

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ADEQUACY AND SAFETY OF
INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
BUNGOMA SOUTH DISTRICT**

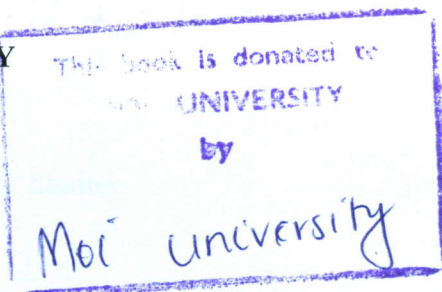


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ABSTRACT

As a member of the international community and signatory of various conventions that recognize education as a basic human right, Kenya has enshrined this right in its laws and the constitution. This has led to introduction of such policies as Free Primary Education and Tuition Free Secondary Education that have significantly increased enrolments in schools and hence demand for more space. Even as plans are underway to include secondary education as part of basic education and make it free and compulsory, the question of whether there are adequate and safe instructional spaces or not lingers. This is especially in highly populated regions like Bungoma south. Provision of adequate and safe instructional spaces is important lest we compromise quality in favour of access, a violation of the very principles that underlie the right to education. Knowledge of the adequacy and safety of the existing instructional spaces is therefore important so as to inform policy makers on the required developments if any. It is on these grounds that this study was conducted with two main objectives: to assess the adequacy of the existing instructional spaces, and to establish whether the existing instructional spaces are safe. The study hypothesised that there is no statistically significant differences among the three types of schools in terms of enrolments, adequacy, and safety of instructional spaces in the study area. This study employed a descriptive strategy and collected essential data from 225 students and 27 teachers using self administered questionnaires. The teachers were heads of departments of sciences and technical subjects and senior teachers. Data was organized into tables and ANOVA, with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS12), used to test the hypotheses. The study found that even though there are inadequate instructional spaces in the district, the situation is worse in mixed schools. Mixed schools however had sufficient classrooms currently. The study also found that there is sufficient lighting, ventilation and chemicals are well labelled. However, schools in the district do not have sufficient fire extinguishers, level and adequate plying grounds and windows, especially in girl schools, cannot be used as means of escape. The study recommends full implementation of the safety standards manual of 2008, additional streams in all schools to a minimum of three, and the private sector is encouraged to invest in secondary education. The study also recommends that the existing schools should be fully utilized. To achieve 100 percent gross enrolment, the government should construct more secondary schools. It is hoped that these findings and recommendations will be of great help to the education administrators in the district in their quest to improve education quality in the area. The findings have indicated areas to be given priority and how education budgets should be tailored to meet the education requirements.