

**FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE IN KENYA
CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (K.C.S.E)
ENGLISH EXAMINATIONS IN NYAMACHE DIVISION,
GUCHA DISTRICT, KENYA.**

BY

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**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Education in
Educational Administration and Planning, University of Nairobi.**



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DECLARATION

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



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This Research Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor



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DEDICATION

This Research Project is dedicated to my dear wife Lauren and daughter Joy for their love and great support, my late brother Jack who was an inspiration to me, and all my family members.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors affecting performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) English examination in Nyamache Division, Gucha District. Five research questions were formulated to guide the study. The review of the literature focused on the nature of language; learning a second language; teacher and qualifications; instructional methods; teaching/learning materials; evaluation methods and the role of mother tongue and attitudinal aspects of teaching and learning.

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This study adopted the Ex-post-facto research design. Simple and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select the participants for the study. The sample consisted of 342 students and 34 teachers out of which 284 (83.0%) of the students' and 34(100%) of the teachers' questionnaires were returned and considered. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires.

The findings revealed that teachers were qualified and so the issue of teacher qualification was not a factor that may have affected students' performance. It was also found out that teachers' evaluation methods had an effect on students performance in English examination. For example, 72.5% of students said that teachers rarely gave them assignments and home work. Majority of the students (94.1%) said that teachers did not correct their assignments. It was also revealed that lack of teaching and learning materials had an effect of poor performance in English. For example 64.7% of teachers said that they did not have teachers reference books and guides. Additionally, a majority, (85.3%) of the teachers and 73.6% students said

they had inadequate audio tapes while 91.2% of the teachers and 73.6% students said they had quite inadequate visual tapes.

The research also revealed that teachers used methods of teaching which were seemingly of a lower level. For example, 79.4% used lecture method of teaching and 66.2% never used demonstration method of teaching, which is a higher level method. The use of mother tongue was another factor which affected students' performance. For example, 58.8% of the teachers said that mother tongue was the most frequently used language in the school, while many students, 39.4 % said they used mother tongue at school. Furthermore, students were found to have negative attitude towards English as a subject and towards areas tested in English which also contributed to poor performance in English. For example, majority of the students (66.2%) had negative attitude towards learning English and 72.5% of them had negative attitude towards areas examined in English.

Based on the findings it was recommended that teachers should use methods of teaching that involve students more as students participation in teaching and learning is very important. In addition, schools should provide the required teaching and learning facilities. School administration should encourage students to communicate in English while at school. This would help in learning spoken language and also assist in making students learn how to think and express themselves in english.

It was also recommended that school administration should find ways of helping students cultivate positive attitude towards English. This could be done by planning for school drama, going to theatres which show English plays, encouraging students

to join English clubs such as journalism, debating, young writers and others. The researcher made the following suggestions for further research; There is need to conduct a research to investigate home background and its effect of students performance; a study to investigate how administrative factors contribute to poor performance should also be conducted.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Language is a unique human characteristic: it is the basis of interaction between people and the principal thing that binds people together. Besides, it gives people an identity and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, it enables people to cooperate and work together for the common good. At the national level, it makes good economic, social and political sense to have one common language. It is through such common language that a country can coordinate the diverse and the efforts of its citizens towards the achievement of national goals and the presentation of a united front to the world (Edward, 1976).

However, many African countries are linguistically diverse, thus, a country has to make a choice out of a range of possibilities available. Spenser (1963) says that the choice of a first National Language in Africa often falls upon a European language that historically has the largest and closest associations with the country. The association has majorly been colonial and has led to categorization of African countries into two major linguistic blocks: those that were colonized by France and speak French (Francophone) and those that were colonized by Britain and speak English (Anglophone). (Carrol, 1967)

English is the principal means of communication among different nations of the world. According to Larry (1983), it is estimated that between 500 and 600 million people living on all continents use English to interact in governmental, academic, industrial, business, cultural, social and athletic contexts. He adds that more and more countries have made the language their *Lingua Franca* to communicate not only with the English-speaking world but also with the rest of the world. The increase in the use of the language has led to the development of a functional concept of English as an international language . According to Charles (2002) the rapid world-wide expansion of English means that it is now one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with well over 400 million native speakers and roughly the same number who speak it as a second language. Charles says that during the first half of the 19th Century British rule was established in Singapore, British Guiana, New Zealand and Hong Kong; the second half of the century was marked by "The Scramble for Africa", in which colonial powers (Belgium, Britain, France, Germany and Portugal) competed for possessions in African continent. As a result British rule was established in regions of West Africa (including what is now Nigeria), East Africa (including what is Kenya now and Tanzania) and Southern Africa (including what is now Zimbabwe)

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When Kenya became independent in 1963, English was recognized as the official language of communication in the country, and also adopted as the medium of instruction in schools (Republic of Kenya, 1964). It is also a compulsory subject in the secondary school curriculum. (Ministry of Education, Science and technology, Secondary School Syllabus, 2002: VI). Achievement for students in all subjects

except languages at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) level therefore largely depends on their ability to use the language effectively (Masinjilia, 1989 quoted in Mutea, 2000). It is also a prerequisite for further education and training in Kenya, and for this reason performance in it is a concern to both educators and the general public alike (Mutea, 2000). Afolayon and Newsom (1983) identify four generally recognized basic language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Essentially they add, the skills are those required for education. They went on to say that reading is an essential activity and represents a major part of the students studying time: success in an examination is directly related to reading ability. They grouped necessary reading skills round two main concepts: Reading Efficiency and Reading Comprehension. Then they explained that the principal emphasis on Reading Efficiency is placed on developing skill in speed reading within tolerable limits of comprehension while emphasis on Reading Comprehension is placed on the recognition of reading level and the development of appropriate techniques for improving understanding of materials read.

The importance of writing skills for students is seen in the fact that most language demands, which have a bearing on their qualification and certification, are in writing. Folayon and Newsome (1983) again grouped writing skills round two main notions: concept Grasping and Concept formation. The two notions, they say, together see writing as a process reflecting on the world phenomena around us. They explained that Concept Grasping, on the one hand expresses an interpretation of the world of phenomena and is recognized as equally important in understanding arguments or expository writing as in creating a logical and unified argument or essay, as well as

note taking and outlining. Concept Formation on the other hand, expresses the process of explaining the world of phenomena around us after our own image or knowledge. It is concerned as much with the content of essays, logical and unified arguments and reports as with the organization and forms of these ideas. Consequently, the study and analysis of various ideas, concepts and thoughts, grammatical information, modern or contemporary English usage, various strategies of making words, constructing paragraphs and building up full discourses and peculiar problems relating to both syntax and lexis of present day English for students in a second language situation came under concept formation, they said. Finally, they said that the exposure to and the study of written materials representing a variety of registers therefore, also constitute essential steps in the acquisition of writing skills.

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Learning as an interactive process requires good speaking and listening skills. In a classroom teacher gives instructions, explains points, and engages the class in discussions while students answer or ask questions, follow instructions and so on. Therefore they are expected to acquire adequate standards of proficiency and good listening habits for meaningful learning to take place.

However, despite its important role in the curriculum, English has not been performed well at KCSE over the past years. For example, commenting on the 1999 KCSE examination results, Hon. Kalonzo Musyoka the then Minister for Education said that there was need to improve in English. He added that the drop in the performance in the language was worrying as it forms the cornerstone of the learning process (Kenya Times, 25th February 2000 (p 33). All that means that for candidates to comprehend

what they are being taught and thus do well in their examinations, they need to be well versed in English. Also during the release of 1995 KCSE results the then Kenya National Examinations Council Chairman professor George Eshiwani said that there was a remarkable fall in performance in English (Kenya Times, 23rd February, 1996, p 2). Similar concerns were raised in 2002 by the then Minister of Education Hon. Henry Kosgey while releasing the 2001 KCSE results. He lamented the declining performance in English adding that the same years Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination results showed a similar trend. He asked education ministry's inspectorate division and teachers of the subject to work towards improving performance (Daily Nation, 26th February, 2002, p. 3). Out of 260,685 candidates who sat 2005 KCSE examination only 554 candidates got 'A' plain (Daily Nation 1st March 2006, p. 2). This represents only 0.021% of the total candidates which is quite low as compared to other subjects. For example, Kiswahili, Christian Religious education, Biology had all a mean beyond that of English.

Analysis by KNEC also confirms that performance in English of KCSE has been poor. A look at four years (2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003) shows the following: In 2000, out of a maximum score of 200 marks, the mean score was 74.34, which translates to 37.17%; in 2001 out of a maximum score of 200 marks, the mean score was 68.84 which translates to 34.42%; in 2002, out of a maximum score of 200 marks, the mean score was 58.16 which translates to 29.08% while in 2003, out of a maximum score of 200 marks the mean score was 65.26 which translates to 32.63%. All these performances are below average. Table 1 below summarizes the information.

Table 1: Candidates National Average performance in KCSE English Examination for four years (2000 – 2003).

Year	Maximum	Mean Score	Percentage
2000	200	73.34	37.17
2001	200	68.84	34.42
2002	200	58.16	29.08
2003	200	65.26	32.63

Source: KNEC (2004)

1.1 Statement of Problem

Nyamache Division falls within Gucha District whose performance in English examinations has not been good over the recent past years. According to data obtained from the District Education Office, Gucha, 2004 in 1999, the district had a mean score of 3.32; in 2000 it had 3.35, an improvement by 0.03 points in 2001 it had 3.37, an improvement by 0.02 points; in 2002 it had 3.35 a drop by 0.02 points while in 2003 it had 3.34 a drop by 0.01 points. It is worth noting that despite the variations, performance in the district still remains at below average. Furthermore, according to KNEC (2004) Gucha District was ranked position sixty nine (69) out of seventy one (71) districts in the republic of Kenya in 2003 KCSE Examination. Table 2 below gives a summary of English performance in KCSE at the district, taking into account all the seven divisions it has for five years (1999 – 2003).

Table 2: Average performance per division in KCSE English Examination in Gucha District for five years (1999 – 2003).

Division / Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Mean Score (MS)	Max Score (MG)	District Order of Merit
Etago	3.60	3.59	3.65	3.61	3.63	3.62	12	1
Sameta	3.50	3.49	3.58	3.55	3.57	3.54	12	2
Ogembo	3.29	3.39	3.40	3.31	3.30	3.34	12	3
Nyacheki	3.29	3.32	3.36	3.30	3.34	3.32	12	4
Kenyenya	3.30	3.29	3.34	3.31	3.22	3.29	12	5
Nyamarembe	3.16	3.21	3.09	3.14	3.15	3.15	12	6
Nyamache	3.13	3.19	3.17	3.20	3.18	3.17	12	7

Source: District Education Office, Gucha (2004)

From the analysis presented on the Table 2 above Nyamache Division is ranked last in the district with 3.15 points for the period between 1999 – 2003. It is only the year 1999 and 2000 when it was ranked second last with 3.16 and 3.21 points for the two respective years. Otherwise in the years 2001, 2002 and 2003 it had the lowest average points in the district, an indicator that it has consistently had low performance. Hence in view of that, the need for this study.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors that affect performance in KCSE English examinations in Nyamache Division, Gucha District Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The following were the objectives of the study:

- 1.3.1 To examine the effect of evaluation methods used by teachers on KCSE academic performance in English.
- 1.3.2 To determine the effect of the teacher qualifications on performance in KCSE English examinations.
- 1.3.3 To examine the extent to which teachers' instructional methods affect performance in KCSE English examinations.
- 1.3.4 To determine the extent to which availability of adequate teaching and learning materials affect performance in KCSE English examinations.
- 1.3.5 To assess the extent to which the use of mother tongue by the students in school affects performance in KCSE examinations.
- 1.3.6 To determine the extent to which students' attitude towards learning English affects performance of KCSE in English examination.

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1.4. Research Questions

The following were the research questions:

- 1.4.1 How does the teachers' evaluation methods affect performance in KCSE English examination?
- 1.4.2 To what extent does the availability of adequate teaching and learning materials affect performance in KCSE English examinations?
- 1.4.3 To what extent do the teachers' instructional methods affect performance?

1.4.4 To what extent does the use of native language by the student in schools affect performance in KCSE English examinations?

1.4.6. How does the students' attitude towards learning English affect performance in KCSE English examinations?

1.5 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of the study may help parents, teachers, students and administrators gain needed insights on how teaching and learning can be better organized to help improve performance in KCSE English examinations in Nyamache Division, Gucha District. Secondly, when the findings are generalized to other parts of the country, they may provide useful information to curriculum designers and developers that can enable them come up with an English curriculum that is acceptable to many, or to identify and fill in gaps that may be in the existing curriculum. Lastly, the findings may help future researchers in identifying priority areas in which to carry out more research.

1.6 Limitations

The study used K.C.S.E results, which are a form of summation evaluation which measures the outcome of the learning process rather than the process itself. The factors that may have affected performance such as availability of teaching/learning materials, evaluation and instructional methods used by teachers could not be present at the time of study. Furthermore, the researcher was not able to manipulate the factors to accurately determine the extent to which they affected performance.

Learning environments also differ and depending on the quality, impact positively or negatively on the final examination results. Performance could also be affected by students' cognitive, social and psychological factors such as entry behaviour, cultural orientation and emotional state respectively which the researcher had no control over.

The other limitation is that the researcher dealt with students who were presently in the schools and not the ones whose results were being considered. This is because the latter could not be traced. However, it was assumed that the characteristics of the current students such as their attitude and the use of mother-tongue were similar to those of the previous students.

1.7 Delimitations

The study was carried out in secondary schools in Nyamache Division, Gucha District only. It involved seeking information from English teachers and form four students of the schools only. Teachers and students were directly involved in the teaching and learning process so information from them was likely to be more accurate and authoritative. Form four students had been in school for many years as compared to other students hence they are likely to be more experienced and more knowledgeable on factors that affect performance in examination than their counterparts in other classes.

1.8 Basic Assumptions

It was assumed that KCSE examination results are effective, valid and reliable measures of the students' performance. It was also assumed that the respondents would be honest and willing to cooperate and give honest and uninfluenced answers. Lastly, it was assumed that the ranking of divisions using arithmetic mean is an acceptable and accurate method of determining the position of each division in terms of performance.

1.9 Definition of Significant Terms.

Attitude refers to the predisposition to think, feel and perceive in a certain way.

Division in the context of education it refers to the area into which a district is sub-divided for effective administration and supervision.

Head teacher refers to the person in charge of the day to day running of a Secondary School in accordance with CAP 212 of the Laws of Kenya.

International Language refers to a language that has spread beyond its own continent of birth, is widely understood in at least two continents and it is the official language of several states in these continents.

Learners refers to people who are in the process of gaining knowledge and experience in a secondary school and are being instructed on the prescribed Ministry of Education Secondary Curriculum.

Lingua Franca is a language that people use to communicate when they have different first/ native languages.

Mother tongue refers to the language that one learns usually in the country or areas where one is born. It is also known as primary language, the mother tongue or L1 (First Language).

Official Language refers to the language that has been recognized and authorized by the government for use in the country.

Performance is standard at which someone does something such as a job or examination, for example students are usually gauged by the examination results.

Second Language is other language one learns after the first language.

Target Language refers to the language being learnt.

Teaching and learning materials are the items such as the textbooks, charts and other stationery that are designed, modified and prepared to assist in teaching/learning operations.

Secondary School is an institution of learning which offers post primary education and prepares learners for the form four examinations.

Teacher refers to the person charged with the task of facilitating the learning process in schools through organizing and conducting instructional activities in the classrooms.

1.10 Organization of the study

The study was organized in five chapters. Chapter One dealt with the general introduction of the research which includes the background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, basic assumptions of the study, definition of significant terms and the organization of the study.

Chapter Two dealt with review of related literature beginning with an introduction, literature related nature of language, second language learning, teacher qualifications, instructional methods, teaching/learning materials, evaluation methods, the role of native language and instructional methods.

Chapter Three consisted of research methodology which was divided into introduction, research design, target population, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, instrument validity, reliability, data collection procedure.

Chapter Four dealt with the presentation of the research findings while Chapter Five provided the summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

• •

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of this section was to review relevant literature on factors affecting performance in English by students. The review focused on eight areas: The nature of language, learning a second language, Teacher and Qualifications, Instructional Methods, Teaching/Learning Materials, Evaluation Methods, The Role of Nations Language and Attitudinal Aspects of teaching and learning.

2.1 The Nature of Language

Muriel (1976) looks at some of the most salient facts about language that have been learnt from the field of linguistics. First, the spoken form of language is basic speech occurred long before writing in the history of language, as it occurs in the language development of every child.

Second, it is systematic: it consists of elements which recur in regular patterns of relationships: each variety (or dialect) of a language is a slightly different system, but equally regular. The vast majority of all sentences which are used have not been memorized but are created according to a system of rules which the speaker is usually unconscious of using or of even knowing, if he acquired the language as a young child.

Third, it is a symbolic; it is a type of code; experience is encoded by the speaker, transmitted by speech, and decoded by the hearer. Fourth: it does change: the language that was spoken at a particular point in time will not be the same later on hence we have for example, old English, Middle English and Modern English.

Fifth, it is social. The nature and form of each language reflects the social requirements of the society that uses it and there is no standard for judging the effectiveness of a language other than to estimate its success in achieving the social tasks that are demanded of it. Lastly, it is variable: every person has a unique linguistic experience and speaks in a way slightly different from the way anyone else speaks.

2.2 Learning a Second Language

Muriel (1976) says that as a child develops control over his native language many aspects of perception and production become more and more fixed, and he loses much of the flexibility he had to produce sounds that are not in the language around him; he soon tends to hear all speech sounds in terms of the phonological system of his own language; he does not hear foreign sounds as they are actually produced, but unconsciously pigeon holes them in the categories he had already learnt to distinguish for his native language. He gives an example of the Spanish speaker who is inherently incapable of recognizing the difference between *she* and *ch*; the speaker has been conditioned **not to** by his experience with his native language in which the difference between the two sounds is not distinctive and therefore ignored.

Muriel says one of the primary steps in learning English as a second language is thus to learn to recognize which differences in sound signal a difference in meaning of English words and to make these differences in speech, at least is so far as intelligibility depends on such distinctions.

The second step is learning the basic grammatical system of English, the formal features which express meaning or the relationship of elements in sentences. He says the grammar of one language is never exactly the same as any other, although some closely related languages have many types of structures in common (like English, German, French and Spanish) because they descend from a common ancestral language.

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Third step is acquiring an adequate vocabulary. Practically every word in English has one or more meanings that can be looked up in a dictionary, but vocabulary cannot be learnt in grammatical isolation, and students must understand a great deal of more than formal definitions of the words they hear if they are to know the full meaning of what an English – speaker says. Therefore they must understand the cultural referents which words reflect in English, how such referents are categorized and even the patterns of thought such linguistic organization represents.

Lastly, he says gestures, intonation, and even facial expressions that accompany language are very important to understanding what one says, and these, too, are different in different language communities. The normal voice level in English may be interpreted as anger by a child from another language background, and that child's respectful aversion of his eyes may be interpreted as shyness or sneakiness by the

English – speaker. He adds that smiling at a stranger may receive varying interpretations from “Friendly” to “Wicked” even from region to region in the United States.

2.3 Teacher Qualifications

The professional role of a teacher is a demanding one and, stretches from classroom teaching, curriculum development, examination processing, pedagogical material, preparation and evaluation to modeling the behaviour of the students and acting as a role model to the society.

According to Wamai (1991) a study carried out in Kenya schools indicated that the academic qualification of teachers is one of the most important factors that determine academic achievement by learners. The study found out that the harambee schools, which depended mainly on untrained teachers had a higher failure rate as compared to government schools that were manned by trained teachers.

Other data support the relationship between teacher qualification and candidate’s performance in Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) examination in 1983 for selected districts in Kenya shows a significant relationship: districts with higher untrained teacher to trained teacher ratios generally had lower performance averages than their counterparts with lower untrained teacher to trained teacher ratios. Table 3 below shows the relationship.

Table 3: The effect of untrained Teacher (UT) Element on performance of candidates in KCPE for selected districts in Kenya (1983)

District	Number of teachers		UT:TT Ratio	Mean score				Rank.
	Untrained (UT)	Trained (TT)		English	Maths	General Paper	Total	
Muranga	1011	5098	1:5.04	54.06	59.61	55.90	169.5	1
Kirinyaga	456	2257	1:4.9	52.97	58.03	51.17	167.17	2
Nyandarua	549	1864	1:3.4	52.51	56.40	55.19	164.10	3
Kilifi	1275	1305	1:1.02	49.19	48.93	47.96	147.93	4
South Nyanza	4064	4060	1:0.99	46.92	47.61	49.32	143.86	5
Kitui	2130	2416	1:1.34	46.16	45.32	46.32	138.51	6

Source: Mutea (2000)

Masinjila (1989) says that untrained teachers constituted another category of teachers of English in secondary schools. He states that these could be graduates, mainly Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree who take up teaching as a last resort or who hold the teaching job while looking around for more "appropriate" openings and schools have to make do with them, some of whom might be good but lack commitment and the correct teaching orientation, attitudes and training in the teaching of English. He adds that with the coming of 8.4.4 system of education and the integration of English language and literature in English, a teacher who was trained to teach literature had to teach language as well and vice versa. A number of teachers were not confident enough to handle some of the components of the subject because they did not learn how to teach them in college so they teach only areas they find easy of the expense of other areas. Others are glossed over (Onjoro, 1990).

In a paper entitled “English Across the curriculum: The Kenya Context” hosted by the British council and the University of Nairobi in 1993 it was reported that after the introduction of the 8-4-4 system of education in 1985, it was felt that there was a need for massive in service training for teachers of English to prepare them to cope with the demands of the new syllabus, which required new approaches to the teaching of English. (Mutea, 2000)

The 2002 Central Provincial Director of Education (PDE) Peter Macharia said there was a significant improvement in performance in 2001 KCSE examination because of intensive in service training of head teachers, their deputies and teachers in the administration and management of schools (East African Standard, 2nd March 2002 p.14).

Opondo and others (1992), quoted in Ayoo (2002) carried out a study on the educational situation for the Kenyan girl - child. One of the findings established was that unqualified staff in unaided (or harambee) schools led to poor performance in examinations. Olembo (1977) noted that the quality of a headteacher affects performance. He says that the way the head teachers structures and administers the school, relates with the schools sub systems, teachers and students significantly affects students’ performance in national examinations.

Harris and Bennet (1969) say that if teachers have insufficient subject knowledge, or an inadequate level of training, the quality of output will be impaired: and could be serious depending on the extent of insufficiency. Lack of adherence to a minimum nationwide standard of employment of teachers, they add, is not good for quality as

the degeneration of a teacher competence in psychology, subject methods and practical training adversely impacts on the quality of educational experiences of the learners.

A management handbook by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) (1999:21) shows that school improvement and effectiveness can be realized through contributions made by various inputs, but effective teaching by far plays the biggest role. Table 4 below shows this.

Table 4: Percentage contribution of instructional inputs to good results.

Input	Percentage contribution to good results
Effective teaching	75
Adequate text books, tuition equipment	15
Good Physical facilities, other factors like supervision and community support	10

Source: TSC. (1999)

Makau and Somerset in 1980 noted that academic and professional qualifications of teachers were crucial factor in influencing performance; the differences in teaching effect performance and those schools with the best qualified teachers tended to be the most successful in examinations. Ndavi (1999) adds that language learning does not merely involve the learning of facts but learning communication skills and the use of language in appropriate context therefore competence of the teacher is critical.

2.4 Teaching and Learning Materials

Instructional materials are an integral component of the Learning process. Their adequacy and suitability are important. Adesine (1994) says that the quality of education the learners receive bears direct relevance to the availability or lack there of instructional materials. Mwamwenda and Mwamenda (1987) quoted in Ayoo (2002) carried out a study established that the availability of schools physical facilities on performance of class seven pupils in examination in Botswana. The study on the effects of schools physical facilities had a direct link to performance. Eshiwani (1983) conducted a study in Western Province of Kenya on factors influencing performance among primary and secondary school pupils and noted that school facilities such as textbooks, visual aids and libraries are vital to performance in national examinations.

A study by Heinemann in 1984 explored the relationship between teaching materials and other related material inputs and students learning and achievement in developing countries. The study evaluated a textbook programme in the Philippines which was introduced there to raise the national level of academic achievement among three subjects Philippino, Mathematics and Science in two grades. The programme reduced the ratio of pupils per book per subject from an average of 10:1 to 2:1 and there was a marked improvement. The study then concluded that there was a reasonable impact of textbook availability and the achievement of pupils (Ayoo 2002)

A study was carried out by the Population Council and the Government of Kenya in 1997 to establish the effects of the material inputs on performance in single sex and

mixed secondary schools. A directory of different types of materials that would be found in a typical secondary school was prepared some of these included textbooks, library, laboratory, playing fields, science rooms and telephone. An examination of the material inputs in selected schools revealed that single sex schools were better equipped than the mixed schools. The shortage of the necessary material inputs in mixed schools was therefore identified as one of the factors affecting performance (Population Council and Government of Kenya. 1997).

Other studies have shown a significant relationship between teaching materials and other related inputs and student learning and achievement in developing countries. The availability of textbooks and other reading materials have a positive effect on school effectiveness (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985). It is only with such materials that pupils can learn to work independently or in groups (Republic of Kenya, 2001) Elimu Yetu Coalition (2003) says that there is a positive correlation between availability of textbooks and three other variables namely: Pupil's achievement, enriching of teaching – learning and professional development of poorly trained teachers in developing countries.

2.5 Instructional Methods/Techniques

Hornsby in Allen (1972) gives the situational approach to the Language teaching. He says that interest, one of the most important elements in teaching, cannot be maintained indefinitely: young learners may want to use the new language for something more exciting than the kinds of action chain that can be performed in the classroom: they want to learn about life in the country whose language they are

learning, they want to adventure stories and tales from history, and above all they want to use the new language in talking the affairs of daily life. Hornsby therefore attempts to show how pictures may be used to supply situations outside the classroom, situations suitable for intensive oral work. He gives the examples of *Eckersley's Essential English for Foreign Students* pictures reproduced from *punch* and other humorous periodicals which in are used as stories without words. He goes on to say that question and answer work based on a textbook story is usually, by its very nature, limited to past tense forms. For example one asks: "Who first saw the bear? Did the wounded bear attack the guide or did it run away?" It is only with pictures: he says, exhibited or pointed to one at a time that one can ask, "What is the guide going to do? "What has the guide just done? Hornsby adds that a picture is an advantage if the subject of the pictured story can be chosen so that it enables the teacher to deal not only with the situations in the picture but with real situations in real life: escape from the classroom, into the outside world.

Another principle of language teaching is what Earl W. Stevick in Allen ed, (1972) calls "Technemes and the Rhythm of Class Activity. He says it is a simple principle, yet in observing scores of teachers he has seldom seen it followed. Teachers who have followed it have been successful ones. He adds that the principle applies to all successful systems of language teaching, even to systems that seem to be mutually contradictory. He explains that there are two very broad conditions for language learning: exposure to the language to be learnt and morale, which represents a combination of self confidence and keen interest in the work at hand. He says of morale and exposure in are to remain high over long periods of time, the student must

feel a continuing sense of progress and closely related to this is the rhythm of class activity he needs, for example, to control the rate at which the student encounters difficulties; too many difficulties per minute will overwhelm him, while too few will leave him restless.

Most programmes in English use dialogues or narratives, or both to show how words work in "real life" situations and to help students become acquainted with the common life experiences that make English mean what it means to native speaker (Allen, ed 1972)

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Modern audio – lingual theory stresses a listening – speaking- reading – writing sequence in foreign language instruction (Allen ed 1972). They add that the importance of ear training in developing proficiency receives particular emphasis. They give strong arguments, both physiological and psychological, for preceding speaking practice with training in listening comprehension, thus:

1. Ear training facilitates speaking. Articulation is dependent upon hearing sounds accurately discrimination among sounds, establishment (memorization or internalization) of proper auditory sound images, and development of a feel for the new language.
2. Concentration on one skill at a time facilitates learning by reducing the load on the student and by permitting the use of materials and techniques geared to the specific objectives and requirements of each skill.

3. When the students are required to speak from the outset, the likelihood for an error is increased. apprehensiveness on the part of the student impeded learning, and confidence is developed slowly (if at all). When listening comprehension precedes speaking, the student's initial experience includes more correct responses and more frequent positive reinforcement, less apprehension, and more rapid development of his language learning ability.
4. Prematurely listening to his own unauthentic pronunciation, and to that of other students, may interfere with the student's discrimination and retention of correct sounds.

Composition writing among many students in Kenya has been poor due to the lack of systematic teaching of the art, based on the wrong premise that the process of writing composition is innate in humanity thereby making the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) and English language teachers (the curriculum implementers) apparently fail to evolve a concrete system whereby the skill can be imparted to the learner. (Kenya Times 4th February, 2002(p. 13).

2.6 Evaluation Methods

Gormon (1970) gives a list that summarizes the chief objective of language testing that does indicate six different emphases in measuring student ability or potential.

1. To determine readiness for instructional programmes. Some screening tests are used to separate those who are prepared for an academic or

training programme from those who are not. Such selection tests have a single cut off point: examiners either “pass” or “Fail” the text and the degree of success or failure may not be deemed important.

2. To classify or place individuals in appropriate language classes. Often screening tests try to distinguish *degrees of proficiency* so that examinees may be assigned to specific sections or activities on the basis of their current level of competence. Such tests may make no pass - fail distinctions, since some kind of training is offered to everyone.

To diagnose the individuals specific strengths and weaknesses. Diagnostic screening tests generally consist of several short but reliable subtests measuring different language skills or components of single broad skill. On the basis of the individual's performance on each sub test, we can plot a *performance profile* which will show his relative strength in the areas tested.

3. To measure aptitude for learning. Still another kind of screening test is used to predict future performance. At the time of testing, the examinee may have little or no knowledge of the language to be studied, and the test is employed to test their potential.
4. To measure the extent of achievement of the instructional goals. Achievement tests are used to indicate group or individual progress toward the instructional objectives of a specific study or training programme. Examples are progress tests and final examination in a course of study.

5. To evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Other achievements tests are used exclusively to assess the degree of success not in individuals but at the instructional programme itself.

He then groups the six categories under three headings: aptitude (category 4), general proficiency (categories 1- 3), and achievement (Categories 5 and 6). He says aptitude test serves to indicate an individual's facility for acquiring specific skills and learning; general proficiency test indicates what an individual is capable of doing now (as the result of his cumulative learning experiences), though it may also serve as a basis for predicting future attainment; while achievement tests indicate the extent to which an individual has mastered the specific skills or body information acquired in a formal learning situation.

David goes ahead and gives the principal language testing techniques. The first one is translation which he says is not easy to evaluate arguing that the criteria and standards for judging translations depend so much on individual taste that the translation test tends to be a highly unreliable kind of measure, and particularly when large numbers of examinees require several scores.

The second is dictation which he says is a useful pedagogical device (if used in moderation) with beginning and low – intermediate – level learners of a foreign language and the responses that such students make to dictations will certainly tell the teachers something about their phonological, grammatical, and lexical weakness. However, he says this device is uneconomical and imprecise.

Third is composition test which he says allows the examinee to compose his own relatively free and extended written responses to problems set by the examiner. In foreign language testing he adds, these responses may consist of single paragraphs or may be full essays in which the student is rated not only on his use of the grammatical structures and lexicon of the target language but also on his ideas and their organization. Grades for such "free responses" tests may also take into account the examinee's employment of the graphic conventions spellings punctuations, capitalization, paragraphing and over handwriting. He says that in advanced – level courses, such tests remain one of the favorite forms measurement for the very understandable reason that they are an easy type of test to construct and appear to measure certain high level abilities than do the objective techniques.

Scored interview is the fourth techniques which is also classified as free response test in which the subjects are allowed to express their answers in their own words in a relatively unstructured testing situation but the examiner must provide a large number of cues throughout the performance and the evaluation is generally made after the actual production of the responses, and there is no way for the examinee to re – examine the performance later in order to check the accuracy of his ratings unless tape recorded.

The fifth technique is the use of multiple choice or selection items types which were developed to overcome a number of weaknesses of the composition test. David says that because of the highly structured nature of these items, the test writer can get directly at many of the specific skills and learning's he wishes to measure, and the

examinee cannot evade difficult problems as he often can with compositions. As these items generally can be answered fairly rapidly, the test writer can include a large number of different tasks in the testing session. Hence in as much as the examinee responds by choosing from several possible answers supplied by the test writer, scoring can be done quickly and involves no judgments as to degrees of correctness. Because of these the writer, he says, multiple choice tests tend to have superior reliability and validity.

The last technique David gives is short answer items tests which he says combine some virtues of both multiple choice and composition tests: the problems are short and highly structured yet they provide the examinee with the opportunity to compose his own answers. As commonly used in language testing short - answer items require the examinee either to complete a sentence or to compose his own according to much specified directions. They are extremely useful in informal classroom testing: they are relatively quick easy to write and require less scoring time than would a composition. However, David gives their disadvantage for large scale testing as, first, that they take longer to score than multiple - choice type, an important factor when large numbers of papers are involved, and second that quite frequently there are a number of possible right answers, some of which the item writer might not even have considered at the time he prepared the text. A review of research by Shiefelbcin and Simons (1981) on determinants of school achievement showed a positive relationship between class assignment and homework and achievement of learners.

2.7 The Role of mother tongue

The influence of mother tongue in second language learning can be seen in either transfer or interference. Transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired (Terence, 1989). While interference is the adverse effect of features of a known language on the acquisition or use of another language (Gormon, 1970). The teachers concern is usually with interference of features of a native language with the learning or use of a second language.

According to Terrance a transfer can be positive or negative whereby the effects of positive transfer are only determinable through comparisons of the success of groups with different languages. Such comparisons, he said, show that cross - linguistic similarities can produce positive transfer in several ways: similarities between native language and target language vocabulary can reduce the time needed to develop good reading, comprehension: similarities between visual systems can make the identification of vowel sounds easier; similarities between writing systems can give learners head start in reading and writing in the target language; lastly, similarities in syntactic structures can facilitate the acquisition of grammar: learners speaking a language with a syntax similar to that of the target language tend to have less difficulty with articles, word order, and relative clauses. On the other hand, he said since negative transfer involves divergence from norms in the target language, it is often easy to identify. Gormon further quotes Schauster (1974) who found that Chinese and Japanese students of English as a second language (E.S.L.) tended to use

fewer (or avoid) relative clauses than did students whose languages have relative clauses, structures more like those of English. He says research indicates that problems may arise from the two kinds of cross linguistics differences: frequency in the use of apologetic formula, and the difference in the relations between apologies and other speech acts. He compares the verbal behaviour of Hebrews, Russian, and English and formed the following tendency:

English ► Russian ► Hebrew

That means English speakers used apologetic formulas the most, and Hebrew speakers used them the least (Terence. 1989). He explains further that native speakers of English generally use apologies more often than native speakers of Hebrew do, and that native speakers of Hebrew do. use apologies when using English less often than native speakers of English do. Terence calls this kind of negative transfer overproduction error.

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The second type of negative transfer he calls production error. This involves the use of native language forms in the target language. He says Ringbhorn (1986) noted the Swedish word *bort* ("away") in an English sentence written by a native speaker of Swedish: "Now I live with my parents. But sometimes I must go bort". It can also reflect very closely a native language structure. He quotes Fantini (1985) who noted the following sentence spoken by a Spanish - English bilingual.

<i>Vamos</i>	<i>rapido</i>	<i>aponer</i>	<i>el</i>	<i>fuego</i>	<i>afuera</i>
Let's	quickly	put	the	fire	out

The child made a literal translation of the English expression “Put the out”, which translates it into Spanish as “*extinguir el fuego*” (Terrence 1989). Lexical (word) interference, he says, has mostly been observed between languages, that are more or less closely related and/or in constant cultural contact. For example Swahili derives the meanings of English “ask” – enquire/request between “Uliiza” and “Omba” respectively and unless one makes this distinction it is difficult to see that these concepts really have very much in common, he concludes.

Students from certain linguistic backgrounds have difficulty in learning various aspects of English and they do make predictable mistakes while learning. For example, the Spanish student fails to distinguish *beat* and *beit* and then he does not pronounce *school* and *school* while the Japanese comes to study at the *English Language Institute* (Allen, 1972)

2.8 Attitudinal Aspects of Teaching and Learning

Attitude has been proposed to account for variation in the level of achievement in second language acquisition (Spolky 1968). Spolky says in a typical language learning situation, there are a number of people whose attitudes to each other can be significant: the learner, the teacher, the learners peers and parents and the speakers of the language. Each relationship might well be shown to be a factor controlling the learner’s motivation to acquire the language. Carroll (1967) also suggested the importance of the attitude of parents in his study of foreign language majors and found, that the greater the parents use of the foreign language in the home the higher the mean scores of the students.

Spolky (1918) adds that a number of studies (thought not in language learning) have pointed up the importance of the attitude of the teacher to the learner for the latter's achievement. Teacher expectations, he says, have been shown to make a great deal of difference to the students. He gives an example of an experiment in which the teachers of retarded children attempted to present a much greater number of new words to students they were erroneously informed to be faster learners, and those students learnt more words than the students randomly to labeled "slow".

On peer groups Spolky gives an example of Shuy's study of social dialect in Detroit which shows how various dialect patterns cluster according to age, sex and socio-economic status (Shuy, 1967, quoted in Spolky, 1967); and a study of certain phonological features of people in a predominant community has shown clustering of these features among friends (Spolky, 1988)

Spolky (1968) says that the most important attitudinal factors are the attitude of the learner to the language and to its speakers. He adds that a number of basic studies by Lambert and others (1963) have drawn attention to the major importance of what they call interrogative motivation to the learning of foreign languages. They suggest that there are two classes of motivation for language learning, instrumental and integrative, and that the presence of the latter is necessary to successful mastery of the high levels of proficiency, signaled by the development of a native-like accent and the ability to "think like a native speaker". Reasons are considered instrumental if they suggest the language is being used for such a purpose as to fulfill an educational requirement, to get a better position, or to read material in the language, and are

considered integrative when they suggest the desire to become a member of the community speaking that language, they explain.

Musango (1982) conducted a study in 20 selected schools in Uganda on factors that influence the performance of pupils at "O" level Arts examination in Uganda and found a positive relationship between headteachers attitude and students performance.

2.9 Summary of Literature Review

The Chapter starts with an introduction in which its purpose is given. Then there is a look at the nature of language whereby Muriel (1976) gives and explains six of its characteristics, namely, basis, systematic, symbolic, change, social and variable. He goes on to identify the steps in learning a second language which include learning to recognize differences in sound signals, learning the basis grammatical systems acquiring adequate vocabulary and knowing the meaning of gestures, intonation and even facial expressions.

The importance of teacher qualification is emphasized whereby studies by Wamai (1991), Mutea (2000), Masinjila (1989) among others are indicated that the academic qualification of teachers is one of the most important factors in determining success by learners instances have also been cited where performance in examinations by schools with qualified teachers have been low as compared to those with qualified teachers have been as low as compared to those with qualified teachers. Effective teaching, which is directly related to teacher qualification, has been cited by TSC (1999) to be having the greatest. Percentage contribution to good results (75%).

The adequacy and suitability of teaching and learning materials is very important. Various studies by Mwamwenda and Mwamwenda (1987) in Ayoo(2002), Eshiwani (1983), Heinemann (1984), population council of Kenya (1997) Elimu Yetu Coalition (2003), and others indicate a positive relationship between adequacy and suitability of teaching and learning materials and good performance.

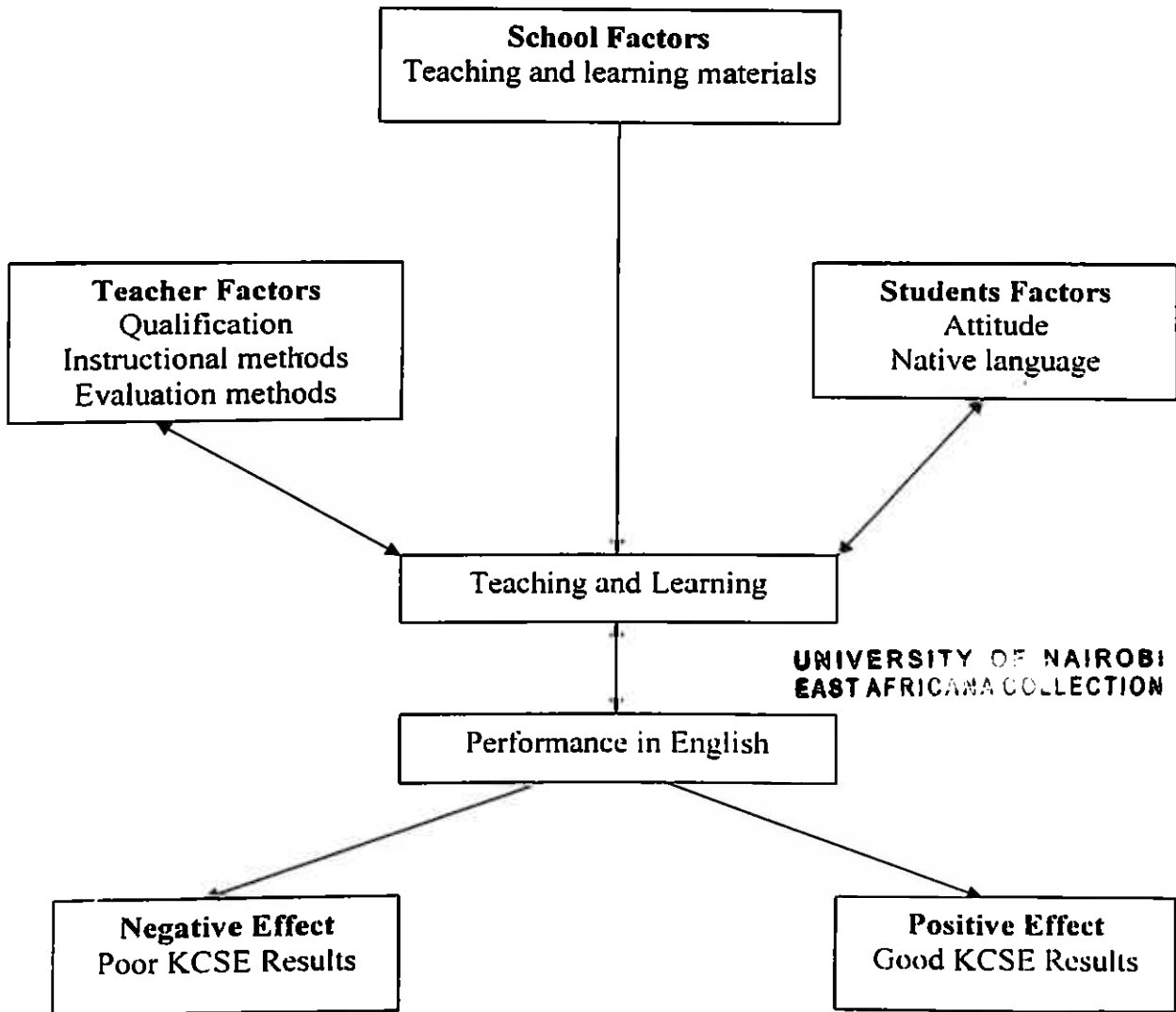
On instructional methods/techniques. Hornsby, Stevick, Virginia , Gerald and Edward, in Allen, ed (1972) give some instructional methods that can be used in teaching language, namely, maintaining interest (which is regarded as one of the most important elements in teaching) using pictures regulating the rhythm of class activity, use of dialogues or narratives or both, and reliance on modern audio - lingual theory which stresses a listening - speaking - reading - writing sequence in language instructions.

David (1969) gives six main objectives of evaluation in language namely, determining student readiness for instructional programmes classifying individuals in appropriate language classes, diagnosing the individual's specific strengths and weaknesses, measuring aptitude for learning, measuring the extent of achievement of instructional goals and evaluating the effectiveness of instruction. Then he groups them under three headings: Aptitude (category 4), General Proficiency (Categories 1 - 3) and achievement (categories 5 and 6). He further gives the principal language testing techniques, namely translation, dictation, composition, scored interview, use of multiple choice or selection items tests.

Mother-tongue influence on second language teaching and learning has been looked at in terms of either transfer or interference. Transfer can be positive or negative whereby positive transfer occurs when linguistic structures of both mother-tongue and target language are similar whereas negative transfer or interference occurs when linguistic structures of both native and target languages are not similar. Both transfer and interference occur at the phonological, lexical and syntactic levels of language learning (Gormon, 1970. Terrence, 1989).

On attitudinal aspects of language teaching and learning. Spolky (1968) identifies a number of people whose attitudes to each other are important: The learner, teacher, learner`s peers and parents, and the speakers of the language. He however, stresses that the most important attitudinal factors are the attitudes of the learner to the language and to its speakers.

2.10 Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework shows that various factors can affect performance in examinations. These are teacher, school and learner factors. Teacher factors include his academic and professional qualification, instructional methods he/she adopts, evaluation techniques and their expectations from learners. School factors include teaching and learning materials that the school is able to provide for. While learners

factors are attitudes towards learning the language and his native language that may enhance or interfere with his/her learning, which may be influenced by his/her background (which can include parents and peer attitude and influence). All these factors will impact directly on the kind of teaching and learning that goes on in school whereby positive impact will be good KCSE results and negative impact will be poor KCSE results in English.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This study was designed to investigate the factors that effect performance in KCSE English examinations in Nyamache Division Gucha District. This chapter therefore presented the research design, target population, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions (Mmaduakonam, 1998). According to Ogula (1995) it provides a framework for planning and conducting a study. This study adapted Ex- post - facto research design. Cohen and Marion (1994) define expost – facto design as a method eliciting the variations in antecedent events, which have happened and because of this fact they cannot be engineered or manipulated by the investigator. Kerlinger (1973) defines it as a systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have a direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulable. Inferences about relations among variables are made without direct intervention from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables. It was therefore suitable for studying events which have already occurred and cannot be manipulated

in any way by the researcher. In studying factors that affect performance KCSE English examinations in Nyamache Division, Gucha District. This design was therefore suitable for establishing the nature of relationship among variables identified such as availability of teaching and learning materials, teacher qualification, teaching methods, evaluation methods, attitude towards English and use of native language. The English examinations had already been done and grades attained and the factors that may have influenced performance have already manifested themselves in KCSE.

3.2 Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define population as an entire group of individuals, events or objects having common characteristics: it is the sum total of all that conforms to a given specification. Target population, they add is that which a researcher wants to generalize the findings of the study. Brinker (1988) defines target population as a large population from whom a sample was selected.

The target population of this study was all secondary schools in Nyamache Division, Gucha District. According to the District Education Officer (D.E.O) Gucha District (2004) there were thirty 30 secondary schools in the division with 38 teachers of English and 1250 form four students by the time of the study.

The form four students were considered most appropriate among the students because at this level they had been introduced to most areas to be tested at KSCE (Drama, Writing, Summary, Novel, and Short story, Poetry, Oral Literature, Grammar and

Comprehension). Further more they had been in school for a longer time thus were more familiar with the issues to be investigated. Teachers were important because they facilitate the learning process through organizing and conducting instructional activities in the classrooms.

3.3 Sample size and sampling techniques

According to Cooper (1998) quoted in Njuguna (2004) how large a sample should be is a function of the variation in the population parameter under study and the estimating precision needed by the researcher. In this study, the researcher used a table for determining the sample size from a given population designed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). In the Table. (Appendix E), a population of 38 require a sample of 34 teachers and a population of 1,250 requires a sample of 291. For this study 34 teachers and 342 students were selected.

To select participants for the study simple random sampling and stratified random sampling procedures was used. Simple random sampling ensures that each element within the accessible population has an equal and independent chance of being selected, adding that the method best suits a study that involves a finite accessible population. Mmaduakonam (1996) says that if a population consists of sub - populations, stratified random sampling should be used to ensure that no sub - population is omitted from the sample and also make the estimate of the variance of the population mean more precise.

To get the nine schools, numbers were assigned to all schools. Each number was written on a piece of paper and all put in a container then nine were picked randomly. Those schools corresponding to the numbers were included in the study. To ensure equal involvement of students in the schools visited, the selected number of students (342) was divided by the number of schools selected to give an average of 38 students per school. To take care of gender, stratified sampling was used whereby there was two clusters or sub groups of students: males and females. Hence, in each school 19 males and 19 females were expected to take part. The same procedure used for selecting the schools was used for each sub – group whereby numbers were assigned to each student in each sub – group then picked randomly and the students who corresponded to the numbers were included in the study.

3.4 Research Instruments

This study used questionnaires to collect data. Mulusa (1988) defines a questionnaire as a written set of questions to which the subject responds in writing. He further says that questionnaires are cheap to administer to respondents scattered over a large area, and convenient for collecting information from a large population within a short space of time, adding that the respondents feel free to give frank answers to sensitive or embarrassing questions especially if they are not required to disclose their identity. Best (2004) adds that it is easy to quantify responses for the purposes of analysis using a questionnaire. In this study, some information was deemed sensitive, like evaluation methods by teachers. Also, the study was limited by time and financial resources. Therefore questionnaire was the most appropriate instrument.

There were two questionnaires namely for teachers and students both consisting of three sections; A, B and C. Section A of teacher's questionnaires was designed to gather teacher's biographical data which includes sex, age, academic qualification, professional experience, length of teaching at current school, type and category of current school and current work load. Section B had 16 questions, seeking information on language student's use most frequently in schools, frequency of giving assignments, homework, preparation of professional documents, and adequacy of teaching and learning materials, factors that can help enhance teachers teaching skills, use of teaching materials and resources. Section C had three open questions relating to how teachers rate performance of English in their schools and what can be done to maintain or improve the performance, areas learners find difficult and areas where teacher finds problems in teaching.

Section A of students' questionnaire had six questions seeking students' biographical data including sex, age, type and category of school. First language and most commonly used language. Section B had ten questions which seek information on attitude, ease of learning, areas examines in English and frequency of revision. While Section C has two open – ended questions seeking student's opinion on factors that lower student's performance in English and what can be done to improve performance.

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

Validity is the extent to which as instrument measures what one thinks is measurable (Ary, 1979 quoted in Mugenda and Mugenda, (1999). A test or research instrument

is said to be valid if it measures what it is supposed to measure (Mulusa, 1988:108). The validity of the instrument was ensured by doing a pilot test in two schools randomly selected. The two schools were not included in the study.

Questionnaires were given to the English Teacher and 28 students of each school. In each school, stratified sampling was used for students to take care of gender then simple random sampling was done for each sub – group to choose the participants. The results for the two schools were then compared.

3.6 Reliability of the Instrument

A reliable test or research instrument is one that consistently produces the expected results (Mulusa, 1988). Thorndike and Hagen (1961) point out that instrument reliability refers to the level of internal consistency or the stability of the measuring device. They say that because of economy in time and labour, the procedure for extracting an estimate of reliability should be obtained from the administration of a single test. They add that split half technique is a simple and convenient, hence more successful approach for approximating the equivalent of the total test. They explain that in the split half technique, if a test consists of 100 items, the scores are calculated separately for two sets of 50 items and the results of the correlated. Further they say that the usual method is to take all even numbered items together then the results of the scores correlated. This study thus used split half technique to test reliability of the instruments.

To test for reliability of the items in the questionnaire, the researcher used the split half method. This method was adapted, as it is suitable for construct such as attitude, perception, opinion and achievement. The split-half method was used to determine the coefficient of internal consistency or reliability coefficient.

The method involves administering the test to a small sample then splitting the test into two halves/subsets; odd items in one subset and even items in another subset. The scores of the two subsets for each individual are computed separately. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to obtain the correlation coefficient.

The correlation obtained however, represents the reliability of only half the test and because reliability is related to the length of a test a correction must be made so as to obtain reliability to the entire test. To effect this correction, the Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula is applied which states as follows:

$$R_e = \frac{2r}{1+r}$$

Where:

R_e = Correlation Coefficient of the entire test

r = Correlation Coefficient of the even numbered statements with

the scores of the Odd number statements.

Results of the reliability analysis

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 284.0

N of Items = 16

Correlation between forms = .0962 Equal-length Spearman-Brown = .1755

Guttman Split-half = .1451 Unequal-length Spearman-Brown = .1758

8 Items in part 1

8 Items in part 2

Alpha for part 1 =

.7232

Alpha for part 2 =

.7127

The reliability analysis showed that alpha for part 1 was 0.7232 and alpha for part 2 was 0.7127 which measures were above 5. The questionnaire was therefore deemed reliable.

3.7 Procedure for Data Collection.

The researcher sought permission to conduct the study from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology through an introduction letter from the department. The researcher then proceeded to seek authority from the District Commissioner (DC) and the District Education Officer (DEO), Gucha in order to carry out research in the district. Once the permit is received the researcher visited the selected schools to make appointments for the administration of questionnaires.

On visiting the schools, the researcher tried to build rapport with the head teachers, teachers and students who were to be the respondents and explained the purpose of the study and how to respond to the questionnaire. The questionnaires were self-administered, so as to explain the purpose of the study and specific difficulties in the instrument. Furthermore, according to Mulusa (1988), in a self administered questionnaire returns are high.

3.8 Data Analysis Techniques.

This study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. Because of its nature the data was analysed using descriptive techniques of data analysis. Data was first coded and entered in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software for windows programme to enable analysis. Frequencies, percentages, obtained were used to answer the research questions.

To obtain attitude in answering research question 6, items were graded in the following using the following key: Very Important (V/Imp) was awarded 4 points, Important (Imp) 3, Not Important (N/Imp) 2, and No Opinion (N/Op) 1. Alternative items were graded in the opposite with reversed keys so that, Very Important (V/Imp) 1 point, Important (Imp) 2, Not Important (N/Imp) 3, and No Opinion (N/Op) 4. Reversing the scoring of the negative items has the advantage of reflecting positiveness towards the object in question.

The maximum score possible was therefore 4 points x 6 items = 24, representing perfectly positive attitude. On the other hand, the lowest score was equal to 6, that is, 1 point for 6 items, representing perfectly negative attitude. A perfectly neutral level was represented by a score of 12.

In the item that sought to establish the attitude of students towards areas examined in English the same was done that is Very Easy (VE) was awarded 4 points, Easy (E) was awarded 3 points, Difficult (D) was awarded 2 points and Very Difficult (VD) was awarded 1 point. When the reverse was done, Very Easy (VE) was awarded 1

point, Easy (E) was awarded 2 points, Difficult (D) was awarded 3 points and Very Difficult (VD) was awarded 1 point. The maximum score possible was 4 x 9 items = 36 representing perfectly positive. On the other hand the lowest score was 1 x 9 items = 9 representing perfect negative. Perfectly Neutral was at 18.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the return rate of the questionnaires, demographic information of the respondents, data presentations, interpretation and discussions of findings. The presentations were done based on the research questions.

4.1 Questionnaire return rate

The sample for the study consisted of 342 students and 34 English teachers. The questionnaires were administered to a sample of 342 students respondents out of which 284 (83.04%) returned the questionnaires. This percentage was deemed adequate for the study. All the teachers' questionnaires (100%) were returned and were well filled therefore were usable.

4.2 Demographic information of Respondents

4.2.1 Demographic information of English teachers

Teachers' demographic information are discussed by their gender, highest academic qualifications, type of school they taught, category of the school they taught, the length of time they had been teaching English in their teaching career and in the school that they taught. English teachers were asked to indicate their gender. Data gathered showed that 24 (70.6%) of them were male while 10 (29.4%) were female. This shows that the number of male teachers were more than the number of female

teachers. This confirms the actual situation of the area where there are more male teachers than female teachers. The English teachers were further asked to indicate their age bracket. Table 5 presents the data.

Table 5 Age of the English teachers

Age Bracket (years)	Frequency	Percentage
25 – 34	12	35.3
35 – 44	15	44.1
45 – 54	7	20.6
Total	34	100.0

Data derived on the age of the teachers showed that the largest number of the teachers were in the age bracket of between 35 and 44 years, a few of them 12 (35.3%) in that age bracket of 25 and 34 years and few 7 (20.6%) in the age bracket of 45 and 54 years. This shows that teachers in Nyamache Division are relatively young. Young people are known to be active and enthusiastic in their undertakings which in this case means teaching and so these teachers in this age are able to actively play their role as teachers.

After establishing their age they were further asked to indicate their highest academic qualifications. Their responses are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 Highest academic qualifications of English teachers

Academic qualification	Frequency	Percentage
M.ED	2	5.9
B.ED	22	64.7
P.G.D.E	10	29.4
Total	34	100.0

Table 6 shows that most teachers 22 (64.7%) were Bachelor of Education holders while the rest 10 (29.4%) were Post Graduate Diploma in Education holders. a few of them 2 (5.9%) were holders of Master of Education degree. It is apparent from the findings that most teachers in Nyamache are trained teachers. This shows that the government policy of teachers employment is followed where only trained teachers are supposed to teach in schools. The findings also revealed that most of them taught subjects that they were trained in. The issue of teacher qualification may not be one of the causes of poor performance in English in Nyamache Division.

The English teachers were also asked to indicate the type of school that they taught. Data derived from their findings showed that all teachers (100%) were in mixed schools. This confirms the actual situation in Nyamache where all schools are mixed. The teachers were also asked to indicate the category of school that they taught. The findings revealed that all teachers taught in day schools. This confirms the actual situation in Nyamache where all schools are day schools. The fact that all school in

the Division are day school could be a factor that contributes to low performance in English in that, as many students are day scholars, they will not practice speaking in English especially when they are at home. Unlike in boarding schools where rules on English speaking are more applicable, it would be difficult for days schools. Students in day schools will only apply the rule only when they are at school and will speak in their mother tongue while they are out of school. This limits their chances of practicing English speaking. The English teachers were further asked to indicate the duration of time that they had been teaching English in their teaching profession. The findings are presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Duration of time that teachers had been teaching English in their teaching profession

Duration of time	Frequency	Percentage
6 – 10 years	15	44.1
1 – 5 years	12	35.3
11 – 15 years	7	20.6
Total	34	100.0

Data presented in Table 7 shows that most of the teachers, 15 (44.1%) had been teaching for between 6 and 10 years, 12 (35.3%) had been teaching for between 1 and 5 years and the rest 7 (20.6%) had been teaching English for between 11 and 15 years. This shows that majority of teacher had a considerable long experience in teaching. The experience that teachers had in teaching English was not a factor that

contributed to poor performance. They were also asked to indicate the duration of time they had been teaching English in the present school. The findings are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 Duration of time that teachers had been teaching English in their present school

Duration of time	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 5 years	14	41.2
Below 1 year	10	29.4
6 – 10 years	10	29.4
Total	34	100.0

Data presented in Table 8 revealed that most 14 (41.2%) of teachers had been teaching in the present school for between 1 and 5 years, 10 (29.4%) had been teaching for between 6 and 10 years and the same number had been teaching for below 1 year. This again shows that the teachers had been in the present school for a time which they can tell the history of English performance in their present school so their information would be very important for this study. Their duration in the present schools may also have influence on their performance.

4.2.2 Demographic information of students

Students demographic information was discussed in areas of their gender, age, type of school and category of school. Students were asked to indicate their gender. Data derived from their responses showed that 171 (60.2%) were male while 113 (39.8%) were female. Majority were therefore male. This confirms the actual situation where there are more male students than female students in secondary schools in Nyamache Division. The students were further asked to indicate their ages. The findings are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 Age distribution of students

Age	Frequency	Percentage
14 years	50	17.6
15 years	75	26.4
17 years	62	21.9
18 years	75	26.4
19 years	22	7.7
Total	284	100.0

Data in Table 9 shows that the students respondents were drawn from different age categories which suggests that they joined school at different ages. This presents a situation where there could be other home based factors which either delayed them from joining school or some school factors which may have caused them repeat

hence, this disparity in their ages. The students were further asked to indicate the category of school that they hailed. Data derived from their responses showed that they were all from mixed schools. This is a confirmation of the real situation in Nyamache where all schools are mixed. When they were further asked to indicate the category of the school they belonged, their responses showed that majority 282 (99.3%) were in day schools while only 2 (0.7%) were in a day and boarding school. This again confirms the situation in Nyamache where all schools are day and only 2 are day and boarding.

4.3 Factors contributing to poor performance in English

4.3.0 Introduction

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The aim of this research was to investigate the factors affecting poor performance in KCSE English examination. Different research questions were asked to solicit the information from the respondents. The research questions were based on teachers' evaluation methods, availability of teaching and learning materials, instructional methods, effects of mother tongue and students attitudes towards English. The research also aimed at identifying other factors that contributed to poor performance in English.

4.3.1 Effect of teachers' evaluation methods on students performance in English.

To answer the research question which sought to examine how the teachers' evaluation methods effected students performance in KCSE English examination, the respondents were asked to respond to items related to teachers evaluation methods.

Teacher were asked to indicate how often they gave students assignments. Table 10 presents the data.

Table 10 Frequency of teachers giving assignments

Duration of time	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	2	5.9
Once a week	14	41.2
Once a fortnight	4	11.7
Once a month	3	8.8
Rarely	11	32.4
Total	34	100.0

Data derived revealed that only 2 (5.9%) teachers reported that they gave assignments daily. 14 (41.2%). 4 (11.8%) said they gave once a week. 4 (11.8%) said they gave once a fortnight. 3 (8.8%) said they gave once a month and 11 (32.4%) said they gave rarely. Most of the teachers therefore said they gave assignments once and fortnight and rarely. This implies that teachers did not give students assignments as required. The students respondents were asked to indicate how often the teachers gave them assignments and homework. To this question, 78 (27.5%) said they were given often while 206 (72.5%) said then were given rarely. This confirms the responses of the teachers that most them did not give assignments or they gave very rarely.

Students were further asked how often the teachers marked their assignments. In this item 59 (20.8%) said teacher marked their assignments less often and 225 (79.2%) said they never marked. The students were also asked whether their teachers marked and gave back their books in good time. Of all the students respondents, 225 (79.2%) said they never did this while 59 (20.8%) said they did this less often. When they were asked whether they got time with their teachers to revise the assignments given, 225 (79.2%) said "no" while 59 (20.8%) said "yes".

Teacher were further asked if they were able to correct all the assignments given at the intended time. Their responses revealed that 2 (5.9%) said "yes" while the rest 32 (94.1%) said "no". This implies that apart from failing to give assignments in good frequency, most of them were not able to correct the assignments in good time. Teachers were further asked to indicate the extent to which they used evaluation methods listed in a table. Table 12 presents the data.

Table 11 Teachers' responses on frequency of evaluation methods

Evaluation Method	Quite often		Often		Less often		Never	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Writing essays	4	11.8	4	11.8	16	47.1	11	32.4
Use of multiple choice questions	-	-	2	5.9	21	61.8	11	32.4
Listening comprehension-	-	-	-	-	12	35.3	22	64.7
Reading comprehension	4	11.8	4	11.8	10	29.4	16	47.1
Speech work	-	-	4	11.8	16	47.1	14	41.2
Use of tests	2	5.9	1	2.9	12	35.3	19	55.9

N = 34

Findings presented in Table 11 revealed that teachers less often or never used the listed evaluation methods. For example, 16 (47.1%) used writing essays less often and 11 (32.4%) never used the method. Twenty one (61.6%) used multiple choice questions while 11 (32.4%) never used that method. Apparently 12 (35.3%) used listening comprehension and 22 (64.7%) never used the method. On reading comprehension 4 (11.8%) used the method quite often, the same number used it often, 10 (29.4%) used it less often and 16 (47.1%) never used it. Speech work was not used or was used less often (47.1%) and 14 (41.2%) never used it. Still a large number of teachers did not use or used less often the close tests where only 2 (5.9%) and 1 (2.9%) used it quite often and often respectively and 12 (35.3%) and 19 (55.9%) used it less often or never used respectively.

From the findings it can be deduced that majority of teachers used multiple choice questions as the method of evaluation, most of them used the listed evaluation methods less often or never used them. This shows that there was limited evaluation on students which could be a course of poor performance. On the same item on frequency of evaluation methods, students were also asked to indicate how they were tested in English and how applicable they were done. Table 12 presents the students responses.

Table 12 Students' responses on frequency of evaluation methods

Evaluation Method	Quite often		Often		Less often		Never	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Personal Reading/ revision	59	20.8	-	-	225	79.2	-	-
Getting English Assignment / Homework	21	7.4	95	33.5	56	19.7	112	39.4
Reading English books other than set ones	59	20.8	-	-	225	79.2	-	-
Having assignment/ homework marked	-	-	59	20.8	75	26.4	150	52.8
Group work	38	13.4	38	13.4	59	20.8	149	52.5

N = 284

Students' responses scores seem to be tending towards the less often and never. For example majority 225 (79.2%) students said that they used personal reading and revision less often while 59 (20.8%) used it quite often. Fifty six (19.7%) used English assignments less often while 112 (39.4%) were never given assignments or homework. used the evaluation never respectively while 21 (7.4%) used it quite often and 95 (33.5%) used it often. 225 (79.2%) read English books other than the set ones less often and 59 (20.8%) did it quite often. 59 (20.8%) had their homework or assignments marked, 75 (26.4%) had it less often and 150 (52.8%) never had their assignments or homework marked. A significant number of students 59 (20.8%) had group work less often and 149 (52.5%) never had group work. Lack of evaluation may make students loose moral and may become disoriented.

Giving assignments to students is one of the ways that teachers can evaluate students' progress. They also play a role in diagnosing the strengths and weaknesses of students. If teachers do not therefore give assignments it would be difficult to determine how well they are progressing. This implies that if students are not examined then teachers will not be able to determine what students know or do not know. This will make them teach without any given direction hence this may affect students performance in their examination. Assignments also play a role of motivation in students, if they are not given then they would tend to lack motivation to learn hence this would affect their performance. Findings have revealed that teachers do not give assignments as required; this could be a factor which contributes to poor performance in English among school in Nyamache Division.

4.3.2 Extent to which availability of teaching and learning materials affect performance in KCSE English examinations.

To answer this research question, teachers were asked to indicate the adequacy that is QA - Quite Adequate, A- Adequate I-Inadequate and QI - Quite Inadequate, of some listed teaching and learning materials. Their responses are presented in Table 13.

Table 13 Teachers' responses of adequacy of teaching learning materials

Teaching learning materials	QA		A		I		QI	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Teacher reference								
books and guides	3	8.8	4	11.8	22	64.7	5	14.7
Students' text books	-	-	8	23.5	7	20.6	19	55.9
Charts	-	-	-	-	13	38.2	21	61.8
Chalkboards and								
chalks	26	76.5	8	23.5	-	-	-	-
Audio tapes	-	-	-	-	5	14.7	29	85.3
Visual tapes	-	-	-	-	3	8.8	31	91.2

N = 34

Data presented in Table 13 shows that majority of teachers responded that they did not have adequate teaching and learning materials. For example, only 3 (8.8%) said

that they had quite adequate teachers reference books and guides, 4 (11.8%) said they had just adequate, while majority 22 (64.7%) said they had inadequate and 5 said they had quite inadequate teachers reference books and guides. Only 8 (23.5%) teachers said that students had adequate text books the rest said they were inadequate of quite inadequate. Concerning the charts, all the teachers said they had inadequate or had none. However, majority of the teachers, 26 (76.5%) said they had quite adequate chalkboards and chalks. The issue of chalk and chalkboards does not seem to be a problem but they did not have audio tapes and visual tapes.

Student respondents were also asked to indicate the adequacy of some teaching and learning materials listed. Their responses are presented in Table 14. The following key was used QA – Quite Adequate, A – Adequate, I – Inadequate and QI – Quite Inadequate

Table 14 Students responses to adequacy of teaching and learning materials

Teaching learning materials	QA		A		I		QI	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Students' text books	57	20.1	78	27.5	112	39.4	37	13.0
Charts	-	-	-	-	113	39.8	134	47.2
Chalkboards and chalks	134	47.2	75	26.4	75	26.4	-	-
Audio tapes	-	-	-	-	209	73.6	75	26.4
Visual tapes	-	-	-	-	209	73.6	75	26.4

N = 284

As presented in Table 14, students responses on the availability of teaching learning materials seem to be in line with the teachers' responses. Most of the students 112 (39.4%) and 37 (13.0%) said the students had inadequate text books. All the students respondents said they had inadequate charts. All of them also said that they had inadequate of quite inadequate audio and visual tapes in their schools.

Teaching and learning materials are aimed at assisting learners in learning. Lack of them implies that teaching and learning would not take place as required. Adesine (1994) says that teaching and learning materials are integral component of the learning process. The findings in this research are in line with Adesine who found that the quality of education that students receive bears direct relevance to the availability of teaching and learning materials. The findings are also in line with Mwamwenda (1987), quoted in Ayoo (2002) who found out that availability of instructional materials has an effect on performance. Schools that do not have enough or adequate facilities will tend to perform more poorly than school which have adequate facilities. The findings are also in line with the findings of a research carried out by the population council and government of Kenya (1997) which found out that shortage of necessary teaching and learning materials was a cause of poor performance in schools. Most of school in Nyamache seem to lack such teaching and learning materials which may have led to poor performance in examination.

4.3.3 Effects of instructional methods on students' performance in KCSE English examination

To answer the research question that sought to establish the extent to which instructional methods used by teachers affected students' performance, the teacher respondents were asked to indicate how often they used some instructional methods such as lecture, small group discussions, question and answer and demonstration. Table 15 presents the teachers' responses.

Table 15 Teachers' responses on the frequency of use of different instructional methods

Instructional Method	Quite often		Often		Less often		Never	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Lecturing	14	41.2	12	35.3	4	11.8	4	11.8
Small group discussion	5	14.7	22	64.7	7	20.8	-	-
Question and answer	27	79.4	7	20.6	-	-	-	-
Demonstration	-	-	11	32.4	17	50	6	17.6

From Table 15 it is apparent that most of the teachers 14 (41.2%) used lecture method quite often. Majority of them 22 (64.7%) used small group discussion often. A great percentage 27 (79.4%) used question and answer quite often while seven (20.6%) used if often. Demonstration method of instruction was used less often by 17 (50%).

11 (32.4%) used it often and 6 (17.6%) never used it in their instruction. The findings reveal that question and answer method and lecture method of teaching were the most used methods of instruction. These are grouped as lower methods of teaching and especially lecture method is discouraged in teaching in secondary school since it does not involve students. Teachers in this area seemed to use the so-called easy methods of teaching which are rendered ineffective and avoid the methods which involve students such as discussion and demonstration. hence, facilitating their understanding.

Table 16 Students' responses on the frequency of use of different instructional methods

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Instructional Method	Quite often		Often		Less often		Never	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Lecturing	116	40.8	94	33.1	74	26.1	-	-
Small group discussion	-	-	21	7.4	150	52.8	113	39.8
Question and answer	94	33.1	134	47.2	56	19.7	-	-
Demonstration	-	-	19	6.7	77	27.1	188	66.2

The students responses as indicated in Table 16 revealed that majority of their teachers used lecture method of instruction. In this item majority, 116 (40.8%) said that their teachers used lecturer method quite often, 94 (33.1%) said they used it often and 74 (26.1%) said that they used it less often. In the use of small group discussion majority 150 (52.8%) used less often and 113 (39.8%) never used it. However

question and answer seems to have been popular among teachers where 94 (33.1%) used it quite often, 134 (47.2%) used it often. Demonstration method of instruction was not very popular as only 77 (27.1%) used it less often and 188 (66.2%) never used it. Students responses seem to concur with the teachers responses that teachers avoided instructional methods of teaching of teaching English and which are advocated as effective in making students learn such as small group discussion and demonstration. They preferred methods that seemed easy and not involving on the part of the teachers. English as any other subject requires its specific instructional methods. This may be one of the factors which may have contributed to poor performance in English.

The data confirms studies by Hornsby and Sterick. in Allen (1972) that instructional methods used by teachers affect learning English. They gave instructional methods such as use of pictures and how it can enhance learning by providing situations outside the classroom, situations suitable for intensive oral work. Allen (1972) also says that instructional methods used influences learning. He gave the example of use of dialogues or narratives, or both arguing that they help students become acquainted with the common life experiences that make English mean what it means to a native speaker.

4.3.4 Effects of use of mother tongue on students' performance in KCSE English examination

To answer the research question which sought to establish the extent to which use of mother tongue contributed to poor performance in English examination, different

items were asked to the respondents. English teachers were asked to indicate which language was mostly used by the students. Their responses are presented in Table 17.

Table 17 Mostly frequently used language by students at school

Language	Frequency	Percentage
English	4	11.8
Kiswahili	1	2.9
Mother tongue	20	58.8
Kiswahili and English	9	26.5
Total	34	100.0

Findings presented in Table 17 revealed that majority 20 (58.8%) of teachers said that students used mother tongue and 9 (26.5%) said that most students used Kiswahili and English. Mother tongue is therefore the most used language. Students were also asked to indicate their first language. Their responses are presented in Table 18.

Table 18 Students' first language

Language	Frequency	Percentage
Ekegusi	187	65.8
Luo	38	13.4
Kalenjin	21	7.4
Kuria	38	13.4
Total	284	100.0

Data presented in Table 18 revealed that most 187 (65.8%) students' first language was Ekegusi, 38 (58.8%) Luo, 21 (7.4%) Kalenjin and 38 (13.4%) Kuria. The fact that majority's first language was Ekegusi confirms the situation in Nyamache which is predominantly Kisii who speak Ekegusi. However, there seem to be other languages spoken which are seemingly the languages of the surrounding communities. Students were further asked to indicate the language which they frequently use at school. Table 19 presents the findings.

Table 19 Students' responses on language most spoken by students at school

Language	Frequency	Percentage
English	78	27.5
Kiswahili	38	13.4
Mother tongue	112	39.4
Kiswahili and English	56	19.7
Total	284	100.0

Findings revealed most, 112 (39.4%) spoke mother tongue with a relatively less number 78 (27.5%) and 56 (19.7%) who spoke English. Majority of the students therefore admitted that they used their mother tongue at school. They were further asked to indicate the language that was mostly used by their peers. Their responses are presented in Table 20.

Table 20 Students' responses on language most used by peers

Language	Frequency	Percentage
English	73	25.7
Kiswahili	57	20.1
Mother tongue	135	47.5
Kiswahili and English	19	6.7
Total	284	100.0

From Table 20, 135 (47.5%) used mother tongue, 73 (25.7%) used English and 57 (20.1%) used Kiswahili. This confirms the above findings that most students used mother tongue at school as a medium of communication. In an attempt to determine how use of mother tongue contributed to poor performance, teachers were asked to indicate if use of mother tongue contributed to poor performance. All of them (100%) said that use of mother tongue contributed greatly to poor performance in English.

Findings above reveal that most students speak mother tongue which can be a factor that can contribute to poor performance in English. English as a language needs to be practiced even in speech so since these students are used to speaking mother tongue and Kiswahili. This could be a factor that contribute to poor performance in English among schools in Nyamache Division. English teachers were also asked to indicate how strongly they agreed, agreed or disagreed with the statement 'students use of mother tongue hinders teaching of English'. In this item, 25 (73.5%) agreed, and 9

(26.5%) strongly agreed. This implies that teachers were of the opinion that use of mother tongue other than English contributed to poor performance in KCSE English examination. Findings have established that mother tongue has an effect on learning a second language. These findings are in line with the findings of Allen (1972) who found out that use of other languages other than English contributed to poor learning of the language. Terrence (1989) and Gormon (1970) also say that the use of mother tongue can influence either positively or negatively the learning of a second language.

4.3.5 Effects of students' attitude towards English on their performance in KCSE English examination

In an attempt to determine the effects of attitude on students' performance in English examination the students were asked to indicate how they deemed important or not important, some aspects of English such as enabling them to communicate, to pass examination, for future career development, as an official language, as a compulsory subject and use of the language in enabling them become a member of English speaking community. Table 21 presents their responses.

Table 21 Results of the attitude of students towards learning English

Range of scores	Category of attitude	No. of students per category	% of students
1 – 6	Negative	188	66.2
12	Neutral		
13 - 24	Positive	96	33.8
Total	Positive	284	100.0

Data presented in Table 21 shows that majority of students (66.2%) had a negative attitude towards English. This may have an effect on their performance. This confirms the argument by Spolky (1968) that the most attitudinal factors that affect language learning are the attitudes of the learner to the language and to its speakers. The students attitudes towards various areas such as composition, summary, comprehension, grammar, poetry, oral literature, skit story novel and drama was also investigated. This was done by asking them to indicate how easy or difficult they found those areas examined. Table 22 presents their responses.

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Table 22 Results of attitude of students towards areas examined in English

Range of scores	Category of attitude	No. of students per category	% of Teachers
1 – 9	Negative	206	72.5
18	Neutral		
19 - 36	Positive	76	27.5
Total	Positive	284	100.0

From Table 22 it can be seen that students had negative attitude towards areas examined in English. They deemed these areas examined in English as difficult. The attitude of students towards a subject is a determining factor to their performance in that subject. Attitude has been found to account for variation in the level of achievement in second language. Positive attitude towards a subject increases motivation in learning hence high achievement. The finding above that students have a negative attitude towards English may be a factor that contribute to poor performance in the subject. The findings concur with Carrol (1967) and Spolky (1968) who say that negative attitude towards a subject has a repercussion in contributing to poor performance. The findings are also in line with Musango (1982) who found out in a research conducted in Uganda that there was a positive relationship between attitude towards a subject and performance in the subject. Negative attitude can therefore be said to be one of the factors contributing to poor performance in English among students in Nyamache Division.

4.4 Other factors that contributed to poor performance in English in KCSE examination

In an attempt to find out how teaching load and teacher preparedness affected students performance, teachers were asked to indicate their current teaching load per week. The findings are presented in Table 23.

Table 23 Teachers' responses on their teaching load per week

Teaching load	Frequency	Percentage
25 – 30 lessons	24	70.6
20 – 24 lessons	10	29.4
Total	34	100.0

Findings in Table 23 indicated that 24 (70.6%) said they had between 25 and 30 lessons a week and 10 (29.4%) said they had between 20 and 24 lessons per week . When they were asked to rate this load, 26 (76.5%) said it was heavy, 7 (20.6%) said it was moderate and 1 (2.9%) said it was light. Majority of the teachers therefore felt that the teaching load was heavy. They were further asked to indicate whether they prepared professional documents such as schemes of work, lesson plans, records of work and students progress records. All the teachers reported that they prepared schemes of work and did not prepare the other records. The were further asked to indicate how often the head teachers made follow up to ensure that those records were prepared as required. Their responses are presented in Table 24.

Table 24 Teachers' responses on the frequency of headteachers' follow up activities

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Once a month	4	11.8
Twice a month	3	8.8
Once a term	13	38.2
Never	14	41.2
Total	34	100.0

Findings in Table 24 revealed that most of the teachers 14 (41.2%) said that their headteacher never made up follow up activities to ensure the professional records were prepared. Supervision is an important factor in education. If teachers are not supervised and head teachers do not inspect and make follow up activities this could teachers reluctant in teaching which could also lead to poor performance.

The research also sought to find out other factors that contributed to poor performance in English. Table 25 (a) and (b) presents the teachers' and students' responses.

Table 25 (a) Teachers' responses on factors contributing to poor performance in English

Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Attitude that English is difficult	17	50.0
Poor entry behaviour	8	23.5
Lack of interest in English	5	14.7
Lack of text books	4	11.8
Total	34	100.0

Table 25 (b) (b) Students' responses on factors that lower performance in English in their schools

Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of teaching learning materials	130	45.7
Negative attitude towards English	78	27.5
Mother tongue speaking	57	20.1
Lack of qualified teachers	19	6.7
Total	284	100.0

Table 25 (a) shows that majority of the teachers said that attitude towards English was a major cause of poor performance among students. The finding confirm the previous findings that students had a negative attitude towards English was a cause of poor performance. Table 25 (b) presented that lack of teaching and learning materials and mother tongue were factors that contributed to poor performance. Results from teachers' and students' responses further confirmed the previous findings by Heinemann (1984), Spdky (1968) and Allen (1972) that lack of materials, negative attitude towards the subject, mother tongue speaking respectively. The researcher wanted to establish ways in which performance in English could be improved. Students were therefore asked to give their recommendations. Table 26 presents their responses.

Table 26 Ways of improving students performance in English in schools

Recommendation	Frequency	Percentage
Need to guide and counsel students on		
Importance of English	75	26.4
More assignments should be given	75	26.4
Teachers should use different		
Teaching methods	75	26.4
Students should be motivated to learn English	38	13.4
Provision of teaching learning materials	21	7.4
Total	284	100.0

From Table 26, students suggested ways that could be put in place to improve the performance of English. These ways were; provision of teaching and learning materials, need to guide and counsel students on the importance of learning English , giving assignments, that teachers should use different teaching methodologies among others.

4.5 Summary of the major findings

The purpose of this research was to investigate the factors that affect performance of students in KCSE examination. The research has established that all teachers are qualified and so the issue of teachers' qualification was not a factor that affected students' performance. It has also been established that teachers do not evaluate their students frequently which may have caused them to perform poorly. It has been established that most schools lack adequate teaching and learning materials which may have contributed to poor performance. It has been found out that use of mother tongue is a major cause of poor performance. The students have been found to have negative attitude towards English language which has been deemed to be a factor contributing to poor performance in their examination.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and presents conclusions and recommendations and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of the study was to examine the factors affecting performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education English examination in Nyamache Division, Gucha District. Five research questions were formulated to guide in the study. Research Question One sought to determine how teachers' evaluation methods affected performance in KCSE English examination. Research Question Two was aimed at examining the extent to which availability of adequate teaching and learning materials affected performance in KCSE English examinations. Research Question Three aimed at determining the extent to which teachers' instructional methods affected performance. Research Question Four sought to assess the extent to which the use of native language by the student in schools affected performance in KCSE English examinations and research question Five aimed at establishing how students' attitude towards learning English affected performance in KCSE English examinations.

The review of the literature focused on the nature of language, learning a second language, teacher and qualifications, instructional methods, teaching/learning materials, evaluation methods. The role of national language and attitudinal aspects of teaching and learning.

The study adopted the Ex-post-facto research design. The sample consisted of 342 students and 34 teachers. 284 (83.04%) of the student questionnaires and all the teachers' questionnaires were returned and considered. The data was collected through the use of self-administered questionnaires. The findings revealed that :-

- That teachers evaluation methods had an effect on students performance in English examination. For example, 72.5% of students said that teacher rarely gave them assignments and home work. Majority of the students (94.1%) said that teachers did not correct their assignments.
- That lack of teaching and learning materials had an effect of poor performance in English. For example 64.7 of teachers said that they did not have teachers reference books and guides, a majority 85.3% teachers and 73.6% students said they had quite inadequate audio tapes and 91.2% teachers and 73.6% students said they had quite inadequate visual tapes.
- That teachers used lower level of inappropriate instructional methods in teaching English which contributed to poor performance of students in English. For example 79.4% used lecture method of teaching and 66.2% never used demonstration method of teaching which a higher level method.

- That use of mother tongue had an effect on students' poor performance in English. For example 58.8% teachers' said that mother tongue was the most frequently used language in the school, while most students, 39.4 % confirmed the same.
- That most students had negative attitude towards English as a subject and towards areas tested in English which also contributed to poor performance in English. For example majority of the students (66.2%) had a negative attitude towards learning English and 72.5% of them had negative attitude towards areas examined in English.

5.3 Conclusions

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Based on the findings, it was concluded that students poor performance in English was contributed by various factors such as evaluation methods used by teachers. The research revealed that teachers used method of teaching that are seen as lower level for example they used lecture method of teaching which is teacher centred and avoided methods that involve students more such as small group discussion, and demonstration. Students are known to learn more if they are involved more. In this case the research has established that the use of these lower level methods may have had an effect of students performance

The research also found out that most school lacked teaching and learning materials. Teaching and learning materials are very important if learning has to take place. Teaching learning materials such as teachers' and students' text books, teaching aids

such as charts, chalk and chalkboard, audio tapes and visual tapes play an important role in enhancing learning. These materials also arouse students' curiosity and motivate them to learn. However, the research has established that these materials are lacking in these school which may have been a factor that has contributed to poor performance. Use of mother tongue has also been found out to a factor which has an effect of students performance. English being a second language need to be practiced in speech. Students in this Division seem not to be speaking in English. This has a negative effect on their performance.

Students have also been found to have negative attitude towards English. Attitude plays an important role in any undertaking. Their negative attitude may have led to lack of interest in the subject which may have led to poor performance in the subject.

5.4 Recommendations

In the light of the research findings the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations:

- i. In order solve the problem of instructional methods, teachers should use methods of teaching which involve students more as students participation is very important in their learning.
- ii. On the issue of evaluation, teacher and school principals should ensure that students are evaluated as required since evaluation helps in checking what has been achieved by the students and therefore plan for remedial teaching.

- iii. School administrators and the government should ensure that school have the required teaching and learning facilities. Teaching learning facilities facilitate learning and achievement of teachers objectives
- iv. As it has been established that mother tongue has affected students' performance teachers and the school administration should encourage students to speak in English. This would help in learning spoken language and also assists in making students learn how to think and express themselves in the language.
- v. The school administration should find ways of helping students cultivate positive attitude towards English. This can be done by planning for school drama, going to theatres which show English plays, encouraging students to English clubs such journalism, debating, young writers and others.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

Taking the limitations and delimitations of the study, the researcher makes the following suggestions for further research:

- i. There is need to conduct a research to investigate home background and its effect of students performance.
- ii. There is need to conduct a research to investigate how administrative factors that contribute to poor performance.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER TO THE HEAD TEACHERS

Ben Kenyaga Ouma
University of Nairobi
PO Box 30197
Nairobi
The Headteacher

Secondary School.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Re: Factors Affecting Performance in English KCSE Examination in Nyamache Division, Gucha District.

I am a post graduate student at the University of Nairobi, currently carrying out a study on the above – stated subject in Nyamache Division, Gucha District.

Your school has been selected to take part in the study. I kindly request your authority to gather the required information from your teachers of English and from four students through questionnaires.

The questionnaires are specifically meant for this study and the responses will be treated with strict confidentiality. Therefore no name of respondents or that of your school will be required.

Your assistance and support on this matter will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

BEN KENYAGA

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS

Ben Kenyaga Ouma
University of Nairobi
PO Box 30197
Nairobi
Tel: 0724 271 315

Dear Respondent,

**Re: Factors Affecting performance in English in KCSE Examinations
Nyamache Division, Gucha District**

I am a post graduate student at the university of Nairobi, carrying out a study in the above stated subject in Nyamache Division, Gucha District.

I kindly request you to respond to all the items in the questionnaire as honestly and correctly as possible.

The information you give will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Therefore neither your name nor that of your school shall be recorded.

In case you will be interested you are welcome to share the findings of the study.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully

BEN KENYAGA.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

This questionnaire is designed to help the researcher find out factors affecting performance of English in KCSE examinations in Nyamache Division. The information you give will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Therefore neither your name nor the name of your school should be recorded. Please respond to all items in the questionnaire as honestly and correctly as possible.

SECTION A

Please respond to each item by putting a tick (✓) next to the response that is applicable.

1. Please indicate your gender

Male ()

Female ()

2. What is your age bracket?

a. Below 25 years ()

b. 25 – 34 years ()

c. 35 – 44 years ()

d. 45 – 54 years ()

e. Over 54 years ()

3. What is your highest academic qualification?

a. M.ED ()

b. B.ED ()

c. P.G.D.E ()

d. BA General ()

e. SI/Diploma in Education ()

f. Others (specify) _____

4. (a) What is the type of your school?

a. Mixed school ()

- b. Boys school ()
- c. Girls school ()

4. (b). What is the category of your school?

- a. Day School ()
- b. Boarding ()
- c. Boarding and Day ()

5. For how long have you been in the teaching profession?

- a. Below one year ()
- b. 1 – 5 years ()
- c. 6 – 10 years ()
- d. 11 – 15 years ()
- e. 16 – 20 years ()
- f. 20 years and above ()

6 (a). What are your teaching subjects?

(b) Are you trained on the subjects that you teach?

- Yes ()
- No ()

7 (a). How long have you been teaching English in your teaching career?

- a. Below one year ()
- b. 1 – 5 years ()
- c. 6 – 10 years ()
- d. 11 – 15 years ()
- e. 16 – 20 years ()

7 (b) How long have you been teaching English in your present school?

- a. Below one year ()
- b. 1 – 5 years ()
- c. 6 – 10 years ()
- d. 11 – 15 years ()
- e. 16 – 20 years ()

8. How would you rate your school performance in KCSE English examination in the last one year?

- a. Very good ()
- b. Good ()
- c. Average ()
- d. Below average ()
- e. Poor ()

9 (a). What is your current teaching load per week?

- a. Less than 20 lessons ()
- b. 20 – 24 lessons ()
- c. 25 – 30 lessons ()
- d. More than 30 lessons ()

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(b). How do you rate this work load?

- a. Heavy ()
- b. Moderate ()
- c. Light ()

(c) What effect do you think the teaching load has on the students performance?

SECTION B

10. (a) How often do you give students assignments/homework?

- a. Daily ()
- b. Once a week ()
- c. Once a fortnight ()
- d. Once a month ()
- e. Any other (specify) _____

10 (b) Are you able to correct all the assignments given at the intended time?

Yes ()

No ()

(c) Please explain your answer above

11. Please indicate whether you prepare the following by ticking as many as applicable

- a. Schemes of work ()
- b. Lesson plans ()
- c. Records of work ()
- d. Students progress records ()

12 (a). Do your students complete their assignments/home work as required?

a. Yes ()

b. No ()

(b) In your answer above is No, put a tick (✓) against the reasons that students give for not completing the work.

- a. Lack of adequate time ()
- b. Lack of textbooks ()
- c. English assignments are too difficult ()
- d. Any other reason _____

13. How often does your head teacher make follow up to ensure that these records are prepared as required?

- a. Once a term ()
- b. Once a month ()
- c. Twice a month ()
- d. Never ()

14. (a) Rate the attitude of students towards learning English in your school

- a. Positive
- b. Neutral
- c. Negative

(b) Please explain your answer above

15. Please indicate with a tick (✓) the adequacy of the following teaching and learning materials in your school in the table provided below. The alternate choices are as follows

- a. Quite adequate QA
- b. Adequate A
- c. Inadequate I

d. Quite Inadequate

QI

Teaching/learning materials		QA	A	I	QI
1	Teachers reference books and guides				
2	Student's textbooks				
3	Charts				
4	Chalk boards and chalks				
5	Audio tapes				
6	Visual tapes				

Other stationery _____

16. Below are statements about the use of teaching materials and resources with regard to your teaching. Tick (✓) in the relevant column the extent to which you use them. The alternative choices are as follows:

- a. Quite Often (Q. oft)
- b. Often (Oft)
- c. Less Often (L.Oft)
- d. Never (Nev)

Information on the instructional methods	Q.Oft	Oft	L.oft	Nev
Lecturing				
Small group discussion				
Question and answer				
Demonstration				

17. Please indicate with a tick (✓) your opinion on the following factors that may hinder teaching of English. The alternative choices are as follows:

Strongly Agree	SA
Agree	A
No Opinion	NO
Disagree	D
Strongly Disagree	SD

Factors hindering teaching of English		SA	A	NO	D	SD
1	High work load					
2	Students negative attitude towards English					
3	Lack of adequate instructional materials					
4	Unqualified teachers					
5	Poor evaluation methods					
6	Students use of mother tongue					

18. Below are evaluation methods used in testing learners. Please tick (✓) in the appropriate column the extent to which you use each of them. The alternative choices are as follows:

- a. Quite Often (Q. oft)
- b. Often (Of)
- c. Less Often (L.Oft)
- d. Never (Nev)

Evaluation methods		Q.Oft	Of	L.oft	Nev
1	Writing essays				
2	Use of multiple-choice questions				
3	Listening comprehension				
4	Reading comprehension				
5	Speech work				
6	Use of close tests				

SECTION C

19. What language is mostly used by students in your school?

- a. English ()
- b. Kiswahili ()
- c. Mother tongue ()

20. To what extent do you think use of other languages other than English contribute to poor performance in English?

- a. Greatly ()
- b. Not very much ()

21. What some of the factors that you feel hinder good performance in English in your school?

22. In your opinion what are the areas that students find difficulty in learning English?

23. The following are areas examined in English. Tick the relevant column the extent to which your students find each of them in learning English. The alternative choices are:

- | | |
|----------------|----|
| Very easy | VE |
| Easy | E |
| Difficult | D |
| Very Difficult | VD |

Areas examined		VE	E	D	VD
1	Composition				
2	Summary				
3	Comprehension				
4	Grammar				
5	Poetry				
6	Oral literature				
7	Skit story				
8	Novel				
9	Drama				

24. How can the performance of English be improved in your school?

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This questionnaire is designed to help the researcher find out factors affecting performance in English in KCSE examination in Nyamache Division. The information you give will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Therefore neither your name nor the name of your school should be recorded. Please respond to all the items in the questionnaire as honestly and correctly as possible.

SECTION A

Please respond to each item by putting a tick (✓) next to the response that is applicable.

1. Please indicate your gender

a. Male ()

b. Female ()

2. Please state your age _____ years.

3. What is the type of your school?

a. Mixed school ()

b. Boys only ()

c. Girls only ()

4. What is the category of your school?

a. Day school ()

b. Boarding school ()

c. Girls only ()

5. What is your first language _____

6. (a) What language do you use mostly at school

- a. English ()
- b. Kiswahili ()
- c. Mother tongue ()

(b) What language do your peers mostly use at school?

- a. English ()
- b. Kiswahili ()
- c. Mother tongue ()

SECTION B

7. To what extent do you think mother tongue speaking contribute to poor performance in English in you school?

- a. Great extent ()
- b. Less extent ()
- c. Not at all ()

8. Indicate the extent to which your school has the following teaching learning for use in English lesson. The alternate choices are as follows:

- a. Quite adequate QA
- b. Adequate A
- c. Inadequate I
- d. Quite Inadequate QI

Teaching/learning materials		QA	A	I	QI
1	Teachers reference books and guides				
2	Student's textbooks				
3	Charts				
4	Chalk boards and chalks				
5	Audio tapes				
6	Visual tapes				

9. The following statements are about your attitude towards learning English. Please tick (√) in the relevant column the extent to which each of the statements applies to you. Alternative choices are as follows.

Very Important v/imp
 Important imp
 No Important n/imp
 No opinion n/op

Statements regarding attitudes towards English		V/Imp	Imp	N/Imp	N/op
1	To be able to communicate				
2	To pass examination				
3	For future career development				
4	As an official language				
5	As a compulsory subject				
6	To become a member of English speaking community				

10. The following are areas examined in English. Tick the relevant column the extent to which you find each of them in learning English. The alternative choices are:

Very easy VE
 Easy E
 Difficult D
 Very Difficult VD

Areas examined		VE	E	D	VD
1	Composition				
2	Summary				
3	Comprehension				
4	Grammar				
5	Poetry				
6	Oral literature				
7	Skeet story				
8	Novel				
9	Drama				

11. The following statements relate to your revision and how you are tested in English. Indicate in the appropriate column how applicable they are done. The alternate choices are as follows:

Quite Often Q.Oft

Often Oft

Less Often Loft

Never Nev

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Areas of revision and testing		Q.oft	Oft	Loft	Nev
1	Reading/revision English on your own				
2	Getting English assignments/homework				
3	Reading English books other than set ones				
4	Having assignments/homework marked				
5	Group work				

12. How often do teachers give you assignments and homework?

- a. Very often ()
- b. Often ()
- c. Rarely ()
- d. Very rarely ()

13 (a) . How often do teachers mark your assignment?

- a. Quite Often (Q. oft)
- b. Often (Of)
- c. Less Often (L. Of)
- d. Never (Nev)

(b) Do your teachers mark and give you back books in good time?

- Yes ()
- No ()

(c) Do you get time with your teachers to revise the assignments given?

- Yes ()
- No ()

14. To what extent do teachers use the following teaching methods in teaching English in your class. The alternative choices are as follows:

- a. Quite Often (Q. oft)
- b. Often (Of)
- c. Less Often (L.Of)
- d. Never (Nev)

Information on the instructional methods		Q.Oft	Oft	L.oft	Nev
1	Lecturing				
2	Small group discussion				
3	Question and answer				
4	Demonstration				

SECTION C

15. In your opinion what factors lower students' performance in English in your school?

16. What do you think could be done to improve students' performance in English in your school?

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX E
TABLE FOR DETERMINING SAMPLE SIZE FROM A GIVEN
POPULATION

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1,200	291
15	14	230	144	1,300	297
20	19	240	148	1,400	302
25	24	250	152	1,500	306
30	28	260	155	1,600	310
35	32	270	159	1,700	313
40	36	280	162	1,800	317
45	40	290	165	1,900	320
50	44	300	169	2,000	322
55	48	320	175	2,200	327
60	52	340	181	2,400	331
65	56	360	186	2,600	335
70	59	380	191	2,800	338
75	63	400	196	3,000	341
80	66	420	201	3,500	346
85	70	440	205	4,000	351
90	73	460	210	4,500	354
95	76	480	214	5,000	357
100	80	500	217	6,000	361
110	86	550	226	7,000	364
120	92	600	234	8,000	367
130	97	650	242	9,000	368
140	103	700	248	10,000	370
150	108	750	254	15,000	375
160	113	800	260	20,000	377
170	118	850	265	30,000	379
180	123	900	269	40,000	380
190	127	950	274	50,000	381
200	132	1,000	278	50,000	382
210	136	1,000	285	100,000	384

N is Population size. S is Sample size.
 Source: Krejcie, R.V. and Morgan, D. (1970).

APPENDIX F
RESEARCH PERMIT

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NAIROBI
KENYA

16th June 2006

KENYAGA BEN OUMA
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
P.O. BOX 30197
NAIROBI

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION

Dear Sir

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on '*Factors Affecting Performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education English Examinations in Nyamache Division, Gucha District*'

I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to carry out research in Gucha District for a period ending 30th August 2006.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer Gucha District before commencing your research project.

On completion of your research, you are expected to submit two copies of your research report to this office.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. O. ADEWA', written over a horizontal line.

B. O. ADEWA
FOR: PERMANENT SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioner - Gucha District

The District Education Officer - Gucha District