INFLUENCE OF POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE ON PERFORMANCE AT KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RONGO DISTRICT, KENYA

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for award of a degree in any other university.

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This work is dedicated to my wife Elizabeth Akello and my children, Vina Anyango, Brian Odhiambo and Rooney Omondi.

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ABSTRACT

The school is a mini society where desirable individual qualities are nurtured and developed. Education in Kenya has not fully lived up to this expectation with a raging debate to scrap Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination to allow free transition of pupils from primary to secondary level. The study objective sought to establish the influence of positive school culture on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Kenya. Descriptive survey design was employed in this study. The target population for the study consisted of the public secondary school principals, teachers and students in Rongo district. Stratified random sampling was used to select 20 public secondary schools in Rongo district. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics was used to show the frequencies and percentages of each response. Qualitative data analysis was done simultaneously with data collection. The study found that pupils' enrollment influences head teachers' instructional supervision in public primary schools in Rongo district. The study found that in public secondary schools in Rongo district core values are communicated, staff meetings are meeting and recognize heroes and heroines. The study also found that the students are involved in activities like drama, sports activities and clubs. The study also found that the secondary schools in Rongo are faced with issues of exam irregularities, which are handled by the schools appropriately. The study concludes that there is need for professional behaviour among the staff, practice regular school rituals to enhance awareness of improving academic standards. Core values should be emphasized with the view of improving academic performance and lastly, challenges of nurturing and promoting positive school culture should be done. The study recommends that public secondary schools come up with talent search program, set up special days where the teachers and the students' interact, improve their organization structure where the teachers are consulted on performance and discipline issues, inculcate honesty and integrity in their students by the teachers being role models, and that the teachers as professional strengthen supervision and invigilation of school based tests and examinations. The study recommends a study to be carried on the effects of culture on the performance of primary schools in Kenya.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

KCSE   Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Culture

KNEC   Kenya National Examination Council

MOEST   Ministry of Education Science and Technology

OECD   Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development

PDE   Provincial Director of Education

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the study

According to Stolp and Smith (1994) school culture can be defined as the historically transmitted pattern of meanings that include the norms, values, beliefs, ceremonies, traditions and myths understood, may be in varying degrees by members of the school community. School culture, therefore, are complex webs of traditions and rituals that have built up over time as teachers, parents and administrators work together and deal with crises and accomplishments. Culture is thus seen as the underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that have built up over time as people work together, solve problems, and confront challenges.

School culture shapes how people think, feel, and act in schools. Stolps (1994) notes that those definitions go beyond the business of creating an efficient learning environment. They focus more on the core values necessary to teach and influence young minds. Barth (2002) asserts that a school's culture is a complex pattern of practices that are deeply ingrained in the very core of the organization. He asserts that a school's organizational culture has more influence over the life of the school community than "the superintendent, the school board, or even the principal, teachers, and the parents can ever have". Teachers in schools form social groups with their own rules, norms values and standard of behavior which

they denote as ethos of a school. Ethos reflects expectations about children's work and behavior. Schools with strong ethos are likely to promote values for hard work and discourage lethargy. The models provided by the teachers own conduct in schools is reflected on students perception of what is acceptable performance. Culture influences everything that goes on in schools: how staff dress, what they talk about, their willingness to change, the practice of instruction, and the emphasis given student and faculty learning (Deal & Peterson, 1994; Firestone & Wilson, 1985; Newmann & Associates, 1996).

From the above assertions, it emerges that school culture can depict itself from the perspective of positive and negative aspects. Schools with toxic cultures are extremely fragmented, where the purpose of serving students has been lost to the goal of serving the adults, where negative values and hopelessness reign. Disgruntled staffs come to staff meetings ready to attack new ideas, criticize those teachers concerned about student achievement, and make fun of any staff who volunteered to go to conferences or workshops. Teachers who support change talk about the meetings as battlegrounds. Negative staff effectively sabotage any attempts at collegial improvement. Toxic schools are places where negativity dominates conversations, interactions, and planning; where the only stories recounted are of failure, the only heroes are anti-heroes. No one wants to live and work in these kinds of schools. The resultant effect is poor performance of students in National exams with attendant risks to engage in cheating.

In contrast to the poisonous places described above, many schools have strong, positive cultures. These are schools where staff have a shared sense of purpose, where they pour their hearts into teaching where the underlying norms are of collegiality, improvement, and hard work, where student rituals and traditions celebrate student accomplishment, teacher innovation, and parental commitment, where the informal network of storytellers, heroes, and heroines provides a social web of information, support, and history, where success, joy, and humor abound. Strong positive cultures are places with a shared sense of what is important, a shared ethos of caring and concern, and a shared commitment to helping students learn.

Goodenow (1993), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (O.E.C.D., 2003) as well as Fredricks, Blumfed and Paris (2004) all suggest that secondary schools that engage their students correlate positively with such manifestations of academic achievement as enhanced grade – point averages, teacher's grades and retention rates. A connection can also be made between organizational culture and student engagement with the institution attended and an outcome that the O.E.C.D (2003) states "deserves to be treated alongside academic achievement as an important schooling outcome"

Secondary school organizational culture impacts directly on the dual student outcomes identified by Lee, Bryk and Smith (1993) as academic achievement and student engagement. Student engagement has been defined by the O.E.C.D.(2003)

as consisting of "students' attitudes towards schooling and their participation in school activities".

Cheng(1993) performed a cross-sectional survey of Hong Kong secondary schools. In his study, Cheng compared the effectiveness of 'strong culture' schools with 'weak culture' schools. Strong School culture was found to be related to perceived organizational effectiveness. In schools with strong cultures, school members expressed that their school was highly effective in terms of productivity, adaptability, and flexibility.

Another study into school culture and performance was reported by Heck and Marcoulides (1996). They studied organizational values in Singapore secondary schools. Heck and Marcoulides found that schools, where positive social and professional relationship among staff members were developed, reported higher student achievement.

Gaziel (1997) has studied the impact of culture on the effectiveness of secondary Schools with disadvantaged students in Israel. His aim was to determine to what extent the culture of effective schools differed from 'average' schools, and what the contribution of each cultural variable was in explaining these differences in performance. His findings indicated that academic emphasis, norms of orderliness, continuous school improvement, teamwork and adaptation to customers' demands were related to the mean scores of students in mathematics,

English and Hebrew over two subsequent years. Furthermore, academic emphasis proved to be the variable that best predicted the differences in effectiveness across schools.

A study to find the effect of principal's leadership behavior on school learning culture in some selected secondary schools in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria, Oluremi O.F.(2008) found out that leadership behaviour of a school principal affects the school learning. Furthermore, additional research has indicated that school-based administrators play an important role in the establishment of school climates as well as instructional structures that are the prerequisites for student academic achievement (Heck, Larsen & Macoulides, 1990). Principals´ attitudes, values, beliefs and personal characteristics inspire people to accomplish organizational goals and if pupil achievement improves over time it is, in large measure, because key stakeholders share the leader's vision about these goals.

In a study to investigate the influence of school culture on performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education level in Homa Bay District Nyambuoro (2012) found that the principal had superior knowledge all round and the relevant academic qualification to be able to improve the running and performance of the school. In relation to the teachers' perception the data obtained revealed that even though the teachers are committed to the success, the schools did not take care of their welfare.

In another study to investigate the influence of school culture on performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education level in Kikuyu District by Njogu. (2012), revealed that the majority of teachers strongly agreed that they were expected to act in conformity to the rules of the school. The majority stated that working with other teachers was of utmost importance.

The challenges of exam irregularities in Rongo District are not on only peculiar and limited to this area of study, but a national phenomenon. Perhaps the results in national exams could be free of irregularities if schools nurtured strong cultural practices. According to KNEC 2011, Head teachers and teachers should continue sensitizing their pupils and staff on examination ethics as part of the general teaching of morals. High standards of performance and individual development depend on how well schools develop personal qualities, skills and competence. Of equal importance is the role the schools play in the transmission of good values in life. The tradition of the school, the way it operates, its code of discipline and its approaches affect students' academic achievements most. Schools need to inculcate honesty and integrity in pupils. KNEC advocates several measures to eliminate cheating in national examinations key among them: Teachers being good role models, teaching of good values during school assemblies and pastoral programmes, guidance and counseling and strengthening of supervision and invigilation of school based tests and examination. These when put together, form a strong basis of positive cultural growth. This project intended to investigate the

fact that students' dismal performance in national exams in Rongo District could be explained by strong or weak cultures in secondary schools. It is thought that schools with strong cultural inclinations are unlikely to engage in exam irregularities. This project work therefore, seeks to examine, the roles of professional ethics in promoting academic performance, to examine the role of secondary rituals on performance at KCSE, to determine the extent values affect academic performance at KCSE and to investigate challenges facing implementation of secondary school culture in public secondary schools in Rongo District.

It is proposed that these factors together with others not in the scope of this paper could attribute to effective schools. Fullan (1992), and Deal and Peterson (1990) all point to the importance of a shared vision championed by a strong leader with a sense of moral purpose. Leadership that encourages and protects trust, on-the-job learning, flexibility, risk-taking, innovation and adaptation to change is likely to champion honesty and hard work leading to improved performance in national examinations.

By assessing school culture and its influence in performance, the researcher hoped to gain insights into how an organization works and learns. Those in leadership position need to recognize the central importance of organizational culture in their own management and leadership behaviors. Waweru (1982) say

that teachers' experiences and commitments to students learning emerge as a key characteristic to good performance in examination. Students learn better, learn more and remember more if they find pleasure in learning experiences.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The school is a mini society where desirable individual qualities are nurtured and developed. Education in Kenya has not fully lived up to this expectation with a raging debate to scrap Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination to allow free transition of pupils from primary to secondary level.

According to the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) (2009), results in the chemistry paper and computer Science paper were cancelled in Rongo District. The year 2011, results for 37 candidates were cancelled in Rongo District (DEO, 2011). Despite the fact that most schools practice positive school cultures anomalies like cheating in exams, strikes among others still occur. Given the fact that other education aspects like co-curriculum activities are not examined, students use any other methods to pass written exams.

It is for this reason that this study seeks to investigate the influence of positive secondary school culture on performance at KSCE in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Kenya.

1.3. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of positive school culture on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Kenya.

1.4. Objectives

(i) To assess the roles of professional ethics in promoting academic performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya.

(ii) To examine the role of secondary's rituals on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya.

(iii)To determine the common values that affect academic performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya.

(iv)To establish the difficulties facing nurturing of positive secondary school culture in public secondary schools in Rongo District.

1.5. Research questions

(i) What are the roles of professional ethics in promoting academic performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya?

(ii) What is the role of secondary's rituals on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya?

(iii) To what extent do values affect academic performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya?

(iv) What are the difficulties facing nurturing of positive secondary school culture in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya?

1.6. Significance of the Study

To the Principals the findings of this study might serve as a form of intervention strategies in improving performance in schools.   To the school community, the findings might also be used to improve the interactions among stakeholders in shaping and developing positive school culture that improves national examination. To the Ministry of Education, the findings will aid policy formulators to develop and assess positive school cultures that influence academic achievements. To parents, the study will promote value which promotes positive school culture which in turn will enhance increase in enrolment, and academic performance. The study will indeed be an eye-opener in research and will be used to as a reference material for research in the future.

1.7. Limitation of the study

Since few studies have been carried out on the influence of school culture on performance, it was not easy to get relevant literature in the local libraries. Lack of information on influence of school on academic performance also hindered respondents giving accurate and informed opinion about effect of school culture on performance. Since the research was conducted during office/hours, some

respondents were not available due to being off duty or sickness. The study did not involve parents because it was not in the scope of the study.

1.8. Delimitation of the study

The study took place within Rongo District Nyanza Province. The study targeted only 20 public secondary schools in Rongo District and therefore did not cover private schools. The study dealt with students, teachers and principal in a set up that were not be discriminative and because they were directly involved in day to day interaction in the school hence the study obtained first hand data.

1.9. Assumptions of the study

(i)   Examination performance can be improved and sustained with established school culture.

(ii) Students are aware they are part of the school community.

(iii) All teachers in public secondary schools in Rongo District have knowledge of secondary school cultural practices and that respondents gave accurate and honest responses to the items in the questionnaires and during interview.

(iv) Respondents were available during the period of data collection.

1.10. Definition of significant terms

Culture refers to the meaning of basic assumptions, norms as well as cultural artifacts that are shared by members of the school.

Customs refers to the way we do things around here.

Effectiveness refers indication whether the objectives are accomplished in timely and costly manner.

Ethics refers to rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of people or ethics of culture

Influence refers to the effect that somebody or something has on the way a person thinks or behaves.

Morals refer to a person's standard of behavior or belief concerning what is not acceptable for them to do.

Myth refers past events which have been important for members of the school.

Norms refers to unwritten rules according to which others are expected to behave

Principal refers to the chief executive of the school.

Profession ethics refers to set of standard adopted by the professional community

Ritual refers to social customs around a certain event that has meaning for the members of a particular group.

School culture refers to complex webs of traditions and rituals that have been built up over time as teachers, parents and administrators work together and deal with crises and accomplishments.

School performance refers to 'the effectiveness and efficiency of the schooling process.

Value refers to what teachers and students believe is good, right and desirable.

1.11. Organization of the study

The study was organized in five chapters; Chapter one entail the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations Delimitation, definition of significant terms and Organization of the study. Chapter two is literature review which entails; Introduction, concept of the school culture, roles of the professional ethics and academic performance, secondary schools rituals and academic performance, role of values in promoting academic performance, teachers' roles in developing positive school culture, challenges of promoting culture of academic performance, summary of literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Chapter three has research methodology which includes introduction, research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, questionnaires, instruments validity, instruments reliability, data collection procedure and data analysis. Chapter four focuses on data analysis, presentations and findings. Chapter five consists of summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggested areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This section deals with: Concept of school culture, roles of school principals and culture of performance, secondary school rituals and performance, values in promoting culture of performance at public secondary schools, teacher roles in developing positive culture, students perception about secondary school culture, school culture and performance, challenges of promoting culture of performance in public secondary schools, summary of literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

2.2. Concept of school culture

Scholars have argued about the meaning of culture for centuries (Clifford Geetz 1973).He says that culture represents historically transmitted patterns of meanings. Those patterns of meanings are expressed both explicitly through symbols and implicitly in our taken for granted beliefs (Stolp 1994). Paul E. Heckman (1993) reminds us of that school culture lies in "The common held beliefs of teachers' students and principals". Stolp and Smith (1994) defines school culture as an embodiment of norms, values beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, tradition and myths understood in varying degrees by members of the school community.

Ott (1973) emphasizes the significance of organizational culture in influencing organizational performance. The research eludes that what is important about culture is that it arouses or suppresses motivated tendencies of individuals. He points out that culture tends to mediate the tasks requirement and the needs of individuals and that cultural property could have profound and immediate effect on motivational performance of all employees.

Yin Cheong Cheng (1993) in his study with profiled effective and in effective organizational cultures and in effective organizational cultures found stronger cultures had motivated teachers hence he concluded that school culture correlates with teachers attitudes towards their work. Purkey and Smith (1983) emphasize the importance of school culture in building on theory of school improvement. They suggested that the concept of school culture may be fruitful because it connects several processors in school. It is thought that schools with weak cultures on performance do not engage their students enough to discourage poor performance and cheating in examinations.

2.3. Roles of professional ethics and culture of academic performance
According Wikipedia, professional ethics refers to a set of standards adopted by professional community. It encompasses the personal, organizational and corporate standards of behavior expected of professionals. Professional people and those working in acknowledged professional exercise specialist knowledge

and skills. How the use of this knowledge should be governed when providing a service to the public can be considered a moral issue and is termed professional ethics. Teachers are professional because they have received training in the field of education. A professional is capable of making judgements, applying their skills and reaching informed decision in situations that the general public cannot because they have not received relevant training.

Strahlendorf (2010) notes that professional ethics has become more important over the years and the issue has become that much more complex and hard. Strahlendorf asserts that professional bodies have been at work developing, revising and refining professional codes of ethics. Professional ethics helps a professional choose what to do when faced with a problem at work that raises a moral issue. Brincat and Wilke (2008) broadly view a profession as possessing the following elements: group identity, shared education and training, special and uncommon knowledge, positive social need, involves individual judgement and some autonomy in decision-making, adherence to certain values and penalty for substandard performance. Most professional ethics cases have to do with conflicts and moral dilemma is a conflict as noted by Strahlendorf (2010). He argues that a bad faith decision by a professional can involve the use of one's position or powers to obtain a personal benefit. The powers or position have been used for the purpose other than for which they were granted. Many codes refers to integrity as a value. You don't have integrity if you are not committed to conflicting

standards or values. Integrity is related to other values such as honesty and a person with integrity will admit errors, refrain from false pretenses and advice clients truthfully. Many codes of ethics require that professionals be objective in their work.

According to KNEC circular (2012), Kenya Examination Council is committed to guarantee fairness in conducting of examinations. To achieve this objective the council has put in place machinery to guard against any candidate gaining undue advantage over others through cheating. To eliminate cheating, the council seeks cooperation from headteachers and teachers to help stamp out this vice. The council appeals to school heads and teachers to continue sensitizing their students on examination ethics as part of the general teaching of morals. KNEC notes that it is important that high standard of performance and individual development depends on how well schools develops personal qualities, skills and competence backed by appropriate knowledge. Equally important is the role the school is playing in the transmission of good values in life.

KNEC admits that schools can make a great contribution in fostering good sound morals and religious values in students by being concerned with their behavior and moral. Children learn through examples. The tradition of the school, the way it operates, its code of discipline and approaches affect students most. Schools should therefore inculcate honesty and integrity in their students. Teachers as

professionals should practice and apply their professional ethics to eliminate cheating in examinations. KNEC advices that teachers should be good role models as students practice and copy what they see their peers and adults do. Teachers should also be free from wrong practices both in words and deeds and discourage dishonest tendencies among students and this should be done as a normal school routine. As professionals, teachers are also required to instill in their students values that will help them grow up into self-disciplined, self-reliant and integrated citizens. Schools should inform students that it is morally wrong to cheat especially in examinations and guide them on the correct code of conduct. School headteachers and teachers as professional should strengthen supervision and invigilation of school based tests and examinations. KNEC notes that cheating in a school is a manifestation of failure by the headteacher and the staff to successfully teach important aspects of moral behaviors and reflects poorly on the administration, professional ethics and moral conduct

2.4. Secondary school rituals and academic performance

According to Oxford Learners Dictionary ritual is a series of actions that are always performed in the same way, especially as part of a practice. These may include and not limited to rites and ceremonies, assemblies, prize giving days, music festivals, Management Board meetings, and sponsorship of a variety of extra – curricular activities, pep and spirit rallies and formal social events such as the prom and the culminating rite of passage -the formal graduation ceremony at

the end of four years. These rituals seek to provide for commonality of experience, mark significant events in the life of the institutions, and strengthen the bonds between members of the school community thereby increasing their points of engagements and sense of purpose. Additionally, tradition plays important roles in the formation of the parameters that serve to define an institution's culture.

Traditions, according to Deal and Peterson (1999), are "significant events that have a special history and meaning and occur year in and year out" and serve to provide community members with a "foundation to weather challenges, difficulties, and change". They include ceremonies marking special occasions, events that reinforce institutional values and rites that provide individuals and groups with a connection to the whole.

2.5. The role of values in promoting academic performance

Values refer to what teachers' believe is 'good', 'right' or 'desirable' in life (Oxford Learners Dictionary 8th edition 2008). Values, therefore, are considered as standards of desirability; they reflect what is conceived to be important to pursue or worth striving for in school. Teachers may consider respect for others important, or may value collaboration with other staff members. Values are translated into norms for behavior. Such behavioural norms, are unwritten rules according to which others are expected to behave. According to Levine and

Lezotte emphasizes the significance of values in building strong cultural tenets. According to the both authors, an orderly environment is associated with interpersonal relationships. Values of commitment, faculty cohesion, collaboration, consensus, communications and collegiality were identified as a crucial feature of effective school cultures. Staff members have to work as a team to ensure a sense of unity and consistency in their relation with students.

The review of Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1995) reveals similar effectiveness enhancing school characteristics. Of the eleven factors they identified, the 'shared vision and goals', 'learning environment' and 'positive reinforcement' factors bear close resemblance to the aspects of what Levine and Lezotte identified as 'productive school climate and culture'. A shared vision and shared goals reflect a unity of purpose among the teaching staff of a school that is likely to result in a consistency of practice. Teachers in schools form social groups with their own rules, values and standards of behavior, which they denote as ethos of a school. Ethos reflects the teachers' expectations about children's work and behavior, the models provided by the teachers' own conduct in school, and the feedback that students receive on what is acceptable performance at school.

Kritek (1996) in his study found higher ratings of school spirit, frequent student monitoring and evaluation as key to school effectiveness. His study further revealed that teachers gave staff cooperation, a high level of staff enthusiasm, uniformity of goals and agreement among staff with regard to program philosophy and policies as reasons for the success.

2.7. Difficulties in implementing positive school culture

The main challenges that may affect establishment of strong cultural practices in schools include leadership style of the incumbent principal, lack of practice of professional ethics by headteachers and teachers, lack of clear definition of what constitute school culture, need to measure success and area of improvement that go beyond test, lack of ownership by stakeholders, setting of highly ambitious targets and unplanned transfer of staff which end up creating high rate of staff turnover. Mpapale (2011), in a study to investigate challenges facing Implementation of Performance Contract in Primary Teachers Training Colleges in Rift Valley and Western Provinces, found out that lack of ownership by stakeholders, setting of highly ambitious targets, unplanned transfer of staff were hindrance to implementation of performance contract which could be a vital element in a school with strong culture.

2.8. Summary of literature review

This section has dealt with; concept of school culture, roles of professional ethics in academic performance, secondary school rituals and values, in promoting culture of academic performance, teachers roles in developing positive culture and lastly it has also dealt with difficulties facing the promotion of positive school cultures. Although much has been said about positive culture influencing academic performance, little has been said about the role of school cultures in bring up all round students who can fit and participate effectively in the society. Academic performance should go hand in hand with desired moral behaviours for better integration of the youths in the society. Weak school cultures has been said to influence academic performance negatively that means, posting poor results in examinations and in most cases get involved in dishonest behaviours like cheating in exams. Positive school culture cannot be wholesomely depend on success in academic performance. There are other factors, which are not in scope of this paper that can also be used to enhance academic performance. It has been observed that institutions that has been practicing particular cultures resists new ideas hence become a stabling block to change.

2.9. Theoretical framework

Vygotsky's Social instructionists Theory is the work of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), who lived during Russian Revolution. Vygotsky's theory is one of the foundations of constructivism. It asserts three major themes: First is

that Social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development. In contrast to Jean Piaget's understanding of child development (in which development necessarily precedes learning), Vygotsky felt social learning precedes development. He states: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)." (Vygotsky, 1978).

The second premise is on the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO). The MKO refers to anyone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner, with respect to a particular task, process, or concept. The MKO is normally thought of as being a teacher, coach, or older adult, but the MKO could also be peers, a younger person, or even computers. The third premise is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD is the distance between a student's ability to perform a task under adult guidance and/or with peer collaboration and the student's ability solving the problem independently. According to Vygotsky, learning occurred in this zone.

Vygotsky focused on the connections between people and the socio cultural context in which they act and interact in shared experiences (Crawford, 1996). According to Vygotsky, humans use tools that develop from a culture, such as speech and writing, to mediate their social environments. Initially children develop these tools to serve solely as social functions, ways to communicate

needs. Vygotsky believed that the internalization of these tools led to higher thinking skills.

Social interaction through and with symbols, artifacts and value system play an important role. Schools have traditionally held a transmissionist or instructionist model in which parents, teachers and peer groups 'transmit' information, beliefs, values, customs and traditions to students which in effect has great bearing on what they are able to achieve. Roles of the teacher and student are therefore shifted, as a teacher should collaborate with his or her students in order to help facilitate meaningful instructions to students. Learning therefore becomes a reciprocal experience for the students and teacher. The second premise on the "More Knowledgeable Others" signifies the role of leaders such as the school principal, teachers and parents in creating a conducive atmosphere for learning through shared vision and missions. Through these interactive processes, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is then achieved when students post good results in national exams.

2.10. Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework can be defined as a set of ideas and principles taken from relevant field of inquiry and used to structure a subsequent presentation (Reichel and Ramely, 1987). The elements of school culture in this study are present in all schools in one form or the other. The key words here are

commitment, trust, teamwork, discussion, openness, morale and control. The conceptual framework below has variable to be investigated, the school culture should be estimated from attribute variable relating to professional ethics, rituals and values as independent variables while KCSE performance as dependent variable.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Professional ethics     │
│   • Honesty             │
│   • Integrity           │
│   • Transparency        │
│   • Accountability      │
│   • Confidentially      │
│   • objectivity         │
└─────────────────────────┘
            ↕
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Secondary school rituals│
│                         │
│ • Assemblies            │        ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐
│ • prize giving days     │        │ Positive     │     │ KCSE         │
│ • music festivals       │───────▶│ School       │────▶│ Performance  │
│ • Board of Management   │        │ culture      │     │              │
│   meetings              │        └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘
│ • Internal exam days    │
└─────────────────────────┘
            ↕
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Values                  │
│   • honesty             │
│   • hard work           │
│   • collegiality        │
│   • collaboration       │
│   • respect             │
│   • teamwork            │
└─────────────────────────┘
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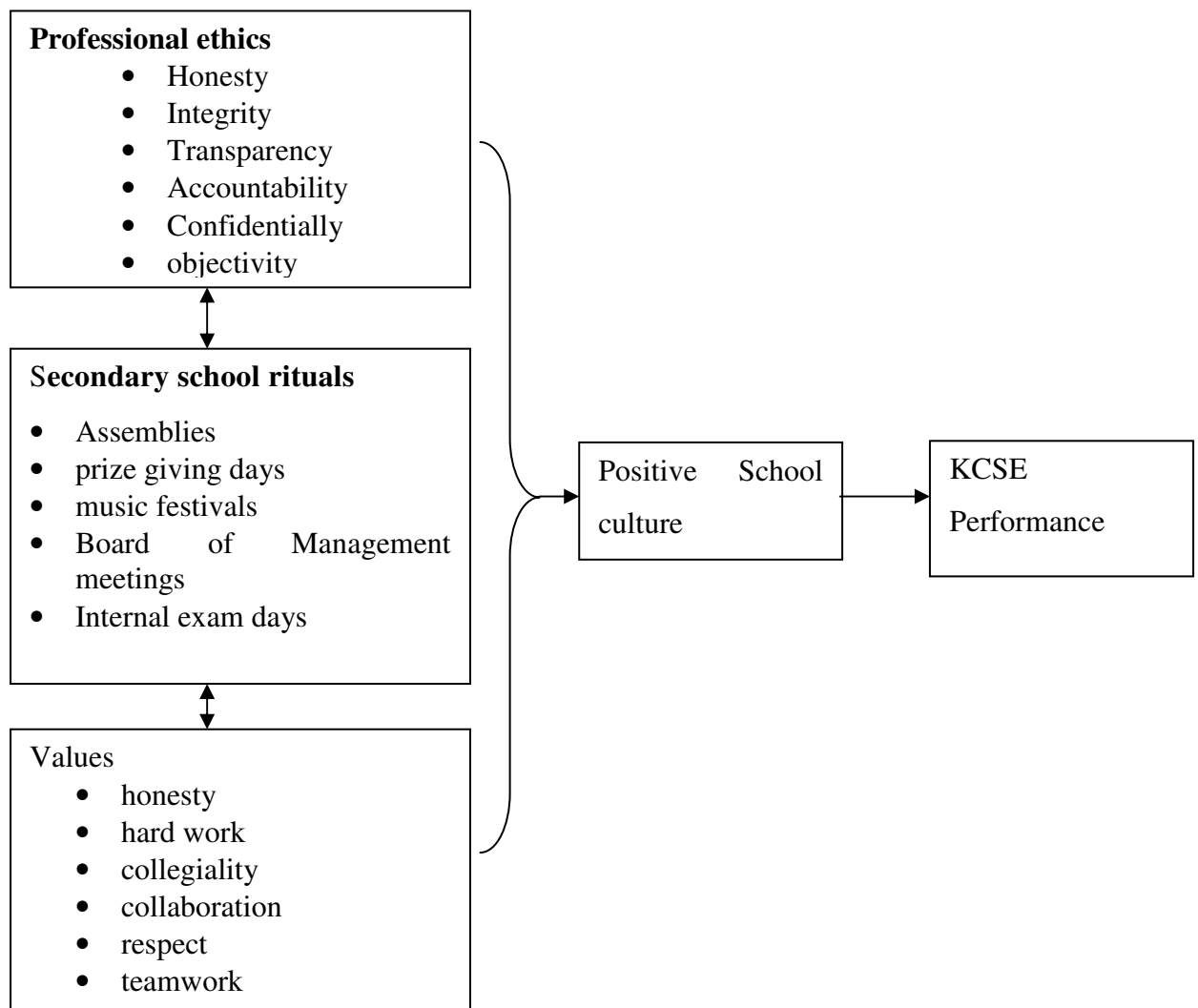
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The chapter is organized under the following sub headings: research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, instrument validity, instrument reliability, data collection procedure and data analysis procedure.

3.2. Research design

A research design is a plan for conducting research (Kothari 2009). The research design applied in this study was descriptive survey research design. Lokech (1984) notes that the study design was useful in obtaining information that best describe the existing phenomenon through asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes and behavior regarding school culture. They design was chosen for this study because it was economical and to facilitate rapid data collection.

3.3. Target population

Target population refers to that population which the researcher wants to generalize the results of the study. The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Rongo District. According to District education office, Rongo District has a total 20 public secondary school with teaching staff of 360 and 4,000

students. The district has 14 district schools and 6 provincial schools; there are 15 mixed secondary schools and 5 boarding schools. Among the boarding schools there are 4 boys' secondary schools and 1 girl secondary school.

3.4. Sample Size and sampling procedures

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define a sample as the representative of a population from which the sample has been drawn from those variable that are relevant to the research being conducted. 20 public secondary school Rongo district were sampled out. Sampling was done using stratified random sampling. Thus, the school was indicated as mixed day or boarding. The names of schools from the district were folded and put in a box. The folded papers were mixed and picked. The principals, teachers and students whose school names were picked were included as respondents of the study.

Table 3.1: Number of schools in the sample

Category of school	No. of school	No of selected schools	Provincial	District
Mixed day	15	6	0	15
Boarding	5	2	5	0
Total	20	8	5	15

3.5. Research instruments

In order to address the research objectives and research questions, data was collected by use of questionnaires. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a questionnaire is a written set of questions to which subjects responds in writing. Two questionnaires were designed to collect data from the principals and teachers. Questionnaires were designed in two sections; section one of the questionnaires for principal and teachers collected background information including gender, academic qualification and work experience. Section two of the questionnaire collected their opinion on professional ethics, value, rituals and challenges of developing school culture in secondary schools. Interview schedule were used by the researcher to gather data from students about their opinion on their school culture that influence academic performance.

3.6. Instrument validity

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) observe that validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences on research results. It is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data that actually represent the phenomenon. The researcher ensured the use of questionnaires and interview schedules in order to determine the validity of the instruments. Validity of the instruments was supported by results from the pilot study in which instruments that failed to measure the variables were adjusted or discarded.

3.7. Instrument reliability

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003), usually expressed as a correlation coefficient. To establish the reliability of the instrument, test-retest method was conducted from a similar population in two secondary schools in Rongo District after an interval of two weeks to the same group of respondents. Scores were then be correlated using the Pearson product moment

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2[n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

where;

n = number of pairs of scores

$\sum xy$ = sum of the products of the paired scores

$\sum x$ = sum of x scores

$\sum y$ = sum of y scores

$\sum x^2$ = sum of square x scores

$\sum y^2$ = sum of square y scores

Reliability coefficient varies between -1.00 and +1.00 with reliability of 1.00 indicating perfect reliability (never attained in practice) and 0 indicating no reliably and -1.00 to 0 shows negative reliability. The coefficient indicates the extent to which a test is free from error of variance. The closer the reliability the extent to which a test is free from error of variance and is a measure of differences

among proportions in the dimension assessed by the test (Borg & Gall, 1989). After responses were obtained, the instrument was discussed with the supervisors and items that are found to be vague are modified.

3.8. Data collection procedure

Donald and Tromp (2009) notes that data collection refers to gathering specific information aimed at providing or refuting some facts. A permit was obtained from the National Council of Science and Technology. Copies of the permit were presented to the District Commissioner and Education Officer of Rongo District who issued authority to visit schools. The researchers contacted principals through letters and thereafter make arrangements for actual school visits. A self-administered questionnaire was hand delivered to the principals and teachers. Students were interviewed using interview schedules. There was an assurance of confidentiality of person before the start of the research. Arrangements were made with the concerned administrators on when to collect the completed questionnaires. Administration of the instruments was done in two stages; the pilot study and the main study.

3.9. Data analysis technique

After collection of the data, data cleaning was done in order to determine inaccurate, incomplete or unreasonable data and then improve the quality through corrections of detected errors and omissions. After cleaning, the data was coded

and entered in the computer for analysis. Data analysis procedures that were employed involved both quantitative and qualitative procedures. Quantitative data derived from the demographic section and other closed questions was analyzed using descriptive statistic such as percentages and frequencies. Qualitative data generated from the open-ended questions in research instruments were organized in themes and patterns, categorized through content analysis then tabulated. The data analysis required the use of computer spreadsheet and for this reason; the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis, discussion and interpretation of the collected data. Data analysis was aimed at addressing the purpose of the study, which was to establish the influence of positive school culture on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Kenya.

4.2 Questionnaire return rate

The researcher dispatched 10 questionnaires to principals, and 20 to teachers. Adequately filled questionnaires and returned were 7 from principals and 20 from teachers. This represents 70% percent return rate from principals and 100% percent from teachers. This is evident that respondents were cooperative to the researcher.

4.3 Demographic information

The table below shows findings on the respondents' distribution by their gender.

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	62.5
Female	10	37.5
Total	**27**	**100**

The study established that majority of the respondents were males whereas few were females, this is an indication that the respondents were well distributed in terms of their gender.

Table 4.2 indicates the distribution of the respondents in terms of their age.

Table 4.2. Distribution of principals and teachers by age

	Frequency	**Percentage**
24-30 years	6	20.8
31-35 years	10	37.5
36-40 years	5	16.7
41-45 years	2	8.3
46-50 years	3	12.5
51-55 years	1	4.2
Total	**27**	**100.0**

The study established that most of the respondents were aged between 31 to 35 years from the findings shown in table 4.2. This is an indication that most of the respondents were above the age of 35 years. This suggests that most teachers were well experienced and therefore were in position to give valuable information.

Table 4.3 tabulates the results on the number of years served by principals as a teacher

Table 4.3: Numbers of years serving as a teacher

	Frequency	Percent
1-10years	2	33.3
11-20 years	4	50.0
21-30 years	1	16.7
Total	**7**	**100.0**

From the findings on the number of years they had served as teachers. From the results in table 4.3, the study revealed that majority of the respondents had served for 11-20. Out of the responses, majority had served as teachers for a long time and therefore, this show that they could handle school culture and improve performance in their schools.

Table 4.4 shows findings on the respondent highest academic qualification;

Table 4.4: Highest academic qualification for principals and teachers

	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	8	29.2
Graduate	15	54.2
Masters	5	16.7
Total	**27**	**100.0**

The study revealed that majority of the teachers and principals had attained graduate level of education as their highest level of education, from the findings shown in table 4.4, majority of the teachers and principals indicated that they had attained graduate level as their highest level of education. It astonishes that

despite majority of the administrators were graduate level and above, poor performance was still evident in many school.

4.4 Role of professional ethics in promoting academic performance at KCSE

Professional ethics entails a set of standards adopted by professional community, which encompasses the personal, organizational and corporate standards of behavior expected of professionals. In order to investigate the role of professional ethics in promoting academic performance at KCSE, Principals and teachers were asked a number of questions to determine the extent this objective is achieved in secondary schools in Rongo District. The results were as follows;

4.4.1 Extent to which public secondary schools in Rongo hold staff meetings to resolve conflicts

The table below shows the principal's, teachers' and students' responses on the extent to which public secondary schools in Rongo hold staff meetings to resolve conflicts.

Table 4.5: Extent to which public secondary schools in Rongo hold staff meetings to resolve conflicts

	Principals		Teachers		Students	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Quite often	3	42.9	6	30.0	24	64.9
Often	4	57.1	11	55.0	13	35.1
Not at all			3	15.0		
Total	**7**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The study established that majority of the principals as shown in the table 4.5 indicated that they held staff meetings to resolve conflicts. From the findings, it can be concluded that even principals themselves underrate the extent to which they hold staff meetings to bring the school community together. Failure by the principal to call for staff meeting to sort conflicts may lead to teachers and students to involve in malpractices leading to poor academic performance.

On side of teachers, the study revealed majority of them felt that staff meetings were held just often as opposed to quite often. This closely reflected the principals' responses. Failure to attend staff meeting could be a recipe to malpractices leading to cheating in examining other indiscipline cases among others, Kritek (1996) in his study found that teachers gave staff cooperation, a high level of staff enthusiasm, uniformity of goals and agreement among staff with regard to program philosophy and policies as reasons for the success.

4.4.2 Involvement in examination irregularity in exams

In order to investigate standards of professional ethics in schools in Rongo District, principals, teachers and students were asked whether they had engaged in cheating of exams both in internally and externally organized exams. The table below shows the findings.

Table 4.6: Involvement in examination irregularity in exams

	Principals		Teachers		Students	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Quite often	6	85.7	17	85.0	30	81.1
Often	1	14.3	3	15.0	7	18.9
Not at all						
Total	**7**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The study revealed that the public schools have been involved in examination irregularity, from the findings shown in table 4.6 above, principals indicated that their schools had been involved in examination irregularity. The teachers also shared the same view with the principals that public schools had been involved in examination irregularity. Majority of the teachers indicated that their schools had been involved in examination irregularity. This shows lack of professional practices as far as preparation and conducting of exams on the part of principal and teacher are concerned. Principal and teachers should ensure that they apply their professional training to avoid exam malpractices in their schools.

The study revealed students perception of examination irregularity in public schools. They concurred with principals and teachers about the extent of examination vice in schools. From the findings shown on table 4.6, the study found that majority of the students indicated that their schools had been involved in examination irregularity. Involvement in exam irregularity can be attributed to poor monitoring of the exams in the public secondary schools in Rongo district. This implies that teachers who are setters, markers, invigilators and supervisors have neglected their professional ethics during the times of conducting exams.

4.4.3 People involved in examination irregularity

To further understand the extent of examination irregularity in schools in Rongo the study sought establish those involved in examination cheating and the result was as follows;

Table 4.7: People involved in examination irregularity

	Principals		Teachers		Students	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Students themselves	4	57.1	13	65.0	24	64.9
Teacher-Students	1	14.3	2	10.0	4	10.8
Students with external help	2	28.6	5	25.0	9	24.3
Total	**7**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**

The study revealed that majority of principals as shown in table 4.7 indicated that the people involved in examination irregularity were students themselves. The study revealed that majority of the respondents indicated that the people involved in examination irregularity were students themselves. This is an indication that the student themselves are the ones involved in examination irregularity in majority of the public secondary schools in Rongo. The finding implies that there is lack of guidance and counseling to students, lack of teaching of moral values and punishment of students involved. This calls for proper professional practices in schools by teachers.

4.4.4 Various ways schools managed examination irregularity at school level

In order to find out how teachers handled cases of exam irregularity, the study sought to get from the respondents various ways schools managed the vice.

The study revealed that public schools in Rongo handled examination irregularity through sending the students home for their parents, punishing the student, disqualification, and guidance and counseling. On the measures put in place to deal with exam cheating in public secondary school in Rongo, the study revealed that the measures include laying down exam guidelines, teaching of good values, suspension if found, disqualification, separating the students, and increasing the number of teachers supervising the exams. It is worth noting the absence of teachers' participation in examination irregularity could be used to inculcate good values in students since they could act as good role models.

4.4.5 Preparation of professional records

The study also sought to establish the extent teachers in Rongo District carried out their professional duties such as preparation of professional records and the results were as shown below.

Table 4.8: Preparation of professional documents

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	15	75.0
No	5	25.0
Total	**20**	**100.0**

The table 4.8 reveals that majority of the respondents as shown indicated that they prepare professional documents. This can be attributed to the requirements to prepare these documents in order to meet standards. Strahlendorf (2010) revealed that professional ethics encompasses the personal, organizational and corporate standards of behaviour expected of professionals and has become more important over the years.

4.4.6 Mechanisms put in place for effective delivery of the curriculum

Schools with sound educational background where teachers deliver the contents of the syllabus effectively and efficiently rarely engage in examination irregularities, (KNEC, 2011). The study established that the mechanisms put in place for effective delivery of the curriculum are; observing school timetables, preparation of schemes of work by teachers, marking and delivery of marks by

teachers, revising in groups, proper supervision and invigilation of exams and maximization of available resources. KNEC (2012) notes that high standard of performance and individual development depends on how well schools develop personal qualities, skills and competence backed by appropriate knowledge.

4.4.7. Involvement in decision making by the administration

Involving teachers in the process of decision-making is an important aspect of collegiality and overall ownership in organizational set up. The study thus sought to find out the extent of teachers involvement in decision-making process leading to nurturing and promoting positive school culture, which enhances academic performance. The results were as follows;

Table 4.9: Involvement in decision making by the administration

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	7	35
No	13	65
Total	**20**	**100.0**

Table 4.9 reveals that majority of the respondents as shown indicated that they are not involved in decision making by the administration. This can be attributed to the bureaucratic nature in the schools, lack of trust in the teachers and corruption. School-based administrators play an important role in the establishment of school climates as well as instructional structures that are the prerequisites for student

academic achievement (Heck, Larsen & Macoulides, 1990). When teachers are not involved in decision-making process, it leads to lack of ownership to school activities which intern breeds unprofessional behaviours among teachers hence poor academic performance.

4.5 Role of secondary school rituals on performance at KCSE

A ritual is a series of actions that are always performed in the same way, especially as a cultural practice of a school. The study also sought to establish the role of secondary school rituals on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya given the fact that those rituals contribute to academic performance. Respondents involving principals teachers and students were asked questions on; Observation of rituals and traditions, emphasis on honor and recognition, recognition of heroes and heroines, holding educational days, students' participation in clubs and societies, students' participation in Music and Drama, whether the principals have held an award ceremony in school and the extent of school reinforcement of the spoken language. The results were as shown in the tables that follow;

4.5.1 Observation of rituals and traditions

Rites, rituals, assemblies, prize-giving day, music festival, Management meetings, may become more necessary where they need to provide for a commonality of experience, mark significant events in the life of the institutions, and strengthen

the bonds between members of the school community. The study therefore sought to establish the extent schools observe rituals and traditions and the findings were as shown in table 4.10 below;

Table 4.10: Observation of rituals and traditions

	Teachers		Students	
	F	*%*	F	*%*
Quite often	7	35	12	32.4
Often	13	65	25	67.6
Not at all				
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The table 4.10 show that majority of the teachers indicated that their schools observes rituals and traditions to support the school's academic performance, while majority of the students indicated that their schools observes rituals and traditions to support the school's academic performance. From the findings, it can be concluded that public secondary schools in Rongo District emphasize observation of rituals and traditions to support the school's academic performance. Schools should have a tradition like ceremonies marking special occasions, events that reinforce institutional values and rites that provide individuals and groups with a connection to the whole (Brincat and Wilke, 2008). Hofman (2002) adds that the high school experience serves to provide adolescence with both societal rites of passage that mark specific points in their lives, as well as rites of

intensification that are group orientated and are designed to foster social within the institution.

4.5.2 Emphasis on honour and recognition

Honour and recognition helps to foster a sense of belonging and self-esteem which in turn leads to motivation of tasks given. The results on this aspect of rituals were as follows;

Table 4.11: Emphasis on honour and recognition

	Teachers		Students	
	F	*%*	F	*%*
Quite often	11	55.0	20	54.1
Often	9	45.0	17	45.9
Not at all				
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The table 4.11 above shows that majority of teachers indicated that their schools lay emphasis on honour and recognition of those who work to serve the purpose of the school.

Majority of students indicated that their schools lay emphasis on honour and recognition of those who work to serve the purpose of the school. From these findings it can be concluded that public secondary schools in Rongo District emphasize honour and recognition of those who work to serve the purpose of the

school. A strong school culture should uphold and recognize the effort made by the various stakeholders in the improvement of organizational performance (Njogu, 2012).

4.5.3 Recognition of heroes and heroines at school

The table 4.7 shows the findings on the principals, teachers' and students' responses on recognition of heroes and heroines as part of school rituals that promoted positive cultures, which influence academic performance.

Table 4.12: Responses on recognition of heroes and heroines at school

	Principals		Teachers		Students	
	F	*%*	F	*%*	F	*%*
Quite often	2	28.6	14	70.0	14	37.8
Often	5	71.4	6	30.0	23	62.2
Not at all						
Total	**7**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The study established that majority of the principals as shown in the table 4.12 indicated their schools recognize heroes and heroines in their schools. Teachers' view reflected that majority of them felt their schools recognize heroes and heroines. This is an indication that the public secondary school teachers in Rongo district believe that the schools recognize heroes and heroines. On the same question of recognition of heroes and heroines the study established that majority of the students indicated their schools recognize heroes and heroines at school

often. This is an indication that in Rongo district the schools recognize heroes and heroines often. It can be concluded that public secondary schools in Rongo District recognize heroes and heroines at school.

4.5.4. Educational days

The table 4.15 shows the extent to which schools hold education days to nurture the spirit of hard work and patriotism among the school community.

Table 4.13. Holding educational days

	Principals		Teachers		Students	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Quite often	1	14.3	6	30.0	12	32.4
Often	6	85.7	11	55.0	25	67.6
Not at all			3	15.0		
Total	**7**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The study established that majority of the principals indicated their schools hold educational days. From the findings in the table 4.13, principals indicated that their schools hold educational days. The study further established that majority of the teachers indicated their schools hold educational days. The teachers indicated that their schools held educational days. On the part of students, the study established that majority of the students indicated their schools hold educational days. From the above findings, it can be concluded that public secondary schools in Rongo District held educational days in order to improve academic

performance. Deal and Peterson (1999) found that schools that hold ceremonies marking special occasions provide individuals and groups with a connection to the whole.

4.5.5. Students' participation in clubs and societies

The study also explored extent students participate in clubs and societies as a way building strong cultural bonds. The results were as shown in table 4.12 below.

Table 4.14: Students' participation in clubs and societies

	Principals		Teachers		Students	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Quite often	7	100	8	40	13	35.1
Often			12	60	24	64.9
Not at all						
Total	**7**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The study established that the students in public secondary schools in Rongo participate in clubs and societies often as shown by principals.

From the findings in the table 4.14, of the teachers indicated that students participate in clubs and societies. On their part, students felt that they do not participate in clubs and societies as the students indicated that they participated in clubs and societies. It can be concluded that majority of students in public secondary schools in Rongo District participate in clubs and societies as a way of building strong culture bonds to enhance academic performance.

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4.5.6. Students' participation in Music and Drama

The table below shows the extent to which students participate in Music and Drama according to the principals.

Table 4.15: Students' participation in Music and Drama

	Teachers		Students		Principals	
	F	*%*	F	*%*	F	*%*
Quite often	7	35.0	10	27.0	4	57.1
Often	10	50.0	23	62.2	3	42.9
Not at all	3	15.0	4	10.8		
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**	**7**	**100.0**

The study established that majority of the respondents indicated that the students participate in Music and Drama. From the findings in table 4.15, the principals indicated that students participate in Music and Drama. It is significant to note that few principals indicated that students do not participate in Music and drama perhaps a pointer to moral decadence in schools in Rongo evidenced by cases of cheating by the students themselves.

The majority of the teachers indicated that students participate in Music and Drama. From this findings it can be concluded that according to the teachers in public secondary schools in Rongo District students participate in Music and Drama but of statistical significance of students who do not participate at all

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bearing in mind that schools are mini societies where cherished values of the society are natured. On their part, majority of the students indicated that they participate in music and drama activities. From the findings majority of the respondents indicated that they participate in music and drama activities. Although majority of respondents indicated that they participate, few should be encouraged to join other clubs to ensure proper interactions leading to academic improvement.

4.5.7 Students' participation in Sports activities

Table 4.16: Students' participation in Sports activities

	Teachers		**Students**		**Principals**	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Quite often	10	50.0	10	27.0	4	57.1
Often	10	50.0	23	62.2	3	42.9
Not at all			4	10.8		
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**	**7**	**100.0**

From the findings in table 4.16, majority of the principals indicated that students participated in sports activities. This is an indication that students participated in sports activities more often. Those principals who indicated that students do not participate in sports activities reasoned that sports take much of students' time, which could otherwise be used to improve the students' academic achievements. However, the study established that majority of teachers indicated that they participated in sports activities often. From the findings, majority of the teachers

indicated that students participate in sports activities. It can be concluded that students in public secondary schools in Rongo District participate in sports activities.

4.5.8. Whether the principals have held an award ceremony in school

The table below tabulates results on whether the principals have held an award ceremony in school

Table 4.17: Whether the principals have held an award ceremony in school

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	5	71.4
No	2	28.6
Total	**7**	**100.0**

The table above 4.17 reveals that majority of the respondents indicated that their schools have held an award ceremony. This can be attributed to increased need for improved student performance through a rewarding program. This finding reveals that motivation through organizing of award ceremonies towards a good work promotes and nurture positive school culture that influence performance.

4.5.9. Languages used in public secondary schools in Rongo District

The study established that the official languages spoken in public secondary schools in Rongo District are Kiswahili and English. Thus, language increases the

students engagement and sense of purposes, which may lead to improvement of academic performance.

Table 4.18: School reinforcement of the spoken language

	Principals		Teachers		Students	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Quite often	2	28.6	9	45.0	12	32.4
Often	5	71.4	11	55.0	19	51.4
Not at all					6	16.2
Total	**7**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The study established that majority of principals indicated that they often reinforced the importance of spoken language in their schools. From the findings on table above 4.18, majority of the respondents indicated that they reinforced the importance of spoken language. The study established that majority of teachers indicated that they reinforced the importance of spoken language in their schools. The teachers responses were closely mirrored by students responses who the study established that majority of them indicated that they reinforce the importance of spoken language. From the findings above it can be concluded that public secondary schools in Rongo District often reinforce the importance of spoken language but not to the level that it can be said to be part of the schools cultural heritage that can reinforce academic achievement. Purkey and Smith (1983) emphasize the importance of school culture in building on theory of school improvement.

4.6. The role of common school values in promoting academic excellence

School values are those virtues extolled and cherished by the school and the larger society- they are the beliefs about what is right or wrong and what is important in life. Values espoused by the school are highly enduring, have a powerful impact on performance, and shape the ways people, think, act and feel. The study therefore explored several areas where positive values could be nurtured.

4.6.1 Mission statement, vision and goals

The table below shows whether public secondary schools in Rongo have a mission statement, vision and goals that guides the school as core values towards attainment of academic performance.

Table 4.19: Whether public secondary schools have a mission statement, vision and goals

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	6	85.7
No	1	14.3
Total	**7**	**100.0**

The table 4.19 reveals that majority of the public schools have a mission statement, vision and goals. The study found that majority of the respondents indicated that their schools have a mission statement, vision and goals. This can be attributed to increased government requirements, need to maintain standards

by the public schools, and increased competition from private schools. A shared vision and shared goals reflect a unity of purpose among the teaching staff of a school that is likely to result in a consistency of practice (Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore, 1995).

4.6.2 Extent to which core values are communicated by the principals

The table 4.21 shows the findings on the extent to which core values of public secondary schools are communicated.

Table 4.20: Extent to which core values are communicated by the principals

	Principals		Teachers		Students	
	F	*%*	F	*%*	F	*%*
Quite often	4	57.1	7	35.0	12	32.4
Often	3	42.9	13	65.0	20	54.1
Not at all					5	13.5
Total	**7**	**100.0**	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

The study established that majority of the principals indicated that core values are communicated. This is an indication that the principals believe that the core values are adequately communicated in their schools. On the part of teachers, only few indicated that core values are being communicated by the administration and themselves adequately. This is in sharp contrast to the findings reported by the Principals themselves who indicated that they communicate core values quite often. From the findings on table above 4.20, majority of the respondents

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indicated that core values are communicated often. This is an indication that the teachers of public secondary schools in Rongo believe that the core values are not communicated quite often in their schools as it should be to inculcate moral values that can reduce cases of cheating in schools.

To further understand the extent core values are emphasized in schools in Rongo students perceptions were brought in the picture. The study established that majority of the students indicated that core values are not communicated quite often in their schools as it should be. From this table it can be concluded that majority of the students are of the view that core values of the secondary schools are not being emphasized as it should be to eliminate cases of cheating. Levine and Lezotte (2004) emphasize the significance of values in building strong cultural tenets in secondary schools.

4.6.3. Schools emphasis of core values in what they do and say

The study also sought the respondents view on emphasis of schools on core values in what they do and say. On a scale of 1-3, 1-quite often 2-often and 3- not at all, they gave their responses as in table 4.19 below.

Table 4.21: Schools emphasis of core values in what they do and say

	Teachers		Students	
	F	*%*	F	*%*
Quite often	8	40.0	14	37.8
Often	12	60.0	23	62.2
Not at all				
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**37**	**100.0**

As shown in table 4.21, majority of the teachers indicated that their schools lay emphasis of core values. Majority of the students indicated that their schools lay emphasis of core values.

From these findings it can be concluded that public secondary schools in Rongo District often lay emphasis of core values in what they do and say. As professionals, teachers are also required to instill in their students values that will help them grow up into self-disciplined, self-reliant and integrated citizens (KNEC 2012). On the values and virtues nurtured and extolled by secondary schools in Rongo, the study revealed that they are discipline, obedience, transparency, commitment, hard work, religious matters, self-determination, order, and hospitality. Kritek (1996) found that values are a crucial feature of effective school cultures. However, levels of emphasis still need to be reinforced in order to build strong institutional culture.

4.6.4 Celebration of the accomplishments of the staff and the students

The table below shows the results on the views of the teachers on the emphasis on celebration of the accomplishments of the staff and the students.

Table 4.22: Celebration of the accomplishments of the staff and the students

	Teachers		Students	
	F	%	F	%
Quite often	5	25.0	11	29.7
Often	15	75.0	26	70.3
Not at all				
Total	20	100.0	37	100.0

The table above 4.22 majority of the respondent's students indicated that their schools celebrated a accomplishments of the staff and the students. It can be concluded that public secondary schools in Rongo District emphasize on celebration of the accomplishments of the staff and the students. Schools should have a tradition like ceremonies marking special occasions, events that reinforce institutional values and rites that provide individuals and groups with a connection to the whole (Brincat and Wilke, 2008).

4.6.5. Dealing with indiscipline cases in Rongo District

The study investigated how teachers deal with indiscipline cases, which could hamper nurturing of positive secondary school culture. It is worth noting that destructive methods of discipline such as corporal punishment which could be

recipe for chaos are not being used by secondary schools in Rongo District. On the contrary, the study revealed that secondary schools in Rongo use student friendly methods such as, students governing councils, guidance and counseling, establishing schools rules and regulations, suspensions, punishments and discipline management committees. Strahlendorf (2010) asserts that the tradition of the school, the way it operates, its code of discipline and approaches affect students most.

4.6.7 Schools performance in National examinations in the last five years in Rongo District

A schools performance in national examinations forms a rich source of building its tradition. Renowned educational organizations and institutions have built their reputations on sound academic performance carried forward over the years. The study therefore sought to investigate the District footing on this aspect of positive school culture and the results were as follows; The study revealed that the school mean in public school in Rongo lay between 4.0 to 7.0 in 2008, 3.7 to 6.8 in 2009, 4.2 to 7.2 in 2010, 3.9 to 7.1 in 2011 and 4.0 to 6.0 in 2012. The finding indicated that the mean score is not predictable hence need positive school culture to ensure improved steady performance.

4.6.8. Rating of the staff team spirit to achieve high academic performance in public secondary schools

The findings shows the rating of the staff team spirit to achieve high academic performance in public secondary schools in Rongo. On a scale of 1-3 (1-very high, 2-high 3- moderate) teachers were asked to rate their team spirit to achieve high academic performance. The results were as shown in the table below.

Table 4.23. Rating of the staff team spirit to achieve high academic performance in public secondary schools

	Frequency	Percent
Very high	5	25.0
High	11	55.0
Moderate	4	20.0
Total	**20**	**100.0**

From the table 4.23 above, the findings reveals that majority of the respondents rated the staff team spirit to achieve high academic performance as high. The findings indicate that the staff team spirit to achieve high academic performance in public secondary schools in Rongo has not reached very high.

Teachers in schools form social groups with their own rules, norms values and standard of behaviour, which they denote as ethos of a school (Barth, 2002). Staff members have to work as a team to ensure a sense of unity and consistency in their relation with students (Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore, 1995).

4.7. Challenges facing nurturing of strong secondary school culture in public secondary schools in Rongo District

The study also sought to investigate challenges facing nurturing of strong-positive secondary school culture. On the challenges faced by public secondary schools in building strong institutional culture, the study revealed that the challenges include indiscipline of students and to some extent teachers, lack of cooperation by the staff, differences in teachers' age, parental influence, cultural differences, limited human resources, lack of community support and financial constraints. Other challenges include corruption, lack of broad based control-instruments such as strategic plans and mission and vision of the school, which is shared by the whole school community. Continued involvement by students in exam irregularity also posed challenge to building sound secondary school culture in Rongo District.

Despite teachers' efforts to stump out the vice, students still found room to collude with the outside world and within them to engage in examination irregularities. KNEC (2011) advocates several measures to eliminate cheating in national examinations key among them: Teachers being good role models, teaching of good values during school assemblies and pastoral programmes, guidance and counseling and strengthening of supervision and invigilation of school based tests and examination.

According to KNEC circular (2012), Kenya Examination Council is committed to guarantee fairness in conducting of examinations. To achieve this objective the council has put in place machinery to guard against any candidate gaining undue advantage over others through cheating.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The objectives of the study was to investigate the roles of professional ethics in promoting academic performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya, to examine the role of secondary rituals on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya, to determine the espoused school values affect academic performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District Kenya, and to establish the difficulties facing implementation of positive secondary school culture in public secondary schools in Rongo District.

5.2 Summary of the study

The main purpose for this study was to investigate the influence of positive school culture on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District. The study was guided by the following objectives; to investigate roles of professional ethics in promoting academic performance, examine the role of secondary's school ritual on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools; to determine the common school values that affect the academic performance at KCSE. Lastly, to establish difficulties facing nurturing of positive secondary school culture in public secondary school in Rongo district. The design of this

study was descriptive survey and primary data was collected by administering questionnaires and interview schedule. Total of 64 respondents were chosen for the project. The area of the study was chosen due to reported cases of exam irregularities for the last 5 years. The data was analyzed using SPPS software programme and were summarized in tables and frequencies.

5.2.1 Summary of the findings

The role of professional ethics in promoting academic performance has not been well practiced in schools by teachers and principals. This has led to the following findings; staff holding few staff meeting to solve conflicts, involvement of exam irregularities, lack of proper policies and guidelines in conducting exams, inadequate preparation of schemes of work and other documents and lack of involvement of staff in decision making.

The role of secondary school rituals are meant to influence in academic performance and create awareness to education stakeholders about positive morals that improves academic performance, the findings revealed that few schools observe ritual and tradition, honour and recognize heros and heroines, hold education days, involve students in sports, clubs and drama and hold award ceremonies.

Values are beliefs of what are desirable, good, right or wrong; therefore, schools need to have common values to influence academic performance. The findings indicated that few schools have mission statements, visions and goals, communicating core values, celebrating accomplishment of staff and students and rating or team spirit.

Many schools are faced by challenges in nurturing and promotion of school culture. The following were the finding of some challenges they include; indiscipline by students and teachers, lack of corporation by staff, difference in teachers age, rental influence, lack of mission, vision and goals among others.

5.3 Conclusions

On the basis of the findings it can be concluded that the role of professional ethics is core in influencing academic performance. It was also concluded that rituals and values improves academic performance. Challenges were also identified as stumbling block to nurturing and promoting of positive school culture that influence academic performance.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that;

Principals and teachers should embrace and apply their professional skills in improving academic performance through constantly attending short courses, seminars and advancing their academic qualifications.

The school stakeholders should ensure that school rituals and values and practiced and emphasized regularly to improve academic performance.

Education stakeholders should be able to brainstorm way forward on how to tackle the challenges facing nurturing and promotion of positive school culture with the view of improving academic performance.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of positive school culture on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Kenya.

1. A study should be carried on the effects of culture on the performance of primary schools in Kenya.

2. A similar study should be replicated in other secondary schools so as to establish whether similar conditions apply.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Zephania Odongo,

University of Nairobi,

Department of Educational

Administration and Planning

P.O. Box 30197-100

NAIROBI

9th /2/2013

The Principal

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a post graduate student of University of Nairobi pursuing a degree in Educational Administration and Planning**.** I am conducting a research on influence of school culture on performance at KCSE in Public Secondary Schools in Rongo District Kenya and your school has been chosen to participate. I am requesting for your assistance when collecting data in the school. The data will be for academic purpose only and the confidentiality of the person will be highly respected.

Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Zephania Odongo

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

The Questionnaire gather information about the professional ethics that develops school culture which influence KCSE performance.

Section A

a) What is your gender   Male [ ]   Female [ ]

b) How old are you? 24-30[ ] 30-35   [ ] 40-45 [ ] 46-50   [ ] 51-55[ ]

c) How long have you been a teacher 1-10yrs [ ]11-20 yrs.[ ] 21-30yrs.

d) What is your highest academic qualification? Diploma[ ]Graduate
   [ ] Masters[ ]

SECTION B

1. To what extent do you carry out the following activities;

(a) Communicating core values of the institution in your everyday work

   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all

(b) Holding staff meetings to resolve conflicts

    (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] Not at all

(c) Recognizing heroes and heroines (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] Not at all

(d) Holding educational days [i] Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all

2. How often do your students participate in the following school activities?
   (a) Clubs and societies [i] Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] Not at all

   (b) Music and Drama [i] Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] Not at all

   (c) Sports activities [i] Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

3. Which are your official languages spoken by students and the staff?

   ………………………………………………………………………….

   To what extent does your school reinforce the importance of spoken

   language in your school? [i] Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all[ ]

4. Briefly explain how you deal with indiscipline cases in your school? ……

5. Briefly explain values and virtues nurtured and extolled by your institution

   …………………………………………………………………………

6. What was your school mean score in the last five years?

   2008……..………   2009…………   2010…………

   2011……… ……   2012……….

7. What mechanisms are in place for effective delivery of the curriculum

   …………………………………………………………………………

8. Has your school ever been involved in examination irregularity either in internally managed exams or externally administered exams? Yes [ ] No []

9. Who were involved? (i)Students (ii) teacher-students

   (iii) Students with external help

10. How did you handle the situation? …………………………………………..

11. Briefly outline three measures in place to deal with exam cheating in your school ……………………………………………………………………….

12. What challenges do you face in building strong institutional culture

    ……………………………………………………………………….

13. Does your school have a mission statement, vision and school wide goals? If yes, please specify them below. (i) Yes [ ] (ii) No [ ]

    ……………………………………………………………………….

14. Have you ever held an award ceremony in your school? (i) Yes [ ] (ii) No[ ]

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS

The questionnaires are to gather information about the role of teachers in shaping school culture which influence KCSE performance.   Please tick (√) in the box

SECTION A

1. What is your gender   Male [ ]   Female [ ]

2. How old are you? 24-30yrs 30-35yrs   40-45yrs 46-50yrs 51-55yrs

3. What is your highest academic qualifications (i) Diploma (ii) Graduate   (iii) Masters

SECTION B

4. Indicate to what extent you will carry out the following activities.
    (a) Communicating core values of the institution in your everyday work

    (i) Quite often [ ](ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all [ ]

    (b) Holding staff meetings to resolve conflicts

    (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all [ ]

    (c) Recognizing heroes and heroines(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ]
    (iii) Not at all[ ]

    (d) Holding educational days (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all[ ]

5. How often do your students participate in the following school activities?

    (a)   Clubs and societies (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all [ ]

    (b)   Music and Drama   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all   [ ]

    (c)   Sports activities   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all   [ ]

6. Does your school have language policy? Yes [ ]   No [ ]

    To what extent does your school reinforce the importance of spoken language in your school? [i] Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] Not at all

    Briefly explain how you deal with indiscipline cases in your school?
    …………………………………………………………………………

7. Briefly explain values and virtues nurtured and extolled by your institution
    …………………………………………………………………………

8. Has your school ever been involved in examination irregularity either in internally managed exams or externally administered exams? Yes [ ] No [ ]

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9. Who was involved? (i) Students themselves (ii) teacher-students (iii) students with external help

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

10. How did you handle the situation?

...……………………………………………………………………………….

11. Briefly outline any three measures to deal with exam cheating in your school

…………………………………………………………………….

12. What challenges do you face in building strong institutional culture

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

13. How often does your school lay emphasis on the following school activities?

(a). Emphasis of core values in what they do and say.

[i] Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all

(b). Honour and recognition of those who work to serve the purpose of the

school. (i) Quite often [ ]   (ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all [ ]

(c). Observing rituals and traditions to support the school's heart and soul.

(i) Quite often [ ]   (ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all [ ]

(d). Recognition of heroes and heroines

(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ]   (iii) Not at all [ ]

(e). eloquently speaking of the mission of the school.

(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

(f). Celebration of the accomplishments of the staff and the students.

(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

(g). Preserving the focus on students by recounting stories of success and

achievement. (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

14. How do you rate staff team spirit to achieve high academic performance?
Tick one (i) Very high [ ] (ii) High [ ] (iii) Moderate [ ](iv) low [ ] (v) Very low[ ]

15. Do you prepare professional document   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

16. Are you involved in decision making by the administration. If No, please explain .   Yes   [ ] No[ ] ……………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

17. What are three important things that keep you in this school? ………..

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS

The interview schedule is to gather information about school culture, which influences KCSE performance.

Do you carry out the following activities

1. Communicating core values of the institution in your everyday work
   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all   [ ]

2. Recognizing heroes and heroines(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] Not at all [ ]

3. Holding educational days (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all   [ ]

4. How often do you participate in the following school activities?

(a)   Clubs and societies (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

(b)   Music and Drama   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

(c)   Sports activities   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

5. Which   are   your   official   languages   spoken   by   students   and   the
   staff?..

6. To what extent does your school reinforce the importance of spoken language
   in your school?   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ](iii) Not at all [ ]

7. Briefly explain values and virtues nurtured and extolled by your institution
   ……………………………………………………………………………………

8. Has your school ever been involved in examination irregularity either in
   internally managed exams or externally administered exams? (i) Yes [   ]
   (ii) No [ ]

9. Who was involved? (i)Students themselves (ii) teacher-students (iii) students
   with external help

10. How often does your school lay emphasis in the following school activities?
   a. Emphasis of core values in what they do and say.
   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [   ]
   b. Honour and recognition of those who work to serve the purpose of the
   school.
   (i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [   ]
   c. Observing rituals and traditions to support the school's heart and soul.

(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [   ]

d. Recognition of heroes and heroines

(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

e. Eloquently speaking of the mission of the school.

(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

f. Celebration of the accomplishments of the staff, the students, and the community.

(i) Quite often [ ] (ii) Often [ ] (iii) Not at all [ ]

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX V: PERMIT

PAGE 2

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution
Zephania Ochieng Odongo
of (Address) University of Nairobi
P.O.Box 30197-00100, Nairobi.
has been permitted to conduct research in

	Location
Rongo	District
Nyanza	Province

on the topic: Influence of positive school culture on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Kenya.

for a period ending: 30th June, 2013.

PAGE 3
Research Permit No. NCST/RCD/14/013/652
Date of issue   15th May, 2013
Fee received   KSH. 1,000

....
Applicant's   For: Secretary
Signature   National Council for
                        Science &Technology

CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit
2. Government Officers will not be interviewed with-out prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two(2)/four(4) bound copies of your final report for Kenyans and non-Kenyans respectively.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

GPK6055t3mt10/2011

(CONDITIONS—see back page)

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APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349, 254-020-2673550
Mobile: 0713 788 787 , 0735 404 245
Fax: 254-020-2213215
When replying please quote
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref: **NCST/RCD/14/013/652**

Date: **15th May, 2013**

Zephania Ochieng' Odongo
University of Nairobi
P.O.Box 30197-00100
Nairobi.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application dated **29th April, 2013** for authority to carry out research on "***Influence of positive school culture on performance at KCSE in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Kenya.***" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Rongo District** for a period ending **30th June, 2013.**

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and District Education Officer, Rongo District** before embarking on the research project.

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

SAID HUSSEIN
FOR: SECRETARY/CEO

Copy to:

The District Commissioner,
The District Education Officer,
Rongo District

"The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development".