

CERM-ESA

East and South African-German Centre of Excellence
for Educational Research Methodologies and Management



Newsletter 1/2022



Table of Contents

Editorial	3	Master of Education Research under scrutiny: curriculum development and validation workshop	17
Meet our new scholarship holders	4	Non-teaching CERM-ESA Staff Capacity Building Workshop By Noel Japheth	19
Reflections on the 7 th International CERM-ESA Research School	8	Inaugural lecture on mixed methods research: myth or reality? My experience By Evans Mos Olao	20
Pre-primary school teachers Short Learning Programme: Maximizing learning in the Competency Based Curriculum by Raymond Sawe	13	CERM-ESA calendar of events January – July 2022	21
CERM-ESA Alumni Conference By Nelson Mandela	14	CERM-ESA in Brief	22
Graduation of our Master's and PhD students 2021	15	Contact	23

Editorial

Another year has started and we all hope that it will be possible to meet, share and exchange in person again. Although we have become used to the digital formats, and greatly appreciate the digital space with all its opportunities, we also long for encounters and exchange that involve all our senses. Some of the face-to-face activities that we have planned for the first half of 2022 can be found in our Calendar of Events.

2021 ended with joyous moments when CERM-ESA Master's and PhD students graduated at Moi University and at Mandela University. Congratulations to all graduates on this great achievement! We hope that what you have learned will help you find a position that enables you to impact positively on education and the society.

CERM-ESA also took in a cohort of new Master's and PhD students in September 2021, who introduce themselves in this newsletter.

We held our first hybrid International Research School with all current students, supervisors and lecturers as well as our alumni in October 2021 and tested the digital infrastructure that CERM-ESA was able to install thanks to DAAD funding. It all worked well – you can find some of the participants' accounts in this newsletter.

By now, the schools in all our partner countries Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Germany, have opened again – after a partly long lockdown due to COVID-19. The revealed backlash with regard to education and deepened inequalities challenge schools,



teachers, parents and learners to a great extent. CERM-ESA with its alumni and in conjunction with the Kenyan Ministry of Education has started engaging in a series of support activities for teachers and schools. These activities will be covered in our next newsletter. For this edition, read about our Short Learning Programme for pre-primary teachers to support the successful implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum.

Enjoy reading our newsletter and best wishes for 2022!

Susan & Malve

CERM-ESA Newsletter editors:

Malve v. Möllendorff (malve.moellendorff@uol.de)
and Susan Kurgat (kurgatsusan@gmail.com)

Layout and design:

Per Ruppel (per.ruppel@uol.de)

Meet our new scholarship holders

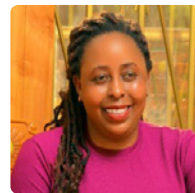
10 new Master's and 5 new PhD students took up their studies in September 2021 at the Centre. Congratulations once more on winning a scholarship and welcome to the CERM-ESA family!



My name is **Veronica Mkusa** from Mangochi district in Malawi. I graduated from Domasi College of Education in

2010 with a diploma in education majoring chemistry, physics and mathematics. I was employed by the ministry education in Malawi to teach at secondary school. After two years of teaching I went back to study for a degree at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. I graduated in 2016 with a Bachelor of Science in agricultural education. I was employed again by the ministry of education to teach at secondary school. I have 10 years of teaching experience. Because I had a passion of teaching in institutions of higher learning, I was employed by Domasi College of education as a part-time lecturer to assist in teaching different education courses. My proposed research aims to explore how teachers use research methods when teaching students in secondary schools.

The purpose of this research is to develop research skills in students and teachers so that they can contribute to Malawi's sustainable development.



Brenda Ekyakunzire hails from Kabale district, South-Western Uganda. She is a teacher of English language and literature with both a diploma and degree in Education from Kyambogo University and Kabale University respectively. She has taught and mentored learners for more than ten years and is the current dean of studies at St. Maria Goretti secondary school. Her research interest lies in the effect of social media on student's learning behaviour. It is aimed at finding ways of making social media positively inclusive in education. This is because social media has become a trending way of communication especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Musongo Conrad is a Zambian graduate with a Bachelor of Education in biology, which he obtained in 2019 at Mukuba University of natural sciences.

He believes in the power of education. He began his journey of education at Twashuka primary school in the Copperbelt Province of Zambia, attended 7th grade at Kasenda primary school in Kasama district, in Northern Province, and did his junior secondary at Kasama boys secondary school and senior secondary school at Mungwi Technical in Mungwi district in Northern Province.

Musongo Conrad now dreams of becoming an expert in research and his belief in the power of education makes him more determined to be part of the people who produce knowledge in the field of education and help enhance pupils' performance, especially in science based subjects.



Jecinta Waringa Githiomi is a Kenyan who comes from Nakuru County. She holds a Bachelor's degree in

Special Education – Secondary Option, from Moi University. Apart from teaching, she is also involved in volunteer work at the Child Protection Offices under the Ministry of Social work and Labour. Her research interest centres on comprehensive sexuality education and its potential to advance basic education. Her motivation to look into this area stems from her role as a Volunteer Child Protection Officer, where she comes across large numbers of school-going children, whose education has been cut short due to early pregnancies while others have been affected or infected by Sexually Transmitted Diseases.



Kenneth Muthomi is a Kenyan from Meru County. He is a graduate of Moi University with a Bachelor of Education Technology Education. Having taught at a primary school, at a couple of secondary schools and a Technical Training institution in Meru, Kenneth is keen to solve problems in various aspects of education such as student learning, classroom dynamics, teaching methods and teacher training. He is very delighted and grateful to have received the golden opportunity in his lifetime because through the scholarship he will grow in his career as an educator. Much appreciation to CERM-ESA DAAD for the scholarship award. The master's degree will provide a firm foundation of his scholarly journey in becoming a researcher and an educationist. His research topic is "Influence of trainer preparation on the implementation of the Competency Based Education and Training in selected technical training institutions in Meru County, Kenya."

Kenneth says that his research will not only be significant to him, but also to Technical and Vocational Education and the Training

Curriculum Development and Accreditation Council (TVET CDACC), as well as the ministry of education, policy makers and implementers.

His dream is to enroll for a PhD immediately he completes his master's degree.



Juma Mugaya originates from the Busoga region in the Eastern part of Uganda. He holds a Bachelor of Education Degree from Makerere University, Kampala, where he acquired additional skills to teach Literature and English Language to high school learners. He has participated in a number of national pedagogical workshops and conferences as a way of bettering his career and class delivery skills. He is renowned in the institutions he served as a counsellor and team builder. He has impacted on many high school teenagers through classroom instruction and social etiquette awareness.

Juma loves proper pronunciation and instruction and wants to do research on learner centred approaches in English Language teaching in Lower Secondary Schools in Kayunga District. The aim is to help with the adoption of pedagogical

approaches suitable for learners' needs in addition to helping the formulation of language policies relevant to the needs of society. Juma explains that "this study is motivated by what I find on the ground in my home district: our students are graded based on the tests only and almost no attention is paid to the modes of delivery."



Adam Shehu Abdulkadir hails from Gezawa Local Government Area of Kano State, Nigeria. He studied Bachelor of Science Education specializing in Chemistry at Bayero University, Kano, and graduated with a First Class Honors. During his undergraduate studies, he acquired substantial knowledge, which makes him highly motivated to achieve greater heights in academia and contribute to developing relevant knowledge in my field and beyond.

"My ultimate goal is to become a University professor, where I can conduct research, instruct and develop students in the field of Science Education and other related areas", he says.

His research interests are academic performance/achievement, psychology of the

gifted child and Educational Psychology in general.

He keeps a keen view to the reality of life, thus approach people with positive mind and attitude, and always prove to be helpful with honest efforts and true dedication. Shehu has always shown willingness and keen interest in his field of study. His hobbies are research and traveling.



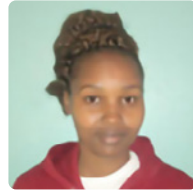
Edith Chelangat hails from Kericho County, Kenya, and considers herself highly motivated and humbled to both DAAD and CERM-ESA for the opportunity granted to undertake a Master's of Education in Research. I graduated from Moi University and hold a Bachelor of Education (Arts) specialized in Kiswahili and Christian Religious Education. My proposed Master's Research topic is "Parents attitudes and Ministry Preparedness on the Competence Based Curriculum. The level of preparedness is still an alarm call since the implementation has been rolled out in primary schools but the workload seems unsurmountable and including parents in the change is still a challenge.



My name is **Mohamed Bello**, from Kata-gum Local Government Area of Bauchi State in Northeastern Nigeria. I

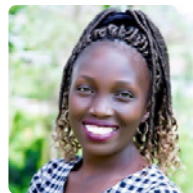
earned my Nigeria Certificate in Education, (NCE) at the College of Education Azare (Bauchi State) and a First Degree in Science Education/Biology at Bayero University Kano, where I graduated with a First-Class Honours in 2018.

I am a teacher by profession with some basic teaching skills and currently pursuing a Master of Education in research at Moi University (Kenya). My area of academic interest is educational research, psychology, guidance and counselling. I have proven to be an excellent student of education with outstanding academic performance as evidenced by my previous studies. This led to my desire to work in the education sector as an academic lecturer at an institution of higher learning.



Ruth Chirchir graduated from Moi University with a Bachelor's degree in Education (Arts). She is deeply passion-

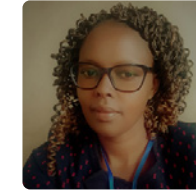
ate and enthusiastic about teaching, as it not only allows her to interact and mentor learners, but also to nurture them. Her desire is to be the best teacher she can ever be and to impact positively on education. Her proposed Master's research topic is 'Corona Virus disease's impacts on Kenya's Education sector'. She endeavours to research on how this new pandemic affecting the entire world paralyzed learning activities all over the world and particularly how the Kenyan Education sector responded to the crisis.



Mercy Chemutai Barasa was born on the slopes of Mount Elgon in Kapchorwa District, Uganda. She enjoyed a

diverse educational menu from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda from Primary school, through to secondary school. She went on to qualify as a teacher of Biology and Chemistry in 2011 from Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Ugan-

da, and has since notched ten years of teaching experience, four of which were spent in school administration. She is passionate about capacity development for student leaders and teachers. She has acted as Prefect's patron, and facilitated leadership development seminars. She earned her Master's degree in Educational Leadership from Pan Africa Christian University, Kenya, in 2018. Mercy's research interests are in teacher professional development and Educational policy. Her PhD research topic is: The Implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum in Uganda: An evaluation of the teacher retooling process. "The lower secondary curriculum is a long overdue move to transform Uganda's education to 21st century standards. Front and center to the success of this venture is the teacher's competence at delivering it. It is therefore critical that teacher professional development is done effectively", says Mercy.



Ann Waithera Karanja hails from Nyandarua County, Kenya and considers herself to be a 'highly motivated graduate'

with a master's degree in Education (Research) from Nelson Mandela University and a Bachelor's degree in Education (Arts) from Moi University. Ann is currently a teacher at Mununga High School, Naivasha and an assistant Marker at the University of Embu, Kenya. She is also an examiner at Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). Apart from teaching, Ann is actively involved in Kenya Science and Engineering Fair whereby she supervises students' projects in Behavioral and Environmental science. Ann's life-long goal is to become a self-actualized individual and a critical enabler for positive change in the society through educational empowerment. Ann's research focus is on the Socio-cultural and economic factors that influence the risk and vulnerability of youths to HIV infection. Ann also has research interests in school transitions, puberty development, risk taking, decision-making and social exclusion in adolescence, and peer influence on academic achievement.



Nelson Mandela is a Ugandan, professional educator with close to 9 years of work experience. He graduated

from Kyambogo University with a Bachelor's Degree of Arts with education in 2013. Nelson holds a Master of Education in Research degree from Moi University, which he attained in December 2019 under the DAAD/CERMESA scholarship. Nelson will be forever grateful to DAAD for the scholarship. He has done research on community participation in the sustainability of community primary schools. Nelson has recently picked interest to do research on climate change education. Thus, his tentative topic is "Knowledge and practices of secondary schools' teachers and students towards climate change education in lower secondary schools in Uganda". Nelson believes that at a time when Uganda and the rest of the world are experiencing severe climate change challenges, it is paramount to explore climate change education, since education is needed to effectively address climate change. This will be through improving the knowledge and practices of teachers and students to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Nelson feels that exploring knowledge and practices of teachers and

students to combat climate change is paramount in enhancing efforts towards achieving the MDGs and the UN net-zero emissions target by 2050.



Labani Mika Kanyonga. Personally, I am curious to learn new knowledge and skills that are beneficial in

both general and professional life. I have a Master's degree of Education (M.Ed.) in Assessment and Evaluation from St. Augustine University of Tanzania (2015-2017) and a Bachelor degree of Education in Science (B.Ed. Science) from the University of Dar es salaam (2009-2012). I have more than seven years of experience in teaching Chemistry in secondary schools and colleges and before starting the PhD, I served as an Assistant Lecturer at Arusha Technical College. My career interest is to be a reputable researcher as well as lecturer in Education for the sake of becoming of service to the society. I have actively participated in a number of professional and research oriented seminars and workshops in Tanzania and abroad for widening my understanding in research. My research interests are in programme evaluations, curriculum design, implementation and evalu-

ation, science education, scientific reasoning skills as well as science inquiry-based learning. My PhD research topic is 'Assessing the Development of Students' Scientific Reasoning Skills in Secondary Schools in Tanzania'. My motivation behind this topic is based on its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically the 4th goal that calls for the provision of quality education that supports "lifelong learning opportunities" for learners as well as 21st Century skills. Scientific reasoning is one of the higher order thinking skills that are very beneficial to the current science and technological world.



David Kipkemboi Lagat is a CERM-ESA alumni and current PhD student, holding a Master's degree in Education Research from Moi University (2019)

and a Bachelor of Education in Special Needs (Hearing Impairment), Primary Option, from Moi University (2015), as well as a Diploma in Special needs Education from Kenya Institute of Special Education (2010). I am a passionate research student in Special Needs Education focussing on hearing impairment and interested in stud-

ying Inclusive Education. My Master's research study as on 'Exploring Stakeholder's Collaborative Partnership in enabling Inclusion of Learners with Hearing Impairment in Selected West Pokot County Primary Schools, Kenya' is based on the premise that inclusive education is a best practice in the provision of education for learners with Hearing impairments. Exclusion still happens and inclusive education is yet to be fully implemented in West Pokot County. The study reveals the need to address stakeholder's collaborative partnership challenges to facilitate full implementation of inclusive education.

I have 19 years working experience as a primary regular and special needs education teacher in West Pokot. This gives me a vast experience in Special Education.

Reflections on the 7th International CERM-ESA Research School

October 2021 at Moi University and online

Annah Atuhaire, Master's scholarship holder (5th cohort)

My name is Atuhaire Annah, a DAAD/CERM-ESA scholar in cohort 5 pursuing a Master's of education in research. Given an opportunity, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to CERM-ESA for the motherly environment you create for us towards pursuing our academic careers. It was a great experience at the 7th Research School organized by CERM-ESA. The engagement with excellent facilitators left us hungry for more. The first two days learning about educational research and visual participatory methodologies facilitated by Prof. Mathabo and Prof. Naydene were enjoyable especially with practical

exercises on visual participatory methods, which piqued our interests in our specific areas of research. We gained a lot of experience while learning from our fellows (group activities) and preparing us ahead of submission of our research proposals was indeed commendable. Great thanks to splendid minds behind this idea not forgetting our leaders Prof. Chang'ach, Prof. Paul, Dr. Malve and our dear Dr. Susan, sincere appreciation also goes to our H.O.D, Dr. Kanyiri, and all our facilitators and lecturers and the



organizers for making the CERM-ESA Research School a success. Gaining a lot of exposure in the field of research provides us with an avenue to un-earth the troubling situations in our society and act towards them because it is the way to go in this civilized world, hail to CERM-ESA for digging those opportunities for us. The research made me realize that we are not only training to research but also have power and voice to do educational research for social change. I have a strong belief that educational research can be a veritable tool for

social change therefore, going this direction would adequately impact the society in a better way while changing routes from teenage pregnancies, GBV, Streetism, inequality, among others, to amore just and empowered society. The research school and the whole course in general makes us feel unique and confident in writing research because of the excellent learning environment and resources that are made available to us. We look forward to more opportunities that will enhance our careers for the betterment of the world we live in. Thank You!

“I am now empowered to commence the publication stage of my project,”

Muhwezi Innocent, Master’s scholarship holder (4th cohort)

I was happy for the reunion of all our CERM-ESA scholarship holders, supervisors, steering group members and facilitators from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, South Africa, Germany, when all came together for the 7th CERM-ESA International Research School in October 2021 at Moi University physically and virtually. The Research School announcement brought back reminiscences of the 6th Research School in Port Elizabeth, anticipating the same (meeting all of you at Moi University) this time again. However, it was one of its kind, which comprised of physical and virtual attendance due to the COVID-19 situation that has jeopardized the universe. I attended virtually via zoom due to the movement restrictions and difficulties in my region here in Uganda. I thank God who enabled our CERM-ESA leaders to organise the School amidst all the corona challenges. The School was of great benefit to me for now



I have confidence in and knowledge about writing publishable articles, manuscripts and abstracts for presentations at conferences, which were the areas that used to challenge me. To be explicit, the Research School’s *Publishing Your Research* (PYR) course by Prof. Paul Webb has empowered and assisted me a lot in writing my articles out of my thesis. For example, the abstract I formulated and submitted immediately after the School has already been accepted by *Recalibrating Africanistic Young Schools Conference* hosted by Moi University. I already have presented my work at the conference on 14th January 2022. Besides, the same has abetted me to formulate an article from my thesis that is under examination which manuscript I am yet to finalise and submit to identified journals for publication with the guidance from my thesis supervisors. Thank you CERM-ESA and DAAD for this great opportunity to belong to this esteemed programme.

Mercy Chemutai Barasa, PhD scholarship holder at Moi University

There could not have been a more ideal launch to my PhD journey than the 7th CERM-ESA International Research School. It surely lived up to its promises as I can declare with confidence that all participants walked away equipped, re-energised and redirected. This intense program covered considerable ground in all matters concerning research, including: research methodologies- with greater illumination on participatory visual methods, research coherence, mixing methods, and research ethics.



The discussion on research methodologies began, quite appropriately, with a look at paradigms. This interesting discussion served to open up the participants to the whole range of paradigms and to clear a number of misconceptions. Participants were challenged to think critically about what exactly they want to research about, to reflect honestly on the assumptions they had about what they were looking for, and how best that knowledge could be produced so as to understand the situation.

The session on participatory visual methods was particularly intriguing for me- being a whole new idea in my world. It revealed exciting possibilities for the depth and reach of research. Professors Naydene and Mathabo laid the foundation for this session with a powerful exhortation to the participants to conduct research that is impactful to the people on the ground and not so much the policy-makers- research ought to change lives; it ought to make a real difference in the lives of people.

One of the biggest hurdles for a novice researcher like myself is deciding on a research methodology and approach. It is never immediately obvious and the plethora of literature available on the subject does not help matters much! Hence the expose on research methodologies and methods, with a focus on mixed methods was truly a shot of adrenaline! The presentations by the alumni went a long way to demonstrate and cement our learning by showing how it could all come together. Curwyn’s revelations about his experience of derailment was particularly heartening for us- he showed participants potential pitfalls to avoid on the research journey. We were glad he got his train back

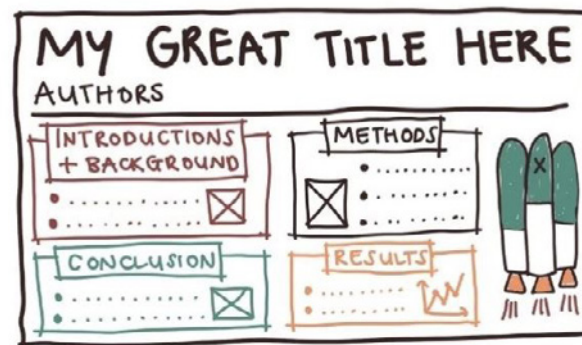
on track! Ann's descriptions of her use of participatory visual methods to understand perceptions of manhood was truly brilliant! Ayanda's reflections on how the research project transformed her thinking left us with much to think about concerning our own planned projects.

Professor Michael Samuel's discussions on research coherence provided a beautiful wrap to the research school. Participants benefited from a walk-through of what an ideal research proposal should look like, and every element of it was expounded upon. I was stirred to reflect on my positionality as a researcher- who am I and why am I in the best position to conduct this study? These, the good professor explained, were critical to forming an informative background to the study. Participants were guided on critical questions to be answered by the study at each level- masters answers the what and how, while PhD goes further to explain the why.

The research school could not have been complete without a discussion of research ethics. Participants unanimously

agreed that this aspect of research has been grossly under-looked and deserves greater attention. With the expert guidance from the erudite Professors Mathabo and Naydene, participants were able to dissect the issue of ethics with in-depth discussions of different cases. Participants were helped to understand that ethics is not just a perfunctory fulfilment but a source of validity for a research report, which must be reflected on at every stage of conducting

ACADEMIC WRITING FOR PUBLISHING YOUR RESEARCH



the research project.

Overall, the program was well organised with engaging, challenging, and thought-provoking group activities and presentations in the afternoons. Doctors Susan and Malve were very accommodating of participants as they were present at every group presentation session to listen to, give feedback, and encourage participants along their learning curve. Materials shared were very insightful- I particularly

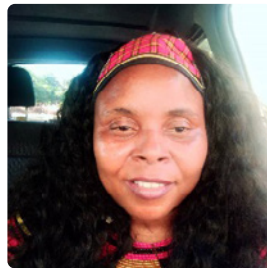
enjoyed the paper by Taylor and Medina (2013) on educational research paradigms; I enjoyed the detailed discussions of the paradigms, especially the injection of humour in the illustrations. The best part of it all is that all these materials and more are available on the DIGI-FACE platform for further reference by the participants!

A hearty appreciation goes to all the facilitators at Moi University and at Nelson Mandela University in South Africa for sharing so generously your hard-earned knowledge and skills. Much appreciation also goes to CERM-ESA and all its organisers, especially Doctors Susan and Malve who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, amidst challenges, to ensure that participants got the best out of the Research School. I would be remiss not to mention the candid exhortations from Dean John Chang'ach as he opened and closed the research school. Participants were sobered to realities of the journey ahead but also encouraged that the whole enterprise was completely achievable with great determination.

Janeth Danford Mlay, PhD scholarship holder at UDSM

I am very grateful to have the chance to be in CERM-ESA family, the PhD scholarship beneficiary, what a privilege indeed! I experienced a number of benefits poured on me in my PhD studies during face to face research school conferences, and now digitalised conferences due to COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

Despite of the complex season of COVID-19 pandemic, I had the opportunity and the access to participate in Online 7th International CERM-ESA Research School that was conducted in October 2021



at Moi University in Kenya. Based at University of Dar es Salaam, I successfully participated in the theme: 'Publishing Your Research'.

With the support, guidance and directives from professionals in the expertise areas, the coordinators of the programme and the students, I had the opportunity to be able to attend all the publication lectures

and discussions through Zoom, DIGIFACE and WhatsApp platforms. The Research School conference had different modes of delivered instructions; specifically with international students like me, who were not able to be physically at Moi University.

The modes of communication and interaction included Zoom, WhatsApp and the DIGIFACE moodle platform for lectures and discussions, providing updates and activities, instructions, and enhanced my knowledge and skills on the publication process tremendously. This research school opened my mind and created confidence at the extent that I was able to prepare the manuscript from one of my PhD thesis objectives. Also, my benefits are the benefits for others too, because I should be able to train others.

However, in order for the students to maintain the online sessions comfortably, the good and empathy with humility and

love from Dr. Malve and the CERM-ESA Coordinators Committee, considered the provision of data bundle for the internet to me. The coordinator sent a message to me; she wrote: *'What is your internet provider? Then I will try to send you the data bundles to your phone, which you can use to establish the internet connection with your laptop. Is that OK? Warm regards'...* This experience will never be forgotten in my life and the coming generations in



love from Dr. Malve and the CERM-ESA Coordinators Committee, considered the provision of data bundle for the internet to me. The coordinator sent a message to me; she wrote: *'What is your internet provider? Then I will try to send you the data bundles to your phone, which you can use to establish the internet connection with your laptop. Is that OK? Warm regards'...* This experience will never be forgotten in my life and the coming generations in

CERM-ESA family. I got the data bundle and accomplished the excellent organized and delivered programmes.

I thank you all who deliberately worked day and night to make this happen, with few mentioned: Prof. John Changach; Prof. Paul Webb, Dr. Malve, Dr. Susan, Dr. Kafanabo. Thank you CERM-ESA!

James Nuwamanya, Master's scholarship holder (5th cohort)

The Research School was especially designed to equip the beneficiaries of DAAD and CERM-ESA scholarships with all the necessary skills in research and academic writing. All the cohorts (both on Masters and PhD levels) were given the avenue to benefit from the School and a lot was there to benefit.

In conducting the research school, there was what seemed to be “catering for individual differences”. As one of the beneficiaries of the DAAD project, I have found it something worth doing to express my appreciation to both



our benefactors and benefactresses for the immense contribution to the Research School. A lot was done for us to amply achieve the set objectives of the School.

I am massively grateful to the DAAD and CERMESA for the continued support to replenish education and research, not only in Africa but in the entire world as well. I really can't thank you enough. You are solidly and immeasurably impacting and building the world by funding the education of those in need as well as making different worlds and cultures meet.

Additionally, I am so thankful to the educators for the dutifulness they imbued us in. The professors and Doctors really had all the imaginable commitment to make us wholly grasp everything in the School. Besides, we were given the avenue for asking questions in case one did not fully understand a given aspect. It made us

learn and acquire a lot since it included active participation by the learners themselves. The learners' participation was ignited by the group exercise work(s) they were subjected to doing.

Finally, I cannot forget to say “Asante Sana” to the Moi University for accepting the partnership with the DAAD. A special “Asante Sana” to the University's key stakeholders in the DAAD project, Prof. Chang'ach and Dr. Kurgat. They walked with us and ensured that the welfare of us was good. Talking on my behalf, I was very complacent with the way the research school was conducted, and I would render my failure to express my gratitude being dishonest to myself.

Sing'oei Mercy Cheruto, Master's scholarship holder (4th cohort)

The hallmark of any researcher is publishing. As much as writing your thesis, presenting it and graduating is important, getting it published essential for the professional development and advancement of any scholar's career. The 7th CERM-ESA Research School provided a great opportunity in understanding the process of

research publishing and how to refine our theses in preparation of publishing. We were extremely lucky to be taken through the course by Prof. Paul Webb. As much as we really craved for a face-to-face learning, we had to navigate

the new normal brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic. We are grateful to CERM-ESA for ensuring that we had a really comfortable stay at the Noble Hotel and we were able to fully concentrate on the publishing course.

Predominantly these topics were covered: understanding how to present your arguments, the claim and its importance, the anatomy of arguments, dissecting the literature review, correct paraphrasing and authorship ethics. The sessions were exciting as they were learner-centred. We

had a zoom sessions every day with Prof. Webb, where he took time to explain the day's session, what we were required to do and how to do it, after which we had some hours each day to work on our assignments and upload them on the DIGI-FACE platform.

The highlight of the session was when some of my colleges and I had to admit that we have to go back and re-organize our theses. We were initially over confident of our ‘perfect’ theses but it came like a shock on us. However, we had time to go back and tie our loose ends to our desired perfection.

We are thankful to Prof Webb and the entire CERM-ESA organizing committee for such an eye opening research school.

Asante!



Pre-primary school teachers Short Learning Programme: Maximizing learning in the Competency Based Curriculum

6th – 8th October 2021, by Raymond Sawe

CERM-ESA held a face-to-face teachers' professional Short Learning Programme at Letangwo Resort to educate and refresh pre-primary teachers on techniques and knowledge to improve their interactions with young students between the age of three to eight years. We welcomed a group of forty teachers hailing from different schools across Nandi county, eager to expand and explore their knowledge and exchange and add to their experience.

With the hosting lecturers and scholars present to answer the various questions from the teachers, the Moi team was honored to have Dr. Kurgat, Dean Prof. John Changach, and Mr. Biwot to kick off the programme. The fantastic facilitators presenting for the duration of the workshop were Dr. Wangila, CERM-ESA alumna Sarah Jemutai, Dr. Chepsiror, Dr. Shitubi, Dr. Bor, Dr. Kerich, Sheila Chepkoech, and Dr. Egesa. Multiple points of view were presented across the three days but all with

the same purpose, to enhance the competence of pre-primary school teachers.

From the energetic disposition of Dr. Shitubi, his fatherly charisma made for a sure hit with the teachers as his presentation largely involved song and dance, which was his specialty. Never did the participants encounter a dull moment as the whole three-day sessions was continuously filled with joy and laughter.

Sarah also shared her expertise on how to engage with students using playing blocks. By pointing out different tutoring scenarios to the teachers, the young students are taught to engage with play blocks from a variety of perspectives, such as colour, shape, numbers, positions, and arrangements of the blocks.

Dr. Mary Kerich explored the topic on how children learn. When developed early, this would lead to later school success. From her presentation, she said "Play is the most important way of learning. Learning occurs



when children act on their unborn curiosity and actively explore their environment". This statement captured the spirit of the workshop, driving the point home that the most important job as Early Childhood Education teachers is to positively mold the children into creative and open-minded individuals with unique thoughts and characters.

At the end of the workshop, the teachers left much more hopeful and energized to tackle the challenges they encounter in their career while dealing with young children. After a practical phase of implementation, the teachers will come back for a second on-site phase to exchange and reflect on their experiences.

CERM-ESA Alumni Conference

By Nelson Mandela

It was an exciting and enriching moment when CERM-ESA organized for an alumni meeting that was held at The Noble Hotel in Eldoret between the 6th and 10th October, 2021. The conference brought together alumni who are members of the first, second and third cohorts of the CERM-ESA Master's programme, whose attendance was both physical and online. The alumni section had been launched by the first cohort of CERM-ESA scholarship holders during a conference held by the Centres of African Excellence network in Ghana. It was the first time that members of the different cohorts were meeting after the disruptions of the previous planned meetings by COVID-19. The meeting brought the alumni together and deliberated on a number of topics: the potential and importance of alumni networks and structures, the way forward for CERM-ESA Alumni, viability and logistics, thematic ar-

reas, funding opportunities and facilitation, Alumni Communication platforms and networks, (AEN-) among others.

The conference was officially opened by the CERM-ESA project coordinator of Moi University, Dr. Susan Kurgat, with a keynote address. Among others, Dr. Susan encouraged the delegates to master their roles as alumni and see how such roles could help in supporting CERM-ESA current students and activities. When sharing her thoughts on the expectations for the alumni, the Dr. Susan emphasized the need to disseminate research findings, e.g. by writing papers and presenting in conferences. From her speech, delegates were excited about the assurance of the CERM-ESA's support for future publications and conference participations. The issue of mentorship came out quite conspicuously from the opening session and delegates were asked to consider support-

ing the students who are behind them and still progressing with their studies. These sentiments were re-echoed by Dr. Malve who joined the conference virtually. She further emphasized that there was a need to get the alumni more formalized, have the members market what they do and plan and use opportunities to raise funds for their projects. The AEN and DIGI-Face platforms offer a number of opportunities in this regard.

For the subsequent three days, the meeting ran smoothly with presentations and moderations of sessions by the alumni members on different thematic areas. From this, a number of proposals came up that would improve the relationship of the members and their activities. Indeed, members were asked to always share experiences and support each other to help to raise the profile of CERM-ESA. A specific proposal for a conference on quality and equity in education in East Africa after two years of COVID-19 crisis was developed and later submitted to DAAD Nairobi.

Members strongly felt that mentorship needed to be done by nurturing and fostering resilience on the path of educational activities and research. The issue of handling information and communicating ideas was identified as a critical component

of the academic journey of postgraduate students, and that these aspects needed to be addressed sufficiently in mentorship programs. This would possibly be achieved under the leadership of the alumni. This resulted into the election of Executive Committee for our CERM-ESA Centre of Excellence Chapter headed by Sarah Chemutai from the first cohort.

It is worth mentioning that towards the end of the workshop, the alumni had an exciting excursion to the Rift Valley where we were awarded the certificates of attendance.

On the last day of the conference, Prof. John Changach joined the delegates and gave his remarks that led to the closure of the conference. The Dean also emphasized the need to participate in conferences and present papers, disseminate research findings to the education sector, mentoring the current students in CERM-ESA, supporting CERM-ESA activities on various levels, extending outreach to the alumni and PhD students and pairing students to mentor each other. He wished the alumni the best and promised to support their activities and programs. The alumni are looking forward to more engagement and close collaboration with CERM-ESA in the future.

Graduation of our Master's and PhD students 2021

The third graduation celebration for Masters and Doctoral degree holders took place at the Centre's auditorium on the 17th of December 2021. The event was attended by CERM-ESA's family locally and internationally both virtually and face-to-

face with the current Master's and doctoral students and supervising professors in attendance. All of the graduands were elated that they had finally reached this milestone in their education and expressed their gratitude to the Centre and their supervising

professors who guided them and supported them throughout their entire journey.

In this regard, the project coordinator, Dr. Susan Kurgat, together with the Dean, Prof. John Changach, graced the event, with Mr. Noel Japheth, another CERM-ESA master's

student, skillfully moderating the graduation celebration. The following CERM-ESA graduates were awarded their certificates:

	NAME	DEGREE AWARDED	THESIS TITLE
1	JOHN KARANJA RANJI	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEACH	Support Mechanisms Influencing the Inclusion of Differently Enabled Learners in Regular Public Primary Schools in Nakuru-North Sub-County, Kenya.
2	JACOB SENTEU MUNKE	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEACH	Exploring Rural Primary Schools Maasai Women Teachers' Constructions of Womanhood: a Case of Kajiado County, Kenya
3	JOHN LUMA LOLA	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEACH	Pedagogical Practices for Developing Learner Imagination and Creativity in the Competency-Based Curriculum in Primary Schools in Kitui West Sub-county, Kenya
4	VIOLET KAWALA	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEACH	Stakeholders' Perceptions on Teen Mothers' Re-entry Policy and Practices in Secondary Schools in Malongo Sub-County, Mayuge District, Uganda
5	KELVIN KIMUTAI CHUMBA	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEACH	Teachers' Readiness for Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills Development in the Competency Based Mathematics Curriculum in Primary Schools in Nandi County, Kenya
6	MURUMBE MERY WAIRIMU	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEACH	School-Related Strategies for Enhancing girls' Participation in Education in Public Primary Schools in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kenya
7	KIPCHUMBA KOSGEI ABRAHAM	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEACH	Influence of Principals' Leadership Practices on School Climate in Secondary Schools in Marakwet East Sub-County, Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya
8	NAKIYAGA DOROTHY	PHD EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT	Stakeholders' Participation in School Management and Enhancement of Learners' Academic Achievement in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Uganda.
9	AYANDA SIMAYI	PHD IN EDUCATION	A Culturally Responsive Strategy for Teaching Sexual Concepts in Rural Xhosa Secondary Schools

Of note, Dorothy Nakiyaga, shared her experience being at the Centre for the duration of her study, highlighting the trials and tribulations she had to go through that led her to successfully accomplish this significant achievement. All in all, the graduation climaxed with the celebratory cutting of the cake, a bottle of champagne for the

Appreciation

I, Dorothy Nakiyaga, a doctoral scholarship holder at Moi University Kenya, worked on the topic **“Stakeholders’ participation in school management and the enhancement of the learners’ academic achievement in selected government-aided secondary schools in Kampala district, Uganda”** wish to extend my sincere appreciation to DAAD and CERM-ESA project for the numerous contributions in support of my education. Without your help, I may never have been able to fulfill my academic dream. Your generosity and help have been an inspiration to me.

This milestone in my career development of attaining a distinctive doctorate “A” class within 3 years was not only a great and deserved achievement, but also a phenomenal case-in-point of our persistent

graduates, supervisors and masters of ceremony, a photo session, and a fantastic traditional Kalenjin dance to mark the end of the day’s celebration and marking the beginning of the graduates’ new journeys as they forge their own futures.

Congratulations to you all!!!

success as a team. **Dr. Kurgut said, “A score of 76% is excellence itself that bears our identity. Doro you have done it. This is a clean “A” and we look for more and more”**. Thank you for recognizing it. Thank you for letting me know of your appreciation for my performance. “A luta continua”.



Dr. Dorothy Nakiyaga and Violet Kawala (MEd) celebrating their graduation



CERM-ESA graduates with their supporters

Not at Moi University, but at Nelson Mandela University, a joyous celebration marked the graduation of PhD scholarship holder Dr. Ayanda Simayi. She investigated issues of taboo language use by teachers when teaching topics of sexual nature during secondary Biology class in rural Eastern Cape. With her excellent piece of research and thesis supervised by Prof Paul Webb she made us really proud!



Dr. Ayanda Simayi

Master of Education Research under scrutiny: curriculum development and validation workshop

Held on Monday 8th to Friday-12th November 2021, Nakuru County

The CERM-ESA Master's in Education Research Programme at Moi University has gone through a complete academic cycle, producing almost 40 graduates already. For quality assurance purposes, the programme was reviewed and evaluated during a Review and Development Workshop, which was conducted at Panaroma Hotel in Nakuru County, Kenya. This was a very important exercise for the programme, which was launched in 2016 and has progressed well with up to 12 students per cohort.

The workshop was organized by CERM-ESA Coordinator, Moi University, Dr. Susan Kurgat. It was attended by the Vice Chancellor: Prof. Isaac Sang Kosgey as the key-note speaker; Deputy Vice Chancellor Academics, Research & Extension: Prof. Isaac Kimengi; Director Quality Assurance: Prof. Mike Korir; The Dean

School of Education and CERM-ESA project leader: Prof. John Chang'ach and 24 other professors and academics from the School of Education, School of Graduate Studies and Directorate of Quality Assurance of Moi University.

In his key-note address, the Vice Chancellor was thankful to the DAAD sponsors as well as to the Dean School of Education, project leaders and coordinators from partnering Universities and participants for supporting the CERM-ESA Master's of Education programme including its review and urged the participants to work towards having unique graduates of research in education.

Furthermore, the Vice Chancellor encouraged participants to give due consideration to course work, learning activities, feedback from students, content, instructional materials and equipment, course



The Master of Education in Research Curriculum review workshop participants with the Vice Chancellor, Moi University, after the keynote address.



Master of Education in Research Curriculum review workshop Participants at Panaroma Park Hotel, Nakuru County.

assessment, e-resources, teaching and learning methods and emerging issues.

The dean School of Education greatly appreciated the turn up and active participation of the academics in the workshop and elucidated the expected outcomes at the end of the exercise. The outcomes included:

1. To complete the curriculum review of Master of Education in Research programme, ready for forwarding to Quality Assurance and tabling in the Committee of Deans, thereafter, Senate.
2. Be familiar with “postgraduate supervisor” as a professional identity and postgraduate “supervision” as a field of scholarship.
3. Be knowledgeable about institutional rules and regulations guiding postgraduate studies.
4. Be able to contextualize the provision of postgraduate studies and the changing nature of research in global and African contexts.

5. Be able to manage different types of relations in the context of being a supervisor (conflict resolution).
6. Be knowledgeable about responsible conduct of research and ethics.
7. Have the capability to guide the postgraduate research process from proposal development to completion.
8. Have strategies for effective supervision (communication, monitoring, and feedback).

The review exercises were done rigorously in specialization group teams from the School of Education and considerable changes, additions, omissions and merges were made to the programme. The new curriculum is under approval and once implemented, is expected to make substantial improvements to the programme.

Non-teaching CERM-ESA Staff Capacity Building Workshop

By Noel Japheth



Deputy Vice Chancellor –Finance (fifth right), Moi University with participants of CERM-ESA support staff workshop at Koriema Resort, Baringo after a keynote address

2021 was a splendid year for CERM-ESA and at the end of it, we came together as a family to celebrate the efforts made across the board by the different departmental staff members who support the great strides made by CERM-ESA here in East Africa. We made a brief, fun filled, and memorable trip to the

serene location of Koriema Resort in Baringo, lasting only two days, where we got to be trained in team building and appreciate each other's company and professional experiences.

On the first day, during the luncheon, many of the team members had surprising-ly never officially met each other aside from

the occasional run on campus grounds. They finally had the opportunity to interact with each other on a deeper level where new friendships were cultivated. An example of these interactions refers to members of departments such as the Finance Department, the security and operations departments, which were scarcely ever in the same room at the same time. Thanks to the strong leadership from Dean, Prof. John Changa'ch and CERM-ESA's coordinator Dr. Susan Kurgat, the team shared their experiences with the main CERM-ESA staff beginning from the point they got involved with the internal operations of the project and some more so from the early stages of the project as well. It was quite heartwarming to hear the lasting impact the project has had in the lives of all the project members as they experienced it.

After concluding the late afternoon meeting, we settled into our accommodations right before coming back to proceed with the festivities and each other's company. The following day, after a presentation

and workshop on communication & collaboration, we had an excursion to the famous lake Baringo. Some of the team members hesitated to tag along the boat ride but fortunately, the vast majority had plenty of courage for the whole team.

Those who dared to venture into the murky waters were rewarded with plenty of memorable moments, for instance the power of the lake that had reclaimed its shores by swallowing up the buildings that dotted its shoreline. Another instance was witnessing the skills and humility shown by the local fishermen, some as young as thirteen, practice their trade and reap their rewards from the lake. Lastly, the majestic flight of the king fisher eagle that swooped down to have its lunch at a distance perfect for our viewing pleasure, which became the highlight of the entire trip.

This also marked the end of our workshop and team building excursion – however, the bonds that were formed grew stronger knowing that the CERMESA family takes good care.

Inaugural lecture on mixed methods research: myth or reality? My experience

By Evans Mos Olao

As a proud alumnus, I can attest that CERM-ESA has continued to offer great opportunities to graduate students to gain practical knowledge and skills on educational research methodologies for application in multiple settings, not to forget the high quality mentorship provided by the leaders. I was recently much honored to receive a formal invitation to attend Prof. Laban Ayiro's Inaugural Lecture which was held at Daystar University on 23rd July,



Evans Mos with Professor Laban Ayiro

2021. The title of the inaugural lecture was 'Mixed Methods Research: Myth or Reality'. Prof. Ayiro is the current Vice Chancellor of Daystar University and a motivated member of CERM-ESA's International Advisory Board. I strongly believe that my attendance and participation in the lecture was indicative of the amiable relationship that exists between the leadership and the students of CERM-ESA.

It all started with a simple call to par-

ticipate in the Daystar-led Inter-University Graduate Students Conference, a forum offering online remedial trainings in research methodologies. My initial volunteering to coordinate contributions towards the lecture was a step closer to this lifetime research experience. During the celebration of this milestone for Prof. Ayiro, I was able to interact with senior researchers and engaged with delegates in the audience from across universities who shared in the topic and had strong interests in the area of mixed methods research. The meaning of an inaugural lecture was explicitly communicated during this time. I was also able to among other things, realize that an inaugural lecture gives the professor-presenter an opportunity to inform about research on their areas and show their way into further research.

A lot of insights also came along with the presentation. It was made clear that innovations sprout from originality, and that early career and seasoned researchers, as well as research fellows should constantly think about how their research impacts citations and innovations. It was also emphasized that there are multiple ways of viewing the world and that research on various phenomena about the world can best be carried out using a mixed methods

approach. Ultimately, we were encouraged to be pragmatic so as to be able to easily solve real world practical-oriented problems. It was fascinating to learn about the Archipelago effect of mixed methods research which requires researchers in any discipline to always look for the truth that is hidden under what can be seen by the eyes.

So, do you think you are ready to conduct a mixed methods research? Are you aware that you can do it? Do you believe it is possible? Well, one's readiness to carry out a mixed methods research can be determined by the 'Guettermann Instrument'. This realization aroused such ecstasy among us during the lecture and delegates committed to checking their readiness. Towards the firm end, I came to realize that there are mostly two ways to a situation, especially one that involves major changes such as a paradigm shift that guides our thinking; that for every controversy that regard mixed methods research as a myth, there is a reason that qualify it as a reality. For this reason, wouldn't it be a nice thing to get our students to start to think about this paradigm shift? With the kind of rigor expected out of the educational researches conducted at CERM-ESA, I personally believe the mixed methods approach can be given priority!

CERM-ESA calendar of events **January – July 2022**

Date	Activity	Location
15-31 January	Needs assessment for teacher professional development: THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS ON SECONDARY SCHOOLS' QUALITY TEACHING, EQUAL ACCESS TO SCHOOLING AND QUALITY EDUCATION IN KENYA	Kwale /Nairobi
14-16 February	Steering Committee Meeting	University of Oldenburg
17-19 February	Steering committee research workshop	University of Oldenburg
February	Data generation in the field cohort 5	
1 March – 30 April	Academic written and graphic presentations online module (facilitated by CERM-ESA to Moi-U postgraduate students)	learn.digiface.org
7-11 March	Alumni conference: QUALITY EDUCATION, EQUITY AND COVID 19: WHERE ARE WE AFTER TWO YEARS OF PANDEMIC IN EAST AFRICA?	Nairobi /online
April	Interviews and final selection of scholarship holders together with DAAD Nairobi	Online
May	Mentoring programme and writing retreat for CERM-ESA PhD scholarship holders	University of Oldenburg
May	Short Learning Programme for Secondary School teachers	Kwale & Nairobi
20 June – 3 July	8th CERM-ESA International Research School for CERM-ESA scholarship holders	Mandela-U

CERM-ESA in Brief

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Homepage:

www.cermesa.uol.de

Project Partners



Moi-University, Eldoret and Nairobi

www.mu.ac.ke

The Moi University School of Education is based in Eldoret and offers various undergraduate and postgraduate courses. It plays a vital role in educational development in the region.



The Nelson Mandela University

www.nmmu.ac.za

The NMMU is one of the leading universities in the field of teacher education and education research in South Africa. It cooperates with universities all over Africa and beyond.



University of Oldenburg

www.uni-oldenburg.de

The University of Oldenburg builds on an almost 200-years long tradition in teacher education and is known for excellent, research-oriented study programmes in initial teacher education and the professional development of teachers.



Networking Partners

<http://www.umi.ac.ug/>

<https://udsm.ac.tz/>

The Uganda Management Institute and the University of Dar es Salaam complement CERM-ESA research, teaching and staff development with specific expertise in educational and management sciences.



CERM-ESA Programmes

CERM-ESA has four major programmes that run concurrently.

1. The objective of the **Research Programme** is to build research capacity in the partner Schools of Education for sustainable institution building and excellent, innovative educational research in, about and for Africa.

2. The **Academic Programme** includes scholarships for postgraduate students in East and South Africa and focuses on teaching and training of future leaders in terms of research methodologies, innovative management solutions and instruction techniques on Master's and Doctoral levels.

3. The **Capacity Building Programme** offers opportunities for academic, teaching and administrative/management staff of all partner Schools of Education to further their education through professional development courses and workshops.

4. The goal of the **Teachers Professional Development Programme** is to support teachers and principals to advance their competencies in relevant areas of educational practice, curriculum implementation and management in their local contexts.

Contact



Moi University

East and South African-German Centre
of Excellence for Educational Research
Methodologies and Management
(CERM-ESA)

School of Education
PO BOX 3900-100
Eldoret
Kenya
+254 722 449 288

kurgatsusan@gmail.com
www.mu.ac.ke



Universität Oldenburg

East and South African-German Centre
of Excellence for Educational Research
Methodologies and Management
(CERM-ESA)

Institut für Pädagogik
Ammerländer Heerstr. 114-118
26129 Oldenburg
Germany
+49 (0)441 798 4085

malve.moellendorff@uni-oldenburg.de
www.cermesa.uol.de



Nelson Mandela University

PO Box 77000

East and South African-German Centre
of Excellence for Educational Research
Methodologies and Management
(CERM-ESA)

Faculty of Education
Port Elizabeth 6031
+27 (0)41 504 4396

paul.webb@mandela.ac.za
www.mandela.ac.za



DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service

Centres of African Excellence
Kennedyallee 50
53175 Bonn
Germany

www.african-excellence.de

CERM-ESA

East and South African-German Centre of Excellence
for Educational Research Methodologies and Management

