

**FACTORS INFLUENCING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN MATUNGULU DISTRICT, MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

Teresiah Muthoni Biama

**A Research Project Report Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the
Requirements of Post Graduate Diploma in Education of University of Nairobi.**

2014

DECLARATION

This research is my original work and has not been presented for any award in any other institution.

Signature

Biama Muthoni Teresia

L40/60089/2013

Date

This research project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Signature

Dr. Dorothy N. Kyalo.

Senior Lecturer

Department of Extra mural studies

University Of Nairobi

Date

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my loving mum Sinkosa Karimba for her encouragement, my Sister Wambura, Sr. Mary D'souza and Sr. Anastacia for their immeasurable support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would first like to express my sincere thanks to my supervisor: Dr. Dorothy N. Kyalo for her guidance, patience and encouragement while shaping this research project

Secondly, I extend my gratitude to my lectures who taught me in the post graduate programme, therefore enriching my research with the learnt knowledge. The head teacher, teachers, parents and pupils who were my respondents deserve my appreciation for their willingness to provide the required information during my research study.

Special thanks to my SJT and Mr. and Mrs. Baima's family who encouraged and undertook additional responsibilities so as to facilitate my studying. To my provincial Sr. Mary Mwangi, the Provincial Council, Sisters of the entire SJT Family.

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xi
ABSTRACT.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE:INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 .Statement of the problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	5
1.4 Research objectives.....	5
1.5 Research Questions	6
1.6 Significance of the Study	6
1.7 Limitations of the study	7
1.8 Delimitations of the study	7
1.9 Assumptions of the study.....	7
1.10 Definition of key terms	7
CHAPTER TWO:LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Parents social economic background and performance.	9
2.3 Provision of instructional materials and performance.	11
2.4 School environment and performance.	12
2.5 Socio-cultural factor and performance.....	14
2.6 Theoretical framework.....	16

2.6.1 Behaviorism Theory.....	17
2.6.2 Cognitivist.....	17
2.6.3 Humanism.....	18
2.7. Conceptual framework.....	21
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	22
3.1 Introduction.....	22
3.2 Research design.....	22
3.3 Location of the study.....	22
3.4 Target population	23
3.5 Sample and sampling procedure	23
3.6 Research instruments	23
3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Research instrument.....	24
3.7.1 Validity.....	24
3.7.2 Reliability.....	24
3.8 Data collection techniques	25
3.9. Data Analysis	25
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION	26
4.1 Introduction.....	26
4.2 Data presentation.....	26
4.2.1 Response Rate.....	26
4.2.2 Type of school.....	27
4.3 Parental Socio- economic background.....	28
4.3.1 Parental/Guardian Education.	28
4.3.2 Parental/Guardian Income.....	29
4.3.3 Pre- occupation with work.....	30
4.4 Provision of instructional materials	31

4.5 School environment and performance	32
4.5.1 Physical and material resources	32
4.5.2 Private studies	33
4.5.3 Languages used	34
4.6 Socio- cultural Factors	35
4.6.1 Attitude towards Education.....	35
4.6.2 Drug Abuse	35
4.6.3 Religiosity/ spirituality.....	37
4.6.4 Strikes.....	38
CHAPTER FIVE.:SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	40
5.1 Introduction.....	40
5.2 Summary.....	40
5:3 Parental socio-economic factors influencing Academic Performance:	41
5:3:1 School environment factors influencing Academic Performance:	42
5:3:2 Provision of instructional materials factor influencing students’ Academic Performance:	42
5:3:3 Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Academic Performance.....	43
5.4 Conclusion.	43
5:5 Recommendations.....	44
5:6 Suggestions for further study.....	44
REFERENCES.....	45
APPENDICES	47
Appendix (I) student’s questionnaire.....	47
Appendix (II) Teacher’s questionnaire	53
Appendix (III) Questionnaire for parents.....	57
Appendix IV. Observation checklist.....	61

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:1 Performance of students of 15 schools in Matugulu Division (2010-2013).....	4
Table 4.2. Response rate of the respondents.....	27
Table 4.3 Circumstances in which students fail to complete Assignment (N= 200).....	29
Table 4.4: Parents attendance at school meetings.....	31
Table 4.5 Adequacy of textbooks for all pupils in every subject in class.....	32

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual framework on factors influencing Academic performance of public secondary schools in Matungulu District, Machakos County	i
Figure 2: Circumstance under which students fail to complete Assignment.....	30
Figure 3: Occurrences of problems posed by students who engage in drug abuse.....	36
Figure 4: presence of the strikes in the schools	38

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

KCSE	-	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
DEO	-	District Education Officer
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	-	United Nations' Children's Education Fund.
SEB	-	Socio-economic background
SES	-	Socio-economic status
MoHEST	-	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology.

ABSTRACT

Good performance in National examination is seen as a sign of quality in education systems that are examination oriented. Despite the Government of the republic of Kenya commitment to provide high quality education, students' academic achievements remains a challenge in the secondary schools in Matungulu District; Machakos County .The available statistics indicate that the district has consistently registered poor results in Kenya certificate of secondary education examination. It also shows that the secondary education standards in the division have been declining. This poses a serious threat to the socio-economic and socio- cultural factors influencing academic performance of public secondary schools in Matungulu District. The study adopted a descriptive survey design utilizing both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The target population was all the public schools in Matungulu District, their teachers, parents and students. The schools were randomly sampled using the lottery technique. The study involved a sample of 50 teachers, 50 parents and 200 students. Making a total of 300 participants. Data were collected using a student's questionnaire, and an observational checklist. Reliability and validity of the research instrument were determined by pilot study. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics: quantitative data were analyzed using statistical package for social sciences. The study also aims at assessing the gap that exists between the two groups of performers (low and high performers). It is also the aim of the study to investigate the role of parents, environment and the school in influencing academic performance of secondary school students in Matungulu District From the study, factors within the school and home environment influence academic performance of the public secondary schools in the district. The parental socio-economic factors, school environmental factors, provisional of instructional materials and socio- cultural factors. Based on these findings, it was recommended that libraries to be fully equipped so as to expose the learners to a bigger world and environment; Parents to support their children and portray a positive attitude towards education; school administrators to undergo education management and administration courses so as to improve efficiency; sensitization in societal beliefs, values and practices which hinder education outcomes; and reviewing, improving and strengthening guidance and counseling.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Education reform efforts in less industrialized countries have aimed at making education an effective vehicle for national development. Governments, policy makers, and society have emphasized that developing countries need to invest more in education and ensure that systems of education are efficiently managed, that limited funds allocated to sector have maximum impact, and that cost-recovery measures are adopted (MOE, 2007). According to UNESCO (2007) education was formally recognized as human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The Dakar Framework for Action (2000) declared that access to quality education was the right of every child. It affirmed that quality was at the heart of education. According to Samoff (2007, cited in Ogawa, 2010) the mastery of curriculum is measured by national examination and the best indicator of high quality education is a high score on the national examination.

Since independence in 1963, the Government of the Republic of Kenya has placed considerable importance on education. Her overall policy goal is to achieve education for all (EFA) in order to give every Kenyan the right to education and training irrespective of his or her socio-economic status (ministry of education (2005b:14). Through the provision of education, the Government aims at enabling the youth to play a more effective role in the life of the nation by imparting to them the necessary skills and knowledge and inculcating the right attitude.

Republic of Kenya (1976) observes that examination provides the means for assessing the degree of past achievement of the learning objectives and in the process, also serve to

stimulate the learner to put the necessary effort into learning and occupational competence. According to Eshiwani (1993:185).one of the major functions of any examination system is to measure the output of the educational system in which it operates often referred to as pupils achievement which reflects the system internal efficiency. Olweya and Otieno (2000:13) pointed out that in Kenya, examinations are used as measures of achievement of the education systems objectives and in assessing the quality of the education offered. They contend that schools that perform well in national examinations are viewed as offering high quality education as opposed to those that perform poorly. The Kenya vision 2030 has promised to have globally competitive quality education, training and research for sustainable development and eliminate poverty (Kenya: vision 2030, 2007, pp.16 and 21).however the vision 2030 has a weakness in that the desire for equity in economic opportunities is not accompanied with a similar promise of equity in educational opportunities. Moreover, the vision fails to recognize that labor is the primary asset of the poor and making them more productive through education and training is the best way to reduce poverty (World Bank, Ibid

Research studies have established that academic performance is also influenced both negatively and positively by socio-economic status of the family. Basil (2007) points out that poor parental care with gross deprivation of school and economic needs of a child usually yield to poor academic performance.

He also asserts that good parenting supported by strong economic background could enhance strong academic performance of the child. Similarly, Orodho (1996:180) and Atkinson and Feather (1966, cited in Muola, 2007), also contend that parental education influences students achievements Gakuru (1977, cited in Kibera and Kikooti, 2007) states that wealthier and better educated parents create conducive learning atmosphere for their children. Harris and Sipay (2001:12 points out that reading ability increases in importance as a society becomes

complex and industrialized. As technology advances more occupations require high level of education or specialized training in which good reading ability is vital. Children who fail to read adequately, particularly those who are severely disabled readers, are increasingly handicapped as they progress through school. They are almost sure to repeat grades; this can also lead to dropout.

For the past few years in Kenya, education has been growing as profitable industry with prime objective of maximizing profit. This profit maximization has affected the quality of education offered by both public and private secondary schools. This is why the scope of this study will try to find out factors that influence students' academic performance. (Mcwell, 1999)

In academic life, there are two groups of students as generally perceived, these are, those who perform well and those who perform poorly. The study focuses on investigating the reason behind the two groups of students. Scholars and studies have revealed that there are factors within the home and school environment which influences students achievement in learning institutions. Edmonds (1982, cited in Lunenburg and Orstein, 2008:345) identified an effective school as one in which there is a strong leadership, an orderly and humane climate, frequent monitoring of students' progress, high expectations and requirements for all students. This clearly shows that the school characteristics play a very crucial role as far as academic performance is concerned.

According to UNICEF (2007:88) children achievement to education is influenced by the degree of support they receive at home, the quality of teachers, the teaching methods employed, and the availability of the necessary teaching aids and resources.

As shown in the Table 1.1 below, the KCSE performance in public schools in Matungulu districts for the past four years is poor. Eshiwani (1993) warns that when a region lags behind

in the number of pupils who pass a national examination its economic development is likely to be retarded.

Table 1:1 Performance of students of 15 schools in Matungulu Division (2010-2013)

Year/grades	A	A-	B	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	D	D-	E
2010	7	15	64	71	92	110	136	165	192	110	76	13
2011	11	14	59	76	80	120	125	172	179	107	56	18
2012	8	16	56	80	79	112	108	165	178	111	76	10
2013	9	11	60	65	71	69	123	181	179	101	69	9

Source: DEO Matungulu district

1.2 .Statement of the problem

National examination plays a significant role in education systems. In the 8-4-4 system of education, Kenya Certificate of secondary Education (KCSE) examination is taken at the end of the fourth year of secondary education. Learners who perform well are perceived to have received high quality education essential for sustainable socio-economic development and poverty eradication as opposed to those who perform poorly (Abagi et al, 200:13). The performance in the national examination is used as a criterion for certification and as a base for selecting pupils to join university institutions (Eshiwani, 1993:184)

Despite the government of the republic of Kenya commitment to provide high quality secondary education, outstanding students' academic achievement remains a challenge in the public secondary schools in Matungulu District Machakos County. The available statistics indicate that the district has not only consistently performed dismally in the national examination but also experienced observable decline in academic performance. The Districts

mean standard score (M.S.S), for example, 2010 was 8.7; in 2011 was 8.4; 2012 was 8.32 and 2013 was 7.8. (District Education Office, Machakos District 2013). This poses a serious threat to the socio-economic development of the region and the country at large, and hence the need to study the factors that influence Academic Performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District, Machakos County.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish the factors influencing academic performance of the public secondary schools in Matungulu District Machakos County, Kenya.

1.4 Research objectives

- To determine how parental socio-economic background influence performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.
- To examine the provision of instructional materials influence on students' performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.
- To examine how school environment influence performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.
- To establish how socio-cultural factor influence performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.
- To examine how reading culture influence performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.

1.5 Research Questions

- What influence does parental socio-economic background have on the Academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Matungulu District?
- How does school environment influence Academic Performance in Public Secondary schools in Matungulu District?
- How does the provision of instructional materials influence students' Academic Performance in Matungulu District?
- To what extent does socio-cultural factor influence performance in Public Secondary Schools in Matungulu District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research will be significant for various stakeholders in the education sector and in the society. First, it will be useful for educationists who will be aware of the factors that influence academic performance of secondary school students. They will become aware of problems existing in secondary schools and look for ways of solving them. Heads of school will also improve and maintain good performance in their schools if they adopt recommendations of the research.

In addition, teachers will be enabled to devise good instructional materials and methods in order to maintain and attain good academic performance.

Students will also benefit from the outcome of this research since they will receive better instructional materials and methods from their school and teachers will boost their academic performance and this will go a long way into securing those places in good colleges.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The researcher was constrained by time available for the researcher which will be limited due to the researcher's having several responsibilities.

The study might also be constrained by lack of enough finances to collect adequate data that covers a wide geographical area or a sample due to the sensitivity of the research, some respondents may be unwilling to give the right data. Thus the results of the research may be inaccurate or biased

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study focuses on the factors that influence academic performance of students which was carried out in secondary schools in Matungulu District, Machakos County. The study was restricted itself in 15 selected schools where 200 students will be sampled from secondary schools in Matungulu District.

1.9 Assumptions of the study.

The study was conducted on the assumption that all participants would be co-operative and provide reliable responses.

1.10 Definition of key terms

- Factor - An independent variable that affects the dependent variable
- Influence - The capacity to have an effect on the character development or Behaviors of someone or something or the effect itself

Academic performance	-	The outcome of education/learning
Correlation	-	Statistical relationship between two random variables or two sets of Data
Socio-economic factors	-	These are social and economic attributes of an individual or family in a given society. These include level of education, occupation and home.
Valid testing	-	The extent to which a test accurately measures what it intended
Contingent	-	Depending on something else that might or might not happen
Fulcrum	-	The main influence or support
Impact	-	Effects/results/outcome
Social contact	-	Social relations/interactions
Self-efficacy	-	The extent/strength of one's belief in one own ability to Complete tasks or goals
Transition	-	Change/passage from one stage to another

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Students' academic gain and learning performance is affected by various factors including school environment, parents and guardian socio-economic status, medium of instruction in schools, provision of instructional materials, socio-cultural factors, daily study hours and accommodation (boarders or day scholars), Gratz, (1995).

Many researchers conducted, detail studies about the factors contributing to students' performance. Gratz (1995) suggests that a student educational success is contingent heavily on social status of student and parents in the society.

Considine and Zuppala (2002), noticed the same, that parents' income or social status affects the students' test scores in examinations. A lot of studies have been conducted in the area of students' academic achievement and they analyses various factors that affect academic performance of students in secondary schools.

2.2 Parents social economic background and performance.

Parental socio-economic factors have been cited as a determinant of student's performance in national examinations. Basil (2007) points out that poor parental care with gross deprivation of social and economic needs of a child usually yield poor academic performance of the child. He believes that good parenting supported by strong economic background could enhance strong academic performance of the child. According to him students achievements is predicted where the child is properly counseled in the choice of his or her courses and vocation that matches ability, interest and capability.

According to Marshall (1984:61), children from poor parents often have chores in homes and farms or go out trading before attending school in the morning and after returning home in the afternoon. He states that the family may not be able to afford school uniform or adequate food. Marshall further points out that at night there may be no place where the child can do his homework and insufficient light for him to work.

Ministry of education (1994) contends that financial ability of parents may lead to absenteeism of learners thus threatening student achievement. Ministry of education, science and technology (2001) notes that school drop-out; absenteeism and general truancy is rampant in coffee, miraa and tea picking, cane and fishing regions in Kenya. It laments that although these activities appear to be supplementing family incomes, they disrupt the normal school routine hindering the syllabus coverage and consequently students are not well prepared for the evaluation tests.

According to Kibera and Kikomoti (2007:115) the language spoken at the homes of the parents from the high socio-economic class is often the medium of instructions in schools hence children from this class have an advantage over children who speak mother tongue at home. They point out that parents from the high socio-economic status are able to buy their children books which parents from low socio-economic class cannot afford. They argue that this increases their children's chances to acquire more language for educational purpose.

According to Murdoch (1965), a family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. The family provides for the physical maintenance of the child, offers the child its first and continuing social contacts and give it affection and other emotional satisfaction including quality education that will last for a life time, teaches him most of social requirements of his behavior and puts him with other specializing institutions. (Ainsworth, 2000).

Parents social and economic background is determine by their income and level of education. Students whose parents earn higher income and have high education level perform better than their counterparts from low income parents who have low education level. This assertion is supported by Dills (2006) who argue that according to the cultural capital theory one could expect students from families who are closest to the academic culture to have great academic success. If parents are educated, they are likely to influence their children into achieving equal or greater academic excellence than themselves. Also, if parents earn high income, they are able to provide adequately for their children, both at school and at home and this minimizes interferences of their life. This includes provision of writing and reading materials as well as taking them to good schools which have adequate teaching and learning resources such as libraries.

2.3 Provision of instructional materials and performance.

Studies from ten developing countries by Heyneman, Farrell, and Sepolveda-stuardo (1978) reported that there is more consistent relationship between pupil achievement and the availability of books than between other variables such as teachers training, grade repetition and others. According to Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) the provision of textbooks for secondary schools students in Mexico was an important part of the government's policy to improve educational efficiency and equity. The use of textbooks would raise academic standards and increase the efficiency of a school system. Numann and Cunningham (1982) summarized Mexican experience and concluded that text books development and supply required and deserved the same priority as teacher development and school construction.

Heyneman et al (1981) indicated that Uganda centralized the purchasing of school textbooks to improve efficiency of production and the distribution of books. This strengthened the

relationships between pupil's economic status and access to books rather than being diminished by the decentralization.

Evidence from both countries, together with that from small-scale studies in other countries such as a study of mathematics teaching in Nicaragua suggests that investments in books may significantly improve the efficiency of education, particularly at the primary school level. (Jamison et .al: 1981).

According to Hehneman, Jamison, and Montenegro, (1984), developing countries devote a very small proportion of school expenditure to teaching resources. They observed that industrial countries allocated 14% of primary school recurrent costs to classroom resources and 86% to salaries. Asia allocated 91% and Africa 96%. This shows that even a small reallocation of resources could increase efficiency. They suggested a minimum of 10% of public recurrent expenditures to be devoted to teaching tools.

According to Lockheed and Verspoor, (1991), the production of improved textbooks, teaching materials, and teaching quality increases the holding power of schools. This improves the academic performance.

2.4 School environment and performance.

Literature has indicated that to realize success the head teacher must provide adequate (and essential) facilities and resources. Eshiwani (1983:23) contends that differences in school facilities amount to differences in achievement. Republic of Kenya (1999:92) revealed that the quality and adequacy of resources such as physical facilities, equipment, teaching and learning materials have a direct bearing on quality as they determine how effectively the curriculum is implemented. She reported that quality cannot be achieved if the resources and facilities are not available and in sufficient quantity and quality. UNICEF(2007:88) points out

that children achievements in education is not only influenced by the availability of the necessary teaching aids and resources but also by the degree to which they are engaged as actors in the education process and a willingness to offer the necessary flexibility to facilitate their regular attendance

Class size has also been identified as a determinant of academic performance. Studies have indicated that schools with smaller sizes perform better academically than schools with large class sizes. Kraft (1994, cited in Kafui, 2005) in his study of the ideal class size and its effect on effective teaching and learning in Ghana concluded that class size above 40 have negative effects on students achievements. Similarly, a recent survey carried by the KNEC established that pupils in smaller classes tended to perform better in numeracy than pupils in larger classes. (The standard, June 22, 2010).

Cotton (2003:23, cited in Gamage, Adams, and Mccomon, 2009) asserts that principals behavior have a significant impact on students achievement. These include the establishment of a vision, clear learning goals and high expectations for learning for all students' interactions and cordial relationships with relevant stakeholders with communication and interaction, emotional and interpersonal support, visibility and accessibility and parent community participation; developing a school culture conducive to teaching and learning.

Various authors and studies identified specific characteristics of effective schools and defined effectiveness partly in terms of outstanding student's achievement. Ronald Edmonds (1982, cited in Lunenburg and Orstein, 2008:345) defined effective school as one in which lower-class student's score as high as middle class students on basic skills tests. Based on the analysis of such schools, Edmonds identified an effective school as one in which there is strong leadership, an orderly and humane climate, frequent monitoring of students' progress,

high expectations and requirements for all students, and focus on teaching important skills to all students.

Similarly, in his paper, correlates of effective schools: The first and second Generation, Lezotte (1991) identified seven characteristic of effective schools which he called correlates of effective schools. These include safe and orderly environment, climate of high expectations of success, instructional leadership, clear and focused mission, opportunity to learn and students time on the task, frequent monitoring of student progress and home-school relations. He attaches a lot of value to the correlates since they have been shown to influence students learning. According to him, the extent to which the correlates are in place in a school has a dramatic, positive effect on student achievement.

There also lack of personal/work/school/family balance, whatever is going on in a student personal life will inevitably affect what is going on in school and whatever is going on in school will affect what is going on in his personal life. A student needs time to be in class and appropriate time to study. However, there must be time for family, friends and social activities and time to just be alone. The key is keeping proper balance. (Hold 1998).

Lack of maturity and discipline in some students and lack of organization skills affect academic performance negatively. Students often fall under the pressure of their peers, rather than using good discretion. They feel compelled to follow others socially when they really should be attending to their studies. (Dale H.S, 2001).

2.5 Socio-cultural factor and performance.

Literature has indicated that academic performance is affected both positively and negatively by socio- cultural factors. UNESCO (2005:139) reveals that student achievement is highly influenced by the community and the families' attitude towards education. She observed that

pupils would work harder and perform well if they realize that their parents and the community are interested in their school work. In a report, it is claimed that negative parental attitude including lack of moral guidance encourage children to seek employment and eventually drop out of school.

Kibera and Kikomoti (2007:115) point out that, children who are not encouraged by their parents in school work are likely to go to school late, for they may be given duties to perform before going to school. They warn that constant late-attendance at school is bound to have an adverse effect on academic performance. This is evident where we have day secondary schools.

Recent studies have demonstrated that academic performance is affected negatively when learners engage in drug taking. Safron, Schulenberg and Bachman (2001, cited in Parkes, Wight, Henderson and West, 2010) highlight specific effects of being preoccupied with drugs. They outline possibility of breakdown during examination leading to failure and drop out. Kibiomu (2006) asserts that drug abuse can lead to rudeness and arrogant to teachers and parents and occasionally causing riots and chaos in their schools and up to become criminals. It may also lead to emotional problems such as depression and low self-esteem which could impede school work.

Evidence from literature establishes that strikes in schools and related activities have negative impact on academic performance. According to the ministry of Education, science and Technology (2001:61) the culture of violence has been introduced in the society. There is violence in the homes, streets and everywhere. Along the same line, UNESCO (2003:143) echoes that schools are not safe havens. Burnett (1994) contends that presence of strikes play a significant role in the widespread increase of violence in schools. He stated that because strikes often actively involved in drugs and their mere presence in school can increase tension

in them. Walker et al (2004) warn that violence and threats of it is highly disruptive to the school environment and interferes significantly with teaching-learning process. They point out that physical and psychological violence is destructive both to individuals' self-esteem and to their emotional well-being.

Recent studies have demonstrated that religiosity has a positive impact on academic performance. In researching on the impact of spirituality on academic performance, Fukofuka (2007) found that students who take the time to commit to spiritual activities enhance their ability to excel academically. He cites several studies that indicate that spirituality has a positive impact on student's academic performance. Among them, Walker and Dixon (2002) in their study had established that spiritual beliefs and religious participation were positively related to academic performance. Similarly, line (2005).Also cited, established a strong relationship between academic performance and personal religiosity, especially in the area of personal scripture study, living up to church standards and personal prayer life. He observed that when students enrich themselves from scripture, abiding by their church standards regardless of faith and have a consistent prayer life, their academic performance respond positively. Jeynes (2002, cited in Fukofuka, 2007) also found that religious commitment had a positive impact on the academic performance of students and also on their school-related behavior. Jeynes observed that students who were committed to their religion were well behaved in school and had better academic performance

2.6 Theoretical framework

There are many theories that been raised to support the academic performance of the learners. Among the theories raised are, Behaviorism Theory, Cognitivist Theory and Humanism Theory.

2.6.1 Behaviorism Theory

Behaviorism is a worldview that assumes a learner is essentially passive, responding to environmental stimuli. The learner starts off as a clean slate (tabula rasa) and behavior is shaped through positive reinforcement or negative reinforcement. Both positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement increase the probability that the antecedent behavior will happen again. In contrast, punishment (both positive and negative) decreases the likelihood that the behavior will occur again. Positive indicates the application of a stimulus. Learning is therefore defined as a change in behavior in the learner. Lots of early behaviorists work was done with animals, for example Pavlov's dogs, and generalized to humans. Behaviorism precedes the cognitivist world view. It rejects structuralism and is an extension of logical positivism. (Watson J.B, 2001).

Radical behaviorism developed by BF Skinner, describes a particular school that emerged during the reign of behaviorism. It is distinct from other schools of behaviorism, with major differences in the acceptance of mediating structures, the role of emotions.(Tolman P. 1998).

2.6.2 Cognitivist

The cognitivist paradigm essentially argues that the 'black box 'of the mind should be opened and understood. The learner is viewed as an information processor (like computer). (Gagne B. 1978).

The cognitivist revolution replaced behaviorism in 1960s as the dominant paradigm. Cognitivist focuses on thinner mental activities – opening the 'black box' of the human mind is valuable and necessary for understanding how people learn. Mental processes such as thinking, memory, knowing and problem solving need to be explored. Knowledge can be

seen as scheme or symbolic mental constructions. Learning is defined as a change in learner's schemata.(Schank D, 1986).

A response to behaviorism, people are not programmed animals that merely respond to environmental stimuli; people are rational beings that require active participation in order to learn, and whose actions are a consequence of thinking. Changes in behavior are observed, but only as an indication of what is occurring in the learner's head. Cognitivist uses the metaphor of the mind as the computer: information comes in, is being processed, and leads to certain outcomes. (Schank D.1986).

2.6.3 Humanism

Humanism is a paradigm/philosophy/pedagogical approach that believes learning is viewed as a personal act to fulfill one's potential. (Knowles M, 2003)

This paradigm emerged in the 1960s and focuses on the human freedom, dignity and potential. (Knowles M, 2003). A central assumption of humanism according to Huitt (2001) is that people act with intentionality and values. This is in contrast to the behaviorist notion of operant conditioning (which argues that all behavior is the result of the application of consequences) and the cognitive psychologist belief that the discovery knowledge of constructive meaning is central to learning. Humanists also believe that it is necessary to the person as a whole especially as an individual grows and develops over the lifespan. It follows that the study of the self, motivation and goals are areas of particular interest (Rogers C. 1990).

According to Abraham Maslow a primary purpose of humanism could be described as the development of self-, actualized, autonomous people. In Humanism, learning is a student centered and personalized, and the educator's role is that of facilitator. Affective and

cognitive needs are key and the goal is to develop self-actualized people in a cooperative, supportive environment.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

MODERATING VARIABLES

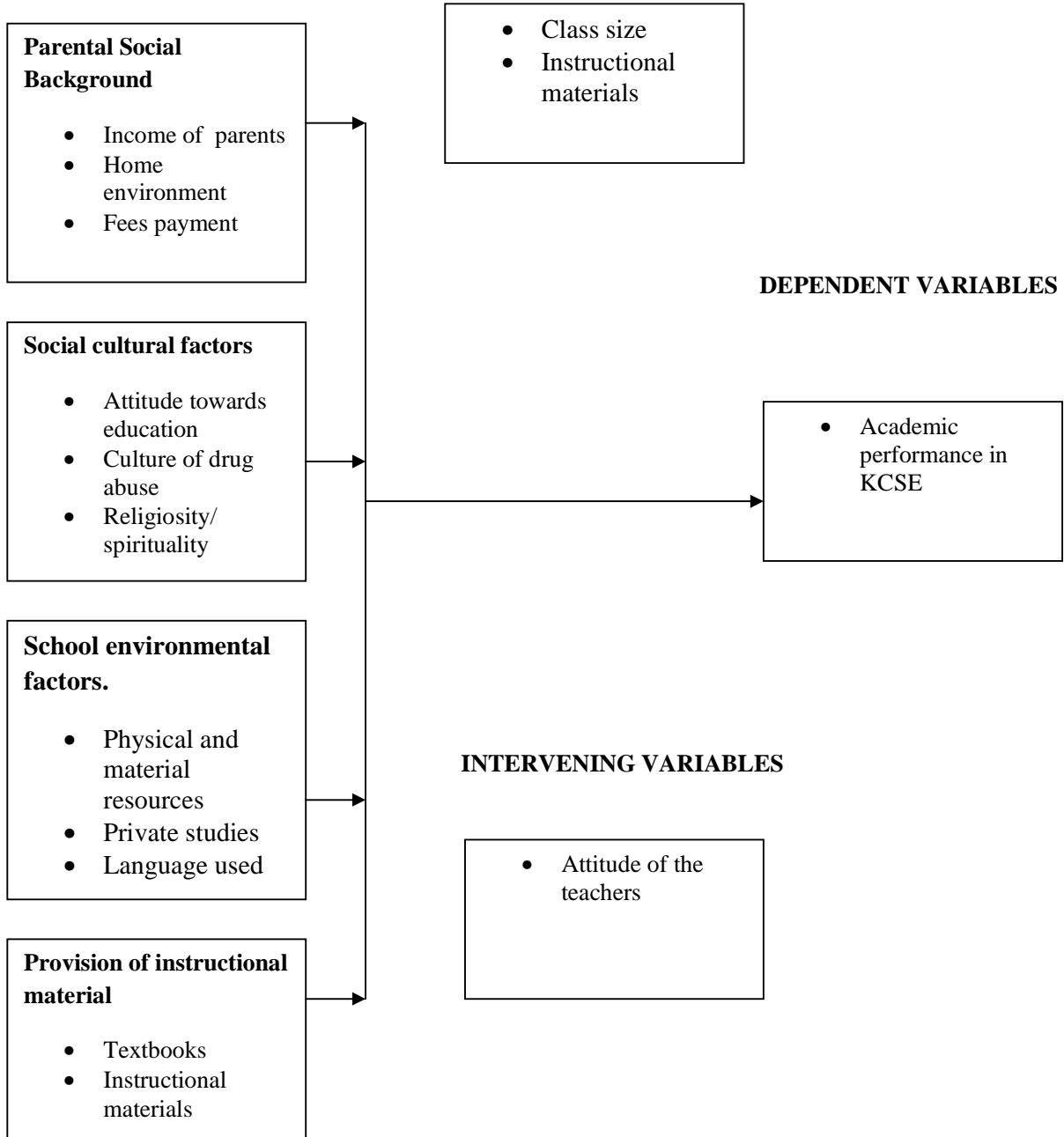


Figure 1: Conceptual framework on factors influencing Academic performance of public secondary schools in Matungulu District, Machakos County

2.7. Conceptual framework.

In Kenya and in the education systems that are examination oriented, there is always the expectation of producing outstanding results through achievement of respective national examinations. However, this expectation does not always come true due to the interplay of multiplicity of factors within the home and school environment revealed by past studies.

These factors are broadly classified as; parental socio-economic factors, school environmental, reading culture and socio-cultural factors as indicated in figure 1.2

Parental social economic factors determining academic performance indicated in the conceptual framework include parental level of education; income; pre-occupation with work and family size. The school environmental factors include, school leadership/management; shared vision and focused mission statement of the school; medium of communication and adequacy and nature of material and physical resources. While the socio-cultural factors include community and/or parents attitude towards education, drug abuse, strikes and religiosity/spirituality

The conceptual framework further suggests that academic performance is determined by a number of different factors other than the aforementioned. These include teachers' characteristics, family size, class size and instructional materials.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter shows how the study will be carried out. It was sub-divided into research design, target population, sample size, and sampling procedures, research instruments, instrument validity, instrument reliability, and data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research design

The study adopted descriptive survey design to investigate the factors influencing academic performance of secondary schools.

A descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. It determines and reports the way things are (Gay, 1996:249). In addition, this type of research attempts to describe such things as possible behavior, attitudes, values and characteristics (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003:160). The researcher was interested in establishing and reporting the factors which influence academic performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District Machakos County. The rationale for adopting survey design was that it allows collection of data from a sample of participants from a target population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables (Gay, 1996 and Orodho, 2009)

3.3 Location of the study

The study will be carried out in selected secondary schools in Matungulu District. Where the researcher had been a teacher. Having been a teacher in the district for four years the researcher had been expecting outstanding academic performance from the public secondary

schools in national examination. However, the expectation was never fulfilled. Instead, the academic standards had been appalling and declining. This worried the researcher and necessitated a study to establish the factors; socio-economic, school environmental factors, and socio-cultural factors influencing academic performance of the public secondary schools in the district.

3.4 Target population

According to Best and Khan (1998), a target population is any group of individuals who have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. The study targets the teachers, parents and students of public secondary schools. Matungulu District has 22 public secondary schools 200 teachers and 6000 students. As at 5th march 2014

3.5 Sample and sampling procedure

A sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis (Best and Khan, 2002). The researcher used simple random sampling to select the sample for the study. The total number of public secondary school is 22 from this number, random sampling was used to select 15 secondary schools. The respondents will include 50 teachers, 50 parents and 200 students.

3.6 Research instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) assert that a questionnaire is a written set of questions to which the subjects respond in writing. The researcher will use structured questionnaire to collect the required data. The questionnaires administered to the three categories of respondents will be distinct for each category. The researcher will also use an observation checklist.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Research instrument.

3.7.1 Validity.

Orodho (2009: 187) defines validity as the degree to which a test measures what it purports to be measuring. The researcher prepared the instruments in close consultation with the supervisor in order to ensure that the items in the questionnaire covered all the area under investigation. Best and Kahn (2002).Observed that, content validity of the research instruments could be enhanced through expert judgment.

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability, according to Orodho (2005), refers to the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results over a number of repeated trials. Reliability of the instrument was determined by establishing whether there were ambiguities in any item, and whether the instrument would elicit the type of data anticipated, and also if the type data desired was meaningfully analyzed in relation to research questions.

The research instruments were tested using test retest method in order to assess their reliability. The questionnaires were given to the pilot respondents to fill, and then after one week, the same questionnaire was administered to the same respondents. The instrument and the data are said to be reliable, if there is a high co-efficient of reliability or stability from the test retest technique (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).To compute the correlation, co- efficient of the instruments, spearman's formula was used. The correlation co-efficient of the study was 0.81.The researcher accepted validity of items at a correlation co-efficient of 0.7, which is recommended by Kiess and Bloomquist (1985).

3.8 Data collection techniques

The researcher administered the questionnaire to the parents; teachers and students level at school by a drop and pick later method. According to Bryman and Bell (2003), a self-administered questionnaire is the only way to elicit self-report on people's opinion, attitudes, beliefs and values. The researcher thus personally administered the research tool to the respondents. Owing to the expansiveness of the area to be covered, the researcher made subsequent visits and paid courtesy calls to the respondent's institution to remind them to fill in the questionnaires to enhance the response rate.

3.9. Data Analysis

The researcher perused completed questionnaires and observation checklist. Quantitative data collected by using a questionnaire was analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and presented through percentages, means, standard deviations and frequencies. The information was displayed by use of bar charts, graphs and pie charts and in prose form. This was done by tallying up responses, computing percentages of variations in response as well as, describing and interpreting the data in line with the study objectives and assumptions through use of SPSS.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the questionnaires return. The chapter presents descriptive data obtained from the sample drawn from 250 respondents.

4.2 Data presentation.

It presents the descriptive data for the sample population used in the study.

Frequencies of responses and percentages were tabulated for the responses of items and demographic data. The information in the table, pie charts and bar graphs were used to answer the following objectives.

- I. To examine the provision of instructional materials influence on students' performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.
- II. To determine how parent socio-economic background influence performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.
- III. To examine how school environment influence performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.
- IV. To establish how socio-cultural factors influence in public secondary Schools in Matungulu District.

4.2.1 Response Rate.

The researcher sought to analyses the response rate of the respondents.

Table 4.2. Response rate of the respondents.

CATEGORY	RETURNED	NOT RETURNED	PERCENTAGE
Students	150	50	68
Teachers	30	20	14
Parents	40	10	18
TOTAL	220	80	100

From the table, it was evident that 68% of the respondents who were students responded to the questionnaires, 14% of the teachers returned the questionnaires while 18% of the parents returned the questionnaires.

4.2.2 Type of school

The researcher sought to analyze the type of school which was represented by the respondents.

Table 4.2. Type of schools.

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Public Day Secondary School	17	77
Public Boarding Secondary school	5	23
TOTAL	22	100

It was evident that of the schools involved in the study, 77% were public day secondary schools while 23% were public boarding secondary schools. This was clear indication that most of the secondary schools in the area were public day secondary schools and were preferred to public boarding secondary schools.

4.3 Parental Socio- economic background.

In this sub-section, socio-economic factors which have bearing on students' academic achievement are discussed. These include parental/guardian education, income and pre-occupation with work.

4.3.1 Parental/Guardian Education.

Parental education is important in relation to home work. Through the questionnaire, the study found that completion of assignments was wanting as indicated by 62(28.26%) who complete always, 116(54.17%) complete sometimes and 26(11.11%) who never complete. This was confirmed by focus group discussions when some participants echoed that there are many cases of students who do not complete their assignment.

In establishing the circumstances under which they do not, the study found that some learners (23.13%) fail to complete due to lack of assistance and encouragement at home indicating that the parents'/guardians' level of education was questionable. This implied that learners lack role models who are inspiration behind attainment of high scores in national examinations leading to prestigious courses. This finding was confirmed by a focus group discussion in one of the schools when a participant lamented over parents' level of education by saying "some of the parents are standard 8 leavers while others are school drop-outs who have nothing or very little to offer." This led to the conclusion that majority of the parents/guardians are ignorant and/ or have regard to education. The researcher hence

concurred with Marshall (1984) that educated parents take an informed interest in their children’s work. The failure to complete assignments denoted lack of enough practice on the task and discouraged the teachers from giving and reviewing assignments regularly during class time which translated to poor results.

4.3.2 Parental/Guardian Income

Parents’/guardians’ income has an important bearing on this study. This is because it is one of the determinants of learners’ lifestyle to establish the implication of the parents’/guardians’ income on education, the researcher, through the questionnaire asked the participants to indicate the circumstances under which they fail to complete their assignment.

Table 4.3 Circumstances in which students fail to complete Assignment (N= 200)

CIRCUMSTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Lack of study area	47	31
Lack of lighting	88	59
Lack of revision materials	15	10
TOTAL	150	100

The study found that most of the parents were low wage earners as suggested by the finding in the table 4.5

The 88 (59%) participants who were living in poorly lit rooms implied that their parents/guardians had not been able to install electricity and solar panels in their homes and could not afford to buy sufficient paraffin making studying impossible. The 47(31.14%) participants

who indicated lack of study area at home implied that there was overcrowding in their homes leaving little or no space at all for studying and lack of important facilities such as tables and chairs which were all essential for the learning process. The study also established that there was an acute shortage of textbooks despite the Government's effort to provide learning/teaching resources. The study fully concurs with Basil (2007) that gross deprivation of social and economic needs of a child usually yield poor academic performance of the child.

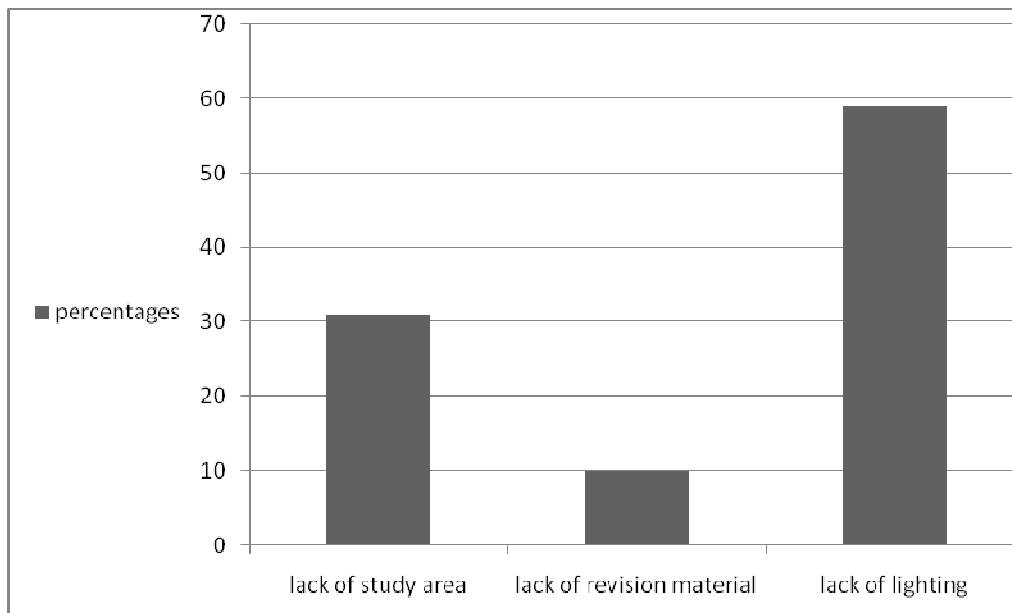


Figure 2: Circumstance under which students fail to complete Assignment.

4.3.3 Pre- occupation with work.

Parents or guardians pre- occupation with work was an important variable of this study. This was because it was a determinant of their lifestyle. Their pre-occupation with work revealed their regard to education and its impact on the attendance at school meetings/ functions. The attention given to attendance at school functions by parents is indicated in table 4.3 as established by the questionnaire.

Table 4.4: Parents attendance at school meetings.

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Always	8	20
Sometimes	27	68
Never	5	12
Total	40	100

The study found that few parents have major regard to education as evidenced by those who attend always. Statistically, it was observed that there was a significant difference between the parents who attend always and those who attend sometimes as far as gender was concerned. The attendance incidences were a clear manifestation of low education level of the parents/ guardians concurring with Marshall (1984:59) that educated parents tend to attend meetings, exhibitions of work or entertainment at schools when invited. There availability denies them the opportunity to discuss with teachers their offspring progress culminating to low quality education.

4.4 Provision of instructional materials

This study sought to examine how provision of instructional materials affected students' academic performance. The teachers were asked to indicate whether there were adequate textbooks for all students in every subject in their class. The results are as shown in Table 4.4

Table 4.5 Adequacy of textbooks for all pupils in every subject in class

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	12	40
No	18	60
Total	30	100

The majority of the teachers (60%) indicated that there were no adequate textbooks for all students in every subject in class. The conclusion drawn on provision of instructional materials influence on students' academic performance, majority of the teachers noted that there were inadequate textbooks and this affected the academic performance of the students.

The focus group discussion with the students also established that there were no adequate textbooks and other instructional materials.

4.5 School environment and performance

In this sub- location, various school environmental factors which had bearing on academic performance are discussed. These include physical and material resources, instructional evaluation, private studies and language used in schools.

4.5.1 Physical and material resources

This study found through the observation checklist that in some schools, some physical and material resources were inadequate and in deplorable conditions. These included classes, latrines and desks. Some classes (54.38%) had smooth floors while others (47.62%) had uneven. In most schools (58.14%) classes had lockable doors while windows had shutters.

This implied that teaching and learning resources could be left for learners to review. These findings concurred with republic of Kenya (1999) which revealed that quality and adequacy of resources such as physical facilities, equipment, teaching and learning materials have a direct learning on quality as they determine how effectively the curriculum is implemented. The inadequate latrines in some schools (63.7%) pose a problem in the teaching and learning process.

Learners would queue desperately in the morning and at break time to use the facilities resulting to poor preparation for the incoming lesson as well as loss of instructional time. The inadequate and poorly maintained desks (33.33%) affected negatively teaching/ learning process. Learners were found uncomfortably seated. This adversely affects their listening, reading and writing skills since they have to be on high alert to avoid falling down and embarrassment.

4.5.2 Private studies

It was found that learners carried out private studies early in the morning, after lunch-break and after classes before they go back to their homes. However, the study established that the studies were neither properly organized nor monitored hence poor utilization of valuable time.

The study found that teachers gave class assignments (84.56%) even though the monitoring system was questionable as it was left to the teacher on duty (65.56%) and class prefects (70%). This indeed showed very clearly that private studies were mostly monitored by class prefects than by teachers denoting the heathers inadequacies in real sense of commitment. This was contrary to the practices of effective schools whereby teachers possess a strong sense of responsibility for the student learning; teachers who organize and monitor students' private studies as pointed out by Gamage (2006:71). This implied that pupils were less

engaged due to lack of effective monitoring practice which culminated to poor results, it indeed supports Hosfords' (1984:63) assertion that when students are left to work privately and are not monitored by the teacher, they spend less time engaged in the activities for which they are responsible.

4.5.3 Languages used

This study found that languages used have direct bearing on student academic achievement. There were low incidences of usage of English language as a medium of instruction despite the ministry of Education policy, that in secondary schools English be used as the medium of instruction throughout the country. Through the questionnaire, the researcher established that English was hardly used as medium of instruction as 35(23.18%) participants claimed that it was used always, 108(72%) sometimes and 7(5%) indicated rarely. This was confirmed by participants in a FGO in one of the schools. "In some cases we use Kiswahili and sheng as an excuse to elaborate some concepts manifested lack of mastery of the medium of instruction. It was logically argued that principals lagged in provision of instructional issues, observing classroom teaching and giving feedback practices which could improve performance. This supports Eshiwani (1983) who attributes poor results to 'arm chair' principals who do not know what goes on in the classroom.

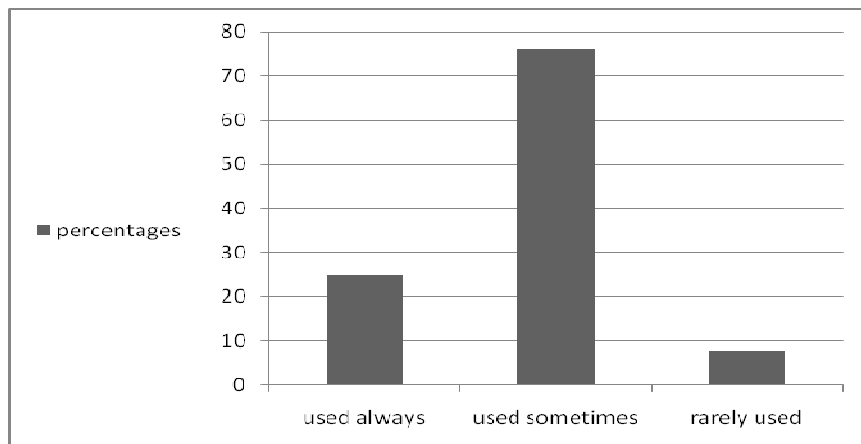


Figure 2: uses of English language as a medium of instruction

4.6 Socio- cultural Factors

In this sub-section, various socio-cultural factors which had direct bearing on academic performance are discussed. These include parents'/ guardians' attitude towards education, drug abuse, strikes and religiosity.

4.6.1 Attitude towards Education.

This study found that most parents/guardians had questionable attitude towards education as evidenced by their attendance to school functions. Out of the total participants, 8(20%) indicated that parents/guardians attend school meetings always, 27(68%) attend sometimes and 5(12%) never attend. The results indicated that parents' attendance at school meeting was poor (wanting) and thus demoralizing to the members of the instructional team affecting their efficiency and effectiveness. It indeed denoted lack of support to the system which cannot run efficiently without their input.

This was a manifestation of low regard for education by parents in the region which had an adverse effect on academic achievement. It confirmed UNESCO (2009:19) observation that students are interested in their school work only if parents/ guardians show concern over education, students would embrace it. This finding agrees with UNICEF (2007:88) revelation that children achievement is influenced by the support they receive at home.

4.6.2 Drug Abuse

It was evident from the study that there were cases of drug taking in the public secondary schools in the region. Through the questionnaire, the study established that students who engage in drug taking create problems in class. 53 (35%) participants reported always and 72(48%) sometimes while 25(17%) did not associate them.

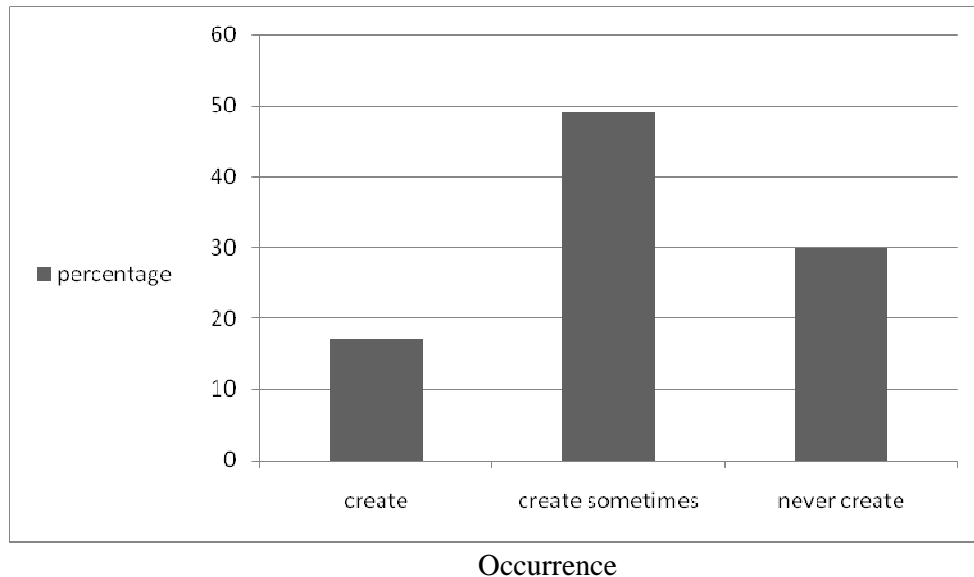


Figure 3: Occurrences of problems posed by students who engage in drug abuse.

These findings were confirmed by the focus group discussions which outlined the related problems in school as reported by one of the participants. Disrespect to teachers, poor concentration in class due to pre-occupation with thoughts of taking drugs; emotional imbalances in case of delay during the lessons before the next take. Fighting even at a very slight provocation with others and the teachers, stealing in school in order to get money to buy drugs, causing strikes in schools. The researcher attributed the above problems to peer influence. Some students are even forced to abuse drugs by their peers. The study found that the drugs are readily available in the market. There are many idle youths willing to sell drugs to the students, hence when the students go out they can easily access the drugs. In some schools the students send the workers to buy for them at a fee. The environment is also to be blamed for the vice. Through the questionnaire, the study found that drug abuse negatively affects students' academic achievement. Out of the total participants, 100(54.01%) well and 56(21.24%) very well.

This was confirmed by focus group discussion whereby participants from one of the schools blamed involvement in drug abuse “boys and girls who engage in drug abuse have poor concentration in class and as a result perform poorly.”

These findings concurred with saffron et al (2001) study which outlined disruption to education by loss of time and concentration on education objectives as the detrimental effects of engagement in drug taking activity.

The study further established that there were intervention measures put in place to address the vice. These included guidance and counseling, pastoral care, teaching life skills, educating the parents/guardians, involvement of the parents in addressing the vice and punishment. Despite employment of the intervention, persistence of the problem was noted and the schools continued to perform poorly as Table 4.2 indicates. This led to a conclusion that the measures employed to curb the vice were ineffective and need to be reviewed, strengthened and improved.

4.6.3 Religiosity/ spirituality

Religiosity/ spirituality of the learners/students involvement in religious activities was noted. This included participation in communion prayers, bible reading, and singing hymns during the FGDS in all the schools. Students who attended catechism were often granted permission to attend too. The findings were also supported by the 110(60%) participants who indicated involvement always, 40(32%) sometimes and 10(8.2%) who indicated never as far as the questionnaire was concerned. The study found that despite involvement of pupils in religious activities and participation in catechism most schools performed poorly in national examination as indicated In the table 4.2. This led the researcher to conclude that mere(usual) involvement of learners in religious activities does not necessarily (always) promote positive behavior or improved academic performance.

The study therefore refuted walker and Dixon (2002, cited in Fukofuka, 2007) finding that spiritual beliefs and religious participation are positively related to academic performance.

4.6.4 Strikes

The study established through the questionnaire the influence of strikes in schools on education outcomes and in particular satisfactory completion of the secondary level of education in the region. The participants were asked whether there had been cases of strikes in their schools. Out of the total number of the participants 69(32.86%) indicated yes while 31(23.14%) indicated none. This was confirmed by the focus group discussions whereby majority of the participants reported that there had been few.

The use of drugs was associated with those who organize for the strikes. Strikes occurrence interferes with the learning process as the learning gets suspended and at times those involved in the planning of the strike are sent home.

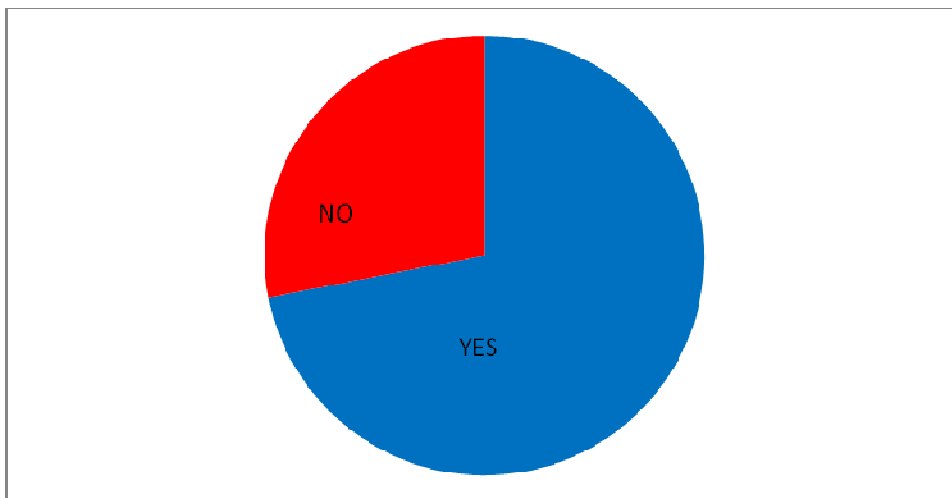


Figure 4: presence of the strikes in the schools

Through the questionnaire, the study further established problems which schools experience due to the occurrence of strikes in the schools.76(45.71%) destruction of resources, e.g.

structures, 60(31.90%) indicated lack of syllabus coverage due to suspension of the learning process, 14(26.14%) indicated death of some students.

The researcher therefore, concluded that the presence of strikes in the region had a negative impact on the teaching and learning process. The finding concurred with Burnet (1994) study that the presences of strikes in schools play a significant role in the widespread increase of violence in schools. The study findings supported Walker et al (2004) study which warned that violence and threats of it is highly disruptive to the school environment and interferes significantly with the teaching- learning process.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction.

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the objectives of the study. It ends with suggestions for further study.

5.2 Summary.

Quality education reflected in the national examination performance is a key component of human characteristics essential for sustainable socio-economic development and poverty eradication. At independence in 1963, the Government of the Republic of Kenya recognized education as a basic human right and a poverty tool for human resource and national development.

In spite of the Government of the Republic of Kenya commitment to provide quality education, the public schools in Matungulu District, Machakos county have been performing dismally in the national examination (KCSE) This poses a serious threat to the socio-economic development of the region and the country at large. This study therefore sought to establish the factors influencing academic performance of the public secondary schools in Matungulu District Machakos County. The objectives of the study were.

- I. To determine how parental socio-economic background influence performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu District.
- II. To examine the provision of instructional material influence on students performance in Public secondary schools in Matungulu District.

III. To examine how schools how school environment influence performance in Public Secondary schools in Matungulu District.

To establish how socio-cultural factor influence performance in Public Secondary Schools in Matungulu District.

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Three research instruments namely; students' questionnaire, focus group and observation checklist were used to collect data. Fieldwork was done in June and July, 2014. The summary of the findings were presented according to the four independent variables.

5:3 Parental socio-economic factors influencing Academic Performance:

Poor parental care with gross deprivation of social and economic needs of a child usually yield poor academic performance of the child. Good parenting supported by strong economic background could enhance strong academic performance of the child. Students achievements is predicted where the child is properly counseled in the choice of his or her courses and vocation that matches ability, interest and capability.

Children from poor parents often have chores in homes and farms before attending school in the morning and after returning home in the afternoon. Such families may not be able to afford school uniform or adequate food. There may be no place where the child can do his homework and sufficient light for him to work at night after school. Parents' socio- economic background is determined by their income and level of education. Students whose parents earn higher income and have high education level perform better than their counterparts from low income parents.

5:3:1 School environment factors influencing Academic Performance:

Literature has indicated that to realize success, the head teacher must provide adequate (and essential) facilities and resources. The quality and adequacy of resources such as physical facilities and equipments teaching and learning materials have a direct bearing on quality as they determine how effectively the curriculum is implemented. Quality cannot be achieved if the resources and facilities are not available and insufficient quantity and quality. Children achievements in education is not only influenced by the availability of the necessary teaching aids and resources but also by the degree to which they are engaged as actors in the education process and a willingness to offer the necessary flexibility to facilitate their regular attendance.

Class size has also been identified as a determinant of academic performance. Studies have indicated that schools with smaller sizes perform better academically than schools with large class sizes, principal; s behavior has a significant impact on student's achievement. These include the establishment of a vision, clear learning goals and high expectations for learning for all students' interactions and cordial relationships with relevant stakeholders.

5:3:2 Provision of instructional materials factor influencing students' Academic Performance:

There is more consistent relationship between pupil achievement and the availability of books than between other variables such as teachers training, grade repetition and others. The provision of textbooks for secondary schools students in a country is an important part of the government's policy to improve education efficiency and equity. The use of textbooks would raise academic standards and increase the efficiency of a school system. The purchasing of school textbooks to improve efficiency of production and the distribution of books strengthened the relationships between students' economic status and access to books rather

than being diminished by the decentralization. The production of improved textbooks, teaching materials, and teaching quality increases the holding power of schools. This improves the academic performance.

5:3:3 Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Academic Performance.

Students' achievement is highly influenced by the community and the families' attitude towards education. Pupils would work harder and perform well if they realize that their parents and the community are interested in their work. Negative parental attitude including lack of moral guidance encourage children to seek employment and eventually drop out of school. Academic performance is affected negatively when learners engage in drug taking. Drug abuse can lead to rudeness and arrogant to teachers and parents and occasionally causing riots and chaos in their schools and up to become criminals. It may also lead to emotional problems such as depression and low self-esteem which could impede school work. Strikes in schools and related activities have negative impact on performance. Presence of strikes plays a significant role in the widespread increase of violence in schools. Violence and threats of it is highly disruptive to the school environment and interferes significantly with teaching and learning process.

5.4 Conclusion.

From the study, factors within the school and home environment which come into play and influence academic performance of the public secondary schools in the district emerged. The parental socio-Economic background included low parental/guardian education level and regard for education, low income of the parents/guardians and pre-occupation with work. The Socio-cultural factors which emerged include; community/parent low regard for education, drug abuse and strikes. Students also need to be provided with proper environment that will encourage them to study.

5:5 Recommendations

1. School administrators to undergo education management and administration courses so as to improve efficiency.
2. Fully equipped libraries should be provided and this will enhance exposure to a bigger world and environment.
3. Sensitization in societal beliefs, values and practices which hinder education outcomes.
4. Reviewing, improving and strengthening guidance and counseling.

5:6 Suggestions for further study.

- I. Further study should be carried on the effect of school environment on performance.
- II. A study on the impact of effective parenting practices on students' academic performance.
- III. A similar study to be carried out in the whole Matungulu County.

REFERENCES

- Basil, A.O (2007). *Socio- Economic factors influencing students' Academic Performance in Nigeria-in ido local Government Area of Oyo*. Free online library.
- Bogonko, S.N. (1992). *Reflections on Education in East Africa*. Nairobi: oxford. University press.
- Eshiwani, G.S. (1993). *Education in Kenya since independence*. Nairobi: East Africa Educational publishers.
- Eshiwani, G.S (1983). *Factors influencing performance among primary and secondary schools pupils in western province of Kenya*. A policy study. Nairobi: Bureau of Educational Research, Kenyatta University.
- District Education Office, Matungulu (2010). *KCSE Examination Results Analysis*. Unpublished KCSE Results analysis, DEOS' Office.
- Ottwang K.C (1970). *Education and Society*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London
- Samuel K. (1968). *Sociology and introduction to the Science of Society*, Bama and Noble Books, London
- Sifuna D.N. (1980). *Short Essays on Education in Kenya*, Kenya Literature Bureau, Nairobi
- Weeks S. (1967). *Divergence in Educational development, the Case of Kenya and Tanzania*, New York Teachers College Press. New York
- Fukofuka, S. (2007). *The impact of spirituality on Academic Performance* journal of Adventist. Education vol. 10, no.2 October 2007 pp.35-37.

- Gamage, D. Adams, D. and McComana, A. (2009). *The Role of School leadership for effective School Improvement*. Theodore Creighton, Virginia Tech. International journal of Education Leadership Vol.4 no.1
- Ministry of Education (1987). *A Manual for Heads of Secondary Schools in Kenya* (Revised Ed.). Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation
- Ministry of Education (1994). *Perceptions and opinions of selected staff of the ministry of Education Regarding Factors Education in Kenya*. Nairobi: BER.
- Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2001). Report of the Task of Force on Students Discipline and Unrest in Secondary Schools. Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation
- Best, J and Khan. (1998). *Research in Education New Jersey*: Englewood cliffs.
- Hynemann, S, P., and Farrel, J. P., Sepulveda S.A. (1978). Textbooks and achievements: What We Know. World Bank Staff Working Paper 298, Washington, D.C; World Bank.
- UNICEF (2007). *A Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All*. New York: UNICEF.
- UNESCO (2003). *Gender and Education for All: the Leap to Equality*. France: UNESCO.
- World Bank. (2006). *International Efficiency of and costs of Higher Education in Kenya* (draft), by E.Ndungutse, Washington, D.C. the World Bank.
- Orodho, J.A. (2008). *Techniques of Writing Research proposal Reports in Education and Science*. Maseno: Kanezja H.P. Enterprises.

Appendix (I) student's questionnaire

I am a post graduate student at the University of Nairobi and I am conducting a research on the factors influencing academic performance of students in Matungulu District. Please fill in the questionnaire as truthfully as possible. The data collected here is strictly for academic research.

1. Indicate the type of your school. (Tick one)

National District

2. Is your school boarding or day?

Day Boarding

3. How much school fees do you pay per term?

Below 10,000

Between 10,000 – 15,000

Over 15,000

4. How do you pay school fees?

Once for a whole term (the whole amount)

Monthly

Always in arrears

Others (specify)

5. Which is the official language of communication in your school?

.....

6. Is the school administration strict on the use of the language above?

Yes

No

7. Which language do you use when speaking to your peers?

English

Kiswahili

Sheng'

Vernacular

8. Which language do you use when speaking to your teachers?

English

Kiswahili

Sheng'

Vernacular

9. Do you have a library in your school?

Yes

No

If yes, does the library have enough reading materials?

Yes

No

10. How do you rate your school in terms of performance?

Very good

Good

Average

Below average

11. Do you like all subjects taught in school?

Yes

No

If no, explain why.....

.....

.....

12. Do you have personal copies of reading materials?

Yes

No

If no, give reasons.....

.....

.....

13. Do you undertake personal studies?

Yes

No

If no, why.....

.....

.....

.....

14. How do spend your leisure time?

.....

.....

15. How do rate your performance in class?

Below average

Average

Good

Very good

16. Give educational level of your parent/guardian?

Illiterate

Semi-illiterate

Primary level

O-Level (form four)

College and above

17. Do you get any encouragement or guidance to study from your parent.

Yes

No

18. How often are you given homework and fail to complete.

a. complete always

b. complete sometimes

c. Never complete.

If sometimes /always under what circumstances' do you fail to complete?

a. Living in poorly lit rooms

b. Lack of study area at home.

c. Lack of assistance at home

d. Lack of textbooks to refer to.

19. How often do your parents/guardians avail themselves when required by teachers at school?

a. Always

b. Some times

c. Never

20. Do you have cases of drug abuse in your school?

Yes

No

21. Do your colleagues who are involved in drug abuse create problems during teaching/ learning process?

a. Always

b) Sometimes

c) Never.

22. How do your colleagues who abuse drugs perform in examination?

a) Very well b) Well c) fairly.

d) Poorly e) Not Applicable.

23. Have there been some students in your school who have been sent away because of taking part in strikes?

a) Yes

b) No.

24. What measures has your school put in place to solve the problem.

a. Guidance and counseling

- b. Pastoral care
- c. Giving students a lot of assignments
- d. Punishment
- E None

25. How is the academic performance of the students who are involved in strikes?

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Average
- d) Poor

26. Does your school involve you in religious activities?

- a) Yes
- b) No

27. Have you ever been absent from school this term?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, tick against each factor that caused you to be absent from school from the list below.

- a. Lack of meals
- b. Lack of school fees
- c. Working to earn money
- d. Lack of school uniform

Appendix (II) Teacher's questionnaire

I am a post graduate student at the University of Nairobi and I am undertaking a research on the factors that influence academic performance of students in Matungulu District. Please fill in the questionnaire as truthfully as possible. The data collected here is strictly for academic research.

1. Indicate the type of school (tick one)

District

County

Extra County

Private

2. Give location of your school.

Rural

Urban

Semi urban

Slum

3. Do your learners conduct their private studies?

Yes

No

4. Which instructional materials do you have in your school?

.....
.....

Are they adequate for teaching?

Yes No

5. Do you have cases of strikes in our school?

Yes No

6. Which language do students in your school use?

English

Kiswahili

Sheng'

Vernacular

7. Do you think the choice of language has an influence in academic performance of your students?

Yes No

8. Do you have cases of illegal drug use in your school?

Yes No

If yes, explain how this affects academic performance of your students

.....
.....
.....

9. Give a general rating of performance of your school

.....
.....

10. What religious activities are your school students involved in?

-----.

11. What problems do you encounter while handling students who abuse drug

12 What impacts does strikes have on academic performance of the learners?

-----.

13 Do you have cases of learners who fail to complete their assignment?

-----.

If yes, what reasons do they do they give?

-----.

14. What measures has your school put in place to ensure that the learners utilize your prep time properly?

Appendix (III) Questionnaire for parents

I am a post graduate student at the University of Nairobi. I am undertaking a research on factors influencing performance in Matungulu District. Please fill in the questionnaire as truthfully as possible. The data collected here is strictly for academic purposes.

1. Please tick the type of residence you live in

Permanent

Semi-permanent

Informal

2. Where is your home situated?

Slum

Up market estate

Middle-class estate

Rural

3. Tick the level of your income per month

Below 15,000

Between 15,000 – 25,000

Between 25,000 – 35,000

Over 35,000

4. Tick the level of your education

Degree and above

Diploma

O-level

Below O-level

5. Do you provide your child with learning materials

Yes

No

If no, explain the reason

.....

.....

6. Do you encourage your child in his/her studies

Yes

No

If yes, explain how

.....

.....

If no, explain why

.....

.....

7. How often do you participate in school events like meetings/school prize giving day, etc?

Never

Sometimes

Always

8. Describe the type of family set-up you live in.

Single

Separated

Nuclear

Extended

Others (explain.....)

9. How do you rate yourself as a parent?

Strict

Disciplinarian

Moderate

10. Do you offer any kind of guidance to your son/daughter?

Yes

No

11. Is your child involved in illegal taking drugs, where do you think is the source?

Yes

No

Don't know

12. For those young people taking drugs, where do you think is the source?

Home

School/poor

Environment

Others (specify)

13. Which language does your son/daughter use at home?

English

Kiswahili

Sheng'

Vernacular

14. Has your son or daughter been sent home because of taking part in the strike?

Appendix IV. Observation checklist.

1. Facilities

Floor: Smooth Uneven

Doors and windows: Lockable Un-lockable.

Desks: Adequate Inadequate

Toilets/pit latrines: Adequate Inadequate

2 Teaching/ learning resources

Wall charts: Available Not available

3. Vision and mission statements.

Vision: Displayed Not displayed

Mission statement: Displayed Not displayed.