



## Teachers' justifications for the need for school holiday coaching in Kenya: Syllabus coverage and other factors

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### Abstract

This paper examines the justifications that teachers give for promoting holiday coaching programmes in Kenyan schools. The study is based on a study of secondary school teachers in Keiyo South Sub-County. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and was grounded on Social Learning Theory advanced by Vygotsky in 1978. The target population comprised all principals and teachers in the 35 secondary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County. Since the number of secondary schools was considered low, all the secondary schools were selected for the study using census sampling technique. A total of 35 principals were purposively selected. Five teachers were randomly selected from each of the sampled schools yielding a sample size of 175 teachers. Questionnaire for teachers and interview schedule guide for principals were the main data collection tools. Open-ended questions were analysed through emerging themes. The themes emerging from secondary data were identified to augment the primary data. Quantitative data was analysed descriptively. Study findings were presented in form of charts, graphs, and cumulative frequency tables. From the study findings, teachers gave three main reasons that influenced the need for private coaching. These were categorised into: economic, educational and social. The study recommends that the government needs to lift the ban policy on school holiday coaching and instead recognize, actively encourage and regulate the practice in secondary schools. Besides, the government, through the Ministry of Education, would initiate a national debate on school holiday coaching which should focus on the root causes behind the existence and flourishing of the practice. Understanding the factors driving the need for holiday coaching in schools will assist the education sector to look for modalities that would assist all learners to benefit from its use irrespective of their financial and social status.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Justifications, School Holiday Coaching, Kenya, Syllabus Coverage, Factors

### 1. Introduction

Different terms have been used to describe coaching. Bray (2013) <sup>[3]</sup>, Bray and Kwok (2007) have used the term coaching and define it as tutoring in academic subjects such as languages, Mathematics and other examinable subjects outside the school hours. It is provided by tutors for financial gain or profit making purposes (Tansel & Bircan, 2006) <sup>[22]</sup>. It does not include extra lessons given by mainstream teachers and family members to needy pupils on voluntary basis outside the normal school hours. According to Kwok (2014), private coaching refers to a kind of extra, fee-paying academic teaching or drilling for full-time students studying in regular school instruction programmes or syllabuses at all levels of education. It has three characteristics, namely: it is academic oriented; it involves monetary transfer from tutees or their parents/guardians to the tutors/teachers, and it involves tutoring content, or mastery of some cognitive skills being in line with tutees' day-time schooling.

In England, the term 'holiday coaching' generally refers to tutoring on a one-to-one basis which often takes place in the home of the tutor or the student (Ireson & Rushforth, 2014) <sup>[9]</sup>. In this paper coaching is defined as the instruction given to mainstream schooling students/pupils on academic and examinable subjects such as Mathematics, sciences, languages and humanities outside the normal mainstream class hours, that is, very

early in the morning, late in the evening or even at night, during weekends and school vacations (holidays and half-term breaks) by trained teachers or any other person who has a better understanding and mastery of the subject content or is more knowledgeable than the student at a fee. It can take place at the school premises, at the student's or teacher's home or any other premises hired or identified for the purpose of offering coaching services.

Irrespective of the form, coaching is not substitutive to mainstream schooling. Holiday coaching has been described globally as a "shadow education system" because it is substantially influenced by the mainstream formal education system and its features are less distinct. Therefore, it is not very easy to study all its attributes in a single study (Bray, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup>. Bray (2010) <sup>[4]</sup> argues that the shadow analogy is appropriate for a number of reasons. First, holiday coaching only exists because the mainstream education system exists; second, as the size and shape of the mainstream system change, so do the size and shape of holiday coaching; third, in almost all societies much more attention focuses on the mainstream than on its shadow, and, fourth, the features of the shadow system are much less distinct than those of the mainstream system. Holiday coaching is a global phenomenon; its presence is non-discriminative; indeed, it is felt in both developed and developing countries (Bray, 2013) <sup>[3]</sup>.

Although reliable data on holiday coaching is difficult to obtain, partly due to its informal and blurring nature and the lack of or limited attention from both governments, policy makers and researchers, a comparative study on a range of studies on private coaching reveals that it is indeed a global phenomenon. Some indicators on the nature and scale of private coaching globally are evident from the following statistics from some selected countries: In Taiwan, the 2001 Taiwan Education Panel Survey indicates that 72.9% of Grade 7 students were receiving holiday coaching for an average of 6.5 hours per week (Liu, 2012) <sup>[14]</sup>. In Vietnam, Dang (2011) <sup>[6]</sup> reviewed the 2006 household survey data and found that 32.0% of primary students were receiving holiday coaching. At lower and upper secondary levels, respective proportions were 46.0% and 63.0%.

In China, a 2010 survey of junior middle school students in Jinan city, Shandong Province, found that 28.8% were receiving holiday coaching in mathematics, 29.3% in English and 11.6% in Chinese (Zhang, 2011) <sup>[26]</sup>. In South Korea, a 2008 survey reveal that 87.9% of elementary school pupils were estimated to be receiving holiday coaching. In middle school the proportion was 72.5%; and in general high school, it was 60.5% (Kim, 2010) <sup>[10]</sup>. In Turkey, a 2005-2006 survey indicates that of the 1,071,827 students receiving holiday coaching, 52.5 % were male and 47.5 were female (Tansel & Bircan, 2008) <sup>[23]</sup>. In Japan, a 2007 national survey found that Juku (tuition centres in Japan) served 15.9% of Primary 1 children, that this proportion rose steadily in later grades, and that it reached 65.2% in Junior Secondary 3 (Bray, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup>. Ireson and Rushforth (2014) <sup>[9]</sup> conducted a study on private tuition in the United Kingdom and found that in aggregate 27 % of year 6, year 11 and year 13 students were receiving private tuition in 2003.

In Mauritius, a 2001 survey of Grade 6 pupils reveal that 87% were receiving private coaching and 91% of these students paid for private coaching (Kulpoo & Soonarane, 2005) <sup>[11]</sup>. In Tanzania, a 1995 survey in Zanzibar on grade 6 pupils found that 44.5% were receiving private coaching and that private coaching was on an increase in both urban and rural areas in Tanzania (Nassor & Mohammed, 2008) <sup>[17]</sup>.

A study by Gordon and Gordon (2013), found that almost 7 million elementary school students were likely to take private coaching in USA. A 1995 survey in Zimbabwe found that 61 % of Grade 6 pupils were receiving private tuition and the percentage varies from 36% to 74% across the regions (Bray, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup>.

In Kenya, a 2007 National sample of 3,233 standard 6 pupils found that 68.8 % were receiving private coaching, ranging from 39.0 % in former north eastern to 74.4 % in former Nyanza Province (Nzomo *et al.*, 2011) <sup>[18]</sup>. A parallel study in three geographically-distinct districts indicated that private coaching was much more common in urban than rural areas, and among boys than girls (Buchmann, 2013) <sup>[5]</sup>.

A 2013 study on Standard 6 pupils found that 88% of the students were receiving private coaching and 58% of the students attending private coaching paid for it. The study by Onsomu *et al.* (2014) <sup>[19]</sup> reveals that the proportion of

pupils who received private coaching had gone up from 68.6% in 2000 to 87.7% in 2010 (Dang & Rogers, 2011) <sup>[6]</sup>. Other studies in Kenya report that private coaching in Kenya is on an increasing trend among upper primary pupils (Wanyama & Njeru, 2004; Paviot *et al.*, 2008; Abagi & Odipo, 2007) <sup>[25, 20, 1]</sup>. The cross-national studies show that private coaching is not only a global phenomenon, but is expanding at a very fast rate globally. However, it is important to note that only studies from outside Kenya have based their studies on both primary (elementary) and secondary levels of education. Almost all studies in Kenya have anchored their studies on data collected from primary level thus not much literature is available on the influence of private coaching on the teaching-learning process factors in secondary schools in Kenya.

### School Holiday Coaching and Syllabus Coverage

Bray (1999) observes holiday coaching has constantly been attributed to the need to cover syllabus content in time. Parents support it for lack of alternative. They aspire for best performance of their children in examinations and therefore side with the teachers on the need for private coaching. Students also view holiday tuition as a vehicle to quality grades in national examinations. Bray's study focused on establishing the status of private tuition in Kenya. Quality service is not guaranteed as long as private tuition is not recognized officially (Wanyama & Njeru, 2004) <sup>[25]</sup>.

Mainstream teachers created demand for commercial tuition by compromising on the quality of education during regular school hours alleging curriculum overload. The critical areas are then covered in holiday tuition directly impacting on quality and performance (Bray, 2003, 2005). Hallak and Poisson (2007) <sup>[8]</sup> observes that private tuition compensates teacher shortage in specialized subjects thus creating fair competition and ensuring early syllabus coverage. According to Njoki (2002), private tuition is exploitative. In a survey Njoki carried out in schools in Gatundu South District, each student spent an average of Ksh 1,000 to 1,750 a week while those who attended the school term spend Ksh 500-1000 per session. This meant that those parents who could not afford had to leave their children at home while others continued covering the syllabus at school. This leads to disparity in syllabus coverage, performance and social placement after school.

Commercial instruction is executed in the evenings, weekends and early mornings and over school holiday with varying durations depending on the institutions and learner needs (Bray, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup>. In India, contact hours range from 10-29 hours per week depending on subjects number and grade (Sujantha, 2006) <sup>[21]</sup>. Private tuition takes various forms and class sizes in different localities; home based approach or centre based with tutors exhibiting varying ages and levels of qualifications.

### Factors influencing the Need for School Holiday Coaching

Holiday coaching is a widespread global phenomenon; it is on an increasing trend both in magnitude and intensity. The reasons behind the proliferation of private coaching

can be looked at in four broad areas, namely economic factors, social and cultural factors, educational, and geographical factors (Bray, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup>.

### **Economic Factors**

First among the economic factors is the household income of the students' family. Tansel and Bircan (2008) <sup>[23]</sup>, while studying the determinants of receiving private coaching in Turkey, have found out that those children from households with higher levels of income were more likely to use holiday coaching than those from poor/lower levels of income. As such, the need for private coaching is higher among higher income households because they can afford the actual cost of private coaching and other related costs such as fare to the private holiday coaching centres.

Bray (2007), Kim (2010) <sup>[10]</sup> and Kwok (2004a, 2004b) <sup>[12, 13]</sup> also contend that family income plays a key role in driving the need for private coaching in various societies albeit with slight variations from one country to another. Bray (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> argues that the second factor behind the widespread use of private coaching among students, especially within the mainstream school premises, is the poor remuneration of mainstream school teachers. In an attempt to earn an extra tax-free income they encourage their mainstream students to attend "remedial" (private coaching) classes outside the normal formal school hours. To achieve this, they employ different tactics such as teaching the main examinable content during remedial classes or even teaching at a slower pace during the normal class hours so as not to cover the stipulated syllabus thus forcing the school management boards and parents to see the need to organize and pay for private coaching. This factor drives the need for private coaching indiscriminately among all students both from rich and poor family background, high and low achievers in class. Bray (2007, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup> argues that as much as teachers in some countries may stress that private tuition is not compulsory, parents are aware that if they do not pay, their children will be academically handicapped not only in failing to secure the curricular knowledge but also probably by incurring the disapproval of the teachers. Moreover, since the teachers control the end-of-year examinations and determine who proceeds from one class/form/grade to the next, parents are aware that if they do not pay for coaching, then their children are likely to repeat classes/forms/grades. For many parents, the arithmetic becomes simple: it is less expensive to pay for coaching classes than to pay the costs of repeating a year (Bray, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup>.

For some parents and students, the drive to use private coaching is the anticipated economic benefits associated with good academic grades. To them, using private coaching services is a form of investment that will guarantee them better careers and more rewarding jobs in the future. Indeed, globally for one to be competitive in the job market one must be armed with quality academic credentials in the given field of specialization. Lucrative careers such as medicine, engineering, architecture, law and pharmacy which attract comparatively higher salaries admits the top cream of the education system from lower levels. Therefore, it would not be surprising for parents to

invest in private coaching for them to realize their goals. Future job, career and in turn higher monetary returns prospects drives the need for private coaching in most countries worldwide (Bray, 2013; Kim, 2012) <sup>[3]</sup>.

### **Educational Factors**

The educational factors drive the need for private coaching more than social and economic factors combined because both the poor and the rich have placed very high premiums on education. For the poor, education would be perceived as the only panacea out of their current squalid condition and the medium through which they are likely to move up the social ladder. Children from such families work very hard and encourage their parents to sacrifice and invest in their education even if it means using privatized coaching. This is because they believe that it is through quality academic credential that they will be able to emancipate their poor families from their current state (Kim, 2012). Bray (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> argues that the rich and the elite families already know the benefits of maintaining their current prestigious positions in society and therefore investing heavily on their children's education is worthwhile. According to Tansel and Bircan (2008) <sup>[23]</sup>, children from educated parents are more likely to use privatized coaching. Bray and Kwok (2014) contend that the children whose parents' educational level were at university or above are twice more likely to use privatized coaching than those whose parents had primary education or less. The perception that the quality of education in mainstream public schooling is poor would be driving parents and children to seek private coaching thus contributing to the rise in the need for private coaching in countries where parents are not satisfied with the quality of mainstream education system.

In most countries, the public school environment is not conducive for optimum teaching and learning due to high student-teacher ratio, low morale of the teachers due to poor remunerations and higher workload, insufficient physical infrastructures and other teaching and learning resources. To supplement their children's education most parents in these countries are compelled to turn to coaching so as to ensure that their children are not disadvantaged when sitting for major national examinations (Bray, 2013; Dang, 2007; Kim, 2006; Tondo, 2011) <sup>[3]</sup>. Tansel and Bircan (2008) <sup>[23]</sup> and Kim (2009) in their respective studies argue that the demand for coaching is substantially driven by the perception that the quality of education in public mainstream schools is poor and that the methodology of teaching in this schools is not student-centred hence the content delivery is not tailored to the individual student needs. When mainstream schools fail to meet the popular and varying demands of parents and students, they quite often opt for private coaching which is more flexible and ready to offer teaching that is tailored to individual student needs. The need for private coaching services is relatively high in countries where the system of education is examination-oriented. In countries such as Poland, Kenya, Vietnam, Turkey, Mauritius, South Korea among others where passing examinations plays a central role in determining who proceeds to the next level / grade / class

/ form in the education system, there is greater need for coaching. In countries where the curriculum is examination oriented, it is common to find the demand for private coaching at the peak when students are preparing for major national examinations or university entrance examinations (Bray, 2013) <sup>[3]</sup>.

In Kenya, KCSE and KCPE examinations perform the screening function. Atieno, Gunga and Akaranga (2013) <sup>[2]</sup> argue that a learner who sits KCSE aims at either furthering their education or joining careers of their choice in the prevailing circumstances. Bray (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> contends that the high need for private coaching is as a result of competitive pressures in an increasingly globalised world. Some governments promote competition through public ranking of schools and students when releasing national examinations. Since schools and students compete to be ranked among the top performers, then it would imply that they are under intense pressure to achieve good grades by all means including the use of holiday coaching (Dang, 2007; Tansel & Bircan, 2008) <sup>[23]</sup>.

Tansel and Bircan (2008) <sup>[23]</sup> argue that high achievers (students who are ranked above satisfactory) are more likely to receive coaching than those who have just passed. This indicates that the demand for coaching among higher performers is higher partly because they have a higher self-intrinsic motivation to do even better and join prestigious careers or partly. This is because their academic demands are not being satisfied in the mainstream schooling hence they opt for holiday coaching to supplement what they have learnt in the mainstream school and even add more. Bray and Kwok (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> argue that the students' abilities play a key role in shaping the need for coaching. Despite the above findings on various studies, it is worth noting that the proliferation of coaching globally is as a result of students of both abilities competing for the private coaching services albeit for different reasons; high achievers and their parents seek coaching so as to maintain a competitive edge, the average students seek coaching services so as to catch up with high achievers and the low achievers seek coaching services so as to avoid being left behind by those above them in the education "race" (Bray, 2013) <sup>[3]</sup>.

Bray and Kwok (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> contend that the popularity of certain subjects such as Mathematics, English and Sciences influences the need for private coaching greatly in Hong Kong; in Mauritius, a failure in Mathematics is synonymous with failure in secondary education. It would be obvious that Mathematics plays a central role in driving the need for private coaching in Mauritius (Dindyal & Besoondyal, 2007) <sup>[7]</sup>. Kwok (2014) contend that Mathematics and English are the popular subjects for coaching and that the need for private coaching is driven more by science subjects than Art subjects in Hong Kong. In Kenya, a survey in the subjects advertised through posters and major media outlets such as daily newspapers show that the subjects advertised by private coaching providers include Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and English (*Remedial Classes* 2011).

## Social Factors

According to Bray and Kwok (2013) <sup>[3]</sup>, many families invest in private coaching as part of "intensive parenting." To these parents, hiring private teachers for their children may be part of a wider strategy in which they place a great premium on education and closely monitor their children's activities outside the mainstream schooling hours. Indeed, with the rise of nuclear families where both parents and other elder members of the family are engaged actively in salaried and self-employment, parenting roles are being shifted to both the regular mainstream and private teachers.

With the availability of private teachers, parents are assured that their children are actively and constructively engaged while they are away. Consequently, the probability that their children will engage in unproductive and dangerous activities such as drug abuse is very minimal. As such, this notion of intensive parenting would be behind the witnessed deluge in the use of private coaching in urban areas and among elite families globally.

For many decades the need for private coaching in East Asian countries has been driven by the Confucian cultural traditions which stresses on effort for self-improvement through learning than accepting in-born abilities and existing circumstances (Bray, 2013) <sup>[3]</sup>. This explains why the use of private coaching has a long history and is widespread in Asian Countries than the rest of the world (Bray & Kwok, 2013) <sup>[3]</sup>. Teachers and parents usually remind their students/children that they must not lose hope when they fail their tests; they instead encourage them to work harder and read regularly. When they do so, they are consciously or unconsciously embracing Confucius' philosophy. Kim (2009) argues that one factor behind the proliferation of private coaching is the social and cultural importance placed on academic credentials and meritocracy and the resultant obsession with education. Globally, people with higher academic credentials are accorded preferential treatment both in the general society and at place of work. Socially, education is seen as the medium through which one will be able to move up in the social ladder.

In order to be competitive in the labour market and attain a higher social status one must be armed with quality academic credentials. To achieve this, students and parents would find it necessary to seek private coaching services. The need for private coaching can also be as a result of peer pressure. Bray (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> contends that often parents send their children to private holiday coaching centres because it appears that all their peers are doing so. Schools, on the other hand, are also influenced to offer coaching (remedial classes) by other schools which are already offering remedial (extra classes) to their students (Bray & Kwok, 2013) <sup>[3]</sup>.

Kim (2009) argues that the widespread social egotism is a contributory factor behind the widespread need for private coaching globally. Excessive concern for the well-being, success of one's family and the obsessive desire to build one's future family capital through investments in education coupled with lack of community

sentiments create a situation where parents are only interested in the education of their own children, in total disregard of the state of education in the public mainstream education system. These egocentric tendencies have contributed to the poor quality education standards witnessed in the mainstream schooling system thus helping in creating a huge market for private coaching which is generally perceived to offer quality and student tailored education.

**Statement of the Problem**

School holiday coaching existed in Kenya before the introduction of the 8-4-4 system as a free service provided to the learners by their teachers. With the advent of the 8-4-4 system, the practice spread widely and became commercialized (Wanyama & Njeru, 2004) [25]. Holiday break is such a vital component of the learner’s social right. This is also stipulated in the Education Act. Every learning session is alternated with a break to all the learners to contemplate on what they have been taught and apply it in their daily cultural situations. This is vital since the learner is allowed to interact and socialize with their environment to conceptualize their intellectual faculties to their immediate society. This has not been so since most learners are recalled back to a vigorous and strenuous learning session purported to improve the learner’s capacity.

This perception is teacher based at the expense of the learner’s freedom to relax and interact out of the normal learning session set for their playful activities to promote mental and social development. The Ministry of Education has constantly directed through the mass media and circulars that holiday coaching is banned for students in private and public schools (MoEST & HR, 1999; MOE, 2008) [15]. The Ministry has banned the extension of curriculum delivery into breaks, lunch, after-school hours, during the weekends and school holiday. It is an illegal way of providing education. The MOE argues that holiday coaching deprives children the opportunity to relax and learn social skills through interaction and socialization through play among themselves and with parents. However, there are indications that many schools still offer private tuition (Wanyama & Njeru, 2004; MOE, 2008) [25].

Nonetheless, there is a shortfall of knowledge on what really motivates school holiday coaching as perceived by teachers; teacher perceptions on the relationship between school holiday coaching, and syllabus coverage and teacher perceptions on the relationship between school holiday coaching and learners’ performance in Kenya. It was, therefore, critical that a systematic study be carried out to investigate this practice and establish the gap behind this issue on student performance.

**2. Materials and Methods**

This study was carried out in secondary schools in Keiyo South sub-County in Elgeyo Marakwet County. Elgeyo Marakwet County is located in the Rift Valley and constitutes 4 sub-counties (Marakwet East, Marakwet West, Keiyo North, Keiyo South). This area was chosen for the study since it was noted that, despite the Ministry of Education’s ban on tuition, secondary schools in the

sub-county have still been retaining students for holiday coaching. Besides, the performance of majority of schools in the sub-county in Kenya national examinations has been average at best. It was, therefore, found imperative that the study be conducted in this region to find out whether private coaching has any value to the teaching-learning process.

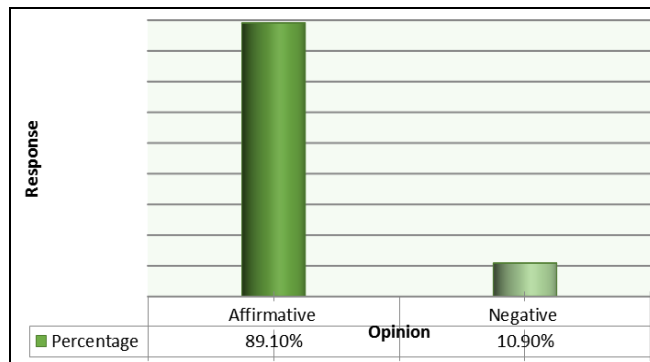
The study adopted a mixed methods research design using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The target population for the study comprised all principals and teachers in all the 35 secondary schools in Keiyo South sub-County. There were 35 secondary schools in Keiyo South sub-County (Keiyo South Education Report, 2014) at the time of the study. One of the schools was private while the remaining 34 were public. The student population stood at 9,569. At the time the study was conducted, there were 35 principals and 318 teachers in the 35 secondary schools.

Thirty-five (35) principals were purposively sampled. Five (5) teachers were randomly selected from the each of the sampled schools yielding a teachers’ sample of 175. Data was collected using questionnaire and structured interview schedules. A self-completed structured questionnaire was designed appropriately for teachers. The structured questionnaire was meant to afford participants freedom of response. Interview schedules were used to obtain data from principals. Based on the data collection instruments, data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Open-ended questions were analyzed through reporting themes and quotas that emerged. The themes emerging from secondary data were identified to augment the primary data. Findings were presented in frequency tables, graphs and charts.

**3. Results and Discussion**

**The Relationship between School Holiday Coaching and Syllabus Coverage**

Respondents were asked to indicate whether, in their opinion, holiday coaching helps in fast tracking syllabus coverage in their respective schools. Majority of the respondents, 172(89.1%), were on the affirmative while some, 21(10.9%), were of a contrary opinion. Figure 1 below illustrates these findings.



**Fig 1:** School holiday coaching and syllabus coverage

From Figure 1, it can be deduced that most teachers value holiday coaching as a medium of enhancing syllabus coverage in their schools. The respondents were further requested to indicate the extent to which holiday

coaching enhanced syllabus coverage in their respective schools. The extent of influence was measured on a three-point Likert scale involving measures of: low, high and very high.

Those respondents who were of the opinion that holiday coaching had a high and very high influence on fast tracking syllabus coverage were 98(50.8%) and 74(38.3%), respectively. Only a small proportion, 21(10.9%), indicated that the extent of influence was low. These results were as summarized in Figure 2.

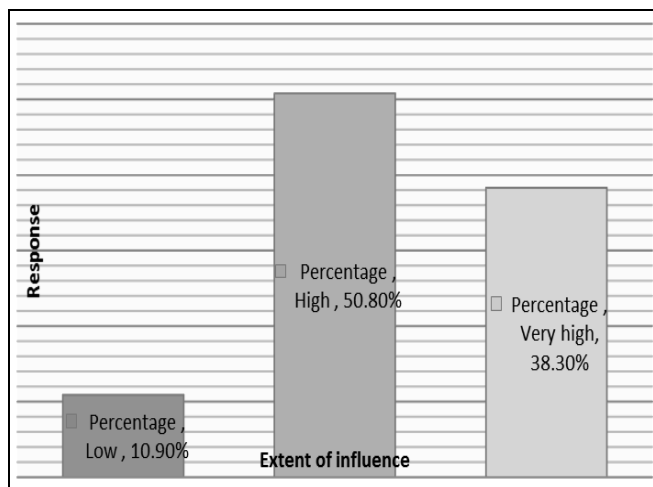


Fig 2: Extent of influence of private coaching on syllabus coverage

A principal interviewed during the study argued that:

Table 1: The Factors influencing the need for School Holiday Programmes

Factors	SA F (%)	A F (%)	U F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)
Low salaries for teachers	176(91.2)	12(6.2)	0(0.0)	3(1.6)	2(1.0)
Increased competition for limited university opportunities	45(23.3)	39(20.2)	12(6.2)	89(46.1)	8(4.1)
Overloaded curriculum	98(5.1)	88(4.6)	0(0.0)	4(2.1)	3(1.6)
Under coverage of the syllabus	14(7.3)	12(6.2)	13(6.7)	97(50.3)	57(2.9)
To improve educational performance	53(27.5)	69(35.8)	7(3.6)	39(2.0)	25(1.3)
Lack of enforcement of government directive	35(18.1)	49(25.4)	16(8.3)	79(4.1)	14(7.3)
Lack of laboratory services	34(17.6)	37(19.2)	12(6.2)	56(29.0)	54(27.9)
Shortage or inadequacy of teaching/learning materials	7(40.9)	84(43.5)	3(1.6)	15(7.8)	12(6.2)
Shortage or inadequacy of library materials	79(40.9)	84(43.5)	3(1.6)	15(7.8)	12(6.2)
Parents' demand	59(30.6)	69(35.8)	11(5.7)	30(15.5)	24(12.4)
Students' demand	62(32.1)	72(37.3)	10(5.2)	30(15.5)	19(9.8)
Administrative pressures	78(40.4)	92(47.7)	4(2.1)	11(5.7)	8(4.1)

From the results in Table 1, it can be deduced that there are three main categories of factors that influence the need for holiday coaching in secondary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County. These factors are: economic, educational and social. Majority of the respondents cited the need for an extra source of income to augment the low salaries for teachers as the main factor influencing the need for holiday coaching. This was followed closely by educational factors: a way of improving educational performance of schools, insufficiency of classroom teaching during mainstream teaching sessions, increased competition for limited opportunities in universities, overloaded curriculum, and shortage or inadequacy of teaching/learning materials. The respondents also cited social factors as being behind the need for private

The curriculum content is essentially enormous and cannot be sufficiently covered within the stipulated time in the academic calendar...we need to appreciate holiday tuition in abating delays in syllabus coverage.

Bray (2013) [3] observes that private tuition has constantly been attributed to the need to cover syllabus content in time. Parents support it for lack of better alternatives to improve their children's performance. They aspire for best performance of their children in examinations and, therefore, side with the teachers on the need for private coaching. Hallak and Poisson (2007) [8] argue that private tuition compensate teacher shortage in specialized subjects thus creating fair competition and ensuring early syllabus coverage. The findings of the study are, therefore, in tandem with these previous studies, although these studies were conducted outside Kenya.

**Factors influencing the need for School Holiday Programmes**

Teachers were asked to indicate the factors that motivated their need to organize school holiday programmes in their respective schools. To obtain their views, the teachers were asked to indicate their level of agreement with different perceived factors behind the need for school holiday programmes. This was tested on a five point Likert scale of 1-5; where 1 represented "Strongly Agree", 2 represented "Agree", 3 represented "Undecided", 4 represented "Disagree" and 5 represented "Strongly Disagree." Table 1 presents a summary of the results.

coaching in secondary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County. Parental demand, students' demand and administrative pressures were cited in almost equal measure as the social driving factors for private coaching. A principal respondent had this say about the issue: ...most teachers, like myself, have committed their meager salaries to development loans,...what they earn monthly cannot sustain them...this explains the need for holiday coaching programs, to, besides covering the syllabus, make ends meet....

In concurrence with the findings of this study, Bray (2013) [3] argues that the second factor behind the widespread use of holiday coaching among students, especially within the mainstream school premises, is the poor remuneration of mainstream school teachers. In an

attempt to earn an extra tax-free income, teachers encourage their mainstream students to attend “remedial” (holiday coaching) classes outside the normal formal school hours. Bray (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> further agrees that in most countries, the public school environment is not conducive for optimum teaching and learning due to high student-teacher ratio, low morale of the teachers due to poor remunerations and higher workload, insufficient physical infrastructures and other teaching and learning resources. Besides, Dang (2007), in a study of factors influencing the need for holiday coaching, concurs that the perception that the quality of education in mainstream public schooling is poor, a fact that drives parents and children to seek holiday coaching. This contributes to the rise in the need for holiday coaching in countries where parents are not satisfied with the quality of mainstream education system.

Finally, Kim (2009) also concurs with the findings of this study when he argues that the social factor behind the proliferation of holiday coaching is the social and cultural importance placed on academic credentials and meritocracy and the resultant obsession with education. According to Kim (2009), people with higher academic credentials are accorded preferential treatment both in the general society and at place of work. Socially, education is seen as the medium through which one will be able to move up the social ladder. In order to be competitive in the labour market and attain a higher social status one must be armed with quality academic credentials. To achieve this, students and parents would find it necessary to seek holiday coaching services. These three categories of factors were found to be the main impetus for the need for holiday coaching in secondary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County.

#### 4. Conclusion

It has been demonstrated by the study findings discussed in this paper that one of the most popular interventions employed by schools, parents and students to keep a competitive edge and avoid obtaining dismal grades at the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations is holiday coaching. The study demonstrated that there are very strong educational factors that influence the need for holiday coaching in secondary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County. Some of the factors driving the need for holiday coaching in secondary schools include: very high competition for limited opportunities in government sponsored institutions of higher learning, ranking of schools and students by the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC), very high academic aspirations among parents and students, overloaded curriculum, desire by low achievers to struggle and avoid being assigned grade E by KNEC, the pivotal role played by certain subjects such as Mathematics and Sciences in determining one’s career, and future job prospects and the perceived poor quality of education in the mainstream schooling.

#### 5. Recommendations

The government needs to lift the ban on holiday tuition and instead recognize, actively encourage and regulate holiday coaching in secondary schools. This way, learner

morale will be bolstered. The researcher proposes that mainstream private coaching should be allowed to continue under the following guidelines:

- a. Parents must not shoulder the financial burden; instead, the government, through the Ministry of Education, should provide funds to cater for holiday coaching. This will ensure that both the rich and the poor will benefit from private coaching thus minimize social stratification in education.
- b. All teachers offering holiday coaching should be paid an equal amount per hour irrespective of the type of school they serve and only those who attend to students during private coaching classes should be paid. This way, the objective of covering the syllabus early will be achievable.
- c. During holiday coaching sessions, a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 30 students per class should be maintained so as to maximize effective teaching-learning process. This way, performance of all students in national examinations can be improved.
- d. Students must be grouped according to their abilities and subject content taught but at different pace so as both the slow learners and faster learners can benefit fully from holiday coaching without disadvantaging any group.
- e. Teachers should be paid at the end of each week and this money should be tax free so as to encourage more mainstream teachers to take part during holiday coaching lessons at a relatively cheaper rate than what they would be paid in holiday tuition centres.

The government, through the Ministry of Education, should initiate a national debate on holiday coaching which should focus on the root causes behind the existence and flourishing of the practice. Understanding the factors driving the need for private coaching in schools will assist the education sector to look for modalities that would assist all students benefit from its use irrespective of their financial and social status. In so doing, the country will work to reduce exacerbation of educational inequalities as witnessed currently.

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