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Does Learners' School Security and Safety Measures Impact on Learners Academic Performance? Tales with focus on Selected Primary Schools in Majanji Sub-County, Busia District

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Abstract

The study was intended to establish the effect of school security and safety on learners' academic performance in selected primary schools in Majanji Sub County, Busia District. With intent to find out the factors influencing learners' academic performance as well as identifying the strategies in place to cater for school security and also determine the effect of school security strategies on learners' academic performance. Findings showed cases of early pregnancies or early marriages, failure to consider children's rights and presence of learners with emotional problems. Conclusively, an unsafe school is more likely to result in students who have emotional problems, particularly direct victims of violence or bullying. Consider setting up a hotline to allow victims and witnesses to report occurrences in confidence. Some public schools are increasingly enforcing uniforms for all pupils, just like private institutions. Thus, the study recommends that schools work with the parents together with development partners and government to put up security systems in schools for learners' safety.

Keywords: effect of security, school environment, academic performance, primary school

1. Background of the Study

Learner performance plays a pivotal role in the growth, existence, and expansion of any institution. This too is dependent on several factors such as proper management of human resource that include sustainability through motivation for efficient flow of school programs among others is the aspect of school security. Security is a "darling of all" and according to Balami et al. (2016), security is a very vital instrument for efficient teaching and learning to take place.

In order to determine the extent to which these policies handle the security concerns that schools confront, Martin & Moufida (2021) performed research to assess and analyze the security policies in 100 UK schools. Such research may be used to evaluate the value and efficacy of security policies. The main conclusions demonstrate that many security strategies are mostly focused on conventional technological solutions rather than dangers that target the human components of their organizations, thus, if well done, school security measures enhance the comfort and safety of study environment.

Arita (2021)'s swedish study examined the connection between teachers' conceptions of security and the educational system. Semi-structured interviews with teachers and principals were undertaken in Sweden's medium-sized towns to gather the data. The data reveals that instructors continue to view security via an

individual-centric lens. While some instructors argue against highlighting the notion of security in connection to schools, teachers seldom embrace national security discourses (with the exception of discussions about school violence).

Albert & Tsanwani's (2017) research examined how security guards contribute to the development of efficient schools, which is essential for ensuring the safety of students, teachers, support staff, and other staff members. The study's primary focus was on the public secondary schools in South Africa's Vhembe District, where a useful field study was carried out. The analysis's findings showed that it is important to not undervalue security guards' contributions to maintaining order in classrooms and preventing school-based violence. It would be feasible to improve student conduct, minimize learning challenges, and foster a more supportive environment in schools, homes, and society if schools were encouraged to see safety and security issues in their broader contexts.

By studying students' opinions and observations of the school environment with a nationally representative sample of U.S. middle and high school students, Brett (2019) intends to close the gap between the amount of research that explores the association between school climate and hateful behaviors. Despite the fact that some people think bullying and hatred are two distinct issues, research shows that hostile school environments also have a negative impact on the hatefulness measurements used in this study. One distinction is that, although security personnel or law enforcement are present, bullying victimization is unaffected, whereas allegations of hate crimes are more common when they are. The findings are discussed in relation to current initiatives to lessen school violence as well as issues with the use of severe sanctions and law enforcement in schools.

In their study, Lindstrom et al. (2018) intended to determine if students' perceptions of safety, equity, and support were related to the security measures that were really in place in secondary schools. Lower views of safety, equality, and support were associated with increased usage of surveillance cameras within the classroom. Students' feelings of support were shown to be stronger when security cameras were used outside of the school in a modest amount. Higher feelings of safety were correlated with the presence of security officers. Compared to white students, cameras were linked to higher perceptions of safety and support for black students.

Based on the ideas that school safety is an important aspect of the learning environment and that research suggests that if students feel unsafe in their surroundings, they may experience a variety of potentially harmful consequences. Jennifer et al. (2019) Explore the factors that students most frequently identify as crucial to their feelings of safety. The findings shed light on how students perceive school safety, how the perception of adults and other students contribute to or exacerbate violence, and how external resources in their contexts help shield children from it.

2. Aim of the Study

The study was intended to establish the effect of school security on the learners' academic performance in selected primary schools in Majanji Sub-County Busia District.

3. Objectives of the study

- 1) To find out the factors influencing learners' academic performance in selected primary schools in Majanji Sub-County, Busia District.
- 2) To identify the strategies in place to cater for school security in selected primary schools in Majanji Sub-County, Busia District
- 3) To determine the effect of school security strategies on learners' academic performance in selected primary schools in Majanji Sub-County Busia District

4. The Theory for the Study

The study incorporated the securitization theory put out by Barry Buzan, Ole Wver, Jaap de Wilde, and other members of the Copenhagen School, so named since the majority of their papers were produced at the Conflict and Peace Research Institute (COPRI) in Copenhagen in the 1990s. According to the Copenhagen School, securitization is a socially created process wherein a socially significant item is chosen to be safeguarded because it is important. This decision is made by securitizing actors in society. Securitization theorists identified five areas, according to McGlinchey et al. in 2021: the economic, sociological, military, political, and environmental sectors. Each sector articulates a distinct threat as posing a harm to a reference item. For instance, the referent object in the sociological sector is identity, whereas the ecosystem and endangered species are the referent objects in the environmental sector. The referent object alone remains the state in the military sector. By "sectorializing" security, we recognize that existential dangers relate to the unique traits of each referent object rather than being objective. This method also emphasizes how contextual risks and security are. For some people now, fear over suicide bombings, for instance, is greater than it is for others. Suicide terrorism is nonetheless frequently described as a "global" menace. Securitization demonstrates that it is inappropriate to discuss

problems like terrorism as though they affect everyone in the globe equally. By discussing referent objects, we might pose the question, "Security for whom?" Protection from what? Who then offers security? The Securitization Theory states that due to the tremendous urgency of a security issue, it must get rapid attention and be resolved.

The theory suits the study because it advocated paying attention to the issue of security in schools and established that this is the only approach to enhance the welfare of individuals concerned. In other words, using principles from this theory, securitization, administrators, teachers, and learners all need security to keep life going on in school. However, as far as this study is concerned, school safety is primarily pointing toward learners' academic performance.

5. Review of Related Literature

5.1 Influencing Discourses For Learners' Academic Performance

With an emphasis on how school adjustment and problem behavior patterns predict academic performance, Kathleen, et al. (2018) described the academic, social, and behavioral performance of elementary and secondary students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) receiving services in a self-contained school for students with serious behavior problems. The results showed that on reading, maths, and written expression tests, the elementary and secondary group scores were significantly below the 25th percentile. A seven-variable model that discriminated between age groups, and groups using academic, social, and behavioral domains explained 54% of the variation and accurately classified 78% of elementary students and 84% of secondary students.

Waleed, et al. (2015) study offers a review of the empirical literature, and its distinctiveness stems from the focus on collaborative learning and engagement in literature, as dominated by higher education. Findings showed that collaborative learning, engagement and intention to use social media positively and significantly relate to the interactivity of research group members (students and researchers) with supervisors to improve their academic performance in Malaysian higher education.

The factors affecting graduate students' academic performance at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Rahim Yar Khan Campus were examined in Ali and Haider's (2013) study. Academic achievement (students' grades or marks) was taken into consideration, with independent variables including gender, age, faculty of study, education, fathers' or guardians' socio-economic position, residential location, and mode of instruction. The trend in tuition, daily study hours, and lodging were also considered. The study indicated that daily study time, socioeconomic status of one's parents, and age all had a significant impact on graduate students' academic performance. A linear model was also recommended as a way to improve graduate students' academic performance at the college level.

According to Bindhia and Suvnam (2019), a new prediction algorithm for assessing students' academic performance has been created using both classification and clustering techniques. The algorithm has been evaluated in real-time using student datasets from various academic disciplines at higher educational institutions in Kerala, India. The outcome demonstrates that the hybrid algorithm, which combines clustering and classification techniques, produces outcomes that are significantly better in terms of obtaining accuracy in the prediction of the students' academic achievement.

Ajibade (2019) carried out a study to suggest a new student performance prediction model based on data mining techniques and including additional variables known as behavioral features of students. Utilizing classifiers like Nave Bayesian (NB), Decision Tree (DT), K-Nearest Neighbor (KNN), Discriminant Analysis (Disc), and Pairwise Coupling, the suggested predictive model is tested (PWC). Additionally, the ensemble techniques AdaBoost, Bag, and RUSBoost were employed to improve the accuracy of the performance models of the students in order to improve the performance of the classifiers. The outcomes obtained demonstrate that there is a significant connection between students' conduct and academic achievement. When behavioral characteristics were included, the suggested model's accuracy was 84.2%, but without them, it was 72.6%. To further enhance academic performance, an accuracy of 94.1% was attained when ensemble techniques were used on the classifiers. The outcomes so demonstrate the validity of the suggested paradigm. Strategies are in place to cater for school security in primary schools.

5.2 Do Schools Cater for Learners' Security? Key Focus Areas

Koskey and Inyega (2018) looked at how risk reduction in public primary schools in Nandi North Sub County has been impacted by the introduction of safety policies. The study was guided by Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. The results demonstrated that schools had implemented policies to encourage children's safety. However, they lacked secured gates, water for hand washing after toilet visits, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, and lightning arrestors. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially goal four, which guarantees inclusive and high-quality education for all and encourages lifelong learning, the study advised the government to make sure that all public primary schools receive adequate funding to meet children's needs

for school safety.

According to Lynn (2018), worries about school violence, especially lethal school violence, have led to calls for more focus on student safety and school security. One reaction has been a rise in the employment of visible security in all locations and grade levels of public schools. However, there is a dearth of information about the efficacy of these initiatives to lessen crime and violence as well as any unexpected consequences that can result.

Anujt et al. (2017) evaluate the infrastructure facilities of government-aided primary schools (GPS) and private primary schools (PPS) in rural West Bengal, India, in order to illustrate the general circumstances of primary school education. With the use of a self-made interview schedule and checklist that was based on the instructions specified in the RTE Act-2009, researchers modified a descriptive survey. In terms of infrastructure design and available human resources, findings showed that government elementary schools were significantly superior to private primary schools. The findings increase awareness of the demands that are present and unfulfilled in primary schools to fulfill the rights of all children, particularly in rural West Bengal, among parents, school authorities, and other stakeholders.

Using semi-structured interviews with administrators, instructors, and students at three urban schools, the study by Nath and Karna (2022), which was based on a qualitative study, looked at their perspectives on the usefulness of CCTV surveillance cameras in schools. The data from the interviews was additionally supported by non-participant observation. The findings indicate that the primary purpose of using CCTV surveillance cameras in these institutions was to monitor and control instructors' and students' non-compliant behavior in order to enhance academic performance. Although the study concentrated on how these schools made use of monitoring technology, its findings aid practitioners in realizing that, in the absence of legislative limits, the technology is also open to misuse and can have negative effects on children.

Existing infrastructure has to be maintained in order to be run and function correctly, according to Javiri et al. (2019). To restore, improve, and service live function in accordance with design life, operation and maintenance operations are carried out sustainably. The connection between operating and maintenance tasks is condition assessment. If the circumstances are poor, the operation won't be at its best, which might lead to malfunction. In this study, case studies are used to evaluate the state of buildings housing students that have a prototype design. employing the Fuzzy Analytical Hierarchy Process as an analytical technique to weighting component. The studies' findings demonstrate that the FAHP method's weighting of building components from the evaluation of expert subjectivity.

5.3 Learners' Academic Performance Versus Their Safe Stay in Schools; Focus on Impact

Study observations have correlated insecure female health status in schools with absenteeism which in turn brings about low grades. A study by Muhammed, et al., (2020) in Ghana which indicates that girls who did not receive regular allowance for menstrual care products had nearly 2-fold increased odds of poor menstrual hygiene management compared to those who received allowance for menstrual care products. Menstrual pain, fear of staining clothing, fear of being teased, nonavailability of sanitary pad, and lack of private place to manage period at school were the common reasons cited for menstrual-related school absenteeism. On many occasions, female learners face challenges when it comes to school life. This begins from the point of spaces for convenience whereby in schools where there are no separate places of convenience for boys and girls, privacy is not observed and this puts tension on especially the girl child who is always undergoing different experiences in life. By principle and to protect females from any form of insecurity, they need separate spaces of convenience from boys. Without this, the level of concentration goes low as they always think about unconducive spaces for convenience.

The research by Benjmin et al. (2018) on a series of multi-level models shows that adolescents in schools with more security measures report higher odds of being threatened with harm, with no difference in odds of being in a physical altercation or having something stolen over time. This study used two waves of data from the Educational Longitudinal Study 2002 (N = 7659; 50.6% female; 56.7% White; 13.3% Black; 13.5% Hispanic; 11.3% Asian American; 5.4% other race). Although earlier studies had found racial differences in the use of school security measures, the data showed conflicting trends in how much the race of teenagers affected the link between victimization and security. The conclusions are explored in the context of prior theoretical and empirical research, and suggestions for further work are made.

Nicola et al. (2020) investigated students' opinions of their personal safety and their on- and off-campus encounters with interpersonal violence. We demonstrate how sexual assault reports from women outnumbered those from males. The study also demonstrates how moving from day to night and from the campus into the city decreased the likelihood that female students, as opposed to male students, had ever felt unsafe. In addition, the study demonstrates how connected elements shape women's perceptions of safety and, as a result, how places seen as risky "hotspots" turn into actual obstacles preventing women from entering public and educational areas.

As a result, the study provides suggestions for improving women's safety while attending college. In other words, when the school puts measures to guarantee security of female learners from rape and all sorts of immorality enables them to be regular at school and this is what indicates the ability to perform well in school.

According to Michal & Yaacov's (2021) investigation of the moderating role of school climate, bullying may have less of an impact on students' feelings of safety in a supportive environment than in a hostile one. With reference to three safety indicators, the relationship between various types (both direct and witnessed) of school bullying and the sensation of safety was also examined (risk assessment, fear, and avoidance). 1213 pupils in the sixth (35.5%), eighth (38.3%), and tenth (26.2%) grades made up the sample. The results demonstrate that bullying has a negative link with students' sense of safety in schools with a negative school climate but not in schools with a positive school climate and that school climate moderates the correlation between victimization and the sense of safety. Without a sense of safety, there is a high likelihood that learners will not concentrate, which in turn will be the cause of low grades and loss of interest in completing education levels.

6. Methodology

The study employed a cross-sectional design involving the use of only qualitative data collection and analysis approaches. The use of this design follows a realization that the current study is intended to be purely qualitative. The study was carried out in three selected public primary schools, Majanji Primary School, Bulwande Primary School and Maduwa Primary School all found in Majanji Sub County in Busia District. The choice of Majanji owes to a realization that it is one of the sub-counties with the worst performing learners and with a combination of tribes among learners who enroll with all sorts of behaviors, most of which spark immorality.

Findings were obtained using purely interview guides to obtain responses from head teachers and teachers who serve as administrators in the selected primary schools. In addition, observation was used to confirm whether there were indeed some security measures in selected primary schools.

7. Findings of the Study

The findings are in the order; factors influencing learners' academic performance, factors in place to cater for school security and effect of school security on academic performance of learners in public primary schools in Majanji Sub County, Busia District.

7.1 Factors Influencing Learners' Academic Performance

Findings revealed that group influence among age-mates is one of the strongest factors that affect academic performance in rural schools in Majanji Sub County. The study also found out that some respondents could not state whether the statement was true or not true, a clear indicator that certain issues were not known to each person at school. From the discussions held, most of the learners maintained that having good company as friends can help in scoring high marks and staying at school till primary level. Results from Group 1 showed that with bad company, it is easier to find cases of early pregnancy or getting married very quickly. On the contrary, using the slogan "Mbulila gwoyita naye nkubulire empisa zo" translated as "tell me your company and I will tell you your behavior," pupils in group 2 simply stated that fools move with fools while the wise and those who want to be wise move with wise pupils.

According to the respondents, sex abuse affected students' ability to learn in Majanji Sub County, Busia District. This suggests that there is sex abuse present in the study area and that it needs to be addressed right away. At connection with this, pupils in one of the schools expressed worry about young girls who use poor clothing to entice instructors to like them. As a result, teachers force female pupils to become pregnant while young, and a pregnant girl may decide to stop attending school to avoid being teased by other pupils.

The results also showed that one of the biggest factors affecting children's education in rural schools in Majanji Sub County, Busia district, was HIV and its effects on families. As a result, it is important to focus on how HIV/AIDS affects welfare and how to improve academic performance of learners. Speaking up about connected difficulties revealed that many of the students had lost both of their parents and were living with relatives, which restricted their ability to obtain the academic resources they desired at school.

Another significant element that affects the education of girls in Majanji Sub County, Busia District, is the unequal allocation of household tasks. This is since many respondents mentioned it, supporting the notion that one of the reasons affecting students' academic performance in Majanji Sub County's public primary schools is the severity of the imbalance in the allocation of household responsibilities. When asked in a class what factors affect the education of girls, most pupils brought up the fact that parents sometimes withhold items from female students while making exceptions for boys. The key argument was that there was prejudice by parents and guardians, even if these issues were not brought up.

Failure to consider children's rights is among the factors which influence the academic performance of learners in primary schools in Majanji Sub County, as ranked by many respondents who reported this issue. In this case,

it is correct to conclude that children's rights in Majanji Sub-County primary schools are not adhered to, and thus a challenge to attaining education for the girl child. This relates to concerns of pupils that sometimes a child is considered unworthy of teaching, whereby parents see them as a source of wealth such that they can be married off at any time.

Studies have shown that because of child labor, kids are forced to work as servants and household slaves rather than attending school. In certain households, in addition to cooking and other housework, a girl child is required to undertake duties like washing youngsters and cleaning the yard. Indeed, girls concur that they work harder at home than boys do. Parents completely assigned the task of fetching water to their girl children. Other constant, regular responsibilities included gathering firewood, cooking, especially supper, and washing dishes.

7.2 Approaches in Place to Cater for School Security in Public Primary Schools

According to research, one of the biggest hazards to school security is unlawful entrance by intruders onto school grounds. Although many methods and attempts have been made to increase school security, they are unlikely to be successful if schools don't take steps to regulate who is allowed access to the premises and how they do so. Because of this, some security professionals advise building walls around school grounds. Respondents contend that fences may benefit a school for a variety of reasons if they are properly erected and maintained. Not only to increase monitoring and improve security, but also—and maybe surprisingly—for the kids' morale and wellbeing.

In many schools, they also utilize physical gates at the main entrance. The findings show that since security gates physically deter thieves, they are more successful at securing schools than many other forms of protection. Alarm systems and security cameras can warn you of a crime in progress or assist you in gathering evidence after a crime has occurred, but they cannot deter criminal activity. To stop the crime, someone must react to the alert or the invader captured on video. Security gates alone cannot deter crime.

According to the responses from two headteachers in particular, schools receive more visitors than you might expect, whether they are prospective pupils, their parents, guest speakers, event vendors, or contract workers. A school security solution that also includes visitor management is a wise investment if you want to effectively plan safety precautions. An access control system that can manage visitor credentials guarantees that visitors may access only specific areas for improved security.

These guest credentials can be texted or emailed directly to the visitor's smartphone with a mobile and cloud-based security solution, eliminating the need for them to pick up a badge or key card to unlock the door. Vendors setting up for concerts, career fairs, and after-hours events will find this to be extremely helpful. Since the guests' personalized credentials will only grant them access to the places they will be utilizing for the event, school officials will not need to keep an eye on entrances to handle security.

Numerous changes have been made to the physical security system in public schools. In order to control who enters their property, several schools have started to lock all unattended entrances and demand that all guests register at the front desk. Visitors are also now issued distinct identification that they are required to wear while on campus.

Now, many public schools have established dress codes for pupils. Some public schools are increasingly enforcing uniforms for all pupils, exactly like private institutions. School uniforms make it easier to spot trespassers. Schools are now requiring pupils to only use see-through backpacks, handbags, and bookbags. This makes it easier for school administrators to find firearms and illicit substances that cause or encourage school violence.

In public schools, the number of law enforcement officers and private security guards is steadily rising. Twenty-three percent of schools reported having police or security personnel stationed for 30 hours or more at the school in a typical week. These officials do many functions, such as monitoring school grounds, aiding with investigations of pupils who disobey school regulations, conducting searches, and arresting students who commit crimes.

7.3 Effect of School Security on Academic Performance of Learners

According to the results, a school's top priority should be the safety of its learners and that students should not have to worry about their physical safety while on campus because they are there to receive an education. Fences and gates keep people off of your property who may be a negative influence. Additionally, they keep learners in school so they may receive the necessary education. The results show that Sonitrol's alarm systems enable quick police deployment. Authorized employees can operate the panic buttons from vantage points around the structures. Within minutes of an occurrence, it immediately adds a crucial layer of security for children and employees. This translates to complete focus and stellar academic performance.

According to the results, security measures proactively protect while being undetectable. Schools ought to be

centers of learning at all times. Schools resemble prisons more when they have armed guards, metal detectors, walls, and checkpoints. The alarm systems from Sonitrol offer a high level of protection without making pupils feel uneasy.

The physical and emotional health of learners attending school might potentially be improved by a safe environment. In fact, a study discovered that behavioral and academic success are positively correlated with feelings of safety at school.

The findings also contends that learners who feel unsafe at school or are victims of violence reported more symptoms of depression. An unsafe school is more likely to result in learners with emotional problems, particularly the direct victims of violence or bullying. Two head teachers noted as follows; schools with high levels of violence have less successful learners. It will be more difficult for schools with low learner success rates to enroll learners. Budget constraints apply to private and charter schools as a result. For public schools, this may mean closing their doors for good. There are a number of strategies to increase safety at school if there is a violence problem at your institution and this is having a detrimental influence on student progress.

The first approach is to give additional non-academic support services. Consider setting up a hotline to allow victims and witnesses to report occurrences in confidence. Since authorities can recognize and address the risk of violence before it spirals out of control, this can significantly improve safety. Lighting is particularly successful in that it may generate a dramatic effect with a small adjustment, as opposed to many other facility expenditures that aim to improve human physical and mental states. They defined lighting by measuring their CCTs, or different correlated color temperatures, ranging from "warm" to "cool," and found that lighting can be optimized for a variety of activities, including reading, recess, and taking tests.

8. Arising Conclusion

Conclusively, a study conducted in rural schools in Majanji Sub County, Busia District, found that group influence among age-mates is one of the strongest factors that affect academic performance. Results from Group 1 showed that with bad company, it is easier to find cases of early pregnancy or getting married very quickly. Speaking up about connected difficulties revealed that many of the learners had lost both parents and were living with relatives, which restricted their ability to obtain the academic resources they desired at school. Failure to consider children's rights is among the factors which influence the academic performance of learners in public primary schools in Majanji Sub County, Busia District. In some households, a girl child is required to undertake duties like washing the youngsters and cleaning the yard. This relates to concerns of pupils that sometimes a child is considered unworthy of teaching.

Some security professionals advise building walls around school grounds. Since security gates physically deter thieves, they are more successful at securing schools than many other forms of protection. For improved security, an access control system that can manage visitor credentials guarantees that visitors may access only specific areas. Guest credentials can be texted or emailed directly to the visitor's smartphone with a mobile and cloud-based security solution. Vendors setting up for concerts, career fairs, and after-hours events will find this to be extremely helpful. Some public schools are increasingly enforcing uniforms for all pupils, just like private institutions.

The alarm systems offer a high level of protection without making pupils feel uneasy. Within minutes of an occurrence, it immediately adds a crucial layer of security for children and employees. The findings also contend that students who feel unsafe at school or are victims of violence report more symptoms of depression. An unsafe school is more likely to result in learners who have emotional problems, particularly direct victims of violence or bullying. Consider setting up a hotline to allow victims and witnesses to report occurrences in confidence. Lighting can be optimized for a variety of activities, including reading, recess, and taking tests.

9. Recommendations

In terms of how to enhance academic performance, parents ought to play their part by providing learners with necessary resources as well as encouraging them to be active in classrooms for better results. It is critical for the learner to take advantage of the opportunities provided to them by attending school on a regular basis, performing tasks as assigned, and avoiding all the various things that prevent them from having a good time at school.

As far as security measures are concerned, this study recommends that schools work in collaboration with the ministry of ICT and other interested parties to facilitate the installation of cameras, alarms on classrooms and gates, and also install security lights throughout the compound to settle the minds of the learners so that they concentrate without fear of any security threat.

It is also recommended that if the administrators, together with development partners and the government, have strived to put up security systems in schools, it is now the role of learners to make use of available facilities and

show high concentration that will later promote revision, discussions, and later realization of results in examinations.

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