

**FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES IN
SHORTHAND EXAMINATIONS IN TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN
NYERI SUB-COUNTY, KENYA.**

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Declaration

This Research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree or a diploma in any other university.

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This Research proposal has been submitted for examination purposes with my approval as university supervisor.

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Dedication

To my husband Meshack, my children Prudence and Mathew for their love, patience, encouragement and support as I prepared this report.

Acknowledgment

First I thank the Almighty God for giving me the strength and courage to complete the study. To him be the glory and honour.

I register my sincere gratitude to all people who rendered their help to me during the various stages in the preparation of this report.

I thank my supervisor, Mr. Caleb Mackatiani for his tireless effort in guiding me through the writing of this report. Special mention also goes to the administration of the institutions I visited for allowing me to carry out my research in their institutions. I also thank the teachers and students for availing time to participate in the study.

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Abstract

Shorthand has been described as any system of rapid writing using symbols or shortcuts that can be made quickly to represent letters of the alphabets, words or phrases. This study sought to find out the factors influencing performance of candidates in shorthand examinations in training institutions in Nyeri sub-county. After giving a background to the study research questions and corresponding research objectives were developed. Relevant literature was reviewed and a research methodology developed. Questionnaires were developed and administered to respondents, analysis was carried out and results presented in form of diagrams such as frequency and percentage tables, bar graphs and pie charts. It was concluded that the number of typewriters in shorthand training institutions in Nyeri sub-county was less than the number of students and therefore students were not given enough time for practice. It was also concluded that the teachers were adequate and qualified enough to teach shorthand. The study recommended that the ministry of Education harmonises the entry point for the shorthand courses and also ensure that institutions offering shorthand have adequate facilities. The study also recommended that the Kenya Institute of curriculum development puts in place a proper curriculum backed by adequate locally developed and selected international teaching-learning materials. Finally the study recommended that institutions offering shorthand ensure that there are adequate teaching- learning facilities for use by students and also ensure they have enough teachers who are well trained to handle the students.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
1.0 CHAPTER ONE: Introduction	1
1.1 Background Information	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Purpose of the Study	5
1.4 Objectives of the study.....	5
1.5 Research Questions	5
1.6 Significance of the Study	6
1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.8 Delimitations of the Study	6
1.9 Definition of significant terms	7
1.10 Organisation of the Study	7
2.0 CHAPTER TWO: Review of Literature	9
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Overview of factors influencing performance in shorthand Examinations .	9
2.3 Influence of the ratio of typewriters versus candidates in the performance of shorthand	11
2.4 Influence of the time allowed for practice and tuition in the performance of shorthand	12

2.5	Influence of teacher competency in the performance of shorthand	13
2.6	Summary of reviewed literature.....	14
2.7	Conceptual framework.....	15
3.0	CHAPTER THREE: Research Methodology	18
3.1	Introduction.....	18
3.2	The Research design	18
3.3	The target population	19
3.4	Sample size and sampling procedure.....	19
3.5	Research instruments	19
3.6	Validity of the Research instruments.....	20
3.7	Reliability of the Research instruments	20
3.8	Data collection procedure	21
3.9	Data analysis techniques.....	22
4.0	CHAPTER FOUR: Data Analysis.....	23
4.1	Introduction.....	23
4.2	Questionnaire return rate.....	23
4.3	Interview for students.....	23
4.3.1	Age bracket of students.....	23
4.3.2	Marital status of students	24
4.3.3	Academic qualification of students	25
4.3.4	Professional qualification of students	26
4.3.5	Level of shorthand currently being studied by students	27
4.3.6	Number of students at the beginning of current class	28
4.3.7	Number of students currently in class	29
4.3.8	Availability of typewriters	30
4.3.9	Number of theory and practical lessons per week	31
4.3.10	Time provided for practical lessons	31
4.3.11	Time provided to teach shorthand	32
4.3.12	Failure in KNEC shorthand examinations	33

4.3.13	Suggestions on methods of improving performance in KNEC shorthand examinations	34
4.4	Interview for Teachers	35
4.4.1	Demographic information of the teachers.....	35
4.4.2	Level and speed attained	36
4.4.3	Level currently teaching	37
4.4.4	Number of years of teaching.....	38
4.4.5	Availability of facilities for use in teaching shorthand.....	39
4.4.6	Steps to be taken to enhance passing of examinations	40
4.4.7	Problems faced regarding the facilities used to teach shorthand	40
5.0	CHAPTER FIVE: Summary, conclusions and recommendations.....	41
5.1	Introduction.....	41
5.2	Summary of the study	41
5.3	Conclusions of the study	43
5.4	Recommendations of the study	43
5.5	Suggestions for further study	44
References	45
Appendices	48
A.	Students' questionnaire	48
B.	Teachers' questionnaire	52
C.	List of training institutions in Nyeri sub-county	56
D.	Map of study area.....	57
E.	Research permit	58
F.	Letter of Research Authorization.....	59

LIST OF TABLES

	<i>Page number</i>
1.1 Performance in shorthand stage III from 2006 to 2010	4
4.1 Academic qualification of students.....	26
4.2 Professional qualification of students	26
4.3 Students who own personal typewriters or use institution typewriters.....	30
4.4 Theory and practical shorthand lessons students have per week	31
4.5 Time for practice during practical lessons	32
4.6 Do teachers have enough time to teach shorthand?	32
4.7 Reasons for failure in KNEC shorthand examinations	33
4.8 Age bracket of teachers.....	35
4.9 Marital status of teachers	35
4.10 Academic qualification of teachers.....	36
4.11 Level and speed of teachers	37
4.12 level currently teaching.....	37
4.13 Number of years of teaching.....	38
4.14 Steps to be taken to enhance passing of examinations	40

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Shorthand is a system of rapid handwriting employing symbols to represent words, phrases, and letters. It is a form, or instance of abbreviated or formulaic reference.

It has been described as any system of rapid writing using symbols or shortcuts that can be made quickly to represent letters of the alphabets, words or phrases. Various terms are used for shorthand. One of the terms used is *Brachygraphy* meaning short writing, from the Greek word meaning short. *Stenography* meaning narrow or small writing from the Greek word meaning narrow is another term used for Shorthand. *Tachygraphy* meaning swift writing from the Greek word meaning swift is also used for Shorthand.

Most historians date the beginnings of shorthand with the Greek historian Xenophon who used an ancient Greek system to write the memoirs of Socrates. It was in the Roman Empire; however that shorthand first became greatly used. Marcus Tullius Tiro, a learned freedman who was a member of Cicero's household invented the first Latin shorthand system which was devised in 63 BC. It lasted over a thousand years. Middle ages in Europe, however, shorthand became associated with witchcraft and magic, and disappeared.

Between the years 1118-70, Thomas Becker who was Bishop of Canterbury encouraged research into Tiro's shorthand. Influenced by Tiro's system, Timothy Bright designed an

English system in 1588 that consisted of straight lines, circles and half circles. With the publication of Timothy Bright's system of shorthand in 1588, the modern era of Shorthand began. In Europe Gabelsberger and Stolze in the early nineteenth century devised important systems but it has been the particular contributions of Isaac Pitman (1837) and John Robert Gregg (1888) which have been particularly significant for writing shorthand in English.

Both Pitman and Gregg used phonographic approach, words were written according to their sound instead of abbreviated spelling. With the publication of Isaac Pitman's shorthand in 1837, the greatest epoch in the history of English shorthand began. Pitman's shorthand may be said to be the first of the really scientific instruments of rapid writing that have been devised, and the inspiration of the wonderful development of the art that has taken place since its invention. Through its development by numerous adapters, Pitman shorthand is known, in one form or another in every country of the world. In 1840 Pitman brought out a new edition of his shorthand in which he introduced numerous changes and the system was called phonography. New editions were brought out in a rapid succession and the system was further developed and improved until 1857 when the tenth edition appeared with a reversal of the vowel scale. This innovation produced a revolt among the writers of the system. The change was generally accepted in England, but in America phonographers generally rejected it. This rejection was however solved by Benn Pitman, a brother of Isaac Pitman who brought the shorthand system to America in 1855. He adhered to the old vowel scale.

Kenya adapted the Pitman version of shorthand from Europe. Under the East Africa examinations council, Kenyans learnt pitman shorthand and were examined by people from Europe. However Kenya got qualified shorthand certificate holders who were able to teach shorthand in Kenya. Since its inception, The Kenya National examinations council (KNEC) has been offering shorthand examinations to Secretaries and aspiring secretaries in the country. These examinations are offered in July and November each year. Shorthand examinations are done at three stages namely stages I, II, III. One has to pass the lower stage before proceeding to the higher one.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Shorthand candidates have been performing very poorly in KNEC Examinations. Such performance indicates that this much needed skill for our secretaries is not being acquired as required. This poor performance has been noted for several years and the institutions offering the examinations seem not to be putting any effort towards improving the performance.

Below are performance statistics in shorthand stage III between 2006 and 2010.

Table 1.1: Performance in shorthand stage III from 2006 to 2010.

Year	Number of candidates	Number passing	Number failing
2006	1201	508 (42.30%)	693 (57.70%)
2007	1145	357 ((31.18%)	788 (68.82%)
2008	1103	400 (36.26%)	703 (63.74%)
2009	1182	574 (48.56%)	608 (51.44%)
2010	998	403 (40.38%)	595 (59.62%)

As shown in table I the percentage of candidates failing each year has been higher than the percentage of candidates passing. Studies undertaken in Shorthand training globally concentrate on the areas which students need to focus on in order to achieve great performance(Hong Kong Polytechnic, n.d.; Amuka et al., 2011), the training methods employed in Shorthand training in order to improve performance (Stonebridge Associated Colleges, n.d.; Rocha et al. 2010), influence of teacher competency(Coombs, 1970;Fayemi, 1991; Jekayinfa, 1993) and entry behavior of learners in practical lessons (Yadved and Singh, 1988; Adeyemi, n.d.).

Despite the poor performance in Shorthand by candidates in KNECexaminations, there is deficiency of academic investigation in this area in Kenya in general and in Nyeri sub-county in particular. This is the academic lacuna that this study hopes to fill.This study istherefore is a

modest attempt to examine the factors contributing to poor performance by candidates in KNEC shorthand examinations in colleges in Nyerisub-county.

1.3 The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to find out the factors influencing performance of candidates in shorthand examinations in training institutions in Nyerisub-county.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study will try to achieve the following objectives-:

1. To determine the ratio of students versus typewriters in training institutions presenting candidates for KNEC shorthand examinations in Nyerisub-county.
2. To establish whether the time candidates are allowed for practice and tuition is adequate before sitting KNEC shorthand examinations in training institutions in Nyerisub-county.
3. To determine teachers' competencies in teaching shorthand at the various stages in training institutions in Nyerisub-county.

1.5 Research questions

In order to achieve the objectives of the study the following research questions will be answered-:

1. How does the ratio of students versus typewriters influence candidates' performance in shorthand in institutions presenting candidates for KNEC Shorthand examinations in Nyerisub county?
2. Does time allowed for practice and tuition affect performance of candidates taking shorthand in institutions in Nyerisub county?

3. How do teacher competencies influence candidates' performance in training institutions in Nyeri sub-county?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is significant to the students who will be taking KNEC shorthand examinations in future. The students will be guided to improve their performance in shorthand and this will help them acquire the required speeds within a short time.

The study will also be of great significance to the Kenya national examinations council in that it will improve candidates' performance in KNEC shorthand examinations. Due to improved performance KNEC will be able to attract more candidates for these examinations. The institutions offering shorthand examinations will also be guided to look for ways to improve performance of the students taking shorthand examinations. The study will also help the policy makers specifically Kenya Institute of curriculum development (KICD) in evaluating the entry requirements for these examinations. Above all it will be of great importance to the Government of Kenya, since the training institutions will produce highly qualified secretaries for employment.

1.7 Limitations of the study

It is important to note that the study was carried out in a few selected institutions in Nyeri sub-county, due to financial and time constraints that may impede the rolling out of the research to all Institutions that offer KNEC shorthand examinations.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

This study was carried out in Nyeri town in the training institutions within Nyeri town.

1.9 Definition of significant terms

1. **Performance-** refers to accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness and speed.
2. **Poor performance-** refers to performing below expectations.
3. **Examinations council-**The national body responsible for overseeing national examinations in Kenya.
4. **Shorthand-**A system of rapid handwriting employing symbols to represent words, phrases, and letters.
5. **Examination -**A set of questions or exercises evaluating skills or knowledge.

1.10 Organisation of the study

The study will be divided into five chapters. Chapter one consists of introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study and definition of significant terms.

In chapter two, literature review is given. It includes introduction, importance of facilities in practical lessons, importance of exposure in practical lessons, teacher qualification in practical learning, entry behaviour of learners in practical lessons and a summary. A conceptual framework is also given.

Chapter three discusses the methodology used in data collection and incorporates introduction, research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures , research instruments, validity and reliability of the research instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis techniques.

Chapter four will deal with data analysis and the research findings made while chapter five gives a summary of the research findings as well as conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is important in that it will help us gain insight into various issues concerning factors influencing performance of candidates in shorthand examinations. This chapter discusses the influence of the ratio of typewriters versus Candidates in the performance of Shorthand and influence of time allowed for practice and tuition in the performance of Shorthand. The influence of teacher competency in the performance of Shorthand is also discussed.

2.2 Overview of factors influencing performance in Shorthand Examinations

Beryl Pratt in her book “What Is Pitman's Shorthand?” writing on the performance of pitman shorthand in the United Kingdom states that dictation cannot teach any shorthand theory, outline or phrase. According to her, for one to do well in shorthand, they must learn and concentrate on basic phrases. One must also increase reading practice from printed shorthand instruction books to consolidate knowledge of outlines. Beryl advises those learning shorthand to endeavor to write as fast as a person can speak, as this will assist in improving the transcription speed.

Sweet Henry in his book, A Manual of Current Shorthand, Orthographic and Phonetic, says that learners have to improve English and spelling while learning shorthand. He advises learners to sharpen their powers of concentration and alertness which are both

essential attributes for shorthand writing. He also advises learners to occasionally practice speed 20wpm faster than the examination for excellent results.

Over the years, KNEC shorthand Chief examiners have raised various issues concerning the performance of shorthand examinations. In their reports the chief examiners have indicated that a lot needs to be done at the institution level to help candidates do well in their shorthand examinations.

According to the July 2006 chief examiner's report, most candidates' scripts displayed lack of mastery of the subject. This shows that the candidates were not well prepared for the examination. In the same report, the chief examiner also noted that some candidates had not achieved the speed of the examination they had registered for. The chief examiner indicates that such candidates register for the examinations when they are not ready and consequently fail.

In the subsequent chief examiners' reports, incomplete transcriptions have been identified as contributing to poor performance in these examinations. Wrong transcriptions and wrong outlines are also a common feature in the candidates' work presented for marking. This according to the chief examiner indicates lack of enough reading and practice. It also shows that the candidates have not mastered the shorthand theory well enough to sit for the examination.

Anyone willing to learn shorthand must have some specific skills also known as the entry behavior. Entry behaviour are the necessary specific skills that students must have prior to beginning an instruction. It is not a list of things that students can do, but the specific skills that must have in order to begin a certain course (University of Wisconsin-Whitewater,

n.d.) These are the required grades or qualifications a student needs to gain entrance to a particular level of learning. Different levels have different entry requirements.

The entry behavior of learners affects the speed with which a teacher can introduce new material, the amount of reading of primary sources you can expect and the level of critical analysis you can demand. In practical subjects students need certain forms of literacy to enable them succeed. One of them is tool literacy, or the ability to understand and use the practical and conceptual tools relevant to education and the areas of work and professional life that the individual expects to inhabit.(White, 2009). One of the entry behavior expected of a shorthand student is masterly in the English language. The KNEC chief examiners indicate that lack of masterly in English is also displayed in the candidates' scripts during marking. The chief examiners indicate that masterly of English is a must for one to do well in shorthand since dictation passages are written and dictated using the English language.

2.3 The influence of the ratio of typewriters versus Candidates in the performance of Shorthand

There are two important aspects of practical classes. One of them is that 'doing' is an important part of the knowledge. A learner learns about the doing part in a practical class. In a practical class one has to apply the theories in a practical situation. During a practical class the learner plays an active role in doing the work and applying the concepts(HongKong Polytechnic, n.d.). This implies that each learner has to have the required facility so as to be able to apply the taught theories in a practical situation. Inadequate relevant laboratories and workshop leads to practical courses being done theoretically and this leads to poor performance in examinations(Amuka et al., 2011).

Shorthand candidates must perfect their speed and accuracy through practice. To be able to achieve this, candidates should have adequate time and typewriters for practice.

2.4 Influence of time allowed for practice and tuition in the performance of Shorthand

Practical exposure to students in the relevant areas and a sound theoretical background provides a modern industry oriented education. It aims at producing trained professionals who can successfully meet the demands of the various industries. A more practical and applied way of teaching can improve the relevance of work.

Practical skills are an essential part of competence in some disciplines. As well as developing these practical skills, good laboratory and practical work also helps students develop expertise in critical enquiry, problem solving, experimental design, data analysis and presentation, and a long list of important academic and professional abilities. Practical classes can also help students to develop the kinds of practical intelligence so highly valued by professionals in many fields, and by those who employ them. (Stonebridge Associated Colleges, n.d.)

Dominant theories in Education point to the ideal a well rounded education that can educate “the whole person” that education should develop moral, aesthetic, physical and practical capacities not just cognitive knowledge organized in academic principles. Practical subjects can have the additional justification that they allow students to learn more active doing than what is typical in academic subjects. Due to inadequate relevant apparatus, machines or equipment, some students encounter these gadgets in examination

rooms as they have never used them. This is a very unfortunate situation which leads to poor performance in examinations.

Practice is an efficient facilitator in the application of theory taught. Eunice and Fleith (2004) emphasize the importance of preparing students to think for themselves and solve new problems requiring the development of creative and independent thinking.(Rocha et al. 2010).

Emphasis in teaching practical subjects should be on students' active involvement in doing the practicals. Practical process skills such as careful observation, interpreting, predicting events, designing experiment, organizing information and reporting and generalization will be acquired. Good quality work promotes the engagement and interest of the learner as well as developing a range of skills, science knowledge and conceptual understanding(United Kingdom Parliament, September, 2011).

For shorthand candidates to perfect their speed and accuracy in transcription, they need enough exposure in practical lessons. The teachers also need to ensure that the candidates are well grounded in the theory aspects of the subject so that they can easily write shorthand outlines during dictation. Candidates are therefore required to increase reading practice from printed shorthand books and also practice in transcription to be able to pass their examinations.

2.5The influence of teacher competency in the performance of

Shorthand

Teachers represent a large proportion of the input of an educational system. Coombs (1970) observed that “the problem of teacher supply is not one of simple numbers. It is first and foremost a problem of quantity and of getting the right quality(Jekayinfa,

1993).Fayemi (1991) also observed that “it is a truism that teachers are the hubs of any educational system” that upon their number, their quality and devotion depend the success of any educational system”. Assuming that necessary facilities are adequately provided for, the environment is conducive to learning, the curriculum satisfies the needs of the students and the students themselves have interest in learning, learning cannot take place without the presence of the teacher.

The quality of education is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classrooms. It is a fact that the academic qualifications, knowledge of the subject matter, competence, and skills of teaching and the commitment of the teacher have effective impact on the teaching learning process.

Quality improvement in education depends upon proper training of teachers. The teachers cannot play any of the roles unless properly trained (Yadved and Singh, 1988)(Adeyemi, n.d.).

2.6 Summary of reviewed literature

In order for a student to succeed in practical lessons it is important that the relevant facilities are availed to them to enable them get adequate practice. Exposure in practical lessons is also very vital for the learners. It is not proper to expose learners to the relevant machines, apparatus or equipment during an examination as this amount to exposing them to very new conditions during an examination which leads to poor performance. Exposing students to machines, apparatus or equipment during an examination amounts to inadequate teaching since practical subjects have to be taught using the relevant apparatus to enable the learner develop the required skills. In this context shorthand learners must have adequate practice using typewriters to perfect their speed and

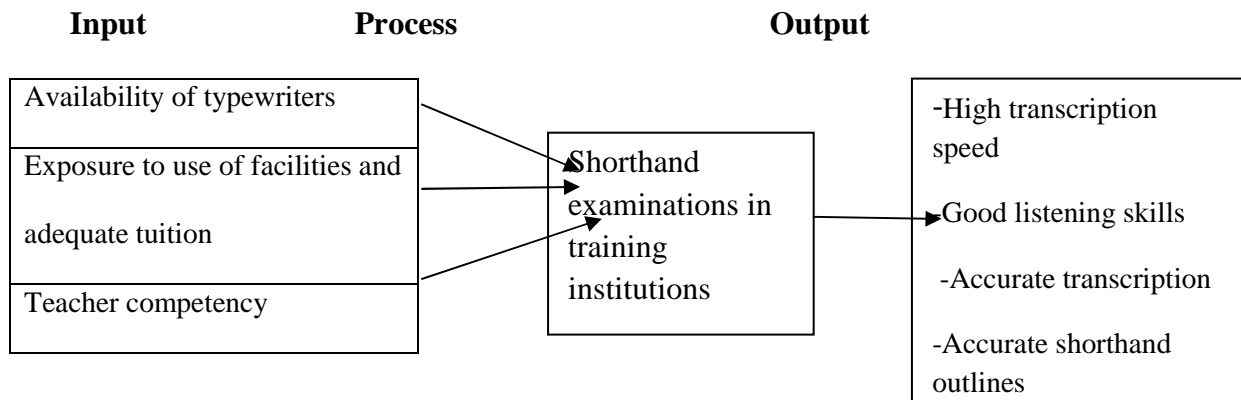
accuracy. The candidates should also be allowed enough time for practice and tuition to be able to do well in their examinations.

Teachers should also be competent so that they can impart the expected knowledge and skills to the learners. This implies that teachers should be properly trained in their areas of specialization. The required grades or qualifications a student needs to gain entrance to a particular level of learning should also be considered as this will affect the speed at which the learner is able to grasp what is being taught. The qualifications of the learner will also determine the success level of the learner in the practical lessons.

Studies reviewed above give a global perspective of the areas which students, teachers and Institutions need to focus on in order to achieve great performance. These include the training methods employed in Shorthand training in order to improve performance, influence of teacher competency and influence of time given for tuition and practice. While the reviewed studies concentrate on the period before examinations, this study examines performance of students in Shorthand in KNEC exams. Nevertheless, these standpoints form a basis upon which this study is pegged.

2.7 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on factors influencing performance of candidates in shorthand examinations. Various factors come together to contribute to either poor or good performance. In any learning situation and specifically a shorthand class, there are several variables which will ensure that students perform well in their examinations as illustrated in figure below.



From the figure above, availability of facilities is an important variable for a candidate to be able to do perform well in shorthand examinations. With availability of facilities, a student is able to apply the theories in a practical situation. The learner is able to play an active role in doing the work. Without the required facilities, the learner is not able to apply the theories taught in a practical situation which leads to practical courses being done theoretically and this leads to poor performance in examinations. In a shorthand class typewriters are the much needed facilities to help candidates practice what they have learnt and perfect their speed to enable them pass the examination. Practicing on typewrites help candidates improve speed and improve their transcriptions to accurate.

Exposure to use of facilities in the relevant areas provides a modern industry oriented education. Exposure to facilities ensures that learners gain the relevant skills in the classroom situation and this enables them to prepare well for the examinations. If a learner does not get enough exposure, they are not able to develop the practical skills needed for them to perform well in their examinations. Adequate tuition time is also paramount in helping candidates perfect their shorthand outlines. It also trains the candidates to listen carefully and this helps candidates when taking down the dictation.

Teacher competency is another important variable. The quality of education is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classrooms. For a learner to be successful, the teacher has to be competent, committed and has sound knowledge in the subject matter they are teaching. Unqualified teachers will not give quality instructions which can help students prepare well for their examinations and this will lead to poor performance in examinations. Shorthand teachers should be competent enough to be able to give quality tuition to candidates and also give proper guidance to enable candidates pass their examinations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into eight sub topics. It includes the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability of the research instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis techniques.

3.2 The Research Design

A Research Design is a framework or structural blueprint for conducting the study. It entails the procedures necessary for obtaining the required information and its purpose. It is meant to determine possible answers to the research questions and provide the information needed for information making.

Survey method which falls under descriptive design was used in this study. This method provides statistics on various issues (Ngechu 2006). Survey research is an attempt to collect data from the members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables. Survey research seeks to obtain information that describes existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes, behaviour or values (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

The survey method enabled me to use both close and open ended questions. The open ended questions gave me a variety of responses which were very crucial in answering the research questions. This was the most appropriate way of collecting data on factors influencing performance of candidates in shorthand examinations in institutions in Nyeri sub-county using a questionnaire.

3.3 The Target Population

The target population contains members of a group that a researcher is interested in studying. The target population for this study was all the shorthand students and teachers in ten colleges in Nyeri sub-county.

After getting the number of shorthand learners at each stage in the ten training institutions in Nyeri sub-county, it was established that there was an average of three (03) students taking shorthand stage III in each college making a total of thirty (30) students. In stage II each college had an average of six (06) students making a total of sixty (60) students. Stage I had an average of nine (09) students per training institution making a total of ninety (90) students. The total average population is therefore one hundred and eighty students in ten training institutions in Nyeri sub-county. Each of the training institutions had an average of one teacher teaching shorthand. The study targeted all the ten teachers since the number is very small.

3.4 Sample size and Sampling Procedure

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define a sample as a given number of members or cases selected from the accessible population. Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the large group from which they were selected. Systematic random sampling was used where 33% of the students were included in the sample making a total of 59 students. All the ten teachers were targeted to take part in the study because their number is small.

3.5 Research Instruments

The study used two questionnaires one for the teachers and one for the students. The teacher questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section one gathered information on

the bio data of the respondents. Section two of the questionnaire contained items aimed at gathering information to answer research questions which relate to teachers.

The student questionnaire was also be divided into two sections. Section one gathered information on the bio data of the respondents. Section two of the questionnaire was divided into parts each of which dealt with specific research questions.

3.6 Validity of the Research instruments

The developed instruments were subjected to the test of whether the sample of the items represented the content that the instruments sought to test. Pre-testing them in some institutions offering shorthand ensured the reliability and validity of the instruments. The pre-test was carried out in two colleges to assess language suitability of the instrument and their clarity. Content validity was used in this study. Content validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. Content validity implies the degree to which a test can stand by itself as an adequate measure of what it is supposed to measure. Each test item should be a sampling of knowledge, which the test purports to measure.

3.7 Reliability of the Research instruments

Reliability is the extent to which answers conform to measurements which are repeatedly made by different persons using the same measure of an attribute. The main purpose of determining reliability in this study was to make sure that the research instrument was consistent in producing expected results.

Reliability was determined by the split half technique. The pearsons correlation coefficient (r) between scores of the halves was used to check the reliability of the instruments using the formula-:

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

Where

$\sum x$ = sum of scores in x distribution

$\sum y$ = sum of scores in y distribution

$\sum x^2$ = sum of squared scores in x distribution

$\sum y^2$ =sum of squared scores in y distribution

$\sum xy$ = the sum of products of the paired x and y scores

N = the number of paired x and y scores

Spearman's brown prophesy formula ($R_e = 2r / 1 + r$) was then used to calculate the full reliability test.

After the pilot study, the items that were found unsuitable were discarded and others were modified to improve the instrument.

3.8 Data collection procedure

The researcher began the procedure by obtaining permission from the principals of the colleges targeted in this study, who had prior information through contact with the researcher. The researcher then chose to develop a questionnaire as the main research instrument for data collection. The questionnaire developed was simple and straightforward capturing the data towards answering the problem in question. The

questionnaire was also specific to the targeted respondent in this case, both teachers and students. The researcher was observant of ethical issues before administering questionnaires by ensuring confidentiality and/or complete anonymity where requested by the respondents. The researcher also made it clear that the study was for academic purposes only and information collected would not be used against the respondents. The researcher administered questionnaires to the respondents who filled them up. The researcher collected all the filled up questionnaires; there was a 100% return rate on the part of students and 80% from the teachers.

3.9 Data analysis techniques

The researcher ensured that data gathered was analysed accurately and honestly. The researcher also protected the data and kept it in a safe place. The data was analysed without any bias whatsoever.

Data gathered from the questionnaires had both close ended and open ended items. The data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitative data which was mainly from close ended items was coded and keyed into the computer using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20 to calculate frequencies and percentages.

Qualitative data mainly came from the open ended items. The items were coded, keyed into the computer and analysed using the SPSS. The data was then summarized and used to write the findings according to the objectives.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents and discusses the data analysis based on the objectives of the study.

4.2 Questionnaire return rate

The sample population for students was 59. All the students were female and they all filled the questionnaire and returned them. This was 100% questionnaire return rate. The teachers were also given questionnaires. Eight of them were given questionnaires and returned them. This was 80% return rate which was deemed acceptable.

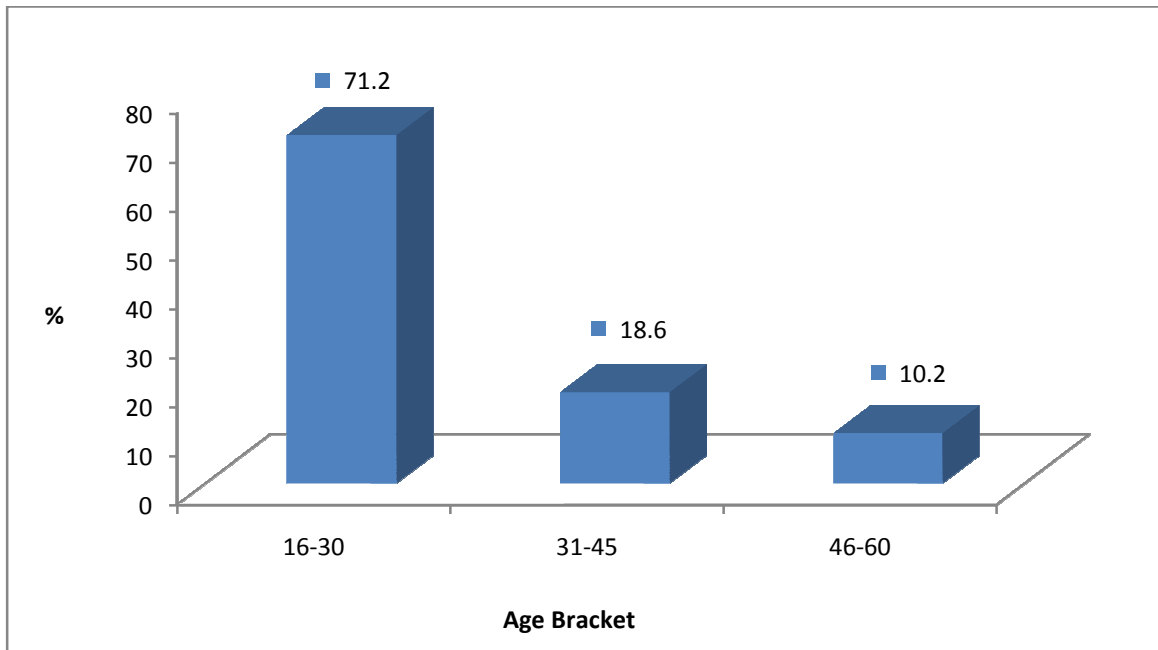
4.3 Interview for students

59 students filled and returned their questionnaires.

4.3.1 Age Bracket of Students

The study sort to find out the age brackets of the students. The results are presented in figure 1.

Figure 1:Age bracket of students

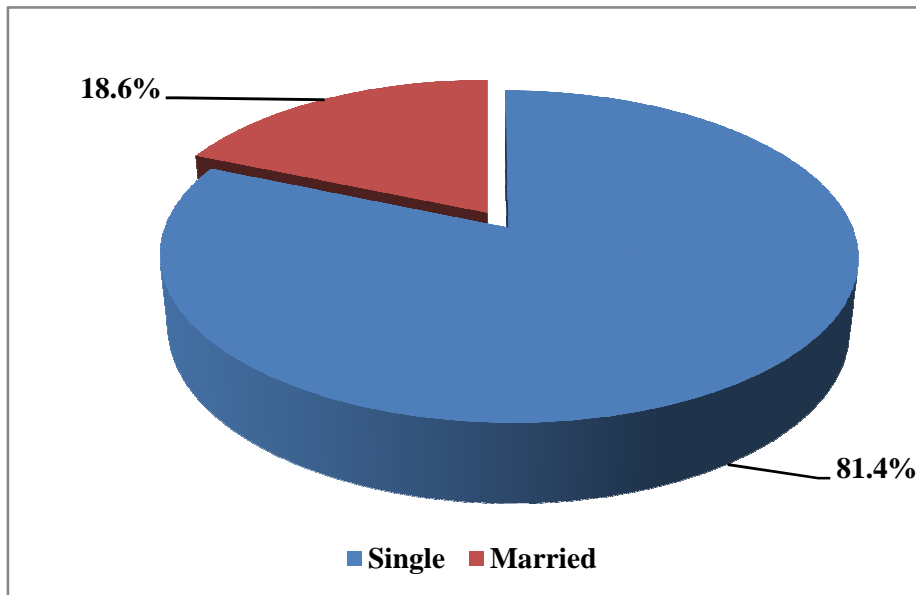


The results show that 71.2% of the respondents were aged between 16-30 years of age while 18.6% were aged between 31-45 years of age. Only 10.2% of the respondents were aged between 46-60 years. This suggests that short hand is undertaken by young people below age 45.

4.3.2 Marital Status of Students

The study sort to find out the marital status of the respondents. The results are presented in figure 2.

Figure 2: Marital Status of Students



The results indicate that 81.4% of the respondents were not married while 18.6% were married. This suggests that shorthand is a highly involving profession which requires high concentration hence the high number of unmarried respondents.

4.3.3 Academic Qualification of Students

The study sort to find the academic qualifications of the respondents. The results are presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Academic Qualification of Students

Academic Qualification		Frequency	Percent
	Secondary	<i>34</i>	<i>57.6</i>
	University	<i>19</i>	<i>32.2</i>
	Others	<i>6</i>	<i>10.2</i>
	Total	<i>59</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The results indicate that 57.6% of the respondents had attained secondary education, while 32.2% of the respondents had University education. Only 10.2% had other academic qualifications. This illustrates that majority of the shorthand students have attained secondary education.

4.3.4 Professional Qualification of Students

The study sort out to find that the professional qualification of the students. The results are presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Professional Qualification of Students

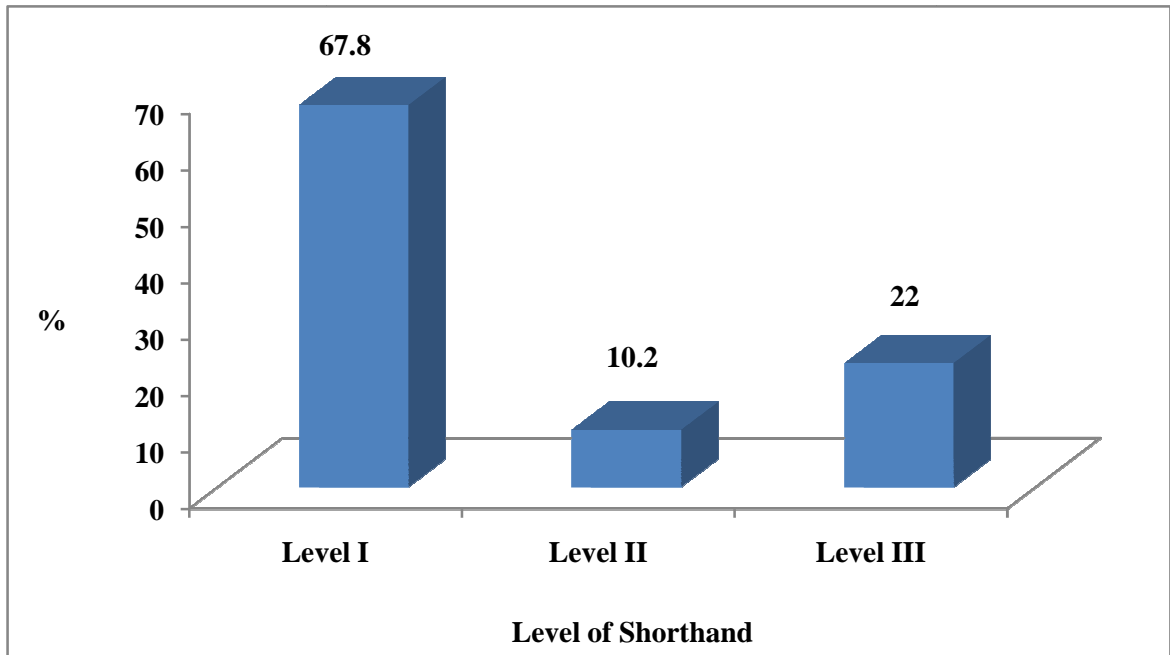
Professional Qualification		Frequency	Percent
	Secretary	<i>19</i>	<i>32.2</i>
	Diploma	<i>8</i>	<i>13.6</i>
	Entrepreneur	<i>3</i>	<i>5.1</i>
	No Qualifications	<i>29</i>	<i>49.2</i>
Total		<i>59</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The results show that 49.2% of the respondents had no qualifications while 32.2% had secretarial training. Another 13.6% had a diploma and 5.1% had entrepreneurship courses. This suggests that most students enter the shorthand training without secretarial training.

4.3.5 Level of Shorthand currently being Studied by Students

The respondents were asked to indicate the level of shorthand they were in then. The results are shown in figure 3.

Figure 3: Level of Shorthand currently being Studied by Students

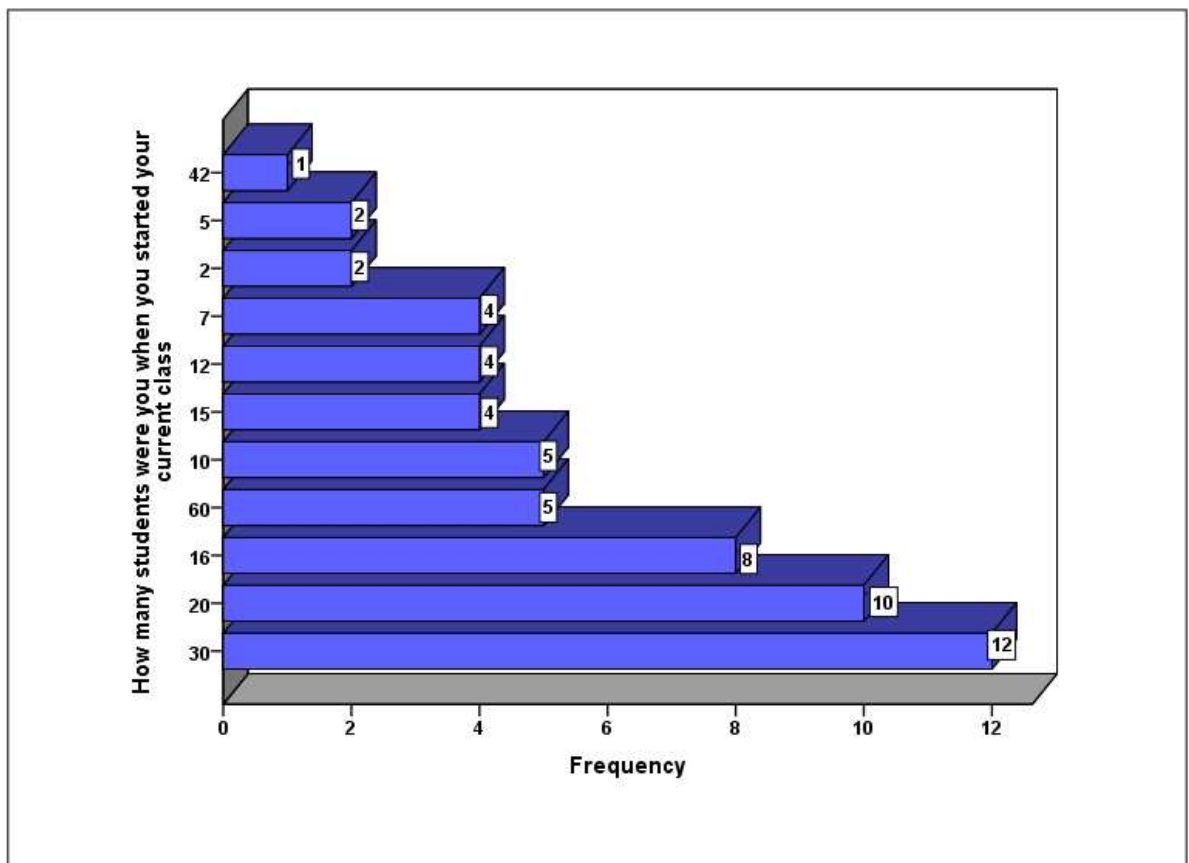


The results show that 67.8% of the respondents were in level one of shorthand while 22% said that they were in level three. Only 10.2% were in level two of shorthand. This suggests that many students find shorthand challenging hence the drop in involvement for higher levels.

4.3.6 Number of Students at the beginning of the Current Class

The respondents were to indicate their number when they joined the shorthand class. The results are shown in figure 4.

Figure 4: Number of Students at the beginning of current Class



The results indicate that the enrolment is usually high at first but confirmed to reduce as the students continue the course together.

4.3.7 Number of Students Currently In Class

The respondents were asked to indicate their numbers in class currently. The results are presented in figure 5.

Figure 5: Number of Students Currently In Class

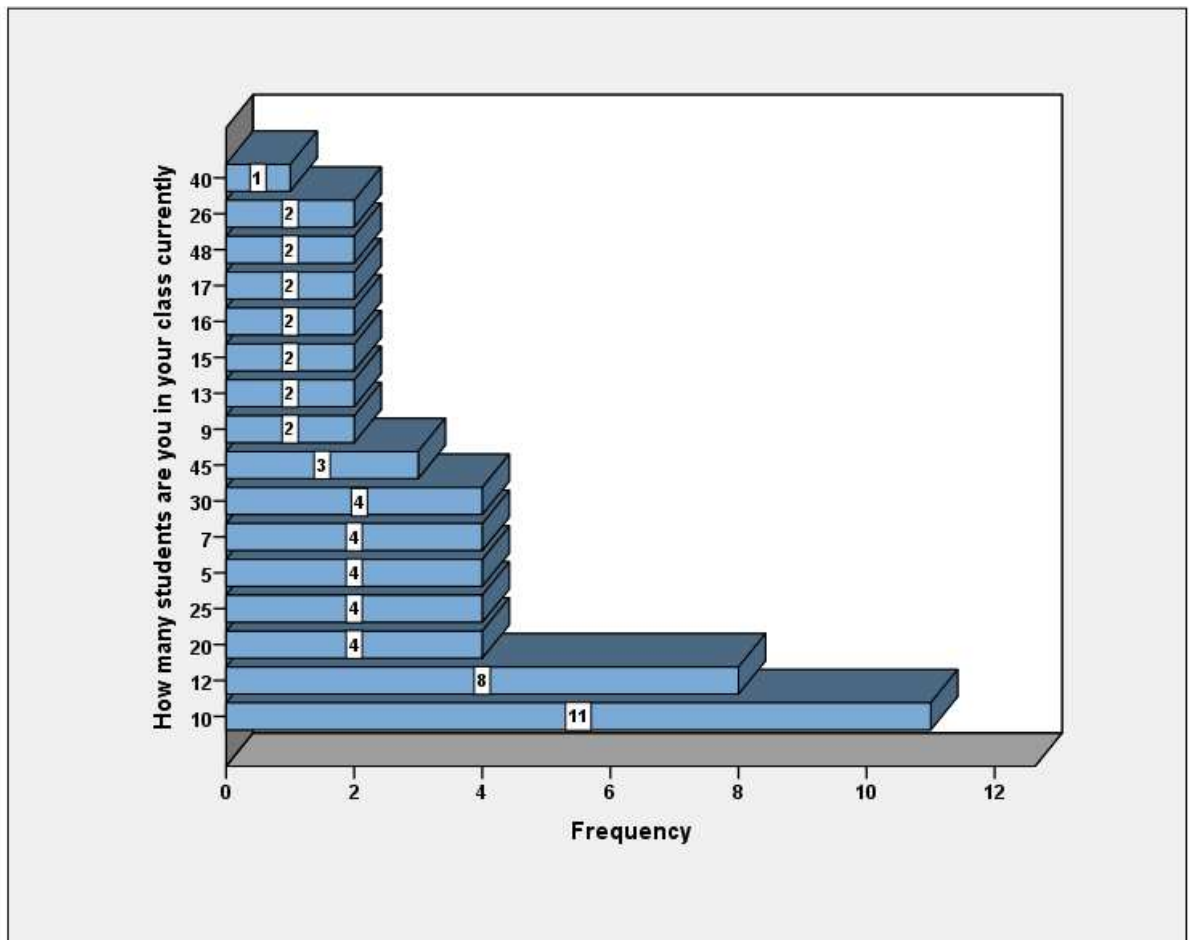


Figure 5 shows the number of student currently enrolled.

This figure indicates drop in number of candidates compared to those who were enrolled in the shorthand classes. This suggests that the course becomes tougher as the students move to the higher level.

4.3.8 Availability of typewriters

Table 4.3: Students Who Own Personal Typewriter Or Use The Institution Typewriters

Own Personal Typewriter Or Institutional Typewriters	Frequency	Percent
Own personal typewriter	<i>12</i>	<i>20.3</i>
Institutional typewriter	<i>45</i>	<i>76.3</i>
Have both	<i>2</i>	<i>3.4</i>
Total	<i>59</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The table shows that 76.3% use institutional typewriter compared to 20.3% who have their own typewriters. Only 3.4% out of 59 student owned personal typewriter as well as used institution typewriters.

The students' said some of the problems they face in the facilities used to teach shorthand in the school were classes being crowded, no enough furniture, unavailability of textbooks, old typewriters and computers, lack of enough teaching staff and stationary was very expensive.

4.3.9 Number of theory and practical lessons per week

The respondents were asked to indicate the number of theory and practical lessons they have per week. The responses are presented in Table 4.4

Table 4.4 : Theory and Practical shorthand lessons Students Have Per Week

Shorthand Lessons Students Have Per Week	Theory Lessons		Practical Lessons	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	16	27.1	6	10.2
1	10	16.9	8	13.6
2	10	16.9	20	33.9
3	15	25.4	14	23.7
4	4	6.8	4	6.8
5	4	6.8	5	8.5
7	-	-	2	3.4
Total	59	100.0	59	100.0

The results show that 59.32% of the students had an average of 1-3 theory lessons per week while 71.19% had an average of the same number of lessons. This indicates that most students attending theory lessons also attend practical lessons.

4.3.10 Time provided for practical lessons

The respondents were asked if they get enough time for practice. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 4.5: Time for practice during practical lessons

Enough?		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	45	76.3
	No	14	23.7
	Total	59	100.0

The table shows that 76.3% of the respondents had enough time for practice during practical lessons while the minority, 23.7% did not have enough time for practice. This indicates that time for practice is not a big challenge to most of the shorthand students.

4.3.11 Time provided to teach shorthand

The respondents were asked if their teacher had enough time to teach them shorthand.

The responses are presented in table 4.6:

Table 4.6: Do teachers have enough time to teach shorthand

Response		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	46	78.0
	No	13	22.0
	Total	59	100.0

The table shows that 78.0% of the respondents reported that their teachers had enough time to teach shorthand while 22.0% reported that their teachers did not have enough time to teach. This suggest that enough time is provided to teach shorthand.

4.3.12 Failure in KNEC shorthand examination

Table 4.7: Reasons for failure in KNEC shorthand examinations

		No	%
Long Passages	Yes	23	39.0
	No	36	61.0
	Total	59	100.0
Not Enough Practice Time	Yes	21	35.6
	No	38	64.4
	Total	59	100.0
High Marks	Yes	18	30.5
	No	41	69.5
	Total	59	100.0

The table shows that 39% of the respondents said that they failed KNEC exams because of long passages while 35.6 %said that they failed because of lack of enough time to practice. Another 30.5% indicated that failure was due to the high marks required by KNEC.

4.3.13 Suggestions on methods of improving performance in shorthand KNEC examinations.

Respondents were asked to suggest ways of improving performance in KNEC examination. It was suggested that the examination pass mark be lowered. Other respondents suggested that the dictation speed be lowered. It was also suggested that more time for examinations be provided and that shorter passages for examination be given to students. Finally many of the respondents indicated that more books for shorthand be availed in the market.

4.4 Interview for teachers

There were 8 teachers interviewed out of the expected 10, which was a return rate of 80%. All of them were female.

4.4.1 Demographic information of the teachers

Table 4.8: Age bracket of Teachers

Age Bracket		No.	%
	31-45 years	6	75.0
	46-60 years	2	25.0
	Total	8	100.0

Table 4.9: Marital status of Teachers

Marital Status		No.	%
	Single	4	50.0
	Married	4	50.0
	Total	8	100.0

Table 4.10: Academic qualification of Teachers

Academic Qualification		No.	%
	University	6	75.0
	Diploma	2	25.0
	Total	8	100.0

All the eight teachers who participated in the study were female. This indicates that shorthand is a profession exclusively undertaken by women. It was also found that 75% of the respondents (teachers) were aged between 31-45 years while 25% were aged between 46-60 years of age. The results as shown in the table show that 50% of the teachers were not married indicating that teaching shorthand is very involving hence half the number of teachers were not married. Those who had university education were 75% while those who had diploma were 25%. This suggests that shorthand is taught by highly qualified individuals.

4.4.2 Level and Speed attained

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of speed which is determinant of their employment as teacher. The results are provided in the table below.

Table 4.11: Level and Speed attained

Speed	Frequency	Percent
100 wpm	2	25.0
110 wpm	2	25.0
120 wpm	2	25.0
130 wpm	2	25.0
Total	8	100.0

The results indicate that 2 teachers each (25%) had attained speeds of 100wpm, 110wpm, 120wpm and 130wpm. This suggests that shorthand is a highly professional field with qualified teachers.

4.4.3 Level Currently Teaching

The respondents were asked to indicate their area of specialization with reference to teaching shorthand. The results are presented in the table below:

Table 4.12: Level Currently Teaching

	Frequency	Percent
Theory	2	25.0
High Speed	2	25.0
Theory and Speed	4	50.0
Total	8	100.0

The results indicate that 50% of the teachers teach theory and speed while 25% teach theory only. Another 25% of the teachers teach high speed. This suggests that there is a balance in the area of teaching in short hand colleges which can lead to good performance of candidates.

4.4.4 Number of Years of Teaching

The study sought to find out the experience of teachers in teaching. The results are presented in the table below:

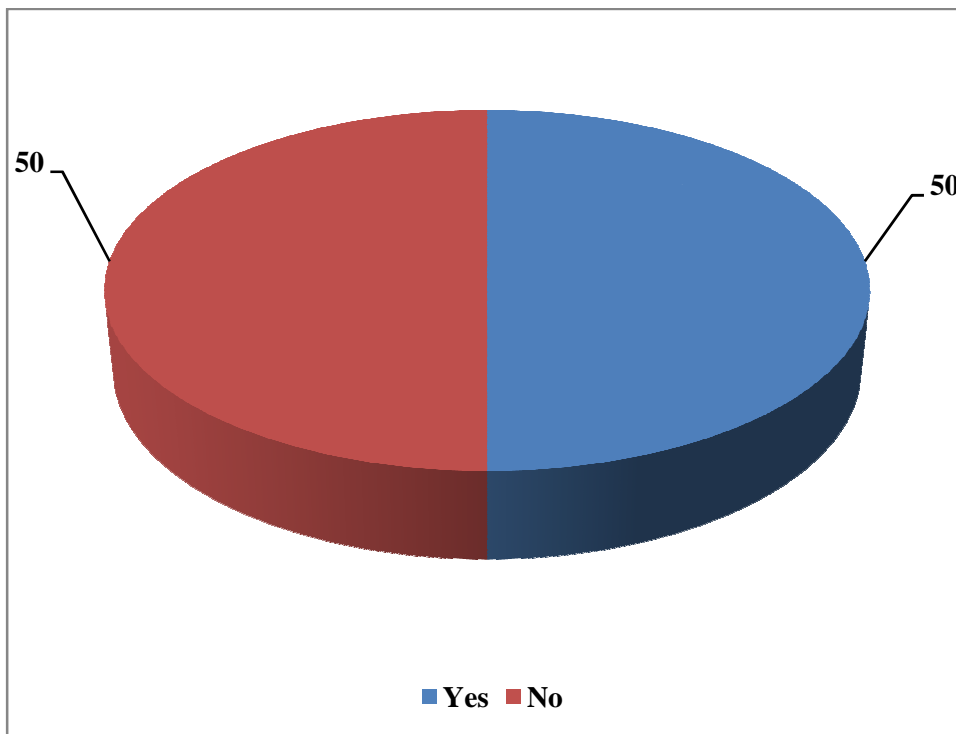
Table 4.13: No of Years of Teaching

No. of years in teaching	Frequency	Percent
8	3	37.5
10	1	12.5
20	2	25.0
13	1	12.5
15	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

The table shows that 37.5% of the teachers had 8 years experience while 25% of the respondents had 20 years experience. Another 12.5% each had 10, 13 and 15 years experience. This is an indication of a highly experienced staff teaching in these colleges.

4.4.5 Availability of facilities for use in teaching shorthand

The respondents were asked whether the institutions had enough facilities for teaching shorthand. The results are presented in figure 6:



The results show 50.00% of the teachers said that institutions had enough facilities to enable students pass KNEC shorthand examinations while the remaining half indicated that institutions did not have enough facilities to enable students pass KNEC shorthand examinations. This is an indication that there were institutions which do not have adequate facilities for learning of shorthand.

4.4.6 Steps to be taken to enhance passing of examination

The respondents were asked to suggest the steps to be taken in order to enhance good results. The results are presented in table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Steps to be taken to enhance passing of examinations

	No.	%
DVD/CD players, radio tapes are never provided for students to practice after lessons	2	25.0
The facilities are enough but more are still needed for the library	6	75.0
Total	8	100.0

Majority of the teachers 75.00% indicated that the facilities were enough but more facilities were still needed for the library.

4.4.7 Problems faced regarding the facilities used to teach shorthand in institutions

Respondents were asked to state the problems faced regarding facilities. According to them there were no enough books published in Kenya and that students were also not allowed to keep the few shorthand books which were available long enough for personal practice.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the research findings as well as conclusions and recommendations.

5.2 Summary of the study

Shorthand has been described as any system of rapid writing using symbols or shortcuts that can be made quickly to represent letters of the alphabets, words or phrases. Various terms are used for shorthand. One of the terms used is *Brachygraphy* meaning short writing, from the Greek word meaning short. *Stenography* meaning narrow or small writing from the Greek word meaning narrow is another term used for Shorthand. *Tachygraphy* meaning swift writing from the Greek word meaning swift is also used for Shorthand.

This study sought to find out the factors influencing performance of candidates in shorthand examinations in colleges in Nyerisub-county. After giving a background to the study research questions and corresponding research objectives were developed. Relevant literature was reviewed and a research methodology developed. Questionnaires were developed and administered to respondents, analysis was carried out and results presented in form of diagrams such as frequency and percentage tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

5.2.1 To determine the ratio of students versus typewriters in training institutions presenting candidates for KNEC shorthand examinations in Nyeri sub-county.

This study found out that the typewriters provided for in the institutions of training were not enough. There is a need to avail each student with a typewriter to enhance practice. The study also found out that some students resulted in buying their personal typewriters to supplement this deficiency.

5.2.2 To establish whether the time candidates are allowed for practice and tuition is adequate before sitting KNEC shorthand examinations in training institutions in Nyeri sub-county.

The study found out that 76.3% of the students had enough time for practice during practical lessons while a minority 23.7% did not. The study also found out that most students received enough tuition time accorded to them by their teachers. Though there is enough time for tuition, practice is compromised by unavailability of enough typewriters.

5.2.3 To determine teachers' competencies in teaching shorthand at the various stages in training institutions in Nyeri sub-county.

The study found out that shorthand is taught by highly qualified individuals. The teachers who had university education were 75% while those who had diploma were 25%. The teachers also had attained high speeds. The results indicate that 2 teachers each (25%) had attained speeds of 100wpm, 110wpm, 120wpm and 130wpm. The study also found that shorthand teachers had a lot of experience; 37.5% of the teachers had 8 years while 25% of the respondents had 20 years of experience.

5.3 Conclusions of the study

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were made:

1. The number of typewriters in shorthand colleges in Nyerisub-county was less than the number of students. It was also concluded that some colleges had more students than the number of typewriter hence forcing students to use their own typewriters.
2. It was concluded that students were not given enough time to practice shorthand since typewriters were few and not enough for all, of them. Also concluded was that students were given enough time for tuition.
3. The study concluded that the teachers teaching shorthand were enough and qualified to teach the students in the selected colleges.
4. It was concluded that most students joined shorthand colleges with the lowest O-level grades (D-) hence high dropout rates. It was also found that most students had other qualifications before entering shorthand colleges in Nyerisub-county

5.4 Recommendations of the study

The following are recommendations from the study-:

- 1.The ministry of Education should harmonize the entry points for the short hand courses and also ensure that institutions offering shorthand courses have adequate facilities.
- 2.The Kenya Institute of curriculum development should ensure that there is a proper curriculum in place backed by adequate teaching-learning materials developed by local experts and selected international shorthand teaching materials.
3. Institutions offering shorthand courses should ensure the there are adequate teaching-

learning facilities for use by students taking courses in their respective learning institutions. They should also ensure that they have enough teachers who are fully trained to handle students undertaking shorthand courses.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

1. The same study should be carried out in another sub-county to find out whether similar results will be found.
2. In addition a study should be carried out on the teacher-training facilities for shorthand teachers.

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STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 1

Kindly answer the following questions as honestly as possible. Put a tick (✓) where appropriate.

1. Indicate your sex

A	Male	
B	Female	

2. Indicate your age bracket

A	0-15 yrs	
B	15-30 yrs	
C	30-45 yrs	
D	46-60 yrs	
E	Over 60 yrs	

3. Marital status

A	Married	
B	Single	
C	Divorced	

4. What are your academic qualifications?

A	Primary	
B	Secondary	
C	Degree	

5. What are your professional qualifications ?

6. Level and speed of shorthand currently studying.

SECTION 2

7. How many were you when you started your current class?

8. How many students are you in your class currently?

9. Do you have your own personal typewriter or do you use the institution typewriters?

A	Own personal typewriter	
B	Institution typewriter	

10. If you use the institution typewriters, do you have one to yourself or do you share with other students? Please explain.

11. What problems do you face regarding the facilities used to teach shorthand in the school?

SECTION 3

12. How many shorthand lessons do you have per week?

13. Out of the number of lessons you have indicated in question 1, how many are theory lessons and how many are practical lessons?

Theory lessons	
Practical lessons	

14. Do you get enough time to practice during the practical lessons?

Yes	
No	

If no, please explain your answer.

15. Do your teachers have enough time to teach you shorthand?

Yes	
No	

If no, please explain your answer.

16. In your opinion, what makes it hard to pass KNEC shorthand examination?

17. Give suggestions on what can be done to improve performance of shorthand in KNEC Examinations?

THANK YOU

APPENDIX B

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 1

Kindly answer the following questions as honestly as possible. Put a tick (✓) where appropriate.

1. Indicate your sex

A	Male	
B	Female	

2. Indicate your age bracket

A	20-30 yrs	
B	30-45 yrs	
C	46-60 yrs	
D	Over 60 yrs	

3. Marital status

A	Married	
B	Single	
C	Divorced	

4. What are your academic qualifications?

A	Primary	
B	Secondary	
C	Degree	

5. What is your highest qualification in shorthand?

6. Level of shorthand currently teaching.

SECTION 2

7. For how long have you taught shorthand?

8. Do your students use the institution typewriters or do they have their own personal ones? Please explain..

9. Does your institution have enough facilities to enable students pass KNEC shorthand examinations?

A	yes	
B	No	

Please explain your answer.

10. What problems do you face regarding the facilities used to teach shorthand in the school?

11. How many shorthand lessons do you have per week in a particular class?

12. Out of the number of lessons you have given in question 1, how many are theory lessons and how many are practical lessons per class?

Theory lessons	
Practical lessons	

13. Do students get enough time to practice during the practical lessons?

Yes	
No	

If no, please explain your answer.

14. Do you have enough time to teach shorthand?

Yes	
No	

If no, please explain your answer.

15. What is the entry requirement for the lowest speed in shorthand I?

16. Is the entry requirement given in question 2 too high or too low?

A	Too high	
B	Too low	

Please explain your answer.

17. In your opinion, what makes it hard for candidatesto pass KNEC shorthand examination?

18. Give suggestions on what can be done to improve performance of shorthand in KNEC Examinations?

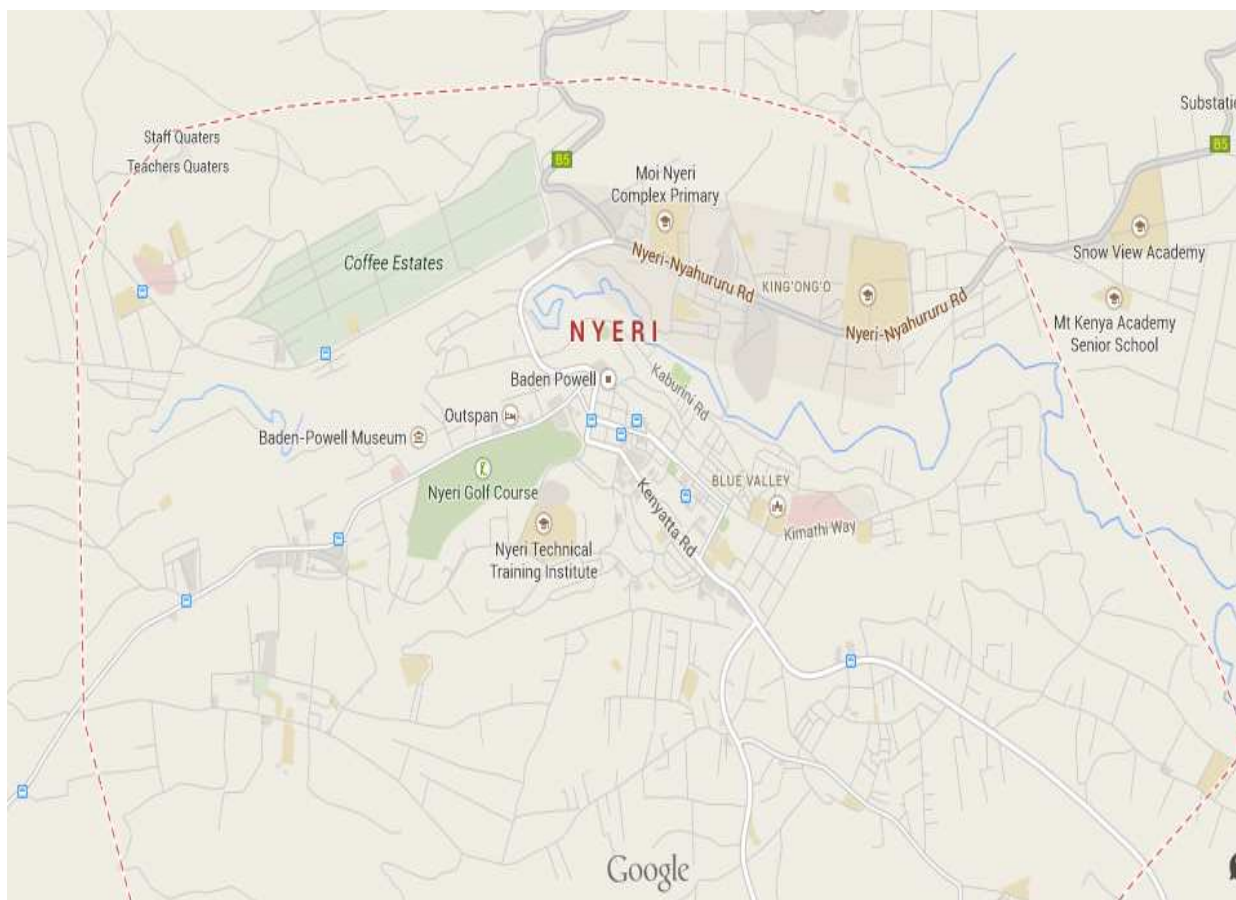
THANK YOU

LIST OF TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN NYERI SUB-COUNTY

S/NO	NAME OF INSTITUTION
1	LITTLE FLOWER INSTITUTE
2	CONSOLATA CATHEDRAL INSTITUTE
3	ST THERESA'S COMMERCIAL COLLEGE
4	NYERI TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTE
5	INSIGHT COMMERCIAL COLLEGE
6	TURINE COMMERCIAL COLLEGE
7	PINNACLE COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
8	FUTURECOM INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
9	EXCEL COMMERCIAL INSTITUTE
10	SKYNET BUSINESS COLLEGE

Source, KNEC (2012)

MAP OF NYERI TOWN



COPY OF RESEARCH PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

MS. JANE NYATHIRI MARIBIE

of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 73598-200

Nairobi, has been permitted to conduct

research in Nyeri County

on the topic: FACTORS INFLUENCING

PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES IN

SHORTHAND EXAMINATIONS IN

TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN NYERI

SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

for the period ending:

31st July, 2014

Applicant's Signature

Permit No. : NACOSTI/P/14/1947/2596

Date Of Issue : 10th July, 2014

Fee Received : Ksh 100

National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

Secretary





**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

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Ref. No. _____ Date: **10th July, 2014**

NACOSTI/P/14/1947/2596

Jane Nyathiin Mariche
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Factors influencing performance of candidates in short-hand examinations in training institutions in Nyeri Sub County, Kenya,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Nyeri County for a period ending **31st July, 2014**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nyeri County** 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 County Commissioner
The County Director of Education
Nyeri County.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO 9001:2008 Certified