

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FACTORS THAT
INFLUENCE PERFORMANCE IN KENYA CERTIFICATE
OF PRIMARY EXAMINATION (K.C.P.E.) IN PUBLIC AND
PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN KARAI LOCATION OF KIKUYU
DIVISION, IN KIAMBU.**

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ABSTRACT

Examinations have for a long time been used to determine who continues with education and who does not. Examinations are also an important selection tool in formal employment. This has made examinations to take central place in the activities of educational institutions. In Kenya, national examinations results indicate that certain schools consistently perform better than others. This places their students in a better position while competing with others.

This study compared performance of private and public primary schools in Karai location in Kiambu district, in Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination (K.C.P.E). Examination results over a period of six years (1997-2002) revealed that private schools performed better than the public schools. It was found necessary to investigate the factors responsible for such examination trends.

Factors that are cited in literature as influencing examination performance were compared between private and public primary schools in Karai location in order to find out whether there was a difference. This difference could possibly explain the difference in examination performance between the private and public schools. The study also made an attempt to find out whether there were factors other than those cited in literature review that could be responsible for the examination performance differences between private and public schools in Karai. A total of ten schools participated in the study. They were selected using random and purposive sampling. The subjects of the study were all headteachers in the sample schools, class eight teachers and twenty class eight pupils in each of the sample schools. A total of 10 headteacher, 55 teachers and 198 pupils participated.

Analysis of data was done using frequencies and percentages and the findings presented in form of tables. Research findings revealed a difference existed between private and public schools at Karai in terms of physical and learning resources, curriculum coverage, quality of teacher/pupil ratio. The other factors included teachers motivation and remuneration, pupils socio-economic backgrounds, pupils levels of exposure and motivation, school selections procedures, rate of absenteeism and headteachers levels of commitment which were found to have some influence on examination performance of the schools.

The recommendations made on ways of improving the quality of education and performance in public schools included deployment of more teachers in Karai location, for effective coverage of the syllabus. Other recommendations included the giving of higher remuneration to teachers so as to motivate them, introduction of career counselling in schools, use of multi alternative educational media, introduction of school feeding programmes, incentives to motivate teachers, recognition of hard working teachers and regular transfers for teachers so as to reduce boredom stagnation and redundancy.

Suggestions, made for further studies were for this study to be replicated in other areas and also for further studies on comparative factors influencing performance to be done but focusing on other unexplored areas such as the impact of free education assessing aspects such as over enrolment, uniform provision of learning materials and also factors such as the impact of boarding facilities to performance.