IMPACT OF PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

By

MUDIBO S.O. CLEOPHAS

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

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DECLARATION

This research is my original work and has never been presented for a degree or other award in any other university.

Signature .... Date... 4th Nov. 2014

Mudibo S.O. Cleophas

E58/71861/2011

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University Supervisor.

Signature .... Date... 4th Nov 2014

Dr. Karen T. Odhiambo

Supervisor,

Psychology Department,

University of Nairobi.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this Research Project to the Almighty God for His steadfast love and mercy that endures forever.

I would like to further dedicate it to my family, led by my mother, Gaudencia, wife Josephine; my lovely sons, Athanas, Aaron and Alvin for their kind support and encouragement throughout my studies.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to establish whether there exists a relationship between parental involvement and academic performance among form three students in secondary schools in Kenya. The objectives were to find out the level of involvement of parents and the students' academic learning process and to establish the relationship between parental involvement and students' academic attainment.

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population of the study comprised of all form three students in secondary schools in Magarini Sub- County. 5 students per school from the seventeen sampled schools were used for the study, giving a sample of 85 students. The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire. The views of some selected teachers were also collected by means of questionnaires. Data was analyzed using quantitative statistics. The difference in the level of academic attainment between students whose parents were involved and those who were not involved was presented. All these were presented using tables and graphs with the aid of SPSS.

This research sought to examine the relationship between parent's level of involvement and its impact on the performance of students in secondary schools in Kenya. Theories show that cooperation at parental level leads to high achievement in academics. The research shows minimum involvement. This also shows there is no early influence on learners towards attaining early academic success. The result is low academic performance at a higher level, in this case secondary level schooling. The study revealed that to a greater extent, parents convey attitudes about education to their children during out-of-school hours. These attitudes are reflected in the children's classroom behavior and in the teacher's relationship with the children and the parents. This shows an orientation towards better performance in that parents' attitudes comprise a key dimension of the relationship between parents schooling.

The study further revealed that to a greater extent, parental involvement ensured and sustainable an intellectually stimulating environment that promotes and motivates their drive towards higher academic performance. This nurtures their talents and boosts their self-esteem. The study shows the need to emphasize the role that parents play in students' academic performance.

In addition, closer stimulating and responsive parental involvement leads to children staying longer in school, positively influences their career choices and progression and academic development values. It also leads to students' school readiness, adjustment as well as socio-emotional development of the children. These result in increased interaction with learning, hence increased academic performance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

TSC: Teachers Service Commission

DEO: District Education Office

KCSE: Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

KNEC: Kenya National Examinations Council

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Parent involvement is one factor that has been consistently related to a child's increased academic performance (Hara & Burke, 1998; Hill & Craft, 2003; Marcon, 1999; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). While this relation between parent involvement and a child's academic performance is well established, studies have yet to examine how parent involvement increases a child's academic performance McLoyd (2005)

Lareau, Annette. 1999) argue that since education influences parents' knowledge, beliefs, values, and goals about child rearing, it thus significantly influences their (parents') behaviours that are directly related to their children's school performance. Thus, students whose parents have higher levels of education may have an enhanced regard for learning, more positive ability beliefs, a stronger work orientation, and they may use more effective learning strategies than children of parents with lower levels of education. Conger et al, (2002), opine that attainment of higher levels of education by parents may be access to resources, such as income, time, energy, and community contacts, that allow for greater parental involvement in a child's education. Thus, the influence of parents' level of education on student outcomes might be positive.

Sirin, 2005; White, (1982). McLoyd's (1989; 1998) in their seminal literature reviews have also highlighted the relationship of poverty and low socioeconomic status to a range of negative child outcomes, including low IQ, educational attainment and achievement, and social-emotional problems. On the contrary, children whose parents have high education levels in most cases usually attend better, well-endowed schools with adequate teaching and learning resources, better teachers and are given individualized instruction, hence performing better.

Parental education is an important index of socioeconomic status, and as noted, it predicts children's educational and behavioral outcomes. However, McLoyd (2005) has pointed out the value of distinguishing among various indices of family socioeconomic status, including parental education, persistent versus transitory poverty, income, and parental occupational status, because studies have found that

income level and poverty might be stronger predictors of children's cognitive outcomes compared to other social economic status indices (Duncan et al., 1994; Stipek, 1998).

In fact, research suggests that parental education is indeed an important and significant unique predictor of child achievement. For example, in an analysis of data from several large-scale developmental studies, (Duncan and Brooks-Gunn, 1997) concluded that maternal education was linked significantly to children's intellectual outcomes even after controlling for a variety of other social economic status indicators such as household income. Davis-Kean, (2005)found direct effects of parental education, but not income, on European American children's standardized achievement scores; both parental education and income exerted indirect effects on parents' achievement-fostering behaviors, and subsequently children's achievement, through their effects on parents' educational expectations.

Corwyn and Bradley (2002) also found that maternal education had the most consistent direct influence on children's cognitive and behavioural outcomes with some indirect influence through a cognitively stimulating home environment.

Most of the experts argue that the low socioeconomic status of the family has negative effect on the academic performance of students because the basic needs of students remain unfulfilled and hence they do not perform better academically (Adams, 1996). The low socioeconomic status causes environmental deficiencies which results in low self-esteem of students (US Department of Education, 2003). Singh et al identified four components of parental involvement namely; parental aspirations for children's education, parent-child communication about school; home-structure and parental participation in school related activities.

Parental aspiration refers to the parents' hopes and expectations for the child's continuing education, ('parent-child *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social SciencesJanuary 2012, Vol. 2, No. 1 ISSN: 2222-6990* 199 www.hrmars.com/journals)

Communication' refers specifically to school related matters. Several studies have employed path analysis models to investigate how psychological maturation may mediate the relationship between parenting style and student achievement. These studies have hypothesized that when parents interact with their adolescents in a more authoritative way, the adolescents exhibit such behavioral patterns that are psychologically more mature (Glasgow, Dornbusch, Troyer, Steinberg, & Ritter, 1997; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989). They found that authoritative parenting leads to the adolescents taking greater self-responsibility for their work and attributing their success or failure to their perceived effort rather than to outside circumstances; consequently, those adolescents tend to have higher achievement.

Recognition of the valuable roles parents play is reflected in educational policies and current legislation, including No Child Left Behind Act, 2102(4) (2001), Education Act (2012), Education For All (2010), among others. These policies mandate that schools implement procedures that actively involve parents in the educational process (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005).

It is likely that these policies are based on the large body of research that has documented the substantial influence of parental involvement on students' academic achievement.

Although much research attests to the positive effects of parental involvement on student academic success, the effects of parental involvement on student academic outcomes have been differential depending on which aspects of parental involvement were investigated and which academic outcomes were studied. Parental involvement takes many forms including good parenting in the home, including the provision of a secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, good models of constructive social and educational values and high aspirations relating to personal fulfillment and good citizenship; contact with schools to share information; participation in school events; participation in the work of the school; and participation in school governance. The extent and form of parental involvement is strongly influenced by family social class, maternal level of education, material deprivation, maternal psycho-social health and single parent status and, to a lesser degree, by family ethnicity.

Gadsden (2003) says greater parental involvement at early stage in children's learning, positively affects the child's school performance including higher academic achievement.

Harderves (1998) review that family whose children are doing well in school exhibit the following characters: establish a daily family routine by providing time and a quiet place to study with the children and assigning responsibility for house hold chores; monitor out-of-school activities, for example setting limits on television watching, reduce time of playing, monitor the groups of friends the pupils walk with; encourage children's development and progress in school; that is maintaining a warm and supportive home, showing interest in children's progress at school, helping him or her with homework, discussing the value of a good education and future career with children.

These mixed findings might be due in part to the lack of a clear operational definition of parental involvement (Fan & Chen, 2001), as this construct is often defined in a non-specific manner (Powell-Smith et al., 2000). Parental involvement is generally referred to as parents' participation in their children's education with the purpose of promoting their academic and social success (Fishel&Ramirez,2005).

The quality of students' performance remains a priority for educators, parents, education policy makers and the general society.Many factors in the family background have some associations with students' success throughout school and in young adults' eventual educational and occupational attainment. Such variables include family structure (socio-economic status and intact/single-parent families), parental education level, parental involvement and parenting style (Jacob and Harvey, 2005).

Students who come from low-income and single-parent homes have significantly less school success than students from high socio-economic (Martini, 1995; Walker *et al.*, 1998) and intact families (Amato & Keith, 1991; Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Downey, 1994; Entwisle & Alexander, 1995; Heiss, 1996). This is, partly because, parents in such settings reported lower educational expectations, less monitoring of children's school work and less overall supervision of social activities compared to

students from high socio-economic and intact families (Jacob and Harvey, 2005). More educated parents are assumed to create environments that facilitate or stimulate learning (Williams, 1980; Teachman, 1987) and involve themselves in their children's school experiences and school environments (Steinberg *et al.*, 1992; Useem, 1992).

However, there are students who come from low-income and single parent homes who are high achievers and many students from high socio-economic and intact families who are low achievers. Students may also come from homes where the parents are highly educated and involved in their children's education, yet achieve poorly at school (Jacob and Harvey, 2005).

It is, all the same, gratifying to note that during the past three decades, the desire of parents to take an active part in the educational system and progress of their children in school has significantly increased (Friedman & Fisher, 2003). In addition, the Education Ministry's policy has encouraged co-parents, and increased their involvement, by establishing community schools across the country. Educational laws have been enacted, which allow parents to intervene in the curriculum of the school, in addition to activities already taking place within the school. Starting with choosing a school and classroom; becoming involved with parent committees; escorting/accompanying students to school and sometimes on school trips; to the declaration of strikes to protect the rights of their children to study; for instance the Kenya National Association of Parents. (Education Act 2012).

1.2 Statement of the Problem
The lack of concern by parents in the running and management of schools is worrisome (Mokete (1997) and Maphorisa (1987). As a result their impact on nurturing students towards academic achievement is minimal. This study attempts to find out the extent to which the parents' involvement affects their children's general academic success in secondary schools in Kenya.

Parent involvement is one factor that has been consistently related to a child's increased academic performance (Hara & Burke, 1998; Hill & Craft, 2003; Marcon, 1999; Stevenson &Baker, 1987). While this relation between parents' involvement and a child's academic performance is well established, studies have yet to examine

how parent involvement increases a child's academic performance. Moreover, few studies have examined parental involvement as a primary socializing agent, as direct predictor(s) of learners' senses of self-efficacy, engagement and intrinsic motivation, hence the need to carry out this research.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between the parent's level of involvement, and its impact on the performance of students in secondary schools in Kenya.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study would provide information useful for teachers, parents, school management committees, Ministry of Education, head teachers and parents on appropriate parameters against which the child's academic performance is pegged beyond the school or classroom factors like relevance in teaching aids and pedagogy. In the same breath, parents would be informed of how to provide or generate an intellectually stimulating home environment, leading to improved academic success. It would further mediate the child-rearing or general upbringing of the children by advocating for closer follow up and monitoring of the children's academic and social pursuits, modeling the children into not only responsible adults but also successful and independent after excelling in their academic work.

Results of the study will be utilized by education stakeholders on how to use parents' involvement level to maximize on students' learning hence enhanced academic performance. Finally, the conclusion reached in this study will institute further research in the area of home factors affecting the academic performance of the children both locally, regionally and internationally.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Specific objectives that would guide the researcher include:

a) To find out the level of involvement of parents and the students' academic learning process

b) To establish the relationship between parental involvement and students' academic attainment

1.6 Terminologies

i. **Parental Involvement;** In this context, it means taking an active role by the parent(s) in the education of their children with the purpose of promoting their academic and social success; by, for instance, including assisting in the assignment, following up on the children's progress at school among others (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005).

ii. **Academic achievement:** Performance and success in standardized national examinations (like the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education) at critical stages of student's life.

iii. **Predictors of academic performance:** Indicators of future (academic) success in the children's academic life by observing what, how he/she is presently performing; hence recommending relevant corrective measures.

iv. **Parent's responsibilit**y: Is a parent's or guardian's solemn duty to perform or carry out a given task to the expected standards; for instance the responsibility of the parent is to ensure the sustenance of an intellectually stimulating home environment for their children.

v. **Home environment**: Is the nature of the surrounding at home; one which will stimulate the child's cognition leading to improved academic performance.

vi. **Self esteem**; refers to a child's overall feeling of self-worth. It is the child's assessment of their worth based on their experiences, their interactions with others: parents, early childhood professionals, peers and their environment (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008).

vii. **Parental expectations.** The degree to which a student's parents hold high expectations of the student's promise of achieving at high levels.

viii. **Parental Style**. The extent to which a parent demonstrated a supportive and helpful parenting approach. In the studies included in the meta-analysis, most frequently this referred to a simultaneous ability to be loving and supportive and yet maintain an adequatelevel of discipline in the household. It also included styles in which the parent demonstrated such qualities.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to find out what other researchers have done in relation to the relationship between the parent's level of Education and involvement, and its impact on the performance of students in schools.

2.2 Related Studies

It has been increasingly recognized in the fields of education and psychology that parents have significant impacts on students' learning and developmental processes. Parental involvement in education has been a topic of interest for many years among those who are concerned with improving academic achievement for children (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997). After reviewing the literature, Henderson and Mapp (2002) indicate that student achievement is most commonly defined by report cards and grades, grade point averages, enrolment in advanced classes, attendance and staying in school, being promoted to the next grade, and improved behaviour.

Many researchers recognize the important role a strong positive bond between homes and schools play in the development and education of children (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009; Richardson, 2009; Sheldon, 2009; Edwards and Alldred, 2000; Henderson and Berla, 1994). The theories put forward have been supported, and reaffirmed, by numerous studies that have shown that good cooperation between schools, homes and the communities can lead to academic achievement for students, as well as to reforms in education. Research has also shown that successful students have strong academic support from their involved parents (Sheldon, 2009). Furthermore, research on effective schools, those where students are learning and achieving, has consistently shown that these schools, despite often working in low social and economic neighbourhoods, have strong and positive school-home relationships (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009; Sheldon, 2009). More importantly, these effective schools have made a real effort in reaching out to their students' families in order to bring about liaison and cooperation.

Bryk and Schneider (in Sanders and Sheldon, 2009) maintain that schools become successful when a strong and positive relationship among students, parents, teachers and the community has been established. All students are more likely to experience academic success if their home environment is supportive (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009; Henderson and Berla, 1994). The benefit for students of a strong relationship between schools and homes is based on the development of trust between parents and teachers. According to Bryk and Schneider (in Muscott et al., 2008), this trusting relationship occurs when teachers and parents respect one another and believe in the ability of the other person and his or her willingness to fulfil their responsibilities.

Research has regularly shown that with increasing parental participation in their children's education, students' success rate increases. According to the Department of Education (2004) in the United States, studies have shown that students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades, pass their class and be promoted; they are more likely to attend school regularly and graduate and go on to post-secondary education, irrespective of their socio-economic status. Jerry Trusty (in Henderson and Mapp, 2002) concurs with this, and claims that the level of parental involvement in high school influences the students' expectations to finish college. In addition, Obeidat and Al-Hassan (2009) maintain that not only do children with involved parents gain academically, but they are also more likely to show improved behaviour and to have better social skills.

In the national educational goals for the United States, the notion of partnership between family and school in order to prevent school failure for children is implicit (Christenson and Sheridan, 2001). Such partnership has been defined as a principal protective factor for children and is characterized as a form of safety net in order to promote children's education and their school experience. The goal of family involvement in their children's education is to strengthen learning and the development of children. It is beneficial for the students to have schools, teachers, parents and the community working together as a unity with the focus on students (Glasgow and Whitney, 2009). Since countless research strongly and consistently supports relationships between homes and schools, Corrigan and Bishop (1997) maintain that such liaison should no longer be regarded as an option, but rather as a necessity.

Gutman and McLoyd (2000) carried out research with the aim of ascertaining the parental behaviour of typical successful students and comparing them with students who were encountering behavioural and academic problems. Their findings suggest that parents of academically successful students used a more specific approach to assist their children with schoolwork. For instance, they had more supportive communication with their children than the parents of less academically successful students. In addition, they frequently checked their children's progress by contacting the school, and maintained positive relationships with school staff. Whereas, the parents of less achieving children seldom contacted the school. Sheldon (2009) concurs with this, and claims that parental involvement and a supportive home environment are no less important for academic success, than quality teaching and committed and caring teachers are.

Recognition of the valuable roles parents play is reflected in educational policies and current legislation, including No Child Left Behind Act, 2102(4) (2001) and the reauthorization of Title I. These policies mandate that schools implement procedures that actively involve parents in the educational process (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005). It is likely that these policies are based on the large body of research that has documented the substantial influence of parental involvement on students' academic achievement (Desimone, 1999; Domina, 2005; Fan, 2001; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Sirvani, 2007b)

Parental involvement has been documented as positively impacting students' Mathematics proficiency and achievement (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Sirvani, 2007b), gains in reading performance (Powell-Smith, Stoner, Shinn, & Good, 2000), as well as performance on standardized tests and academic assessments (Desimone, 1999; Domina, 2005; Jeynes, 2005).
 In addition, parental involvement was found to be related to fewer behavior problems in school (Domina, 2005), better attendance and class preparation (Simon, 2001), better course completion (Simon, 2001) and lower dropout rates (Rumberger, 1995).

 Fan (2001) showed that parental academic aspirations for their children had greater effect on students' academic growth while communication and volunteering in school had lesser effects, and contact with schools had negative effect. Moreover, Domina

(2005) found that attending conferences and parent organization meetings, volunteering and checking homework were positively related to students' academic achievement.

However, when examining achievement over time, these factors demonstrated negative relationships. Although much research attests to the positive effects of parental involvement on student academic success, the effects of parental involvement on student academic outcomes have been differential depending on which aspects of parental involvement are being investigated and which academic outcomes were studied. Researchers have incorporated the multidimensional conceptualization of parental involvement by identifying and studying specific components of this construct. For example, Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) assessed a hypothesized three-dimensional view of parental involvement consisting of behavioral, intellectual/cognitive and personal aspects.

Epstein (1995) provided a multidimensional definition by describing six types of parental involvement activities: parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, and decision-making and community connections. Similarly, Fan (2001) empirically identified a seven component solution for parental involvement: television rules, communication, contact with school, parent–teacher association, volunteering, and supervision and education aspiration.

Despite the research's support for the impacts of parental involvement on academic success, research addressing the relationship between parental involvement and student achievement motivation has been conducted less frequently. Generally speaking, research has indicated a positive link between parental involvement and students' achievement motivation and attitudes (Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2005).

However, evidence also suggests that different aspects of parental involvement have differential or even opposite effects on different elements of student achievement motivation. For example, students were found to be more engaged with school activities when their parents participated more frequently in school functions; however, they reported less engagement in school when parents initiated contact with school personnel more frequently (Izzo et al., 1999). Grolnick and Slowiaczek(1994)

discovered that not all aspects of parental involvement predicted student achievement motivation and called for further studies investigating various aspects of parental involvement and different elements of student achievement motivation.

Similarly, Merchant et al. (2001) raised the point that parental involvement at home and at school differentially related to student motivation and suggested investigations of more relational aspects such as parental involvement in academic and non-academic activities. Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2005) also suggested in their review that a wider range of parental involvement practices on student motivation should be investigated. Bandura emphasizes in social cognitive theory the construct of self-efficacy and its impact on learning, as this belief in one's own ability influences choice of activities and effort (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2006), engagement in the behaviours that are necessary to attain goals (Thomas, 2005), academic interest and motivation (Bandura, 1986, 1997), as well as growth of cognitive competencies and accomplished achievement (Pajares, 1996; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Zimmerman, 2000).

Self-efficacy consistently predicts academic achievement (Bong, 2008) due to its effects on effort and persistence, because students who demonstrate greater senses of self-efficacy are more likely to put forth the necessary effort and persist longer when facing academic challenges (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2006).

Both theories and empirical research studies argue the existence of a relationship between parental involvement and self-efficacy. Confirming the social environmental influences addressed in Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, empirical research has shown that children perceived a greater sense of competence when their parents were more involved in their education (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994), were more involved in school functions (Marchant et al., 2001) and had higher values for their children's education (Marchant et al., 2001).

Engagement has been defined differently in the literature by various researchers. It has been categorised into three types: behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement (for review, see Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). However, research mostly refers to behavioural engagement and emphasises factors such as

effort, persistence, concentration and attention (Birch & Ladd, 1998; Fredricks et al., 2004). Student engagement in school activities promotes academic achievement (Skinner, Zimmer- Gembeck, & Connell, 1998), increases graduation rates (Connell, Spencer, & Aber, 1994), decreases students' decisions to drop out of school (Alexander, Entwisle, & Horsey, 1997), improves student performance and increases positive expectations about academic abilities (Skinner et al., 1998).

Several studies have reported an association between parent–child relationship and student engagement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Hughes & Kwok, 2007). However, direct examinations of the effects of parental involvement on student engagement are few, as only a couple of studies were identified. Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, and Darling (1992) indicated that as parents demonstrated greater involvement in schooling and encouragement, high school students were more engaged across subject areas.

Intrinsic motivation, which exists within and drives the spontaneous behaviours of individuals, has been argued to be very important for adolescents' cognitive development (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Those who demonstrate intrinsic motivation engage in academic tasks due to the enjoyment of the tasks and the desire to learn. Studies have indicated that intrinsic motivation has positive associations with children's achievement (Renninger, Ewan, & Lasher, 2002), persistence and effort (Renninger et al., 2002), self-efficacy (Hannover, 1998) and achievement motivation (Deci, 1992; Schiefele, 2001).

The effects of parental involvement on intrinsic motivation are two-sided. According to cognitive evaluation theory, parental involvement can be informational or controlling. The informative aspect enhances students' intrinsic motivation, while the controlling aspect undermines students' intrinsic motivation (Amabile, DeJong, & Lepper, 1976; Greene, Sternberg, & Lepper, 1976; Plant & Ryan, 1985). For example, children's intrinsic motivation increased when parents received weekly information regarding their children's progress and how to help their children at home (Ames et al., 1993) and when parents encouraged and provided positive reactions to the grades their children received. In contrast, students' motivational orientations were negatively associated with parental surveillance of homework, as this was considered

to be excessively controlling (Ginsburg &Bronstein, 1993). It is worth noting that level of education of parents can impart positively on motivation.

2.2.1 Summary of issues arising

In conclusion, the literature on academic performance among children suggests that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively involved in their education (Fadeye 1985; Nyarko 2007; Nyarko and Vorgelegt, 2007). Some studies seem to neglect the issue of single- parenting as a variable. Generally such studies have tied academic performance of children to socio-economic status, parents' educational level, student attitudes to learning, school environmental factors, housing and residential experience (Win and Miller, n.d.; Donkor, 2010; Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq and Berhanu, 2011; Mahama and Campion, 2011; Insah, Mumuni and Bowan, 2013). What these studies failed to realize is that the variable family structure (particularly single parenting) is crucial in determining a person's academic performance.

However, studies that seemed to have focused on assessing the role single parenting on the academic performance of children have mostly used respondents from senior secondary schools and universities without taking time to consider pupils from the basic schools (Fry and Scher, 1984; Krein and Beller, 1988; Salami and Alawode, 2000; Eweniyi, 2005). The basic school pupils are nonetheless the most fragile because they are still in their formative years meaning any disruptions could have everlasting result on them. This creates a knowledge gap. Also, studies in Ghana have basically focused on the parental involvement in children's school activities (Donkor, 2010; Nyarko, 2011; Chowa, Ansong and Osei-Akoto, 2012) but not on how the family structure (e.g., single parenthood) affects their academic performance which equally is lacking in Ghana and the study site, Wa Municipality in particular: This makes it necessary to investigate influence of single parenting on children's academic performance using basic school pupils. This study is timely as the performances of pupils at the basic school levels are declining in recent times (The Statesman, 2011).

2.3 Literature of the study

2.3.1 Parental Involvement

The family makes critical contributions to student achievement, from earliest childhood through high school. Efforts to improve children's outcomes are much more effective if they encompass their families. When schools engage parents and students, there are significant effects. When parents are involved at school, not just at home, children do better in school and they stay in school longer (Henderson & Berla, 1994).

According to Henderson and Berla (1994), the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which that student's family is able to: create a home environment that encourages learning; express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; become involved in their children's education at school and in the community (p. 160)

Parent involvement in a child's early education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child's academic performance (Hara & Burke, 1998; Hill & Craft, 2003; Marcon, 1999; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Specifically, children whose parents are more involved in their education have higher levels of academic performance than children whose parents are involved to a lesser degree. The influence of parent involvement on academic success has not only been noted among researchers, but also among policy makers who have integrated efforts aimed at increasing parent involvement into broader educational policy initiatives. Coupled with these findings of the importance of early academic success, a child's academic success has been found to be relatively stable after early elementary school (Entwisle & Hayduk, 1988; Pedersen, Faucher, & Eaton, 1978). Therefore, it is important to examine factors that contribute to early academic success and that are agreeable to change.

2.3.2 Parenting practices

Researchers have reported that parent-child interactions, specifically stimulating and responsive parenting practices, are important influences on a child's academic development (Christian, Morrison, & Bryant, 1998; Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy, 2000). By examining specific parenting practices that are agreeable to

change, such as parent involvement, and the mechanisms by which these practices influence academic performance, programs may be developed to increase a child's academic performance. While parent involvement has been found to be related to increased academic performance, the specific mechanisms through which parent involvement exerts its influence on a child's academic performance are not yet fully understood (Hill & Craft, 2003). Understanding these mechanisms would inform further research and policy initiatives and may lead to the development of more effective intervention programs designed to increase children's academic performance.

Parents' prior beliefs of their children's ability and the causes parents infer for their children's achievement have been found to influence other aspects of their values and practices (Miller & Turnbull, 1986; S. Phillipson & S. N. Phillipson, 2007; Stevenson, Lee,Chen, Stigler, et al., 1990). It has been suggested that such prior beliefs derived from their children's past performance at home and at school (Graham, 1991; Pomerantz & Dong,2006), and hence, in turn affect parents' other affective responses. For example, it was suggested that parental academic expectations could be influenced by parents' perceptions of their children's ability (Furnham & Petrides, 2004; Furnham et al., 2002).

2.3.3 Parents' attitude on their children's education, teachers and school.
The role parents play in their children's education can have far-reaching consequences for children's socio-emotional development, school readiness, school adjustment, and academic performance. Parental engagement promotes parent–child, parent–teacher, and/or parent–school interactions and establishes parents as active participants in their children's learning activities. A positive relationship between parental involvement and students' achievement is supported in the literature. For example, parents' communication and participation in school is linked to higher teacher-reported scores in reading and mathematics for younger students, at Grades 3 through 5 (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

Parents convey attitudes about education to their children during out-of-school hours and these attitudes are reflected in the child's classroom behavior and in the teacher's relationship with the child and the parents (Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom,

Parental engagement can be equally important in developing children's early literacy and numeracy skills. As noted in a recent literature review (Saracho & Spodek, 2010), parents' reading age-appropriate stories to their children contributes to the development of children's listening comprehension skills, oral language skills, positive attitudes toward reading, larger vocabulary acquisition, and learning that text conveys meaning. Consequently, the findings show that greater parental engagement with storybook reading improves children's reading achievement in academic settings. Longitudinal studies demonstrate that children's reading and mathematics skills at the time of school entry predict higher reading and mathematics achievement in later grades, and that early math skills are a stronger predictor of later reading achievement than early reading skills are (Duncan et al., 2007). Although children's early literacy and numeracy skills can be developed both at home and outside the home, families are arguably the most important source in developing children's early reading and mathematics skills.

However several studies found that increased frequency of activities was associated with higher levels of child misbehavior in the classroom (Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999) hence negatively affecting performance,).

Increased parent's activities in schools, such as increased number of parent-teacher contacts, was associated with worsening achievement, Izzo et al. (1999)   , as increased contacts may have occurred to help the teacher manage the child's existing behavior problems.

2.3.4 Positive behavior of the child on education.

Parent involvement has been defined and measured in multiple ways, including activities that parents engage in at home and at school and positive attitudes parents have towards their child's education, school, and teacher (Epstein, 1996; Grolnick&Slowiaczek, 1994; Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000). Positive attitudes towards education and school are associated with the child's increased academic

performance (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, Cox, & Bradley, 2003). This positive attitude can result in high academic achievement in test scores. Positive behavior of the child will motivate the parent to be involved in their children's education hence high academic achievement.

In their cognitive evaluation theory, Deci and Ryan (1980, 1985) have also proposed that environments impact the development of intrinsic motivation. Within this framework, the importance of social environments is also recognized, as they can either enhance or hinder intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000b) based upon the interpersonal context in which rewards are delivered (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001).

When the environment conveys meaningful feedback in the context of self-determination, it is perceived as informational and enhances intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, aspects of the environment that are perceived as controlling, such as externally controlled rewards, controlling communication, deadlines and surveillance, pressure individuals towards specified outcomes and undermine intrinsic motivation (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993).

Recent research examining the associations between parent–child relationships and achievement motivation has provided empirical support for the motivational theories described above (e.g. Bong, 2008; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Lynch & Cicchetti, 1997; Wentzel, 1998) and has redirected educational psychologists' attention back to parents. However, few studies have examined parental involvement, a primary socializing agent, as direct predictor(s) of adolescents' senses of self efficacy, engagement and intrinsic motivation.

Although it has generally been suggested that parents have positive influences on their children's educational outcomes, much of the research has not fully considered the differential effects of various aspects of parental involvement on different elements of achievement motivation (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Doan Holbein, 2005). Therefore, more specific information is needed to understand which parental activities and behaviours contribute to promoting and shaping the development of adolescents' senses of Self-efficacy, engagement and intrinsic motivation.

2.3.5 Parents and Talent Development

Parents build on and shape their children's talent abilities by getting involved in their academic work. For instance, in an American context, gifted students' perception of their parental involvement and their income and education were highly associated with their academic achievement (Clemons, 2005).

Although the term talent development is not usually associated with academic achievement, Chinese parents in general have emphasized excellence in academic Achievement as crucial advancement in their children's development (Salili, Chiu, & Hong,2001; Salili, Chiu, & Lai, 2001). Chan (2005) found that despite his attempt to classify high ability as beyond that of academic achievement, the Chinese parents' and students' tendency to view excellence seemed to fall within the caveat of school performance.

Hence, Chinese parents' expectations and encouragement are linked with the Perceived academic skills, and creativity and leadership associated with those skills. Research on parenting also has shown that parent education is related to a warm, social climate in the home. Klebanov et al. (1994) found that both mothers' education and family income were important predictors of the physical environment and learning experiences in the home but that mothers' education alone was predictive of parental warmth. Likewise, Smith et al. (1997) found that the association of family income and parents' education with children's academic achievement was mediated by the home environment. The mediation effect was stronger for maternal education than for family income. Thus, these authors posited that education might be linked to specific achievement behaviors in the home (e.g., reading, playing).

2.3.6 Parental expectations, expressions and aspirations.

Parental expectations that stem from their beliefs and practices have been a dominant predictor of achievement (Neuenschwander, Vida, Garret, & Eccles, 2007; S. Phillipson & S. N. Phillipson, 2007). Though high-ability students could be high achieving academically, they need the same emotional and social support and encouragement as do students of lower-ability (Morawska & Sanders, 2008).

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Parental expectations and expressions of confidence in their children's ability and talent are paramount in promoting the potential that the children have in academic achievement (Chan, 2009; Furnham, Rakow, & Mak, 2002).

Furthermore, the nature and extent of parental involvement at home and at school play a crucial role in the development of their children's academic potential (Clemons, 2005; Morrison, 2009).

Parental aspirations and expectations are communicated, either implicitly or explicitly, to their children in their everyday interactions, which then directly or indirectly determine the way the children perceive education and perform at school (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002b; S. Phillipson, 2009a, 2009b).

High expectations enable children to achieve the best possible outcomes in both their academic achievement and their wellbeing. In a study by Schiff & Tatar (2003) most children reported that significant teachers – those making a positive difference – expect them to succeed. High expectations from parents, professionals and peers are linked to self-esteem, children's sense of agency and academic motivation. These factors in turn lead to educational success (Ahmed, et al, 2008; Patrick, Mantzicopoulos, Samarapungavan & French, 2008). These factors are discussed in detail below. Evidence shows that early childhood professionals' expectations impact directly on children's expectations of themselves, their academic aspirations and their self-perception (Rubie-Davis, 2006; Berzin, 2010). Motivation, self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy all interact in complex ways to determine a child's academic success and resilience (Uszynska-Jarmoc, 2007).

Potvin, Deslandes and Leclerc (1999) defined parental affective support as parentalPraise, encouragement, discussions about school and presence at school as audience that manifest themselves in parental involvement, which is critical for their children's overall development. Parental involvement at home and at school determines the mediation structure that occurs for their expectations to be transferred to their children (Epstein,1995; Georgiou, 1999).

Along the same line of research, parental academic expectations were found to predict their children's academic achievement (S. Phillipson, 2009a; S. Phillipson & S. N. Phillipson,2007). And usually, parents tend to have a higher belief of their children's ability and consequently, higher expectations of academic performance if their children show high ability.

Parental expectations are usually conveyed through their involvement with their children's everyday lives. Parents who have lower academic expectations of their children are most likely to be less involved in their children's schooling. Asian American parents, for example, who had higher expectations, were found to be more actively involved with students' home and schooling processes and vice versa (Hong & Ho, 2005).

Accordingly, Chinese parents who have higher expectations of their children's academic performance consider effort as an important achievement attribute and most always emphasize this attribute to their children in the course of their daily interaction.

The Davis-Kean study, however, found that the more highly educated parents showed higher educational expectations for their children and spent more time in constructive interactions with their children. These studies, in general, demonstrated that parental expectations and involvement were highly influential in determining how students worked towards their goals in academic achievement.

Fadeiye (1985) and Uwaifo (2008) found that differences in academic performance of children exist in terms of those from single parent and those from two parent families. Fadeiye (1985) in particular found that in two parent homes, both parents have roles lo play in child education. The father is to give the necessary tools for the educational advancement, while the mother is to supplement the father's efforts in this regard. Where the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the basic needs as well as supervised the academic performance of the child, the child will have poor academic performance.

High expectations from both early childhood professionals and parents can enhance children's resilience, achievement, motivation and self-belief (Gizir & Aydin, 2009; Ahmed, Minnaert, Van Der, & Kuyper, 2008). When educators have low expectations of their students it impacts directly on children's selfconfidence, belief in their own abilities, sense of agency and their academic outcomes (Rubie-Davies, 2006).

'High expectations for every child' also recognizes that each child is different and has a unique learning trajectory, meaning that each child will require unique support to reach his or her full potential (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Children's Fund & Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2006; Ireson, 2008; MacNaughton, 2003). High expectations can be achieved by: believing that each child is capable of learning; communicating high expectations to children and parents; taking responsibility for children's learning and reflecting on teaching practice. Strengths-based, differentiated learning environments give each child the opportunity to experience success, learn and develop.

2.4 Models of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement has been defined and measured in multiple ways, including activities that parents engage in at home and at school and positive attitudes parents have towards their child's education, school, and teacher (Epstein, 1996; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000). The difference between the activities parents undertake in and the attitude parents have towards education has been highlighted by several recent studies.

Research has established that increased frequency of activities was associated with higher levels of child misbehavior in the classroom (Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999), whereas positive attitudes towards education and school were associated with the child's increased academic performance (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, Cox, & Bradley, 2003).

Izzo et al. (1999) reported that an increase in the parent's school activities, such as increased number of parent-teacher contacts, was associated with worsening achievement, as increased contacts may have occurred to help the teacher manage the child's existing behavior problems. Parents convey attitudes about education to their

children during out-of-school hours and these attitudes are reflected in the child's classroom behavior and in the teacher's relationship with the child and the parents (Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993).

2.4.1 Mechanisms by which a parents' involvement impacts on academic performance

Research has found out that parents who have a positive attitude towards their child's education, school, and teacher are able to positively influence their child's academic performance by two mechanisms: (a) by being engaged with the child to increase the child's self-perception of cognitive competence and (b) by being engaged with the teacher and school to promote a stronger and more positive student-teacher relationship.

Perceived cognitive competence is defined as the extent to which children believe that they possess the necessary cognitive skills to be successful when completing academic tasks, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic (Harter & Pike, 1984). Previous research found evidence that higher parent involvement contributes to an increase in a child's perceived level of competence (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Holbein, 2005; Grolnick, Ryan, &Deci, 1991).

There are theoretical pathways through which children's perceptions and expectations of their cognitive competence are influenced by others ie; (a) performance accomplishments/performance mastery, (b) attitude reinforcement, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) emotion regulation (Bandura, 1977).

In addition, a child's increased perception of cognitive competence is consistently related to higher academic performance (Chapman, Skinner, & Baltes, 1990). Based on theory and previous findings, Gonzalez-DeHass et al., (2005) suggest that perceived cognitive competence be examined to explain the relation between parent involvement and a child's academic performance.

Walberg (4:399) concluded from an analysis of over 2,500 studies on learning that an academically stimulating home environment is one of the chief determinants of learning. From these studies, Walberg selected 29 which were conducted during the

last decade. He found commonalities which he called a "curriculum of the home" (4:400) which has an average effect on achievement that is twice as large as family socioeconomic status (SES). This curriculum includes informed parent-child conversations about everyday events, encouragement and discussion of leisure reading, monitoring and joint analysis of televiewing, deferral of immediate gratification to achieve long-range goals, expressions of affection, and interest in children's academic and personal growth.

Sattes (5:2), from a review of 30 studies on the connection between family background and school achievement, concluded that parent involvement factors such as reading to children, having books available, taking trips, guiding TV watching, and providing stimulating experiences contribute to school achievement. "The fact that family SES is related to school achievement doesn't mean that rich kids are born smarter. It means that, in more affluent families, children are more likely to be exposed to experiences that stimulate intellectual development."

Reynolds, et. al., (6) found that the most consistent predictors of children's academic achievement and social adjustment were parent expectations of their child's educational attainment and satisfaction with their child's education at school. Data for this finding were collected from the sixth year evaluation of the "Longitudinal Study of Children at Risk," an ongoing study of low-income, minority children in the Chicago public schools.

Clark (7:85-105) drew a sample of 1,141 high- and low-achieving third-graders from 71 Los Angeles elementary schools and analyzed parental data gathered through questionnaires. He found that parents of the high-achieving students set higher standards for their children's educational activities than parents of low-achieving students.

Recent research has shown that, particularly for students who have reached high school, the type of parent involvement that has the most impact on student performance requires their direct participation in school activities (8).

Steinberg's (8) three-year study of 12,000 students in nine high schools revealed that the following types of parent involvement draw parents into the schools physically and are most effective in improving academic achievement: attending school programs, extracurricular activities, conferences, and 'back to school' nights. It was concluded that "When parents come to school regularly, it reinforces the view in the child's mind that school and home are connected-and that school is an integral part of the whole family's life (8)."

In conclusion, research also shows that parental involvement does not only affect academic outcomes, but also non-academic outcomes, such as students' school attendance and their behaviour and attitude towards school (Henderson and Berla, 1994). Furthermore, studies suggest that parents who are involved, can assist their children with transition from one school level to another school level, or from one school to another (Sheldon, 2009).

2.5 Theoretical framework
2.5.1 Theoretical background
There are many reasons for developing and establishing a partnership between school, family and community, Epstein (2009). The main reason for such a partnership is to aid students in succeeding at school. Other reasons are, for example, to improve school climate and school programs, to advance parental skills and leadership, to assist families to connect with others in the school and the community, as well as assisting teachers with their work. All these reasons emphasize the importance for parents to play an active role in their children's education and to keep a strong and positive relationship with schools. This therefore forms the basis for this study.

2.5.2 Epstein's Framework
A framework containing six important factors with regard to parental involvement has been developed by Epstein and her co-workers at the Center on Family, School, and Community Partnership at John Hopkins University. This framework is based on findings from many studies of what factors are most effective when it comes to children's education.

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(Epstein, 2009). Those six factors are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community. *Parenting* pertains to helping all families understand the development of both the child and the adolescent. It also helps establishing a supportive home environment for children as students.

Communicating refers to how best to design and conduct an effective two-way communication that is school-to-home and home-to-school, about school programs and their children's progress. *Volunteering* applies to recruiting and organising help and support from parents for school programs and students' activities. *Learning at home* pertains to providing ideas and information to parents about how they can best assist their Children with homework and curricular related decisions and activities. *Decision-making* refers to including parents in school decisions and to developing parent leaders and representatives. *Collaborating with the community* pertains to identifying and integrating communities' services and resources to support and strengthen schools, students, and their families.

Each of these factors can lead to various results for students, parents, teaching practices and the school climate. In addition, each factor includes many different practices of partnership. Lastly, each factor poses challenges to involve all families and those challenges must be met. That is why Epstein (2009) considers it to be important for each school to choose what factors are believed to be most likely to assist the school in reaching its goals for academic success, and to develop a climate of alliance between homes and the school.

Even though the main focus of these six factors is to promote academic achievements, they also contribute to various results for both parents and teachers (Epstein, 2009). For instance, it may be presumed that parents will gain more self-confidence in their role as parents, they will show leadership with decision-making, they will have more effective and productive communication with their children with regards to school work, and will have more communication with other parents at the school. According to Henderson and Berla (1994), parents also gain a more positive attitude towards the school and its staff, and gain more confidence in assisting their children with homework, by being involved with their education. In addition, they are more likely

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to gather support for the school and its programs in the community and become more active community members.

For teachers, the benefits may be presumed to be better communication with parents, a deeper understanding of the family of their students and their situation, and more effective communication with both the homes and the community (Epstein, 2009). Henderson and Berla (1994) also claim that the schools will benefit by parental involvement by improved teacher morale, more support from families and higher student academic achievement. In addition, Clarke (2007) asserts that schools function best when parents and the community are active participants and have a sense of ownership of the school. Therefore, it is safe to say that these six factors not only benefit the students, but also their parents, teachers and the schools.

2.5.3 Summary of the Framework

As the discussion in this chapter has illustrated, there is a steady and growing body of evidence of how important parental involvement is in improving student's academic achievement. Parental involvement has a positive effect on test scores and grades in core subjects, such as reading, math and science. However, the effect of parental involvement is not only on the academic side, but also on the non-academic outcomes, such as school attendance, student behaviour in school, student attitudes towards school, and their social skills. It has been argued that these benefits hold for students of all ages, across educational, economic and racial and ethnic background. Thus, generally it is accepted that in order for students to excel in school, they need the support and encouragement from their parents.

The benefits emphasize the importance of getting parents involved. It also asserts the importance that parents feel both welcome and respected at school. The key factor to get parents involved, is to have an inviting school climate, where parents are frequently invited to be involved at school and where parents perceive themselves to be welcome. Therefore, school personnel need to establish a trusting relationship with parents and to regard them as partners in their children's education. Such relationship influences how parents become involved in their children's education and reinforces their willingness to be actively involved.

Studies have shown that parents consider their assistance with homework to be particularly effective for their child's academic achievement. In addition, students themselves, claim to do better in school, at least some of the time, if they receive help from their parents. The importance for parental volunteerism and participation in decision making at school has also been discussed. It is well worth considering whether parents feel more part of their child's education by volunteering and by participating in school decisions. By being a part of something, gives us ownership and therefore it is reasonable to assume that such ownership makes it more likely that parents will be active participants in their child's education. Since a myriad of studies have shown the importance of parental involvement in children's education, it is vital for both parents and schools to acknowledge that and establish such partnerships. Parental involvement not only influences students' academic achievement and behaviour but also whether students continue their studies or not.

To become involved in our children's education is something most of us can do, regardless of our socio-economic status and situation. For instance, we should all be able to monitor our children's homework and be supportive and inquisitive about their schoolwork. Therefore, schools should do their utmost to encourage and emphasize partnership between schools and homes.

Since there is so much at stake, it must be considered essential for schools to build a bridge between schools and homes, where parents feel welcome and valued and trusted by teachers. Teachers need to build a strong and trusting relationship with parents. It will be much more likelier for parents to become actively involved with their children's education, if the school cultivates a rich and inviting atmosphere at school. Research has shown us that this kind of a strong partnership between parents and schools is more likely to produce successful students who achieve academically. What I want to ascertain with my research is how parents of academically achieved students participate in their children' education, and what effect it has on their academic achievement. For instance, do the parents monitor their children's school work and progress; what are their expectations of their children's education; do they convey these expectations to their children; do they assist their children with homework; what kind of a relationship do the parents have with their children's teachers. These are some of the questions I want my research to answer.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section consists of research design, study site, research sample, sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures.

3.2 Research Design

This details the schedule and/or plan on how the researcher went about answering the research questions, Lewis and Thornhill (2007).

The study adopted descriptive research design. Descriptive research seeks to find answers to questions through the analysis of variables' relationships; what factors seem to be systematically associated with certain occurrences, conditions, or types of behavior, for instance how the level of education of the parent (independent variable) affects performance (dependent variable).

To this end, both qualitative and quantitative data was collected via help of questionnaires, hence a mixed-method approach. Questionnaires are a collection of items to which a respondent is expected to react to by writing (Oso and Onen, 2008). This approach is preferred because of its relevance to educational researches. (Hallinger& Murphy, 1993).

Use of questionnaires is preferred to interviews or any other means of data collection because it is cheaper and effective; one does not need to arrange for a convenient venue, time, among other formalities. One also need not be psychologically or emotionally prepared to respond to questionnaires as would be the case with the interviews. Since the respondents need not write their names on the questionnaire paper, confidentiality is assured, giving the respondent a platform to respond thoughtfully and freely, hence accurate information being gathered.

3.3 Study Site

The study was conducted in Magarini Sub-County of Kilifi County, Kenya. Magarini Sub-County is one of the seven Sub-counties that make up Kilifi County; others are: Kilifi North, Kilifi South, Kaloleni, Rabai, Ganze and Malindi. It, according to 2009 Census, has an estimated population of 177,241 people, sparsely distributed on its 6,979.40 km^2 surface. The Sub-County is further segmented into six wards: Marafa, Magarini, Gongoni, Adu, Garashi and Sabaki (IEBC, 2010).

The main inhabitants of this Sub-county are the Giriama-a scion of the Mijikenda sub tribe, though there are others like the Akamba, Agikuyu, Somalis, among others. Subsistence farming; crop and animal keeping, tourism and fishing are the main economic activities of the residents. It is basically semi-arid, characterized by erratic, occasional rains, windy and sunny climate, hence famine-stricken.

The residents thus, view education as the only vehicle that would transform the community, moving them out of the biting poverty that mostly afflicts the rural majority. It is against this background that there have been incessant efforts by various government and non-governmental organization traversing the entire sub-county mounting projects in schools that would motivate learners and improve the academic standards in the Sub-County. Some of these organizations are; the World Vision, Nature Kenya, Action Aid, Mulangaza, African Development Bank and the Red Cross. They have funded the construction of classrooms, wash rooms, provision of water, offered food, stationeries among other provisions that have gone along not only to improve educational standard of but also enhance the standards of living.

3.4 Target Population

Form three students and teachers from Magarini Sub-county constituted the target population for the study. These were drawn from all the seventeen schools in the Sub-county; three of which were private. The input of parents towards their children's academic success varies, among other variables that influence academic performance in standardized form three examinations. To this end, they had been posting varied performance indices, in spite of being in the same geographical location.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

Simple random sampling was used to obtain a sample from students and teachers in every school and descriptive survey design used to show the nature of relationships between the effects of the parents' level of education as well their participation in the children's education and students' academic success.

To obtain the sample data from teachers and students, in the Sub-County, four lists on teachers, and students by schools were prepared. From each list, the required number of respondents-for the teachers and students was selected using simple random sampling technique where papers with yes or no labels were placed in a box and potential respondents allowed to draw. For each yes drawn, the potential respondent was included in the sample data and the no drawn was excluded from the same.

The head teachers or their deputies were asked to identify, assemble and introduce the researcher to the students and teachers, explaining the purpose of the study. The questionnaires were then administered to those students and parents who were again selected using simple random technique as explained above. The respondents were expected to respond to the questions without assistance from colleagues under the supervision of the researcher and his assistants to retain control and to limit missing responses.

3.5.1 Sample Size Determination

All the 17 secondary schools in the Sub-county participated in the study in which five teachers and forty form three students were selected from each school depending on the school size using random sampling procedure thus translating into 45 teachers and 85 students. Form three students were selected to participate in the study because of their experience courtesy of their fairly longer stay in the school and being at a very crucial stage of the secondary school course.

Simple random sampling was used to select the sample size of the students, ensuring that all the students from the defined population have an equal and independent chance of being selected as a member of the sample.

On the students, the study employed the rule by Leedy and Ormod and (2001) that for a population more than 1,500 a sample of 10% is adequate. While on the teachers, the study used 30% of the total population as stated by Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) that 30% is well representative. This therefore resulted in a sample size of 130 respondents.

Table 3.1: Determining the sample size

Category	Targeted population	Technique	Procedure	Sample size
Form three students\	850	Stratified & simple random	10%	85
Teachers	151	Purposive	30%	45
Total	1300		10%	130

Source: (DEO, Magarini Sub-County; 2014)

3.6 Data Collection Instruments.

The data for the study was the responses from questionnaires for both the teachers and form three students.

The study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was sourced from the field through questionnaires while secondary data constituted the results of form three standardized exams administered in the past three years purposefully selected.

3.6.1Questionnaire

Questionnaires are a collection of items to which a respondent is expected to react to by writing (Oso and Onen, 2008). Kothari (2004) further observes that the use of questionnaire is a popular method for data collection in education because of the relative ease and cost effectiveness with which they are constructed and administered to large samples. Questionnaires give a relatively objective data. Though suitable to a literate population, they ensure confidentiality since respondents will be anonymous and this can yield honest responses.

The first questionnaire sought the teachers' information on students' performance in the previous internal, standardized form three exams in the school and the parents' input towards the realization of these results and general sustenance of the required academic standards. The teacher was expected to table the internal exams' analyzed results realized by the school in the past three years, detailing the parents' contribution towards the realization of the same, for instance, whether timely fee payment for their children; provision of adequate teaching and learning materials; following up on their kids' academic progress, including helping out with their homework and attending all the school academic clinics in the school have had any impact on the students' performance over the years. This was designed for all the five teachers (in every school) who participated in the study.

The second questionnaire sought the students' information on how their parents' involvement in their school work had influenced their general academic performance in the previous internal, standardized form exams in the school. Parents' participation through attendance of all school functions; provision of an intellectually stimulating home environment; hiring private tutors at home for the children; provision of commercial tests as well as revision materials; helping out on the assignments and general follow-up on their school work defined the students' questionnaire which was administered to all the form three students that took part in the study.

3.7 Validity and reliability of instruments

3.7.1 Validity of instruments

Validity is the extent to which research instruments measure what they are intended to measure (Oso and Onen, 2012). According to (Orodho 2004), validity is the degree to which results obtained from a study actually represents the phenomena under study. It ensures that research instruments are relevant to the objectives of the study. The validity of research instruments would be determined through consulting and discussing with the project supervisor.

To ensure validity of the instruments, the questionnaires were given to experts in educational psychology and educational administration to check through for face validity and determine how well the items measured the constructs in the study.

Besides, a pilot study was conducted in the researcher's school set-up and one other secondary school in the sub-county before the instruments were used to collect the data for the study. The piloted school was not used during real research.

The pilot study also helped to identify the anticipated challenges the researcher and respondents alike would encounter. The questionnaires were then revised before preparing the final copy for the whole sub-county.

3.7.2 Reliability of instruments

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument supplies consistent results or data after repeated trials (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). Reliability of measurement concerns the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results over a number of repeated trials (Orodho, 2004).

The reliability of the questionnaires was improved through split-half reliability method. The score obtained from the two sets of questionnaires was then analyzed using the Pearson product moment correlation co – efficient formula. A high correlation co – efficient of 0.5 and above implied that the instruments were reliable.

3.8 Data collection Procedure

After several submissions of proposal write-up, by the researcher, the final one as eventually approved and hence granted permission to go to the field and collect data. After this approval, the researcher obtained an introduction letter from the University of Nairobi, though the supervisor, to obtain a research permit from the Ministry of Higher Education. The researcher further sought consent from the local education office, District Education Office, Magarini Sub-county to carry out research within the Sub-county. The researcher then visited the participating schools for familiarization and to obtain permission from each head teacher to conduct the proposed research in the school at an agreed day or time.

The researcher then visited each sampled school to collect data from the sampled teachers and form three students. The researcher administered questionnaires to the teachers and students, allowing them adequate time to respond appropriately. The researcher also assured the respondents of total confidentially and guarantee of no

victimization from the information given. The researcher then collected completed questionnaires at the end of the exercise each day from each school for purposes of data analysis. Finally, the respondents were not required to write their names on the research tools to enhance confidentiality.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis

After obtaining the results and responses the sample data was first coded and tabulated. The resulting template was used to create a soft copy in form of a data file in SPSS and Excel programs. The created data file was then used in creating information through the use of descriptive statistics. The descriptive procedures were used to measure distribution tendencies (aggregation and dispersion) in the sample data for accurate description.

The resulting descriptive information was then used to make decisions on which inferential statistical procedure (Parametric or non-parametric) was most appropriate in generalization with regards to measuring association or differences at stated confidence levels.

In association, the study used correlation coefficients (either Pearson's r or Spearman's rs) as a measure of strength of association.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on parents' involvement and its influence on student academic achievement. The sample of the study comprised of 45 teachers and 80 students within Magarini Sub-County of Kilifi County.

The instruments of the study were questionnaires for both the teachers and the students. The presentation and discussions follows the objectives of the study which were to:

a) To find out the level of involvement of parents and the students' academic learning process

b) To find out the difference in students' academic rating between students whose parents are involved and those whose parents are not involved

4.2 Respondents' response rate.

The study had 45 questionnaires for teachers and 85 for students targeting the same amount of responses. The response to the study was 30 from the teachers and 60 from the students. This implied that the study had a 66.67 % response rate from teachers and a 70.59 % response rate from students.

4.3 Teachers' demographic information

To establish the characteristics of the respondents in the study their demographic profiles were sought and are presented in the table, 4.1.

Table 4.1: Demographic information of teachers

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	18	60
Female	12	40
Total	30	100
Age		
20-30 years	12	40
31-40 years	11	36.7
41-50 years	5	16.7
Over 50 years	2	6.7
Total	**30**	**100**
Teaching experience		
Less than 5 years	9	30
6-10 years	13	43.3
11-15 years	6	20.0
Over 15 years	2	6.7
Total	**30**	**100**
Professional qualification		
Diploma	3	10
Degree	22	73.3
Masters	4	13.3
Ph.D	1	3.3
Total	**30**	**100**

4.3.1 Distribution of teachers based on gender

The results indicate that on the gender of the teachers 18 (60%) of the sample used were males while 12 (40%) were females. This enabled the researcher to examine the opinion of male and female teachers on the influence of parental involvement on students' academic performance equally. This information can further be represented on the histogram as follows;

Figure 4.1: Bar graph showing teachers' gender

GENERAL
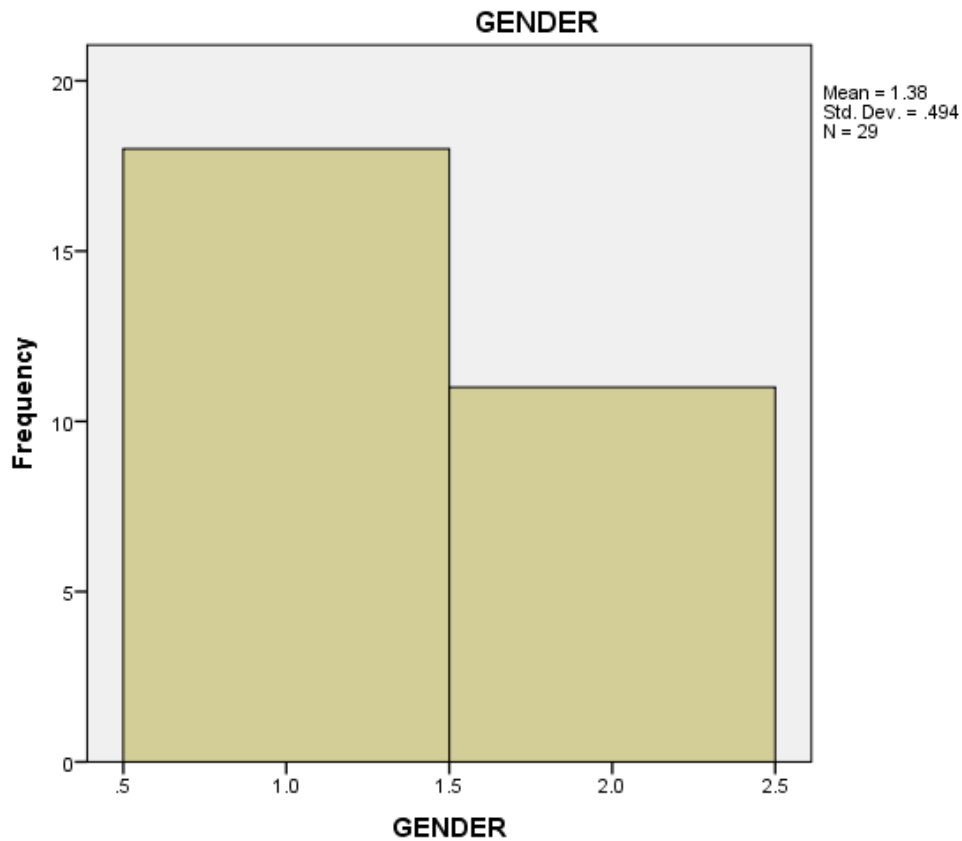
KEY:

Male…………………… 1

Female………………….2

4.3.2 Age of the teachers

On age majority of the teachers in the sample 12 (40%) were aged between 20-30 years, 11(36.7%) were between 31-40 years, 5 (16.7%) were between 41-50 years while the remaining 2(6.7%) were over 50 years. This can be interpreted to mean cumulatively 23 (76.7%) many teacher are aged between 20-40 years an age bracket for maximum teacher performance in class. This information can further be represented on a bar graph as follows;

Figure 4.2: Bar graph showing distribution of teachers based on their age
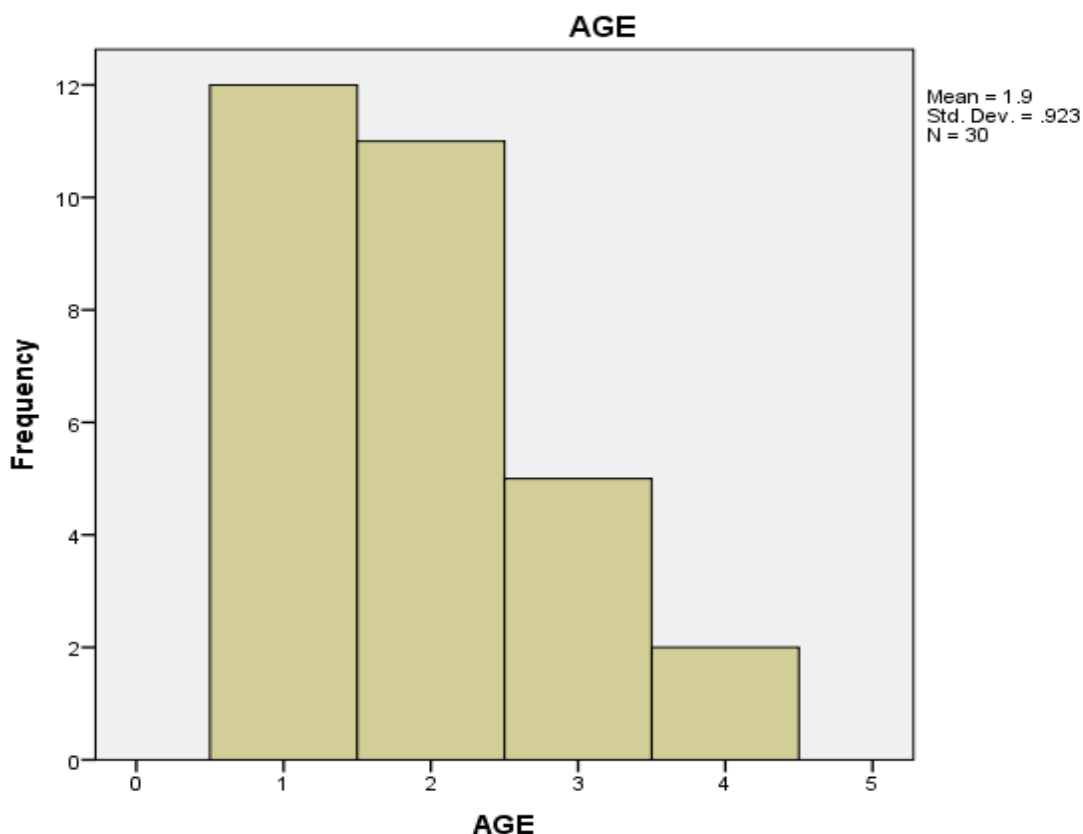
KEY:

20-30 Years…………………………… 1

31-40 Years……………………….…..2

41-50 Years……………………………3

Over 50 Years………………………… 4

4.3.3 Professional qualification of the teachers

On teacher education and training majority of the teachers 22 (73.3%) had an undergraduate degree, 3 (10%) had qualified with a diploma in education, 4 (13.3%) possessed master's degree while the remaining 1 (3.3%) had a doctorate degree. This can be interpreted to mean that all teachers in the Sub-county possess qualifications as outlined in the Ministry of Education guidelines that for one to teach in secondary school a minimum grade of a diploma are necessary. This can further be represented on a bar graph as shown below;

Figure 4.3: Bar graph showing distribution of teachers based on their professional qualifications
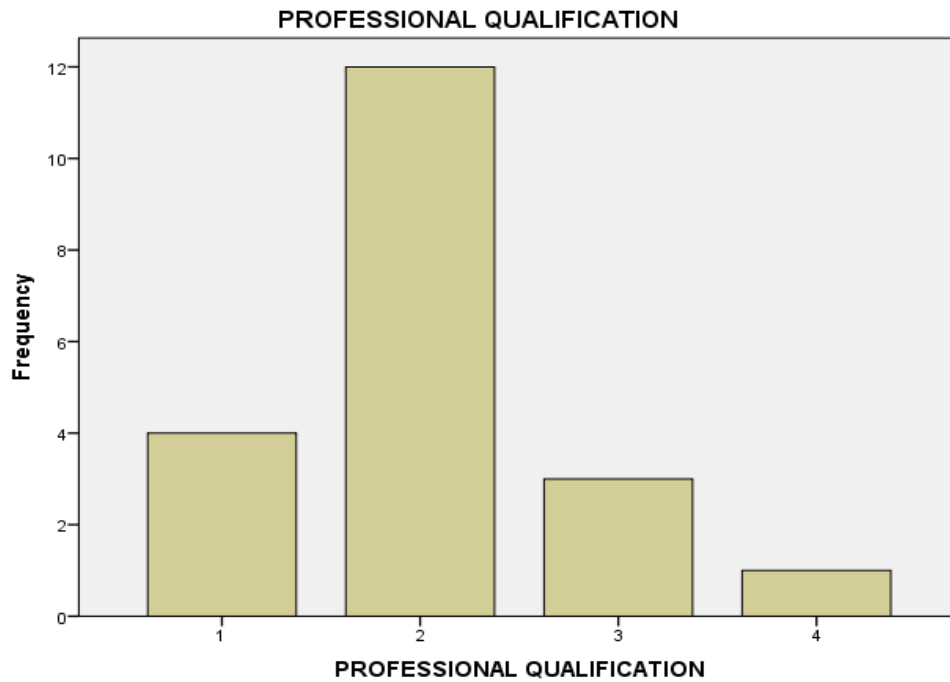
KEY:

Diploma……………………..……… 1

Bachelors'……………………………2

Masters'……………………….……..3

Ph.D…………………………………… 4

4.3.4 Experience of the teachers

Results on experience of teachers show that majority of the teachers 13 (43.3%) had taught between 6-10 years, 9 (30%) had been in class in less than five years, 6 (20%) had taught between 11-15 years while the rest 2 (6.7%) had an experience of over 15 years. This could be interpreted to mean that students performance based on teacher experience was somehow uniform since majority the teachers of the 21(70%) had experience of over 5 years. This paved way to investigate the difference in educational attainment of students based on whether their parents were involved or not. This can further be represented on a bar graph as shown below;

Figure 4.4: Bar graph showing distribution of teachers based on their length of service/experience
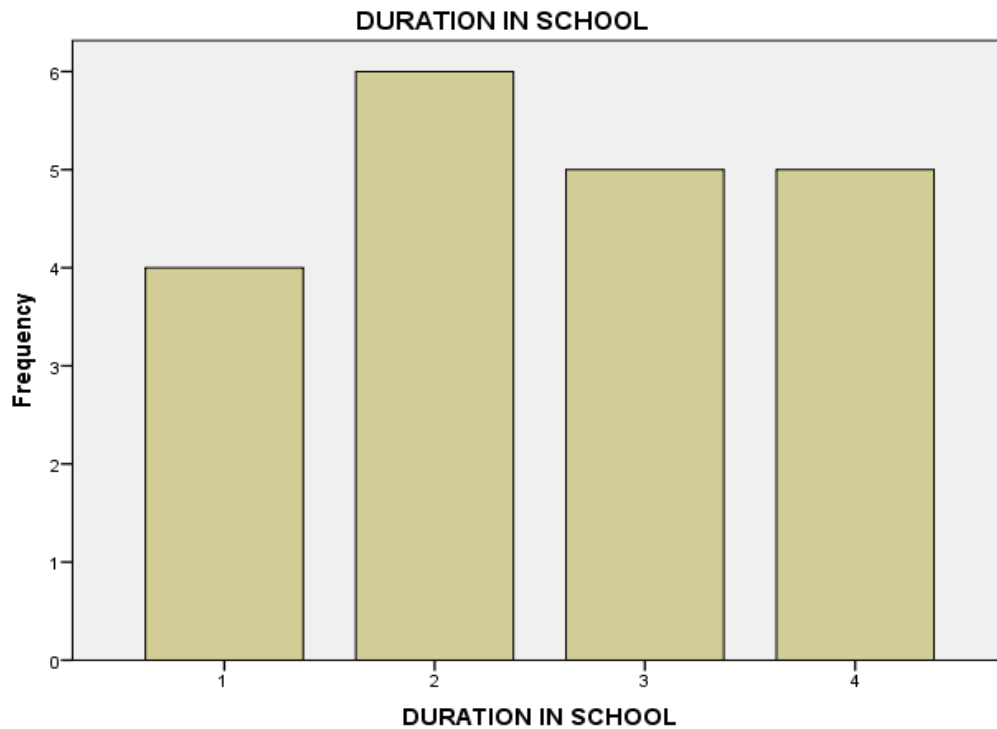
KEY:

Less than a year………………………… 1

Over 10 years………………………………2

1-3 years……………………...…………..3

3-10 years…………………………………… 4

4.4 Demographic characteristics of students

The study sought to establish the background information of the respondents. The findings were as presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Showing the students' demographic information

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	29	48.3
Female	30	50.0
Total	60	100
Age		
Below 14 years	4	**6.7**
15-16 years	20	**33.3**
17-18 years	22	**36.7**
19-20 years	6	**10.0**
Over 21 years	8	13.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Length of stay		
Less than a year	**4**	**6.7**
1 year	**12**	**20.0**
2-3 years	**43**	**71.7**
Over 3 years	**1**	**1.7**
Total	**60**	**100**

4.4.1 Gender of the students

The results indicate that on the gender of the students 30 (50%) of the sample used were males while 30 (50%) were females. This enabled the researcher to examine the opinion of boys and girls on the influence of parental involvement on students' academic performance equally. It can be interpreted to mean that there was no bias in sampling. This information can further be graphically represented as follows;

Figure 4.5: Histogram showing the distribution of students based on gender
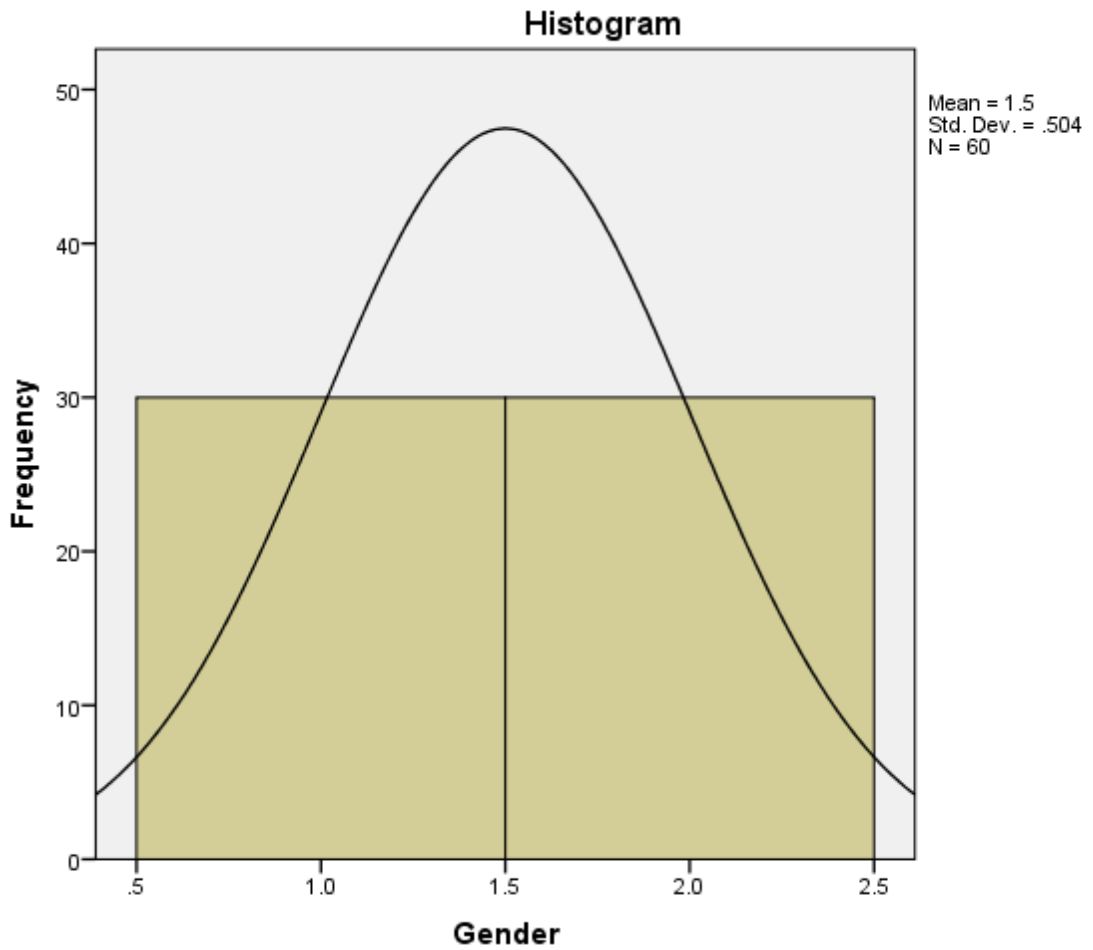
KEY:

1…………………………… Male

2…………………………… Female

4.4.2 Age of the students

On age majority of the students in the sample 28 (46.7%) were aged between 17-18 years, 20 (33.3%) were between 15-16- years, 4 (6.7%) were 14 years and below while the remaining 8 (13.3%) were over 18 years. This can be interpreted to mean most of the students were in their right age of study.

Figure 4.6: Bar graph showing distribution of students based on their ages
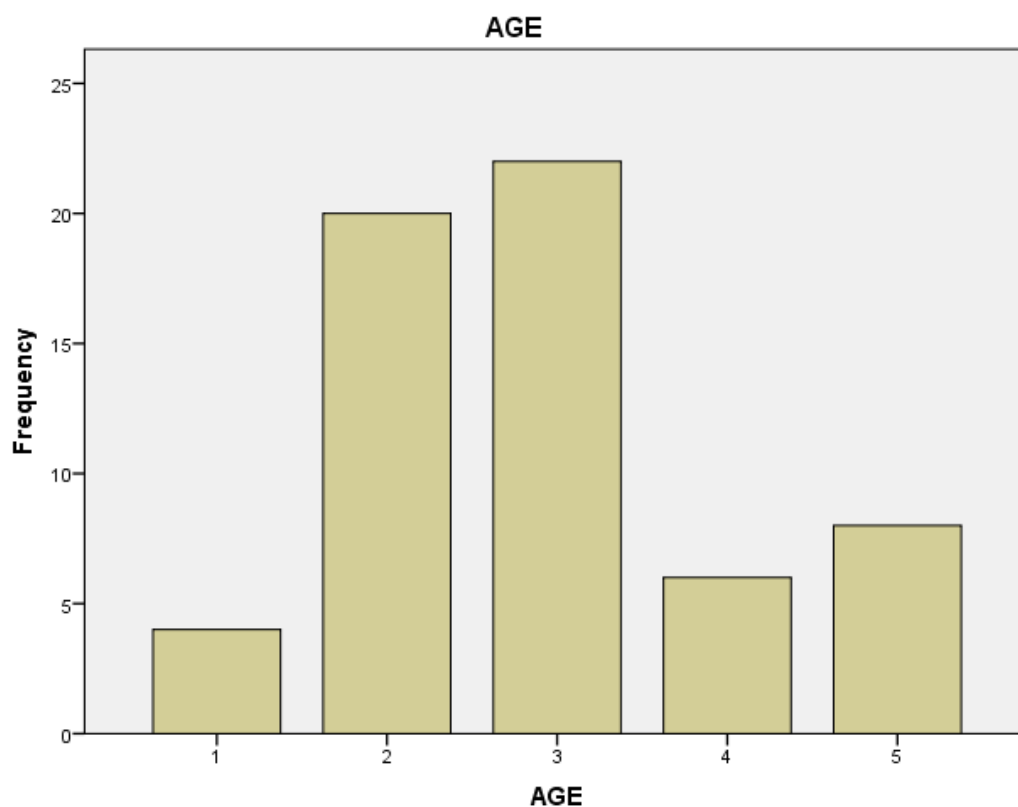
KEY:

1……………………………… below 14 years

2……………………………… 15-16 years

3……………………………… 17-18 years

4……………………………… 19-20 years

5……………………………… over 21 years

4.4.3 Students' duration of study in their respective schools

According to the study majority of the students 36 (60%) had been in their current schools for up to 3 years, 12 (20.0%) had stayed in their schools for between 1-2 years, 4 (6.7%) for less than one year and 8 (13.0%). This could be due to the small course time limit at the secondary schools as outlined in the education system.

Figure 4.7: Bar graph showing students' duration in their respective schools
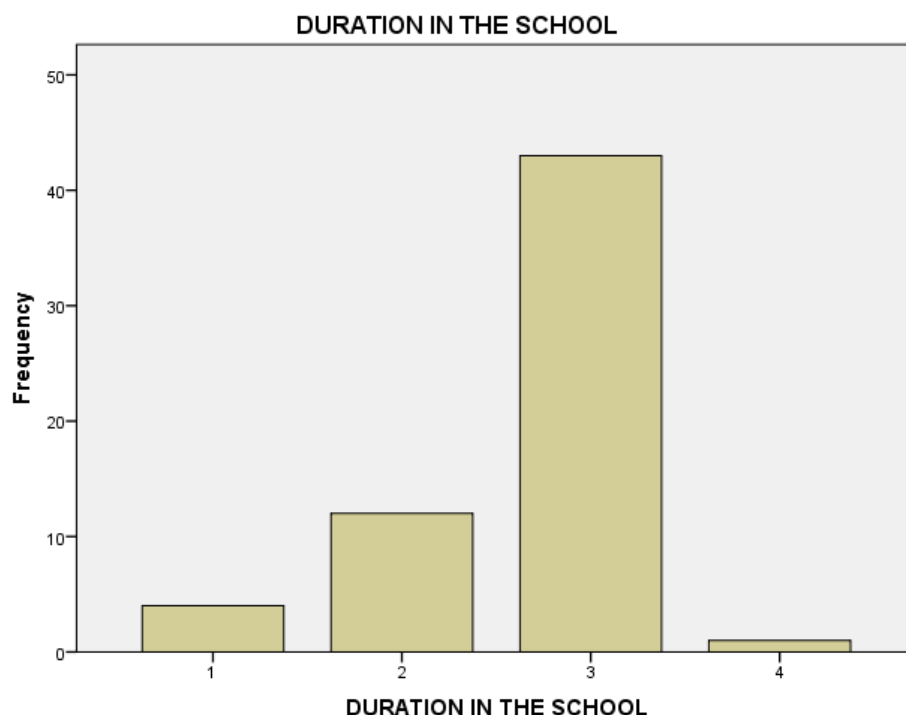
KEY:

1…………………………… Less than a year

2…………………………… 1 year

3…………………………… 2-3 years

4…………………………… over 3 years

4.5 Specific information

The researcher sought to find the role of parental involvement on students' academic performance in day secondary schools in Magarini Sub-county and the results were as tabulated below.

4.5.1 The level of involvement of parents and the students' academic learning process

The first objective was to investigate the extent to which the level of involvement of parents had on students' academic learning process. Teachers and students were asked to give their views on how they felt on the effect of parental involvement on students' academic learning and performance on a scale of 5: 1 Strongly disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Undecided, 4 Agree and 5 Strongly Agree. The descriptive results for the teachers are presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: The level of involvement of parents and the students' academic learning process

Descriptive Statistics							
Attribute	N	Range	Min	Max	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Close parental monitoring and child's positive behavior	20	4	1	5	72	3.60	1.046
Parents' prior beliefs of their children's ability and child's performance	20	4	1	5	84	4.20	1.152
Parents positive attitude and child's academic performance	20	4	1	5	77	3.85	1.226
Parents increased frequency of activities in school and child performance	20	4	1	5	87	4.35	.988
Students' perception of their parental involvement, their income and education on academic performance	20	4	1	5	85	4.25	1.209
Parental expectations and expressions of confidence in their children's ability on performance	20	3	2	5	88	4.40	.940
Parental attendance of conferences and organization meetings on child's performance	20	4	1	5	84	4.20	.894
Frequency of parent-teacher contacts and students' academic performance	20	4	1	5	79	3.95	1.146
parent–child relationship on student engagement and students' performance	20	4	1	5	77	3.85	1.387
parental surveillance of homework and students' academic performance	20	4	1	5	73	3.65	1.387
Parental intrinsic motivation and students' academic performance	20	4	1	5	70	3.50	1.277
Valid N (list-wise)	20						

Some of these attributes' information can further be graphically represented as follows;

Figure 4.8 (a): Bar graph showing teachers' responses how close parental monitoring by the parents affects the child's behavior and academic performance

Close parental monitoring and child's positive behaviour

KEY:
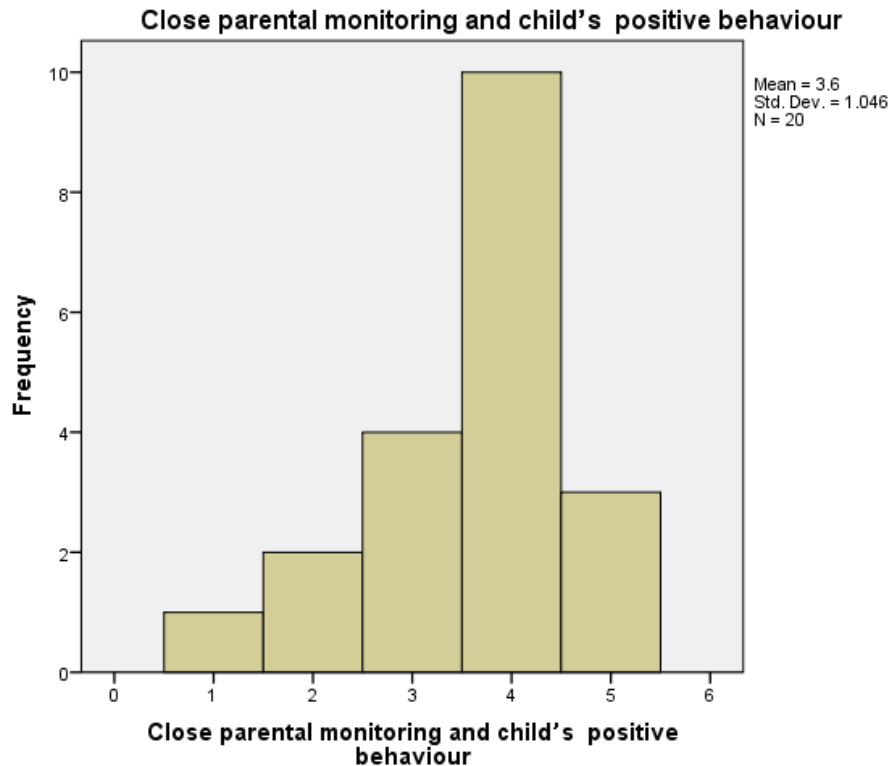
1…………………………… Strongly disagree

2…………………………… Disagree

3…………………………… Undecided

4…………………………… Agree

5…………………………… Strongly agree

Results of the study revealed that close parental monitoring had an effect on the child's positive behavior (M=3.60 and SD=1.064) .Close parental monitoring keeps the child on the run, fearing reprisals and living to the parents' expectations.

Figure 4.8 (b): Bar graph showing teachers' responses how parents' prior beliefs of their children's ability affect the children's academic performance

Parents' prior beliefs of their children's ability and child's performance

Mean = 4.2
Std. Dev. = 1.152
N = 20

KEY:
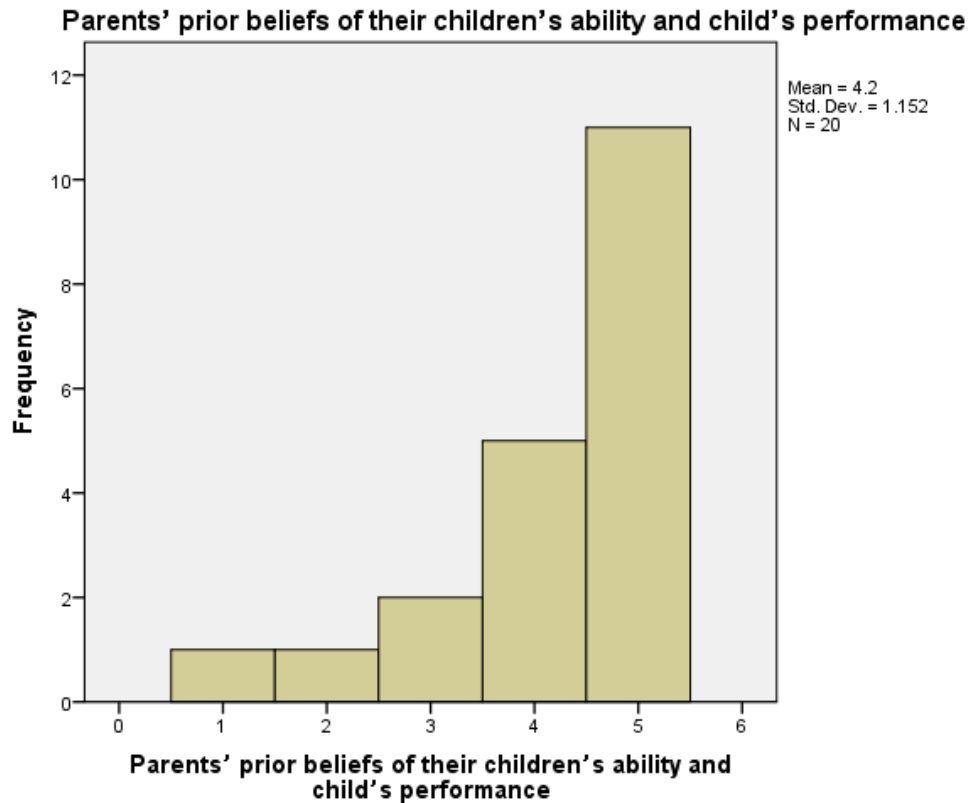
1…………………………… Strongly disagree

2…………………………… Disagree

3…………………………… Undecided

4…………………………… Agree

5…………………………… Strongly agree

The results also revealed that parents' prior beliefs of their children's ability had a positive effect on performance (M=4.20 and SD=1.152) further confirming what had been discovered earlier that parental academic expectations could be influenced by parents' perceptions of their children's ability (Furnham & Petrides, 2004; Furnham et al., 2002). This instils confidence in the children, keeping them focused and true to their parents' expectations.

Figure 4.8 (c): Showing teachers' responses on how parents' positive attitude towards the children's education affects their academic performance

Parents positive attitude and child's academic performance

KEY:
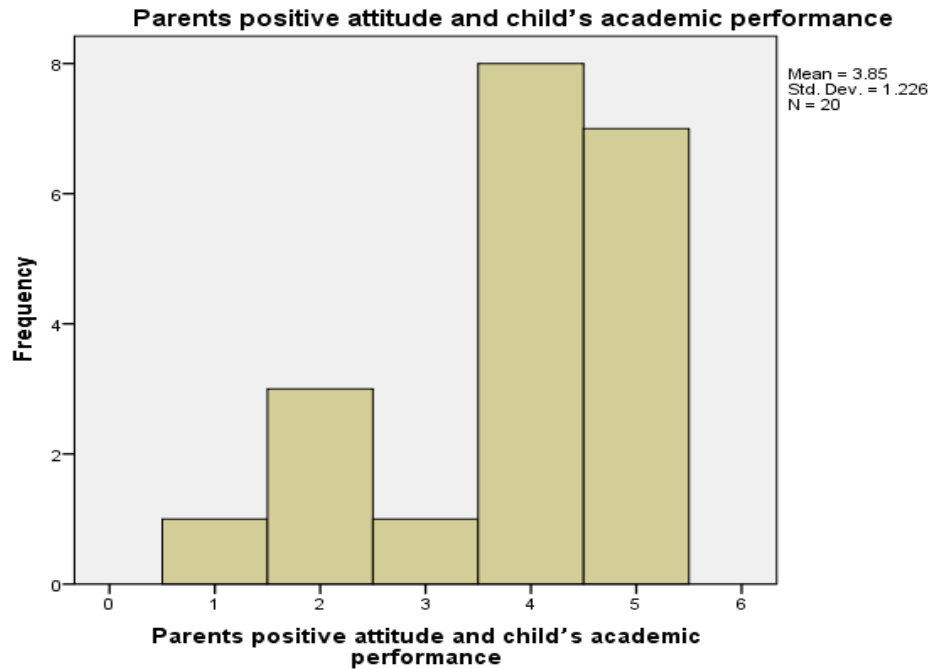
1……………………………… Strongly disagree

2……………………………… Disagree

3……………………………… Undecided

4……………………………… Agree

5……………………………… Strongly agree

It is evident that parents' positive attitude greatly influences child's academic performance (M =3.85 and SD=1.226). This is in line with previous results which established that positive attitudes towards education and school are associated with the child's increased academic performance (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, Cox, & Bradley, 2003).

Figure 4.8 (d): Showing teachers' responses on parents' participation in the school activities affects the children's academic performance

Parents increased frequency of activities in school and child performance

KEY:
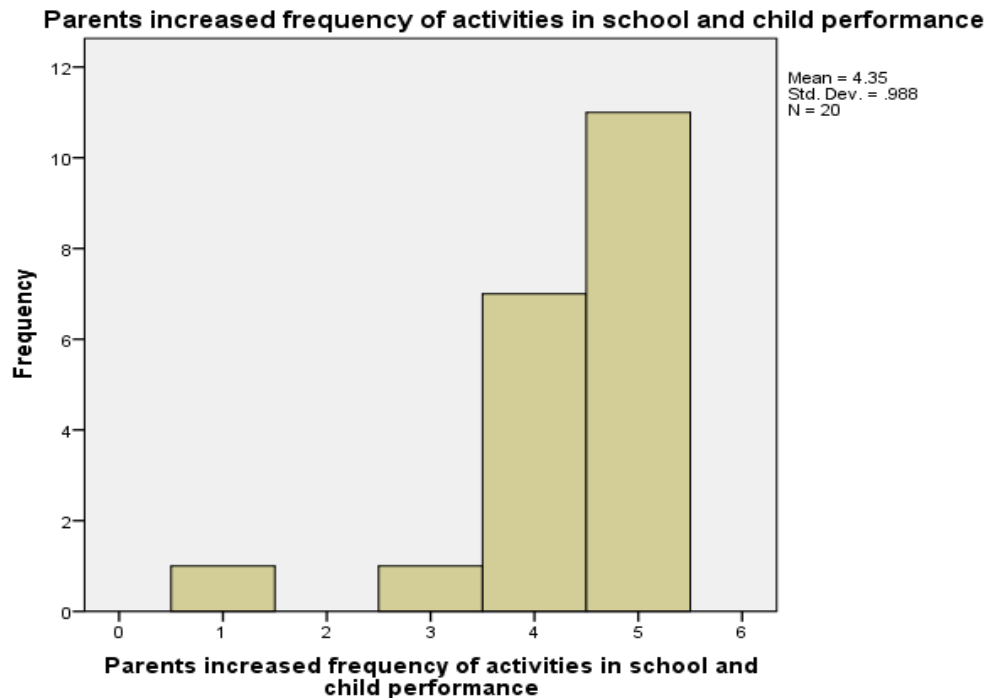
1……………………………… Strongly disagree

2……………………………… Disagree

3……………………………… Undecided

4……………………………… Agree

5……………………………… Strongly agree

Parents' increased frequency of activities in school, as observed from the findings had a positive impact on students' academic performance (M=4.35 and SD = 0.988) as it kept the child focused on the envisaged academic goals as frequently reminded by parents and teachers.

However, this was in sharp contrast with earlier research which found out that increased parent's activities in schools, such as increased number of parent-teacher contacts, was associated with worsening achievement, Izzo et al. (1999) .

Figure 4.8 (e): Showing teachers' responses on how parents' perception about their children's education affects the children's academic performance

KEY:
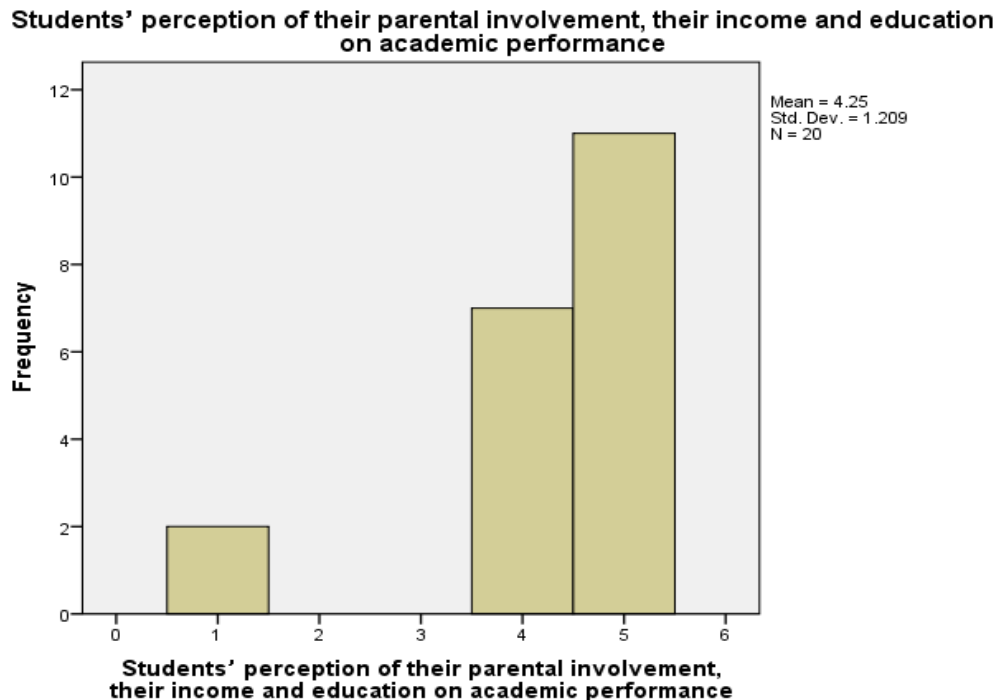
1…………………………… Strongly disagree

2…………………………… Disagree

3…………………………… Undecided

4…………………………… Agree

5…………………………… Strongly agree

It was revealed through the findings that students' perception of their parental involvement, their income and education positively influences students' academic performance (M=4.25 and SD=1.209). This was in agreement with earlier research in American that gifted students' perception of their parental involvement and their income and education were highly associated with their academic achievement (Clemons, 2005). Such parents would enrich their children's environment through provision of adequate learning materials, hiring of private tutors and adequate exposure to intellectually stimulating materials and/or environment.

Figure 4.8 (f): Showing how parents' intrinsic motivation of their children affects the children's academic performance

Parental intrinsic motivation and students' academic performance

KEY:
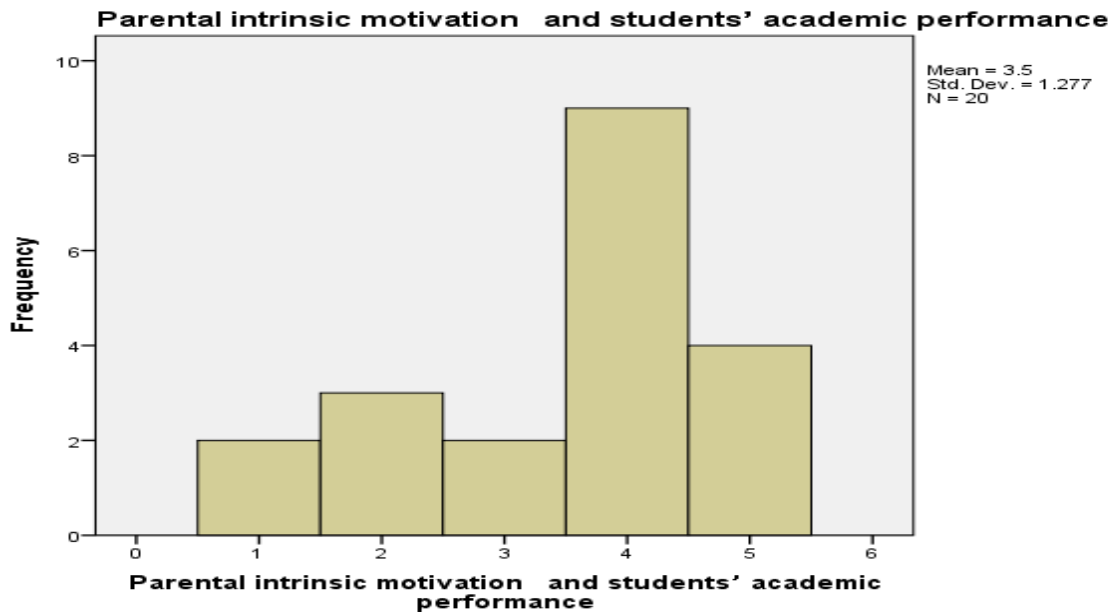
1…………………………… Strongly disagree

2…………………………… Disagree

3…………………………… Undecided

4…………………………… Agree

5…………………………… Strongly agree

Further analysis of the results revealed that parental expectations and expressions of confidence in their children's ability positively influenced academic performance (M=4.40 and SD=0.94) which was in line with a previous study which established that Parental expectations and expressions of confidence in their children's ability and talent are paramount in promoting the potential that the children have in academic achievement (Chan, 2009; Furnham, Rakow, & Mak, 2002).

To buttress this further is Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002b; S. Phillipson, 2009a, 2009b) who agree that parental aspirations and expectations are communicated, either implicitly or explicitly, to their children in their everyday interactions, which then directly or indirectly determine the way the children perceive education and perform at school.

Further evidence shows that early childhood parents and professionals' expectations impact directly on children's expectations of themselves, their academic aspirations and their self-perception (Rubie-Davis, 2006; Berzin, 2010). Motivation, self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy all interact in complex ways to determine a child's academic success and resilience (Uszynska-Jarmoc, 2007).

In conclusion, high expectations from parents, professionals and peers are linked to self-esteem, children's sense of agency and academic motivation. These factors in turn lead to educational success (Ahmed, et al, 2008; Patrick, Mantzicopoulos, Samarapungavan & French, 2008).

4.6 Response of students on the level of involvement of parents and the students' academic learning process.

The objective of the study was to find out level of involvement of parents on the students' academic learning process. Students were asked to give their opinions based on the extend at which their parents are involved on a scale of: 1-Never, 2-rarely, 3-occasionally and 4 -always. The descriptive result is presented in the table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Students' response on the level of involvement of parents and the students' academic learning

Key: N-Never, R-Rarely, O-Occasionally, A-Always, M-Mean, %-Percent, SD-Standard deviation

Attribute		N	R	O	A	Total	M	%	SD
Parent checks on my home work	F	5	32	18	5	60	2.38	47.6	0.761
	%	8.3	53.3	30.0	8.3	100			
Parent buys tests for me to do at home	F	42	13	5	0	60	1.38	27.6	0.640
	%	70.0	21.7	8.3	0	100			
Parent hires for me tutors during school holidays	F	41	15	3	1	60	1.40	28.0	0.669
	%	68.3	25.0	5.0	1.7	100			
Parent comes to school to discuss my academic progress with my teachers	F	33	19	7	1	60	1.60	32.0	0.764
	%	55.0	31.7	11.7	1.7	100			
Parent punishes me when I underperform	F	30	24	5	1	60	1.62	32.4	0.715
	%	50.0	40.0	8.3	1.7	100			
Parent advises me on my career prospects	F	33	18	8	1	60	1.62	32.4	0.783
	%	55.0	30.0	13.0	1.7	100			
Parent checks on my report card when school closes	F	23	20	12	5	60	1.98	39.6	0.965
	%	38.3	33.3	20.0	8.3	100			

Some of these attributes' information can further be graphically represented as follows;

Figure 4.9 (a): A histogram showing whether parents check on their children's home work

KEY:
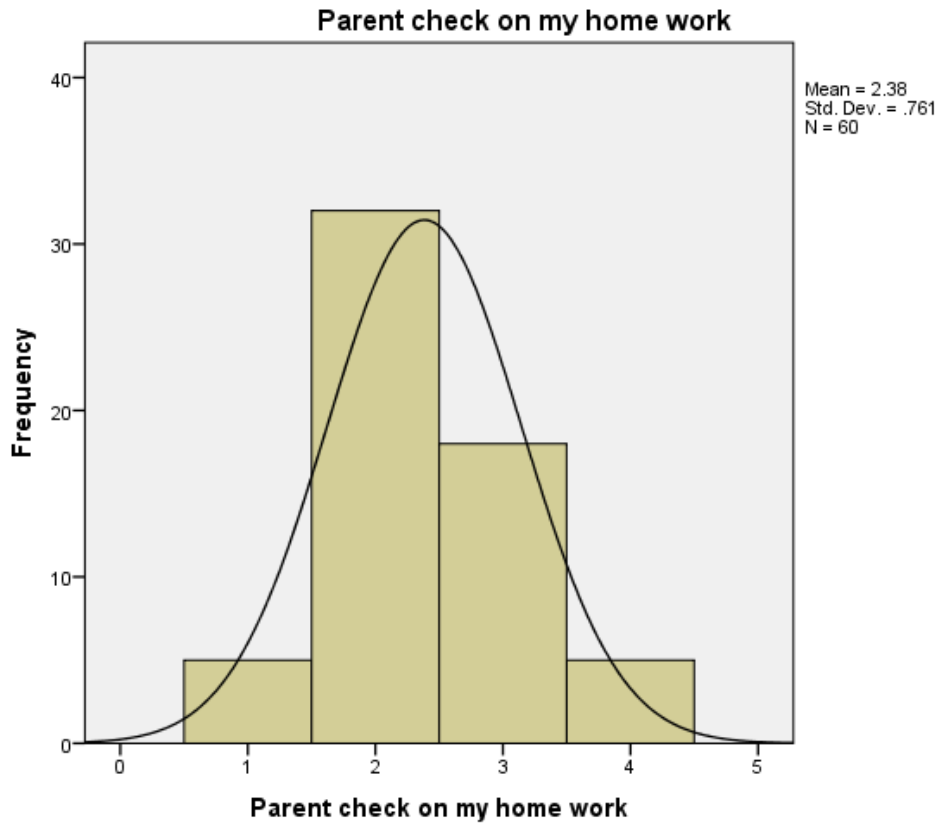
1……………………………… Never

2……………………………… Rarely

3……………………………… Occasionally

4……………………………… Always

Closely following up on the child's homework by the parent keeps the child on course and responsible, leading to improved academic performance. This, however seem not to be happening to most students as revealed by the study's findings as only 8.3% of the sampled students within the sub-county had their parents always following up on their homework.

This could partly be attributed to the low literacy levels in the sub-county, hence parents do not give their children's class work the necessary attention. This opinion is also shared by Domina (2005) who found that checking children's homework is positively related to students' academic achievement.

Figure 4.9 (b): A histogram showing whether parents bought tests for their children

Parent buy tests for me to do at home

Mean = 1.38
Std. Dev. = .64
N = 60

KEY:
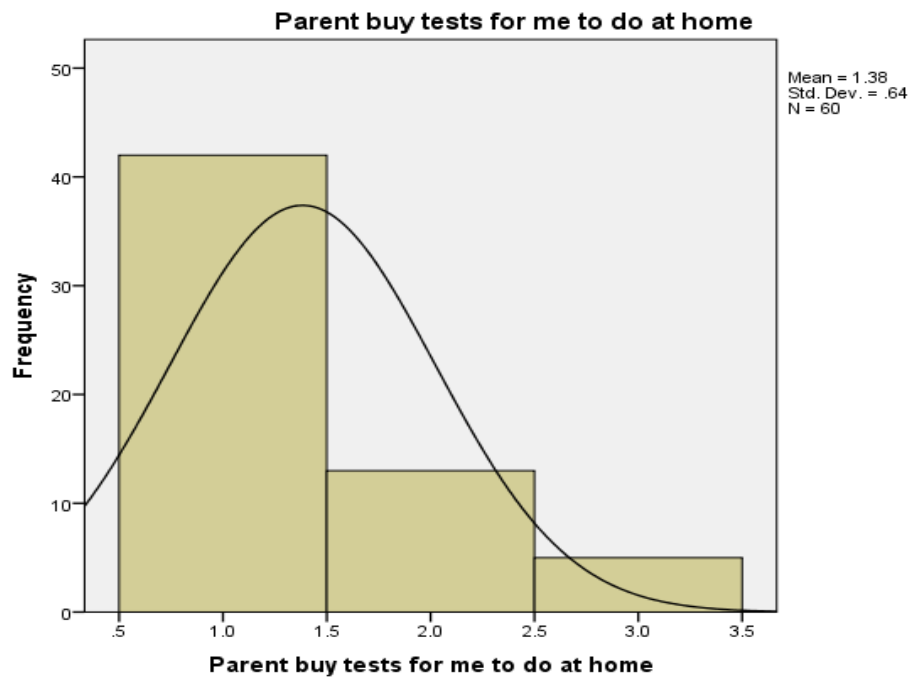
1……………………………… Never

2……………………………… Rarely

3……………………………… Occasionally

Alternative and varied tests supplement the teachers' input, enabling the child to access and apply the knowledge learnt in different ways; through answering questions and solving common problems within their environment. The study's findings however indicate that the greatest percentage, 70% of the parents never made an effort to provide such tests for their children at home, depriving them of this much needed knowledge and diversity in answering questions.

This could be attributed to the high poverty levels, hence being unable to purchase the same or not appreciating the need for the same due to low literacy levels.

Figure 4.9 (c): A histogram showing whether parents hire private tutors for their children during the school holidays.

Parent higher for me tutors during school holidays

Mean = 1.4
Std. Dev. = .669
N = 60

KEY:
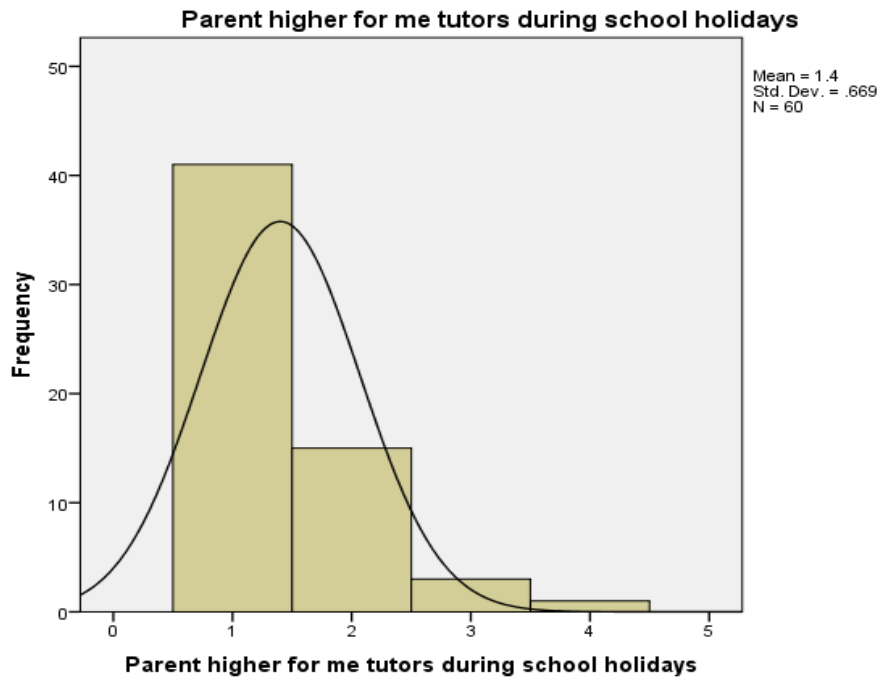
1……………………………… Never

2……………………………… Rarely

3……………………………… Occasionally

4……………………………… Always

Private tutors enable children to recapitulate what was taught at school during the regular sessions. As such, child is taken through the same content at his/her pace, getting more different approaches to handing the related questions. From the findings, it is evident that only a paltry1.7% of the sampled parents, went an extra mile to avail this valuable service to their children, hence the low academic performance.

Figure 4.9 (d): A histogram showing whether parents come to school to discuss their children's academic progress with their teachers

Parent comes to school to discuss my academic progress with my teachers

Mean = 1.6
Std. Dev. = .764
N = 60

KEY:
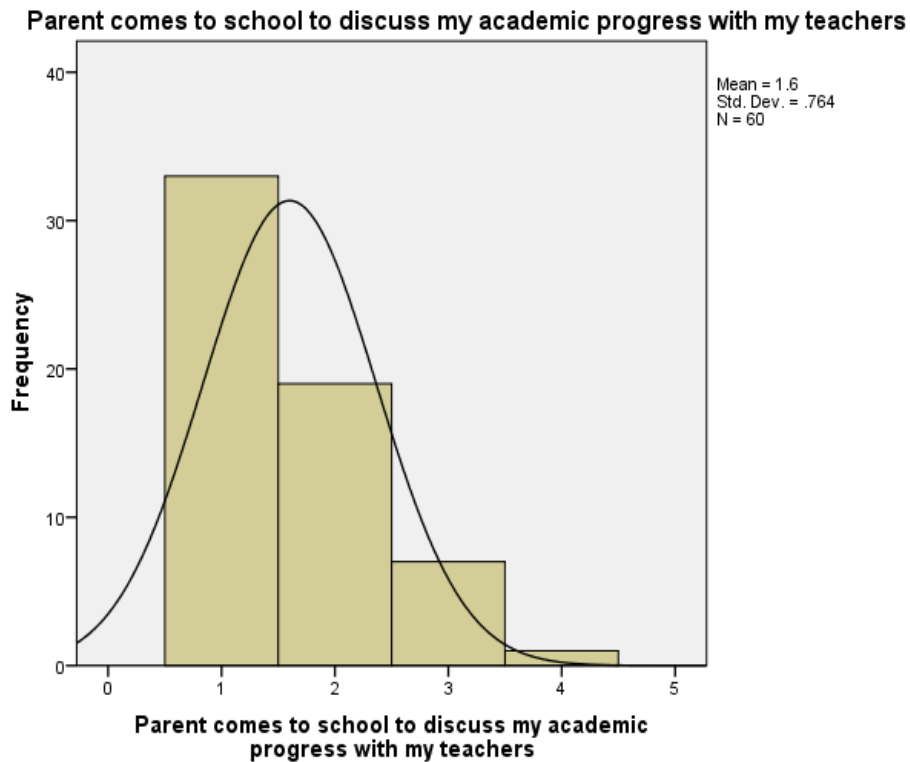
1……………………………… Never
2……………………………… Rarely
3……………………………… Occasionally
4……………………………… Always

Parents' closer working relations with teachers keep the student on toes for fear of being reprimanded. This also helps in controlling undesired behaviours amongst students. From the study's findings, only 1.7% of the parents whose children were sampled in the study always went to school to discuss their children's academic progress. This could be due to lack of awareness on its significance or lack of interest in enhancing education standards in the region.

Figure 4.9 (e): A histogram showing whether parents punish their children when they under-perform

Parent punish me when I underperform

Mean = 1.62
Std. Dev. = .715
N = 60

KEY:
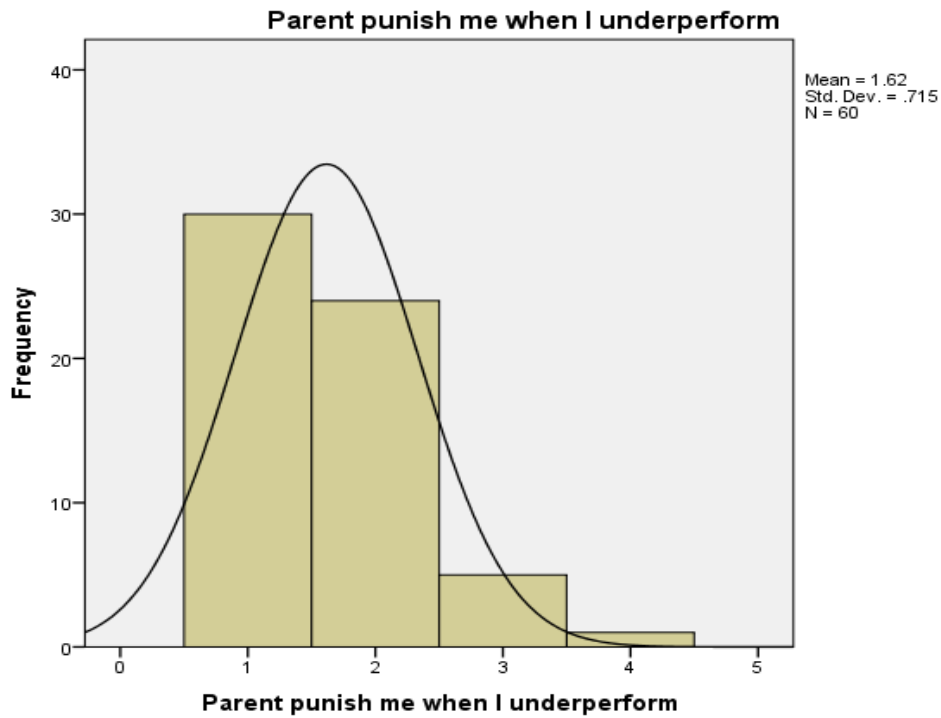
1………………………………… Never

2………………………………… Rarely

3………………………………… Occasionally

4………………………………… Always

A parent who is interested in her/his child's academic success would go to any lengths to keep the child on course academically, including punishing him when his performance is below par. From the research findings, only 1% of the children's parents always punished them for under-performing. This can be attributed to lack of interest amongst parents due to low literacy levels in the sub-county.

Figure 4.9 (f): A histogram showing whether parents advise their children on career prospects.

Parent advises me on my career prospects

Mean = 1.62
Std. Dev. = .783
N = 60

Frequency

Parent advises me on my career prospects

KEY:
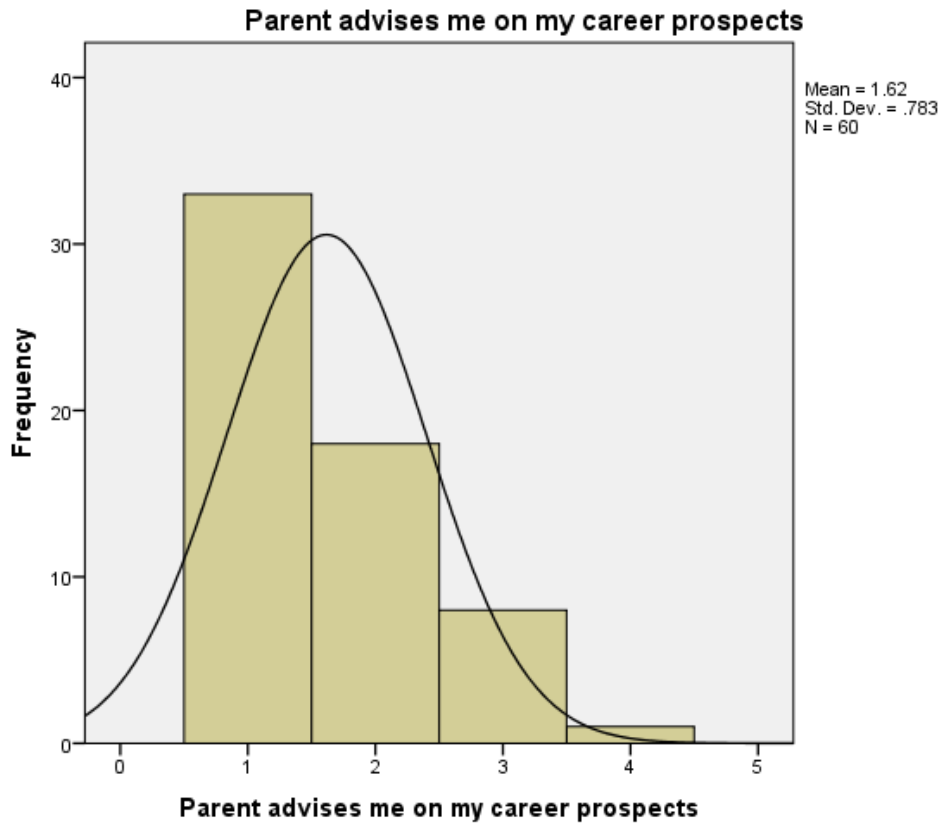
1………………………………… Never

2………………………………… Rarely

3………………………………… Occasionally

4………………………………… Always

Advising children on their careers should not always be left to the teacher; parents should also take lead as it inspires the child, giving him confidence to study while aiming at a particular goal in life. Low literacy levels within the sub-county partly accounts for the low percentage of parents who always advised their children on career prospects (1.7%).

In conclusion, it is clear most parents do not go an extra mile as regards to supplementing what is provided to the child at school, for instance, hiring private tutors, purchase of tests, offering career guidance, checking and assisting with homework among other intervention measures. This is (partly) attributed to the high

60

poverty levels as well as the low literacy levels within the sub-county, hence most parents do not appreciate the need to go an extra mile and provide these crucial incentives to their children, hence the low academic standards.

Failure by most parents to attend and participate in school functions also makes it difficult for the teachers and general school administration to smoothly execute some school programmes, especially those that require parents' intervention and/or endorsement.

4.7 To find out the difference in students' academic rating between students whose parents are involved and those whose parents are not involved

The researcher sought to find out the difference in students' academic rating between students whose parents are involved and those whose parents are not involved. The findings were as presented in table 4.5 for both those who said their parents are involved and those whose parents are not involved.

Table 4.5: Students' responses onthe difference in students' academic rating between students whose parents are involved and those whose parents are not involved

Key: G-Good, A-Average, BA-Below Average, F- Frequency.

Parental involvement activity and student performance	Student Performance Rating	Yes		No	
		F	**%**	**F**	**%**
Parent check on my home work	G	10	52.6	4	9.8
	A	7	36.8	26	63.4
	B A	2	10.5	11	26.8
	Total	**19**	**100**	**41**	**100**
Parent buy tests for me to do at home	G	7	36.8	3	7.3
	A	9	47.4	31	75.6
	B A	3	15.8	7	17.1
	Total	**19**	**100**	**41**	**100**
Parent comes to school to discuss my academic progress with my teachers	G	6	31.6	2	4.9
	A	5	26.3	11	26.8
	B A	8	42.1	28	68.3
	Total	**19**	**100**	**41**	**100**
Parent advises me on my career prospects	G	11	57.9	6	14.6
	A	4	21.1	9	22.0
	B A	4	21.1	26	63.4
	Total	**19**	**100**	**41**	**100**
Parent attend school meetings and academic consultations	G	10	52.6	8	19.5
	A	6	31.6	13	31.7
	B A	3	15.8	20	48.8
	Total	**19**	**100**	**41**	**100**
Parent motivate me and advises me on my talent prospects	G	9	47.4	6	14.6
	A	5	26.3	10	24.4
	B A	4	26.3	25	61.0
	Total	**19**	**100**	**41**	**100**

According to the study majority of the students 41 (68.3%) said that their parents are not involved while 19 (31.7%) said their parents are involved. This could be interpreted to mean that most parents in Magarini Sub-County are not involved in their children's academic work.

The study revealed that 52.6% of the students whose parents frequently check their children's homework rated their performance as good compared to 9.8% whose parents did not check their school work. These findings are in harmony with Domina (2005) who found that checking children's homework were positively related to students' academic achievement. This can be interpreted to mean that most of the parents are either illiterate or semi illiterate and thus do not comprehend the dynamics in academics. This can be graphically be represented as follows;

Figure 4.10: A histogram showing whether parents check on their children's home work

KEY:
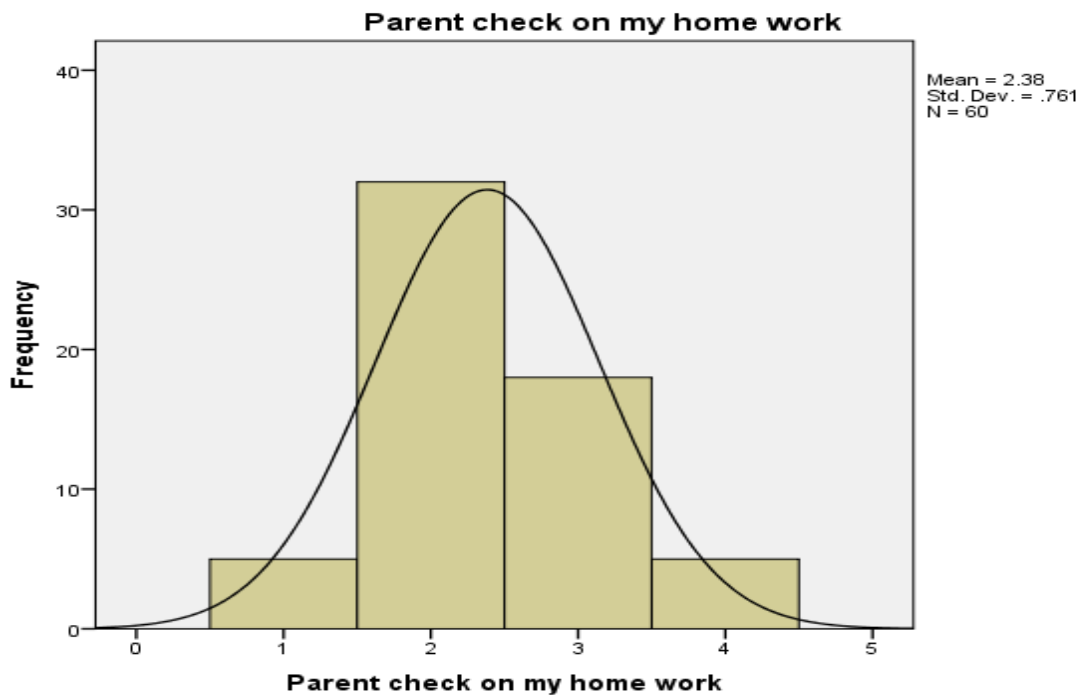
1……………………………… Never

2……………………………… Rarely

3……………………………… Occasionally

4……………………………… Always

Furthermore, the study revealed that 36.8% of the students attributed their good performance on their parents buying tests for them to do at home compared to7.3% whose parents hardly bought tests to do at home. This could be interpreted to mean that many parents do not understand the value of regular testing on students' academic achievement or are not well-endowed economically to meet the cost for the same. This can be graphically represented as follows;

Figure 4.11: A histogram showing whether parents bought tests for their children.

KEY:
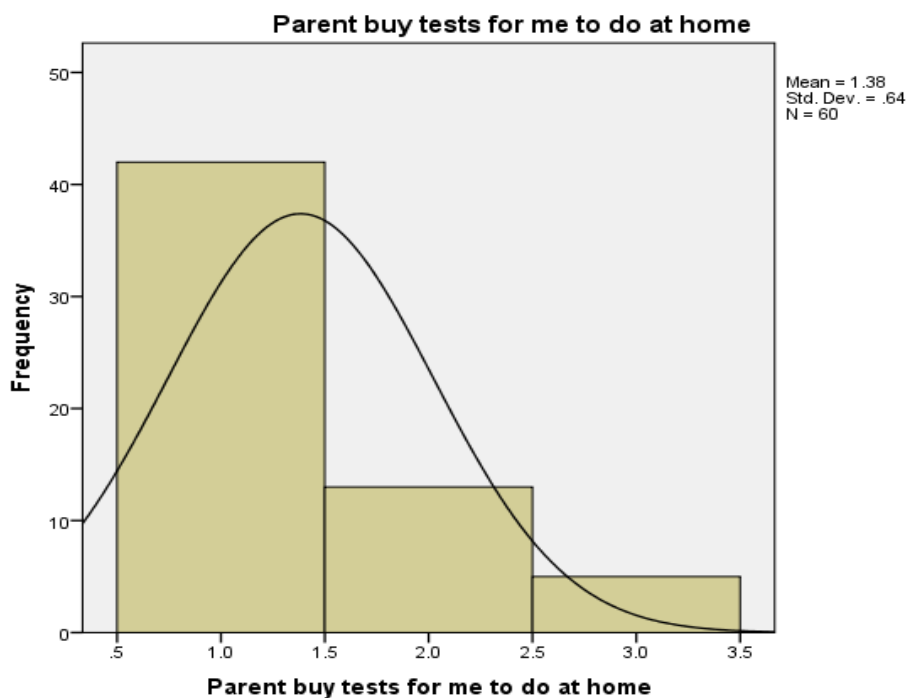
1…………………………… Never

2…………………………… Rarely

3…………………………… Occasionally

It is also evident from the study that students' good results are associated with parents coming to school to discuss their academic progress with their teachers; 31.6% compared to 4.9% who said that good results were not connected to the parental visits to school. This evidence is in agreement with what Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, (1999) discovered. They found that quality parent–teacher interactions had predicted improvements in student behavior and achievement. This can be interpreted

to mean parents' pieces of advice given during meetings have a positive impact on student academic attainment although the frequency of such meetings ought to be regulated and confined to academic issues only. This information can further be represented as follows;

Figure 4.12: A histogram showing whether parents come to school to discuss their children's academic progress with their teachers.

KEY:
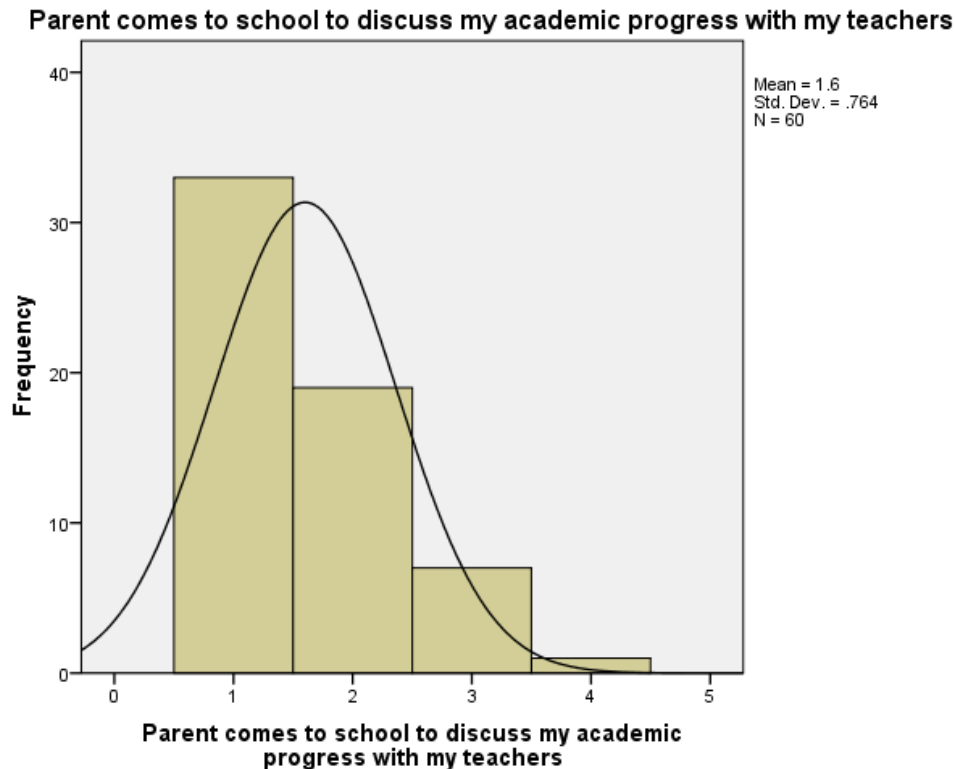
1……………………………… Never

2……………………………… Rarely

3……………………………… Occasionally

4……………………………… Always

The effects of parental involvement on intrinsic motivation are two-sided. According to cognitive evaluation theory, parental involvement can be informational or controlling. The informative aspect enhances students' intrinsic motivation, while the controlling aspect undermines students' intrinsic motivation (Amabile, DeJong, & Lepper, 1976; Greene, Sternberg, & Lepper, 1976; Plant & Ryan, 1985). For example, children's intrinsic motivation increased when parents received weekly information

regarding their children's progress and how to help their children at home (Ames et al., 1993) and when parents encouraged and provided positive reactions to the grades their children received.

In contrast, students' motivational orientations were negatively associated with parental surveillance of homework, as this was considered to be excessively controlling (Ginsburg &Bronstein, 1993). It is worth noting that level of education of parents can impart positively on children's motivation.

Further literature on academic performance among children suggests that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively involved in their education (Fadeye 1985; Nyarko 2007; Nyarko and Vorgelegt, 2007).

This is echoed by Henderson and Berla (1994), who posits that the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which that student's family is able to: create a home environment that encourages learning; express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; become involved in their children's education at school and in the community (p. 160)

In addition, parental involvement was found to be related to fewer behavior problems in school (Domina, 2005), better attendance and class preparation (Simon, 2001), better course completion (Simon, 2001) and lower dropout rates (Rumberger, 1995).

Evidence from the study revealed that 57.9% as opposed 14.6% of the students reported that good academic performance is linked to parents advising them on their career prospects. However with 63.4% responding that their performance was poor due to their parents not advising them on career prospects, it implied that most of the parents are not well versed with career guidance. The findings can further be graphically represented as follows;

Figure 4.13: Histogram showing whether parents advise their children on career prospects

Parent advises me on my career prospects

Mean = 1.62
Std. Dev. = .783
N = 60

KEY:

1…………………………… Never

2…………………………… Rarely

3…………………………… Occasionally

4…………………………… Always

Analysis of the results also revealed that 52.6% as opposed to 19.5% attributed their good performance to parents attending school meetings and academic clinics in schools. This is in line with Domina (2005) who found that attending conferences and parent organization meetings, volunteering and checking homework were positively related to students' academic achievement. However with 48.8% of the students sampled attributing their below-average performance to their parents not attending school meetings and academic clinics, it can be interpreted that most parents in the sub-county seem not to understand the relevance of availing themselves for school functions as well as academic clinics when called upon to, hence the need to sensitize parents on the same.

The study further revealed that 47.4% as opposed to 14.6% of secondary school students in the Sub-county attributed their good performance to parents motivating and advising them on their talents. These findings are in harmony with an earlier research that had also established a positive link between parental involvement and students' achievement by Gonzalez-DeHass et al., (2005). However With 61% associating below average academic attainment to lack of parental motivation, then it can be interpreted to mean that most of the parents in the Sub-county do not know how to or lack the capacity to identify and hence nurture the talents of their children at an earlier stage. There is, therefore, need for sensitization of parents on this premise.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings, the conclusion of the same and some suggestions for future research, based on the researcher's opinion.

5.2 Summary of the findings

This section presents the summarized, analyzed findings of the study. The study, impact of parents' involvement on the children's academic achievement, had the following specific objectives that guided it:

1. To find out the level of involvement of parents and the students' academic learning process
2. To establish the relationship between parental involvement and students' academic attainment

5.2.1 To find out the level of involvement of parents and the students' academic progress

Teachers and students were asked to give their views on how they felt on the effect of parental involvement on students' academic learning and performance on a scale of 5: 1 Strongly disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Undecided, 4 Agree and 5 Strongly Agree. The descriptive results for the teachers are presented in table 4.4

Results of the study revealed that Close parental monitoring had an effect on the child's positive behavior (M=3.60 and SD=1.064). The results also revealed that parents' prior beliefs of their children's ability had a positive effect on performance(M=4.20 and SD=1.152) further confirming what had been discovered earlier that parental academic expectations could be influenced by parents' perceptions of their children's ability (Furnham & Petrides, 2004; Furnham et al., 2002).

On the attribute of Parents positive attitude and child's academic performance it was found this factor had a strong influence on students' academic performance (M =3.85 and SD=1.226).

This is in line with previous results which established that positive attitudes towards education and school are associated with the child's increased academic performance (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, Cox, & Bradley, 2003). Moreover on Parents' increased frequency of activities in school it was established in the study that this action had a positive impact on students' academic performance (M=4.35 and SD = 0.988). However, this was in sharp contrast with earlier research which found out that increased parent's activities in schools, such as increased number of parent-teacher contacts, was associated with worsening achievement, Izzo et al. (1999) .

It was revealed through the study that Students' perception of their parental involvement, their income and education positively influences students' academic performance (M=4.25 and SD=1.209). This was in agreement with earlier research in America on gifted students' perception of their parental involvement, their families' income and education. They agreed that these were highly associated with their academic achievement (Clemons, 2005).

Further analysis of the results revealed that parental expectations and expressions of confidence in their children's ability positively influenced their academic performance (M=4.40 and SD=0.94) which was in harmony with a previous study that established that parental expectations and expressions of confidence in their children's ability and talent are paramount in promoting the potential that the children have in academic achievement (Chan, 2009; Furnham, Rakow, & Mak, 2002).

To buttress this further isDandy & Nettelbeck, 2002b; S. Phillipson, 2009a, 2009b) who agree that parental aspirations and expectations are communicated, either implicitly or explicitly, to their children in their everyday interactions, which then directly or indirectly determine the way the children perceive education and perform at school.

Further evidence shows that early childhood parents and professionals' expectations impact directly on children's expectations of themselves, their academic aspirations and their self-perception (Rubie-Davis, 2006; Berzin, 2010). Motivation, self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy all interact in complex ways to determine a child's academic success and resilience (Uszynska-Jarmoc, 2007).

In conclusion, high expectations from parents, professionals and peers are linked to self-esteem, children's sense of agency and academic motivation. These factors in turn lead to educational success (Ahmed, et al, 2008; Patrick, Mantzicopoulos, Samarapungavan & French, 2008).

5.2.2 To establish the relationship between parental involvement and students' academic attainment

The researcher sought to find out the difference in students' academic rating between students whose parents are involved and those whose parents are not involved in their academic progress.

From the findings, majority of the students 41 (68.3%) said that their parents are not involved while 19 (31.7%) said their parents are involved. This could be interpreted to mean that most parents in Magarini Sub-County are not involved in their children's academic work.

The study further revealed that 52.6% of the students whose parents check on their homework rated their performance as good compared to 9.8% whose parents did not check their work. These findings are in line with Domina (2005) who found that frequently checking children's homework is positively related to students' academic achievement.

In addition, the study revealed that 36.8% of the students attributed their good performance to their parents buying tests for them to do at home compared to 7.3% whose parents hardly bought tests for them to do at home. This could be interpreted to mean that many parents do not understand the value of testing on students' academic achievement.

It is also evident from the study that students' good results are associated with parents coming to school to discuss their children's academic progress with their teachers (31.6%), compared to 4.9% who said that good results are not connected to the parental visits to school. This is, however, in sharp contrast with (Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, &Fendrich, 1999) who, while reporting that quality of parent–teacher interactions had predicted improvements in student behavior and achievement,

quantity of such interactions had predicted the contrary. This can be interpreted to mean parents' advise, given during meetings have positive impact on students' academic attainment although the frequency of such meeting ought to be regulated and confined to academic issues only.

According to Henderson and Berla (1994), the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which that student's family is able to: create a home environment that encourages learning; express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; become involved in their children's education at school and in the community (p. 160).

Parents convey attitudes about education to their children during out-of-school hours and these attitudes are reflected in the child's classroom behavior and in the teacher's relationship with the child and the parents (Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993) hence performance. The significance of parent attitudes toward education and school is less well understood, although attitudes are believed to comprise a key dimension of the relationship between parents and school (Eccles & Harold, 1996)
In addition, parental involvement was found to be related to fewer behavior problems in school (Domina, 2005), better attendance and class preparation (Simon, 2001), better course completion (Simon, 2001) and lower dropout rates (Rumberger, 1995).

Evidence from the study revealed that 57.9% as opposed 14.6% of the students, reported that good academic performance is linked to parents advising them on their career prospects. However with 63.4% responding that their performance was poor due to their parents not advising them on career prospects, it implied that most of the parents have no knowledge on the careers available.

Analysis of the results also revealed that 52.6% as opposed to 19.5% rated their good performance to Parents attending school meetings and academic consultations. This is in line with Domina (2005) who found that attending conferences and parent organization meetings, volunteering and checking homework were positively related to students' academic achievement. However with 48.8% of the students sampled rating their below average performance to lack of Parent attending school meetings

and academic consultations, it can be interpreted that in the Sub-county seem not to understand the relevance of academic consultations hence the need to sensitize parents on the same.

Evidence from the study shows that 47.4% as opposed to 14.6% of secondary school students in Magarini Sub-county attribute their good performance to parents motivating and advising them on their talent prospects. These results are in agreement with earlier research that had indicated a positive link between parental involvement and students' achievement motivation and attitudes (Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2005).

However, with 61% associating below average academic attainment to lack of parents' motivation, then it can be interpreted to mean that most of the parents in the Sub-county do not know how to or lack the capacity to identify and hence nurture the talents of their children at an early stage. There is, therefore, need for sensitization of parents on this premise.

5.3 Conclusion

This research sought to examine the relationship between parent's level of involvement and its impact on the performance of students in secondary schools in Kenya. Theories show that cooperation at parental level leads to high achievement in academics. The research shows minimum involvement. This also shows there is no early influence on learners towards attaining early academic success. The result is low academic performance at a higher level, in this case secondary level schooling. The study revealed that to a greater extent, parents convey attitudes about education to their children during out-of-school hours. These attitudes are reflected in the children's classroom behavior and in the teacher's relationship with the children and the parents. This shows an orientation towards better performance in that parents' attitudes comprise a key dimension of the relationship between parents schooling.

The study further revealed that to a greater extent, parental involvement ensured and sustainable an intellectually stimulating environment that promotes and motivates their drive towards higher academic performance. This nurtures their talents and boosts their self-esteem. The study shows the need to emphasize the role that parents play in students' academic performance.

In addition, closer simulative and responsive parental involvement leads to children staying longer in school, positively influences their career choices and progression and academic development values. It also leads to students' school readiness, adjustment as well as socio-emotional development of the children. These result in increased interaction with learning, hence increased academic performance.

5.4 Recommendations

From the findings obtained, the researcher recommends that:

5.3.1: Schools should put in place mechanisms, programs and structures that bring parents on board to participate in their children's academic progress.

5.3.2: Parents should be sensitized on the importance of closely following up and monitoring of their children's academic progress besides guaranteeing them a conducive home environment that stimulates learning

5.3.3: Strengthening guidance and counseling in schools for the teachers to fully understand the children's social backgrounds, providing an avenue for comprehensive intervention to guarantee the child academic and social wellness both at home and school.

5.3.4: Schools should communicate targets and benchmarks set for individual children at school to their respective parents for them to be reinforced further, realizing greater academic achievement since the child would be monitored and hence encouraged from all angles.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

5.4.1: This study was conducted in secondary schools within Magarini Sub-County, Kilifi County; the same can be done in primary schools, on a larger scale-in several counties or on a national scale to enable wider generalization of the findings

5.4.2: Not all aspects of parental involvement predicted student academic achievement and motivation, hence, there is need for further studies investigating

various aspects of parental involvement and different elements of students' academic achievements and motivation.

5.4.3: Since parental involvement at home and at school differentially relates to student motivation, there is need for further investigations and/or studies into more relational aspects such as parental involvement in academic and non-academic activities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Introduction Letter

The University of Nairobi

P.O. Box, 30197-00100 GPO

Nairobi, Kenya

07/08/2014.

To;

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT ON THE CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN KENYA'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

I am a post-graduate student at The University of Nairobi undertaking a Master of Education degree in Measurement and Evaluation, Registration No: E58/71861/2011. As part of the course's requirements, I am carrying out a research titled, Influence of Parents' Involvement on Children's Academic Performance.

The study involves administration of questionnaires to teachers and form three students of selected schools.

Your kind facilitation towards the success of this noble exercise will be highly appreciated, while assuring you that the information gathered will be used purely for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanking you in advance,

Yours faithfully,

Mudibo S.O. Cleophas

Appendix II: Questionnaire for the Teachers on the Impact of Parents Involvement on Students' Academic Success

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a post-graduate student at the University of Nairobi undertaking a Master of Education degree in Measurement and Evaluation, Registration No: E58/71861/2011. As part of the course's requirements, I am carrying out a research titled, Influence of parents' level of involvement in the academic success of their children.

It's my hope that the results of the study will provide useful information to the school Boards of Management, Ministry of education and Head teachers on ways of improving academic performance of students in secondary schools through constructive involvement and participation of parents

You are one of the teachers selected to participate in this study; your response will be treated with utmost confidentially and for purpose of the study only.

SECTION A:

Background Information

    1 a) Please indicate:

i) Your School's name_____

ii) Duration you have been in this school_____

iii) Duration you have served in this position _____

iv) Subject(s) you teach _____b) Gender

    Male ( )

    Female ( )

c) State the highest level of professional training you have attained.

 [ ] Dip (Edu.)   [ ] BED   [ ] PGDE   [ ] M.Phil   [ ] Doctorate

d) How do you rate the performance of your students in your department?

 [ ] above 50%   [ ] between 30-49% [ ] below 30%

SECTION B:

To what extend do you agree with the following statements as the parent involvement factors affecting the performance of your students in your subject?

SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, A- Agree, SA-Strongly Agree.

2. Kindly, indicate whether the following activities take place in your school regarding parental involvement the education of their children:

Tick appropriately in the rows and columns in the table below

SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, U- Undecided, A- Agree, SA-Strongly Agree

S.NO.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						

14. Please indicate whether the following activities take place in your school regarding the parents' activities and their involvement in their children's education:

15. Parents are friendly and always willing to help us achieve the academic goals of the school

       Yes   ( )   No   ( )

16. Parents have helped in creating and sustaining a conducive school environment for the children's study

       Yes   ( )   No   ( )

If your response is **no**, briefly explain.

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17. We have numerous academic clinics where parents, teachers and learners freely interact to bolster academic performance in the school

Yes   ( )   No   ( )

 If no, please shed some light on your view

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…………………………………………………………………………………………

18. Assignment for students in our school is mandatory, in a bid to enhance academic performance.

Yes   ( )   No   ( )

If yes, do the parent(s) take time to assist learners out on this, or have they assigned somebody to do it on their behalf-in form of a private tutor?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………I

n your own opinion, has the quality of teaching and learning in this school improved over time? Do you attribute this improvement (if any) to the parents' active involvement? Kindly give a brief explanation how.

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Appendix III: Questionnaire for the Students on the Impact of Parents' Level of Involvement on Students' Academic Attainment

Dear student,

I am a post-graduate student at the University of Nairobi undertaking a Master of Education degree in Measurement and Evaluation, Registration No: E58/71861/2011. As part of the course's requirements, I am carrying out a research titled, Influence of Parents' Involvement on the academic success of their children.

It's my hope that the result of the study will provide useful information to the school Boards of Management, Ministry of Education and Head teachers on ways of improving academic performance of students in secondary schools through constructive involvement and participation of parents.

You are one of the students selected to participate in this study; your responses will be treated with utmost confidentially and used only for the purpose of the study.

SECTION A:

Background Information

19. a) Your Age Bracket (Kindly tick (√) one)

(i)Below 14 yrs ( )   (ii) 15-16 yrs ( )   (iii) 17-18yrs ( )   (IV) 19-20 yrs ( )

(v) 21yrs and above ( )

20. Please indicate your

(i) School's name_____

(ii) Class _____

Gender

Male   ( )

Female   ( )

21. Are you a boarder or day scholar?

Boarder   ( )   Day scholar ( )

22. For how long have you been in this school?

Less than 1 yr ( )   1-2 yrs ( )   2-3 yrs ( )   over 3 yrs ( )

23. How many are you in your class/stream?   _____

24. Do your parent(s) endeavors to know if teachers are friendly and always willing to help me achieve my academic goals

       Yes   ( )   No ( )

25. Is your school environment conducive for your study

Yes   ( )   No ( )

If your response is **no**, briefly explain.

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

a) Do teachers call your parent(s) often to discuss your academic progress

Yes ( )   No ( )

If no, please shed some light on your view

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………………………………………………………………………………

c) Does your parent(s) endeavors to know if teachers always give you assignments in school and at home.

     Yes   ( )   No   ( )

If no, does your parent(s) take time to assist you out on this, or have they assigned somebody to do it on their behalf-in form of a private tutor? Briefly explain

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………………………………………………………………………………

S.NO.					
26.					
27.					
28.					
29.					
30.					
31.					
32.					
33.					
34.					
35.					

In your own opinion, has the quality of teaching and learning in your school improved over time? Do you attribute this improvement (if any) to the parents' active involvement? Kindly give a brief explanation how.

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………………………………………………………………………………………

SECTION B:

10   To what extend do you agree with the following statements as the parent involvement   factors affecting your performance?

SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, U- Undecided, A- Agree, SA-Strongly Agree.

S.NO.					
36.					
37.					
38.					
39.					
40.					
41.					
42.					
43.					
44.					
45.					
46.					

Appendix IV: Public Secondary Schools in Magarini Sub-county

1. Magarini Secondary School
2. Marafa Secondary School
3. Shujaa Mekatilili Secondary School
4. Mapimo Girls'
5. Marereni Secondary
6. Fundi Issa Secondary
7. Adu secondary
8. Galana Secondary
9. Garashi Secondary
10. Kaembeni Secondary School
11. Baricho secondary
12. Waresa Secondary
13. Progressive Kagombani Secondary
14. Burangi Secondary
15. Magarini Hill secondary
16. Ramada secondary
17. Mambrui secondary