

**FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN
KCSE IN MATHIRA EAST DISTRICT**

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L40/79171/12

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FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION,
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DECLARATION

This research is my original work and has not been presented for a degree/ diploma at any other university.

Sign_____

Date_____

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university supervisor

Sign_____

Date_____

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my daughter, she changed the course of my life.

God bless.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank all my friends for time and moral support. For all the countless hours spent together as I did my research, God reward you.

Also to the teachers and fellow scholars for your great insight.

And lastly to all who have made this possible through financial and technical support, thanks.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SPSS	Statistical Package For Social Studies
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization

ABSTRACT

Education is a basic need in the life of a human being. This is because it helps an individual to think and to become socialized in the society. To find out if an individual has learnt, his or her performance is studied. The academic performance of students in mathira east has remained poor for many years. The purpose of this research study was to investigate the determinants that cause poor performance in mathira east district, where majority of students are enrolled in public secondary schools.

The objective of this study was to establish whether factors like the student home environment enhance performance. The study was also seek to establish the extent to which each of this factors influence student performance. The research was carried out in mathira east district, Nyeri county. Nine sample secondary schools were satisfied for the study. The study involved nine headteachers, thirty four form four teachers and 394 students.

The researcher was guided by the following questions (research questions). A cross-sectional descriptive survey design method was adopted by the researcher. Primary data was collected by the use of a questionnaire and observation schedule.

The validity and reliability of the research instruments were enhanced by peer review and pearson correlation coefficient. A reliability correlation coefficient of at least 0.8 was considered relevant for the study. The raw data that was coded and analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS), in both qualitative and quantitative statistic techniques. Data presentation would involve use of frequencies, totals, percentages and tables.

The study found out that among the variables under study, inadequate teaching/ learning resources, poor students home background, poor administrative practices and poor teacher commitment were the main causes of poor student performance in Mathira East District.

The researcher therefore recommends that schools should be allocated more funds in order to access better teaching/ learning resources, teachers should get better working conditions, headteachers should be held more accountable and finally that parents must be sensitized on the need to play a better role in their children's education.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the problem

Education is one of the main keys to economic development and improvement in human welfare. It plays the role of equipping citizens with the appropriate skills to enhance the realization of self-reliance and work actively towards the maintenance and development of the society. The Kenya government policy to provide more education opportunities has to be seen within the developments in the wider international context. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948 stated that everyone has a right to education. The OAU 1961 declaration committed all the member countries to provision of universal education to all its citizens by 1980. The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 emphasized renewed commitment to education for all, with emphasis on access, enhancing environment for learning and broadening means and scope for basic education (Abagi, 1997).

On the whole, the Kenyan Government and individual households have attached a higher importance to passing national examinations. The parents and students themselves see education as a tool to equip them (students) with a good certificate for advancement. The aim therefore has been to work hard to pass national examinations and thereafter secure a well-paying job (op. cit p165).

However as the number of school goers increased and the rate of unemployment grew, there was a struggle for a few available jobs and places in higher levels of learning. This therefore means that only those with higher marks or grades in national examinations manage to get placements (Elimu Yetu Coalition, 2004).

Examination systems have become the strongest justification when nations seek to change education. Examinations have a powerful influence on schooling arrangement, and have changed from being exclusively directed at regulating credentials for entry into higher education to controlling access to a variety of further education, jobs placements and training opportunities (UNESCO.2006).

There is a very strong emphasis on national examinations in kenya. Headteachers of schools that do not perform well are demoted schools and parents engage in other practices such as giving extra tuition to students and grilling of candidates. Others cheat in examinations and forced competition of pupils all aimed at passing examinations (Daily Nation, December 29, 2006).

When examination results are released it is a moment of either great joy or frustration to students, parents or teachers. This is because they have become a major contest. They are no longer a tool for feedback, but a sieve for selecting those who would move from one grade to the next (Ibid pg. 2).

However despite the importance placed on education in Kenya, Mathira East District has had dismal performance in KCSE in the past years. A look at four years (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013) shows that in 2010 mean score was 28.0942 in 2011 was 27.5183, in 2012 was 29.5773 and 2013 was 27.1090. in terms of positions within Nyeri county.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In Mathira East District for the past 4 years, there has been varied performance trends in KCSE in public secondary schools. For example out of the total number enrolled in the years 2010 to 2013, only 31%, 30.4%, 31.9% and 29% managed to get placed in public universities as a result of poor performance experienced (MOE-Mathira East Education Office). The remaining percentage considers either repeating or terminating their formal education.

Table 1.1 : Meanscore and transition rates

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Mean score	28.0942	27.5183	29.5773	27.1090
% admitted to public schools	31%	30.4%	31.9%	29%
Ranking position	220	190	186	216

Amid the falling standards and dismal performance, parents as well as educational experts are now worried that education would soon remain a preserve of the rich, whose children go to private secondary schools endowed with rich resources. These students

also work to private universities and thereafter to prosperous careers, leaving their counterparts in public schools to drop out (Kenya Times, December 29,2006).

With no other training opportunities available, those pupils who have failed to get placement in public universities because of their poor performance and with no skills to participate in meaningful development, soon join ranks of the unemployed. This is wastage of resources to pupils, parents and the government, and hence the need for research to establish and document the factors influencing KCSE performance in public secondary schools.

1.3 Purpose of the study

To assess the determinants of poor student performance at KCSE in Mathira East District public schools. The researcher intends to establish the relationship between the determinants and performance of students in KCSE, some of which are external to the school, while others operate within the school.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study was the following:-

- i. Investigate how the socio-economic background of the students influence their performance in KCSE.
- ii. Determine the effects of teachers' attitude to teaching on students performance at KCSE.
- iii. Establish the relationship between school facilities, equipment and material availability and student performance at KCSE.

- iv. Assess how the headteachers style of management affects student performance in KCSE.
- v. Find out how teacher academic qualifications affect student performance in KCSE.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What is the effect of the students' socio-economic background on their performance in KCSE?
- ii. What is the effect of the teachers' attitude to teaching on student performance in KCSE?
- iii. What effect does the adequacy and availability of key facilities, equipment and materials provided for learning have on KCSE performance?
- iv. What effect does the headteachers' style of management have on student performance in KCSE?
- v. What is the effect of headteacher academic qualifications on the performance of their students in KCSE?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings would be significant to;

- i. The Ministry of education as a source of information on eliminating the determinants that cause poor performance.
- ii. Teachers who would use the findings to improve service delivery.

- iii. Parents who would use the findings to improve their roles in the learning process.
- iv. Headteachers who would use the findings to improve and equip the school with the relevant teaching learning resources.

1.7 Assumptions of the study

The study was based on several assumptions:

- That all the schools in the study have equal learning time and resources.
- That all the students sampled are tested on standardized examinations.
- That all the students were mentally fit to fill in the questionnaire.
- That the ranking of district using arithmetic mean is an acceptable and accurate method of determining district performance.

1.8 Limitation of the study

The study used KCSE results, which are a form of summation evaluation which measures the outcome of the learning process rather than the process itself. The factors that may have affected performance such as availability of teaching/ learning materials not presented at the time of study. Furthermore, the researcher was not able to manipulate the factors accurately to determine the extent to which they affect performance.

Learning environments also differ and depending on their quality, impact positively or negatively on the final examination results. Performance could also be affected by the students' cognitive, social and psychological factors like their emotional state, culture or entry behaviour which the researcher would have no control over.

The other limitation was that the researcher dealt with students who are currently in school and not the ones whose results were considered. The researcher to assumed that the characteristics of the current students are similar to those of the previous students.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

The study confined itself to Mathira East District in Nyeri county, due to time and financial constraints. The respondents were teachers and students who are directly concerned with the teaching/ learning process. Therefore the information they gave was more accurate and authoritative . Only public secondary schools were targeted because majority of students are enrolled therein. The teachers and students to be included in the sample were in those session.

1.10 Theoretical framework

This study is guided by the structural functionalist theory. The proponent of this theory is Emile Durkheim (1951). In it the scientific components of a social system are seen to be playing specific and contemporary roles to produce a desired outcome.

The outcome in this case is good KCSE performance.

The first component of the social structure in the students' home background where the parents expected to make the home atmosphere conducive in order for proper learning to take place. This includes not bugging children with excessive domestic chores, providing basic facilities such as lighting, textbooks, furniture like tables and chairs, assisting and supervising homework as well as emotional and psychological comfort. They should

provide food, shelter, clothing, school fees and moral support. Absence of these can affect the child's academic performance.

The student's attitude to education forms the second component of the social structure. They too must play their role in enhancing their chances at high academic achievement. Hard work and private studies are vital to good performance. Consulting with teachers and fellow students in case of difficulty is also important.

The last component of the social structure is the school. Both physical and non-physical facilities must be adequate. This enables the school to effectively prepare its students for good examination results. The quality of the school management and the effective utilization of these facilities is also crucial.

The roles played by the three components are complementary in that if one fails, the whole system would most likely not produce the desired outcome. Conflict is anticipated where one component fails. The purpose of this framework is to show the interrelationships that exist between the student's home environments, the student and the school in regards to their academic achievement.

By examining structural components, the ability of each makes a positive contribution towards good academic performance. The study distinguished how the components complement each other and therefore determine the extent to which each actually hinders or facilitates the achievement of good performance.

1.11 Conceptual framework

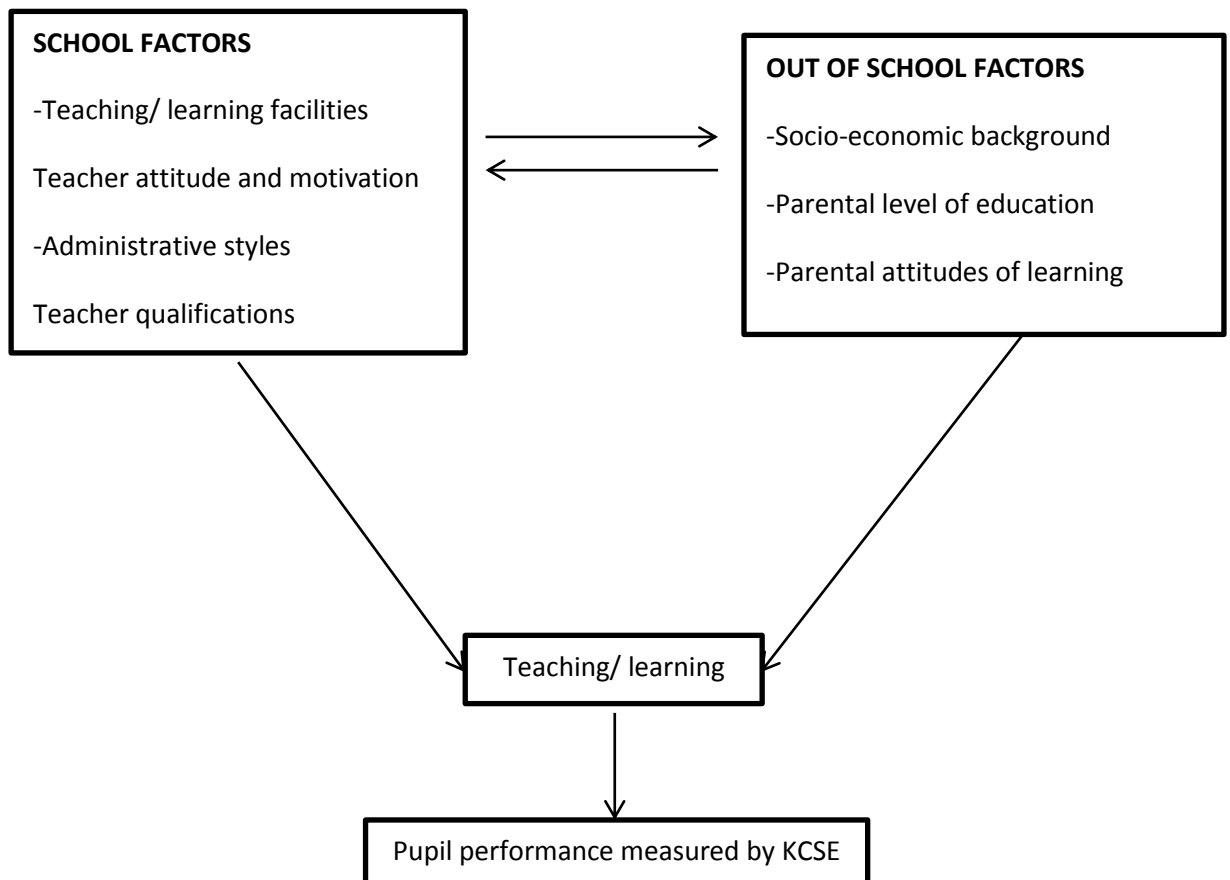


Fig 1.1 Conceptual framework

In this summary, we see all the factors under consideration for optimum students' performance in KCSE. They are divided into school based factors and home based factors.

School based factors include the provision of adequate teaching and learning resources like textbooks and laboratories; good administrative and leadership practices mainly focusing on the school head teacher, teachers who are highly motivated in their jobs because these provide positive attitudes to students.

The out of school or home based factors include the students socio-economic background which determines if the student is provided with resources like school fees, books or remedial lessons; parental level of education which is important because learned parents place more value on their children's education and encourage them to work hard in school; and parental attitude to learning because where there is positive attitude means pupils are provided with adequate time to do revision and assignments while at home.

1.12 Operational definition of terms

Content: area of knowledge to be covered or the subject matter to be learnt.

Ability: Differentiated powers of the mind

Determinants: Factors that cause event to happen

Headteacher: Person charged with school administration and supervision

National examination: Common exams sat by all students in the country

Public secondary school: Refers to secondary schools owned by the government

Learning resources: These are what may be used (materials) by the student or teacher jointly and severally, usually informally, to facilitate learning. Examples include information, techniques and equipment.

Learning activities: The activities which the students should carry out in order to learn content information presented to them by the teacher.

Motivation: The process of arousing, sustaining and regulating behavior

Masterly:	Showing great skill and understanding
Attitudes:	An evaluation containing cognitive, emotional and behavioral components of an idea, event, object or person.
Performance:	The act of doing or the ability to do something.
Student achievement:	Performance of learners. A measure of success performing specific tasks in a subject or area of study after the teaching/ learning experience.
Teaching load:	A scheduled number of lessons a particular teacher handles in a week.
Instructional methods:	Approaches, styles or strategies adopted in teaching.
Method:	Orderly system or management.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a summary of relevant related literature used to conceptualize the research theme. The literature review would give an overview of the concepts and what scholars, researchers and educational administrators have found out and said about the cause of poor performance in public schools. The literature review was based on student's home environments, the teaching/ learning resources, teachers' attitude, teacher's qualifications and the school leadership.

2.2 Teacher qualifications

The teacher plays many roles including classroom teaching, curriculum development, examinational processing, pedagogical material, preparation and evaluation, modelling student behavior and acting as a role model to society.

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

Research carried out among selected districts in Kenya on candidate performance in the certificate of primary education in 1983 showed that districts with higher untrained teacher to trained teacher ratios generally had lower performance averages.

Table 2.1 The effect of untrained teacher (UT) element on performance of candidates on CPE for selected districts in Kenya (1983)

District	number of teachers			mean score			ranks	
	Untrained (UT)	Trained (TT)	UT: TT	Eng	Math	Gen. Paper	Total	
Muranga	1011	5098	1:5.04	54.06	59.61	55.90	169.5	1
Kirinyaga	456	2257	1:4.9	52.97	58.03	51.17	167.17	2
Nyandarua	549	1864	1:3.4	52.51	56.40	55.19	164.10	3
Kilifi	1275	1305	1:1.02	49.19	48.93	47.96	147.93	4
South nyanza	4064	4060	1:1.99	46.92	47.61	49.32	143.86	5
Kitui	2130	2416	1:1.34	46.16	45.32	46.32	138.51	6

Source: Mutea (2002)

The 2002 Central Province director of education said there was a significant improvement in performance in 2001 KCSE examination because of intensive in-service training of head teachers, their deputies and teachers in the administration and management of schools (EAST African Standard, 2nd March 2002 pg 14).

Opondo et al (1992) noted that the quality of a head teacher affects performance. He says that the way the head teacher structures and administers the school relates with the school subsystems, teachers and students significantly affect students' performance.

Harris and Bennet (2001) say that if teachers have insufficient subject knowledge, or inadequate level of training, the quality of output was impaired.

A management handbook by the Teachers, Service commission (1997) shows that school improvement and effectiveness can be realized through contributes made by various inputs, but effective teaching by far plays the biggest role.

Table 2.2 Percentage contribution of instructional inputs to good results

Input	percentage contribution to good results
Effective teaching	75
Adequate textbooks, tuition equipment	15
Good physical facilities, others like	
Supervision and community support	1

Source: Mutea (2002)

Makau and Somerset (1980) noted that academic and professional qualification of teachers was crucial factors in influencing performance. The differences in teaching affect performance and those schools with the best qualified teachers tended to be most successful (Makanu, 1986).

Agyemang (1993) reported that a teacher who does not have both academic and professional qualifications would have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of his/ her subject. Poor teacher training has resulted in the production of poorly skilled teachers. A stereotyped method of teaching gives learners little or no opportunity to develop insight and initiative. A dull and negative teacher demonstrates his learners and therefore causes poor performances. Lateness and absenteeism of teachers reduces

instructional time and results in the syllabus not being completed. Completion of the syllabus is important because it provides the foundation for the next class to be built upon. If this happens affect from class to class, the student's encounter materials they do not have the foundation to study, and the cumulative effect was poor performance in KCSE.

2.3 School administration and management

While reviewing research on effective schooling, Duigan (1986) identified school leadership as a crucial factor in the success of a school. He listed the activities that contribute to effective leadership by the head teacher to include setting an atmosphere of order, creating a climate of high expectation for staff and students, encouraging collegial and collaborative relationships and building commitments among the students and staff to the school goals.

Kathuri (1986) affirms that there is a strong relationship existing between the quality of administration in school and the schools performance. Muchira (1988), in a study of university effectiveness in primary teacher colleges in Kenya found that the principals' leadership style was significantly related to the principal level of evaluation.

Campbell et al (1986) say that the principal is responsible for a suitable learning and teaching environment. He/she also needs to put in place deliberate interventions to meet the specific and special needs of students' performance in KCSE.

Raju (1983) states that the role of the head teacher involves directing, controlling and managing all matters pertaining to educational enhancement in the school. Coombs (1968) observes that differing organizational and administrative structure of public secondary schools influence performance. School facilities, qualified teachers and a good organizational and administrative structure should all work together to achieve good performance.

Eshiwani (1983) noted that school administrator have an impact on pupils performance. He further argues that those schools with a consistent high performance tend to have sound and efficient administrators. He adds that the leadership style adopted by the head teacher would either have a positive or negative impact on the teachers who are the main channels of imparting knowledge to students.

UNESCO (2005) agrees that good school administration and management practices has direct impact on teaching and learning which in turn leads to the attainment of good results.

Griffins (1996) argues that school administrators have a direct bearing on the achievement of the learners because they have a major role coordinating, directing and facilitating the process.

Lawrence (1993) points out that the school characteristics in general and teachers' characteristics in particular make a significant contribution in the academic performance of students.

School management ensures proper organization and coordination of the various sub-units and activities within the school for the achievement of its overall aims and goals. It has been observed that most problems, including poor performance of students in examinations do not require as many financial solutions as prudent managerial solutions. School leadership has a crucial factor in the success of a school; effective leadership by school principals including an atmosphere of order, creating a climate of high expectation for staff and students, encouraging collegial and collaborative relationships and building commitment among students and staff to the school goals. The Kenya times of 10th June 2003 cited the poor performance in central Kenya as due to the failure by the head teachers to supervise curriculum implementation, poor financial management and poor maintenance. However highly qualified teacher may be, they will not achieve high academic performance from their students if they work under unfavorable conditions. According to Estey, Amedale and Edjah (2004) academic performance was better in private schools because of more effective supervision. Sisungu (1988) found out that supervision led to improvement in scheming and lesson planning. It leads to teachers being keener on their work, and mistakes corrected as soon as they are detected.

2.4 Teaching /learning materials

Instructional materials are an integral component of the learning process. Chogo, in his study in Vihiga found out that poor performance is associated with non-availability of the necessary facilities and equipment's among other factors.

Kizito (1983) argues that the lack of equipment leads to the neglect of the role of experiments and practical work in the teaching of science subjects, and yet these methods are crucial to the understanding of these subjects.

UNESCO (1962) observed in a study that “science is somewhat different from the other subjects in that it is not effectively learnt by children unless they experiment. KNEC (1984) revealed that exam candidates are at a considerable disadvantage if the teachers have not adopted a practical based approach to learning.

Baraza (1985) in his study in Bungoma indicates that “lack of adequate and relevant textbooks affects performance. He argues that lack of both class and reference books for teachers and students make a subject like chemistry difficult to teach or learn. H.J. Keishing (1971) found out that science laboratory facilities were significantly related to performance.

Eshwani (1988) indicates that most schools which perform poorly spend less money on the purchase of teaching resources without which teaching is made difficult. Lack of physical facilities is a problem within the school which most headteachers are faced with mainly due to financial constraints.

Kivuva (2004) shows that learning is both passive and boring if the learning resources are not incorporated effectively, organized and exploited in the learning process. Court et al (1974) identified the distribution of resources such as textbooks as a major factor that

accounts for scholastic differences among schools. Sharing of textbooks among students results to inadequate study time and therefore poor results.

A study done by Heynemann (1980) and Nderitu (1998) showed that a school library has a significant effect on the learner's academic performance. Orodho (1996) asserts that textbooks as a teaching resource individualizes instruction and gives students a chance to refer to areas he/she did not understand during the lesson.

Angora (2003) assures us that those schools with adequate textbooks, apparatus and other instructional material perform better. Andesine (1994) says that the quality of education the learner receives bears a direct correlation with the availability of learning materials. Mwamwenda and Mwamwenda (1987) quoted in Ayoo (2002) found out in a study carried out in Botswana that the availability of school physical facilities had a direct effect on student performance.

Eshwani (1983) in a study carried out in Western Kenya. Noted that facilities such as textbooks, visual aids and libraries were vital to performance in national examinations.

A study by Heinemann (1984) in the Philippines found that there was a reasonable impact of textbook availability and the achievement of pupils. By reducing the ratio of pupils per book per subject from an average of 10:1 to 2:1, they had found out that there was a marked improvement.

A study carried out by the population council and the Government of Kenya in 1997 on the material resources in selected schools revealed that single sex schools were better equipped than mixed schools. The shortage of the necessary material inputs in mixed schools was therefore identified as one of the factors affecting performance, (population council and Government of Kenya).

Other studies have shown a significant relationship between teaching resources and other related inputs and students' achievement. The availability of textbooks and other reading materials have a positive effect on school effectiveness (Psachoropoulos and Woodhall, 1985). It is only with such materials that can learn to work independently or in groups (republic of Kenya, 2001).

Elimu yetu coalition says that there is a positive correlation between availability of textbooks and three other variables: pupils' achievement, enriching of teaching (learning), and the professional development of poorly trained teachers in developing countries.

Hofstein, Maoz and Rispon agree that students who have had at least some exposure to extra curricula activities had a more positive attitude towards learning and therefore performed better. These include watching educational films, reading scientific books and journals etc found the subject more enjoyable and attractive and believed more strongly in the "value of science", for example (Hofstein, Maoz and Rishpon, 1990).

It has also been proved that students who come from simulative environments, with laboratory equipment's or those that are taught with rich instructional aids, pictures and allowed to demonstrate using their peripheral nerves, like eyes, hands and the sense of taste performed better than those trained under theoretical and canopy of abstraction. Thus, teaching and learning should be done under organized, planned and fortified environments with learning aids to stimulate the students' sense of conception, perception and concentration to facilitate systematic understanding and acquisition of knowledge in them.

Textbooks enable the students to follow the teachers' sequence of presentation and aid in understanding the lessons. Lack of textbooks make the pupils not participate in class exercise and assignments given by the teacher.

Due to inadequate teaching and learning materials the teachers are less committed to their work. Pupils fail to enjoy or understand the lessons and their desire to learn or study is reduced resulting to low academic performance. Facilities and resources are important for learning and they add a positive climate which is conducive for learning to take place.

The absence of electricity in many schools hampers the use of audio-visual equipment for learning. Many schools also lack adequate laboratories. Learners therefore go school trying to master the theory of science and never have the opportunity to perform any experiment or practical investigations. Without proper and adequate supply of curriculum support materials, even the most able teacher would find it very difficult to maintain the high standards of performance.

2.5 Student home environment

The relationship between attitude and performance is reciprocal, Alken (1970). Attitudes affect achievements, and achievements affect attitude. Neale (1969), Alken (1979) and Ongoma (1987) refer to this relationship as a dynamic interaction between feelings and behavior.

Johnson and Rising (1974) state that attitude determines what students learn. What we learn in school, and how well we learn it are closely related to our attitudes about school and the subject taught there.

According to Marland (1983) there exists a large body of literature that examines children's belief about their performance in matters of intellectual achievement. Reyes (1984) shows that there is a consistent positive correlation between self-concept and academic achievement. Some support has been found for linking achievement as a casual factor in the development of self-concept.

Studies done underline the importance of encouragement on the child's performance.

Learners, whose parents encourage them to do well in school show interest in their schooling and are actively involved, therefore perform better. Learners who are encouraged to excel tend to be academically motivated and are likely to work harder in order to please their parents. Parents who know the importance of education and have a positive attitude towards learning would always press their children to complete their homework and even assist them where possible.

Cullen (1969) stressed that those children who come from homes whose parents are interested in education offer help and even stress the value of deferred rather than immediate gratification.

Douglass (1964) carried out a study of over 5000 children in Wales and found that parental encouragement is significantly related to the Children School achievement.

Kapila (1976) in a study, found a positive association between parental participation in their childrens' academic work and academic performance.

Bali et al (1984) found out that the educational background of the family is related to the academic performance of the child. Amahala (1975) found out that the students from educated parents performed at a significantly higher level than those students from uneducated parents.

Kivuva (2004) asserts that parents should visit their children school in order to monitor their progress. Pidgeon (1970) observed that parental encouragement led to improved performance. He compared boarding and day school students in Britain and found out that the day student performed better because of the day to day support and encouragement given by parents at home. This also explains the higher achievements of students who are assisted to solve difficult homework problems at home.

Indongole (1987) asserts that socio-economic background of students influence performance because well-off parents ensure that students have access to the relevant learning resources and a stimulating learning environment. Early in life, children of

labourers accept their situation and come to see education as having little relevance to their life chances. To them, the idea that education is an emancipator is cloudy and learning becomes something which must be done because someone says so. The daily nation on Monday 4, 2009 observed that a lack of interest by learners has made public schools sink deeper in terms of performance. Most of them sit in class making noise while some just absent themselves from school for no apparent reason. Studies done have concluded that the causes of poor academic performance among secondary school students are their intellectual ability, poor study habits, achievement motivation, lack of vocational goals, low self-concept, low socio-economic status of the family, poor family structure and anxiety. The consequences of these include indiscipline and low levels of educational standards. Lateness and absenteeism among individual students contributes to poor performance, arising from loss of content and knowledge. Assignments would not be properly and correctly done. In rural schools, students are fond of using mother tongue among them. This leads to a loss of English vocabulary needed in lessons. Some students develop a negative attitude towards their teachers and hence a lack of interest in their lessons.

The Daily Nation of May 4, 2009 also noted that children in public schools in rural areas especially do not have a positive exposure to education in the sense of role models. Those they mostly admired were successful businessmen in whose life education played little role. Some were even school dropouts. Such individual boasted of how they never went to school, yet owned lots of livestock, houses and were therefore very wealthy.

Indiscipline is a huge problem among students because it leads to lateness, absenteeism, French leaves and even rudeness to teachers. Okumbe (2001) observed that parents are convinced that schools are meeting their objectives by maintaining discipline. The daily nation of June 22, 2004 reported that some of the major causes of poor performance in secondary schools were drug abuse, poverty and HIV/AIDS.

The distance covered by pupils from their home to school on a daily basis influences their retention rates and attendance. Such students have low concentration in school because of having unsettled minds. Studies have shown that a child with poor self-concept perceives their own poor self-evaluation. Insecure children avoid participation and prefer to be left alone, in case they make mistakes. Such behavior does not encourage learning or improve performance. The Kenya Economic Survey (2008) noted that the rise of poverty levels in Kenya is one of the major factors that discourage parents from investing in their children's education. Most parents cannot provide the student's basic need, and this causes the student to have an unstable mind which is not conducive for study. Abagil (1997) notes that the frustrations these students go through affect their performance.

To meet their economic needs, poor families are sometimes forced to withdraw their children from school to work on the farms in order to supplement the family the family income. Such parents do not see the value of education especially where the future job opportunities were few.

Unemployment, poverty and overcrowded homes offer little or no motivation to achieve any mental stimulation. Such homes are devoid of proper study areas. Working parents leave early and return too tired to check on their children's academic progress. Most cannot tell when their children are not attending school.

According to Shittu (2004) poor parental care with gross deprivation of social and economic needs of a child usually leads to poor performance. Lack of parental guidance demonstrates pupils learning. Reglin in Du Toit 1994:50 believes that it is impossible to improve the performance of demotivated, underachieving children from low socio-economic status if the family members showed no interest on academic progress.

Insecurity, family disharmony, inability of parents to offer the child continual affective and spiritual security and economic pressure are all factors that affect the child's attitude towards learning. In an emotionally stable home environment, the child is more open to the parents feeling and values and therefore tends to learn better. The learning environment that is free of barriers, obstacles or distractions such as noise smoke pollution and dark enhances the student's concentration, and his or her perceptual and conceptual focus. The home has a great influence on the students' psychological, emotional, social and economic state. Ajila and Olutola (2007), the state of the home is important because the parents are the first agents of socialization. Ichado (1998) also concludes that the home environment can greatly affect the Childs' performance at school.

Mba (2003) lamented that poverty of the parents has made education and learning impossible for children especially those with special needs. He adds that poverty causes other problems such as frustration, poor performance and other psychological ones. Ipaye (1996) also states the effects of poverty on the Nigerian child. Poverty in Nigeria he says is caused by economic crunch, mal-administration, corruption and unemployment. Parents have not therefore been able to cater for the educational needs of their children, forcing some students to abandon school to seek for work. The Daily Nation of January 8, 2009 observed the problems caused by lack of water. Children are locked out of school while others were forced to seek casual employment to buy food. Charity Ngilu water and irrigation minister, noted that children were usually allocated household chores like fetching water which took up to 6 hours a day, time they would have spent doing school assignments or revision.

Kemp (1995) found a strong relationship between the socio- economic status of the parents and child's school attainments. Research carried out of the 1960's and 70's in western countries concluded that the social, cultural, economic and political structures are the main determinants of school outcome, Coleman et al (1966) Bowers and Griffins (1976). These findings among British children agree with American studies by Jenks (1972) and emphasize the influence of the home as an important contributor to variation in academic achievement. "The higher the social economic group of the parents, the more they talked with the head teachers and class teacher about how their children were doing in school". Plow den et al, 1967. This suggests that the more educated and well paid

parents showed greater concern for the academic progress of their children than parents with low education and poorly paying jobs.

2.6 Attitude aspects of teaching

Attitude has been proposed to account for variations in the level of achievement in learning (Spolky, 1968). He states that there are a number of people whose attitudes for one another can be significant; the learner; the teacher; the learner's peers, the parents. Each relationship might well be shown to be a factor controlling the learner's motivation. Spolky (1968) says that teacher expectations have been shown to make a great deal of difference to the students. He gives the example of an experiment of which the teachers of a retarded children attempted to present a much greater number of new words to students they were erroneously informed to be fast learners, and those students learnt more words than the students randomly labelled as "slow".

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

Insensitive teachers label low academic achievers as failure rather than provide them with academic support to accelerate their efforts towards good academic performance. Negative labels often stick on the students and they internalize them and make them disillusioned about education and hence affect any chances they may have to excel.

Teachers who bring in a positive attitude steer high possibilities of academic achievement among the students. Teachers in public schools do not complete the syllabus on time and spare some for revision. They have developed a don't care attitude. Most of them conduct their private business during school hours. A tour by former education minister prof. Sam Ongeru and his permanent secretary Prof. Karege Mutahi in Kisii District noted that some teachers employ four leavers to teach on their behalf as they go about their private business (Daily Nation May 4, 2009). The same article also noted that teachers in private schools are highly motivated because of receiving monetary and other material rewards in case of high performance in their subjects.

Lockheed, M. et al (1991) found that lack of motivation and professional commitment produces poor attendance and unprofessional attitudes towards students which in turn affects their performance.

Aggarwal (1994) says that "the best learning takes place when the teacher is successful in arousing the interest of the students. The guidance of teacher is only a matter of giving the right kind of stimulus to help them learn"

Okumbe (1999) observes that educational managers should deliberately improve the teachers working condition so as to motivate them to learn new and different work procedures and experience performance growth through further training. Kelly (1987) warned that "teachers should not assume that methods which were successful with girls but should be sensitive to sex differences in interpersonal relationships".

Rist (1970) confirms that teachers' assessment and perception of student's potential abilities to succeed in schoolwork turned out to perform as expected by their teachers. Some teachers create a negative learning environment by neglecting, abusing, mishandling and even sending out of class those students they deem as difficult to teach. Even in answering of questions, the teacher ignores slow learners and concentrates only on the fast learners.

A number of studies show that teachers simply do not believe in girls intellectual abilities. A presentation to a UNESCO seminar in Bangkok described a sample of Korean teachers who revealed their overwhelming belief that boys are naturally superior to girls in Maths and science. Teachers' attitudes, actions and words can discourage girls and hamper their progress in school (Niger Country Report, 1996).

According to the Forum of African Women Educators (FAWE) biased treatments by women teachers is often more blatant. Secondary school girls in Kenya reportedly feel that women teachers discriminate against them more than their male teachers. In Zimbabwe, there is discrimination against female students by their secondary school teachers, with boys getting priority in the distribution of learning materials, Graham – Grown (1991).

In “Girls African Research and Action to keep girls in school”, FAWE (OPCIT) points out that teachers inflate or deflate girls as being less able to learn than boys, hence they are steered towards stereotyped subjects such as needlework and cookery rather than science and technology.

2.7 Summary

Many scholars have been investigated in relation to poor performance in KCSE examinations. Such factors like the student home environment, availability of school resources, or teacher qualification and motivation to teach have been linked to poor performance. It is important they say that both students and teachers are provided with the resources they need to facilitate learning and teaching. Parents should also provide an ideal environment for the student to undertake their studies according to many scholars. It is also important, they have concluded, that the school administration provide the incentives needed by both teachers and students to achieve high performance.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter indicates the methods used by the researcher in carrying out the study. It is presented as follows; research design, target population, sampling and sampling procedures, research instruments, the data analysis techniques and the data collection procedures.

3.2 Research design

Research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions. According to Ogula (1995) it provides a framework for planning and conducting a study. The research will take a form of descriptive survey design of accessible population as it appears without manipulation. A descriptive survey was appropriate for these reasons: It would enable the researcher to gather information concerning the current situation in public secondary schools in Mathira East District as regards poor performance and it would help to investigate and establish the nature of the relationship among the variables.

3.3 Target population

According to Borgin and Gall (1989) a target population is the number of real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects which a researcher wishes to generalize the study on.

The target population of this study was all the public secondary schools in Mathira East District. According to the district educational officer, Mathira East, there are 30 public secondary schools with 38 teachers teaching form 4 and 1250 form four students.

3.4 Sampling and sample procedure

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define a sample as “a small group obtained 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 larger group from which they were selected.

According to Cooper (1998), how large a sample is should be a function of the variation in the population parameter under study and the estimation precision needed by the researcher.

To select participants for this study, simple random sampling and stratified random sampling was used. Ayoo (2002) says that simple random sampling ensures that each element within the accessible population has an equal chance of being selected. This method is also best where the population is finite. He adds that if a population consists of sub populations, stratified random sampling should be used to ensure that no sub population is omitted.

3.5 Research instruments

The research instruments would be a questionnaire developed by the researcher and an observation schedule. Questionnaires were presented to the teachers teaching form 4 students, and also to their students.

The observation schedule: observation of physical resources on the ground would form a useful source of data that can be compared to data collected using the other instruments. It would help the researcher to put facts in context and therefore understand them better. The main focus of the observation was the number and condition of physical resources available to teachers and students.

In this study, the researcher used a table for determining the sample size from a given population designed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). In the table a population of 38 would require a sample of 34 teachers and a population of 1250 will require a sample of 294; therefore 34 teachers and 394 students were selected.

To get the nine schools, numbers were assigned to all schools. Each number was also written on a piece of paper and put in a container, and then nine was picked randomly. Those schools corresponding to the numbers were then being included in the study.

The selected number of students (294) was divided by (9), the number of schools, to give an average of 34 students per school.

3.6 Validity of research instruments

A test or research instrument is said to be valid if it measures what it is supposed to measure. The instruments were subjected to peer review in order to make the necessary corrections and eliminate any possible problem areas. The researcher would present the instruments to the supervisor, who would examine them to judge their suitability and the representative sample of the behavior domain under investigation.

3.7 Reliability of research instruments

According to Mulusa (1998), a reliable research instrument is one that consistently produces the expected results. Thorndike and Hagen (1961) say that because of the economy of time and labour, the procedure for extracting an estimate of reliability should be obtained from a single test.

They add that the split half technique is simple and convenient, where with 100 items, scores are calculated separately, for 2 sets of 50 items and the results correlated. To test the items in the questionnaire, this method is adopted because it is so suitable to construct variables such as attitude, perception. Opinion and achievement, it involves administering the test to a small sample and then splitting the test into two halves, the odds and evens. The scores are computed separately and the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient used to obtain the correlation coefficient.

The correlation obtained represents reliability for half test. A correlation must therefore be made to obtain reliability for the whole. To effect this, the Spearman Brown prophecy formula is applied which states that

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

Where R_e = correlation coefficient for the whole test

r = correlation coefficient of even numbered statements with the scores of the odd numbered statements.

A correlation coefficient of above 0.7 was needed in order to have a reliable research instrument. In this test, the coefficient result was 0.75, therefore indicating that the questionnaire was reliable.

3.8 Data analysis techniques

The completed questionnaires were edited for ambiguities, errors and inconsistencies. The responses were then be coded and tabulated in the SPSS computer programme to aid in analysis. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyze the strength of the relation between the variables and the statistical significance of their relationship. Quantitative was analyzed using simple statistical tools, such as percentages and frequencies.

Generalization was drawn in line with the study objective based on description of observations, document analysis and interview material. The findings were then be presented using tables, charts, graphs and frequency tables for the purpose of making clearer interpretation.

3.9 Data collection procedure

The researcher would secure a letter of introduction from the dean, college of education and external studies, University of Nairobi, which would state the purpose of the study.

Permission to carry out the research in public secondary schools was obtained from the Ministry of Education. These research permits was presented to the District Education Officer- Mathira East, who would then write a cover letter to all head teachers of the school which have been sampled requesting them to allow the researcher to collect the data.

The researchers would then book appointments with the head teachers of the sampled schools and notify them of the mission and purpose of the study. The researcher would then visit the schools on the appointment dates to deliver and administer the questionnaires.

The researcher would request the teachers to fill in the questionnaires and to assist in reaching out to the sampled students who was given their questionnaires. The respondent was given ample time to fill in the questionnaires before they are collected the same day. Meantime the researcher would use school examination records to obtain data on KCSE performance and would also be taken around the school for the observation schedule by a person appointed by the head teacher. The researcher would thank all the participants via the teacher.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Three sets of questionnaires were used to collect data. A questionnaire for the head teachers, which was meant to elicit the school policy, form four teacher's questionnaire meant to delve into school practice as experienced by those implementing the school policy, and a questionnaire for the form four students as recipients of the school policy on their experiences.

The head teachers questionnaires were preferred to a head teacher of the sampled schools and were all returned dully filled. A total of 34 questionnaires were given to the form four students and 30 were returned, while 294 questionnaires were given to form four students and all of them were returned.

4.2 Interpretation

4.2.1 Distribution of participants by gender

The study sought to establish the head teachers; teachers and pupil's gender. The findings revealed that out of 9 head teachers, 7 were male while 2 were female. This represented 78% and 22% respectively. The findings revealed that out of the 30 form four teachers, 20 were male while 10 were female, representing 67% and 33% respectively. Among the form four pupils, 160 were male while 164 were female. These represented 54% and 46% respectively.

Table 4.1: Distribution of participants by gender

	Headteacher		Teachers		Pupils	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Male	7	78	20	67	160	54
Female	2	22	10	33	134	46
Total	9	100	30	100	294	100

4.2.2 Distribution of participants by age

The participants were also asked to state their age bracket. On the age of headteacher, 33% of them lie between the ages of 41-45 years, 67% between 46 and above. No headteacher sampled was below 41 years. Among the teachers, 33% lie between 25-34 years, 50% between 35 – 44 years and 10% 45 – 54 years. Only 7% of teachers sampled were above 54 years of age.

Table 4.2: Distribution of participants by age

Teachers age	frequency	percentage
25 -34	10	33
35 - 44	15	50
45 -54	3	10
Over 54	2	7
	30	100

4.3 Selected factors of students' poor performance in KCSE examinations in Mathira East District

4.3.1 Head-teachers and teachers response on academic qualifications

The study sought to establish the highest level of education of the head teacher and teachers. The findings revealed that seven headteachers hold a bachelor's degree on education while two hold diploma in education. This therefor implied that majority of head teachers in Mathira East District are academically qualified to enhance performance in KCSE. Among the teachers, 21 had bachelor of education, 70 had diploma in education, while 2 had masters in education. Therefore based on the above findings, it is evident that teachers' academic qualification is not one of the causes of poor student performance in KCSE in Mathira East District.

Table 4.3: Academic qualification of head-teachers and teachers

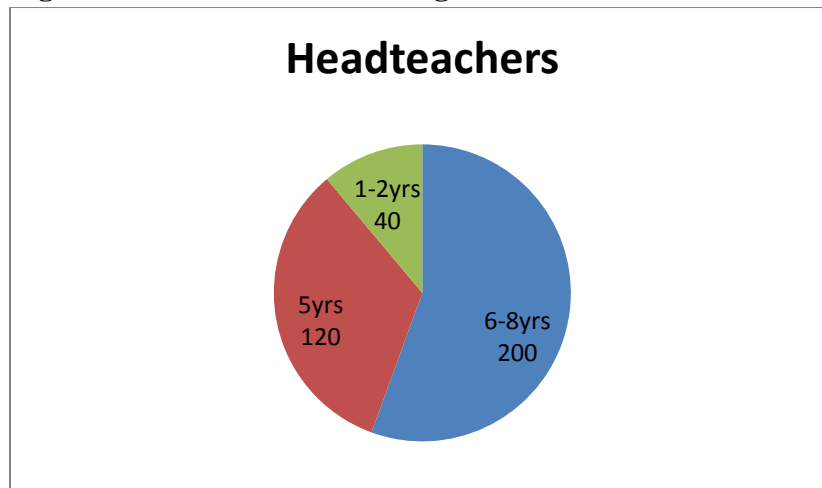
	Head teacher		Teacher	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
B.E.D	7	78	21	70
Diploma	2	22	7	23
M.ED	0	0	2	7
Total	9	1000	30	100

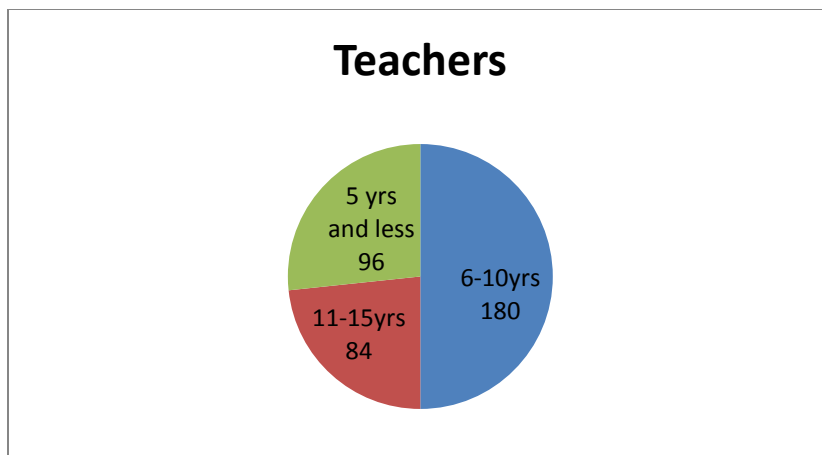
4.3.2 Duration of teaching for head-teachers and teacher

The head-teachers were asked to indicate the number of years they had served in the capacity. The finding indicated that 3 had served for 5 years, 5 had served for 6 -8 years while 1 for only 1 -2 years. This showed that the majority had gained a lot of experience in the administration of schools.

The downside may be that they were set in their ways in the administration of their particular schools and may be inflexible in trying out new ways. Among the teachers 15 had 6 -10 years' experience, 7 had 11 -15 years' experience, 8 ha 5 years and less. This indicated again that majority of teachers may have become too set in their ways and not open to try new teaching methods. The fact that there were many new teachers however may be a good indicator of the presence of young and energetic teachers eager to discharge their duties.

Figure 4.1: Duration of teaching for head-teachers and teacher





4.3.3 Availability of teaching and learning resources.

The study sought to establish the opinion of the sampled population on the availability of teaching/ learning resources from the finding, percentage of students, percentage of headteachers and percentage of teachers indicated that there was inadequacy of teaching/ learning facilities. These finding agree with the findings from a study conducted by Wachiye (1996) that the availability f teaching/ learning facilities is a critical factor and it influences performance by hindering effective teaching / learning.

Teachers were of the opinion that, given the correct and adequate resources, they would do much better. They did not have enough instructional materials, resulting to poor performance. The Parents and administration were not playing their roles in providing these. The roles of parents in providing instructional resources needed close attention. About 55.5% of the teachers who cited inadequacy of teaching aids were teaching sciences. The comprehensive nature of the 8.4.4 system of education demands that teachers are properly equipped both in the theory and practical knowledge of their subjects, and especially science. Without these resources teachers may need a lot of in

service training to help them cope, and as Kathuri (1986) observes, poorly in serviced teachers feel threatened and inadequate by new innovations. Facilities such as laboratories, play fields or transport are shared with the nearest boarding school making it extremely difficult for teachers and students.

Pupil’s opinion on the availability of teaching and learning resources in their schools was in agreement with that of their teachers and head-teachers. They revealed that revision books and teaching aids were inadequate, thus supporting the teachers’ but not the head-teachers’ opinion. Lack of revision books is a serious problem in schools because it could lead to poor performance by students.

Table 4.4: Frequency of pupils who indicated that textbooks were inadequate

Resources	Frequency	Percentage
Textbooks	230	78
Revision books	100	34
Teaching aids	91	31

4.3.4 Availability of basic facilities

Both teachers and head-teachers shared the view that while a number of facilities were adequate like offices and staffrooms, others were in-adequate and needed improvement while others were nonexistent. Among those that needed improvement were classrooms, desks, chairs, tables, play-fields, laboratories. Library and staff houses were nonexistent in almost all schools. The few who claimed to have libraries only referred to a small

room where textbooks were kept. Pupils supported the view that classrooms (92%), desks (91%), playfield (78%) were adequate while the rest believed they were inadequate. Absence of library and laboratory facilities is a great blow to both teachers and students in their aim to achieve high performance.

4.3.5 Availability of teachers for all subjects

From information provided by students, it was clear that some schools did not have all the subject teachers. 93% of pupils sampled indicated that they had all subject teachers while 7% reported shortages in one or more subjects.

4.3.6 Headteachers' comments on availability of teaching resources

It was evident from data collected that teaching and learning resources were found to be inadequate in most schools. Among those found to be so were textbooks for both teachers and pupil's reference books for teacher's desk and chairs, teaching aids like maps, wall charts laboratory equipment. Exercise books, chalk and chalkboards were found to be adequate.

Table 4.5: Frequency of headteachers who indicated teaching resources were inadequate.

Facilities	Frequency	Percentage
Textbooks	9	100
Exercise books	6	67
Reference books	9	100
Chalkboards	6	67
Teaching aids	7	78
Desk and chairs	7	78
Laboratory equipment's	8	89
Classrooms	7	78

4.3.7 Headteachers response in the state of schools

Of the schools surveyed, none had attained the District mean score of 6.5%

Table 4.6: The table shows the average performance of the schools sampled in this survey.

Year	Mean score	Mean grade	Students admitted by JAB
2010	5.0326	C-	21%
2011	5.0882	C-	20.5%
2012	5.6894	C	19.8%
2013	5.872	C+	22.5%

The headteachers in the sampled schools were all well qualified and experienced, with 7 holders of BED and 2 holders of Diploma in Education. Majority had an average of 5 years' experience as school heads and many more as teachers.

While the school had teachers, there was a shortage of specialist science teachers. The headteacher cited this as one reason for poor performance. On the problems of student's teacher ratio, the headteachers indicated that they recruited untrained graduate BSc. holders and form four leavers who had done well in science subjects to alleviate teacher's shortage.

The headteachers also cited the lack of laboratories and libraries as one of the major problems affecting performance. Most of the schools sampled did not have adequate facilities and teachers had to make do with improvised version or relied on well-endowed neighboring schools during exams. Each school ideally needs at least two laboratories for

teaching biological or physical sciences in Mathira East District cannot effectively offer practical oriented subjects in line with objectives of 8.4.4 system of education because of the lack of proper physical facilities, therefore adversely affecting KCSE performance.

The headteachers also cited the lack of textbooks necessitating the sharing of books among students which greatly affects good revision. They also agreed that the admission of weak students at form 1 is a major stumbling block.

The headteacher also blamed the poor attendance by students and some errant teachers as being cause of poor performance. Parents were also cited as problem because they did not attend school meetings, did not pay fees or buy books for their students, did not ensure well discipline pupils at home, all indicating a lack of seriousness on their part in regard to student performance.

4.3.8 Parental level of education

The students were requested to indicate their fathers' and mothers highest academic qualification. The findings indicated that 53.6% and 51.8% of the students indicated that their fathers and mothers respectively had only gone up to secondary education, 39.3% and 42.9% indicated that their fathers and mothers respectively had gone up to primary education, 5.4% and 3.6% respectively had gone up to university education while 3.6% did not indicate. This shows out that the level of parental education in Mathira East District could work to the student's disadvantage. This is because the parents could have less interest in monitoring the academic progress of their pupils, it could be a hindrance to helping and inspiring their pupils to achieve positive aspirations and self- esteem.

Table 4.7: Parental level of education

Level	Father		Mother	
	Frequency	percentage	Frequency	Percentage
No school				
Primary		39.3		42.9
Secondary		53.6		51.8
University		5.4		3.6
No response		1.8		1.8
Total		100		100

4.3.9 Parental occupation

The students were asked to indicate the economic activities carried out by their parents. According to the information given, 53% were subsistence farmers while 27% were in business, and only 15% were in formal employment, 6% were involved in other economic activities. This meant that majority of the students came from weak economic backgrounds because most of the farmers in Mathira East District own small scale farms. This is also meant that farmers who were generally more learned than the mothers were likely to be working far away from their homes, and for long hours. This implies that they were not likely to help their children in doing their homework.

Table 4.8: Parental occupation

occupation	Frequency				Percentage				
	Male	Female	Guardian	Total	Male	Female	guardian	Total	Cumulative %
Subsistence farming	48	30	1	79	32	20	1	53	53
Business	16	24	1	41	10	16	1	27	80
Formal employment	9	15	0	24	6	10	0	16	96
Other	0	6	0	6	0	4	0	4	100
Total	73	75	2	100	48	50	2	100	100

4.3.10 Distance covered by pupils daily to school

The students were asked to indicate the distance they had to cover daily on their way to school. According to the information given majority took 30 min to 1 hr while 30% took 1 hr-2hrs, 10% also indicated that they took an average of over 2 hrs daily to and from school. This implied that the students had to leave their homes very early to get to school on time and also that they reached their homes quite late in the evening. This meant that majority of students were too tired to do much remedial reading in the evenings, except the necessary school assignments.

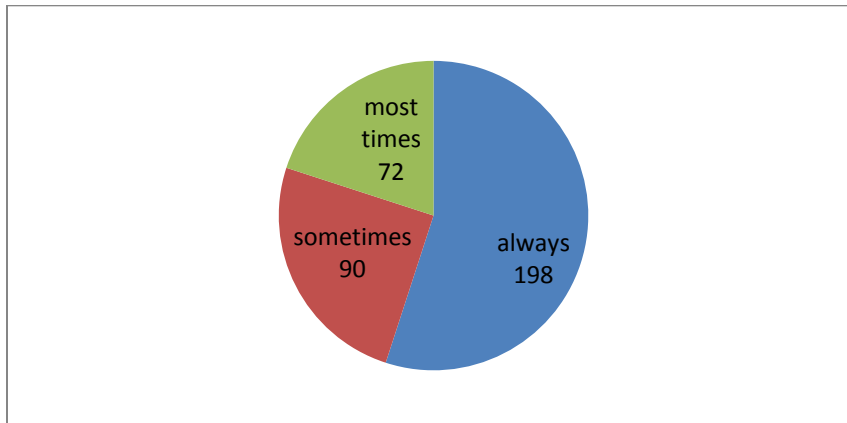
Table 4.9: Time taken by students to school

Time	Frequency	Percentage
0-10mins	15	5
10 -30mins	59	20
30min -1hr	103	35
1 – 2hrs	88	30
Over 2 hrs	29	10
Total	294	100

4.3.11 Pupils' study habits at home

From the data collected, over half (55%) of the pupils sampled completed their homework always, 20% most times while 25% completed their homework only sometimes, 38% studied privately always, 19% most times, 40% sometimes and 3% never. The fact that only 38% studied privately explained why a good number of pupils (45%) did not complete their homework on time.

Figure 4.2: Pupils study habits at home



Amount of pupils learning time consumed by other activities

It was evident from data collected that students learning time was sometimes interrupted by other activities. Most students reported that a substantial amount of their learning time was reduced by activities such as working in the local market to supplement family income, general cleaning, herding cattle or just idling. Weeks (1963) found out that the chores expected of a day student by parents or guardians were often excessive to the extent that they could be termed exploitive. This does not help in good examination performance.

Table 4.10: Learning time consumed by other activities

Type of work	No. of students	Percentage
Looking after cattle	53	18
Earning income for family	44	15
Cooking and cleaning	77	26
Idling	20	7
Shamba work	100	34
Total	294	100

Other problems faced by the student that they said hindered their supplementary studies included lack of reference and reading materials at home poor lighting interference noise pollution hunger lack of study groups etc. other students live under the care of guardian's in order to attend school indicated a lack of proper accommodation or guidance and counselling that they would otherwise have got from their parents.

Table: 4.11: Problem faced by student during their studies

Problem	No. of students	Percentage
Poor accommodation	20	7
Hostile environment (alcoholic parent)	55	19
Poor diet	20	7
Heavy work / chores	60	20
Lack of reading facilities	40	14
Poor lighting	19	6
Noise	22	7
Interference during private study	58	20
Total	294	100

The questionnaire for students and their very honest and frank responses described a region which is replete with problems of poverty at massive levels. It is this poverty which leads to poor dietary practices, lack of proper housing facilities which can provide good study environments, and other factors which lead to a good learning process. This poverty situation also leads to high dropout rates at lower levels, who become bad company to those remaining in school.

4.3.12 Student activity during prep

The findings revealed that all schools had preps in the morning, afternoon and evening where 73% of students carried out individual studies or formed discussion groups, while other students for quiet study/ discussion. Only 27% of students indicated that teachers came in to teach them during prep time. Almost all the students, 90% said that teachers bought them past papers from schools in other areas for revision. This data suggests that teachers in Mathira east District are not highly motivated to go to great lengths to prepare students for KCSE examinations. During their free time or any other extra expense or convenience.

Teacher's responses on causes of poor performance

The teachers were asked to give their opinion on who should receive the most blame for poor performance in KCSE. 10% blamed politicians, 80% parents, 30% other teachers, 66% blamed headteachers and 70% blamed the students in others category. When asked about what measures should be taken, 70% suggested giving of bursaries, 99% said teachers should be provided with housing to cut on amount of time they took in commuting, and 60% indicated that alternatives to capital punishment should be found to curb student's indiscipline. The high number of teachers who indicated that housing should be provided could also be because majority of teachers sampled (98%) indicated that the salary they received was less than they deserved. Only 2% indicated that the salary they got was what they deserved. Teachers wanting to be provided with housing may be an indication of wanting to save up on income.

Issuing and marking of assignments

The significance of teachers assigning students homework and in their marking of the assignments was based on the rationale that the teachers would be able to know which areas were clearly understood by students and which were not. The findings showed that 50% of teachers gave assignment weekly and only 17% gave assignment daily, 20% gave assignments only after two weeks as compared to 13% once a month. The teachers who gave assignments once every two weeks or once per month were prompt in marking and correcting the assignments. Among those who gave assignments once a week, 48% of them marked and corrected while among those who gave assignment daily only 5% were able to mark and correct all the assignments. These findings indicate that teachers were not able to follow up on those topics not understood clearly by students in order to give those better explanations.

Table 4.12: Assigning and marking of assignments

Duration	Assigning		Marking	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	5	17	1	5
Weekly	15	50	14	48
Fortnight	6	20	9	29
Monthly	4	13	6	18
Total	30	100	30	100

These findings generally agree with student's responses that they get assignments often, but teachers rarely mark them. The students also stated that teachers very rarely revise the assignments with them.

Duration	Assigning		Marking	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	79	27	65	22
Often	135	46	88	30
Rarely	59	20	138	47
Never	21	7	3	1
Total	294	100	294	100

Average lessons per teacher per week

From the data collected the average lessons par teacher per week was above 30. In the majority of schools, 73% of teachers taught an average of over 30 lessons per week. This meant 7 or more lessons per day, leaving teachers with very little time to prepare in between classes or to mark tests.

It was only 8 teachers sampled who taught 25-30 lessons per week on average, leaving them with at least one or two free lessons during the day.

Table 4.13: Average number of lessons per week

No. of lessons	Frequency	Percentage
20 and below	-	-
20-24	-	-
25 -30	8	27
Over 30	22	73
Total	30	100

Preparation of teaching documents

Among the teaching records prepared by teachers, schemes of work ranked the highest with 85% of teachers preparing them. Pupil's progress records were also given emphasis with 70% of teachers preparing them. Lesson plans were given the least emphasis, with only 5% preparing them and records of work covered being prepared by 35% of the teachers always. This meant that teachers emphasized preparation of schemes of work and student progress records at the beginning and end of term respectively. Lesson plan

and records of work were not covered daily probably because of the heavy work load the teachers had.

Table 4.14: Preparation of teaching related documents.

Document	Frequency	Percentage
Schemes of work	26	85
Lesson plans	2	5
Records of work covered	11	35
Pupils progress reports	21	70

Teacher’s sources of extra income

The teachers were asked to indicate whether they engaged in other economic activities besides teaching ,with majority of them [90%]indicating that they carried out commercial agriculture of them (90%) indicating that they carried out commercial agriculture on a small scale or owned or operated a shop / hotel. The teachers sampled also indicated that they carried out these other activities during morning, evening, weekend or during the school holidays. This probably shows why teachers were generally not available to students during remedial time or prep.

The response of teachers toward student attitude

Teachers were also asked to rate the attitude of their students towards learning. Majority indicated that student attitude in their schools were generally neutral, and many others being negative in the day school. Negative attitude of students in day school may be

explained by the fact that majority of the students admitted to day school were those who did not attain a good enough grade to join high caliber of schools.

Teacher justification for student poor attitude was because of the high number of students who do not complete their homework, and also the high number who do not actively participate in class either by asking or answering questions. When asked about the reasons students gave for not completing assignments, teachers answered that majority of students cited lack of enough time to complete their work and many others the lack of text books. This agreed with other results which concluded a major shortage of books and students having too little time at home to complete assignments.

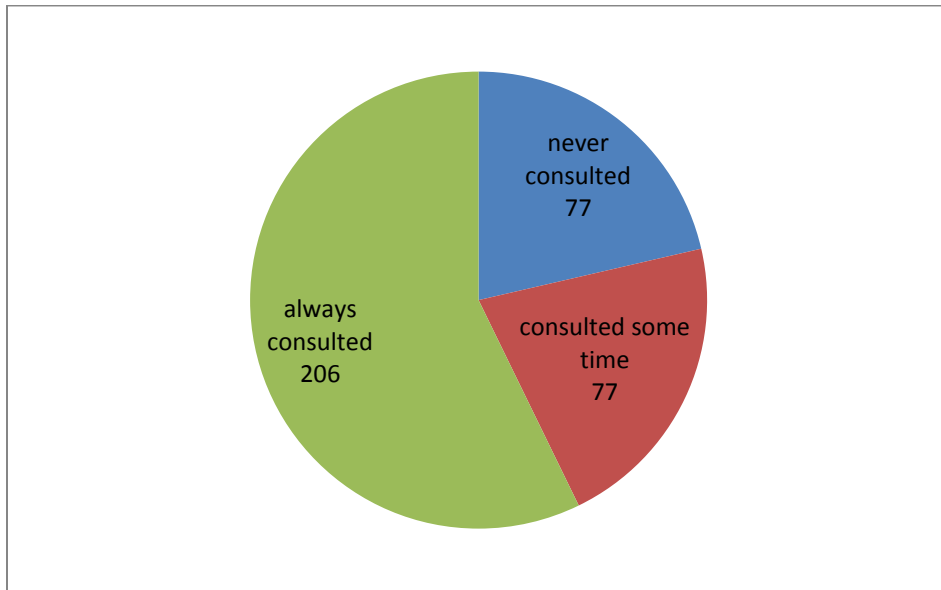
As observed in regard to problems. None of the day schools provided any kind of housing. All teachers including the headteachers are commuters. Some walk remarkable distances daily translating to as much fatigue as their students. As a result they are not able to maximize on their school work as would be expected of them. Therefore teachers in day secondary schools suffer from high transport costs and unpredictable weather conditions which result to their reporting late to school.

The teachers also observed that admission scores were low at form one. Such student becomes difficult to bring to the level of performance expectations. The main reason for this admission is because the best students are first admitted to the best schools and only the low grade students find their way to day secondary schools. Other causes included absenteeism, poor attitude of students towards education, lack of motivation from teachers and students, poor home environments, poor leadership.

4.4 Involvement of Teachers in Making Decision

The headteachers were asked to indicate the rate at which they consult teachers while making school decisions. The responses indicate the higher percentage of headteachers 57.2% consulted their teachers always as compared to 21.4% who never consulted. Based on this finding, it can be noted that the involvement of teachers on decision making does not seem to have affected students' performance in KCSE in Mathira East District to a great extent.

Figure 4.3: Involvement of teachers in marking decision



Inspection of teachers' schemes of work, lesson plans and records of work

The findings revealed that the majority of headteachers 55% checked teacher's schemes of work, lesson plans and records of work once per term, 23% checked them once per month, 8% checked them twice a month while 14% never checked them. Hence it can be concluded that the fact that majority of headteacher s checked teachers work records once per term may have a negative effect on students' performance. This concurs with a study

done by the Njooora (1987) which concluded that headteachers never or rarely check teachers work progress and therefore teachers may not conclude the syllabus or give adequate assignments or tests.

Table 4.15: Inspection of teachers' record

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Once a term	17	55
Once a month	7	23
Twice a month	2	8
Never	4	14
Total	30	100

Headteachers supervision of lessons

The information provided by teachers indicated that headteachers were generally not committed to performing their duties such as coming into their classrooms as lessons were on going to inspect their styles of teaching. Lack of headteacher supervision of lessons at all was prevalent in most schools with 85% of teachers reporting that this never occurred. Only 10% of teachers reported that headteachers came into their classes once a year and 5% once a term. This trend is worrying because it could mean that teachers reporting late for class, left early or left students to do private study during the lessons as they carried on with other duties. This is made even more likely by the fact that majority

of teachers do not complete the syllabus, one of the major factors leading to poor performance.

4.5 Inferential Statistics

Pearson's product moment correlation analysis was used to assess the relationship between the variables.

4.5.1 Correlation analysis

The data presented previously was computed into single variables and Pearson's correlation coefficient was then conducted at 95% confidence interval and 5% confidence level 2 tailed. There was found to be a positive correlation between the variables (teaching/ learning resources, teacher qualification, teacher attitude, leadership styles, and student home background) and student performance in KCSE. This positive relationship indicates that there is a correlation between the variables and the academic performance of students with teaching/ learning resources having the highest value and teacher qualification the lowest.

Table 4.16: Correlation analysis

Variable	Correlation magnitude	Significance values
Teaching / learning resources	0.872	0.021
Student home background	0.766	0.048
Leadership style	0.582	0.015
Teacher attitude	0.489	0.027
Teacher qualification	0.206	0.045

The significance values for the relationship between academic performance and the various variables implies that teaching / learning resources was the most significant factor, and qualification as the least significant.

4.5.2 Regression analysis

The researcher also applied the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) to code, enter and compute the measurements for regression of the study.

Coefficient of determination explains the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by changes in the independent variables.

The five independent variables that were studied explain only 85% of the academic performance in KCSE as explained by the R^2 . This means that other factors not studied in this research represent 15%, which can be studied under a different research.

4.5.3 ANOVA

The significance value is 0.0138 which is less than 0.05 thus the model is statistically significant in predicting how the various variables studied affect academic performance in KCSE in Mathira East District.

4.5.4 Coefficient of determination

Regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between academic performance in KCSE and the five variables. According to the regression equation established, taking all the five variables at zero, academic performance will be at 1.150.

The data findings analyzed also show that a unit increase in teaching / learning resources will lead to a 0.842 increase in academic performance, a unit increase in teacher qualification will lead to a 0.429 increase in KCSE performance, a unit increase in teacher attitude will lead to a 0.597 increase in academic performance, a unit increase in

leadership style will lead to a 0.682 increase in KCSE performance and a unit increase in student home environment will lead to a 0.784 increase in KCSE performance.

At a 5% level of significance and 9% level of confidence, teaching / learning resources had a 0.0174 level of significance, teacher qualification 0.0489 level of significance, teacher attitude a 0.0401 level of significance, leadership styles a 0.0382 level of significance and student home background a 0.0287 level of significance.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focusses on the summary of the study, the findings of the study, conclusions, recommendations and recommendations for further studies.

5.2 Summary of the study

The study aimed at finding out the factors that contribute to poor performance in KCSE in Mathira East District. The study found out the following.

- a) Most schools in Mathira East District have inadequate resources, physical and teaching / learning.
- b) The findings revealed that the majority of students come from a low socio-economic background.
- c) The findings also revealed that majority of teachers are qualified to teach in secondary schools.
- d) Teachers in Mathira East secondary schools have low morale and many are generally not committed to their work
- e) Head teachers in most schools do not take their roles as schools supervisors seriously and majority rarely check on teacher activity in the classroom.

5.3 Conclusions

The following are brief conclusions from the study.

- a) Inadequate teaching and learning resources implied that it was one cause of poor student performance

- b) Poor student home ground implied that students did not receive the proper motivation to study from their parents or neighbours because the parents themselves did not appreciate the value of education.
- c) Headteachers neglect in the supervision of classrooms indicated that teachers could get away with not delivering quality service to their students.
- d) High teacher qualification indicated that students were getting good value in terms of delivery of subject matter.
- e) Poor teacher committed to teaching pointed to major problems that result to poor student performance in their academic careers.

5.4 Recommendations

- a) The school administration, ministry of education and other stake holders should sensitize their parents on the importance of education. The parent should also be encouraged to monitor their children academic progress, allow them sufficient study time at home, encourage them to work hard, and cooperate in disciplinary matters.
- b) School administration and ministry of education should provide teachers with a good working environment in order to motivate them in their work, including coming up with a workable solution to their grievances. Other perks include study leave, seminars, guidance and counselling for teachers and students with disciplinary problems, promotions.
- c) School heads should take their supervisory roles seriously, engage stakeholders in constructive ways to sort out school financial problems in order to provide the much needed physical and teaching resources, and not send students home for fees causing them to miss lessons.

- d) Unless the provision of physical and teaching /learning resources was improved, students will continue to perform poorly. Contribution of funds through harambee should be encouraged, and also increased allocation of funds from the Government and donors to schools.

5.5 Recommendations for further research

The researcher suggests that the following areas require further research.

- a) Investigate the gap in quality of education in co-educational public, private and single sex secondary schools.
- b) Similar studies to be carried out in the other district in Nyeri County in order to aid in developing an effective education policy for the country.

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Section B

5. Besides teaching do you have another source of income?

None

Transport

Shop / hotel

other (specify)

6. If yes, when do you attend to it?

Section C

7. How often do you involve teachers in decision making?

Never

occasionally

often

very often

always

8. How often do you inspect teachers as they teach?

Never

occasionally

often

very often

always

9. What personally gives you satisfaction in your job?

10. What factors make you dissatisfied in your job?

Section D

11. How many teachers do you have in your school?

12. How many of these teach form four?

13. Where do most of your students come from?

Within 2 km radius	within the district	outside county
Within 5 km radius	outside the district	

14. Please indicate the mean score of your school in these years?

Year	mean score	position
2010		
2011		
2012		
2013		

15. How many of your students were selected to join public universities in these years?

Year	No. of students
2010	
2011	
2012	
2013	

16. How many students are repeaters in form four?

17. Is there a library in your school?

Yes

No

18. If yes, how often do form four students make use of the library?

Never

occasionally

often

very often

always

19. How many classes don't have proper classrooms of their own?

20. What other physical facilities don't you have in your school?

21. What in your opinion contributes to poor student performance?

THANK YOU.

Appendix II: TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate by tick the correct option or fill in appropriately in the blank space provided, whichever is applicable.

1. Please indicate your gender

Male

Female

2. What is your age bracket?

Below 25

25 – 34

35 – 44

45 – 54

Over 54

3. What is your highest academic qualification?

MED

BED

PGDE

BA general

Other (specify)

4. A) What is the type of your school?

Mixed school

Boy's school

Girl's school

b) What is the category of your school?

Day school

Boarding school

Day and boarding

5. How long have you been in teaching profession?

Below 1 year

1 – 5 years

6 - 10 years

11 – 15 years

16 – 20 years

20 years and above

6. A) What are your teaching subjects?

i.

ii.

iii.

iv.

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

Yes

No

7. How do you rate your school performance in KCSE in the last one year?

Very good

Good

Average

Below average

Poor

8. A) What is your current teaching load per week?

Less than 20 lessons

20 -24 lessons

25 – 30 lessons

b) How do you rate this work load?

Heavy

Moderate

Light

c) What effect do you think the teaching load has on the student's performance?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section B

9. How often do you give students assignment?

Daily

Once a week

Once a fortnight

Once a month

Other (specify)

b) Are you able to correct all the assignment given at the intended time?

Yes

No

c) Please explain your answer above?

.....

.....

.....

Please indicate whether you prepare the following by ticking schemes of work.

Lesson plan

Records of work

Student's progress records

10. A) Do your students complete assignments as required?

Yes

No

b) If no please tick () against the reasons that student's give for not completing their work.

Lack of adequate time

Lack of textbooks

Assignments are too difficult

Others (specify)

11. How often does the head teacher make follow ups on your work as required?

Once a month

Twice a month

Once a term

Never

12. Rate the attitude of your student's towards learning?

Positive

Neutral

Negative

b) Please explain your work above.

.....

.....

.....

Does the school have enough learning facilities?

Available

Not available

Scarce

13. To what extent do you think society contributes to poor performance in schools?

Failure to pay fees in time

Politicization of school affairs

Other (specify)

14. In your efforts to improve KCSE performance, do you get support from

Fellow teachers

School administration

Parents.

15. In your view, who should be blamed for poor performance in secondary schools?

Head teacher

Parents

Teachers

Politicians

Others (specify)

16. Do you encourage parents to assist in ensuring that children complete homework?

Always

Most times

Sometimes

Rarely

Not at all

17. What measures do you think should be taken to ensure improved performance?

i.

ii.

iii.

18. Please indicate the adequacy of the following in your school.

The choices are as follows

Quite adequate QA Adequate A Inadequate I Quite inadequate QI

Availability of Manila paper

Availability of felt pens

Availability of wall charts

Availability of text books

Availability of chalks and dusters

Availability of other teaching aids (specify)

19. Have you attended an in service training during your teaching career?

Yes

No

20. If yes, specify the course and duration

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

21. What is the commitment level of your head teacher?

High

Moderate

Low

22. Please give reason for your answer

.....
.....

Does the head teacher involve you in decision making about the school under these tasks?

Yes

No

Planning for instructional programmes

Pupil discipline

Acquiring resources

23. How many times have the head teacher come into your class inspect your teaching?

Duration	no of times
----------	-------------

Last month

Last term

Last year

24. How do teachers acquire the necessary text books for teaching?

From the school

Buy their own

From MOE other (specify)

25. When a pupil fills up a book, how easy is it to supply him/ her with a new one?

Easy

Difficult

26. When you need chalk, duster, notebook, or pen for your school use, how easy is it to get one?

Easy

Difficult

Section C

27. Who is your employer

TSC

BOG

Volunteer

Other (specify)

28. What do you think for the salary you get for your work?

Less than I deserve

What I deserve

More than I deserve

29. What other benefits do get from the school where you teach?

i.

ii.

iii.

30. Besides teaching, do you have another source of income?

None

Shop / hotel

Transport

Other (specify)

31. If yes, when do you attend to it

.....

.....

.....

Appendix III: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

You are kindly requested to indicate by a tick () on the correct option or fill in appropriately in the blank space provided, whichever is applicable.

Section A

1. State your gender

Male

female

2. Indicate your age bracket

16 – 17 years

17- 18 years

Over 18 years

3. Would you like to continue your education beyond form four?

Yes

No

4. How far would you like to go?

Form 4

Polytechnic/ certificate

Diploma College

University first degree

Postgraduate degree

5. Who motivates you most to study?

Father

Mother

Teacher

Other (specify)

Section B

6. How long does it take you to get to school daily?

0- 10 mins

1 – 2 hrs

10 -30 mins

over 2 hrs

30 – 1 hr

7. What do you like to be in future?

Farmer

Self employed

Professional eg Doctor

In leadership eg M.P

8. What is your parents' level of education?

Father

Mother

Not educated at all

Primary

Secondary

College

University

9. What do your parents do for a living

Father

mother

Subsistence farming

Small scale /commercial farming

Self employed

Formal employment

10. Below are some tasks performed at home. Indicate the amount of time you spend on each task daily.

Task	time spent in hours				
	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	over 4
Cooking					
Child-rearing					
Fetching water					
Collecting firewood					
Washing and cleaning					
Tending animals					
Shamba work					
Running errands					

11. Do you study at home?

Yes

No

12. If yes, how much time do you spend on studies at home?

0-30mins

30min -1hr

1-2 hrs

13. How often are you absent from school in days?

1-2 times per week

1-2 times per term

1-2 times per month

Never

14. If yes, what are the main causes of your absenteeism?

Illness

Lack of fees

Shamba work

Section C

15. How often do teachers give you assignment?

Very often

Often rarely

Never

Often

16. How often do teachers mark your assignment?

Quite often

Often

Rarely

Never

17. Do you get time with your teacher to revise the assignments given?

Yes

No

18. Do you have teachers to teach all subjects?

Yes

No

19. If no, how many are lacking

.....
.....

20. Is there remedial teaching in your school?

Morning preps/teaching

Lunch hour preps/teaching

Evening preps/teaching

Weekend preps/teaching

21. If yes, do students

Study on their own

Have a teacher to teach

22. Have you been using KCSE past papers from other schools for your revision?

Yes

No

23. Do you use KCSE revision books with past papers and exercises for your revision?

Yes

No

24. Do you have access to these resources?

Radio

Newspaper

T.V

Computer

25. Do you share this facilities at school, and if so, with how many other students?

Share by no. of pupils

Testbooks

Desks

Chairs

Others (specify)

Thank you.

Appendix IV : OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

A. Classroom

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
i.Availability of desks			
ii. Pupils tables and chairs			
iii.Teachers tables and chairs			
iv.Cleanliness			
v. Organization of desks and chairs			
Vi. Ventilation			
vi. Lighting			
vii. Blackboard size			
viii. Blackboard condition			

B. Library

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
i.Availability of reading desk			
ii. shelve size			
iii.Size of room			
iv. Availability of rooms			

Comments

.....

.....

.....

Teaching resources

Availability of Manila paper

Availability of felt pens

Availability of wall charts

Availability of text books

Availability of chalks and dusters

Availability of other teaching aids (specify)