



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Hundred percent transition policy and learners' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru county, Kenya

Luke Murithi Kathenya *

Department of Education, Faculty of Education, Tharaka university, Kenya.

International Journal of Science and Research Archive, 2024, 13(02), 209–217

Publication history: Received on 19 September 2024; revised on 30 October 2024; accepted on 02 November 2024

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/ijrsra.2024.13.2.2081>

Abstract

The main aim of introduction of hundred per cent transition policy by the ministry of education Kenya was to guide efficient transition of all pupils from primary to secondary schools without repetition. However, the transition of hundred per cent transition policy seems to adversely affect the quality of secondary schools in Kenya. The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between the hundred per cent transition policy and learners' academic achievements in public secondary schools in Meru county Kenya. The objectives of the study were to examine the relationship between school over enrolment, inadequate teaching/learning resources and learners' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru County. The study utilized correlational research design. The researcher utilized Krejcie and Morgan table of sample determination to determine a sample size of 291 respondents from 1200 target population. The 273 secondary school teachers and 18 principals were selected using simple random technique and purposive sampling technique respectively. The study population was 1200 individuals. Questionnaire was used to collect data from 291 respondents. The reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained from questionnaires. Data was analysed using statistical package of social sciences version 26. The researcher adopted linear regression statistics at 5 per cent significant level. The findings of the study were that hundred per cent transition policy is significantly related to learners' academic achievement in public secondary schools. The researcher concluded that there was significant relationship among over enrolment, inadequate teaching/ learning resources and learners' academic achievement in Meru County. Therefore the researcher recommended that the government should establish more day secondary schools to minimize cases of over enrolment in secondary schools. The researcher further recommended that teachers and school administrators should involve parents in improvisation of teaching/learning resources to minimize congestion on use of few and limited learning resources in schools.

Keywords: Hundred per cent; Transition policy; Students; Academic achievements; Secondary schools

1. Introduction

The influx of students enrolling for secondary education is a force in some countries. The hundred- per cent transition policy is part of a global campaign to give all learners access to twelve years of learning. The idea of attaining hundred-per cent transition from primary to secondary is a significant step towards attainment of universal basic education. A study by Marvis, (2014) on investigation of students' academic performance for junior secondary schools in Botswana argued that overcrowding of classrooms has a challenge in short term resulting of limited teacher- learner interaction. As per the idea of Chinooneka (2015), study in Zimbabwe on factors related to effective teaching or learning in schools argued that hundred- per cent transition limits schools to adherence to effective use of teaching/ learning resources, building safety regulations, identification of learners with disabilities and students sustainability in schools. According to SEIA (2001), choices for secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa communities in which gender and cultural norms are still a challenge; hindering access to secondary education, the national government needs to undertake sensitization around cultural attitudes that deter access to secondary education especially girls.

* Corresponding author: Luke Murithi Kathenya

A study by Ncube (2004) claimed that there is necessity of having quality processes in education output, since the developed countries are characterised by significant transition from primary to secondary schools. For instance, in Finland there is high secondary school attainment. The transition rate in Finland is escalated by the government, municipal and school efforts by assisting students through remedial instructions. A study in Ghana by Hansen (2021) on effect of increase in enrolment to teachers, pinpointed that increase in learners enrolment significantly increased the work of the teachers. His study employed a descriptive study design and sample teachers in second cycle in Ghana. The study revealed that increase in enrolment made it hard for teachers to manage classrooms and interaction in learning activities. According to Okatch (2019) day secondary schools have many challenges following limitation of teaching resources and physical facilities which cannot accommodate the increased number of learners. There is a lot of congestion in teaching and learning facilities.

Schneider (2006) study on forming a college-going community in U.S. public high schools reviewed that transition tends to be conceptualized as a one of the occurrence that concentrates on a short period on what happens prior and after the learners join school. However according to Oyugi, (2010) study on introduction to issues affecting contemporary issues affecting education from primary to secondary schools pinpointed that transition should be measured by the rates of enrolment in secondary schools from primary schools. Throughout the world, transition to secondary from primary school is a significant milestone in the lives of children as most learners do it at some point during adolescence. It is considered crucial as it gives every child free access to learning for twelve years. The exact timing of transition can however differ per country. For example, in England, children transit in year six to primary and at age of eleven from primary schools to secondary schools. In the United States the age is between ten and fourteen depending on one school to another.

According to World Bank (2019) survey on the impact of school infrastructure on learning; transition for all learners to secondary school is recognized more in the sustainable development goals number four. It recognized secondary school as the second stage of basic education for all learners as it is the unique source of workers who are knowledgeable and skilled. All United Nations member countries ensure that every child accesses free and quality basic education. There have been criticisms that sustainable development goals number four policies concentrate more on transition for all students from primary to secondary schools at the expense of quality teaching and learning. World Bank (2018) noted that governments and other education stakeholders are thus under pressure to ensure enlargement does not dilute quality teaching and learning in secondary schools.

International Institute for Educational Planning (2021) posited that teaching and learning should be measured using indicators like; the content delivery in class, how students are assessed, and the learning outcome. Teaching/learning is manifested in the use of appropriate instructional methodologies to evoke enduring learning. There are a multitude of techniques that can be used to deliver content based on learners' needs. Exposure to information communication technology skills has been found to improve teaching and learning quality as it aids students to have more chances to construct new knowledge onto their background knowledge as it supports student-centered learning, self-directed and collaborative learning. Learning takes place in students' minds which is not visible, strategies that provide immediate feedback about students' level of learning such as assignments, group work assessment and continuous assessment tests are vital.

A study by Prasad, (2018) on quality of secondary education in India reviewed that teacher shortage is felt almost in every country around the world but more acute in poverty stricken areas. There is need to increase the number of teacher to create conditions that keep them in schools once they are fully trained. Large class sizes influence the teaching/learning interaction as teachers resort to use lecture teaching methods in order to handle large classes. The advantage of aid teachers is that they are paid a relatively lower salary, which improves the student-teacher ratios while keeping expenses low. Technology use is highly interactive thus improving the quality of teaching and solve the challenge of learning space experienced in face-to-face learning since it reaches a large number of learners. There are a range of learner support methodologies that have been employed to ensure they transit smoothly to secondary schools.

As per the suggestions of World Bank (2001), education has been recognized as a cornerstone of economic and social development. More recently, however, it has become even more important to the development process as accelerated technological change and new organizations of production transform the world economy. Education forms the basis upon which economic, social and political development of any nation is founded. Investment in education can help to foster economic growth, enhance productivity, contribute to national and social development, and reduce social inequality. UNESCO (2005) asserted that the level of a country's education is one of the key indicators of its level of development. The move towards education for all has rapidly increased the demand for secondary education in Africa. A study by Mughal (2020) on secondary school student who dropped out of school in rural Pakistan, argued that pressure on governments in Sub-Saharan Africa to expand secondary education is growing; increasing numbers of

learners flowing from expanded primary education to improve the educational levels of the labour force to benefit globalization that expand and promote secondary education.

.A study by Agosiobo, (2007) on effective teaching in schools pinpointed that theory and practice teachers constitute the core of the education system and its importance in student Performance has been widely confirmed by many studies conducted by. Teachers are an important resource in the teaching/learning process and their training and utilization therefore requires critical consideration. Further study by Lewin (2007) on expanding access to secondary schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa emphasized that human resource is the most important resource in a school organization. Teachers comprise the most important resource; however the contribution made by other staff such as secretaries, accounts clerks, nurses, messengers and even watchmen are equally important. In addition, he observed that the most important purpose of a school is to provide children with equal and enhanced opportunities for learning and the most important resource a school has for achieving that purpose is the knowledge, skills and dedication of its teachers. Optimal staffing in schools is a factor of learners' enrolment, number of hours taught per week, number of streams and teacher involvement in administrative and other extracurricular assignments. There is a wide variation in the number of teachers relative to the number of pupils across provinces, districts and zones that may imply that teacher distribution is not in line with school needs.

According to Moore (2008) study on expanding Education for Sub-Saharan Africa Secondary schools can provide a range of supports to boost students' academic performance. Student support within the education system is defined as all activities that increase the capacity of schools to respond to diversity and to challenges faced by their students, lecturers and staff as a whole. Students can be given academic support through extra lessons, remedial lessons, reading labs should be facilitated by a qualified and dedicated person who supports the school's vision. A study by Luque (2011) on achieving world class education in Brazil pointed out that the culture of school must show the balance between learning and the social needs of individual.

A survey by UNESCO (2008) on challenges of implementing free day secondary education in Kenya, suggested the subsidized free day secondary education policy. The government was expected to meet the tuition fees per student, while the parents were required to meet other requirements like lunch, transport and boarding fees for those in boarding schools, besides development projects. In a concerted effort to achieve hundred-per cent transition and to address the low transition rates from primary school, the government of Kenya introduced free day secondary education. The introduction of competency based curriculum rolled out in 2018 deteriorated the situation and compounded the problem of teacher- shortage. Provision of secondary education is hindered by various factors including: shortage of teaching staff, inadequate and limited infrastructure facilities, Inequitable distribution of teachers, teaching and learning resources exists between National, extra-county and sub-county categories of secondary schools. According to MOEST (2015), the government through an all-inclusive stakeholder consultation developed plan as a reference point for directing the education sector. The purpose was to minimize illiteracy, increase access, realize hundred per cent progression and transition in all levels of basic education as well as raise the quality and relevance of education with an emphasis on Science, Technology and Innovation. The hundred-per cent transition policy is part of a global campaign to give all children access to twelve years of learning, and also show the government's commitment to the constitutional imperative of the right to education.

According to MOEST (2015), Governments and financial partners are increasingly looking to make secondary education more widely accessible, more relevant and of higher quality. Recognizing education as the primary means of sustainable economic development, social mobility, national cohesion and social development, the Government of Kenya has implemented programmes resulting in rapid expansion of the education sector. It had shown its commitment to the provision of quality education and training as a human right for all Kenyans through the introduction of free primary education in 2003 and subsidized free day secondary education in 2008 so as to enhance retention of learners in schools.

The constitution of Kenya (2010) recognises the need for basic education for all children under the bill of rights. The sustainable development goal for target ensures that all boys and girls complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education. Similarly, the introduction of basic education act (2013) operationalizes provisions on the right stipulates that any parent who is a Kenyan must enrol for primary and secondary education. According to Orodho, (2013) on his study on basic education Kenya; focused on strategies applied to cope with school-based challenges inhibiting effective implementation of curriculum the roll out of hundred per cent transition policy complemented free day secondary education and primary to secondary transition rates increased from 83.3% in 2018 to 95% by the first quarter of 2020.

1.1. Statement of problem

It has been observed that learners’ academic achievement in secondary schools is declining following introduction of hundred per cent transition policy in Kenya and little has been done to combat the deteriorating situation. Therefore researcher sought to examine relation between hundred per cent transition policy and learners academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya.

1.2. Objective of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives.

1.2.1. General objective

To determine relationship between hundred- per cent transition policy and learners’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru County

1.2.2. Specific objectives

To examine the relationship between school over enrolment and learners’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru county

To establish relationship between inadequate teaching or learning resources and learners’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru county

1.3. Study hypothesis

H₀¹ School over enrolment has no statistical significant relationship with learners’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru County.

H₀² Inadequate teaching/learning resources has no statistical significant relationship with learners’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru County.

1.4. Theoretical framework

The study was guided by system theory by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968) who claimed that a system is a self-contained unit and a part of wider higher order and is organised in a series that the output of one is the input of another sub-system and therefore, alteration of one part requires alteration of other sub-systems. The implication of system theory in the study was that compulsory hundred per cent transition from primary to secondary schools is treated as a single system, since output in primary schools act as input in secondary schools.

1.5. Conceptual Framework

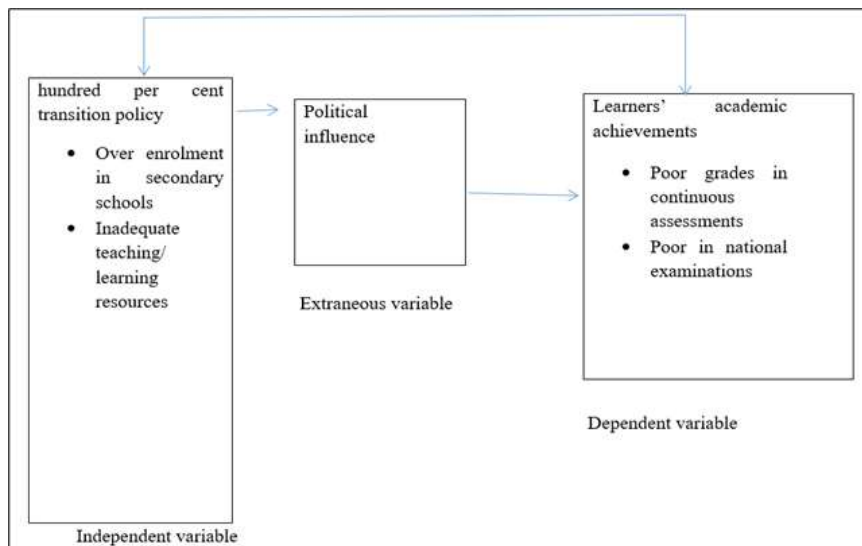


Figure 1 Relationship between hundred percent transition policy and learners' academic achievement in public secondary schools

The introduction of the hundred per cent transition policy indicated by over enrolment and inadequate teaching/ learning resources seem to have a direct relationship with learners' academic achievement indicated by poor grades in both continuous and national examinations. The relationship of independent variable seems to be extraneously influenced by political influence.

2. Research methodology

2.1. Research design

The study utilised correlational research design. Correlational design establishes the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. It also provides insight into complex real world of relationship; by helping researcher to develop theories and makes predictions on causal relationship.

2.2. Target population

The study population was 1200 comprising 1121 secondary school teachers and 79 principals.

2.3. Sampling procedure and sample size

2.3.1. Sample size

The researcher utilised Krejcie and Morgan table for determining sample size (1970) to establish sample sizes of 291 respondents. According to Krejcie and Morgan table; the sample size of 291 respondents is appropriate to represent a target population of 1200 individuals. Therefore the sample sizes of the study was 291 respondents comprising 273 secondary school teachers and 18 principals selected using simple random and purposive sampling techniques respectively.

2.4. Research instruments

2.4.1. Questionnaires

The researcher employed questionnaires to both secondary school teachers and principals. Researcher made questionnaire was most efficient since it is a standardized measuring tool where questions are phrased exactly the same way for all respondents.

2.5. Data Collection Procedure

First researcher conducted pilot study in western region of Kenya. Then, researcher employed research assistants. The researcher conducted actual study in Mount Kenya region; by collecting data starting with secondary school students and principals; using researcher made questionnaires.

2.6. Validity and Reliability of the Study

Researcher ascertained research tools validity by getting relevant information on specific tools from experts and professionals in ministry of education. The respondents were given questions with similar characteristics; basing on specific objectives of the study. The reliability of tools was determined by cronbach alpha co-efficient; which computed to 0.72.

2.7. Ethical Considerations of Study

The researcher maintained ethical issues by adhering to assured confidentiality, non-discrimination, anonymity to maintain privacy of participation in the study.

2.8. Data Analysis

The researcher quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed data. Regression technique was used to estimate relationship between variables. Qualitative data was analyzed in frequencies and percentages. Data processing adopted statistical package for social sciences software version 26.

3. Results of discussion

The study sought to determine the relationship between hundred per cent transition policy and learners' academic achievement. The responses were reflected in table 1, 2, 3 and 4. 5-point Likert scale was utilised. 5-strongly agree (SA), 4-agree (A), 3- neutral (N), 2-disagree (D), 1-strongly disagree (SD).

Table 1 Teachers and Principals Responses on School over Enrolment and Learners' Academic Achievement in Meru County

Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Over enrolment in class did not allow efficient monitoring of teaching or learning activities.	80	27.5	121	41.6	20	6.9	59	20.3	11	3.9
Over enrolment discourages smooth monitoring of learners' progress	137	47.1	93	32.0	31	10.7	21	7.2	9	3.1
Supervision of learners in class was difficult due to class over enrolment	129	44.3	87	29.9	29	10.0	19	6.5	27	9.5
Marking of learners' assignment was difficult due to class over enrolment	96	33.0	137	47.1	8	2.7	31	10.7	19	6.5
School over enrolment made it difficult to control learners' discipline.	129	44.3	101	34.7	19	6.5	17	5.8	25	8.6

Majority of the teachers (41.6%) agreed that over enrolment in class did not allow efficient monitoring of teaching or learning activities. Several teachers (47.1%) strongly agreed that over enrolment discourages smooth monitoring of learners' progress. The findings correlated with ideas of Marvis (2014) study on investigation of students' academic performance for junior secondary schools in Botswana who argued that overcrowding of classrooms has a challenge in short term resulting to limited teacher- learner interaction. Major of teachers (44.3%) strongly agreed that supervision of learners in class was difficult due to class over enrolment. The findings were in line with ideas of Prasad (2018) study on quality of secondary education in India who reviewed that teacher shortage is felt almost in every country around the world but more acute in poverty stricken areas. There is need to increase the number of teacher to create conditions that keep them in schools once they are fully trained. Large class sizes influence the teaching/learning interaction as teachers resort to use lecture teaching methods in order to handle large classes. A good number of teachers (47.1%) agreed that marking of learners' assignment was difficult due to class over enrolment. Regarding control of learners' discipline, majority of teachers (44.3%) strongly agreed that school over enrolment made it difficult to control learners' discipline.

Table 2 Teachers and Principals Responses on Inadequate Teaching/ Learning Resources in Meru County

Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Inadequate teaching/ learning resources discouraged efficient supervision of teaching/ learning activities	59	20.3	187	64.3	21	7.2	11	3.8	13	4.5
Inadequate teaching or learning resources made it difficult for the										

teacher to maintain class discipline	132	45.4	46	15.8	50	17.2	27	9.3	36	12.4
Completion of assignment was difficult due to limited learning / teaching resources	62	21.3	181	62.2	16	5.5	14	4.8	18	6.2
Monitoring of learners progress was difficult due to limited teaching/ learning resources	116	39.9	75	25.8	69	23.7	10	3.4	21	7.2

Several teachers (64.3%) agree that inadequate teaching/ learning resources discouraged efficient supervision of teaching or learning resources. Majority of teachers (45.4%) strongly agreed that inadequate teaching or learning resources made it difficult for the teacher to maintain class discipline. A good number (62.2%) agreed that completion of assignment was difficult due to limited learning or teaching resources. Majority of teachers (39.9%) strongly agreed that monitoring of learners progress was difficult due to limited teaching or learning resources.

3.1. Hypotheses Testing

3.1.1. Hypotheses one

Table 3 Summary of Regression on Relationship between School over Enrolment and Learners’ Academic Achievement in Public Secondary Schools in Meru County

R	R-square	Adjusted R square	R-square change	F change	df1	df2	sig. F change
.113a	.013	0.15	.013	3.981	1	290	0.39

F (1, 290) = 3.981, P 0.05 (hypothesis rejected) ; a predictors (constant): School over enrolment

From table 3, since p-value (0.39) is less than critical value (0.05) the researcher rejected null hypothesis and retained alternative one. Therefore the researcher found that there was a significant relationship between school over enrolment and learners’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru County. The findings were in line with the views of Mughal (2020) on secondary school student who dropped out of school in rural Pakistan, who argued that pressure on governments in Sub-Saharan Africa to expand secondary education is growing; increasing numbers of learners flowing from expanded primary education and the need to improve the educational levels of the labour force that benefit globalization to expand and promote secondary education.

3.1.2. Hypothesis two

Table 4 Summary of Regression on Relationship between Inadequate Teaching/Learning Resources and Learners’ Academic Achievement in Public Secondary Schools in Meru County

R	R-square	Adjusted R square	R-square change	F change	df1	df2	sig. F change
.112a	.012	0.11	.012	4.071	1	290	0.46

F (1, 290) = 4.071, P<0.05 (Hypothesis rejected); a predictors: (Constant) Inadequate teaching/learning resources

From table 4, since p-value (0.46) is less than critical value (0.05), researcher rejected the null hypothesis and retained alternative hypothesis. Therefore the researcher established that there was significant relationship between inadequate teaching/learning resources and learners’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Meru County. The findings correlated with ideas of Chinooneka (2015) study in Zimbabwe on factors related to effective teaching or learning in schools who argued that hundred- per cent transition limits schools to adherence to effective use of teaching/ learning researches, building safety regulations, identification of learners with disabilities and students sustainability in schools.

4. Conclusion

The researcher concluded that:

- There was significant relationship between school over enrolment and learners’ academic achievement in Meru County.

- There was significant relationship between inadequate teaching/learning resources and learners' academic achievement in Meru County.
- Therefore hundred per cent transition policy is significantly related to learners' academic achievement in public secondary schools.

Recommendation

The researcher recommended that:

- The government should establish more day secondary schools to minimize cases of over enrolment in secondary schools.
- Teachers and school administrators should involve parents in improvisation of learning/teaching resources to minimize congestion on use of few and limited learning/ teaching resources in schools.

Compliance with ethical standards

Statement of ethical approval

The present study was done under ethical approval from National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation-Kenya.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individuals participants included in the study.

References

- [1] Agosiobo, C. (2007). Effective teaching in schools. Theory and practice. Delta place: Stanley Thomas limited.
- [2] Chinooneka, T. (2015). Factors contributing to effective teaching and learning in primary schools: why are schools in decadence? *Journal of education and practice* 6(19), 20-34.
- [3] Hansen, A. (2021). Class size reduction: from promise to practice educational leadership, 50(7) 30-41.
- [4] International Institute for Educational Planning (2021) Strategies for addressing behaviour problems in the classroom. 6th edition. Columbus: Merrill Prentice-Hall.
- [5] Lewin, K. M. (2007). Expanding Access to Secondary Schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa: Key Planning and Finance Issues. Sussex: Centre for International Education, University of Sussex.
- [6] Luque, J. (2011). Achieving world class education in Brazil: the next agenda. World Bank publications.
- [7] Marvis, M. (2014). Investigation of students' academic performance for junior secondary schools in Botswana. *European journal of education* vol. 3, issue 3, 11-27.
- [8] Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2015). National Education Sector 2013-2018: Basic Education Programme Rationale and Approach. Nairobi: MoEST. Email: nesp@education.go.ke www.education.go.ke
- [9] MOEST, (2005). Education Sector Report 2005. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- [10] Moore, A. (2008). Expanding Education for Sub-Saharan Africa: Where is the Teacher? Washington, D.C.: The World Bank
- [11] Mughal, A. (2020) a secondary school student who dropped out of school in rural Pakistan: the perspective of fathers. *Educational research*, 60(3) 88-110.
- [12] Ncube, N. (2004). Managing the quality of education in Zimbabwe. The internal efficiency of rural day secondary schools. Pretoria: university of South Africa.
- [13] Okatch, M. (2019). Subsidized day secondary education in Kenya. A review of its implementation in selected day school in Nairobi City County.
- [14] Orodho, A. (2013). Basic education Kenya; focus on strategies applied to cope with school-based challenges inhibiting effective implementation of curriculum. *International journal on education and research* vol. no. 11 November 2013.

- [15] Oyugi, N. (2010) introduction to issues affecting contemporary issues affecting education. Kenya institute of special needs.
- [16] Prasad, N. (2018). Quality of secondary education in India. Singapore: springer nature.
- [17] Schargel, F. (2014). Strategies to help solve our school dropout problem. Routledge.
- [18] Schneider, B. (2006). Forming a college-going community in U.S. public high schools. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University.
- [19] SEIA. (2001). At the Crossroads: Choices for Secondary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. Washington D.C.: The World Bank.
- [20] UNESCO (2008). challenges of implementing free day secondary education in Kenya. Experience from district; Nairobi, UNESCO.
- [21] World Bank, (2019).The impact of school infrastructure on learning: A Synthesis of the evidence. 1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 204331