

**FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS PERFORMANCE
OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF
SECONDARY EXAMINATION IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN MERU – NORTH DISTRICT, KENYA.**

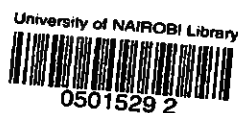
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**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for
the Requirements of the award of a Degree in Master of
Education in Curriculum Studies.**

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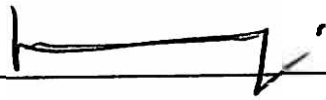
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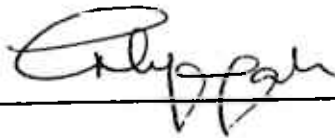
DECLARATION

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 is presented for examination with our approval as University Supervisors



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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my daughter, Elvera Njeri Mwangi, whose inspiration, prayers and encouragement made me work extremely hard. My sons, Derick Nduati and Elmer Carsan will find satisfaction and enjoyable life as they study and emerge as academic giants, to serve Kenya and the international community.

I dedicate this work to my mother, Taali Wanja Carsan, who prayed and inspired my life in quest for education.

In addition, this work is dedicated to students, teachers, school administrators and all those who treasure the proper application and daily usage of English language; and struggle to protect English language against any threats to distort its usage.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

God, creator of Heaven and Earth receives gratitude for providing me with wisdom, knowledge and insight to complete this noble task.

- My thanks go to Dr. Genevieve Wanjala and Dr. Grace Nyaga for their invaluable guidance and thoroughness in imparting wisdom in order for me to complete this precious work. My gratitude is conveyed to the staff, School of education, who gave me moral and practical support in doing this task.

I am grateful to the principal of Ntunene Girls High School who released and allowed me to undertake this degree. Many thanks to the Teachers Service Commission for granting me study leave with pay in order to accomplish this academic pursuit. School Head Teachers and Teachers from Meru – North District gave me practical and emotional support during my research work; thanks for being kind to me. In addition, I acknowledge all the well wishers and friends who supported me in doing this research.

My husband John Mwangi, children, Elvera, Derick and Elmer take credit for their love, understanding and prayers, as I did the research. May God prosper, bless and enrich every participant who has participated in making me achieve this dream.

ABSTRACT

English is among the compulsory subjects in the Kenya secondary school curriculum. It is significant as a medium of instruction and communication. At the secondary level it is taught and examined as an integrated subject. That is the Language section and Literature parts being taught and examined as one English subject.

- It is notable the performance of English Language at Kenya certificate of education (K C S E) has been poor for several years. The main objective of this study was to investigate factors influencing poor performance in English Language in Meru North. The interest and concern of the researcher to study performance of English Language was strongly prompted by the continued poor performance in K C S E examination, and the researcher teaches English in one of the schools in the district.

The questionnaire for teachers contained demographic information, physical facilities, teaching and learning resources; other aspects include teacher's qualification and training needs. The factors affecting performance of English language was addressed in section D. in addition, suggestions were made in section E on how to improve performance of English language. The observation guide reflected on physical facilities on the ground.

A document study was carried out to establish the performance of the candidates between 2003-2007. The information was gathered from the schools analyzed results for K N E C over this period as well as the computer print of these results from the examinations department at the District Education Office, Meru North, the Personnel Department Ministry of education, and the schools deputies and curriculum masters/mistress provided the particulars of the English Language results. These results were valid and reliable.

The study had five research questions. The research question one analyzed the physical facilities in the school. Research question two dealt with teachers' professional competence and how it contributed to performance of English Language. From the responses of the respondent ,it was noted, schools with untrained teachers performed poorly. Schools that were understaffed did not perform well in English. Research question three looked at learning resources this study sampled fifteen secondary schools in Meru North. There were only four schools which had adequate teaching and learning resources. We find eleven schools did not have enough course books, story books and set books for form four students were inadequate. This was a clear explanation why the students performed poorly in English Language in the respective schools.

Research question four considered strategies to be used to improve the performance of English Language on improvement of learning teaching resources, quality in service training courses, schools, assessment methods should be effective and the syllabus content should be reviewed. In addition teachers should be thoroughly trained on how to teach listening and speaking skills; during teacher education more emphasis should be on practical subjects than theoretical work.

Research question five addressed individual differences among learners. The school catchment area is the local community, whose enrolment is over 80% from the neighborhood. Some of these students are below average and they join districts schools with as low as 180 marks, which is a " D " grade. The result from the district schools curriculum department provided a frame work of distinctive individuals' differences among the students. This reflects different ability and how they perform.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- CPE-** Certificate of Primary Education
- FAWE-** Forum for African Women Education
- GOK-** Government of Kenya
- INSET-** In-Service Teacher Training
- KCSE-** Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
- K.I.E-** Kenya Institute of Education
- KNEC-** Kenya National Examinations Council
- K.U-** Kenyatta University
- ODA-** Overseas Development Agency
- SELP-** Secondary English Language Project
- SPRED-** Strengthening Primary Education
- U.K-** United Kingdom
- U.O.N-** University of Nairobi
- U.T-** Untrained Teacher
- F.S.E-** Free Secondary Education
- MOE-** Ministry of Education
- T.S.E-** Teachers Service Commission.
- C.B.E** –Curriculum Based Establishment.
- D.N** – The Daily Nation Newspaper
- P.G.D.E** – Post Graduate Diploma in Education
- P.T.A** – Parent Teachers Association.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The world is fully alive to the need for an International Language, Baugh and Cable (2003), English Language has been artificially selected to satisfy that need. The expansive growth of the internet was extending English as a world Language, according to the (2000) Advanced Research Project Agency Network. Information Technology (IT) has grown rapidly in Kenya, making her utilizes English Language to develop software and Internet operations in the country. When Kenya attained her independence in 1963 English Language was recognized as the official medium of communication in the country. According to republic of Kenya Report, (1964) English was adopted as the Language of instruction in schools. Further, Kenya has ascribed as a member of United Nations whose Language of communication is English.

From 1970-1985, English Language and Literature in English were taught and examined as two different subjects in Kenya. However, with the introduction of the 8-4-4 system of education in 1985 English Language and Literature were integrated into one subject. The secondary school syllabus comprises English Language and Literature in English. The English part has four components; composition, comprehension, Grammar and summary. The Literature section is comprised of Drama, Novel, Oral Literature, Poetry and short stories (Kenya National Examinations Council, 2003). These nine parts are examined at Kenya

Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) level at a total of 200 marks with 60% of the total marks coming from the Language part and 40% from the Literature section.

The allocation of lessons for English Language is as follows six lessons of week in form one and two and eight lessons in form three and form four. These lessons were allocated to teachers trained in the teaching of English Language or Literature in English as well as those who did not have such a background for instance, Kenyatta University (KU) trained most of the country's English Teachers in the late 1990's and early 2000. A teacher trainee could take Literature and another teaching subject such as Geography. In addition in 1988 University of Nairobi was training BED teachers. These teachers were posted to teach either Literature in English or English Language (Ndavi, 1982). With the introduction of the 8-4-4 system and the integration of the English Language and Literature in English, a teacher who was trained to teach Language had to teach Literature too. A notable drawback is a number of teachers are not confident enough to handle some of subject components because they did not learn how to teach them in college, in a situation like that, such teachers teach only the areas they find easy at the expense of the other areas (Masinjila, 1989). Based on the assumption that any subject teacher can teach English incompetent teachers are allocated English lessons (Ndavi, 1982). The competence of the teacher is significant because Language learning does not only involve learning facts but learning of

communication skills, eloquence codes and the use of Language in appropriate contexts.

Lack of in-servicing of teachers has been cited as a problem of teaching English. In a paper presented by Waitaha in a conference “English Across the curriculum, The Kenya context” hosted by the British Council and the University of Nairobi in May 1993, he wrote:

“The Ministry of Education places strong emphasis on the upgrading of English Language teachers as is shown by collaboration in British Government sponsored project at both Secondary English Language Project (SELP) and Strengthening For Primary Education (SPRED) levels, (The British Council, 1993 Pg 23).”

It is noted in the same paper that after introduction of the 8-4-4 system of Education in 1985, it was felt there was need for massive in -service training for English teachers. This would have prepared them to cope with the demands of a new syllabus, which required new approaches to English teaching.

An agreement was reached between Overseas Development Agency (ODA) and the Kenya Government to start a four -year in service projects for Secondary English Teachers (SELP). The British council funded this project over three thousand teachers were in serviced between March 1988 to July 2002, and 45 teachers and inspectors were trained in the United Kingdom (UK). The in service Training For Teachers (INSET) courses are not frequent, partly because of the

busy school schedules and the financial constraints. The course objectives have normally been those of the authorities with hardly any consideration of what teachers want to learn (Masinjila, 1989) as teachers are not consulted on their choice of areas of training; they therefore look at INSET as boring and time - wasting, hence the benefits are little.

The school heads and Administrators should advice and guide teachers and stimulate them to consider new methods of teaching, that is, give educational leadership in their schools (Ominde, 1964). It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to literary check on the students' exercise books to establish the number of composition written and marked; check comprehension grammar, summary and Literature work covered by the Teacher. If such supervision and guidance is lacking students will perform poorly in English.

The teaching and learning resources play an important role in teaching English Language. The Government introduced the policy of "cost sharing" (Republic of Kenya, 1988). Parents are required to provide to the Education of their children by ensuring they put up physical facilities while the government provides the teachers and tuition facilities. However, there are imbalances as the urban centers and up country are able to provide opportunities to their children, while the arid and semi-arid areas and other poor regions have to do without most of the essentials (Masinjila, 1989; Onjoro, 1990). This is a serious problem because sharing of textbooks of English means those students without the books cannot do

their assignments in time. The Literature set -books require thorough analysis this cannot be achieved when the students share only a few books (Onjoro 1990). Teachers of English face strong criticism against integration of the English syllabus. Teachers, parents, sponsor, laymen and media, have argued that the syllabus scope is too wide and the time frame is too short. According to Onjoro (1990), "it is difficult to squeeze so much into so little time" given other unforeseen factors like poor training of the teachers. The syllabus is poorly covered therefore students perform poorly in final examinations.

The 1999 commission of inquiry into the education system in Kenya, chaired by Koech, interviewed English teachers and students in connection with the integrated English syllabus. The commission made a recommendation that the integration of Language should cease. It was noted that English Language and Literature should be taught and examined as separate subject (Republic of Kenya, 1999).

Our society right from the school level has contributed immensely to the poor performance of English at KCSE level. The quality standard and mannerism used in the staff-room, public notices, public address and Language used by support staff are generally poor. Our candidates use poor English in examinations because they reproduce the kind of English they hear, read and speak (personal observation).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The Free secondary Education (F.S.E) was started in 2007 in Kenya as indicated in Kenya Gazette of 2007. This provided opportunity for students who passed their Kenya Certificate of Primary Education to proceed with their studies in the secondary level.

In the secondary school syllabus (2003-2007) English Language is among the compulsory subjects to be taught in schools. It means the 40 District Secondary Schools in Meru North should accord students opportunity to learn English Language. The Meru North District enrolled 11511 candidates who did their K.C.S.E respectively between the year 2003 to 2007.

It is notable that no students from the District had attained “A” grade in English. The B+ and B students were 34 and the majority of the students got C- and D grades. During the period 2003-2007, six district schools had a mean of C -, 23 schools had D and 5 schools had D- the national mean score was 5.2197 and 5 district schools had got a mean of 2.800 E. This depicts a pathetic academic situation which prompted the researcher to carry out this study on factors influencing student’s performance of English Language in K.C.S.E examination in secondary schools in Meru – North district. The researcher comes from Meru North where illiteracy level is very high and since I have taught English Language in many schools, my work may play a great role in improving performance of English Language in the district and nationally.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The study investigated the factors contributing to performance of English Language from 2003 to 2007, in Meru- North district.

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study achieved the following objectives. :

- i. The study examined the extent school's physical facilities contributed to performance of English Language.
- ii. The study established the professional competency levels of teachers to teach English Language and Literature in English.
- iii. The study determined whether learning materials and resources were available and adequate for teaching English Language and Literature in English.
- iv. The study identified the individual differences among students in learning English Language.
- v. The study established appropriate strategies that would be used to assist improve the performance of English Language.

1.5 Research questions

The following are the research questions of the study:

- i. To what extent do the physical facilities in the school influence enhance/ improve English Language performance?
- ii. To what extent do the teachers' professional competence levels affect the performance of English Language?
- iii. To what extent were the learning and teaching resources adequate to improve the performance of English Language?
- iv. What are the individual differences among students in learning English Language?
- v. What appropriate strategies would be used to assist improve the performance of English Language?

1.6 Significance of the study

The results from this study may be very vital in establishing the causes and providing remedy for good performance of English Language. The various stakeholders in the school namely: Head Teachers, English Teachers and parents will find the study useful to improve on the performance of their children. The Ministry of Education on getting this report may communicate to the inspectorate, the Quality Standards and Assurance Officers on how to advice English teacher on how to improve the performance of English Language. The MOE may utilize the report to prepare in-service training for teachers.

The study may provide useful information to Kenya institute of Education (K.I.E), which prepares school syllabuses. The study may be used by the Kenya National Examination council when analyzing the performance of English Language.

The finding from this study may be available to all researchers who may be interested in doing study in the field of performance.

1.7 Limitations of study

The study used descriptive survey and was limited due to the dependence on the Co-operation of the respondents.

Another limitation of the study was that, though a single survey can establish whether or not a relationship existed between two variables, it was not sufficient to determine the direction of the causality. Another limitation was the the size of the sample of schools in relation to performance of English Language; that is in relation to the number of schools in Meru north district. This affected the generalizability of the research findings.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study focused only on public secondary schools which had sat for KCSE English Examination between the year 2003-2007. The respondents of the study were the head teachers and teachers from the public secondary schools, in Meru North district.

The research considered the following variables that influence the performance of the English Language: the national tests at K.C.S.E level, the professional qualification of the teachers and the readiness to teach, availability of facilities, type of school, students upbringing and home background and school learning environment. The effect of *sheng*, *slang* and *pidgin* on performance of English Language and styles of learning and how they affect performance of English Language are discussed.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The following assumptions were made in this study that: The respondents were aware of the effect of poor performance of English in their future.

All public secondary schools under study are familiar with the effects of performance of English Language on their future career.

The respondents gave accurate, truthful and honest answers.

1.9.1 Definition of significant terms

8-4-4 system refers to a system of Education, which represent eight years of primary, four years of secondary, and four years of University first degree level of education.

Component refers to sub-section of the English examination paper which can be composition, Grammar, comprehension, summary for the Language part. The literature section has, Novel, short story, Drama, poetry and Oral literature.

Integrated syllabus refers to the K C S E syllabus in which English Language and Literature in English are combined to form one English subject.

KCSE Examination it refers to the Kenya certificate of secondary Education an annual examination offered by the Kenya National Examination's Council to assess students who have covered four years of secondary education.

The **Language** refers to the English examination which tests the aspects of Language i.e. composition, Grammar, comprehension and summary.

Literature refers to the KCSE English examination; the aspects are Drama, Novel and literature, poetry and short story.

Performance refers to the students academic level of achievements at KCSE examination , which is graded from the highest (A) to the lowest (E) a 12 grade scale, whose part signify “very good” “good” “average” “poor” and “very poor” is used.

Competence is the ability to do well.

Incompetent refers to lack of skill or ability to do your job or task.

Pedagogical concerns teaching methods

1.10 Organization of the rest of the study

Chapter one gave the background of the study which showed English Language as accepted as an international Language. When Kenya attained her

independence in 1963, she recognized English as the medium of communication in the country.

The statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations, assumptions of the study and definition of significance terms are all discussed in chapter one.

Chapter two included the literature review and comprised factors affecting student performance, factors which influence students performance: national test at KCSE level, the professional qualification of the teachers and their readiness to teach, availability of facilities, type of schools, student upbringing and home background, the effect of *sheng*, *slang* and *pidgin* on performance of English Language, styles of learning affects performance of English Language.

Chapter three covered the research methodology which included, introduction, research design, target population, sampling technique, sample size, sample population validity, research instruments reliability, instrument validity, data collection procedure and data analysis techniques.

Chapter four dealt with: research findings/ results, introduction, questionnaire return rate, data reporting, data analysis, research question 1, research question ii, research question iii, research question iv and research question v.

Chapter five deliberated on: summary, discussion, conclusion and recommendation. Specifically, introduction, summary of the study, discussion of research findings, discussions of findings of research question I, question ii, question iii, question iv and question v, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further research were analyzed.

Chapter five dealt with summary, discussion, conclusion, recommendation of research findings and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter on Literature review addressed some issues which are very significant when assessing the factors influencing performance of English Language.

This include : national tests at KCSE level, the professional qualification of teachers and their readiness to teach, availability of facilities, type of school, students upbringing and home background, the effect of *sheng*, *slang* and *pidgin* on performance of English Language, styles of learning affects performance of English Language.

2.2 Significance of English

English Language has become so powerful due to its diversity in usage. The political, academic, technological and social events globally make people enjoy expressing their views using English Language. The spread of English arts and sciences through the medium of a particular Language in turn reinforces the prestige of that Language. English is one of the most important Languages of the world. It is spoken by 380 million people in the United Kingdom, the United States and the former British Empire. It is the largest of the western Languages. Baugh and Cable (2003).

When scholars compare English Language with other Languages like Spanish which is spoken by 330 million people, Portuguese by 180 million, Russian by 175 million, Germany by 110 million, French by 80 million native speakers; French and English are Languages of wider communication. The ascendancy of English has measured by numbers of speakers makes many people use the Language. According to Fishman (1992) English is less learned but more used. In a world where “econo-technological superiority” is what counts, “the real power house” is still English.

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The official Languages of the United Nations are English, French, Russian, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic. More scientific research is published in English than in any other Languages and the prominence of English Language in commercial use is undoubted.

The major broadcasting and motion pictures industries in the United States and Britain are done in English Language.

Since World War II, English has become an official Language with one forth of the world’s population using the Language. In many countries English is used in schools, courts and in doing business. For example in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya English Language is used as a medium of communication in schools, courts and business premises.

English Language in a secondary school set up ensures learning is acquired. Information is transmitted via Language and students use Language to ask

questions. The answers to their questions serve to increase their knowledge in a number of areas. Students must learn to use English Language as a tool of peace so that what they say and the way they say it does not lead to hard feelings and conflicts Mwamwenda (1996).

2.3 National Tests at K C S E Level

The KNEC council administers Examination to students all over the country: the assumption given is students have covered the syllabus and they have gone through the same learning experiences. This assumption could be wrong given the inequalities that characterize schools in Kenya.

According to the Steadman Group report Daily Nation 2nd July 2009, out of 1.3 million candidates who sat for the form four exams have obtained the mean grades between E and D. The study indicated that 18,798 candidates had scored a mean grades of E. when this is critically interpreted, the candidates just scored one point in each of the seven subject (English Language included) tested by the Kenya National Examinations Council. These findings were scaring and they caused commotion during the National secondary School Head Teachers Conference which was held in Mombasa. The PS Ministry of education and KNEC secretary intervened and stopped the Head Teachers from discussing the results which gave the public a wrong picture of the credibility and confidentiality of the KNEC was highly questioned

When one considers the reliability and validity which have a direct bearing on a candidates performance , given that a score that a candidate obtains in an examination cannot note his/her level of achievement relative to other people in the same group. According to Nultal and Willmatt as cited in Indongole (1987), the scores given to candidates are not true scores but observed scores since the candidates “underlying achievement” tends to be blurred by other influence.

The difference between the candidates observed score and the true score is attributed to a statistical error of measurement (not a mistake made). It is notable that the candidates’ attainment can only be measured reliably if there is a consistent rank ordering of the candidates in which the error score is reduced to a minimum.

Sometimes poor performance in an examination might be nothing but distortion of the students’ true academic attainment by a faculty examination instrument. This observation was verified by Wamai (1991). For example the 8-4-4 integrated English syllabus is wide, deep and complex to handle. However, on the other hand the tests used to assess what has been achieved are short and insufficient. The test fall under the general rule of time restriction and the extent to which they can be reliable measure of four years of secondary schooling is open to debate. Wamai (1991) argues that the policy of KNEC to influence the comprehensive curriculum coverage by ministering choice of questions given to candidates is likely to have adverse effects on performance for many students. Topics, for

which teaching and learning resources are not available in school are most likely to be avoided or very poorly covered, and so some teachers may not be confident in teaching some English components which they think are difficult (Masinjila, 1989),

The selection range of questions poses a problem to students. It is likely that at least a handful of students would benefit from a wide choice of questions.

It is very complex for KNEC to administer oral examinations; therefore it is difficult to find out whether students read extensively and intensively. When we look at the examination results in this subject it does not contain a measurement of those important objectives of learning in English and literature. The type of instrument used to assess achievement can not be used to capture a student who can demonstrate mastery in those areas.

The study done by Wamai, 1991), "while the instrument may reveal those with potential to become pen and paper journalists, it does little to unearth potential of "on the spot" broadcasters"

Looking at Charter (1984) "Marking and assessment in English "she writes teaching and assessment should be integrated, Assessment should reflect what a teacher has taught. According to her views in English it is pointless giving pupils a wide experience in reading, writing, listening and talking if teachers only assess their writing. Teachers find this is an inherent weakness of the current integrated 8-4-4 English syllabus.

2.4 The professional qualification of teachers and their readiness to teach

The studies done by Maundu and reported by Wamai (1991) about the study carried in Kenya, revealed that academic qualification and training of teachers and the availability of teaching/learning resources were the most important factors that determined achievements by learners.

The studies carried out in western Kenya, Eshiwani (1983) on factors influencing performance in examination among primary and secondary school pupils in the Province; revealed the increased in the numbers of untrained teachers had far exceeded that of trained teachers in the region, while in 1975 the proportion of untrained teachers in secondary schools in western province was 44.6 % in 1983 it had increased to 60%. The proportion of untrained teachers in the province was above the National average. This was a key factor contributing to the poor grades in the National Examination. These finding have far-reaching implications on teaching, learning and performance in English at KCSE level because the teacher of English is expected to be a role model for his student in the use of English Language (Ndavi, 1982)

According Heinemann (1976) who conducted same studies in Uganda, he correlated variable such as teachers teaching experiences, salary, grade and the quality of teachers' English competence with grade of the primary learning examinations. The results showed that the quality of a teachers English as

measured by the teachers Languages competence had a correlation of $r=31$ which was significance at $p < .01$ level.

2.5 Availability of facilities

The use of resources points to key Policy issues like in the individual access to information technology, classroom management and the role of the library/resource centre. 'The teachers' ability to utilize and manage classroom resources are fundamental to the extension of the range and repertoire of teachers, skill whether, it be a whole class work, group work or independent learning'' Brighouse and Woods (2000).

According to a study conducted by Heinemann and Laxely in Ndiritu (1998) it revealed that a school library has a significant effect on learners' academic performance. They found out that a simple presence of a school library was significantly related to achievement in Brazil, Chile, Bostwana and Uganda.

This was in agreement with Colemans study 1966 as cited in Ndiritu (1998) where the findings were that the number of textbooks on loan from the library was significantly related to learning achievement in the united states of America.

Okello Ayot, (1984) States that a glance of secondary school syllabuses for any subject will reveal the numerous topics on which a reasonably good library could provide comprehensive information by means of reference books, supplementary texts, encyclopedias, good reading books, magazines journals and local and international Newspapers, these will contribute immensely to students store of

knowledge. It is obvious that such an opportunity will stimulate curiosity, comprehensive study and good study habits. It will also help in developing various individual interests and aspirations, books are informative and they enrich the readers' future dreams. If the importance of the library is understood, it can become the real centre of academic pursuits, the springs of academic knowledge to nourish symbolically the schools educative purpose.

Ayot (1987) states that whenever teaching resources are utilized and integrated into the planning of teaching the results is always encouraging and proper utilization may assure the teacher of good response from the audience.

Fuller (1985) states that school facilities such as desks, instructional materials especially books and school library enhance school performance. Therefore, students in school with all the relevant facilities are likely to perform better than those who go to poorly equipped schools.

2.6 Type of school

The studies done by Makau and Somerset (1986) has quoted in Indongole (1987), indicated that rural and urban schools performed fairly in their exams. They used their spearman rank correlation method in the analysis of their data and the results indicated that a strong correlation existed between teaching methods and pupils performance at C.P.E examination. There was a strong correlation between the quality of administration and the students' performance in the C.P.E Examination.

Kariri and Ndiritu (1998) noted that larger schools performed better than small schools. Probably, this was because larger schools attracted better head teachers, who exercised proper administration and created a conducive learning and teaching environment which lead to higher academic achievement. He also noted that larger schools received equipment and textbooks promptly and effectively. Dimuzio's work as reviewed in Ndiritu (1998) noted that the quality of the head teacher of a primary school mattered in students' examination performance. Olembo is cited in Ndiritu (1998) as having obtained similar results in a 1977 study.

Eshiwani's work as reported in Ndiritu (1998) showed similar findings in the school administration was closely related to the performance of the students. Ndiritu explains a study undertaken in 20, selected schools in Uganda by Musango, showed a positive relationship between head teachers attitude and performance was observed. He used the questionnaire method to collect data aid and measure the attitude of the head teacher.

Some studies conducted by the Bibby and Peil (1974) in Ghana, found out that in developing countries the type of school a student attends has a greater impact on their performance in an examination than the social-economic status of the candidate. The government quota system policy in selection of students in provincial and district schools has contributed to poor performance in English according to government policy, 85% of all student enrolled in a provincial school

should be from the district where the school is situated and 100% of all the students enrolled in a district school should be from the district where the school is situated.

This contributes to poor performance in English as such students use their mother tongue and Kiswahili during their conversion, this relegates English to a second or third place (personal observation). Language problems which are phonological and syntactic, for example pronunciation spelling and word order pose a problem (Masinjila, 1989).

2.7 Students upbringing and home background

Parental role in the students' academic work is a factor which affects student performance. According to a study done on 106 standard seven school children in Nairobi by Kapila in 1976, Ndiritu (1998), notes there was a positive association between parents participation in the children's school work and academic performance Ndiritu (1998) quotes Okumu's study of standard seven pupils of Nairobi schools, which reported similar findings.

Baliet also conducted a study in 1984 which is cited in Ndiritu (1998), using a sample of 571 Kenyan standard seven pupils from six districts namely Nairobi, Kiambu, Mombasa, Kwale, Kisumu and Meru in this study, it was revealed that there were low and negative relationships between parents support and interest and pupils performance in C.P.E and K.C.S.E examinations. Ndiritu (1998) explains in a study of 426 primary standard seven pupils in Gulu district of

Uganda he found parental encouragement to be significantly positively related to the child's academic performance.

Graffin (1996) and Ndiritu (1998), they have accorded parental participation great importance as a factor determining the pupils performance in an examination. He pointed out that parents involvement is an important element in the learners academic achievement.

Parents' level of education affects students' ability to achieve. Ndiritu in 1998, worked at the relationship between secondary school students need to achieve and the educational levels of their parents. Results from this study showed that there was a positive and significant correlation between the fathers level of education and the pupils need to achieve ($r=0.120$, $P<0.50$).

He also reported a further positive relationship between the mothers level of education and the students achievement motive ($r=0.130$). Another study by Jamison and Lockheed reports had similar findings as cited in Indongole of the father and mother as important factors in determining the children's learning achievement at school level.

The studies done by Indongole (1987) revealed that the socio-economic background of the candidate tends to influence performance. Most educated parents tend to provide their children with educationally stimulating environments by encouraging them to study and have access to relevant books and useful

literature. To many third countries parents who are illiterates or semi illiterate earn low income, they can hardly provide basic needs for their students.

When food shelter and clothing (basic needs) are not satisfied the students are demoralized and they perform poorly in their examination. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1962) is significant in addressing basic needs of students. Candidates with good intellectual and material environments do better in exams than their counterparts, who may not be so endowed. According to Burk, 1937, Indongole, 1987, Douglas, 1964 and Harvitghaust 1962; in the Western world research has shown that the Educational achievements of children from middle class homes is superior to that of children from manual working class homes.

2.8 Effects of slang on English Language

Slang has been defined as one of those things that everybody can recognize and nobody can define P. Roberts (1958). The use of slang or colloquial Language introduces new words into the Language by recombining old words into new meanings. Slang introduces new words such as bort, turb and pooped. Finally, slang consists of ascribing entirely new meaning to old words. Slang words and phrases are invented in keeping with new ideas and customs. They represent attitude and expressed ideas of the speakers involved in a conversation. For example such slang has entered English from the underworld such as crack for a special form of cocaine, payola, c-note, G-man to hang paper. When students use slang in writing their composition, they are penalized. The composition lacks

coherent, the meaning is absurd and the fabric is distorted, this makes the student to perform poorly in writing.

2.8.1 Sheng, slang and pidgin's effects on performance of English Language

Sheng is a mixture of Kiswahili and English, where Kiswahili contributes and English contributes eng from sheng. Iren Mbaabu and Kibande (2003). However, sheng is a mixture of more than these two Languages as it derives its lexicon (vocabulary) from all the Languages used in Kenya. Pidgin is gradient mixture of elements of two or more Languages forming a system that is substantially different from its antecedent parents systems (Mazrui 2003). Slang has been defined as "one of those things that everybody can recognize and nobody can define" (Roberts 1958).

The issue of sheng interfering with English Language ought to be taken seriously by all policy makers. Some sheng words for example, matatu, (passenger vehicle) manamba (tout) and mutumba (second hand clothes) are used in spoken and writing by young people. Slang promotes socio-psychological function of enhancing a sense of group solidarity. These inter-group social interactions make the student use speech to create in group distinctiveness, which is used in written composition by the interlocutors. The use of pidgin distorts various words and phrases in English. For example grammatical errors are created in sentence construction. In Standard English we write John's, but pidgin when used it reads John Haus.

2.8.2 Styles of learning affects performance of English Language

There are major differences in learning styles from one student to another. These differences have a noticeable effect on classroom learning. Learning styles (also referred to as cognitive styles) are different ways in which people process information in the course of learning. They include individual preferences in both perceptual organization and conceptual categorization that is **perceiving, thinking, remembering and solving problems** (Ausubel, 1886; De cecco, 1974; Kagan, Moss and Siegel, 1963; Messick, 1969). According to Ausubel (1968) learning styles are a reflection of individual differences in personality and motivation.

The three basic types of learning style are **visual (reading), aural listening and physical (doing)**, according to Reissman (1966). Other aspects of behavior that might be classified as learning styles are the **mode of response and the thinking pattern** (Nations, 1967). Response made refers to the manner in which an individual prefers to work, alone or in a group. Thinking pattern refers to the tendency of some individuals' to gather details first and organize them later, as compared with the tendency of others to look for the overall picture first and to obtain supporting information afterward.

Teachers should help each individual student to discover the learning style that is most effective for him and use this information in formulating learning plans.

Children vary in their level and span of attention. Some students pay attention for long periods of time while others are easily distracted or frequently day dream; still others pay attention only to what interests them. By observing the attentive behavior of students, a teacher can determine which children need to be monitored during class instruction and which children can handle long assignments (Shumsky, 1968).

2.8.3 Summary of the Literature Review

The Literature reviewed in his study focused on other studies carried out on some elements of performance of English Language. (Onjoro, 1990) the study carried out a study on English Language has a medium of communication in the classroom. Baugh C Albert and Thomas Cable (2003) highlighted the significance of English Language. None of the studies has addressed the factors which influence the performance of English Language in Meru-North District. The current study therefore aims at providing information to fill this gap.

2.8.4 Theoretical framework based on the study

This study is based on Jerome Bruner's theory of cognitive development. Bruner emphasized Gestalt principles of **organization** in developing concepts of the **structure** and insight learning which he refers to as **intuition**. According to Bruner the primary purpose of education is the learning of skills in such a way that they can be used in other worthwhile situations (Bruner, 1966). He explains that school curricula should be organized so that once children master the early

basic skills for example **speech work, reading and writing** in Language later learning of a more advanced nature will be facilitated.

In his famous critique, the process of Education, Bruner (1960) uses examples from the teaching of scientific and mathematical concepts to illustrate basic principles that are applicable to all areas of teaching and learning.

The first theme is that learning involves understanding basic relationships in the **structure** of a subject. According to Bruner, once a student effectively relates one aspect of knowledge to another, he will acquire a sense of direction that will add excitement to his learning process. For example when the student understands the relationship between comprehension, grammar and literature in English it will aid the student retention of the material and can transfer it to learning situations.

Readiness for Learning is Bruner's second theme. According to Bruner, basic concepts of any discipline can be taught in a form simply enough to be meaningful to students. In this respect he agrees with Piaget who maintained that we can teach a child if we match the subject matter to his cognitive level.

Bruner's third theme is **intuitive thinking**. Intuitive thinking involves the ability to arrive at reasonable but tentative formulations prior to any actual formal analysis. Bruner puts emphasis on creative thinking and recognizing the values of the subject matter.

Motivation is the fourth theme. According to Bruner, a child can be motivated to learn. The teacher stimulates such a desire and the student desire to learn will be carried from the environment of the classroom to the rest of his world. Bruner explains a teacher can best stimulate learning by creating interest in the material so that the student can realize it is worth learning. Bruner reflects on designing teaching methods that will best utilize the capacities of the students of different abilities.

Bruner refers to three integrated steps in learning, **acquisition, transformation and evaluation**. **Acquisition** is the process of obtaining new information that can be used to either replace or refine something known previously. **Transformation** is the manipulation of information to make it suit new situations. The process of **evaluation** involves checking whether the acquired information has been manipulated appropriately. In the teaching of English Language, the teacher ensures that the student has acquired necessary knowledge in reading, speech work and writing.

The knowledge acquired can be transformed into new environment like skills used in writing application letters and oratory Language used in speech work. Teachers use evaluation procedures to check if the students have grasped the contents taught.

2.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

A concept is an abstract or general idea inferred or derived from specific instances. A concept is a word or phrase that symbolizes several interrelated ideas. Unlike a theory, a concept does not need to be discussed to be understood (Smyth, 2004)

Conceptualization is inventing or continuing an idea or explanation and formulating it mentally. Conceptualization is an abstract simplified view of the world that we wish to represent for some purpose. Every knowledge base, knowledge based system or knowledge level agent is committed to some conceptualization explicitly or implicitly (Genesereth and Nilsson, 1987)

Conceptual framework of the study

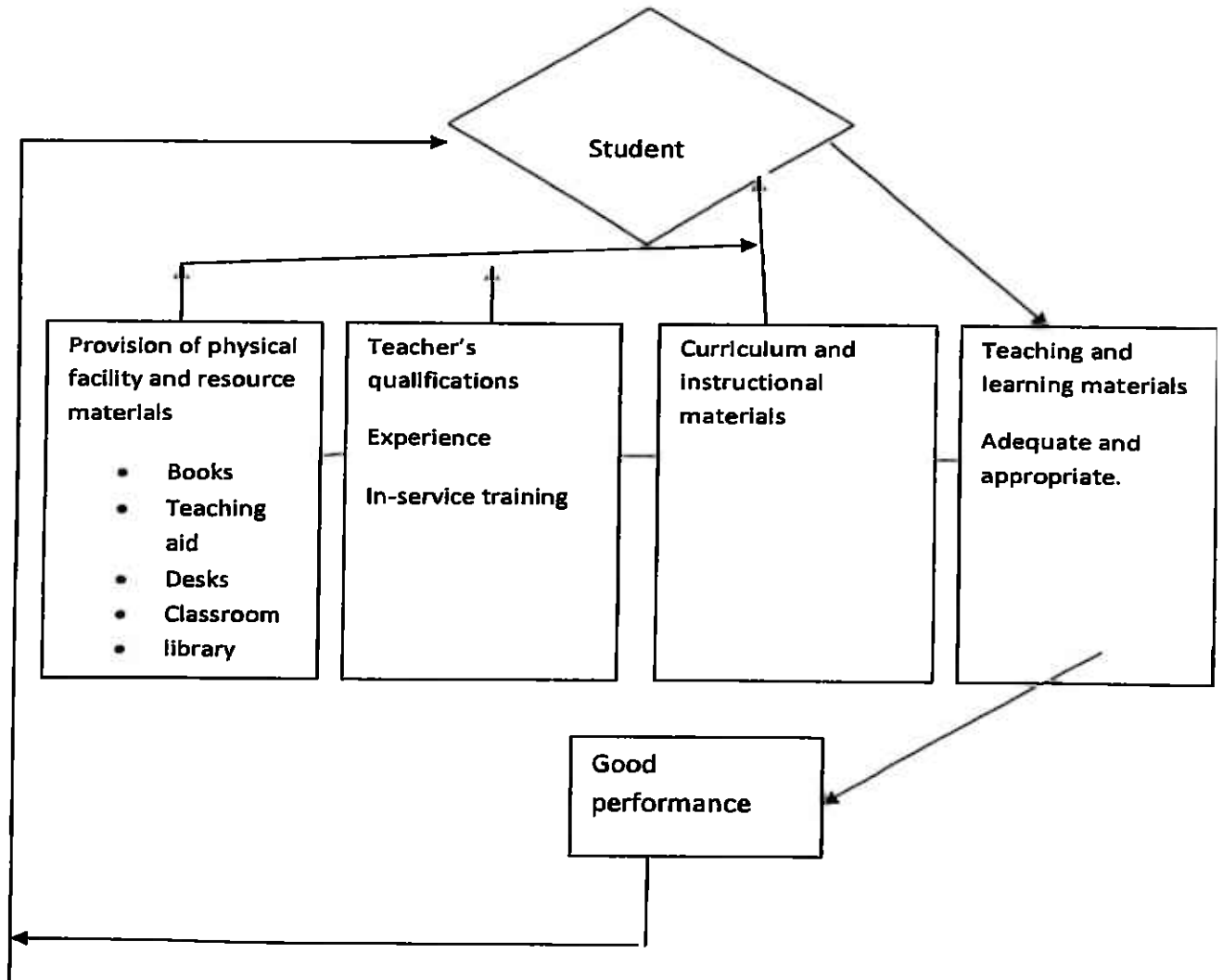


Figure 1 Conceptual framework adapted from Gerlach as depicted by Ayot

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the **research design, target population sample size and sampling procedures research instruments, reliability and validity of research instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures.**

3.2 Research Design

This study was conducted using descriptive survey research. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) defines a survey as an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables. Survey research is thus a self-report study which requires the collection of quantifiable information from the sample.

This research is appropriate for the study because by identifying the factors which influence the performance of English Language, the researcher will be able to establish the status of physical facilities, teaching and learning resources.

3.3 Target Population

Target population is the group of subject to whom the researcher wants to apply the conclusions from the findings (Ary, Jacobs, Razaimah & Sorensen, 2006). The target population of the study included all the Head teachers of the 40 public secondary schools and the 96 English teachers, in Meru-North District.

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedures

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), a sample must be large to represent the salient-characteristic of the accessible population. To get the sample, simple random sampling method will be used.

Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) described simple random sampling as a method involving giving a number to every subject or member of the accessible population placing the number in a container and then picking any number at random. The subject corresponding to the numbers picked are included in the sample. The school not picked from the container were used for piloting of the study. Since the average number of English teachers in each is four, the study dealt with 168 teachers. In order to get 20 Head teachers to participate in the study all the names of the 42 schools were written on pieces of papers put in a basket and then shaken well. A piece of paper was picked at a time and then the rest of the papers were shaken again. The process was repeated until the 20 schools will be selected. The researcher randomly selected 80 teachers from the 168 teachers teaching English Language in the 20 schools. According to Donald, Jacobs, Razavieh, Sorensen 2006, a sample is a portion of a population. In simple sampling all members of the population have an equal and independent chance of being included in the random sample. The steps in simple random sampling are: define the population, all members of the population are listed and sheer chance determined which schools on the list drawn on the sample were used for the study.

The researcher assigned each school a distinct identification number. First, the researcher enumerated all the schools in the district. The schools were assigned numbers for identification purposes. There are 40 schools, the numbers 000, 001, 002, 003 ...039, are used. The next step was to enter a table of random numbers to obtain numbers of three digits each, using only those numbers that are less than or equal to 039. For each number chosen, the corresponding member of the population falls into the sample. The process was continued until the desired number of the sample has been chosen, in this case the first fifteen numbers, representing the schools. The researcher allowed chance to determine which elements in the population was be in the sample.

The sample size intended for the study was 40 secondary schools having a total of 96 English teachers and 40 Head Teachers. This sample would have presented about 61% of all English Language and Head teachers from Meru-north. The eligible teachers and head teachers were supposed to be education graduates of diploma colleges, universities, those with post graduate diplomas in education (PGDE) or masters in education. The statistics on the number of English Language teachers in each school had been computed using the curriculum based establishment (CBE), with the assumption that they were not understaffed. The actual number of teachers who took part in the study were 35. The table below shows the schools that participated in the study and the number of teachers that qualified to participate and actually did so.

Table 4 Schools that participated in the research and the number of Head Teachers and teachers they presented

School	Number of Head Teacher	English Teachers who participated in the research
1. Antuambui	1	2
2. Akirangandu	1	2
3. Mutuati secondary	1	3
4. Nthare secondary	1	3
5. Antubetwe kiango	1	3
6. Kiegoi secondary	1	2
7. Thitha secondary	1	3
8. St Mary's Mbaranga	1	1
9. Akithi Girls	1	3
10. Ntuene secondary	1	1
11. Uringu Girls	1	2
12. St Anjelas Ngithiru	1	3
13. Amwamba Girls	1	3
14. Irindiro Secondary	1	2
15. Kibuline Secondary	1	2
Total	15	35

The actual number of English teachers in most schools were higher than the teachers who participated, but they did not take part in the research because:

- i) Some had just been promoted and transferred outside the sampled schools.
- ii) Some were employed by the Board of Governors and were unwilling to participate.
- iii) A few teachers were untrained therefore ineligible.
- iv) While a few teachers were newly posted and lacked the skills and knowledge to answer the various questions in the questionnaire.

3.5 Sample population validity

The sample used had the salient features of the target population. The common of closely comparable qualified and characteristics stated below proves that the use of this sample was representative of the universe, thereby establishing sample population validity, thus validating generalization to be made.

The common characteristics of the target population were:

- i) The similar admission criteria of students in all the selected schools, with comparable cut off points upon admission to form one; according to admission records at the district education office, Meru – North.

- ii) The comparable socio-economic status of students in the secondary schools within the district, agricultural produce and livestock keeping was their parents' source of income.
- iii) The same social and cultural practices in the rural environment or (set up) through out the district.
- iv) Comparable English Language teacher to student ratio in most schools. Teaching work loads of most English teachers within the district are about 24 lessons per week, established from quarterly returns at the district education office.
- v) The same low performance of English Language in majority of the schools with the mean score from 3 to 5.1. This suggests that the schools were affected by similar factors.

3.6 Research instruments

The research instruments for the study included three questionnaires one questionnaire for head teachers, Teachers and an observation guide.

Questionnaires---They allow respondents to give frank answers to sensitive questions especially if they are not required to disclose their identity
[Mulusa.1990]

The questionnaire for head teachers was divided into two main parts with part one soliciting demographic information from the respondent while part two was

divided into sections each contained items which asked information to answer the research questions.

Section A of part II sought information on physical facilities while **section B** dealt with information which concerned **teaching and learning** materials. **Section C** contained questions seeking information on the time allocation and content delivery. Finally **section D** dealt with information on the strategies to improve performance of English Language.

The questionnaire for teachers was divided into three main parts, demographic information section the curriculum issues and the last section on ways of improving English Language.

The observation guide was made to confirm the information provided by the respondents. According to Mugenda [1999] an observation check list is used to record what a researcher observed during data collection.

3.7 Validity of instruments

Validity is the degree which the empirical measure or several measures of the concept accurately measures the concept [Orodho, 2004]. According to the standards for educational and psychological Testing [1999] in Ary et al [2006] validity is the degree to which evidence and theory supports the interpretation of the tests scores entailed by proposed uses of test validity thus deals with how well the operational definition. Looking at validity it deals with establishing if the instruments content is measuring what it is supposed to measure. Ary et al [2006]

asserts that there is no index to indicate content validity evidence but evidence based on content is mainly a result of logical examination an analysis that shows whether the instrument adequately represents the contents and objectives making up the domain .To validate the questionnaires, the researcher carried out a pilot study. The researcher administered the questionnaire to the head teacher and teachers of the school not in the sample. The questionnaire items were discussed with the respondents. The respondents were requested to point out or to identify the ambiguities in items.

The questionnaire had adequate instruction on how to fill and ensure that items were clearly understandable. An analysis of the pilot results showed that all items were well stated and respondents understood each item. According to responses gathered, the respondents did not show any ambiguous items (the researcher asked the pilot respondent to comment on how easy or hard it was to understand the items). The additional open-questions were treated in two ways: respondents were asked to give their opinions, attitudes and feelings as affected performance of English Language. If a response was positive showing how results can be improved, it was accorded a measure of 4 on the likert scale and a 5 if very positive. A negative response got a measure of 2, if very bad feeling, it was given 1. The responses once coded were treated like the rest.

The researcher sought the help of colleagues and professionals in the area since Ary et al[2006] asserts that professional judgment can ensure validity of

instruments. The inadequacies pointed out were rectified before the administration of the questionnaire to the sampled population. A good research should be able to control all possible factors that threaten the research validity.

To validate observation checklist the researcher consulted the supervisor before the administration of the questionnaire to the sampled population. In addition, to validate the observation guide the researcher consulted other professionals who critiqued it and guided the researcher to identify errors and unpleasant phrases.

3.8 Reliability of the instruments

Reliability is used to focus the degree to which empirical indicators or measures are consistent across two or more attempts to measure the theoretical concepts [Orodho, 2004]. The researcher used a test re –test technique in order to test reliability of the instruments. The instruments were given to similar subjects for study but not those that were used in the final study. The same instruments were administered to the same group of subjects after a period of time, say one to two weeks.

Reliability was used to focus the degree to which empirical indicators or measures are consistent across two or more attempts to measure the theoretical concepts (Orodha, 2004). The items used in the questionnaire carefully structured so that they were based on the conceptual framework of the study, for instance section D on the Head Teachers' questionnaire answered research question five which is closely related to both conceptual and theoretical studies. The Kenya

national examination council results and records obtained from the schools are reliable documents.

3.9 Data collection procedures

Administration of the research instruments for data collection was done by the researcher both at the pre-testing and during the main study. This was after a research permit was obtained from the Ministry of Education. A copy of the permit and an introductory letter was sent to the District Education Officers, Meru-North District, A copy of the introductory letter was given to ,Area Education Officers in charge of the Divisions in the District. The Local Chief and school head teachers of all sampled schools, were given a copy of the letter. The researcher visited the respondents to create rapport and set dates for the administration of the instruments. The researcher later administered the instruments to the head teachers and teachers.

During the actual data collection day, the head teacher was requested to fill the questionnaire. The researcher requested the head teacher to provide one room, which the teachers occupied as they filled the questionnaire. The researcher later walked around the school, observed the physical facilitates and teaching and learning resources and filled the observation guide.

Permission to conduct the research including the administration of the questionnaire for both pilot testing and actual research was sought from three parties: the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, the District education

Officers Meru – North, Heads of secondary schools under study who gave their permission and were all very co-operative, they organized data collection procedures very well.

The schools under study are widely scattered. The means of transport used were motor – bikes, vehicles; the researcher walked very long distances where there were no means of transport. The researcher personally gave introductory letters to the District Education officers Meru North, the area Education Officers in charge of the divisions in the district. A copy of the introductory letter was given to the local chief and the school head teachers of all the sampled schools. The researcher visited the schools under study to create rapport and set dates for the administration of the instruments.

The actual data collection was done personally by the researcher herself. The researcher personally visited the schools and administered the questionnaire to the head teacher and English teachers. A discussion was held with the respondent which assured them of the honesty and confidentiality of the research undertaken. The head teacher filled the questionnaire in his office, while the teachers undertook their work in the staffroom. The researcher strolled the school compared and observed the physical facilities. A visit to the class rooms gave a good view of the teaching learning resources available in their respective classes.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a detailed analysis of the research findings. There are several sections. It starts with analyzed tables showing K.C.S.E graded c-d- for selected schools in Meru North District 2003 to 2007. This table reflects on the poor performance of English Language in the respective schools. The highest mean score is a “c” from only 2 schools, in 2007. The rest of the schools had “d”, while 4 schools had “e” grade in 2003. The table gives tangible evidence which justifies this study on the performance of English in Meru - North.

Table 2 compares the results from Meru- North with the national performance of English Language. Again, it is notable we have Meru- North with “c-d” grades nationally. These set of tables were instrumental in analyzing research question number (iv), which considered the strategies to use in order to improve the performance of English Language.

The next section analyzed the findings or answers to the research questions in a chronological order and showed results of statistical tests which were significant. The last section was a summary of the results (general for each research question), tentative interpretations and conclusions.

4.2 Questionnaire return rate

The study had endeavored to study 40 out of 96 English teachers and its head teachers derived from 15 out of 40 secondary schools in Meru-North district. In the actual study, 91% respondents gave returns. Nevertheless, these respondents were those qualified to give data in the schools under study. The rest of the teachers were disqualified as explained in sub-section 3.3.2

4.2.1 Reporting of data

The tables gave a detailed account of the data collected. Table three elaborates the types of schools in Meru-North. The mixed schools and a high percentage of students and their performance in English Language was low. These tables are used to answer the research questions. The tables provide relevant extracts to answer all the research questions, for example the table showing teachers who participated in the research and their academic qualification, which was used to answer question (ii).

The tables and figures are vital in extracting information regarding research question (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv).

Looking at table entries, it is apparent that the K.N.E.C examination results in (table 1) show the performance of English Language is low. Therefore the justification of this study in dealing with performance of English Language. Table 4 and 6 answer the research question number (ii). Table 7 deals with physical facilities available in the school and answers question research question (i) and (iii).

Table 1 K.C.S.E grades in selected schools in Meru-North 2003 - 2007.

	school	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007	
		Mean score	Grade	Mean score	Grade	Mean score	Grade	Mean score	Grade	Mean score	Grade
1.	Antuambui	3.5142	D	3.6333	D	3.7391	D	3.7222	D	3.7692	D
2.	Akirangandu	3.2682	D -	5.1111	C	4.9375	C-	3.9729	D	3.1666	D-
3.	Mutuati secondary	3.1866	D -	4.5000	D+	4.8629	C-	4.5824	D+	4.6781	C-
4.	Nihare secondary	3.2000	D -	4.1818	D	4.3529	D+	4.0384	D	3.8333	D
5.	Antubetwe kiango	3.6956	D	3.3636	D -	4.0883	D	4.7857	D+	4.0909	D
6.	Kiegoi secondary	3.1000	D -	3.0645	D -	3.5833	D-	3.8333	D-	3.2631	D+
7.	Thitha secondary	2.7027	E	3.2093	D -	3.3958	D	4.5235	D+	3.5000	D-
8.	St Mary's Mbaranga	2.5294	E	3.4000	D -	3.6956	D-	3.5000	D	3.5172	D-
9.	Akithi Girls	3.3488	D -	3.7464	D	5.1685	C	4.4390	D+	5.3218	C
10	Ntueene secondary	3.1178	D -	3.0000	D -	3.7428	D	3.7500	D	3.3333	D-
11	Uringu Girls	2.9166	E	no exam	No exam	4.6111	D+	3.2222	D-	3.8571	D
12	St Anjelas Ngithiru	3.0697	D -	4.3409	D	4.5932	D+	4.4871	D+	5.7478	C
13	Amwamba Girls	3.3170	D -	3.0869	D -	3.7391	D-	4.4545	D+	3.6428	D
14	Irindiro Secondary	2.800	E	3.2666	D -	3.1578	D-	3.2631	D-	3.8824	D
15	Kibuline Secondary	3.000	D -	4.1388	D	4.9375	C	5.0714	C	5.1304	C

Table 2 depicts low performance from 2003 to 2007. It is sad to note the grades were D therefore most of these candidates could not qualify to join higher academic institutions in the country.

Table 2: K.C.S.E Results for English Language in Meru-North 2003-2007 compared with the National Mean Score

District	Year	Mean Score	Grade	National Mean Score	Grade
Meru-North	2003	3.3963	D	4.4323	D+
	2004	4.3165	D	4.8659	C-
	2005	3.883	D	5.3919	C-
	2006	4.3476	D	5.2801	C-
	2007	4.2395	D	5.2197	C-

Source: Kenya National Examination Council 2003-2007

Table 3 reflects the categories of schools in Meru-North. It can be compared with table one reflecting on the mean scores, this showed performance was poor even after the schools had been given different categories.

Table 3 Categories of Schools in Meru-North District 2003-2007

Category

Boys	Girls	Mixed Boarding	Private
8	11	19	2
Total number of schools = 40			

Table 4 shows that five teachers were disqualified from filling the questionnaire because they did not meet the stated qualification: one was untrained four lacked experience and knowledge to handle the questionnaire.

Table 4: Schools that participated in the research and the number of Head Teachers and teachers they presented

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION**

School	Number of Head Teacher	English Teachers who participated in the research
1. Antuambui	1	2
2. Akirangandu	1	2
3. Mutuati secondary	1	3
4. Nthare secondary	1	3
5. Antubetwe kiango	1	3
6. Kiegoi secondary	1	2
7. Thitha secondary	1	3
8. St Mary's Mbaranga	1	1
9. Akithi Girls	1	3
10. Ntuene secondary	1	1
11. Uringu Girls	1	2
12. St Anjelas Ngithiru	1	3
13. Amwamba Girls	1	3
14. Irindiro Secondary	1	2
15. Kibuline Secondary	1	2
Total	15	35

Table 5 depicts, the in-service of English teachers was poorly attended in the district. It was important to invite all the concerned teachers on time.

Table 5: English Language Teachers from selected schools who attended English Languages in-service courses

Provider of in-service	Number of teachers attended	%
K.I.E	5	13
Ministry of Education	3	8
Publishers	2	5
Total	10	26

Table 6 shows more female teachers teaching English than male. This enhances the traditional myth that more women like teaching English. However, it is notable that this table answers research question ii on teachers' professional qualification and the readiness to teach English Language. It is hoped in future the performance of English Language will improve as the level of teacher education goes up.

Table 6: Categories of teacher academic and professional qualification and sex from selected schools

Teacher qualification		Number	%
Sex	Male	22	40.0
	Female	33	60.0
Professional Qualifications	Bachelors	36	65.5
	Diploma	13	23.6
Untrained teachers		6	10.9

Table 7 is significant in answering research question number 1 which dealt with the school physical facilities and how they enhance the performance of English Language. From the table it can be observed schools lacked important physical facilities like a library which is significant in learning and acquisition of skills such as reading, writing and developing skills in speech work.

Table 7: Physical facilities available in the selected schools which participated in the research

Facilities	Total number	Number of schools
Classes	27	15
Blackboard	15	15
Television	5	15
Video Machines	5	15
Library	0	15
Resource centre for English	0	15
Slides	0	15
Language lab	0	15

Table 8 display the teaching and learning resources in the selected schools. The table enabled the researcher to answer question (i). The selected schools lacked important teaching and learning resource material which could have boosted learning and enabled the learners to understand the content of the syllabus: it is notable students performed poorly in English Language because they lacked these facilities.

Table 8: Teaching and learning materials

Teaching and learning materials	Learning resources and comments
Course books	Few(mostly shared between 3-4 students)
Set-books	Scarce(most students did not have them)
Television Set	Only 5 schools had T.V Sets
Pictures and magazines	Not available in all selected schools
Story books	These were less than 300 in the sampled schools.
Wall charts	Not available in all selected schools

Figure 2 displayed the categories of schools in Meru-North. Despite the different types their performance was poor.

Figure 2: Category of schools in Meru-North

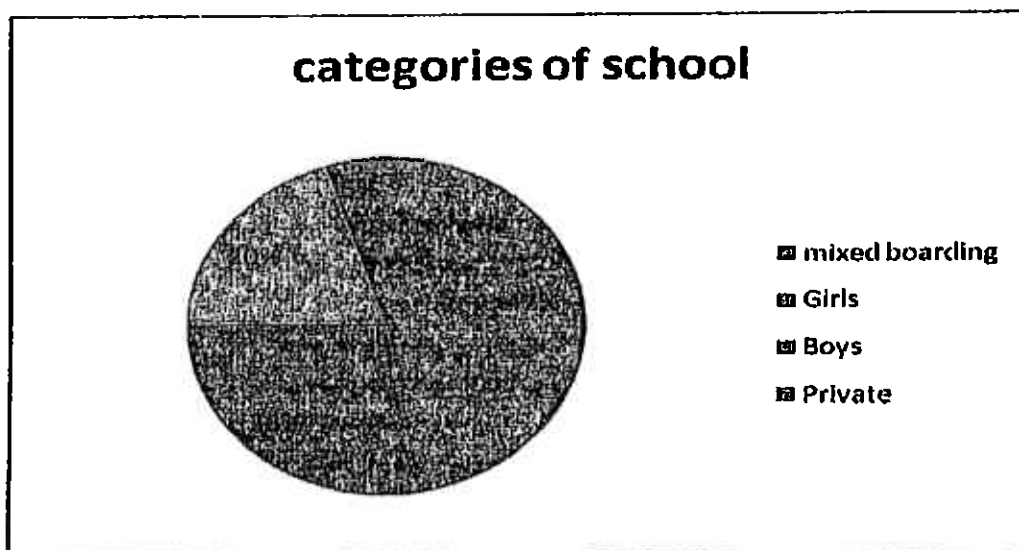


Figure 3: K.C.S.E results among selected schools in Meru-North 2003 – 2007.

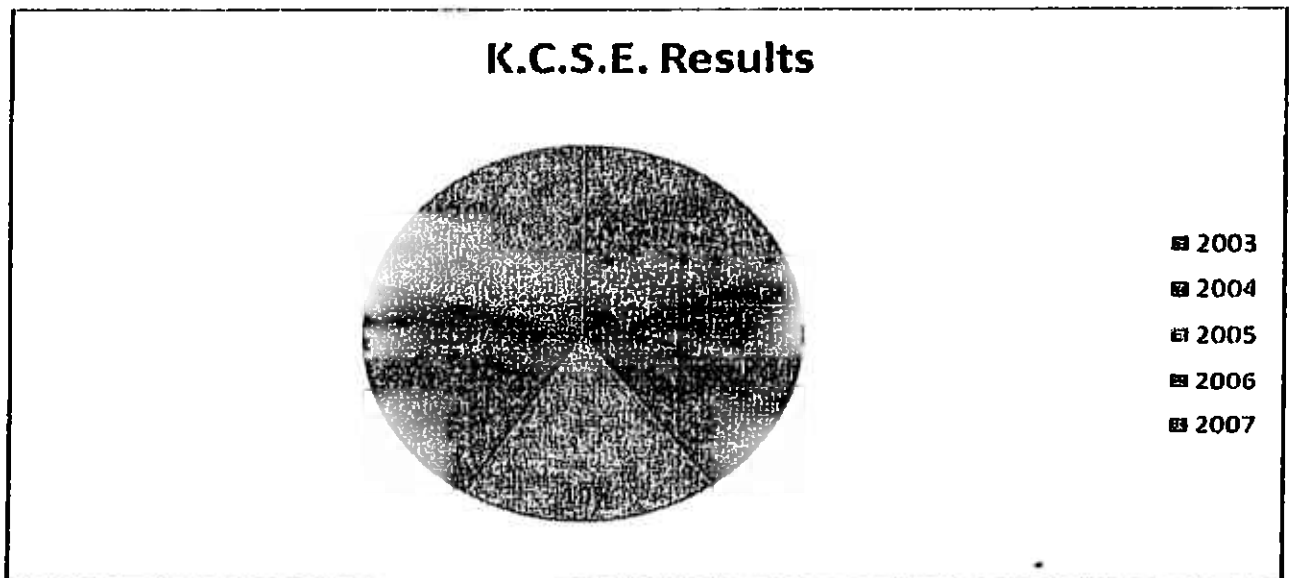


Figure 3 showed results from 2003 to 2007 had C and D grades. This depicts low performance in the selected school

Figure 4: English Language examination mean score per selected school, 2003

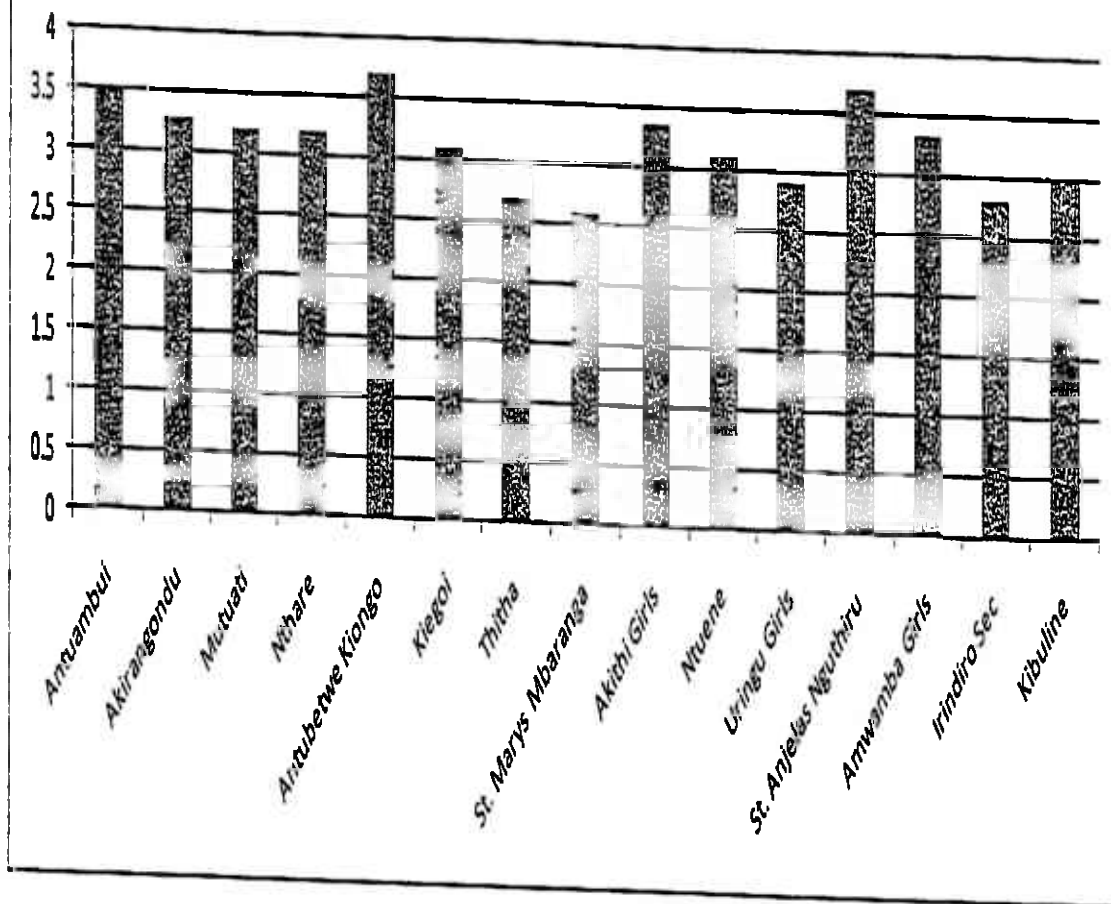


Figure 4 showed poor performance, 11 schools had D and 4 E grades. This figure justifies the need to study the performance of English Language in Meru North.

Figure 5: English Language examination mean score per selected school, 2004

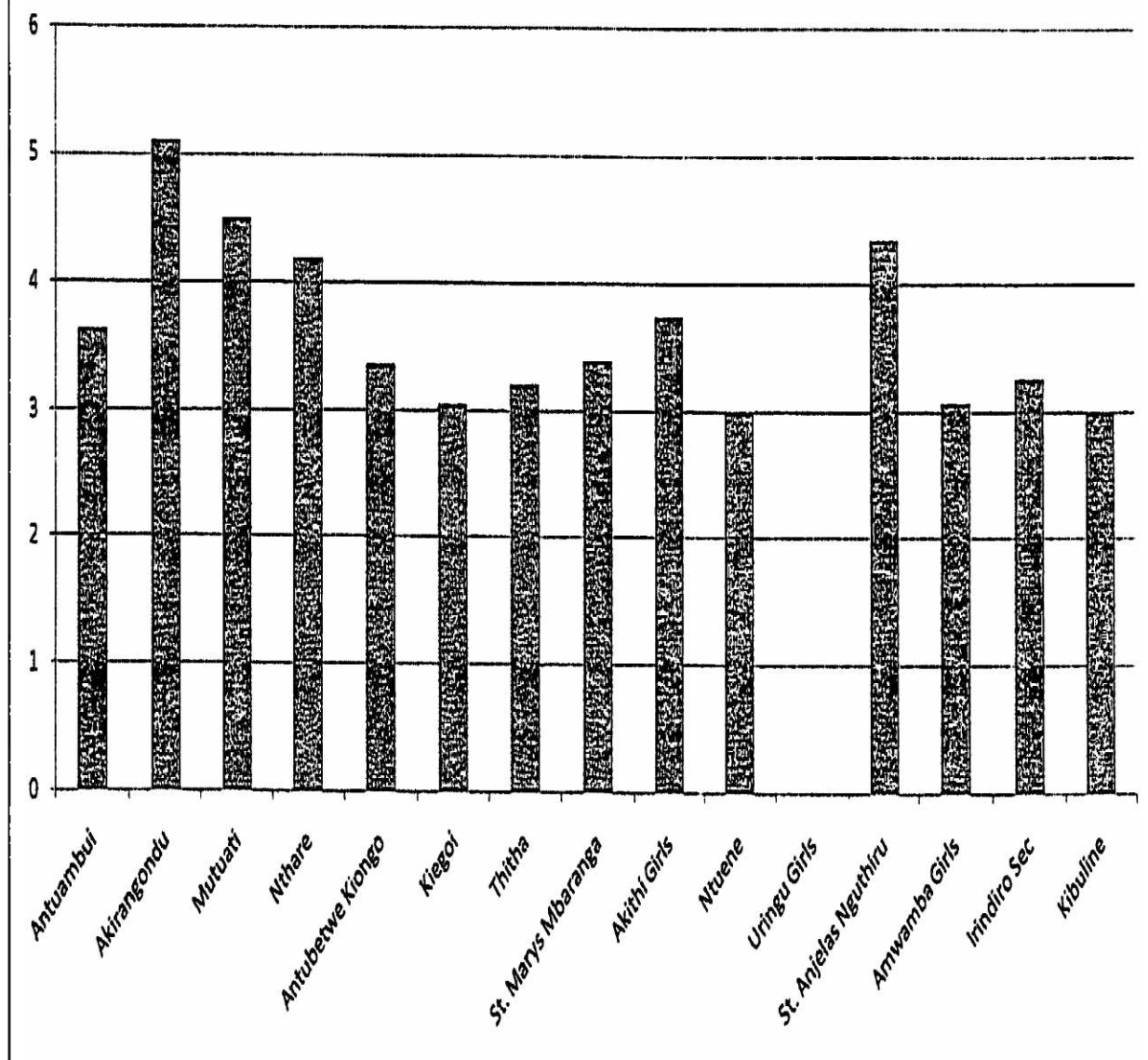


Figure 6 showed 13 schools got D, 1 school had a C grade. Uringu Girls did not present candidates to do form four examination because the school experience administrative problems and the candidates who were supposed to do K.C.S.E transferred to other schools

Figure 6: English Language examination mean score per selected school, 2005

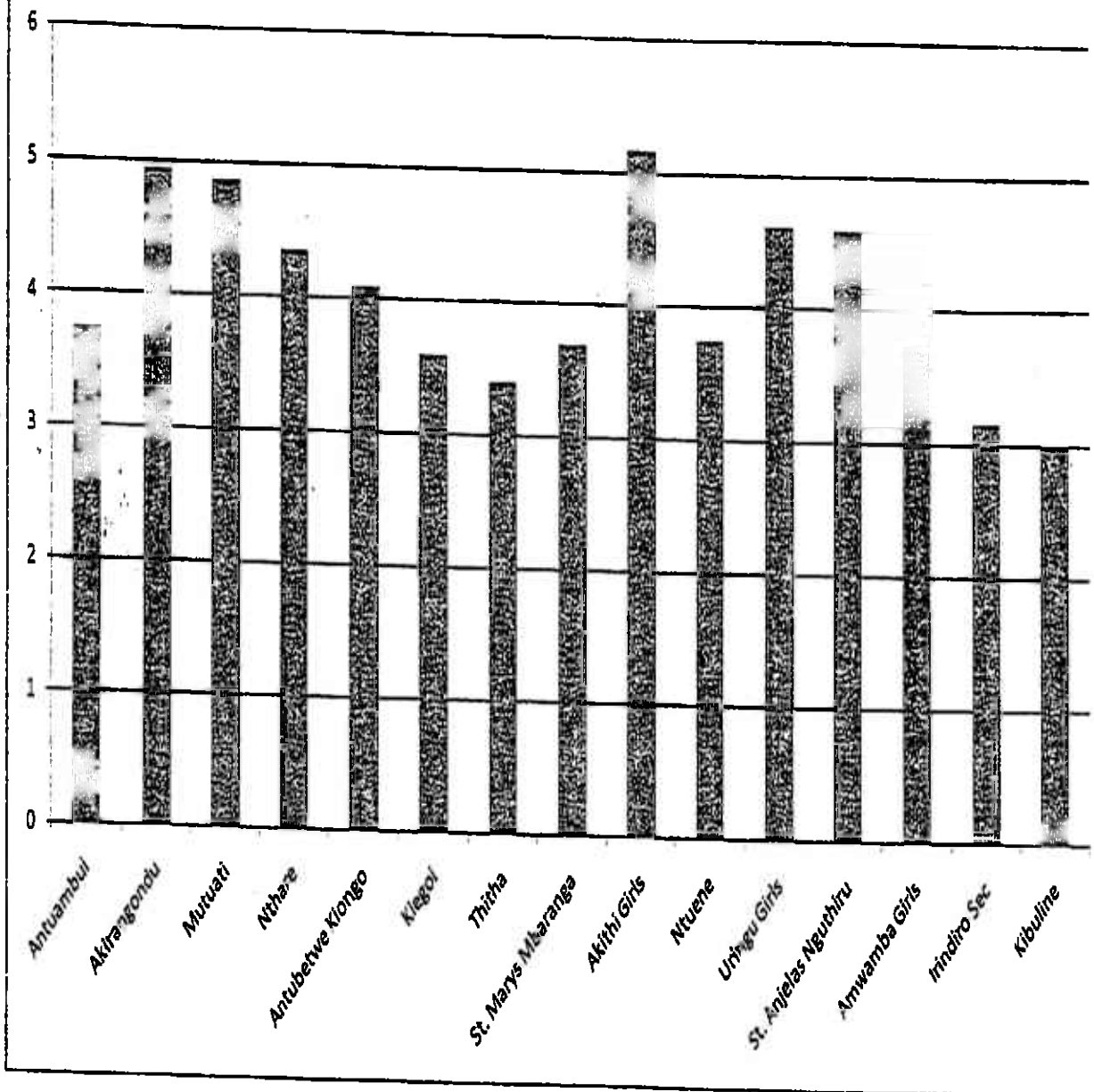


Figure 6 showed 11 schools had D and only 4 schools obtained C grade. This is low performance which lowered the mean individual student

Figure 7: English Language examination mean score per selected school, 2006

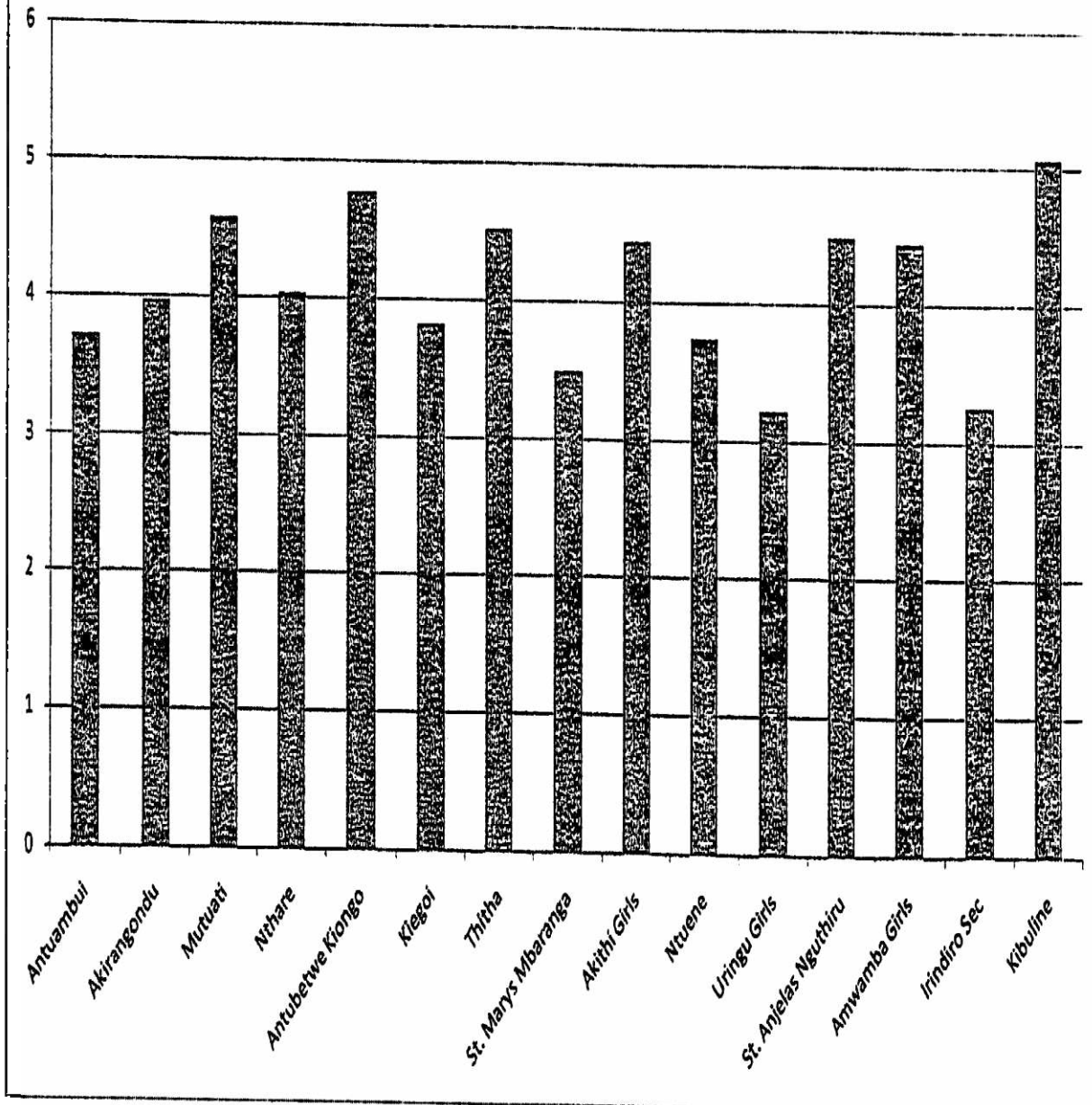


Figure 7 showed only one school had C grade and 14 schools had D. The performance of English language was poor.

Figure 8: English Language examination mean score per selected school, 2007

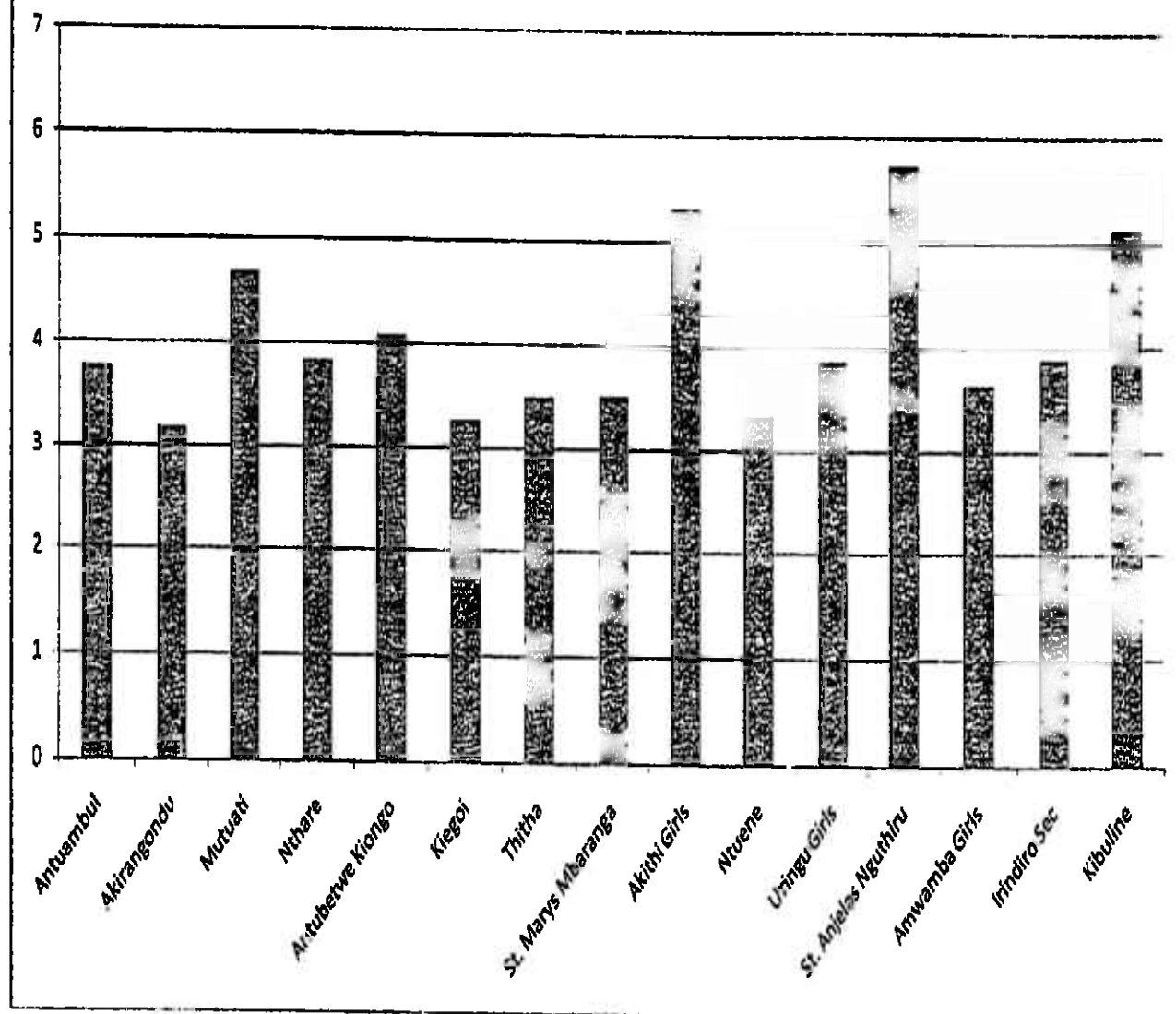


Figure 8 showed 11 schools got a D and 4 schools attained C grade. This was poor performance which affected the final marks which the candidates had got.

4.3 Data analysis

The research questions were discussed in detail to answer the various research questions. Statistical analyses were done where possible on relevant variables, stating which results were relevant to this study.

4.4 Data Analysis Technique

Data collected is expected to be both quantitative and qualitative in nature. It was analyzed using descriptive statistics and was included pie-chart, tables and graphs. After correcting all errors the researcher formulated a coding scheme. A coding scheme is an unambiguous set of prescriptions of how all possible answers are treated and what if any numerical codes are to be assigned to particular responses, Kombo Kisilu and A.L Deluo [2006].

The answers of respondents were coded according to demographic information. The total number of respondents were 15 Head teachers and 40 English teachers; giving a total of 55 respondents. The answers of respondents were counted from the questionnaire for example the answers on section 1 demographic information are contained in a table. The answers indicated in the table reflected on the responses given by the respondents. These findings have a strong relationship on the performance of English Language. From the table we learn 60% of the respondents were ladies. This depicts a scenario, where traditionally it is held many English teachers are women. A good proportion of the respondents, consisting 65% had bachelor's degree, which poses a disturbing question why

students failed in their schools yet they can impact their knowledge and skills to make them excel. The researcher found that 24% of the teachers were diploma teachers; probably these teachers would enroll in university programme to attain their degrees. It was found that 11% comprised untrained teachers. There were form four leavers who did not under go any form of training. Several disadvantages are experienced in allowing them to teach English Language: they lack knowledge and skills to handle the subject, they have not learnt the methodology and skills of teaching English Language; they will reciprocate their mistakes and errors which would have been corrected during teacher education and perpetuate them to the learners. Therefore lowering education standards and making students fail in their exams.

According to the study English Language teachers from selected schools who attended English Language in-service courses, were only 10. We find out of the 40 respondents who taught English Language only 10 teachers who had done any in-service training. In-service training equips the teachers with new skills and knowledge on how to address the different components of English Language. Poor in-servicing of English teachers is a major factor which contributed to the poor performance. Stake holders like K.I.E. the ministry of education and publishers should look at this issue and give it the serious attention it deserves. When K.I.E trains only 13% of English teachers, this reviews a situation where majority of the English teachers may not handle the syllabus adequately. This results in poor performance. When the ministry of education trains only 8% of

English teachers, this depicts a bad situation, where some teachers may not know the correct up to date concepts to teach the students. The publishers publish books but offer only 5% in service training. This displays a state where both students and teachers are ignorant and does not benefit from their work.

4.4.1 Statistical analysis for research question

The total numbers of classes were 27 from the 15 selected schools. In some schools the classrooms were small and not spacious to allow proper student interaction and movement in class. The problem of enrolment was an issue which hindered learning as books were scarce and could not be shared adequately. It was sad to note out of the selected schools none had a school library. The absence of a school library is major hard cap to performance of English Language.

The school library is a source of knowledge and students can improve written and spoken English through wide reading. In all the selected schools there were no slides, no literature video cassettes. We have only 5 schools that had television set but had no video machines. The poor physical facilities depicted in the selected schools, actually justified why students in the schools fail K.C.S.E. examinations.

4.4.2 Research question (i)

To what extent are the physical facilities in the school appropriate to enhance/improve English Language performance?

The 15 schools under study had a total of 27 classes. In 7 schools the classes were small and overcrowded. One of the sampled schools had semi-permanent classes. The mean score for that school was between e and d, (between 2003-2007). When classrooms are shoddy and poorly constructed students are demotivated and they do not work hard in their studies hence poor performance in English. During class discussion and answering of questions, students require spacious room for ventilation and conducive learning. When these are inadequate they contribute greatly to low performance.

Looking at our observation guide, out of the 15 schools, 8 schools had dilapidated desks and chairs. When students pulled chairs in class; they produced strange noise, because they were broken and in ugly shape. These schools had the old outdated chairs and desks. Some of these schools did not present descent tables and chairs for teachers. In fact, the staffroom was congested, noisy and untidy. This depicts a bad state which contributed to the poor performance; since both teachers and students are not motivated in living in a comfortable environment which encouraged proper and highly concentrated learning, therefore students failed in their exams.

It was observed that all the 15 schools under study did not have a school library. A school is a store of knowledge and research work. When students are not exposed to wide and inquisitive reading and writing; this makes them perform poorly in their exams. The issue of illiteracy, ignorance and cultural practices are eradicated, when students are exposed to comprehensive reading from a library. The students in the 15 schools are left to suffer academic malnutrition, because they lack a library, resource centre for English; there are no story books and no English laboratory: the implication students perform poorly in their exams.

a) Implication or suggestion from response of the questionnaire.

The issues raised by the respondents revealed they were unhappy with the physical facilities in their respective schools. This means these teachers would be reluctant to give their best to improve students' performance. They would teach with less dedication, being late to go to class, they missed lessons, and did not prepare their lessons; students assignments were not marked on time, records were poorly kept, students were not exposed to practical skills in order to improve English Language. Some of the issues/factors raised by the teachers and head teachers were as follows:

i) construction of more classrooms

The Head Teachers and teachers strongly stated, the B.O.G PTA and parents should organize a funds drive to construct more classrooms and proper school administration block. A poorly constructed school gained a

bad image to students, teachers and educational stakeholders. Students are not inspired to work hard in a poorly constructed school.

ii) Lack of a library, an English resource centre and English Language laboratory.

This implies students are not exposed to wide exploratory reading. They do not acquire skills in reading, speaking and writing because they have no library books available. Teaching resources are a prerequisite to good performance.

iii) Dilapidated school equipment

Poor school equipments like desks, chairs and worn out textbooks; demoralize the students and teachers. This makes students develop poor attitudes towards school life. This negative attitude is transferred to leaning and makes them to perform poorly.

iv) Over enrolment

This drastically reduces the teacher student ratio and brings about little contact time between teacher and student. Students do not get personal attention and slow learners are disadvantaged for lack of additional attention.

(v) Excessive work load

This was mostly observed in school with untrained teachers. While in another school the teacher was sick and only one English teacher was supposed to handle classes from form one to form four. Excessive work,

reduces the time that teacher would need to prepare their lesson plan notes, schemes of work, prepare exams and mark students' assignments and tests. It causes stress and depression leading to frustration and reduces efficiency and worsens especially when compounded with over enrolment.

v) Indiscipline

Undisciplined students do not do English Language assignments. They are absentminded in class, when the teacher is teaching. Some sneak from school and drink liquor or take drugs.

Others make noise while they should be reading. Peer pressure makes the want to be identified with "heroic" activities that get them into trouble with the administration. These deviants can cause commotion in schools which seriously affects performance.

vii) Persistent interruption of classes

It was notable second term was a beehive of activities. These activities: drama festival, music athletics, prize-giving days and education days to name a few; slows dawn courage of the syllabus and breaks the continuity of student learning, affecting performance.

viii) Poor planning and lack of academic guidance to the English teachers.

This factor targets Head Teachers. These Head Teachers are too "busy" to concentrate in their administrative duties. The schools I visited, it was difficult to get Head Teachers in school. This coasted me time and money

to get back to their stations. If they have misplaced priorities that do not centre on academic excellence, it makes performance to deteriorate. Over stressing on physical expansion of the school plant would leave little funds for learning resources, no wonder only 5 schools had television sets. Poor coordination of the Language department lowers standards and not having a vision for the school causes academic stagnation (likely to lower the standards).

The se findings concur with Mutea Z.K, 2000. She investigated on the analysis of performance in English Language at the Kenya certificate of secondary examination. In her findings, she discovered that availability, quality of teachers, teaching and learning materials and the styles of leadership in schools contributed immensely to the performance of English Language.

Baya Neo Lekatsa, 2005, investigated factors that contribute towards poor performance of English Language at the Kenya certificate of secondary education in Ngong Division, Kajiado district. He considered students attitude, students' home background and the school administration as important variables who contributed greatly to performance of English Language.

Finally, Mutea Z.K., in her advice endeavor to examine and advice on good performance. She suggested:

- i) The integration of literature and Language does not auger very well because students get most of their marks from Language and literature seems to be relegated into second place.
- ii) Some English skills are introduced late and emphasized in form 3 and 4. This denies the candidate the time factor to practice those skills for example skills of writing composition from selected set books.
- iii) The short story posed a problem to most students. Teaching and analyzing so many short stories with the confined congested time table is a difficult task to both teachers and students.
- iv) The novel is too demanding as it requires a lot of reading. However, the teacher has a duty to encourage students to practice wide reading and develop positive attitude from form one.

4.4.3 Research question (iv)

What appropriate strategies would be used to assist improve the performance of English Language ?

According to this study, the performance of English Language was poor between 2003-2007. The poor performance was attributed to factors like candidates' inability to answer questions, responses from students and teachers showed students performed poorly in literature because they did not study the set books
ils.

This was compounded by the fact that some schools lacked the set books. In composition writing, candidates could not between functional writing as entails reports, minutes, memorandum and official letters. These difficulties contributed to poor performance. However, the study has come up with specific strategies to be enforced in order to improve the performance of English Language:

i) Provision of teaching and learning resources

The schools should buy adequate course books for students to use in class. The English teachers should go a step further to get simple learning materials like pictures, wall charts and coloured magazines which can motivate the learners. The school, administration should liaise with parents to ensure that set books, that is the short story, novel and oral literature books are bought right from form two. This will prepare the candidates psychologically, emotionally and practically for the task ahead of them, this will make them excel academically.

ii) The role of K.I.E

The K.I.E should work closely in consultation with the English Language teachers. There is an outcry that the syllabus content is too wide cover. A review of the English syllabus is necessary. According to this study, K.I.E. has conducted only 13% of in-service training for English teachers. There is need to train all then English Language teachers in Meru North and her neighbors. Teachers should be given thorough training on each specific skill used in English. The K.I.E. should enlighten the school administration on the learning

teaching resources like slide, video and audio cassettes; in order to improve performance of English Language.

iii) The Ministry of Education Science and Technology

The ministry should ensure schools have adequate number of teachers to teach English Language. They should formulate policies to train the untrained “A” level teachers who are still teaching English. The ministry should provide thoroughly researched in-service training for English teachers. It is the duty of the ministry to ensure that all schools get their syllabus on time and they are well covered.

iv) The school administration

The school administration comprised of Head Teachers, deputy B.O.G, P.T.A and parents should ensure the school has adequate physical facilities: a library should be given first priority. It is the duty of the school head to ensure the school has adequate learning resources in terms of course books and English set books. The school head should work closely with K.I.E to purchase relevant resource materials and get copies of the English syllabus and give them to English teachers.

The Head Teacher should organize motivational programmes to reward teachers and students who excel in English Language school Head Teachers should conduct constant educative counseling and checking of students books to find the number of compositions written and to advice teachers accordingly.

v) The English teachers

The English teachers are the custodians and the experts of the subject they should be role models to students as they speak fluently in English. They should inspire the students to borrow story books and read widely.

English teachers should be committed to cover the English Language syllabus on time. When teaching English Language, they should address all components: summary, comprehension, grammar and literature comprising of oral literature, poetry, short story, novel and the play. These are the experts of the subject and have a role to cultivate positive attitude in the students.

vi) Parental guidance in academic matters

The words of wisdom from a responsible parent go a long way in boosting a student's morale. Parents should pay fees on time to avoid the problem of absenteeism. They should buy the literature set books, dictionaries and short story books for their children.

Parents should encourage the students to engage in speaking in English while at home and in school.

Parents should check their students' English work and provide remedial teaching on weak areas by even employing a private teacher to coach them.

vii) Teacher education

There should be thorough training on the methodologies of teaching: comprehension, summary, grammar, composition, literature, oral literature,

poetry, short stories, the novel and the play. Teachers should be trained on how to handle excessive workload and how to cover the wide syllabus.

During teacher training, there should be more emphasis on the practical; work like writing, than on theoretical work. Teachers should be taught on how to teach speech work and how speech work can be tested in both oral and written exams

viii) The integration of English Language and Literature

According to some teachers, the integration of Language and literature makes the English syllabus wide and difficult to cover. Some teachers develop a negative attitude towards literature, they only teach the grammar and comprehension section. This is a big disadvantage, which will make students to fail in their exams. During teacher education, teachers should be trained how to handle the integration of the English components, the application and practical work should be well taught.

4.5 Discussions of Research Findings

This chapter discussed the tables drawn from the mean scores and data collected, their analysis meanings and what they suggested or their interpretations as derived from chapter four. The discussions done with reference to the research questions are in chronological order.

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4.5.1 Discussions of findings of research question (i)

The findings at the beginning of analysis of data for question (i) was stated by the researcher when she looked at and observed the physical facilities in the schools under study. The observation guide was carefully filled and later analyzed. A table containing the physical facilities in the school was drawn and analysed. It was noted schools with poorly constructed classroom and worn out furniture, demoralized the students and they performed poorly in their exams. The responses them the questionnaires provided vital information.

4.5.2 Discussions of findings of research question (ii)

The attempt to answer this question was started with analysis of questionnaire responses. The demographic information from the 50 respondents were tallied. The researcher used coded scheme to determine the sex, age, and experience in teaching and academic qualification of the respondents. The responses from each section were separately analyzed to reveal additional factors that were common to

most respondents which gave vital information on performance of English Language.

Table 5 depicts, the in-service of English teachers was poorly attended in the district. It was important to invite all the concerned teachers on time.

Table 5 English Language teachers who attended English in-service training

Provider of in-service	Number of teachers attended	%
K.I.E	5	13
Ministry of Education	3	8
Publishers	2	5
Total	10	26

Table 6 shows more female teachers teaching English than male. This enhances the traditional myth that more women like teaching English. However, it is notable that this table answers research question ii on teachers' professional qualification and the readiness to teach English Language. It is hoped in future the performance of English Language will improve as the level of teacher education

Table 6 showing teachers professional qualifications in selected schools

Teacher qualification		Number	%
Sex	Male	22	40.0
	Female	33	60.0
Professional Qualifications	Bachelors	36	65.5
	Diploma	13	23.6
Untrained teachers		6	10.9

4.5.3. Discussion of findings of research question (iii)

Several factors were analyzed in an attempt to give a detailed answer to this question. The answers given on the learning and teaching resources were analyzed. The researcher looked at the respondents answers which addressed significant variables in this study. From the responses given, we learnt student did not have English dictionaries. During admission of students in from one, the school administration did not ask them to bring story books to school. Parents were not guided on the choice of simple books they could purchase for their students to improve in English. At this point, the researcher interrogated the English teachers on the number of exercise books that students had. It was

shocking to observe, student wrote grammar and composition work in the same exercise books. While in same school the students' composition books were never marked, on the other hand a certain school had given only three composition to form four students. Therefore, it is very clear when school lack adequate teaching and learning resources, students will fail in their exams.

4.5.4 Discussion of the finding of research in question iv

All the responses given by the respondents were thoroughly analyzed. From the analysis recorded, the following strategies were suggested:

- i) Provision of learning and teaching resources.
- ii) K.I.E. should play her role of providing learning and teaching resources, review the syllabus, organize frequent in-service training for teaching and conduct research on causes of poor performance in English Language.
- iii) The ministry of education should assist in providing trained teacher in schools, organize in-service courses for teachers and send quality standards and assurance officers to advice teachers on how to handle the wide English syllabus.
- iv) The school administration should organize a fund drive to construct a school library, English resource center. School Head Teacher should guide English teachers on difference skills to teach them.
- v) English teachers should play a vital role in creating positive attitude in students, they should give assignment and mark them on time. Teachers

should teach listening, reading, writing and comprehension skills effectively.

- vi) Parents and the school B.O.G should motivate teachers and students by giving awards to those students who improved and get 'B' and above grades in English.

4.5.5 Discussion of the findings of research (v)

It was noted that there were major differences in learning styles from one students to another. These differences have an effect on classroom learning. These individual preferences are in perceptual, organization and conceptual categorization. That is perceiving thinking, remembering and solving problems. From the Head Teacher's questionnaire, we learn the mean scores were poor, due to individual differences among learners. We learn these schools had average, poor and slow learners. However, the situation becomes complex when the classrooms are overcrowded and students face other challenges as such:

- a) Indiscipline
- b) Influence of drugs "Miraa" (a stimulant plant grown by the surrounding community of the selected schools under study which acts as a drug).
- c) Failure to complete the English Language syllabus.
- d) Poor student attitude towards English Language.
- e) Influence of mother Language, sheng and broken English.
- f) Over enrolment and congestion experience in class.

- g) Excessive assignment.**
- h) Persistent interruptions of classes**

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by giving a brief summary of the research questions, the methodology employed in answering them and the analysis of the data collected. The findings given in the study are summarized. Conclusions logically arising from the findings are given. Lastly, recommendations are made first to all parties concerned and to whom these findings and conclusions are pertinent; in addition, further relevant research needs to be carried out that would complement the findings from this study.

5.2 Summary of the study

This study aimed at answering the research questions that have great significance in education. These questions are re-stated below since they form the basis of the discussion, conclusion and recommendations made in this chapter.

- (i) To what extent are the physical facilities in the school appropriate to enhance/ improve English Language performance?**
- (ii) To what extent are the teachers' professional competence levels on impediment to performance of English Language?**
- (iii) To what extent are the learning and teaching resources adequate to improve the performance of English Language?**

(iv) What appropriate strategies would be used to assist improve the performance of English Language?

(v) What are the individual differences among learners in learning English Language?

A search for the answers to these questions was done empirically. The methodology employed involved use of descriptive survey research, which sought to identify qualified English teachers within schools that would establish the causes and remedy for performance of English Language, valid and reliable examination data of candidates from 2003 – 2007 where obtained from KNEC ,schools Head Teachers Records and Printouts from the examination department at the district education office, Maua, Meru-North.

The data collected was then tabled, analyzed, put in pie charts, bar graphs and narrative discussion showing the relevant variables necessary to answer the research questions. Appropriate test of significance were carried out to answer questions (i). An in-depth analysis of the questionnaire responses answered questions, (ii) A re-evaluation of the data for question iii, iv and v was done using tables, graphs, pie charts and detailed narrative discussion; these were significant and sufficient in addressing the various variables in the research questions. The suggestion/ implications derived from teacher and Head Teacher's responses to the open ended questionnaire items were used to answer questions i), ii), iii), iv) and v).

In addition to this, independent research conducted by researchers who are included in the literature review of this research project provided significant yet independent findings to strengthen the conclusions drawn for research questions. Basing on the definition of good, average or poor performance in KNEC examination derived from the “definition of significant terms” subsection of this project report, appropriate tables, pie charts, bar graphs and narrative discussions were made, these results are described as good, average or poor for English Language the year 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 2007.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

From the findings and discussions made in this study the following conclusions are made:

- i) There is a statistically significant relationship between the provision of physical facilities in the school and the performance of English Language.
- ii) The teacher’s professional qualification and competence in handling English Language and literature contributes greatly to the performance of English Language.
- iii) The learning and teaching resources are very significant in teaching English Language.

- iv) The appropriate strategies addressed in this study are important in improving performance of English Language; the researcher pleads with the beneficiaries of this noble task to implement them.
- v) We have individual differences among students which should be critically addressed. The school administration should take care of above average, average, slow learners, poor learners and learners with disabilities or special problems; this should be carefully counseled and guided accordingly.
- vi) The performance presented for the five years period (2003 – 2007) is generally poor. However, the future generation in Meru_North can work very hard to alleviate the causes of poor performance and excel in English.

5.4. Recommendations

The findings and conclusions of the study is useful to secondary school head teachers, English teachers, K.I.E, Ministry of Education and all people who endeavor to study English Language and cherish this correct application. Some recommendations are made below in order to make schools Head teachers and teachers improve their performance of English Language.

- a) Schools should endeavor to provide teaching and learning resources.
- b) Teachers should attend English in-service training courses when provided by K.I.E and the ministry of Education

- c) **Quality Standards and Assurance Officers should visit schools to provide proper guidance especially in teaching of English Language.**
- d) **School assessment methods provide students with methods of how to answer questions. Therefore teachers should be trained on how to set standardized tests.**
- e) **The K.I.E should be more informative in exposing to teachers the types of teaching and learning resources they can utilize in their respective schools.**
- f) **English Language teachers have a role to teach all the components of English: Summary, Comprehension, Grammar, Short Story, Novel, Poetry and Oral literature. They can consult colleagues in their department or outside their school on areas which are difficult to teach.**
- g) **The English teachers should organize inter-school debates, symposium and play writing/acting/drama festivals to encourage students practice speaking fluent English.**
- h) **Parents should buy story books and set books for their children and encourage their children to speak English while at home and in school.**
- i) **The school administration should improve those aspects of the working environment which enhances positive attitude in both teachers and students and foster self – esteem.**
- j) **The school administration should have a programme of rewarding performing teachers and students as well as improving the working environment for all stakeholders this will boost students performance.**

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher recommends the following topic: Quality Teacher Education for English Language and Literature for further research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTION LETTER TO RESPONDENTS.

**UNIVERSITY OF
NAIROBI**

P.O BOX, 92

KIKUYU

_____ 2009

THE RESPONDENTS

-----SCHOOL

P.O BOX-----

MERU NORTH

Dear sir /madam

**RE:FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS PERFORMANCE OF
ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN K.C.S.E EXAMINATION IN SECONDARY
SCHOOL IN MERU-NORTH DISTRICT- KENYA**

While, I am a post- graduate student from the University of Nairobi, pursuing Degree in Educational Administration planning and Curriculum Development.

My area of research is on factors influencing students performance of English Language in K.C.S.E examination in Meru-North District.

Your school has been selected to participate in the research.

Please respond to each item in the questionnaire. You are requested to provide honest and accurate answers. Any information or response given in this research will be treated with a high degree of confidentiality.

Thanks for participating in the researcher work

Yours faithfully,

LORNA BEENA MWANGI

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

This Questionnaire is aimed at Gathering information on the factors influencing students performance of English Language in K.C.S.E Examination in secondary school in Meru-North District. The questionnaire is divide into two sections; section one contains questions soliciting demographic information. Section II is divided into 5 parts each containing questions aimed at soliciting information to answer the research questions and therefore achieve the objectives of the study. Please tick against the item you choose.

SECTION I

Demographic information of the respondents

1. Name of school _____
2. Sex of head teacher : Female Male
3. Age in years: Up to 30 31-35 36-40 ove 40
4. What is your professional qualifications
PI Bachelors Degree SI/Diploma Masters
Degree
Any other please specify _____
5. How long have you been a Head teacher? _____
years.

PART II

This section requires you to answer the questions provided in relation to issues related to the factors influencing students' performance of English Language in K.C.S.E Examinations. Please answer the questions as truthfully as possible

SECTION A: Physical facilities

In this section you are expected to provide answers related to facilities that enhance the performance of English Language.

6. Does your school have enough classes to cater for all the enrolled students

Yes No

7. Do you have a library in the school?

Yes No

SECTION B: Teaching and Learning Materials

8. Are there teaching/ learning materials for use by teachers in teaching English Language and Literature?

Yes No

9. What actions have you taken to ensure you have adequate teaching resources for English Language?

SECION C: Teachers qualifications and In-service training

10a) Indicate the number of English teachers in your school by gender

Male _____ Female _____

Total _____

b) Indicate in the table below the number of English teachers who have received in-services training between 2003-2008

Type of in-service	year	Provider	TS trained	
			No. of TS trained	No. records available
		Kenya Institute of Education		
		Ministry of Education Headquarter programmes		
		Publishers		
		Others specify		

11. Do teachers in your school teach subjects they were trained to teach from colleges?

Yes No

Please explain your answer:

12. Are there untrained teachers in your school, who teach English Language?

Yes

No

SECTION D: Suggestion on Improvement of performance of English Language

13. What suggestions do you have in relation to:

(i) Learning/teaching

materials _____

(ii) In-service courses for

teachers _____

(iii) School assessment

method _____

(iv) The syllabus content for English Language

(v) Employment of more trained teachers to teach

English _____

14. What academic support do you suggest should be provided by the following stakeholders in order to improve the performance of English Language:

(i) The ministry of Education Science and Technology

.....
.....

(ii) The teachers

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

(iii) The students

.....

(iv) The parents

.....
.....

.....
.....

Table two

15a) Indicate the mean score of K.C.S.E English results from 2003-2007

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Mean score					

b) What strategies/measures do you intend to undertake to improve the English Language results?

Thank You.

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This questionnaire is aimed at gathering information on factors influencing students' performance of English in KCSE examination in Meru-North District. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Section I requires your demographic information. Section II is divided into sub-sections each soliciting information on different issues related to performance of English Language. Please tick the answers you select.

SECTION I

Demographic information of teachers

1. What is your sex? Male female

2. What is your age?

Below 20 21-30

31 - 40 Above 40

3. How long have you been a teacher? _____

4. What is your highest academic qualification?

A – levels KCSE degree master Degree

5. What is your professional qualification?

P1/2/3 diploma

BED MED

SECTION 11

This section entails issues on English Language. Please answer them as precisely as possible

Section A: Physical Facilities

6. Do you have a school library?

Yes No

7. Are the classroom spacious enough to provide conducive learning environment?

Yes No

Section B: teaching and learning materials

8. As a teacher do you have enough teaching materials to enhance teaching English Language?

Yes No

9. Please explain the challenges you encounter in the provision and use of teaching and learning resources

Section C: teacher qualifications and training needs

10. Are you trained to teach English Language and literature in English?

Yes No

11. Have you attended any in-service-training for English Language between, 2003-2007?

Yes No

12. What suggestion would you like to make in the training of English Language teachers?

Section D: Factors affecting performance of English Language

13. Please explain briefly how the following factors hinder the performance of English Language

Broad content in English

Inadequate instructional materials

Negative attitude by learners

.....

.....

.....

.....

Influence of mother tongue

.....
.....

Section E: suggestions on improving performance of English Language

14 suggest ways through which the following items can be utilized to
improve performance of English Language

School library

.....
.....

Teaching/learning materials

.....
.....

Assessment methods

.....
.....

Teaching materials

.....
.....

Motivation methods for both students and teachers

.....

.....

.....

Thank you

APPENDIX IV: OBSERVATION GUIDE

The following are facilities and teaching /learning resources which the researcher observed in the sampled schools.

Facility	Available	Not available
Spacious classrooms		
Desks/chairs		
Library		
Resource centre for English Language		
Teaching/ learning materials		
Textbooks		
Set-books		
Television set		
Video machines		
Slides		
Blackboard		
Pictures and magazines displayed on walls		

It was noted that in all the fifteen sampled schools, physical facilities were observed.