

Determinants of academic performance in public day secondary schools in Meru Central District, Meru County, Kenya

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Abstract:

This study was carried out to investigate the determinants of academic performance in public day schools in Meru Central District of Meru County. The objective of the study is to investigate how the home environment, income of the parents, the level of education and parental involvement, the and community participation affects the academic performance of an institution. Despite the role that education plays in the whole world, the results of the day secondary schools in Meru central District leaves a lot to be desired. In the past years, KCSE result the district was last out of eight districts in the larger Meru County. This has been a consistent trend over the years. It is therefore important to identify the reasons why the institutions in the district have not been performing equally well. The objectives of the study were: to find out how home environment, parental involvement and parental level of education, income of the parent, and community participation contribute towards the performance of the institution. The study will benefit all stake holders in the education sector among them Ministry of Education officials, District education Board, School management Committee, parents, Students and teachers. This study was based on the assumption that schools have adequate resources, teachers are well trained and the teaching methodology that is used is the best possible. The findings of the study indicated that to a large extent the environment outside the school was very important for the good academic performance of public schools. Though parents' involvement was deemed important in academic performance most parents were not able to participate actively due to their level of education . They were therefore not able to carry out the responsibilities bestowed on them. Income was realized as a major contributor to academic performance due to the ability or inability of parents to provide for the school fees of their child, among other school requirements. It was also observed that despite the realization of the need to participate in the academics issues of public day schools, communities still have -a lot to do in order to achieve good performance in their schools. The study recommended that: a sensitization be done so that both parents and members of the community realize their indispensable role and contribution in academic performance, parents should seek to create a conducive home environment for their children to study, follow up should be made to ensure that funds in Kenya Education Sector Support Program reach the intended beneficiaries and government to cushion poor students from paying school fees. The researcher suggested further studies to be carried out on determinants of gender participation of parents in education. A further study was also suggested on the topic of gender participation in education.