbooks

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4
Strongly Disagree	0	1	1	1
Disagree	3	6	7	6
Undecided	3	1	1	0
Agree	7	3	4	5
Strongly agree	0	2	0	1

Source: Author of this study

From the table a number of conclusions can be made. One, that the teachers feel books are difficult to read and cannot be used without their supervision since 7 teachers agreed to item 1.

Secondly, from item 2 some of the terms used in definitions are those students cannot understand since 7 teachers disagreed to item 2. Thirdly, most of the teachers disagreed to item 3, that

the language is readable, comprehensible, interesting, accurate and at the level of students, 8 teachers disagree to this item. Lastly, from item 4 more teachers felt that the topics are not illustrated with diagrams, pictures and charts, 7 teachers disagreed to this item while 6 agreed.

On the whole, while from the last section it came out that the content used in textbooks is appropriate, from this section it is apparent that the language used is inappropriate to the students and can therefore present difficulties to the students in understanding the concepts presented in the textbooks. This may explain the poor performance since if the concepts are not understood then there is the possibility of having misconceptions and having wrong ideas contrary to those presented in the books. Teachers should therefore give a lot of guidance to students on how to use the textbooks and explain the concepts there in , for better understanding of those concepts.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The value of teaching/learning economics in secondary schools cannot be overemphasized. It is a very valuable subject because, among other reasons, of its body of knowledge, facts and concepts which provide the learners with tools of economic analysis such that learned are able to understand the economic environment in which they live, as well as interpret the consequences of various event within their environment. Besides this it has some value in preparing one for a vocation as well as contributing to citizenship training in the economic dimension. At the same time it provides a rigorous intellectual training, it gives the learners an understanding of the insistent present besides providing a base for further education in economics and related disciplines such as commerce, building and land economics and so on.

Economics is a very valuable subject, but it is plagued with a lot of problems such that it is becoming an extinct subject in the secondary school curriculum. It came to the author's notice during the process of conducting this research that out of 97 schools in Nairobi Province, only 5, as at the time of the research (October, 1995), offered economics as a subject, and even then the number of students taking the subject are very few relative to the whole student population in the schools and even as compared to enrolment to other optional subjects like commerce.

A lot needs to be done to reverse this trend which is mainly a result of the generally very poor performance in the subject at the terminal examinations of KCSE in form 4.

Considering the central role played by textbooks in any instruction, this research looked at the textbooks used in teaching and learning economics. The textbook is the most influential factor in determining the content and the approach in teaching. In fact, most of our teachers would be at a loss without a textbook. It is the most widely used teaching instrument in any subject as indeed it is in economics next to the teachers oral presentation.

It was with this in mind that the author of this study embarked on evaluating the textbooks used in the teaching/learning process of economics. However it was assumed that the respondents gave genuine and honest information and that the students selected were homegenous such that results could be generalized for Nairobi province.

Some limitations were encountered in this study. The prime limitation being funds as well as the number of schools offering the subject being too few. Also the unwillingness by the school administration of one of the five schools offering the subjects, to allow the author to conduct his research in the school. Time was also not on the side of the author since this was limited to the short period between late October 1995 to mid November 1995 when the national examinations were scheduled to begin. These limitations therefore meant that the researcher could not look into the use of economics textbooks exhaustively.

this as a yardstick we would expect an average performance, on the subject of national examination. On conformity of the content of the textbooks to the syllabus 66.7% felt this was so and only 14.5% felt otherwise with 15.8% undecided on the issue.

In general the opinion of students on the illustrations used in the textbooks was that there were fairly good, 87.5% of the respondents felt this way.

With respect to language used in economics textbooks, a good number of students (60.4%) could easily use the textbooks without teachers supervision, 62.5% could understand most of the terms used in definitions, 54.2% thought the language used was readable, comprehensible, interesting accurate and understand the concepts presented. Also 58.3% agreed that topics were illustrated with diagrams, pictures charts and this enhanced their understanding of concepts.

Most of the findings from the students were reflected in the teachers opinion on the textbooks used except on the language used in these textbooks.

The teacher felt that the language used was inappropriate and thus students need teachers supervision while they use the textbooks. This leads us to the point where students misunderstand economics concepts in these textbooks.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion therefore since it has been noted that the textbooks are generally of good quality this leaves use with one option and this is to consider the way these books are used for the purposes of instruction. The approach the teacher follows should utilize all available resource which may include textbooks, notebooks, reference-books, charts, diagrams, films and the many other teaching aids. A well balanced programme to utilize all these resources can only give better results.

Another thing we might consider is the fact that all the textbooks identified as being used in secondary school economics curriculum were published before 1991. This means that all of them are 5 years old or more in the market. With the dynamics of change, we have a situation where economic knowledge and its applications to our life are increasing everyday. Economics is plagued with constantly changing application of some concepts, some of which become abstract in the present times. In effect the conclusion here is that these books are out of date and need revision since many changes have occurred in our economy and economic life such that we could be teaching the students the things which do not apply in our Kenyan situation.

This could be the reason for poor performance in Economics since the examiners require application of economics concepts while on the other hand teachers are still teaching the concepts without applying them to the local situation. This may be because they largely rely on these textbooks which by now may be 'stale', or

overtaken with events.

Das RC (1985) : 143 commented that

"...Neither the textbook nor the teachers alone can be the best medium for instruction, but a good textbook and an experienced teacher (trained) can make the teaching learning process effective...'

Another conclusion is that the language used in these textbooks is inappropriate and leads students to misunderstand the concepts in the books. It therefore requires teachers to explain the ideas in the textbooks to avoid this misunderstanding and therefore enhance chances of better performance in economics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Economics teaching in secondary schools is plagued with a lot of problems culminating in the poor performance exhibited in the subject in national examinations. On this note, to avoid extinction of the subject, economics teachers should find ways of making the subject regain its lost fame.

With respect to the textbooks used, the economics teacher should select textbooks with appropriate content for the age level of pupils and should conform to the prescribed syllabus for that particular class. The book needs to be up-to-date and should be related to the everyday life experience of the pupils. The concepts should not be too difficult for majority of the students.

The content selected should be consistent with pupils, interests and previous background. Statement of fact and

principles must be correct. Topics should be illustrated with simple diagrams, pictures and charts, local examples should be included and major headings and sub headings should be appropriate to the content.

The subject matter in the textbooks selected should be organized in a psychological sequences with the content materials presented in such a way as to make the subject meaningful to the students for whom it is designed.

The language used should be easy and within the comprehension of the students. The sentences, terms should be introduced only after clearly defining them.

The physical aspects of the textbooks selected should be appealing to the age as this creates an impression on the minds of pupils which determines their desire to handle and study it.

Besides textbooks, economics teachers should use other aids to instructions with an aim of making the subject more interesting and relevant to the learners.

The spiral approach to teaching economics should be emphasized such that the teacher moves from the simple to complex experiences.

Economics teachers and students should always keep up with the times and be ready to change when this is called for. The dynamism of change should not catch them unaware. Things in our economy are changing all the time. To do this one needs to be well acquainted with current economics affairs through newspapers Journals and magazines which should be used as supplementary reading material for every economist, teacher or student.

In selecting the textbook the economics teacher should use some kind of evaluating tool such as a simple but comprehensive checklist for evaluating the economics textbooks such as the one given in appendix D. Universal rating may be obtained for each textbook evaluated and this may form a basis for comparison and hence selection of the textbook to be used.

A lot of guidance should be given to the students while they use the economics textbooks so that they can understand the concepts put across clearly.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Due to the limitations the researcher faced such as time limitation and money, it was not possible to conduct a more comprehensive research in order to come up with generalizations on the status of economics in Kenya especially with regard to economics textbooks used for instructions. In order to clearly understand the problems faced in teaching and learning the subject in Kenya and come up with suggestions to enhance the performance in the subject research needs to be done in the following areas.

- 1 Factors that have led to economics being dropped by many secondary schools in Kenya.
- 2 A comparative study on the performance in economics with respect to the various books used for instruction.
- 3 Effects of using a single textbook versus using a number of textbooks in teaching economics
- 4 Readability of economics textbooks.

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APPENDINDIX A.

Martin Mogambi,
Egerton University,
Kisii Campus,
P.O. Box 408,
KISII.

31st October, 1996

Att. Headteacher,

Dear Sir,

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

In partial fulfillment for the requirements for the award of Post-Graduate Diploma in Education I am required to undertake a research Project on education.

I hereby would like to request for your permission to conduct the research in your school at an appropriate time.

Thank you and your permission will be most helpful.

Yours faithfully,

Martin Mogambi Agwata.

cc. Dr. Barasa,
Supervisor of Project,
Department of Education Administration and Planning,
Egerton University - NJORO.

APPENDIX B.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire attempts to survey Economics textbooks used in your school and their appropriateness in teaching Economics. Please complete each item as honestly as possible, your anonymity is absolutely guaranteed.

A:

1. Give the details of the textbook being evaluated

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher _____

Edition/Year _____

Form _____

2. Do you have a copy of the textbook referred to in No.1?

Yes

No

3. How often do you use the textbook in classroom for instruction?

Very often

Often

Hardly

Not at all

B: CONTENT OF THE BOOK

4. The following criteria are intended to facilitate your evaluation of the organization of content.

Indicate your judgement by putting a tick () against the most appropriate space.

Ledge: E = Excellent
 V.G. = Very Good
 G = Good
 F = Fair
 P = Poor

E V.G G F P

1. Organization of topics in their psychological sequence in terms of level of difficulty.					
2. Careful structured development of topics of interest to the pupils					
3. Simple logical presentation of ideas and concepts supported by careful organization of examples					

5. To what extent do you agree with the following points about the contents of the book? Put () in the most appropriate space to indicate your judgement.

1 = Strongly disagree
 2 = Disagree
 3 = Undecided
 4 = Agree
 5 = Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. In choosing the content, attention has been given to existing syllabus and is upto date.					
2. The concepts to be imparted are not too difficult for majority of pupils.					
3. The content selected is consistent with pupils needs, interests and previous background.					
4. Contains topics that will attain the set objectives of the course.					
5. Contains tests for evaluation of achievement and exercises are adequate and of the level to meet student abilities.					
6. The book contains extra materials to provide for an enrichment course and encourages teacher to try out fresh teaching methods.					
7. Illustrations given in the book are appropriate in teaching and learning of Economics.					

C. LANGUAGE

6. This section requires you to give your judgement on the language used in this book. Put () in the most appropriate space to show how strongly you agree with the given statement:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Undecided
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5

1. Book is difficult to read and cannot be used without teachers constant supervision.					
2. Terms used in the definitions are those students can understand.					
3. The language is readable, comprehensible, interesting, accurate and at the level of student.					
4. Many topics are illustrated with Diagrams Pictures, charts etc.					

APPENDIX C:

STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire attempts to survey Economics textbooks used in your school and their appropriateness in teaching and learning Economics. Please complete each item as honestly as possible. Your anonymity is absolutely guaranteed.

A:

1. Give the details of the textbook you use

Author _____
Title _____
Publisher _____
Edition/Year _____
Form _____

2. Do you have a copy of the textbook referred to in No. 1 above

Yes

No

3. How often is the book used in classroom?

Very often

Often

Hardly

Not at all

B: CONTENT OF THE BOOK

4. To what extent do you agree with the following points about the content of the book? Put () in the most appropriate space to indicate your judgement.

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Undecided

- 4 = Agree
 5 = Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5

1. The concepts of ideas in this book are too difficult for you.					
2. The content of this book is consistent with your needs, interests and previous background information.					
3. The book contains tests and exercises that you can do without difficulty.					
4. The content of the textbook confirm to the syllabus prescribed for your class.					

C: ILLUSTRATIONS

Are the illustrations given in the book appropriate in teaching and learning of Economics. Put () where appropriate.

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

D: LANGUAGE

This section required you to give you judgement on the language used in the book. Put () in the most appropriate space to show how strongly you agree to the given statement.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Undecided

4. Agree

5. Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

1. The book is difficult and you cannot use it without teachers constant supervision.					
2. You can understand most of the terms used in the definitions.					
3. The language used is readable, comprehensible interesting accurate and you understand most of the concepts.					
4. Many topics are illustrated with Diagrams, Pictures, charts etc. enhance your understanding of concepts.					

APPENDIX D

SCALE FOR EVALUATING TEXTBOOKS IN ECONOMICS

PUBLICATION DATA

- A. Title of Book: _____
 B. Author of Authors: _____
 C. Publisher: _____
 D. Copyright date: _____
 E. Number of Pages: _____
 F. Period covered: _____
 G. Price of book: _____

<u>Number Rating</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	Very poor	Poor	Medium	Good	Excellent
I <u>MECHANICAL ELEMENT</u>					
1. Appearance of book					
2. Durability of binding					
3. Kind of paper					
4. Clearance of type					
5. Width of margins					
II <u>ORGANIZATION</u>					
1. General plan					
2. Logical division					
3. Summaries					
4. Coherence					
5. Fundamental unity					
III <u>PRESENTATION</u>					
1. Style					
2. Vocabulary					
3. Concreteness					
4. Freedom from bias					
5. up-to-date					

- IV ILLUSTRATION
1. Accuracy
 2. Objectively
 3. Quality
 4. Pupil appeal
 5. Proportion
- V MAPS/CHARTS AND GRAPHS
1. Accuracy
 2. Concreteness
 3. size
 4. Value
 5. Proportion
- VI EXERCISES AND QUESTIONS
1. Relation to subject matter
 2. comprehensiveness
 3. Value
 4. Motivation
 5. Arrangement
- VII REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY
1. Practicability
 2. Value of teacher
 3. Value of pupil
 4. Type of material
 5. upto-date
- VIII APPENDICES AND INDEX
1. Arrangement
 2. Content
 3. Usability
 4. Completeness
 5. Value

TOTALS

1	2	3	4

APPENDIX E

LIST OF SCHOOLS INCLUDED IN THE STUDY

1. Jamuhuri High School
2. Parklands Secondary School
3. The Aga Khan High School
4. Nairobi School.

EGEYTON UNIVERSITY LIBRARY