

ABSTRACT

Learning mathematics` problem-solving skills using learner-centered teaching approach, as emphasized in the philosophy of progressivism, enhances creativity and problem solving skills to the learners. In contrast, learning mathematics using teacher-centered approaches have increasingly dire consequences to the pupils such as poor performance, lack of creativity, poor socialization and lack of problem-solving skills. This study critically analyzed how learner-related factors affect application of progressivists` learner-centered approaches in teaching and learning of mathematics. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of 5,547 subjects consisting of 5,160 pupils and 387 teachers from 129 public primary schools within Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. A sample size of 378 respondents was obtained using simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Questionnaires were used to collect data from pupils and mathematics teachers. The results of the data analysis were presented using bar graphs, frequency tables and charts. The research findings revealed several learner-related factors such as motivation, attitude, beliefs and myths on mathematics, which were noted to make pupils participate passively in the learning process. Pupils` negative attitude towards mathematics was also noted as a major hindrance to the application of Progressivists` learner-centered approaches in teaching and learning of mathematics in Meru South Sub-County. The researcher anticipates that the findings and recommendations of this study may provide valuable reference for teachers, curriculum developers and policy makers in education on learner-centered approaches to enhance teaching of Mathematics.