

**POOR PERFORMANCE IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF  
SECONDARY EDUCATION (KCSE).  
A CASE STUDY IN WAJIR DISTRICT.**

BY:

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## DECLARATION

I Muhiyadin A. S. declare that this research report is my own original work and has never been presented to any University for the award of a Certificate, Diploma or Degree in any other University before.

Signature—(M) -----

Date—31/08/07-----

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Signature—-----

Date—31/8/07-----

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all those who treasure knowledge by financing, seeking and providing it diligently. Especially to my beloved parents, my dear brother Mr. Ismail and more so to the perpetual love of my uncle Dr. Ahmed Hadi Sh. Ali who has paid my fees from primary to secondary and still paying my university fees .

I owe much to him, without his guidance, encouragement, inspiration, love and financial support, this work would not have been written.

May Allah Reward him abundantly.

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May I then add that any shortcomings in this report is purely mine. This report is no way a seal for further research, but rather a means through which a further research can be launched.

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## CHAPTER ONE:

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Wajir district is the second largest district in the Republic of Kenya after Turkana district, and one of the four districts in North Eastern Province. The district covers an area of about 56,698 square kilometres. The district borders Ethiopia to the north, Mandera district to the north-east, Somalia to the east, Garissa district to the south-east, Isiolo district to the south and Marsabit district to the west.

#### Demographic Data

According to the 1999 population census, Wajir district had a total Population of 406,000 persons.

#### Economic Data

Wajir district is dry most of the year therefore, rainfall is erratic and inadequate. The main economic activity in the district is livestock rearing. Therefore, the communities living in the district are nomadic pastoralists who are 80% illiterate and unskilled. However, their contribution is mitigated by rising incidents of famines and drought, hence the district is one of the (ASAL) arid and semi-arid areas of the province (NEP), the level of poverty and economic under-development is higher than in other parts of the country with kinder weather patterns. This is because the mainstay of the country is agriculture and therefore weather patterns play an important role in the economy.

Land is communally owned. During the dry periods, people move from place to place in search of water and pasture for the animals. Small scale farming takes place in the northern part of the district. Farmers in this area grow maize, beans, simsim, sorghum and vegetables. The district is



rich in limestone for construction of buildings. The potential for production of cement is high.

### Educational Data

The district has one hundred and three (103) public primary schools, Fourteen (14) secondary schools and ninety eight (98) pre-primary centres dispersed in five (5) Education Divisions. There are also three (3) private mixed day schools and twelve (12) private primary schools. There are also five (5) schools for special needs and seven (7) mobile schools to address the alternative approach to education. Due to the vastness of the district and distance between schools, effective supervision and monitoring of education activities in the district has not been very easy.

The enrolments of the schools in the year 2007 are as follows:

#### EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRES (ECD)

1. Public ECD 106
  2. Private ECD 15
  3. Mobile ECD 03
- Total 124

#### PRIMARY SCHOOLS ENROLMENT.

<b>Central</b>	6813	4258	11071
<b>Habaswien</b>	3415	1872	5287
<b>Griftu</b>	3322	1258	4580
<b>Bute</b>	2386	1150	3536
<b>Tarbaj</b>	2252	1952	4204
<b>Total</b>	<b>18088</b>	<b>10484</b>	<b>28572</b>

## SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT

	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>	
<b>FORM I</b>	643	350	993
<b>FORM II</b>	481	280	761
<b>FORM III</b>	440	217	657
<b>FORM IV</b>	430	162	592
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1009</b>	<b>3003</b>

Source: DEO's office wajir district.

The importance of education to man cannot be over emphasized. No nation can develop in any sense of the term without a population which has not received a thorough and relevant education. For any society to develop socially, politically and economically should get the quality education.

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Education is the background for technological development and for a society to achieve this, it must perform well in their education.

Secondary school absorbs primary school leavers in the 14 – 17 year age group. It is also the transitional stage between primary education and higher education. The aim of secondary is to create human resource base for the country, at a level higher than primary education. Performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) examination, which is attempted at the end of the 4 year secondary course, is used as the criteria for selection into university and training in middle-level trades and other professions such as primary teaching and vocational and technical jobs (Government of Kenya , 1998).

Secondary education in the district started in 1965. Wajir high school was established in Wajir catering for the whole (NFD)Northern Frontier Districts namely Garissa, Wajir Mandera, Isiolo and Marsabit. This is

according to DICECE report 2001. In this essence Wajir district is considered to be the pioneers of secondary education in the province as a whole.

Regrettably the good performance which is the key to the development is absent in vast majority of the society. Time and again when the results of the final examinations are announced Wajir district is always among those who perform poorly. hence the target of this simple research. There is a problem of drought which leaves many school dropouts as a result of non-payment of school fees.

The culture of Mal-practices and leakage have contributed to the cancellation of exams in 2000. Inadequate of physical facilities contributed to the poor performance of KCSE.

There is much reflex indiscipline in the schools which ranges from individual indiscipline which has not been a very big problem to mass indiscipline which has caused untold suffering to students, teachers, and the society as a whole. These largely involves fighting among students and teachers, constant destruction of school property, sneaking from schools, and un accomplishment of assignments which clearly shows lack of commitment. Noise making has become the order of the day and this could even be heard outside the school. Students socializing unaccepted behaviours through peer pressure such as drug abuse which also led a dismal performance and discontinuation of studies.

This problem is always addressed by leaders and education officers but there is no tangible changes taken so far.

Major transformation of the education system is needed in the district to overcome the problem and therefore the development of the district in the nation.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Northern Kenyan Communities lags far behind the rest of Kenya and by extension the larger E. African communities in terms of Education, Health and Economy. The region is known to have the lowest enrolment in schools and worst performance in schools annual assessment exams. Those who are familiar with North Eastern Province can predict KCSE and KCSE results of NEP schools with some accuracy before it is officially released each year. The unwavering trend of low performance is perhaps the best reason why one can make a prediction with such precision. It is miraculous to imagine NEP schools making it to the top one hundred in the annual national exams both at primary and secondary levels. The reality is that the four districts are condemned to the lowest possible rank in terms national performance. However, it would be cruel to deny recognition of individuals efforts whose performance is still a dream to accomplish for many in the region.

Improving the educational outcomes in the Province has been a challenge to educationists and other stakeholders. Both the government and non-government organizations have indeed initiated many programmes, and several interventions measures have been put in place. However, academic results continue to be disappointing and remain below the national averages.

The majority of the population are Muslims, despite the emphasis of Islamic religion on education, statistics show for along time the poor performance of the national examinations in the region.

The 1992 tribal clashes in the country and insecurity in cattle rustling areas like Wajir district have had a major impact on the education sector, and particularly exams hence many households and children get displaced, thus children's participation in education has remained

problematic. The situation is exacerbated where children have lost their parents in such cases.

The clashes were in form of cattle rustling and banditry, children were molested or raped on their way to and from school. In such instances, parents decided to withdraw their children, especially girls, from school or the pupils themselves refused to go to school for fear of being raped, tortured or killed by raiders. This is one of the reasons why exams in that year showed low performance in the province as a whole and the district in particular.

In the year 1999 most of students' results were cancelled in the district due to irregularities, cheating in exams and indiscipline of the highest order.

Likewise in the year 2000 exams were cancelled in the province as a whole, Wajir District being one of the affected regions, due to irregularities, cheating in exams and indiscipline of the highest order. Another incident of the same magnitude occurred in the year 2002, 2003 and 2006 where we had thirteen (13) irregularity cases, especially from Wajir High Secondary School.

The trend may continue if serious steps are not taken urgently. The implication can be severe because education is a basic need in life. Upon such background, the study was set to analyze the forms and ways to improve the performance in the district.

### 1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to find out the factors contributing to the poor performance of the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in Wajir district.

## 1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Objectives of the study are:

- ❖ To establish whether the climatical condition of the area contributes to the poor performance of the Kenya certificate of secondary education (KCSE).
- ❖ To establish whether the teaching staff and the facilities in the schools affect the performance.
- ❖ To establish whether there is existence of good teacher – parent relationship.
- ❖ To find out whether the Islamic education in the district i.e Madarasas and Dugsis (Quranic schools) overloads the children.
- ❖ To provide suggestions and recommendations on the possible way of rescuing the situations.

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## 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The student researcher will use the following research questions to help him focus various aspects of the research problem and get answers to them;

1. What are the attitudes of learners and parents towards education.
2. Is the climate of the area conducive for learning.
3. Are there enough teaching staff in the school.
4. Are the facilities enough for good learning purposes.
5. Does the teachers poor preparation for lessons have anything to do with the poor performance in the national exams.
6. In what ways does the defective system and policies of education lead to students poor performance.

## 1.6 BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

- Its assumed that all information that will be given by the respondent is correct.
- And that the parents and learners understand the importance of education in one's life.
- On the other hand the government is taking affirmative action towards improving the standard of education in the district, mainly providing enough teaching staff and learning facilities.

## 1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

If this study can be accomplished, I believe that it will contribute substantial awareness to a number of people.

To the ministry of education and NGO's, they can use this study and find the needs sensitize the parents on the importance of secondary education.

Educational planners can use the statistics for strategic planning.

Students who had their examination cancelled due to cheating, for the research will propose ways preparing for examinations and hence no need of cheating in examinations.

Teachers will put full actions and put effort in enhancing their teaching techniques to produce effective graduates.

The study is essential since it will help in determining areas of improvement for the purpose of creating satisfaction and good performance.

Above all this study gives the student researcher a better understanding of his profession and accomplish his post graduate programme, hence it is a partial requirement in the university.

Lastly the information generated from this study will help guide interested scholars in further investigation on the ways of improving the issues pertaining the performance of the district in the national exams

## 1.8 Limitation of the study

The student researcher faced the following problems in carrying out the research.

- ✓ The PGDE time schedule was too tight that there was no appropriate time that could enable the researcher to carry out research.
- ✓ Time limitation was a major problem in conducting the study.
- ✓ There was limited funds for he was supposed to sponsor himself.
- ✓ The vast area did not allow him to cover the whole district hence restricted himself in the central division.
- ✓ In the process of data collection some limitations were encountered like, the research was carried out during school time and most of the teachers were busy.
- ✓ Teachers and head teachers were busy with exams and had a limited time to offer.
- ✓ Some of the questionnaires were not returned in time.
- ✓ Meanwhile data collection exercise was particularly challenging, interesting and exciting. There were a lot to learn from parents, students and teachers.



## 1.8 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**AIDS** Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

**ASAL** Arid and Semi Arid Lands

**DEO** District Education Officer

**DICECE** District Centre For Early Childhood Education

**DUGSI** A non-formal village school for reciting the Koran

**ECD** Early Childhood Development

**EFA** Education For All

**FAWE** Forum for African Women Educationalists

**FGC** Female Genital Cutting

**GoK** Government of Kenya

**HIV** Human Immunodeficiency Virus

**KCPE** Kenya Certificate of Primary Education

**KCSE** Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

**KIE** Kenya Institute of Education

**KNEC** Kenya National Examination Council

**MADARASAS** A parallel formal education system underpinned by Islamic values

**MoE** Ministry of Education

**MoEST** Ministry of Education Science And Technology

**NEP** North Eastern Province

**NFD** Northern Frontier Districts

**PDE** Provincial Director of Education

**PTA** Parents Teachers Association.

## CHAPTER TWO:

### 1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

There were no published literature in reference to the poor performance of Kenya certificate of secondary education KCSE in Wajir district. The development of the education sector has been along standing objective of the Government of Kenya (GoK) since independence in 1963. The reason this objective is clear. Education is considered by various stakeholders and players as a basic need and a basic right. Besides, the socio-economic and political benefits accruing to education are now well established. Various studies indicate that countries with high literacy rates among women and men have lower level of fertility, low infant and mortality rates, longer life expectancy and are politically mature for democratic governance (Abagi, 1998, Colclough, 1986, Cochrane, 1979, Psacharopolos, 1989). Thus, the investment in education in Kenya has been in response to a number of concerns, which include, among other things the need to combat ignorance, disease and poverty. Among nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America, where manpower needs are acute, the demand formal education is very high indeed. In his observation on developing nations, Rene Maheu, the then Managing Director of the U.N, Special Fund, expressed this demand when he said:

There is every where in the underdeveloped world a tremendous hunger for learning, ... the people and their leaders know well that if they are to modernize, they must channel into economic development the magic ingredients of education and training.

People voluntarily turn out in the multitudes to erect school buildings. When a school opens to serve one area, children from nearby areas where school is not yet available will walk miles just to hang around the doorway, or sit on the window ledge, in hopes

of over-hearing a bit of the precious mystery which is happening in the class.

Such fervor necessitates a clear and comprehensive theory of education, particularly for newly-formed nations which are trying to cope with the socio-economic demands of the technical age.

Hyde (1989) has suggested that poverty arising from marginalization of African countries in the global economy, as well as the countries' low levels of economic development, may be important factors in how much stakeholders can avail for the purposes of education. In arid and semi-arid areas such as NEP, the level of poverty and economic under-development may be higher than in other parts of the country with kinder weather patterns. This is because the mainstay of the country is agriculture and therefore weather patterns play an important role in the economy.

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The NGOs perspective basing their data on MOEST statistics and KNEC data considered the communities of North Eastern Province to be predominantly Islamic and pastoral. It is their view that the communities' perceptions of formal schooling are problematic, a majority supporting cultural practices such as FGM and early marriages, which have disappeared in most parts of the country.

Poverty and high levels of illiteracy are thought to under-lie the poor nutritional status and high mortality rates found in the community. Other factors suggested by NGOs affecting performance include:

Very poor physical infrastructure coupled with a harsh environment.

Inadequate physical facilities such as schools, equipment and supplies.

Nomadism in search for water during dry spells, limited community participation.

The formal curriculum, teaching and administration on the whole were regarded as reflecting Christian perspectives and values. This was seen as alienating strongly Muslim learners who usually preferred to learn in Madrassa in order to retain their own culture and Islamic perspectives, rather than attend government or formal schools. Officers who were indigenous to the districts thought this issue was of less importance, however, arguing that most of the teachers and educational personnel at district level are local people. But the issue that still needed to be addressed was why Madrassa schools were popular while well equipped government school continued to register low enrolments.

Indigenous staff members identified the following as important influences on education in the district:

High illiteracy rates of the parents adversely affected community school links. Often the parents do not see the point in supervising homework or even of keeping children in school.

The quality of the teachers needs to be addressed. Most primary school teachers were thought to have failed in school, particularly in mathematics and science subjects.

In-service training of teachers was thought to be rare or nonexistent. Some teachers were thought not to have been in-serviced for 10-20 years, unlike in other areas where DEOs regularly organize in-service courses for teachers to motivate them and keep their methodology up to date.

The primary and secondary curriculum link was thought to be problematic. A comparison of KCPE and KCSE results shows a considerable decline in achievement levels in secondary schools, compared with what learners had achieved in primary schools.

Role models were also seen as important.

The NGO's study also raised that inadequate facilities in the schools was a contributing factor to the poor performance.

Oyaya's (2000) study shows there were no entries for separate science subjects in the district in 1999.

Wajir and Mandera districts were among five districts in the country that did not register any candidates for pure science subjects of physics, chemistry and biology. The percentage of students who failed in mathematics in KCSE was 98.4 in Wajir and 97.9 in Mandera (Oyaya, 2000).

According to research by FAWE(Forum For African Women Educationist) the issue of insecurity say of Instructional materials (textbooks, science equipment and reference materials) are crucial to student's learning.

In most schools facilities, basic equipment and materials are in a sorry state, a condition that has forced them to turn to parents and communities for alternative financing and provisioning. Students from low-income households are most affected by impact of constraints in financing and supply of learning materials. Schools have not developed a book policy for purchasing and distribution of books to students.

The increased HIV/AIDS pandemic has had devastating effects on the education sector in general, and the performance of exams in particular. HIV/AIDS affects both the demand and supply of basic education.

Available statistics indicate that more than 1.5 million people have died of HIV/AIDS, over 2 million are affected, and about 45 per cent of the infected cases are young people aged between 15-36 years. There are indications that the education sector is losing many qualified human resources from the pandemic. Many teachers are also either infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, thus, unable to be efficient and effective in their work. Many children have been affected by the disease because of loss of their parents. Such orphans' participation in school becomes irregular

bursaries to the needy learner, which ensures that the learner is retained in school at whatever level that the learner is, which is either primary and or secondary school level.

CDF has involved gender mainstreaming which ensures that at least one third of representation of each gender in the structure of CDF programmes and also the support of programmes that ease the burden of women, particularly the girl child education.

According to empirical research brought out respondents feeling that CDF has participated in infrastructure building in schools as seen in the attached pictures which show classrooms build and laboratories.

CDF has participated in the learner retention in school at the primary levels with over 90% reporting a positive impact yet secondary school recorded a negative impact as low as 15%.

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Many respondents seemed very aware of CDF role in ensuring the learner is retained at school and so are happy about it, yet have a lot of fear in relation to secondary school education which they don't seem to realize. The demands to a learner in secondary school education are still many and so majority do not realize that CDF is really assisting.

According to Kenya's vision 2030, the country's development blue print (2006), equity and poverty elimination aimed at reducing the number of people living below the poverty line. It asserts at Kenya aiming at having a society which guarantees equal opportunity in accessing public services. This was to be achieved by placing all the citizens at a level of an income which is sufficient to cater for basic requirements of health, education and productive life. CDF can contribute to the achievement of this goal if it is well managed.

Maholtra (2004) wrote in a field visit report that in Brazil, the state was using Community Driven Development (CDD) for service provision to the rural poor, including

PROFFESSOR ESHWANI in his paper education and national development, the challenges of 1990's say that I advanced the following reasons for the dismal performance in the CPE as well as 'O' and 'A' level western province:-

- Over –crowdedness in most schools ,
- Understaffing in both primary and secondary schools
- In equality in the distribution of physical facilities and monetary allocation
- Poor performance and homework
- Incompetence absentism and parochialism among a few headmasters
- Lack of direction for academic work in schools
- Lack of adequate supervision from PEOS,DEOS.
- In effective parent teachers association and board of governor s
- Indifference on the part of some teachers
- Influence of bad social factors on the pupil eg. Changaa drinking and smoking, PROFFESSOR ESHWANI confirms and quotes Nyerere's address to the conference on adult education and development (1976) which says .....development has a purpose; that purpose is the liberation of man, we talk a good deal about economic development about expanding the economic development about expanding the number of goods and services and the capacity to produce them. But the goods are needed to serve man are geared to make the lives of man more useful as well as more fruitful. This quotation implies that one of the major components in the development of any nation is the development of the human resources. Education is the vehicle for this development.

In Kenya times, Friday march 15<sup>th</sup> 2003 page three, column one, a cause of poor performance of exams in Gucha district schools was cited that is political interferences and reluctance by the relevant education stakeholders to address the impediments hindering the progress of education in the district.

In the same paper on Monday may 20<sup>th</sup> 2002 poor results of exams was caused by wrangles between education officers and politicians.

Also in the Kenya times on Monday June 10<sup>th</sup> 2002 page five says that poor performance in central province was due to failure by head teachers to supervise curriculum implementation, poor financial management, poor maintenance among other things.

Research carried out in Malindi showed that poor economic growth and increase in poverty, inappropriate government policy, effect of diseases like HIV AIDS limited public resources for education were some of the causes of poor performance in the district in the years 2000 and 2002.

In the Daily Nation, 20<sup>th</sup> February 1999, a number of causes that contributed to the poor performance in Turkana district was cited and these were the causes:

Lack of sufficiently qualified teachers and understaffing, as a problem facing the district secondary schools in maintaining high quality education in the face of the rapid quantitative expansion of schooling opportunities to meet the increasing demands for education.

A good number of teachers are doing an excellent job of teaching students. But it must be admitted that a large number of teachers are teachers only because they cannot find a job of their choice. Others are lowly motivated in their work, partly because of inadequate training which should give the teacher professional depth to make him confident of his work and satisfied with it. Others have stagnated through lack of reading or in-service training.



The problem of the uncommitted teacher is partly the result of government policy which regards teachers as essential but rather cheaply hired members of society. The profession often attracts candidates who are not keenly interested in the profession but who mark time until they can find a better alternative.

Another major contributing factor to the poor performance in the national exam of the district in that year, is the lack of adequate and proper physical facilities which are conducive to effective learning and teaching, hence the schools lack some essential facilities such as science laboratories.

There is lack of equipment as well, such as text books. Without equipment, it is inconceivable that students will be able to learn effectively.

Without a proper and adequate supply of curriculum support materials, even the most able teachers will find it very difficult to keep high standard of teaching.

Indiscipline was also cited to be the among the factors that contributed to the bad performance of the school in the national exam. There is hardly a term that passes without a school strike. The causes of unrest and other habits of rebellion among school pupils are not fully understood, hence there were no studies conducted on the subject.

However what is usually seen as indiscipline may be an expression of deeper problems, and it is distressing that in the majority of cases where school strikes have occurred, school heads and education administrators alike have simply labeled the involved pupils as rebellious, who have to pay heavily for their sins. There is hardly any time wasted in trying to investigate the root causes of school strikes, even when it is known to the authorities that the students have resorted to mass indiscipline after other rational approaches have failed.

The problems which have been highlighted and others were mentioned in the gazette but Endeavour to solve them, or to make sure that they do not occur, would be a much more worthwhile pre-occupation for all those concerned with education in the district.

Also in the Daily Nation, 28 February 2007, has enumerated causes of poor performance in Narok District, the causes included the following: Poor prioritizing; poor management of resources; poor relationships between school management committees, board of governors and head teachers; and protection of non-performing teachers by the local community. Negative attitudes towards Narok schools, and cultural practices such as 'moranism' have also been cited as affecting retention rates in schools.

Other factors cited include poor syllabus coverage, lack of commitment by teachers, un-paid salaries, fee arrears in secondary schools, and an extension of poor performance in primary schools, which also affects performance at the secondary level. And then most children do not have access to early basic education.

The district is also under-staffed both at the primary and secondary levels, according to the DEO, who said his office has a deficit of 24 officers. The task force has expressed fears that poor results may, in the long-term, give rise to increased crime, dissatisfaction among teachers and stake holders, lack of development in the area due to ignorance, and wastage of resources.

In the Daily Nation dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2007, it has gazetted under the head line Axe falls on exam cheats: Schools and candidates face reality as results are cancelled.

In the gazette it was recorded 679 cases of cheating in 93 schools. Schools involved in examination cheating began to feel the pinch when they found their results cancelled. One of the major casualties was

Kitondo Secondary School in Makueni district, where results for more than 100 candidates were cancelled.

The Makueni district examinations officer, Mr. Simon Mulwa, said the candidates were found to have cheated in Mathematics and since that is a key subject, the entire results had to be cancelled.

Some 43 cases of irregularities were detected in Western Province and the affected students had their Chemistry results cancelled.

In Kisii, 14 students from five schools had their results cancelled. Also affected were five students in Bomet districts, whose results for English, Biology and Chemistry were cancelled.

In Kisii, district education officer Charles Mwanoyha Ndegwa told journalists that the worst-hit school in cheating was Nyanchwa Adventist which had seven cases. Kenyoro Secondary School had three, Gesabakwa two, Rioma and Gamba one each.

The DEO said 12 of those cases involved collusion where students worked in cahoots with some people to cheat. The rest were found with handwritten materials in the examination room.

Kisii Kenya National Union of Teachers branch chairman Geoffrey Mogire condemned the cheating cases and asked head teachers to vigorously campaign against such practices.

In Western Province, the affected schools were Mihu Secondary in Bungoma where 41 candidates were penalized for collusion in Chemistry while one candidate at Shungungu Secondary had the result withheld for a similar anomaly in the same subject.

At Kaimosi Girls in Vihiga, one candidate was punished for irregular registration.

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## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter outlines the methods, techniques and procedures which the student researcher has used to obtain data pertaining the survey to determine causes of poor performance of KCSE in Wajir district. The chapter also presents and discusses the targeted population to get information and the research instruments that has been used and why the student researcher has used them.

The researcher would have like to carry out this study for the whole province but due to the vast geographical area which would have been covered and the limited time for carrying out the research project, it would be impossible to cover the whole province. But the researcher is still highly convinced that the findings could be applicable to the whole province since similar conditions tend to exist in the other areas also.

### **3.1 RESEARCH SCOPE AND DESIGN**

A case study was carried out in Wajir District Secondary Schools in the central division for the following reasons:

One of the basic reasons is that the student researcher comes from the district.

That the schools in this area have at many times experienced the problem. And finally due to limited funds and time to travel in the vast district the student researcher carries his data in the central division of Wajir District.

### 3.2 TARGET POPULATION

According to Sprinthall et al (1990:27) the term population refers to the entire group of persons, things or events that share at least one common factor.

The student researcher used different categories of population; school principles, teachers, ordinary students and parents. The population will comprise of four (4) head teachers, twenty six (26) teachers, seventy (70) students and twenty (20) parents, these totals to hundred(120) persons.

Therefore below is a table showing number of informants by category and sex.

Informants	Male	Female	Total
Parents	12	8	20
Teachers	23	3	26
Head teacher	3	1	4
Students	50	20	70
Total	88	32	120

Source: field study

### 3.3 SAMPLING

A sample is a smaller number of observations taken from the total number making out a given population (Sprinthall et al, 1990:28).

Sampling technique was employed in two(2) boys secondary school, one(1) girls secondary school and one(1) mixed day secondary school in the central division because of their accessibility.

### 3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

A variety of research instruments were used to collect data for this research. These include questionnaires, interviews and direct observations.

a) Questionnaires

Questions were prepared for the selected categories of persons to extract information i.e students, teachers and Head teachers. The questionnaires were of simple and easy language was used for data collection and evaluation.

The researcher used questionnaires because it enabled him to get feed back from many respondents with in a short time, its easier to fill and the information can be stored for further reference.

It also enabled the respondents to take their time and answer the questions in a more detailed manner.

The questionnaires were developed to ascertain their views on the poor performance in their schools.

b) Interviews.

The researcher used interviews to elicit data from the respondent because the method enable him to have a direct verbal interaction with the respondents.

The interviews were structured with relevant rating scale for easy and quick responses.

Some questions were aimed at making interviewees give their views, attitudes, suggestions and any information which could be put forward for further consideration.

c) Direct Observation.

This is a method where the non-verbal communication were applied.

Observation was used to set important information such as the number of teachers and the physical/learning facilities i.e laboratories and libraries.

### 3.5 DATA COLLECTION

The main method of data was questionnaire. This method was chosen because it was not easy to find the respondents easily due to their tight schedules. Also the district is vast the student researcher could not travel to all schools in the district. Therefore the best alternative was to distribute questionnaire to the sampled schools in the central division. However, the student researcher also used interviews as well as direct observation in the data collection process.

An appointment was made with the Head teachers of various schools. Questionnaires were delivered on the respective schools for filling at their own time without causing inconveniences in the smooth running of the activities and learning environment of the school.

The student researcher clarified all queries arose from the questionnaire by the H/teachers, teachers and students.

### 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

After collecting the filled questionnaires descriptive statistics was used to describe how different factors affect the poor performance of the district in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE).

Also the interviews were examined and the direct observation put into consideration.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents research findings collected from various sources including students, parents, teachers and head teachers.

These findings are intended to test and cross examine research questions that were formulated in relation to the study. It was upon such background that the study would be able to clearly expose the impact of different factors that contributes to the dismal performance in the district.

#### 4.1 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

The data collected were mainly related to questionnaires given (27) teachers, (4) head teachers, (50) students and an interview guide given to (20) parents. But before the presentation of questionnaire's responses, here there is a brief information on the students performance as from the years 2002-2006.

As a result the researcher develops his conclusions from the relations between different variables taken and the KCSE performance.

The means score of each school in the district.

Table 1 KCSE Results 2002

School Name	Entry	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	X	Y	Mean Score
Wajir High	135	0	1	1	6	3	10	9	18	28	33	13	2	0	6	4.10
Sabunley	90	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	10	15	26	27	10	0	0	3.25
Wajir Girls	138	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10	17	27	66	24	0	0	2.39
Furaha Mixed Day	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	15	5	35	11	0	0	2.18

Source Deo's office Wajir



Table 2 KCSE Results 2003

School Name	Entry	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	X	Y	Mean Score
Wajir High	134	0	1	1	4	4	10	12	10	20	35	33	3	0	1	4.61
Sabunley	90	0	0	0	1	0	4	7	10	30	13	20	5	0	0	4.16
Furaha Mixed Day	88	0	1	1	4	2	10	7	9	11	20	18	3	0	0	4.46
Wajir girls	84	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	20	10	33	10	5	0	0	2.76

Source Deo's office Wajir

Table 3 KCSE 2004

School Name	Entry	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	X	Y	Mean Score
Wajir High	122	0	3	4	10	8	14	32	20	21	10	3	3	0	0	5.694
Sabunley	83	0	0	0	0	2	5	8	8	12	14	10	0	0	0	4.867
Furaha mixed day	63	0	0	1	0	2	5	8	8	12	14	10	3	0	0	4.158
Wajir girls	102	0	0	0	0	1	2	7	9	15	28	28	12	0	0	3.1

Source Deo's office Wajir

In this year a total of 471 candidates sat for the examination out of which 127, were girls and only 19 scored (B-) and above with leading of one (A-) from Wajir High School. No single girl managed to fall in the above list.

Table 4 KCSE Results 2005

School Name	Entry	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	X	Y	Mean Score
Wajir High	113	0	1	1	8	12	16	23	29	11	10	2	0	0	0	5.858
Sabunley	105	0	0	1	0	2	6	21	21	22	23	9	0	0	0	4.514
Furaha Mixed Day	98	0	0	0	4	7	9	17	16	22	14	9	0	0	0	4.949
Wajir Girls	100	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	8	25	33	25	2	0	0	4.500

Source Deo's office Wajir

A total of 563 candidates sat for the KCSE in this year out of which 134 were girls. Out of these only 39 scored (B-) and above. Again there was only one (A-) from Wajir High. Two girls obtained grade (B) and (B-) the girls were from Furaha Mixed day and Wajir Girls respectively.

Table 5 KCSE Results 2006

School Name	Entry	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	X	Y	Mean Score
Wajir High	134	0	1	10	19	34	26	15	14	5	4	0	0	0	6	7.250
Sabunley	81	0	3	2	10	12	13	17	12	7	3	2	0	0	0	6.580
Furaha Mixed Day	95	0	0	2	3	14	12	18	9	20	12	5	0	0	0	5.494
Wajir Girls	74	0	0	0	1	2	5	15	15	12	13	10	1	0	0	4.500

Source Deo's office Wajir

A total of 525 candidates sat for the examination for 2006 and 102 candidates obtained grade (B-) out of these 65 were Wajir High school. Only 19 boys qualified for direct admission into public universities with mean grade of (B+) plus and above.

There were a total of four (A-) minus in the district the highest since the introduction 8-4-4 of these three from Sabunley secondary school.

Overall performance of the district was below average in the five years tabulated above compared to the national mean score.

In the data we had only 11 (A-) for the five years the mean grade A being elusive, compared to other schools nationally whereby they produce numerous (A-) in one year depicting we have along way to change the situation. In addition only 35 students qualified for direct admission into public universities with mean grade of (B+) and above over these five years. To add insult to an injury these schools produced 82 E,s out of these 44 were from Wajir Girls Secondary an alarming number that not longer exists compared to other schools nationally.

Performance was not pleasing at all, to make the matter worse there was an alarming issue in this year's exam since there were thirteen (13) irregularity reported cases all from Wajir High School as shown in table 1, 2 and 5.

It is worth noting that the district performed the best in 2006 since the introduction of 8-4-4. Also the district was the most improved District in the Republic, hence attained position 5 out of 71 improved Districts Nationally with an average mean score of 5.86.

Its also important to note that Sabunley Secondary was not only the most improved school in the province but equally attained a number 6 nationally in the same category. Wajir District also produced almost 60% (both boys and girls) of the top 100 students from North Eastern Province with Wajir High taking the lion's share of 30% . (Source Deo's office Wajir, Daily Nation 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007).

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Head teachers responses on the Questionnaires:

Table : Head Teacher's responses on effects of a range of variable responses on performance.

Responses of four H/teacher's	Poor facilities	Laxity in secondary education	Harsh environment	Enough Teaching staff	Poor parent teacher relationship
Out of four H/teacher's	3	4	4	4	4
Percentage%	75	100	100	100	100

From the data provided 75% of the head teacher's response shows there is high laxity in secondary education , unconducive environment for learning, efficient staff and poor parent-teacher relationship.

NB.

The head teacher's response towards the question whether there is enough teaching staff or not is based on their respective schools but the fact remains the vast district has 14 secondary schools mostly in the rural areas which are severely understaffed.

**Table : Teacher's response**

Responses of twenty six teachers	Poor facilities	Professional qualification		Harsh environment	Poor parent teacher relationship	
		Degree	Diploma		No	Yes
Out of 26 teachers	24	11	15	26	20	6
Percentage%	92.30	42.30	57.69	100	76.92	23.07

Most of the teachers lamented that there are inadequate physical facilities in the schools, unfavourable climate and poor parent relationship.

However the sampled schools had qualified graduate and diploma teachers which leaves no room for those schools to have excuses on their poor performance, although the scarcity is there in vast areas of the district.

**Table: Students response**

Responses of fifty students	Poor facilities	Subjects performed worst		Harsh environment	Fees problem
		Sciences	Arts		
Out of 50 students	40	35	15	50	45
Percentage%	80	70	30	100	90

Most of the students lamented that they miss lessons due to school fees problem thus cannot cover the syllabus adequately hence leads poor performance in their exams. Science subjects were the worst performed

subjects compared to Art subjects and this is influenced by the inadequate facilities in learning institutions.

The student researcher also interviewed twenty (20) parents:

Parents and their monthly income

Income	300-1000	1100-2000	2100-6000	Over 6000
Number	15	3	2	1
Percentage%	75	15	10	5

It is clear from the above table that high percentage of the parents are destitute and cannot afford to pay school fees.

Parent attitude towards education:

	Positive	Negative
Number of parents	5	15
Percentage%	25%	75%

The table above shows that most of the parents have negative attitudes towards education particularly Secondary Education in that it is so demanding and that are many educated unemployment youth nationwide.

The student researcher also used direct observation hence observed that elnino of 1997 along way with the current drought has a devastating effect on the community livelihood. Hence parents cannot sustain their own living and cannot afford to pay their fees.

The student researcher also observed that labs are available but are ill equipped.

Some of the schools for instance Sabunley Secondary School is not fenced up to date which makes difficult the control of students from flocking to/from town after evening classes.

Who is to be blamed for the poor performance of the students.

Responses	Respondents	%
Parents	15	75%
Students	3	15%
Teachers	2	10%

The above table shows that parents students and teachers were to be blamed for the poor performance of KCSE.

But the parents take 75% of the blame because they were unable to motivate, encourage and pay students fees. This was confirmed through

parents day meeting in Sabunley Secondary School which the student researcher attended. The principal of the school stated that over one million Kenyan shillings were an outstanding balance. Likewise most of the parents did not come for the occasion because of being nomad.

**CHAPTER FIVE:  
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS.**

**5.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter attempts to present the findings and conclusions of the study in a more condensed form. However, it's not all exhaustive though the student researcher has attempted to give recommendations.

**5.1 SUMMARY**

The performance of the national exams (KCSE) in the district has not been satisfying and still not pleasing. Questionnaires distributed to students, teachers and head teachers of the selected sample school. Interviews held by the researcher with parents on one hand, and information from the libraries and other stakeholders on the other hand exposed that performance in the district was affected by a combination of factors.

The overall outcome of the study indicates that inadequate school facilities, unfavourable climatic conditions that result in a conducive learning environment, poor parent teacher relationship, fees problem, involvement of pupils in drug abuse, constant mobility of nomads in search of pasture and water are key factors among others that are affecting the performance of the district in the national exams.

**5.2 CONCLUSION**

Communities are number one stakeholders in education. Schools essentially belong to the community and their participation is crucial for the success of education.

Communities including parents and teachers are expected to be fully involved in the management of education and resource mobilization and utilization.

Poor attitudes towards Education by parents, students and teachers hence lack of commitment by all stakeholders.

Social economic factors contributes negatively to the performance such as poverty, early marriage and boy child preference.

Other factors that contributes to poor performance are lack / shortage of learning teaching resources in secondary schools, Over loaded curriculum which demands a lot from the learners and laxity of the students.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Having seen the various causes affecting the performance of the district in the national exams, the study came up with the following recommendations which were thought to contribute towards having tangible solutions if put in place and adopted.

- ❖ The government and the ministry of education should provide facilities for schools irrespective of their geographical location to make them conducive for learning. Such facilities lacked by many schools in the rural include: school libraries, school laboratories, enough text books, sufficient classrooms, play grounds, water, good lighting equipment, ventilators to mention but a few.
- ❖ Parents should be mobilized and sensitized on the importance of secondary education as well as adult literacy be encouraged.
- ❖ Reasonable measure be taken against drugs consumptions and guidance and counseling services be provided in order to assist students to adjust to various situations and enable them make use of the best of their abilities and assets.



- ❖ More research should be carried out to establish the causes poor performance of KCSE/KCPE in the district.
- ❖ Teacher's should realize that a little appreciation given at the right time will go along way to bring out the best in their students. Elmer Wheeler says "Appreciation makes people feel more important than anything else you can give them".
- ❖ For curbing examination cheating teachers and students should work extra hard and complete the syllabus. The students should also develop self confidence and not panic of examination.
- ❖ For effective teaching secondary teachers salary terms and conditions should be improved.
- ❖ Reasonable measures be taken against drug consumption.

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#### 5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Sensitization of parents literacy research should be conducted.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

Questionnaires will be directed to school principles, teachers and students.

Questionnaires for principles.

Dear Headmaster/Headmistress

You have been selected to participate in the assessment of factors contributing to the poor performance of KCSE in Wajir District. The questionnaire bellow is intended to collect data regarding poor performance of KCSE in the district. Therefore please do not indicate your name.

Please indicate your answer by means of a tick where necessary.

#### 1. School background

- a) Name of the school \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Number of the students \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Number of teachers \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Please indicate your gender

- a) Male ( )
- b) Female ( )

#### 3. Please write down the subjects offered in your school

- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| i. _____    | ix. _____  |
| ii. _____   | x. _____   |
| iii. _____  | ix. _____  |
| iv. _____   | xii. _____ |
| v. _____    |            |
| vi. _____   |            |
| vii. _____  |            |
| viii. _____ |            |

4. Availability of resources

- a) Available ( )
- b) Not available ( )
- c) Scarce ( )

5. students performance in the KCSE for the three years.

- a) 2005 poor ( ) fair ( ) good ( ) relatively good ( )
- b) 2004 poor ( ) fair ( ) good ( ) relatively good ( )
- c) 2003 poor ( ) fair ( ) good ( ) relatively good ( )

6. Is the environment and climate conducive for learning?

- a) Yes ( )
- b) No ( )

7. Parents fully participate in the School management.

- a) Yes ( )
- b) No ( )

## APPENDIX B

### Questionnaires for teachers

Dear Teacher,

You have been selected to participate in the assessment of factors contributing to the poor performance of KCSE in Wajir District. The questionnaire bellow is intended to collect data regarding poor performance of KCSE in the district. Therefore please do not indicate your name.

Please indicate your answer by means of a tick where necessary.

#### 1. Teachers characteristics

- |     |              |     |
|-----|--------------|-----|
| Sex | Male         | ( ) |
|     | Female       | ( ) |
| Age | 25-29        | ( ) |
|     | 30-34        | ( ) |
|     | 35-39        | ( ) |
|     | 39 and above | ( ) |

#### 2. Professional qualification

- |                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| a) Diploma       | ( ) |
| b) Degree        | ( ) |
| c) Post graduate | ( ) |

#### 3. Your teaching subjects

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| i. _____  | iii. _____ |
| ii. _____ | iv. _____  |

#### 4. Availability of resources

- |                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| a) Available     | ( ) |
| b) Not available | ( ) |
| c) Scarce        | ( ) |

5. Use of teaching aid

a) Good ( )

b) V. good ( )

c) Excellent ( )

6. As a teacher in the field what do you think are solutions to overcome the problem.

a) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is the environment and the climatic conducive learning process?

a) Yes ( )

b) No ( )

## APPENDIX C

### Questionnaires for students

Dear Student,

You have been selected to participate in the assessment of factors contributing to the poor performance of KCSE in Wajir District. The questionnaire bellow is intended to collect data regarding poor performance of KCSE in the district. Therefore please do not indicate your name.

Please indicate your answer by means of a tick where necessary

1. The type of your school

- a) Girls school
- b) Boys school
- c) Mixed school

2. List the subjects you perform worst

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_

3. What do you think is the reason for your bad performance in the subjects you mention above.

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4. How many times do you miss lessons or classes due to fees problems?

- a) Rarely
- b) Often
- c) None

5. Are the environment and the climate conducive for leaning?

- a) Yes
- b) No



## APPENDIX D

### Interview questionnaire guide for parents:

1. What is your monthly income?
2. Who is to be blamed for the dismal performance of KCSE in the national exams?
3. Do you see there is need for secondary Education and why?

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