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Influence of home and school based factors on pupils academic performance at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Makadara sub-County, Nairobi County.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of primary education is to provide education at the basic level of all ongoing primary school pupils. This study was carried out to investigate influence of home and school based factors on pupil's academic performers at Kenya certificate of primary education in Makadara sub-county, Nairobi County. The study adopted the ex-post facto design which involved the studies that investigate possible causes and effects by observing an existing condition and searching back in time for possible causal factors. It involved testing out possible antecedents of events that had happened and cannot be manipulated by the investigator. The study sampled 240 teachers, 39 Parents Association members and 150 pupils from class 6 and 7. The data collection instruments comprised of questionnaires and interview guide. Data collected was categorized, coded, analyzed then tabulated. The analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was both qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative analysis considered use of frequency counts and distribution, tabulation totals and calculation of percentages aimed at generating the data collected into meaningful groups and frequency tables for further analysis. Qualitative analysis involved the conclusions from the respondents' opinions. The study established that most parents had a college educational level, majority of the teachers were female whereas majority of the students were males. It also established that parental level of income influenced pupils' performance in KCPE at 60%. Physical facilities and teaching and learning resources were also cited as factors that highly influence performances. The researcher recommended that the parents should provide a conducive learning environment at home to give the pupils ample time and space to study. Parents ought to strive to provide the basic required learning materials that are vital for a good performance in the KCPE exam irrespective of their level of income. The government should endeavor to allocate funds to be used for improving on the existing teaching and learning resources in public primary schools while adding more. The government should allocate enough funds that will enable provision of key physical learning facilities.

Keywords:

Home based, School based, Academic performance

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Background to the study

Home based factor is defined by (Douglas, 2009) as features of people's domestic lives that contribute to their living conditions. These factors may be physical (poverty, psychological conditions due to parenting), social circumstances (nest, living or wider cultural patterns of life related to the location (suburban environments, urban environments). A study undertaken by (Drake, 2000) on academic performance in United States of America has shown that students in schools across America are faced with special emotional and environmental problems which affect their academic performance. A study by (Marzano, 2003) on home environment influencing academic performance states that, educated parents can provide an environment that suits best for academic success of their children while the school authorities can provide counseling and guidance to parents for creating positive home environment, for improvement in students' quality of work. Their findings imply home environment has great impact on learner's positive and negative academic performance.

Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) serves as the first major educational milestone. Performance on this national examination is critical for students and parents alike. Mwanzia, (2007), Lewis et al (2017) and Rotich, (2002), have both noted that decline in KCPE performance is a major concern for parents, educators, political leaders, and provincial administration and community leaders. The causes for the decline have been categorized into two that include out of school and in school (institutional) related factors. Institutional factors include; administration effectiveness, teachers' commitment to their teaching students' attitude to learning, social facilities among others. Despite major strides made in education and training a number of challenges still persist. At the heart of challenges in Kenya is erratic parental involvement in learner's education; this has seriously affected retention rates in the

country. (Republic of Kenya, 2010). An earlier study done in Kenya by (Mutuku, 2006, Lewis et al 2014, Kivuli, 2012) also sought to find out factors influencing students' performance in Kenyan national examinations. The findings revealed lack of commitment by teachers, instruction incompetence, inability of administrators and educational officers, poor relationship between teachers, learners and parents also led to poor performance. A research carried out in Nairobi by Ogola, (2010) examined parental factors that lead to poor academic performance in primary schools in the County. The study established that involvement of parents was one of that most factors that affect the academic achievement of primary school. Parent's joblessness leads to difficulties in paying school fees for their children. Inability to meet some basic needs, irresponsible parenthood also contributes to poor performance in Nairobi County.

Researchers and educators have long considered parent's involvement in their children's education as a major pathway to children success (Fullarton, 2004). Findings based on those studies link parent involvement in their children's schooling to positive educational outcomes such as greater learner, motivation to learn, better learner behaviors in school, high student test scores and long-term achievement. The findings of (Fullarton, 2004), suggest that differences in academic performance vary with parental background, institutional environment and home environment play a pivot role in learners' academic outcomes. Other studies focusing on parental level of education have also revealed that the educational level of learners' parents (Robitaille, 2006, Schafer, 2009) home educational resources (Mullis 2006), socio-economic status of the parents (Nadenge et al 2016), and provision of quality school work assistance by parents (Engheta, 2004), are some of the major factors that can explain the variance in academic achievement. (Okpala and Smith, 2005) cited the findings of the

studies done by (Hanushek, 1997) and Fergusson, (1991) which indicated that the family background of the learners affects their academic achievement. Nevertheless, as resourceful as they are, these studies have been carried out elsewhere especially in developed countries, and limited data is available from developing countries.

Statement of the Problem

Pupils declining performance in the KCPE examination has been a major headache to all stakeholders in the education sector including parents and teachers who are directly involved in the learning process and outcomes. A significant proportion of learners nationally tend to score very low marks and fail to progress to secondary schools and consequently discontinue from learning. National development can only occur if, pupils are able to complete the education cycle from primary to secondary leavers onto higher education of learning. A review of the literature points to several gaps in the understanding of factors affecting KCPE performance in Kenya. Although collective studies done in primary public schools have established that such factors like inadequate and relevant textbooks, teachers' qualification, and student background affect performance in examinations, little research has been done on the influence of home and school-based factors on students' performance in KCPE examinations hence the need for this study.

Data collection techniques

The study adopted the ex-post facto design that involve studies that investigate possible causes and effect by observing an existing condition and searching back in time for possible casual factors. It involves testing out possible antecedents of events that had happened and cannot be manipulated by the investigator (Cohen and Manion, 1994, Kerlinger, 1986). The sample size comprised of 39 P A. members, 150 pupils and 240 teachers and data was collected using questionnaires and interviews.

Results and discussions

The findings of the study revealed there was significant relationship between parental level of education and pupils' academic performance at KCPE with over 82.3% of the respondents strongly/very strongly agreeing with the statement. The study further revealed that parents with high level of education motivated their children to do better in school than parents with low level of education. The study established statistically significant relationship between parents' level of income and pupils' academic performance. It was established to a certain degree that more income meant better school life for children hence good performance. The finding revealed that adequate teaching/learning resources were prerequisite for good academic performance. It was established to a large extent that availability of classrooms, library, laboratory, washroom, and playground was useful to their environment hence if addressed; it will have an impact on helping them to achieve better performances.

Conclusions

The performance of pupils at KCPE level is determined by various factors. Some of these factors are home based while others are school related. The combination of these factors if not well addressed by policy makers and school administration may impact negatively on pupils' performance. Inadequate teaching and learning resources, inadequate physical facilities, parental level of income and education have a strong bearing on student academic performance.

Recommendations

1. The parents should provide conducive learning environment at home to give the pupils ample time and space to study. This means that parents have a responsibility to assist their children to do their homework in a bid to impact on their KCPE performance.

2. Parents ought to strive to provide the basic required learning materials that are vital for a good performance in the KCPE exam irrespective of their levels of income. The parents should provide extra revision books or question papers as a supplement to what the public primary schools offer.
3. The Ministry of Education should endeavor to allocate more funds to be used for improving on the existing teaching and learning resources in public primary schools while adding more. Adequate staffing and appropriate reading materials are key to improvement of pupils' performance.

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