

**INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL CULTURE ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AT  
KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN HOMA-BAY  
DISTRICT, KENYA**

**Nyambuoro Monica Oyieko**

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**A Research Project Report submitted in Partial fulfillment of the  
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## DECLARATION

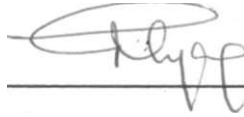
This Research Project Report is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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Nyambuoro Monica Oyieko

This Research Project Report has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.



Dr. Grace Nyagah

Senior Lecturer and Chairman

Department of Educational Administration and Planning

University of Nairobi.



Dr. Phyllis Matula

Lecturer

Department of Educational Administration and Planning

University of Nairobi

## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my late father Rev. James P. Nyambuoro, my mum Clementine Nyambuoro. My dear husband Moses Oyieko, my children Reinnhard Odete, Caleb Ochieng,' Naome Faith Awuor and Suzzie Jael Achieng.'

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## TABLE OF CONTENT

Content	page
Declaration.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgement.....	iv
List of Tables.....	viii
list of Figures.....	ix
abbreviations and Acronyms.....	x
Abstract...«,,.....	xi

**O B o\***

### CHAPTER ONE

#### INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.3 Purpose of the Study.....	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	6
1.5 Research Questions.....	7
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	7
1.7 Limitations of Study.....	8
1.8 Delimitations of the Study.....	8
1.9 Basic Assumptions of the Study.....	8
1.10 Definitions of significant terms.....	9
1.11 Organization of the Study.....	9

### CHAPTER TWO

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Concept of school culture.....	11
2.3 Principal's role in shaping of the school culture in relation to performance at K.C.S.E.....	12

2.4.	Teachers' perception of the school culture and its influence on performance at K.C.S.E.....	14
2.5	Students' perception about the school culture and its influence on performance at K.C.S.E.....	16
2.6	Relationship between school culture and performance at K.C.S.E.....	18
2.7	Theoretical Framework.....	19
2.8	Conceptual Framework.....	21

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1	Introduction.....	22
3.2	Research Design.....	22
3.3	Target Population.....	23
3.4	Sample Size and Sampling Procedure.....	23
3.5	Research Instruments.....	24
3.5.1	Questionnaires.....	25
3.5.2	Observation Schedule.....	25
3.6	Instrument Validity.....	25
3.7	Instrument Reliability.....	26
3.8	Data Collection Procedure.....	26
3.9	Data analysis techniques.....	27

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION**

4.1	Introduction.....	28
4.1.1	Questionnaire return rate.....	28
4.2	Demographic information.....	29
4.2.1	Teachers' distribution by gender.....	29
4.2.3	Students duration in the current school.....	30
4.3	Role played by the principals in shaping school culture has influence on students' performance at KCSE.....	32

4.3.1	Principals' Level of Education in relation to school management .....	33
4.4	The perception of teachers on school culture and its influence on students.....	35
4.4.1	Teaching experience of the teachers.....	36
4.4.2	Teaching load per week.....	37
4.4.3	Role of school administration in ensuring good performance in KCSE.....	38
4.5	Students' perception of the school culture and its influence on performance at KCSE.....	44
4.5.1	Students' Forums to share with the teachers academic issues.....	44
4.6	School culture and performance at KCSE.....	47

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1	Introduction.....	53
5.2	Summary of the study.....	53
5.3	Discussions of the findings.....	54
5.4	Conclusions.....	57
5.5	Recommendations.....	58
5.6	Suggestions further research.....	59

<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>60</b>
------------------------	-----------

<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>65</b>
------------------------	-----------

Appendix A: Letter of Introduction.....	65
---	----

Appendix B: Principal's questionnaire.....	66
--	----

Appendix C: Teachers' questionnaire.....	68
--	----

Appendix D: Students' questionnaire.....	72
--	----

Appendix E: Observation schedule.....	75
---------------------------------------	----

Appendix F: Research authority Letter.....	76
--	----

Appendix G: Research permit.....	77
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## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
Table 4.2.1	Teachers'distribution by gender.....	29
Table 4.2.2:	Distribution of students by gender.....	30
Table 4.2.3:	Students Duration in the current school.....	31
Table 4.4:	Ratings on the perception of teachers about school culture.....	40
Table 4.7:	Observation Schedule.....	51
Table 4.5.1	Students forums to share with the teachers on academic issues ...	45
Table 4.5.2:	Students norms for relationship and behavior that create a culture of excellence.....	46
Table 4.6:	School culture and performance at K.C.S.E.....	49
Table 4.7	Observation schedule.....	51

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure</b>		<b>Page</b>
Figure 2.1	Conceptual framework .....	21
Figure 4.2.3:	Students duration of being in the current school.....	31
Figure 4.4:	Teachers responses on benefits obtained from the school.....	36
Figure 4.4.2:	Teaching load per week.....	37
Figure 4.5:	Meals given in schools.....	44

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>K.C.S.E</b>	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
<b>KNEC</b>	Kenya National Examinations Council
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>NCST</b>	National Council for Science and Technology
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>TSC</b>	Teachers Service Commission

## ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to determine the influence of school culture on performance at Kenya certificate of secondary Education. Culture refers to totality of all that goes on in an institution. The study sought to fulfill the following objectives; (i)To determine the extent to which the role of the principal in shaping school culture has influence on students' performance at K.C.S.E.(ii)To determine whether teachers' perception of school culture has influence on performance at K.C.S.E.(iii)To determine whether students' perception of school culture has influence on performance at K.C.S.E (iv)to establish whether there is relationship between school culture and performance at K.C.S.E. The study adopted descriptive survey research method. The data for the study was collected using questionnaires. The instrument was delivered to the respondents by the researcher. A sample of 180 students 108 teachers and 18 principals was drawn from 18 public secondary schools in Homa- bay district which were selected randomly out of 52 public schools in the district. Descriptive statistics was used In analysis. The data was presented in frequencies and percentages. The results of this study revealed that the principal being the overall administrator had superior knowledge all round and the relevant academic qualification to be able to improve the running and performance of the school. In relation to the teachers' perception the data obtained reveals that even though the teachers are committed to the success, the schools did not take care of their welfare. In addition, it was observed that the teachers had big workload clearly indicating that they do not have free time when they can dp thorough preparation and this may have contributed to poor performance. From the results, it is evident that the teachers' have a positive relationship with students and parents they serve. From the findings it is evident that many students were positive about their school culture unlike the teachers. It is evident that the students are happy about the choosing of their perfects however they were unhappy about the meals provided by the schools. Finally the findings it is evident that students perform best in schools with a "participatory" climate at all levels and where high but realistic expectations for students are held. The research recommends that to promote a positive school culture there is need to provide better meals for the students and teachers. In addition the teachers' welfare should be improved and more teachers to be employed to reduce the workload.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the study

In every organization there is always a unique type of behavior. This is a clear indication that behaviour in an organization is not simply a function of formal expectations and individual needs and motivation. The relationship among the elements is dynamic. People within a given organization bring to the work place unique values, belief, needs, goals and expectations. These individual characteristics shape up aspects of organizational life. (Wayne & Cecil, 2008). After some time of interaction, a collective sense of identity emerges that transforms a simple aggregate of individuals into a distinctive work place "personality".

Educators and researchers over the last two decades recognized that there are a set of elements that shapes up school climate which is part of school culture. There is never one commonly agreed upon list of essential dimensions that shapes up school climate. A review of research practioners and scholarly writings suggests that there are ten essential dimensions that color and shape our experience in schools; Environment, structural, safety teaching and learning relationship; sense of school community; morale; peer norms; school-home mutual support and on going communication (Cohen, 2006).

School culture has also been viewed by other scholars as the existence of interplay between three factors: the attitudes and beliefs of persons both inside the school and in the external environment, the cultural norms of the school and the relationships between

persons in the school (Fullan, 1991). An examination of school culture was important as in Goodlad's study (1984). He asserted that 'a like as many schools may be in many ways'. Each school has an ambience or culture of its own. Its culture would suggest to the careful observer useful approaches to making a better school.

Patterson, Purkey and Parker (1986) summarized the general knowledge base regarding school culture as; School culture does affect the behavior and achievement of elementary and secondary school students; school culture does not fall from the sky; it is created and thus can be manipulated by people within the school; School cultures are unique, whatever their commonalities, no two schools would be exactly alike nor should they be. To the extent that it provides a focus and clear purpose for the school; culture becomes the cohesion that bonds the school together as it goes about its mission. Lasting fundamental change (e.g. changes in teaching practices or decision making structures) required understanding and often altering the school's culture; cultural change is a slow process.

In South Africa there was a drive to improve the culture of teaching and learning particularly in secondary schools. As studies reveal principals in South African schools are faced with two major challenges namely; handling a greater variety of school based decisions than before and creating a sound culture of teaching and learning in which effective education can take place.

The current international trend in education reform and restructuring is the decentralization of decision making power to local and school level. The vehicle of this reform was school based management which implied an increase of the responsibilities of school management teams and school governing bodies (Armstrong,2009). The South African government embarked on curriculum reform and general drive to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools. The restoration of the culture of teaching and learning was one of the most important factors to improve the quality of education in South African schools today (Garson, 2004).

The control role that a principal plays in all the programmes of a school and the impact that he or she has on the tone and ethos which were conducive to teaching and learning were crucial in the process of building sound culture of learning and teaching.

The poor matrix results of the past number of years, the lack of learner discipline, the low teacher morale as well as other educational problems in some of the schools in South Africa had led to a general drive to improve the culture of teaching and learning and the rural quality of schools in the country (Armstrong, 2009). The South African government embarked on curriculum reform and general drive to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools.

In the American context, research findings indicated that school culture promoted meaningful students' learning. For example activities like community services and debates enhanced the learning environment by providing students opportunities to actively participative in the learning process and construct their own knowledge of social and government systems. Moreover when such activities were presented in a supportive,

collaborative environment they encouraged students to build upon one another's ideas and projects.

(Watkins,2002) asserts that considering a positive schools culture was important since it provided guidelines on how school could most optimally promote these important learning activities even beyond the classroom environment.

Organizational culture was an attempt to get at the feel, sense, atmosphere, character or image of an organization. It encompassed many of the earlier notions of informal organization, norms, values, ideologies and an emergent system asserts (Wayne & Cecil, 2008).

(Heynemann,1991)from Botswana asserts that assignment and close revelation of homework would boost learning.

This is in support of (Kibanza,1980) who had found that the use of classroom time and assignment of study activities outside classroom was important for improved performance. Culture is important to the extent that students are able to feel safe, cared for, appropriately supported, teachers are motivated to work hence enabling them to achieve more in their academic endeavors. Freiberg (1999) asserts that positive school culture promoted co-operative learning, group cohesion, respect and mutual trust or climate for learning.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) expectations of good performance in Kenya certificate of secondary education (KCSE) and other stakeholders demand for good grades which would enable their children at the end of secondary education to attain university education has become universal benchmark across all schools. School culture in Kenya is an important aspect if schools have to achieve their set goals in examinations. One of the most powerful statements in Kenya on the connection between school culture and issues affecting education was performance of students at national examinations. Competitiveness and standards of performance were determined by not just within a particular school but also among schools.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In spite of several interventions by the government, the Ministry of Education (MoE) through quality assurance officers and the stakeholders in Kenya, performance in national examinations in Kenya has over the years remained an issue of concern in Kenya. Performance is an indicator of how well schools are managed, how effective teaching and learning are carried out as well as the direction and future educational programmes.

What was realized as more serious in Homa-Bay district was that some of the schools did not produce even a single student who qualified for the university intake for over a number of years. Despite investment of significant resources in the education subsector and downsizing the number of subjects covered by the curriculum, performance in Homa-bay district still remained low. Some of the stakeholders often blamed the

administrators, teachers and students demanding they be held accountable. Both researchers and practitioners started paying attention to the study of school culture as an explanatory variable from the dismissal performance in Kenyan schools. Studies on other factors affecting performance in the district has been done but there is scanty information about school culture and its dimensions in relation to performance. The main concern of this study was to establish whether there was a relationship between school culture and performance at K.C.S.E in schools in Homa-Bay district. The main question so far was; could school culture have any influence on student's performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education?

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of school culture on the student's performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Homa-Bay district.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study focused on the following objectives:

- i. To determine the extent to which the role played by the principals in shaping school culture has influence on students' performance at K.C.S.E
- ii. To determine whether the perception of teachers on school culture has influence on students' performance at KCSE.
- iii. To determine whether students' perception of the school culture has influence on performance at KCSE.

- iv. To establish whether there was relationship between school culture and performance at KCSE.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

- i. To what extent does the principal's role in shaping the school culture influence student's performance at K.C.S.E.
- ii. How does the teachers' perception about the school culture influence students' performance at K.C.S.E?
- iii. To what extent does the students' perception about the school culture influence students' performance at K.C.S.E?
- iv. How does school culture influence students' performance at K.C.S.E?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

School culture is developed in order to realize the dream of academic excellence. It is hoped that the findings of this study if made available would help the Ministry of Education with useful information on how schools could shape up a school culture which will enhance academic excellence. It would also give insight to school administrators, teachers and students on how to improve and keep positive culture.

The study would also assist educational administrators to recognize the importance of a positive school culture that would enable teachers to integrate achievement of schools goals, vision, mission and routine with fulfillment of personal goals.

### **1.7 Limitations of Study**

Limitations are conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and the application to other situations. In this study the researcher was not in a position to control the attitude of the respondents. The study was carried out in Homa-bay district but most schools were in rural setup and so the findings cannot be generalized in urban set up.

### **1.8 Delimitations of the Study**

These are boundaries of the study or the scope (Orodho, 2005) the study was restricted to public secondary schools in Homa-Bay district only, private schools were not covered. The study was confined to one district in Kenya so the results would be generalized with caution.

The study targeted only some principals, teachers and form four students as the respondents to provide information in relation to the influence of school culture on performance.

### **1.9 Basic Assumptions of the Study**

The study had the following assumptions:

- i. The respondents were honest as they responded to the questionnaires.
- ii. Marks and grades obtained from schools and Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) were reliable and valid measures of academic achievement.

### **1.10 Definitions of significant terms**

**Influence** refers to the capacity or power of principals to be compelling force on or produce effects on the actions, behaviours and opinions of the teachers.

**Organizational climate** refers to those characteristics that distinguish the organization from other organizations and that influence the behavior of people in the organization and this is mainly work environment.

**Perception** refers to opinions of teachers and students on pertinent issues, how they see it.

**Performance** refers to student's academic level of achievement in the National examinations at the end of form four..

**Principal** refers to the person appointed by the teacher's service commission as the administrative head of a school being responsible for its administration.

**School culture** refers to that totality of all that goes on within the school system which includes; values, norms, morals, customs, beliefs knowledge and all other capabilities and habits acquired by people as members of the school.

**Stakeholders** refer to all those parties or groups who sponsor and have interest in education.

### **1.11 Organization of the Study**

This study is organized into five chapters; chapter one consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions of the study, significance of the study, limitations, delimitation, basic assumptions of the study and definitions of significant terms. Chapter two presents of

literature review on the concept of school culture, reviewed literature related to the role played by the principal in shaping the school culture in relation to performance, teachers and students perception of the school culture verses performance and relationship between school culture and performance.

There is theoretical frame work and conceptual framework. Chapter three consists of research methodology which covered research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, instrument validity, instrument reliability, data collection procedure chapter four comprises data analysis and interpretation in which the questionnaires returns and the demographic data of the respondents were analyzed. Chapter five presents a summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presented a review of related literature in five divisions: in the first division the concept of school culture was explored; The second division outlined the role played by the principal in shaping the school culture in relation to performance; The third section outlined the teachers' perception of school culture in relation to performance; In the fourth section students' perception of the school culture in relation to performance and in the fifth section studies on the relationship between school culture and performance was outlined.

i •

#### **2.2 Concept of school culture**

(Deal & Peterson, 1993) defines school culture as an inner reality. (Robbins & Alvy, 1995) expand on the definition by stating that this inner reality reflects what organizational members care about, what they are willing to spend time doing, what and how they celebrate and what they think about. ( Gary, 1993) characterizes school culture as the "beliefs attitudes and behaviors that characterize a school in terms of; How people feel and treat each other, the extent to which people feel included appreciated, rituals and traditions reflecting collaboration and collegiality. Culture is reflected in an organization's atmosphere, myths, moral code, norms rituals and ceremonies, rites of passage, artifacts, symbolic, values and beliefs.

(Hempton, 1973) emphasizes the significance of the organizational culture in influencing organizations performance.

The researcher alludes that what is important about culture is that it can arouse or suppress the motivational tendencies or individual he points out that culture tend to meditate between the task requirements and the need of individual that changes in certain culture properties could have profound and immediate effect on the motivational performance of all employers. A study carried out in New York by (Dimuzo, 1989) to evaluate the achievement of large and small secondary schools through an examination of the relationship between school enrolments school climate and students achievement reveal that school organizational climate has an effect on performance.

### **2.3 Principal's role in shaping of the school culture in relation to performance at K.C.S.E.**

(Blase, 2000) points out that those in leadership positions need to recognize the central importance of organizational culture in their own management and leadership behaviour. Many researchers agree that the principal plays a significant role in shaping the school culture. (Harris, 2001) argues that leaders need to gain some understanding of the culture if they are to try to manage. The early stage of leadership is a time when head teachers are socialized into knowledge, values and behaviour that constitute the culture of a particular school. (Weindling, 1999) refers to this as organizational socialization described as- a critical period when new heads in leadership meet the reality of a particular school.

The head should have admirable characteristics and qualities so that all participants in the school will look unto him or her for guidance. (Olembo, Wanga & Karagu, 1992) asserts that as a model, the headmaster is expected to become an example whose professional

and academic integrity are admired by his staff, pupils and the wider community.

He should be emulated in all areas- legal, Ethical, religious etc of all the teachers in the school the headmaster should be most competent. He should be assigned some reasonable teaching load to keep him abreast with classroom teaching.

The role played by the principal in shaping the school culture is one of the most important factors that determine students' performance. In their study on education administration (Olembo, Karagu & Wanga 1992) noted that quality of a head teacher in school matters is students' performance. They point out that the way the head teacher structures and administers the school: his/her relationship with the school's subsystems, teachers and students has a strong effect on the students performance. (Eshiwani, 1983) has similar findings that school administration is closely related to the students' performance.

The head teacher's academic achievements and experience also determines the kind of leadership given to a school which determines academic performance of learners. (Olembo, Karagu & Wanga, 1992) supports this view as they assert that the head teacher is considered the instructional leader of the school programme. In this role he is expected to possess a superior knowledge about curriculum and instruction and to provide expert leadership in all areas of the school programme.

While some studies show that principals have a crucial role in changing the school culture, (Mc Mahon & Romano, 1999) asserts that organizational theory often focuses on the role of leaders or managers as cultural change agents but their power may be limited in practice^ Elverşon, 1993) argues that managers are more likely to be driven by culture

and suggests that, although management will have an influence on culture, it is possible to be at the same time a product of culture to be constrained by it and to some degree, to be able to change or at least modify it. If the principal does not provide the right leadership, there is little direction with consideration and support of teachers.

#### **2.4. Teachers' perception of the school culture and its influence on performance at K.C.S.E**

Teachers are key participant members of a school and therefore determine the students' level of academic achievement. ( Fullan, 1992) in his book "what's worth fighting for in your school" explains that teachers are among the most important influences on the life and development of many young children. They play a key role in creating the generation of the future.

With the decline of the church, the break up of traditional communities and the diminishing contact that many children have with their parents who can't be there for their children on a regular basis, the moral role and importance of today's teacher is probably greater than it has been for along time. Goodlad (1984), in support of this, asserts that the success of a school depends crucially upon its human resources. The successful school is one where individual teachers are motivated, where the desperate talents of the various members of staff are harnessed and where all efforts are coordinated so that the school's objectives are fulfilled. Teachers experience and commitment to student learning emerge as key characteristic to successful learning. Teachers' attitudes, behaviour and teaching practices are the most significant implication for schools and

learners level of performance.

Students learn and remember more if they find pleasure in the learning experience.

Schein (1995) supporting this view argues that teachers in effective schools are reported to work collegially and to collaborate to achieve goals: they have high expectations of their students, teach purposively, monitor students work and give positive feedback.

Teachers in carrying out their duties are believed to have an impact on the students' level of achievement and are part of what makes one school unique as compared to others. In effective schools, teachers have high expectation of their students and they are willing to design strategies to move towards such a goal. They frequently give assignments which they mark, give positive feedback to students, give awards to students who perform well, identify students with problems and help them out. In such schools there is a culture of hard work among the teachers and students and anyone coming in must fit in or go. (Cooke, 1989) noted that schools with best qualified teachers tended to be the most successful. Bett (1996) carried out a study on factors affecting performance in Kericho District. The findings of the study revealed that the major factors that influence performance in the said district was unequal distribution of graduate teachers and in effective role played by the teachers and head teachers. Similarly Eshiwani (1983) in his studies also reported a positive relationship between students' academic performance and teacher characteristics which included his/her qualification.

Time allocated to teaching and learning has also been cited as a factor that contributes to performance. (Glickmann & Gordon, 1990) also noted that many schools normally lose many teaching and learning hours at the beginning and at the end of the term. This factor contributes to poor performance.

## **2.5 Students' perception about the school culture and its influence on performance at K.C.S.E**

Students are as interested as any other person involved in education development to find out why they do not perform well. They would give constructive comments when asked to do so or help to identify what it is about their school that gets in the way of learning.

From a study conducted with 90 pupils in 3 secondary schools by Ruddock (1996) found that most pupils want to succeed. From the pupil's responses, the researcher identified 9 principles that make a significant difference to pupils learning and would lead them to respond constructively in school. The principles were: Respect for pupils as individuals and as a body occupying a significant position in the institution of the school, There is a clear priority focus on teaching and learning as the schools primary purpose four factors, time spent on learning, amount of homework, effective learning time, learning time for different subjects are measures of indicating the practical implementation of this focus. Teaching is purposeful, well organized and clear about objectives, well prepared appropriately phrased and structure questioning focuses pupils' attention. There is a general culture which has high expectation of every one; teachers, pupils and parents.

Better pupil outcome follow from positive reinforcement, clear feedback, rewards and clear rule for behaviour. These are more efficient than punishment or criticism.

Monitoring progress keeps track of whether the school is meeting its target and goals, maintains awareness of target and goals among staff, pupils and parents inform of planning and teaching, sends clear messages on pupils that teachers are interested in their progress. Giving pupils rights and responsibilities and enabling them to play an active role in the life of their school is important for raising self esteem and encouraging taking responsibilities for their own learning. Partnerships that encourage and foster parents support for learning have positive effects on achievements; successful schools make demands on parents as well as encouraging involvement.

Effective schools are learning organizations where teachers and there senior managers as well as pupils continue to be learners, improve their practice and keep up with change. Other studies focused upon the micro variables within the school such as pupil attitude, pupil behaviour and school climate. (Firestone, 1991) noted that the effective schools movement was committed to the belief that all children could learn and succeed in school. That school can do:-

- i. Fairness to all students irrespective of their class, gender, ethnicity or academic status.  
In particular teachers not pre- judging students on the basis of past incidence.
- ii. Autonomy as both right and a responsibility in relation to physical and social mutually.
- iii. Intellectual challenge helps people to experience learning as dynamic engaging in an empowering^activity.

- iv. Social support in relation to both academic and emotional concern.
- v. Security in relation to physical setting of the school and in interpersonal concerns.

Many research studies have been concerned with measuring the 'school effects on students' level of academic achievements. One study done in Atlanta by Sandy (1988) indicates very clearly that schools do make a difference to pupils' behaviour and attainment and that variations in outcomes were systematically and strongly associated with the characteristics of schools as social institution.

### **2.6 Relationship between school culture and performance at K.C.S.E**

School culture being a totality of all that ^oes on in a school. School climate, values, norms, beliefs, traditions, symbols and artifacts are its subsets. Climate has been researched on by scholars. A study done in Georgia by Litwin (1968) defines climate as a set of measureable properties of the work environment based on the collective perception of the people who live and work in the environment demonstrated to influence their behavior. School climate has also been defined as teacher's perceptions of the general work environment of the school, the formal organization, informal organization, personalities of participants and organizational leadership influence. It is the set of internal characteristic that distinguish one school from another and influence the behavior of each school member.

The components of school climate are; Communication, values, expectations, norms, policies and rules, programmes and physical facilities and leadership and decision making. In organizations there are two types of climates; open and closed climate. The open climates is characterized by cooperation and respect between the departments and between the administrators while in the closed climate the administrative are highly rigid, restrictive and do not responded to the needs of employees. School climate is a significant element in discussing about improving academic performance and school reforms. It is also important in getting solution to problems such as bullying; inter student conflicts, suicide, character education and moral education.

Looking at components of school climate as part school culture, it plays a very important role in academic achievement since school climate has been called the heart and soul of an organization Schein (1995). In other words it is that quality of a school that helps individuals feel personal worth, dignity and importance. Many research studies have been concerned with measuring the school effects on student's level of academic achievement. One study done by Eldridge (1974) indicates very clearly that schools do make a difference to pupil's behavior and attainment and that variations in outcomes were systematically and strongly associated with the characteristics of schools as social institutions.

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework**

This study was based on the theory of organization culture and effectiveness. The theory was propounded by Daniel R. Denilson and Aneil K. Mishra in 1995. This theory

develops a model of organizational culture and effectiveness based on four principles namely; Involvement, consistency, adaptability and mission.

When developing this theory both qualitative and quantitative studies were done to identify the nature and their linkage to effectiveness. The results showed that involvement and adaptability are indicators of flexibility, openness and responsiveness and were strong predictors of growth. Consistency and mission are indicators of integration, direction and vision each of the four principles were also significant predictions of effectiveness criteria such as quality, employee satisfaction and overall performance.

This theory is relevant to this study since it asserts that culture can be studied as an integral part of the adaption process of organizations and that specific culture traits may be useful predictors of performance. This theory suggests that shared values form the basis for consensus and integration which encourages motivation and commitment of meaningful membership. A school as an organization whose effectiveness is measured in terms of performance in national examinations requires all the four principles; involvement, consistency, adaptability and mission in order to give out good results.

The administration, the teachers and students should have a mission and vision. The teachers need to be committed to their work and consistent likewise to students, school as a community must show to commitment and involvement to post good performance. Everyone in the school as a system has to be adaptable to the school culture so as to reach consensus easily and hence team work and good performance.

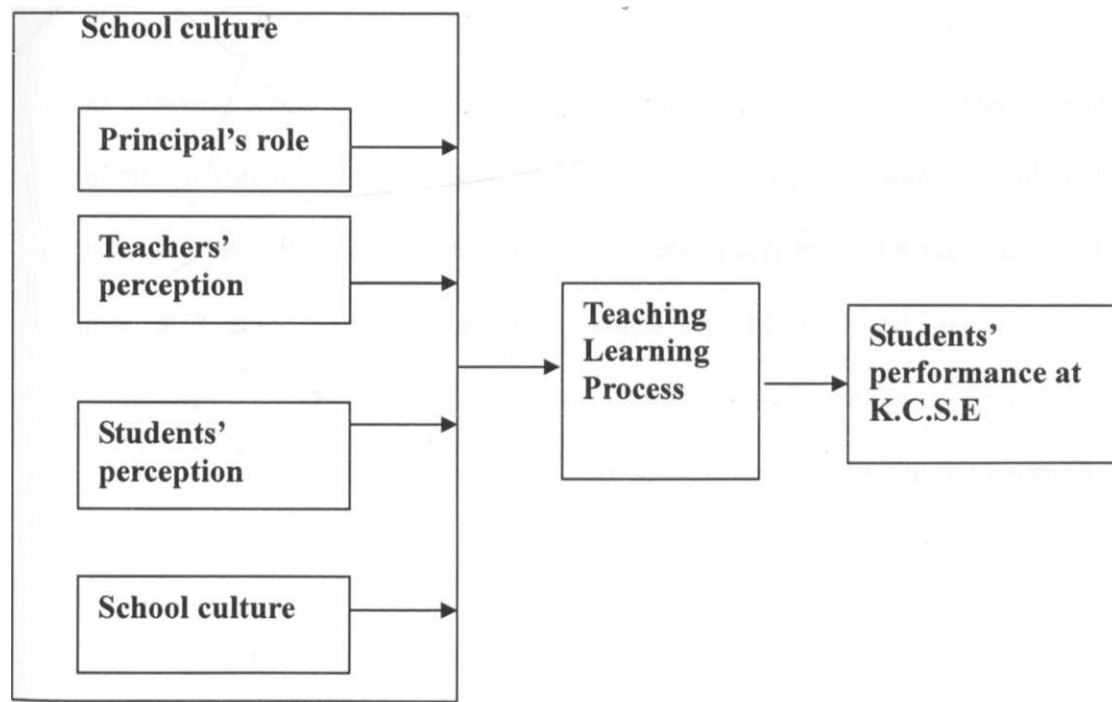
Although this theory has principles that can make organizations to produce quality and

quantity to achieve their vision, it does not suggest ways through which the human resource can willingly practice the principles as part of their lives. The theory ought to have given suggestions for rewards or suggest ways of how to adapt, be consistent and committed.

## 2.8 Conceptual Framework

This study investigated the influence of school culture on KCSE performance in Homa-Bay district. In the study the school culture is the independent variable while performance at K.C.S.E is the dependent variable. Performance is influenced by the school culture. If a school has a positive and a strong culture , this will be reflected in the performance in K.C.S.E.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter was on the following; research design used in the study; target population; sampling procedure; sample size; research instruments; instrument validity; instrument reliability; data collection techniques and data analysis procedures.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design to determine the influence of school culture on students' performance at K.C.S.E. A survey is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The researcher attempted to find out the influence of school culture on students' performance at K.C.S.E in schools. According to Lokesh (1984), descriptive research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the status of phenomenon and whenever possible to draw valid general conclusion from the facts discovered. Survey also aim at obtaining information which can be analyzed, patterns extracted and comparisons made. Descriptive survey was preferred as a design because it is elaborative and would also explain all the features investigated in the research.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The study focused on 18 principals from 18 schools out of the 52 public secondary schools in Homa Bay district. 108 teachers of which 6 teachers were randomly selected from the 18 schools. There were 180 students, 10 students were selected from each. The targeted population was 306. The principals were targeted because their leadership styles, the decisions they make and their expectations. They are largely responsible for school's culture and consequently the outcomes of a school. Teachers were targeted because of the role they play in shaping the students perception about each other, about the staff, the school and life in general. The form four students were targeted because they had been in school for the longest period of time as compared to other students. They therefore had witnessed and participated in many activities that formed the school culture.

### **3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

Stratified random sampling was used to select 18 schools out of the 52 secondary schools in Homa-bay District Kenya representing 10% of the schools. Gay (1976) proposes a minimum sample of 10%-- 20% for descriptive study. Youngman (1980) suggests sample size of about 200 so long as sample of 30 or more are maintained for statistical analysis. Stratified random sampling was preferred because the study did not deal with homogenous groups and when dealing with groups which are homogeneous in nature then this sampling technique is suitable.

From the selected schools, 10 students were selected from the form four classes each using stratified random sampling to make a sample size of about 180 students. Where there was more than one stream one was selected randomly from the list for ease of administering the instruments. Two teachers were selected from the schools from different department's humanities, science and language using stratified random sampling, giving a total of 6 from each school. This gave a total of 108 teachers. The total population was 18 principals, 108 teachers and 180 students giving a total of 306. Stratified random sampling was preferred because this research did not deal with homogeneous groups.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

The objectives of this research necessitated usage of measuring instruments to determine influence of culture on KCSE performance. Questionnaires and observations schedules were the data gathering devices. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) asserts that social science commonly use questionnaires, interview schedules, observation forms and standardized tests as research instruments. In this study questionnaires which were structured (closed-ended) and unstructured (open-ended) were constructed and the items were mainly based on the objectives of the study. The closed ended questions were accompanied by a list of possible alternatives from which the respondents selected the answer that best described their situation. In the process of developing the instruments the researcher consulted the supervisor who is an expert to verify the language and the appropriateness of the instruments for obtaining the needed information.

### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

The researcher prepared three questionnaires. One for the principals and other for the teachers and the third for the students. The items in the questionnaires were both open ended and closed ended. Borg and Gall (1983) emphasizes that whereas the open ended types of questions will give informants freedom of response, the closed ended will facilitate consistency of certain data across informants. The questionnaire covered all the research questions. The researcher used questionnaires because they were easy to administer to the respondents and convenient to collect information within a short span of time.

### **3.5.2 Observation Schedule**

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An observation schedule was used as a follow up instrument to gather data on the observation features of the schools visited which were a directly related to the school's culture and academic performance. An observation was used in the study because it enabled the researcher to code and record behavior at the time when it occurred. It enabled the researcher to observe various activities that went on in the schools and other facilities which the researcher had wanted to observe.

### **3.6 Instrument Validity**

According to Mugenda (2003) validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represents the phenomenon understudy. In this study a pre-test was done where the questionnaires were presented to selected schools using stratified random sampling. The responses from the questionnaires were scrutinized for clear

direction, in sufficient space to write responses, clustered questions and wrong phrasing. Questions detected to be vague were rephrased to convey the actual meaning. The pre-test results revealed the soundness of the analytical technique used in the study.

### **3.7 Instrument Reliability.**

Reliability is the degree to which empirical indicators of a theoretical concept are consistent across two or more tests (Orodho, 2002). To determine reliability test- retest method was applied. The responses in the first test of the first subject were compared against their responses in the second test (Orodho 2002). Pearson's product moment formula for the test- retest was used to compute correlation coefficient. The formula was:  $r_{xy} = \frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{N S_x S_y}$  Where  $\bar{x}$  was subject's score in the first test and  $\bar{y}$  was the corresponding score in the second test,  $\bar{x}$  and  $\bar{y}$  was the mean scores of the first test and second test respectively. N was the total number of subjects in the pilot study and S was the standard deviation of the first and second tests respectively  $r_{xy}$  was the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient A coefficient of 0.7 was achieved hence the instrument was considered to be reliable.

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher initially obtained a research permit from National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology for the authority to collect data. The researcher then sought permission from the District Education Office and the schools involved by visiting the schools personally and talking to the principals about the proposed study. Questionnaires were administered by the

researcher. The questionnaires were collected on the following day but the observation schedule was done on the same day. Notes were taken during the observation. A full report was written from the notes on the same day.

### **3.9 Data analysis techniques**

The researcher ensured that the data collected from the questionnaires and observation schedule were counter checked and put together. The data was then entered into the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Both quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed. From the analysis the findings were presented in the subsequent chapters where conclusions and recommendations were drawn.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of school culture on the students' performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Homa-Bay district.

Thus the study sought to achieve the following objectives given below;

- i. To determine the extent to which the role played by the principals in shaping school culture has influence on students performance at KCSE.
- ii. To determine whether the perception of teachers on school culture has influence on students performance at KCSE.
- iii. To determine whether students' perception of the school culture has effect on performance at KCSE.
- iv. To establish whether there is relationship between school culture and performance at KCSE.

##### **4.1.1 Questionnaire return rate.**

Data was collected from a sample of 18 principals, 90 teachers and 140 students out of the total population of 18 principals, 108 teachers and 180 students (306 Respondents).

This implies that the return rate was 81%. Questionnaires and observations schedules were used to collect data from the principal, teachers and students.

## 4.2 Demographic information.

Under this section the researcher investigated gender of teachers and students, duration of students in their current schools and age.

### 4.2.1 Teachers' distribution by gender

Data was obtained on the gender of the teachers. This was important for the researcher to get information from both males and females to avoid being biased. Single gender being dominant can influence performance.

**Table 4.2.1 Teachers' distribution by gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Female	30	33.3
Male	60	66.7
<b>Total</b>	90	100.0

From the total population of 90 teachers, 33% were female while the other 67% were male. This implies that there were more male teachers than their female counterparts' in this study. The reason could be that in Homa Bay district more males are employed in the teaching profession than the females because of the cultural beliefs that females do not mean much to the society as males and therefore should not be given opportunity to education when males are there. Teachers Service Commission in conjunction with the Ministry of Education should ensure equity in employment to both gender.

**Table 4.2.2: Distribution of students by gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The implication in the data on gender of students is that there were more male students than the female counterparts reason being that in Homa bay District there has been discrimination against girls education. Girls have also been found to be dropping out of schools to take care of their siblings given that the District has been affected with poverty and natural calamities, so the number of girls in secondary schools is slightly smaller than boys.

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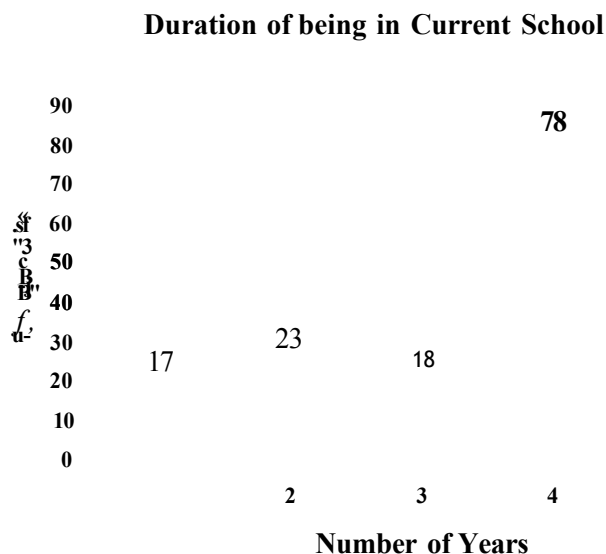
#### **4.2.3 Students duration in the current school**

The duration of being in the school was of paramount importance because the length of stay in a place enables one to understand the expectations of a given society. The four students were taken to be the ones who had stayed in the schools longest so they understood the culture of their schools better

**Table 4.23: Students Duration in the current school**

<b>Duration</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1	17	12
2	23	16.3
3	18	12.8
4	78	55.3
5	5	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 4.23: Students duration of being in the current school**



Data obtained on the duration of students in the current school indicates that 12% of the students had been in the school for duration of one year, 16% had been in the school for two years, 13% had been in the school for three years while 59% had been in the school for duration of four years. This implies that greater percent of form four students had stayed in the school for four years. Most of the students who were in form four did not repeat any class, only 5% of the students had stayed for five years an indication of

repeating a class. This shows a positive culture in transition rates. Other students of 17%, 18% and 23% had not completed four years in the school though they were form four students and might have come from other schools. The key aim of this research was to determine the influence of school culture on students' performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. Descriptive data was obtained on the role played by the principals in shaping school culture, perception of teachers on school, students' perception of the school culture and relationship between school climate and performance at KCSE.

#### **4.3 Role played by the principals in shaping school culture has influence on students' performance at KCSE**

The first objective was to investigate whether the role played by the principals in shaping school culture has an impact on students' performance at KCSE. Data was obtained from the principal to elicit responses on the role played by the principals in shaping school culture has an impact on students performance at KCSE. This was important to the study because the principal plays a significant role in shaping the school culture. In addition the head should have admirable characteristics and qualities so that all participants in the school will look unto him or her for guidance.

The results indicate that majority of the principals had been serving as school principals for more than three years in their current schools. This implies that the school principals have the expected to possess a superior knowledge about curriculum and instruction and to provide expert leadership in all areas of the school programme. When asked if they allow teachers to make decisions on how to improve KCSE, responses obtained indicate

that all the principals reported that they do allow teachers to make decisions on how to improve KCSE trends observed revealed that 85% of the principals reported that they visit classrooms regularly to check on assignments. However the other 15% reported that they do not visit classrooms regularly to check on assignments.

#### **4.3.1 Principals' Level of Education in relation to school management**

The head teacher's academic achievements and experience also determines the kind of leadership given to a school which determines academic performance of learners. Data obtained from this study indicates that all the head teachers were graduates. It was observed that among the 18 principals, half of the principals had enrolled for their post graduate education.

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Data obtained on the estimate of percentage average daily attendance for the students, it was noted that on average the head teachers reported that they record an average of more than 70% average daily attendance. However it was evident that none of the 18 schools recorded total daily attendance by all the students.

When asked if they were accessible to the students, 80% of the principals indicated that they were accessible to the students however the other 20% reported that they were not always accessible to the students. This implies that majority of the principals are accessible to the students.

A question was put across to the principals on the ways through which the schools partner with parents effectively to support student learning and character growth. It was reported that the parents support the school through PTA/BOG meetings and through the open forums.

From the above objective, the implication of the study is that the role played by the principal in shaping the school culture has a great influence on students' performance at K.C.S.E. Decision making in schools which leads to improvement of performance at K.C.S.E should be done by teachers as well and it is the principal's responsibility to involve the teachers in decision making.

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The findings of objective one which was about the influence of the principal's role in shaping the school culture on students' performance agrees with the findings of Olembo and Karagu (1992). They argue that as a model the Principal or the Head teacher is expected to become an example whose professional and academic integrity are admired by staff, pupils and the entire community. Olembo (1997) in his studies about school administration found out that quality of a head teacher in school matters is students' performance. He argues that the way the head teacher restructures and administers the school; his relationship with his or her subsystems, teachers and students has a strong effect on students' performance. The findings of this objective also supports studies done by Benet (2001). He argues in his findings that leaders need to gain some understanding of the culture if they are to manage.

Level of principals' education was also a key factor which influences performance. The study shows that all the principals were graduates and half of them had registered for post graduate implying that principals should have superior knowledge all round. The studies also imply that it is the principals that facilitate partnership with parents through P.T.A and BOG to enhance fee payment. From the features observed it implies that the principal was responsible for every thing that goes on in the school from curriculum and instruction to infrastructure. Being the overall administrator he or she can shape up a relevant school culture

#### **4.4 The perception of teachers on school culture and its influence on students performance at KCSE.**

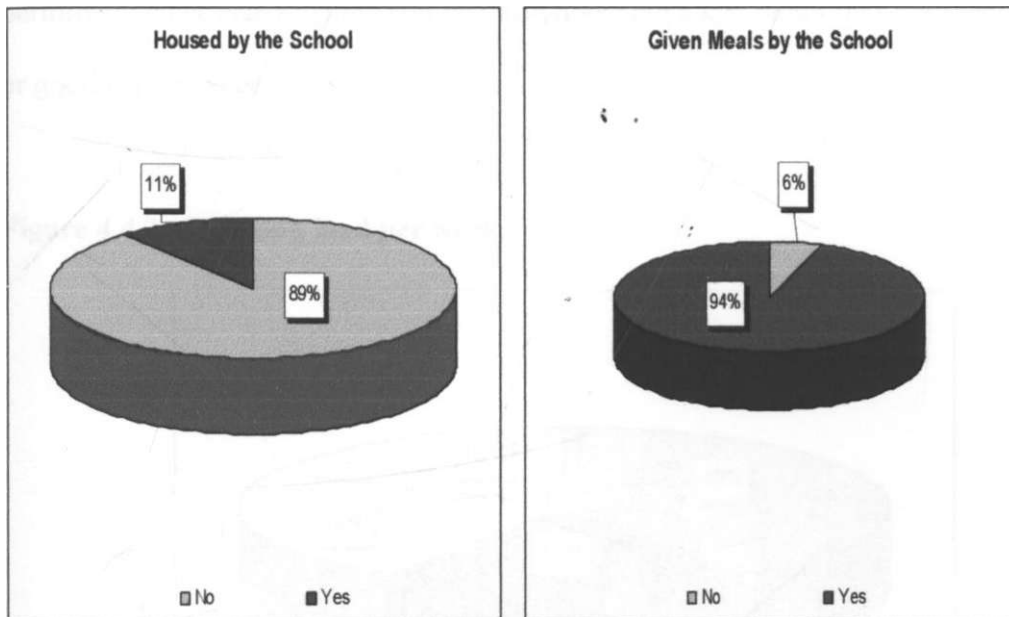
The second objective was to determine whether the perception of teachers on school culture has influence on students' performance at KCSE. The perception of the teachers was paramount to this study because teachers are key participant members of a school and therefore determine the students' level of academic achievement. This was so because that teachers are among the most important influences on the life and development of many young children and they play a key role in creating the generation of the future.

Data was gathered on the teachers' experience, the benefits obtained from the school, Teaching load per week lessons and the school administration. In addition questions were also put across to gather ratings on the teachers' perceptions of the teachers on school culture.

#### 4.4.1 Teaching experience of the teachers

Data obtained on the teaching experience of the teachers revealed that 39 % of the teachers had been teaching for duration of between 1 to 5 years. Majority (61%) of the teachers had been teaching for duration of between 6 to 10 years. This implies that the teachers have the relevant teaching experience and commitment to student teaching which a key characteristic to successful learning.

**Figure 4.4: Teachers responses on benefits obtained from the school**



When asked if they were housed by the school, it was noted that 89% of the teachers reported that they were not housed by the school. Only 11% of the teachers did report that they were housed by the school. This implies that most of the teachers seek for accommodation outside the school compounds. However when asked if they were given some meals by the school, it was noted that 94% of the teachers reported that they were given meals by the school. Only 6% reported that they were not given any meals by the

schools.

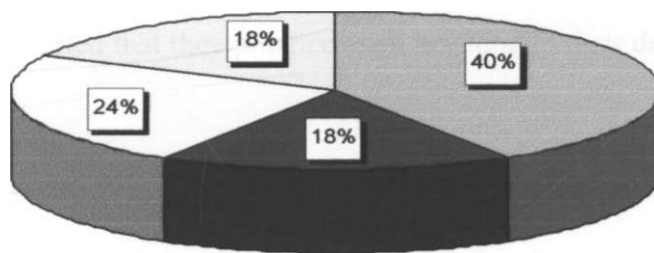
The teachers were also asked to list other benefits that they get from the school. Only 28% did respond to this question. From the 28% who responded 11% reported that they access computer learning and internet programmes while the other 17% indicated that they get spiritual growth from their schools.

#### 4.4.2 Teaching load per week

Time allocated to teaching and learning has also been cited as a factor that contributes to performance because teaching and learning hours are a key factor that contributes to poor or good performance

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**Figure 4.4.2: Teaching load per week**



- 11-15 Lessons
- 16-20 Lessons
- 21-25 Lessons
- 30 Lessons and above

Data obtained from this study revealed that 40% of the teachers had a work load of between 11 to 15 lessons, 18% reported between 16 and 20 lessons per week, another 24% reported between 21 and 25 lessons while 18% of the teachers had a teaching load of more than 30 lessons per week. This implies that majority of the teachers have a work load of between 11 to 15 lessons. This clearly shows that in Homa Bay District most of the secondary schools are under staffed hence majority of the teachers are handling so many lessons such that they do not have for thorough preparation.

The Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) should employ enough teachers in schools in the district to reduce the work so that performance can be improved.

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#### **4.4.3 Role of school administration in ensuring good performance in KCSE**

When asked to state if the school administration takes measures to ensure good performance in KCSE. It was noted that all the teachers reported that their school administration does take measures. Among the measures taken. It was noted that 78% of the teachers reported that they practice team teaching in their department.

Responses obtained on the involvement of teachers in decision making by the administration revealed that 83% of the teachers reported that they are you involved by the administration in making important decision in the school. However, 17% indicate that the school administration does not involve them in making important decision in the school. A question was also put across to elicit responses on what the teachers can do if tl^ey were administrators to improve the culture of the school to make it a better work

place. The responses revealed that all the teachers reported that there was need for the administrators to improve the welfare of the teachers

To gather responses on the perception of the teachers, ratings were obtained on the different aspects of teacher. A Likert scale was used to rate the different aspects. Twelve items comprised the ratings related to teacher perception on the school. The range was strongly agree (6) to strongly disagree (1). Descriptive statistics in the perception of teachers for the individual item and summated scores for the individual responses

**Table 4.4: Ratings on the perception of teachers about school culture**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Mean</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	
The teachers in our school are committed to the success of our school.		6		6	38	50	<b>5.333</b>
The teachers in our school trust the clients who are the students and parents they serve.		6	11	33	22	28	<b>5.2778</b>
The teachers in our school are committed to the personal and academic success of each and every student.		6			<b>44</b>	50	<b>5.1667</b>
Our school believes they can make a difference in the lives of our students.			6	11	<b>44</b>	39	<b>4.889</b>
The teacher leaders in our school effectively lead other departments in our school-wide efforts toward excellence in teaching and learning.		6		22	<b>44</b>	28	<b>4.667</b>
The "leadership team" (principal, assistants, counselors, chairs, team leaders, etc.) provides effective leadership for our school.	6	17	6	6	26	39	<b>4.6667</b>
Our school has structures for giving staff and students a voice in shared responsibility for sharing problems and making decisions that affect school environment and community	6	11	6	17	32	28	<b>4.6111</b>
Our school has norms for relationship and behaviour that create a professional culture of excellence and ethics		17	6	11	33	33	<b>4.5777</b>
The teachers in our school trust their fellow teachers.	11	11	6	22	22	28	<b>4.556</b>
Overall, our school effectively uses assessment strategies and data to improve instruction and achievement for each and every student.		11		28	33	28	<b>4.444</b>
The school has a healthy work environment.	6	11		17	38	28	<b>4.1667</b>
The school climate is positive, trusting, and respectful.	22	6	11	22	6	33	<b>4.0332</b>
<b>Overall mean</b>							<b>4.6991</b>

The results indicate that majority of the respondents agree that the "leadership team" (principal, assistants, counselors, chairs, team leaders, etc.) provides effective leadership

for our school. This was so as 6% somewhat agreed, 26% agreed while 39% strongly agreed.(Mean 4.667). Ratings on the school climate indicate that 22% somewhat agreed, 6% agreed while 33% strongly agreed that the school climate is positive, trusting, and respectful. However it was noted that 39% of the teachers disagreed that the school climate was positive, trusting, and respectful. When asked to rate the healthy work environment, majority of the teachers rated that the school has a healthy work environment as 17% somewhat agreed, 38% agreed while 28% strongly agreed. Only 17% disagreed.

Ratings on the relationship between the teachers and fellow teachers indicates that majority of the teachers agreed that the teachers in our school trust their fellow teachers. This was so because 22% somewhat agreed, 22% agreed while 28% strongly agreed. However 28% disagreed that the teachers in our school do not trust their fellow teachers. Table 4.4 depicts that majority (33% somewhat agreed, 22% agreed while 28% strongly agreed) of the teachers agree that the teachers in our school trust the clients who are the students and parents they serve. This implies that there is a good relationship between the teachers, students and parents. Ratings obtained revealed that 94% of the teachers in our school are committed to the success of our school. It was also noted that another 94% reported that the teachers in our school are committed to the personal and academic success of each and every student. This implies that the teachers in these schools have a positive perception towards the success of the schools.

On the other hand, responses obtained indicate that 94% of the teachers (11% somewhat agreed, 44% agreed while 39 % strongly agreed) believe that their school believes they can make a difference in the lives of our students. The results of this study indicate that the teacher leaders in our school effectively lead other departments in our school-wide efforts toward excellence in teaching and learning. (22% somewhat agreed, 44% agreed while 28 % strongly agreed). This gives an indication that the teachers are committed to the performance of the schools. More responses on the instruction methods used in the school indicate that the teachers believe that their school uses assessment strategies and data to improve instruction and achievement for each and every student as (28% somewhat agreed, 33% agreed while 28 % strongly agreed). The overall mean indicates that according to the teachers the schools effectively use assessment strategies and data to improve instruction and achievement for each and every student.

Table 4.4 displays that the schools have structures for giving staff and students a voice in shared responsibility for sharing problems and making decisions that affect school environment and community as (17% somewhat agreed, 32% agreed while 28 % strongly agreed). On the other hand only 23% disagreed. The item mean score indicates that the schools have structures for giving staff and students a voice in shared responsibility for sharing problems and making decisions that affect school environment and community. In relation to the school norms, it was noted that more than half (77%) of the teachers agreed that their school has norms for relationship and behavior that create a professional culture of excellence and ethics. However 23% felt that the school does not have norms for relationship and behavior that create a professional culture of excellence and ethics.

About teachers perception of the school culture and performance at K.C.S.E, greater percentage of teachers had teaching experience but their welfare such as housing ,meals and others benefits was not taken care of. Greater percentage of the teachers had big workload clearly indicating that they do not have extra free time when they can do thorough preparation. This may have contributed to poor performance.

The findings of objective two about influence of teachers' perception of school culture on students' performance at K.C.S.E. supports Bett's studies(1986) on factors influencing performance in K.C.S.E in Kericho district. His studies revealed unequal distribution of graduate teachers and in effective role played by the teachers. The findings also agrees with Eshiwani's studies (1983). His studies was on factors influencing performance of

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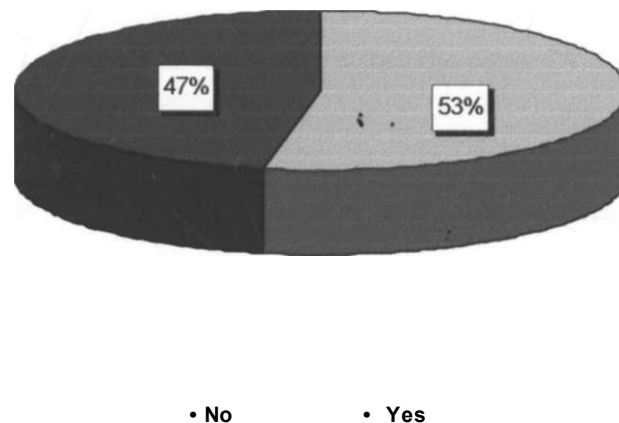
secondary and primary schools in western province Kenya which revealed appositve relationship between students academic performance and teachers characteristics which included qualifications and experience.

Data obtained on the teacher perceptions reveals it was note that the aspects that rated the highest means were the teachers commitment to the success the school (mean 5.333), teachers school trust in the clients (mean 5.277) and teachers commitment to the personal and academic success of each and every student (mean 5.166). It was however noted that the teachers scored low on healthy work environment(mean 4.166) and the school having a positive, trusting, and respectful (mean 4.03). This implies that the teachers have positive perception of their school climate.

#### 4.5 Students' perception of the school culture and its influence on performance at KCSE.

The third objective was to determine whether students' perception of the school culture has effect on students' performance at KCSE. Data was gathered on the meals, forums held with teachers and school norms.

**Figure 4.5: Meals given in schools**



When asked if they like the meals given in school, it was noted that slightly less than half (47%) of the students reported that they like the meals given by the school. Majority of the students reported that they do not like the meals given by the school and this represented 53% of the total population. The implication here is majority students do not like the meals given in school.

##### 4.5.1 Students' Forums to share with the teachers academic issues

Having -forums to share with teachers was important because this reveals some of the ways through which students share issues interfering with their studies and welfare in

school. The forums also create a friendly relationship between the teachers and the students where the teachers can counsel and advise.

**Table 4.5.1 Students forums to share with the teachers on academic issues**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>26.2</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>73.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Data obtained indicates that 72 % of the students reported that they have forums to share with their teachers. It was however noted that the other 28% reported that they did not have forums to share with the teachers.

In relation to the Is the method used to choose prefects ,the responses obtained from the students revealed that 73% of the students reported that the method was good while 27% said that the methods was not good. This implies that majority of the students are satisfied with the method used to choose prefects.

Data obtained on the assignments revealed that all the students reported that they were given assignments by the teachers. Ratings on the frequency of the assignments indicated that 95% reported that they were given assignments on weekly basis while the remaining 5% reported that they were given assignments on monthly basis.

**Table 4.5.2: Students norms for relationship and behavior that create a culture of excellence.**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No	40	28
Yes	101	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A question was put across to elicit responses on whether there are norms for relationship and behavior that create culture of excellence. The responses indicate that 72% of the students reported that their school has norms for relationship and behavior that create culture of excellence. Only 28% felt that their school does not have norms for relationship and behavior that create culture of excellence.

The findings as to whether students' perception of school culture has effect on performance. This implies that poor meals in schools could have contributed to poor performance. The findings about influence of students' perception of school culture on performance at K.C.S.E supports the findings of studies done by Ruddock (1996) his studies revealed that there were nine principles that make a significant difference to students' learning and would lead them to respond constructively in school. Some of the principles identified were; respect for learners as individuals and as a body occupying a significant position in the institution, time spent on learning, amount of homework given, purposeful teaching, rewards and clear rule behavior among others. He concludes that most students are positive and would wish to perform well. The findings of this study also reveals that most students are positive if the school culture recognizes their position.

Greater percentage of the student population did not like meals taken in schools. Most of

the students had forums to share with their teachers which could have contributed to positive culture which brought good performance in schools which did well. The finding further implies that more than half of the student population liked the culture of choosing their prefects. Many students were positive about their school culture unlike the teachers

#### **4.6 School culture and performance at KCSE**

The last objective was to establish whether there is relationship between school culture and performance at KCSE. The focus of this interest is to understand the phenomenon in a school environment and its relationship to the performance of members of the school. To determine whether students' perception of the school culture has an impact on performance at KCSE a rating scale of 8 items was used. The range was strongly agree (6) to strongly disagree (1). Descriptive statistics in the perception of students for the individual item and summated scores for the individual responses revealed that overall the students agree (mean 4.55) with the statements on their school culture. This implies that the students have high perceptions of their school culture.

Table 4.6 display that 37% of the students agree and 25% somewhat agree that students feel welcomed and valued and have a sense of ownership of their school. Overall mean implies that the students somewhat agree that students feel welcomed and valued and have a sense of ownership of their school (mean= 4.3143).

The results indicate that the students agree (mean= 4.5143) that all students in every classroom are supported and challenged to do their very best and achieve work of quality. This was so because 34% strongly agreed, 20% agreed while 25% somewhat agreed that all students in every classroom are supported and challenged to do their very best and

achieve work of quality. It was however noted that 21% disagreed that all students in every classroom are supported and challenged to do their very best and achieve work of quality

In relation to standards of learning and behaviour it was reported that overall the students somewhat agree (mean=4.4357) that all school members accountable to high standards of learning and behavior. More responses revealed that the students also somewhat agreed that the school has structures for giving staff and students a voice in, and shared responsibility for, solving problems and making decisions that affect the school environment and their common life (mean=4.3786 ).

Responses on leadership of the school indicates that majority of the students agree as 16% somewhat agreed, 41% agreed and 23% strongly agreed that the leadership team provides effective leadership for our school (mean=4.5214).

Form the results it is evident that the students agree that the teachers in our school effectively lead other faculty in our school wide effort towards excellence in teaching and learning (mean= 4.6386).

**Table 4.6: School culture and performance at K.C.S.E**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Mean</b>
The teachers in our school are committed to the success of our school.			2	23	38	37	5.1000
The teachers in our school effectively lead other faculty in our school wide effort towards excellence in teaching and learning.	5	6	3	24	33	29	4.6286
Our school climate is positive, trustful and respectful.	4	6	6	18	44	22	4.5429
The leadership team provides effective leadership for our school.	3	9	8	16	41	23	4.5214
All students in every classroom are supported and challenged to do their very best and achieve work of quality.	8	8	5	25	20	34	4.5143
All school members accountable to high standards of learning and behavior .	6	9	9	11	38	27	4.4357
The school has structures for giving staff and students a voice in, and shared responsibility for, solving problems and making decisions that affect the school environment and their common life.	12	4	4	23	29	28	4.3786
Students feel welcomed and valued and have a sense of ownership of their school.	9	9	20	25	37		4.3143
<b>Overall Mean</b>							<b>4.5544</b>

The findings of this study revealed that the students agreed that their school climate is positive, trustful and respectful (mean=4.5429). As (18% somewhat agreed, 44% agreed while 22 % strongly agreed).on the other hand only 16% disagreed. The item mean score

indicates that the teachers in our school are committed to the success of our school (mean=5.1). The results indicate that only 25% of the students disagreed with the statement on the teachers' commitment to the school success. It was noted that (23% somewhat agreed, 38% agreed while 37 % strongly agreed) that teachers in our school are committed to the success of our school.

From the findings it can be observed that the teachers in our school are committed to the success of our school and this can result in better performance in KCSE. In addition it was observed that the teachers effectively lead other faculty in our school wide effort towards excellence in teaching and learning. From the results it is evident that the teachers and the school culture is geared towards better performance .

An observation schedule was used as a follow up instrument to gather data on the observation features of the schools visited which are directly related to the school's culture and academic performance in the schools.

**Table 4.7: Observation Schedule**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>		<b>Appropriate</b>	<b>Not appropriate</b>
1.	Response to bells	66%	34%
2.	The kind of building in the school	20%	80%
3.	Students work checked by teachers	90%	10%
4.	Decorations in principal's office	.	100%
5.	Class size and populatipon per class	.	100%
6.	Students neatness	100%	.
7.	Compound neatness	75%	25%
8.	Maintenance and upkeep of facilities	30%	70%
9.	Quietness in classes	70%	30%
10.	Kind of reading spaces	66%	34%
11.	Staffroom seating arrangement	60%	40%

The researcher observed that in all the schools student neatness was appropriate. Trends observed revealed that 66% of the schools reported appropriate response to bell while 34% reported that in their school there was no appropriate response to bells.

In relation to the building in the school, it was noted that only 20% reported that they had the appropriate buildings. Majority (80%) of the schools recorded inappropriate building in the school. On the other hand, it was observed that 90% of the schools had the students work checked by teachers. Only 10% reported that there was inappropriate checking of the students ^york by the teachers. Observations made on Compound neatness revealed

that majority (75%) of the schools recorded appropriate compound neatness. However 25% reported inappropriate compound neatness. Trends observed revealed that all the schools did not appropriate decorations in principals' office and the class size and population per class was inappropriate.

It was also observed that only 30% of the schools recorded appropriate maintenance and upkeep of facilities. This implies that in most (70%) of the schools there is poor maintenance and upkeep of facilities. In relation to the school learning environment the researcher observed that 70% of the schools had quietness in classes. It was also noted that another 66% had appropriate reading spaces. Finally observation done on the staffroom revealed that 60% of the school had appropriate staffroom seating arrangement. However 40% recorded inappropriate staffroom seating arrangement.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of research findings, conclusions of the study, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

#### 5.2 Summary of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of school culture on students' performance at K.C.S.E in secondary schools in Homa-Bay district. The study aimed at achieving the following specific objectives; to determine the extent to which the role played by the principals in shaping the school culture influences students performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education, to determine whether the perception of teachers on school culture has influence on students' performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education, to determine whether students' perception of the school culture has influence on performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education and to establish whether there was relationship between school culture and performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

The literature review was organized under the following sub headings; introduction ,concept of school culture, principal's role in shaping of the school culture in relation to performance at K.C.S.E, teachers' perception of the school culture and its influence on performance at,K.C.S.E, students' perception about the school culture and its influence

on performance at K.C.S.E and to establish whether there was relationship between school culture and performance at K.C.S.E, summary of the literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

The study was descriptive survey design and the targeted population was 18 principals from 18 secondary schools, 106 teachers and 180 students giving a total of 306. Three different questionnaires were used as instruments for collecting data one for the principals another for the teachers and the other for the students. To determine reliability for the instruments a test -retest method was used. This assisted the researcher in making corrections where necessary.

Chapter four entailed analysis, presentation and interpretation of the data. The raw data from the field was edited and coded. The coded data was analyzed using SPSS Where descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to describe the data. The findings of the study were interpreted and discussed and discussed with the findings from relevant empirical literature.

### **5.3 Discussions of the findings**

The research had four objectives. The first objective was to determine the extent to which the role played by the principal in shaping the school culture influences students' performance at K.C.S.E. The findings of this objective reveal that it is the principal's role to promote and develop the school culture in a given direction. The principal's influence is exercised through actions and deeds that express the vision of the school and through

their management styles, values and symbols put forward. The findings reveal that the principals possess superior knowledge about curriculum and instruction to provide expert leadership. This concurs with the literature reviewed on the role of the principal in shaping the school culture and its influence. On this Olembo (1997) asserts that the quality of a head teacher in school matters is students' performance. He points out that the way the head teacher structures and administers the school, his relationship with the school subsystems, teachers and students has a strong influence on students performance.

Objective two was to determine whether the teachers' perception of the school culture has influence on students' performance at K.C.S.E. The findings reveal that although many teachers had teaching experience of more than five years most of the schools did not take care of their welfare such as provision of good meals, housing and other benefits. The findings also reveal that greater percentage of the teachers had a big work load and this could deny them time for serious preparation, this may have contributed to poor performance. It was however revealed that the school administration takes measures to ensure good performance. Among the measures taken, it was noted that most teachers practice team teaching in their departments. Ratings obtained on the teachers' perception indicate that teachers have a positive perception about their schools. It was observed that they trust their clients who are the students and parents. They are committed to the success of the school hence they are committed to the personal and academic success of each and every student. From the literature reviewed on the perception of teachers, Goodlad (1994) asserts that the success of a school depends crucially upon its human resource. The successful school is one where individual teachers are motivated, where the

disparate talents of individual members of staff are harnessed and where all efforts are coordinated so that the school's objectives are fulfilled.

Objective three was to determine whether students' perception of the school culture has influence on performance at K.C.S.E. From the findings it is evident that students were positive about their school culture. The results indicate that students reported that their schools have norms for relationship and behavior that create culture of excellence. The findings reveal that greater percentage of students did not like the meals taken in the school and this could contribute to poor performance. It was worth noting that students had to share with their teachers which could contribute to positive culture leading to good performance to schools which do well.

The fourth objective was to establish whether there was relationship between school culture and performance at K.C.S.E. It is evident from the findings that there is relationship and performance. The results indicate the all the students in every classroom are supported and challenged to do their very best and achieve work of quality. Responses on leadership of the school indicate that majority of the students agree that the leadership team provide effective leadership for the schools. It is also indicated that the school administration and the teachers effectively lead other faculties towards excellence. A positive and a strong school culture will always lead to students academic achievement. School which have developed strong cultures of excellence always perform.

## 5.4 Conclusions

In the light of the results of this research, it would appear that the presence of a strong organizational culture in a school accounts for academic success;

The principal was responsible for everything that goes on in the school from curriculum and instruction to infrastructure. Being the overall administrator he or she can shape up a relevant school culture. Hence the school principals need to be have superior knowledge all round and the relevant academic qualification so as to be able to improve the running and performance of the school. This calls for the principals to be able to allow teachers to make decisions on how to improve KCSE, to visit the classrooms regularly to check on assignments and to facilitate partnership with parents through P.T.A and BOG to enhance fee payment.

i .

In relation to the teachers perception the data obtained reveals that the schools did not take care of their welfare. In addition it was observed that even though the school administration takes measures to ensure good performance in KCSE, the teachers had big workload clearly indicating that they do not have free time when they can do thorough preparation and this may have contributed to poor performance. From the results it is evident that the teachers' have a positive relationship with students and parents they serve. In conclusion the teachers are committed to the success of the school. The findings that may also increase school's performance identified include the following: involvement of all staff in the achievement of high and clearly defined goals; encouragement from the administration and school board; and a climate characterized by openness, respect and trust between members of different staff groups

From the findings it is evident that many students were positive about their school culture unlike the teachers. It is evident that the students are happy about the choosing of their perfects however they were unhappy about the meals provided by the schools. The results indicated that the schools provide open forums where most of the students had forums to share with their teachers and this leads to a positive culture which brings good performance in schools. The results indicate that the students reported that their school has norms for relationship and behavior that create culture of excellence. In conclusion the students were positive about their school culture and this is a leading factor that influences the performance of students. From the findings it is evident that students perform best in schools with a "participatory" climate at all levels and where high but realistic expectations for students are held.

### **5.5 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are worth making in regard to promoting a positive school culture in order to improve performance of K.C.S.E in public schools in Homa-Bay district:

- i. The teachers need to visit classrooms regularly to check on assignments. It is evident from the findings that in most schools teachers did not check the assignment regularly which encourages laziness and negligence. Regular checking of assignments encourages hard work and competition.
- ii. There is Need to provide better meals for the students and teachers. This will be a motivation and teachers can be contained in schools longer hours. The findings reveal ' that most of the teachers were not given good meals and that students did not like the

meals which could have contributed to poor performance.

- iii. The teachers' welfare should be improved by the schools and the Ministry of Education should employ more teachers to reduce the workload. This will enable teachers to get time for thorough preparations. It is evident that most teachers had bigger workloads.
- iv. The infrastructures in schools should be improved to make the students have a friendly climate to promote effective learning. The school management bodies; PTA/BOG and the Ministry of Education should try to improve physical facilities and infrastructure. The findings reveal that most schools had poor infrastructures.

#### **5.6 Suggestions further research**

4 ,

This study focused on influence of school culture on performance at K.C.S.E. considering the role played by the principal in shaping the school culture and the extent to which it influences performance, influence of teachers' perception of the school culture on performance, influence of students' perception of school culture on performance and relationship between school culture and performance. I looked at culture as the totality of all that goes on within an organization but could not research on all aspects of school culture.

Future research may be done on the following

- (i) School culture and performance at K.C.P.E
- (ii) School climate and its influence on academic performance
- (iii) Influence of School motto, ethos and symbols on academic performance.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

MONICA NYAMBUORO OYIEKO,  
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI,  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL  
ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING,  
P.O BOX 92,  
KIKUYU.

THE PRINCIPAL,  
SECONDARY SCHOOL,  
HOMABAY. « •

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL CULTURE ON PERFORMANCE AT K.C.S.E IN  
HOMABAY DISTRICT.**

I am a post graduate student at the University of Nairobi, pursuing a master's degree in Educational Administration and Planning. I am conducting a research on the above topic. My respondents will be some of your students and teachers. The identity of the respondents will be kept in strict confidence. However the usefulness of the information will depend solely on your honesty.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

**MONICA N. OYIEKO**

## APPENDIX B: PRINCIPAL'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire seeks to get information from your experience on your view about students' academic achievements. Your identity will be treated confidentially. Your views and suggestions will highly help in coming up with a collective view on the study topic.

1 Name of school

1 District

2 How long have you served as a principal in this school?\_\_\_\_\_years.

3 What is your age?

» •

4 Do you allow teachers to make decisions on how to improve KCSE?

Yes Q

No

5 Do you visit classrooms regularly to check on assignments?

Yes Q

No

6 What is your gender?\_

7 What is the level of your education?

8 What is the current enrolment in your school?

9 How many full-time permanent teachers do you have in your school?

10 What do you estimate is the percent of average daily attendance for your students' body?\_

11 How many years were you a classroom teacher, counselor, or other non administrator regardless of grade level?\_

12 How many years did you serve as the deputy principal of this school?\_

13 Are you accessible by students?\_

14 Mention two ways through which you partner with parents effectively to support students' learning and character growth

;

15 How many years were you a classroom teacher, counselor or other non administrator

at the middle level

Thank you very much for your contribution

## APPENDIX C: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire hopes to benefit from your experience by getting your views on students academic achievements. There are no correct or wrong answers. Your identity will be treated confidentially and your sincere views and suggestions will contribute highly to coming up with a collective view on the study topic.

Name:

Optional

1) Gender                      M(    )                      F(    )

Teaching experience (    ) years

2) Are you housed by the school?

Yes (    )                      No(    )

3) Are you given meals by the school?

Yes (    )                      No(    )

4) What other benefits do you get from the school?

5) Teaching load per week

lessons

6) What measures does the school administration take to ensure good performance in KCSE?

7) Is team teaching practiced in your department? Yes ( ) No ( ) please explain.

8) Are you involved by the administration in making important decision in the school?

Yes ( ) No ( ) » .

9) If you were an administrator, give two suggestions of what you would change to improve the culture of the school to make it a better work place

10) Please use this scale to indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

**1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Somewhat Disagree 4=Somewhat Agree  
5=Agree 6=Strongly Agree**

- |      |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| i    | The leadership team (Principal, Deputy principal, Counselors, and Team leaders, etc) provides effective leadership for our school.       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| ii   | The school climate is positive, trusting and respectful.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| iii  | The school has a healthy work environment.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| iv   | The teachers in our school trust their fellow teachers   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| v    | The teachers in our school trust their clients who are the students and parents they serve.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| vi   | The teachers in our school are committed to the success of our school  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| vii  | The teachers in our school are committed to personal and academic success of each and every student                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| viii | Our school teachers believe they can make a difference in the lives of our students  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| ix   | The teacher leaders in our school effectively lead other faculty in our school wide efforts towards excellence in teaching and learning. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| x    | Our school faculty effectively uses assessment   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

strategies and data to improve instruction and achievement for each and every student

- xi Our school has structures for giving staff and students' a voice in and shared responsibility for solving problems and making decisions that affect school environment and community. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- xii Our school has norms for relationships and behavior that create a professional culture of excellence and ethics. 1 2 3 4 5 6

Thank you very much for your contribution.

## APPENDIX D: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Students,

This questionnaire seeks to get your views as per the items given. There are no correct or wrong answers. You are asked kindly not to share ideas so that a true reflection of the finding of the study topic can be reached.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ optional

1 Gender M ( ) F ( )

2. How long have you been in this school? \_\_\_\_\_ years

i •

3. Do you like the meals given in school?

Yes ( ) No ( )

4. Mention 2 practices done in this school in relation to performance that you like?\_

5. Do you have forums to share with your teachers?

Yes ( ) No ( )

6. Give two suggestions of what you would change in the school to improve performance

7. Is the method used to choose prefects good?

' Yes ( ) No ( )

8. Are you given assignments?

Yes ( ) No ( )

9 How often is this done? Weekly ( ) Monthly ( )

10 Are there norms for relationships and behavior that create culture of excellence? Yes ( ) No ( )

11. Do you have prize giving days?

Yes ( ) No ( )

12. Please use this scale to indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

**1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Somewhat Disagree 4= Somewhat Agree  
5= Agree 6= Strongly Agree.**

1	All students in every classroom feel supported and are challenged to do their very best and achieve work of quality	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	All school members are accountable to high standards of learning and behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	The school has traditions and routines built from shared values that honor and reinforce the school's academic and social standards.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	The school has structures for giving staff and students a voice in, and responsibility for solving problems and making decisions that affect the school environment and the common life.	1	2	3	4	5	6

5	The leadership team (Principal, assistants, counselors, chairs, team leaders' e.t.c.) provides effective leadership for our school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	The teacher leaders in our school effectively lead other faculty in our school wide efforts towards excellence in teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Our school climate is positive, trustful and respectful.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	The teachers in our school are committed to the success of our school	1	2	3	4	5	6

Thank you very much for your contribution.

**APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE**

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>	<b>Not Appropriate</b>
1	Response to bells		
2	The kind of buildings in the school		
3	Students work checked by teachers		
4	Decorations in the principal's office		
5	Class size and population per class		
6	Students' neatness		
7	Compound neatness		
8	Maintenance and upkeep of facilities		
9	Quietness in classes		
10	Kind of reading spaces		
11	Staffroom seating arrangement		

## APPENDIX F: RESEARCH AUTHORITY LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



### NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349  
254-020-3105/1, 2213123, 2213446  
Fax 254-020-318245, 318249  
When it-plying please quote  
secret\* ny-D nest, fok\*

po ^ 30623-00100  
NAIROBI KENYA  
Website www.ncst-io.ke

ourtef: NCST/RCD/14/012/686

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2012

Monica Oyieko Nyambuoro  
University of Nairobi  
P.O BOX 40197-00100  
NAIROBI

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Influence of school culture on students' performance at Kenya certificate of secondary Education in Uoma-Bay District, Kenya"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to carry out the research in Umuvi Nyanza Province for a period ending 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2012.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of Homa Bay District before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit two hard copies and one soft copy of the research report/thesis to our office.

**DR.M.K.RUGUTT, Ph.D**

#### **DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY**

Copy to:

The District Commissioner  
The District Education Officer  
Homa Bay District

