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The effects of infrastructure, teaching & learning materials in geography classrooms: investigating the experiences of teachers & learners in two public schools, Gauteng province

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Abstract

Infrastructure and teaching and learning materials are integral aspects of quality teaching and learning. In the same breath, the lack of it can compromise the school's capacity to offer quality teaching and learning. This study aimed at investigating the effects of infrastructure, teaching and learning materials on the quality of education and learning in classrooms. The nature of investigating involved looking closely into the different experiences of Geography educators and learners on infrastructure, teaching and learning materials, to attempt to show the relationship if any, between infrastructure, learning materials and quality teaching and learning. The two public schools involved were of two different quintiles. The first public school was a township school that formed part of quintile one category, and the other school was a quintile four school in the urban area.

The study included a total number of four experienced Geography teachers with three and more years of teaching experience and eight grade 12 Geography learners who had studied Geography from grade 10. The experiences of both teachers and learners were advantageous to the study as participants were familiar with the subject and teaching and learning materials needed to help produce quality teaching and learning in Geography.

The data was collected qualitatively using semi-structured and focus-groups interviews. The findings from interviews showed a relationship between infrastructure, learning materials and quality teaching and learning to be reflexive. The results of this study concluded on three aspects; (1) that the quality teaching and learning in Geography classrooms relied heavily on infrastructure and teaching and learning materials and therefore, was necessary. (2) The research further implied that the effects of quality teaching and learning result because of the lack of infrastructure and teaching and learning. (3) Lastly, the quintile one school revealed the shortcomings of poor infrastructure, teaching and learning materials and how it affected the teaching and learning experience.

Key Words: Infrastructure, Teaching Materials, Learning Materials, Public Schooling, Quality teaching and learning.