PERCEPTIONS OF CAUSES OF POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONGST SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KERICHO SUB-COUNTY: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT.

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Key Words

Perception, academic performance and school management

Abstract

This Paper explores perceptions of causes of poor academic performance amongst selected secondary schools in Kericho sub-county and its implications for school management. It focuses on the relationship between family background and students' poor academic performance in Kericho sub-county. Selected literature revealed that the major highlight on causes of poor academic performance is family background. However, there is need to find out what other factors are causing poor academic performances among students and the extent of these causes. It was discovered that the perception of parents, teachers and students was not any different as was reflected in the frequencies percentages and mean deviations. The study found out that majority of respondents agreed that perceptions are key to a students' poor performance amongst other factors especially family background. Based on these results, This paper argues that there is need to sensitize stakeholders, give career guidance to students and have extra time for them . The paper suggests areas of further research on relationship between school factors and poor academic performance and impact of socio economic factors on academic performance on students.   The paper is expected to give insight reference to policy makers, scholars and researchers in order to improve the weak areas. An effort is made to catch the attention of students, teachers and parents at the secondary school level who have attended the conference.

Introduction and background of the Study

Educators, governments, students, parents and the general public have time and again expressed concern over factors that influence student performance in examinations. Academic failure is not only frustrating to the students and the parents (Aremu, 2000). Its effects are equally grave on the society in terms of dearth of manpower in all spheres of the economy and politics. In Kenya , the major yard stick to measure educational output is performance in examination. And yet majority of schools in Kenya experience poor academic performance (Lydiah and Nasongo, 2009). Ongiri & Abdi (2004) reported that many of the country's 4000 secondary schools had bad examination results and that there are only about 600 schools that excel and if a student is not in any of these schools he or she is not expected to get a credible grade. Poor student performance in examinations in Kenya therefore represents a great challenge. The need to gain a better picture of the causes and solutions to the problem of poor academic performance cannot be over-emphasized. This is because such a decline in the quality of education can't be ignored by anyone who is aware of the significant role of education as an instrument of societal transformation and development. And progression to university or further training depends on the achievement at KCSE in form four. This paper will focus on perceptions of causes of poor academic performance and the relevance of it to school management in Kenya.

Rationale for concern over poor performance

All over Kericho Sub-county , there is a consensus of opinion about poor performance in academics .Performance in almost all subjects in KCSE is wanting (Munyeke,2010) .About 90.5 percent of schools in Kericho Sub-county in 2010 KCSE posted mean scores of between C and D. From 2006 to 2011 KCSE, nearly 63 percent of KCSE candidates scored within grade C and D- . There was also a drop of 0.080 in 2012 KCSE results (Kipngetich , 2013) . This is indeed poor performance in academics. This study documents perceptions that affect teaching and learning negatively to an extent of poor performance in Secondary schools in Kericho Sub-county . Teachers, students , parents and the Ministry of Education have different perceptions in as far as academic performance is concerned. For instance teachers perceive the following as causes of poor performance ; non use of verbal reinforcement , poor attendance to lessons , poor method of teaching , teacher work load , emotional problems , study habits , teacher consultation, poor interpersonal relationship, self esteem and motivational orientation . While students perceive the following causes of poor performance ; low retention, parental factors, wrong peers , low achievement , low motivation , student's effort , abilities and traits and role perception .

Parents perceived low income , illiteracy , nutrition type of discipline at home, lack of role model, finance , poor parenting and poor teaching as causes of poor performance. Finally, the Ministry of Education perceives the following as causes of poor performance; attitude of teachers to their work , poor methods of teaching , poor attendance to lessons, failure to cover syllabuses, lateness to school, unsavory comments about students performance , failure to offer guidance and counseling to students and poor management . This became an issue of concern to the researcher and it prompted a research on perceptions of cause of poor academic performance amongst selected secondary schools in Kericho sub-county and its implications for school management.

Statement of the Problem

Student performance has been a serious issue among students, teachers and parents for long in Kericho sub-county. Performance in National examinations by most schools in Kericho sub – county is not commensurate with its economic endowment and potential. According to Bett (2004), schools in Kericho which were once the pride of the nation in academic excellence have dropped drastically in educational standards. The annual release of KCSE results justifies the problem of overall poor secondary school students performance. In view of KCSE results analysis by DEO'S office, Kericho, (2006-2011), KCSE means score have remained relatively low in most of the public secondary schools in Kericho district. Most of the grades attained were C- and C which was not good and the grades continue to decline every year. While a number of factors account for poor academic performance, perceptions of

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students, parents and teachers seem to play a key role. Hence the need for this study to determine perceptions of causes of poor academic performance amongst selected secondary schools in Kericho sub-county and it's implications for school management. Students have different reasons as to why they perform poorly. Teachers, Head teachers and parents often complain of student's low performance in National Examinations and they have different reasons to attribute to declining grades of the students. Most of the populations in Kericho are peasants who work in tea plantations and are majorly from poor backgrounds. Amidst all these perceptions, there is need to identify the causes of poor performances and their implication to school management.

Purpose of the study

This paper was designed to analyze perceptions of causes of poor academic performance amongst selected secondary schools and its implications for School management with particular reference to Kericho sub-county.

Objective of the Study

The paper seeks to explore   the following objectives:

1. Determine perceptions of causes of poor academic performance in secondary schools in Kericho sub-county.
2. Examine the relationship between family background and students' poor academic performance in Kericho sub-county.

Research Questions

This paper attempted   to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of causes of poor academic performance in secondary schools in Kericho sub-county?

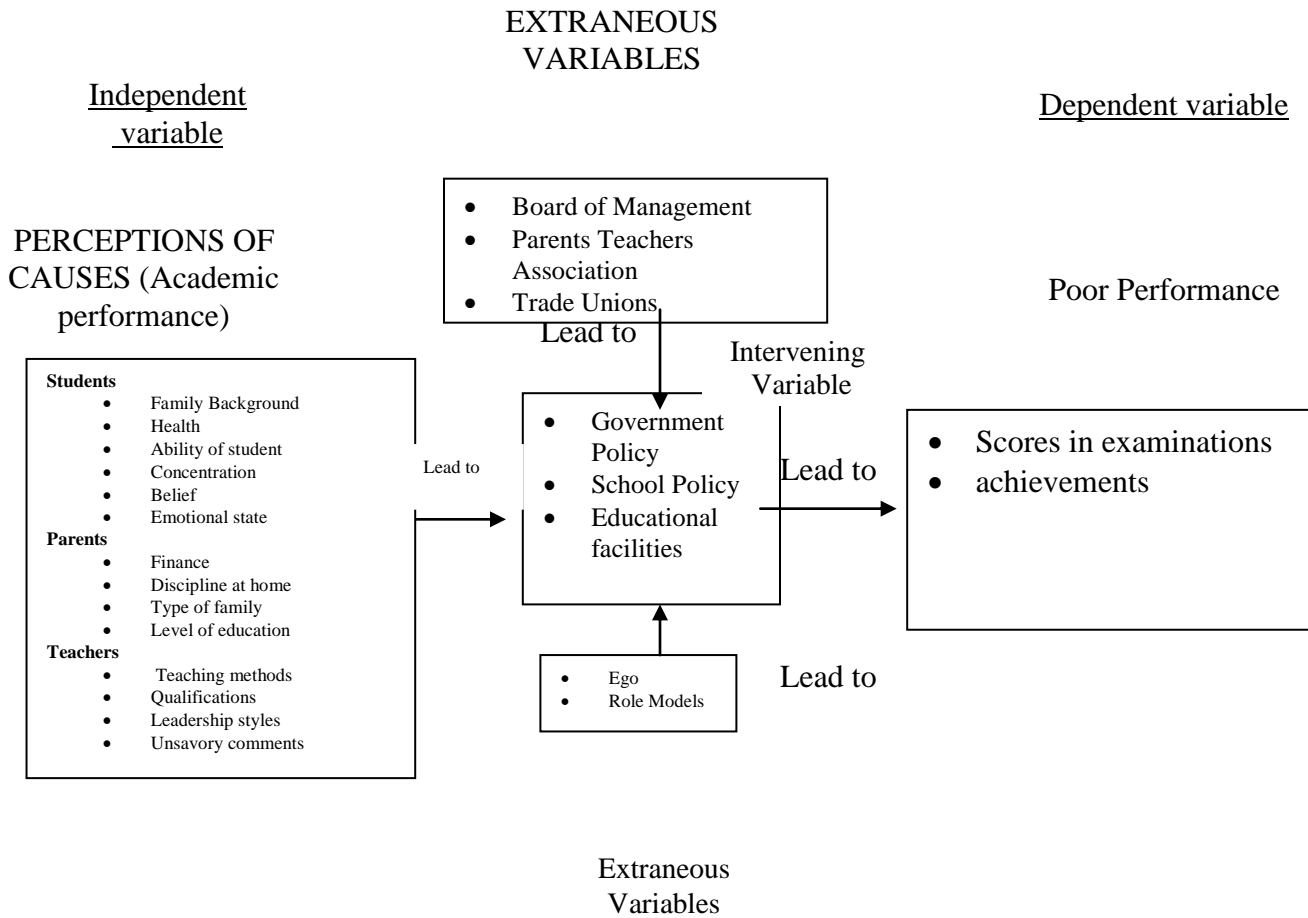2. What is the relationship between family background and poor academic performance of students in Kericho sub-county?

Significance of the paper.

It has been commonly observed that the quest for good performance is a desire each school would like to achieve. The study will be of significance to students, teachers and parents by changing their perceptions on their performance . The study will be of significance to stakeholders in policy making and decision making .Exploring issues that contributes to poor performance can possibly generate scholarly exchange among academicians , policy makers and practitioners in the field of education thereby benefiting students , teachers , school administrators , policy makers and ministry of education, science and technology .The paper

will contribute to new knowledge in educational management. Finally, it will form a base for further research.

Conceptual Framework

Perceptions of causes of poor academic performance in school

EXTRANEOUS
VARIABLES

Independent
 variable

Dependent variable

PERCEPTIONS OF
CAUSES (Academic
performance)

Poor Performance

- Board of Management
- Parents Teachers Association
- Trade Unions

Lead to

Intervening
Variable

Students
- Family Background
- Health
- Ability of student
- Concentration
- Belief
- Emotional state

Parents
- Finance
- Discipline at home
- Type of family
- Level of education

Teachers
- Teaching methods
- Qualifications
- Leadership styles
- Unsavory comments

Lead to

- Government Policy
- School Policy
- Educational facilities

Lead to

- Scores in examinations
- achievements

Lead to

- Ego
- Role Models

Extraneous
Variables

Source: Adapted & Modified from Orodho (2008)

The conceptual framework illustrates the prevalence of poor performance . The goals of the study were to understand and describe the dependent variable which is this case is Scores in examinations and achievements. It is the main variable that leads itself to determination as a viable factor . The

analysis of the dependent variable will make it possible to find answers or solutions to the problems . Independent variable in the study is Students, parents and teachers perceptions . When they are managed well they will be decrease in poor performance. The intervening variable according to this

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study is School policies and Government policies. From the conceptual framework , the scores in examination and achievements depended on students , parents and teachers perceptions . It can be deduced that there is relationship between perceptions of students, parents and teachers and poor academic performance which calls for various intervention as shown .

Delimitations of the Study

Perceptions of causes of poor performance considered in this paper were of the teacher, student and parent .

Limitations of the study

The research was limited to Kericho sub-county . This area was chosen due to its multicultural nature in order to reduce cultural biases .Generalization of the results to the whole country needs to be done with caution .

Assumptions of the paper

The study was undertaken based on the following assumptions:

1. There were factors which contributed to poor performance in KCSE which were related to teacher qualification, student background, school policy, Government policy and educational facilities.

2. All respondents were readily available to answer questions on time.

3. All respondents were cooperative, frank and honest in their responses.

4. The research was done on time and respondents would answer questions professionally.

5. Scores in National Examinations was an indicator of student academic performance.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

A review of the related literature is presented in this paper in order to be informed about previous studies, identify gaps in the literature, discuss conceptual framework and theoretical background of the study, and to address the issue of perceptions of causes of poor academic performance and its implications for school management. The review is informed by the main research questions for this study. It therefore evaluates the concepts of causes of poor academic performance, family background and poor academic performance will draw conclusion on the literature review.

Perceptions of causes of poor academic performance

Academic performance usually appears in research into education. Academic achievement is conceptualized as focus on final results (Rois et al, 2011). The problem of poor performance in examinations is costly for any country since education is a major contributor to growth (Lydiah et al, 2009). All major stakeholders: learners, educators, parents, employers and the national ministry of education are concerned about the problem of poor performance in the grade 12 examinations in South Africa (Legotlo et al ,2002).Students' academic performance in Osun state public secondary schools is a concern. This requires prompt

attention on the part of the state educational planners and policymakers to improve the academic situation of the state public secondary education from its present state, since most secondary schools in the state operate below specified standards (Behar-Horestein et al, 2010). A perception is a constant. It can change. It is not easy to research on all areas. Components will therefore be limited to certain variables. Students, teachers and parents have different perceptions in as far as academic performance is concerned. Education stakeholders should stop splitting hairs and begin digging at the root cause of the dismal performance (Soi , 2009) .

Low school quality is widely recognized as a serious problem in developing countries .Performance in KCSE in Kenya is unsatisfactory . Some schools constantly get lower student outcomes in national examinations (Odiembo, 2004 ; Kizito,2005).The cause of the fallen standards could be the fault of the students, parents and teachers or all. It is generally agreed that most important manifestations of quality education have to do with literacy, cognitive abilities, performance and progression to higher levels of learning (Reche et al, 2012). The education system in Kenya has historically placed emphasis on academic performance aimed at getting white collar jobs (Khamasi, 2002). Secondary schools are therefore evaluated by the public based on how many students qualify for admission to the public universities. Teachers and students are pressurized to attain high grades and those who are seen to perform below parental and government expectations are judged harshly. The quality of education as

measured by student achievement in national examinations is considered as below average standards (Ongiri and Abdi, 2004) .The writer further reported that many of the Kenya's 4000 secondary schools had bad examination results and that there are only about 600 schools that excel and if a student is not in any of these schools he or she is not expected to get a credible grade.

Majority of schools fall short of providing for the learning needs of their students, leading to poor performance (Republic of Kenya,1998). Bett (2004),Observes that schools in Kericho which were once the pride of the nation in academic excellence have dropped drastically in educational standards. According to Kipngetich (2013), Kericho sub-county recorded a drop of 0.080 in 2012 KCSE results .Hence the need to research on perceptions of causes of poor academic performance using the views of students, parents and teachers. There is need to bring parents, teachers and students views about the educational standards on board so that good academic results can be achieved .

Family background and Poor Academic Performance of the Student

Family background is a very important determinant of student achievements. Family background influences conformity to societal norms. The family is the primary socializing agent of which a child is a member since it is in the family the child is born (Agwanda, 2002). The relationship

between the children and parents could be influenced by occupation. Performance of students is a product of environmental factors (Reche,2012).Inadequate closeness between parents and children could result into insecure environment for the child resulting into the self perception as unworthy of love and perceiving others as unavailable and unresponsive. This may cause individuals to interpret losses and disappointments as personal failures, which contributes to the development of distress (Oghuvbu, 2007).

Distress affects academic achievements of students. A child who is often subjected to severe and harsh treatment will suffer academic defeat (Chukwudolue, 1996).One may rightly say that the family is the informal socializing agent since all its members have blood relations. Free interaction among the family members promotes better understanding. There is imposition of the social norm on the child through punishment and praises. A child in the family is having his/her primary exposure to the world and hence he/she is totally guided by the adults in his family most especially the parents. Home environment has an effect on student's academic performance .This is because the home has a great influence on the students' psychological , emotional , social and economic state .

Home environment of a student determines academic performance . If it is not conducive for reading ,academic performance is poor(Oloo,2003).In the view of Ajila and Olutola (2007) the state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an

individual's life . This is because the family background and context of a child affects his reaction to life situations and his level of performance. Ichado (1998) concluded that the environment in which a student comes from can greatly influence his performance at school . The writer further stated that parents constant disagreement affects children emotionally and this could lead to poor academic performance in school. Home environment is therefore very important in the life of children. Finally, a child in the family is immune to all the social ills in the society under normal condition or in an ideal situation. According to Odero (2004), the family determines students academic performance . Unfortunately some parents aren't aware how family structures can influence learning (Donkor, 2010). This calls for further research. Cultures and social norms are unavoidable family environments that influence family relationship.

Type of family and students' academic performance

Essentially, there are different types of families. Three major types of family are nuclear or monogamous, compound or polygamous and traditional or extended families. Ajala & Iyiola (1988) conducted a research which indicated that each type of family has its influence on the academic achievement of a student. Furthermore, their research indicated that children from nuclear families perform better in school than children from the compound or polygamous families. The following reasons are responsible for this:

The children have more time for their studies in most cases because there are less people to send them on errands. The reverse is the case in a polygamous family. Children from polygamous and broken homes have a

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tendency to be social deviants due to lack of adequate supervision and care. Since there are more people in a polygamous family, they exert a lot of pressure or influence on the child. If it happens that a lot of such influences are bad then this will adversely affect the child. In addressing causes of poor academic performance, it is important to realize that there are children who come from nuclear families and still don't perform well. It must be clearly known that families differ vastly in terms of their significance in social order as some have more prestige, dignity, money and power than others (Asikhia, 2010).

However, despite these differences in families, a child in the family remains exactly alike for the following reasons: The people surrounding the child here are generally adults full of experience; the child lives his early life in the family and equally develops his first language. Since they are of the same blood, they all work together to mould him in a way that he will perfectly fit into the society. For the same reasons given above they will not intentionally misdirect him. Polygamous homes can be a good environment to a students' performance as compared to nuclear or extended types of families.

Family size and position in the family

Family size refers to the number of children in the reference family. The larger the family the less the attention and devotion of each child by the parents and the more the difficulties encountered by the parents in meeting the needs of the children both physically and emotionally particularly in this austerity period when the prices of food and commodities in Kenya have

skyrocketed. No wonder the federal government of Nigeria is making a move to limit the number of children by a family to four. It is a good move in the right direction although the populace themselves are regulating child bearing due to the present economic conditions. The fewer the family the better is the 'rule' (Asikhia, 2010). The position a child occupies in a family equally plays a significant role in his development and academic achievement. Generally, the first child enjoys most particularly among the middle class and the 'rich'.

The parents are excited and determined to give him all he needs. They are generally overprotected and have a tendency to become spoilt due to the type of family they come from. Due to some of the facts stated above, some of them that are undetermined and therefore achieve low academic excellence. In few cases, particularly among the 'poor', they labour seriously to achieve academic excellence and hence pave way for those behind them. The last born are generally 'rotten' in that they are adequately provided for not only by their parents but equally by their brothers and sisters (Ibid, 2010). The mere fact that their brother is a lawyer and their sister is a doctor; blindfold them to the extent that they themselves will not work hard. In other words, they are relaxed by their elders' achievements. However, there are exceptional cases to this. In the African traditions, family size is a conducive environment to students' success more so among the rich.

Family educational background

Kerlinger (1986) opines that socio-class or status could be defined more objectively by using such indices such as occupation, income and education. It is assumed that the society is divided into different strata based on the possession of social and economic amenities. The stratum which an individual occupies in this socio-economic stratification represents his social class. Status based on socio-economic factors represents one of the major systems of stratification. Parents level of academic qualifications, occupation and economic status affects the upbringing of children (Oghuvbu, 2007). Public schools in Coast region of Kenya perform poorly as compared with private schools. This is due to illiteracy among parents who do not value their children's education (Njoroge, 2013).

Social stratification arises out of the recognition that in all societies, people are ranked or evaluated at a number of levels. Social class is common to most societies, ancient or modern. Socio-economic status is usually determined by wealth, power and prestige. Generally, when comparing and evaluating people we rank those who are wealthy in terms of material possessions, type and size of house, area of residence, number of cars and quality of clothes (Asikhia, 2010).

Wealth is strongly correlated with education and occupation and when socio-economic status is measured these other factors are usually included. Hence in any society, there is social stratification that is the organization of society in hierarchical order which deals with inequality in society in terms of services, obligation, power and prestige

(Ibid, 2010). In terms of rearing children, middle class parents are probably more permissive, that is democratic while the lower class parents are more rigid, that is autocratic. Reasons for these actions could be traced to the level of education and nature of work or personal experience. It is not a guarantee that students with learned parents are better off than those whose parents are not learned.

Type of discipline at home and academic achievements of students

A study conducted in South Africa (Legotlo et al, 2002) has shown that learner's disruptive behavior impacted negatively on the commitment to work. Research works have shown that the nature of parental discipline affects academic output of children (Aremu, 2000). Parents in their bid to discipline their children have been found to be authoritative, democratic or permissive. Children whose parents are authoritative constantly live in fear of their parents and may most likely transfer such fear to significant others in the school environment. Such children have low self-worth, insecurity, and may find it difficult to consult with teachers.

Aremu and Oluwole (2000) found that the degree of self-efficacy and anxiety manifest by learners determine their academic performance. On the other hand, children from permissive homes are too complacent, unmotivated, and lack personal will to succeed. The democratic style of parenting has been found to be very helpful to teaching-learning situation because they receive punishment that is commensurate

with the offence committed. Such children are strong willed and ready for success (Asikhia,2010). Aremu (2000) observes from a study that undergraduates that receive democratic type of parenting perform better than their counterparts from autocratic homes.

Learning environment of children determines their learning outcomes. A survey in Bangledesh showed that student's education varied positively with their family's income and holdings. Parenting practices in the home strongly predict school performance in the student's schooling .This in the end may affect the performance of the students in the national examinations (Khan,1993;Oloo,2003).Home supervision of children while studying helps to improve their academic performance. Parents admit that the falling standard of children's academic performances may be attributable to their own absence from home. For example through spending long hours in their jobs than with their   children at home (Donkor, 2010). Parental support should not be limited to financial support only. Parents play a big role in developing learning opportunities for their children (Wyk, 2001). Students whose parents are involved in their academic lives and create a good home environment tend to perform better than those whose parents are detached (Mwita, 2010). Discipline may therefore have an influence on a child's academic performance negatively or positively.

Conclusion

According to authors like Aremu and Oluwole(2000),Khan (1993), Agwanda (2002), Asikhia (2010), Donkor (2010), Wyk (2001), Legotlo, Maaga and Sebego

(2002), Behar- Horestein et al (2010), Odiembo (2004) , Kizito (2005), Ongiri and Abdi (2004), Bett (2004) , Chukwudolue, (1996), Oloo (2003) , Ajila and Olutola (2007) , Ajala and Iyiola (1988), Oghuvbu (2007) , Aremu (2000) and Mwita (2010) , the major highlights on causes of poor academic performance are ; perceptions, family background, socio-economic status and school factors. However, there is need to find out other factors that are causing poor academic performances among students and the extent of these causes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive cross sectional research design was used. This is because it attempts to show and document current conditions or attitudes and describes what exists at the moment in a given context .A stratified random sampling technique was used to select public secondary schools and teachers who included a principal and four teachers . Also eight students and 2 parents from each sampled schools were involved. The study embraced both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis .Data was collected from 21 secondary schools and a total of 38 respondents including students, teachers and parents were contacted. Data was analyzed using SPSS with use of frequencies and mean deviations.

Summary of findings.

The purpose of this paper was to identify the perceptions of poor academic performance amongst selected secondary schools in Kericho Sub-county and its Implications

for school management .It also examined the relationship between family background and students poor academic performance. The findings of the study revealed the following :-

Demographic data.

Age of respondents

Majority of the respondents rated at 44.7% were aged between 14-24 years followed by those aged between 36-46 years who were rated at 23.7%, while 21.1% of the respondents were aged between 25-35 years. Finally 10.5% of respondents were aged between 45-55 years.

Marital status of respondents.

The respondents were balanced in term of marital status with 50% being single and 50% were married.

Gender of respondents.

There is more male than female respondents. Female respondents were 36.8% while 63.2% were male respondents. The study indicates that there were more male than female respondents. This implies that the respondents in the study were male dominated.

Level of Education.

The respondents with diplomas were more than those with certificates and degrees. The percentages were 50%, 28.9% and 18.5

for diplomas, certificates and graduates respectively. Post graduates were at a percentage of 2.6%. This implies that most of the respondents were diploma holders and certificate holders. This may mean that the respondents need to go for further studies.

Occupation of respondents.

The majority of respondents were teachers followed by business people with percentages of 68.4% and 15.8% respectively. The peasants were rated at 10.5% while the farmers were at a percentage of 5.3% .

Number of children.

The majority of respondents had children between 5 and 10. These were rated at 47.4%. Those with less than 5 children were rated at 44.7%. Those who had more than 10 children were rated at 5.3%. Those who had no children were 2.6%. The parents who had more than 10 children were rated at a percentage of 5.3%. This implies that the majority of respondents had between 5-10 children. In as far as performance of these children is concerned, it would be very hectic for the parents to supervise these children. The chances of students performing poorly at this rate is very high because the parents may not have enough time to give the students in as far as

academic support is concerned. Having more than 5 children in Kenya today is also very costly in terms of finance and time which might not be very effectively used well in as far as the students' academic performance is concerned.

Level of student.

The majority of respondents were in form four with a percentage of 68.4% while other forms constituted 31.6%. This implies that the form four students were the eligible students for the survey due to the several examinations they undertake. It also implies that the kind of respondents that were used for the survey should have sat for examinations in one way or another.

Level of income

The big number of the respondents earn between 5-10Ksh. This constituted 44.7%. Those who earned between 10-30 Kshs. constituted 39.5%. Those who earned less than 5ksh were rated at 10.5% and the least number earned between 30-50ksh with a percentage of 5.3%. This implies that the respondents' salaries are still low and needed some increment in as far as boosting academic achievements is concerned. The level of income of parents and guardians would directly affect the academic performance of the students in one way or another.

Perceptions of causes of poor academic performance among students.

Students perform poorly because of their perceptions

The majority of respondents agree that students perform poorly because of poor perceptions. Those who agreed were rated at 34.2%. Those who strongly disagreed were rated at 31.6%. The rest who constituted 26.3% strongly agreed. While those who disagreed were rated at 7.9%. This was the least number of the respondents who disagreed that students perform poorly because of their perception. This implies that the student perception is very key in a students' academic performance.

Students do not have ample revision

The majority of respondents strongly disagreed that students do not have ample revision. They were rated at 65.8%. Those who agreed were rated at 34.2%. This implies that students have ample revision and it is not a good reason for their poor performance.
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Students are slow to learn

Majority of respondents rated at 44.7% agree that students are slow to learn . 31.6 % strongly agree while 23.7% strongly disagree. This implies that if a student is slow to learn , then the academic

performance of such student will not be good.

Students are solely responsible for their performance

Majority of respondents rated at 52.6% strongly agreed and 47.4% agreed that students are solely responsible for their poor performances. This implies that students are responsible for their performance.

Perceptions of causes of poor performance among parents

Parents are responsible for their students performance

Majority of respondents rated at 39.5% strongly agreed while 42.1% of the respondents agreed that parents are responsible for the students' academic performance. 15.8% of the respondents disagreed while 2.6% strongly disagree. This implies that parents are really responsible for their students performances.

Parents' up bringing is a cause of student's poor performance

Majority of respondents 42.1 agree, 28.9% strongly agree, 23.7% strongly disagree and 5.3% disagree that parental upbringing is key   a student's academic performance. The findings imply that the majority of the respondents agree to the fact that parental

upbringing is key in a student's performance.

Parents literacy and education level affects a child's academic achievement

Majority of respondents strongly agreed that the level of literacy and parental education is key in a students' academic performance. Those who strongly agreed were rated at 52.6% and the rest who agreed were rated at 47.4%. This implies that all respondents agree that parent's literacy and education level affects students academic performance.

Parents need to participate in encouraging students to perform better

All the respondents agreed to the fact that parents should get involved in encouraging students to perform better. This implies that encouragement of students by parents is a key aspect in helping students to perform better than they are performing.

Perceptions of causes of poor academic performance among teachers

Teachers' attitude towards students is key to their academic performance

All the respondents strongly agreed that a teachers' attitude towards students is key in students' academic performance. This implies that teachers' attitude towards

student academic performance is Key to a students' performance.

Teacher motivation improves students' performance

100 % of the respondents strongly agreed that teacher motivation is very important in as far as improvement of students academic performance is concerned

Teachers' attitudes to their jobs contributes to student performances

Respondents have a balanced view concerning the influence of teachers attitudes to their jobs on student performance. 50 % of the respondents strongly agreed and 50% agreed that teacher attitude towards their Jobs is very important in contributing to students performance.

Teachers allowing students to consult improves performance

68.4% of respondents strongly agreed and 31.6% agreed that teachers should allow students to consult them and hence improve their academic performance.

Family background and poor academic performance

Family background is key to student's performance

50% of the respondents agree that family background is key in student achievement and another 50% disagree that family background is key to student achievements. This implies that the respondents had a balanced view on family background and student achievements. This is because the family background and context of a child affects his reaction to life situations and his level of performance.

Students from polygamous families perform better than others

Majority of the respondents disagreed that students from polygamous families perform better than others. Those who strongly disagreed were rated at 34.2%. 10.5 % agreed that students from polygamous families perform better than others. 2.6% strongly agreed that students from polygamous families perform better than others. This implies that respondents have a mixed idea concerning the students' polygamous background and its influence on academic performances.

Students from monogamous families perform better

50% of the respondents strongly disagreed and 50% disagreed that students from

monogamous families perform better. This implies that any student can perform well whether from polygamous backgrounds or monogamous backgrounds.

Family structure contributes to student performance.

Majority of the respondents rated at 26.3% strongly agreed and 23.7% disagreed. 23.7% agreed and 26.3% strongly disagreed that family structure contributes to student performance. This implies that the respondents have a balanced idea about family structure and its contribution to a students' performance

Students' position in the family affects their academic performance.

It is very clear that students' position in the family does not affect their academic Performance. All the respondents rated at 100% disagreed that the students' position in the family affects their academic performance.

Students from well to do families perform better than those from poor families.

Majority of respondents (50%) disagreed and 28.9% strongly disagreed that students' from well to do families perform better than those from poor families. 13.2% agreed and 7.9% agreed. This implies that students from well to do families may not automatically

perform better than those from poor families.

Students from formal families perform better than those from informal families.

Majority of respondents rated at 55.3% strongly disagreed while 44.7% disagreed as to the fact that students from formal families performing better than those from informal homes. This implies that students from formal families do not perform better than those from informal families.

Students from disciplined homes perform better than those from indisciplined homes.

Majority of the respondents rated at 28.9% strongly disagreed that students from disciplined homes perform better than those from indisciplined homes. 26.3% disagreed while 21.1% agreed and 23.7% strongly agreed that students from disciplined homes perform better than those from indiscipline homes. This implies that students from disciplined homes may not perform better than those from indisciplined homes.

Relationship between socio economic status (SES) and student's academic performance.

The level of income of parents influences a child's academic performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 36.8% agreed that level of income of parents influences a child's academic performance. 26.4% strongly disagreed, 18.4% strongly agreed and 18.4% disagreed. This implies that parents who are capable financially can afford extra tuition for their children.

The occupation of parents influences a student's academic performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 28.9% strongly disagreed and another 28.9% disagreed and still 28.9 % agreed and 13.3 % strongly agreed that the occupation of parents influences students academic performance . This implies that parents occupation does not influence students academic performance.

Poverty is a key determinant of a student's academic achievement.

Majority of respondents rated at 28.9 % strongly disagreed and another 28.9 % disagreed , 26.3 % agreed and 15.9 % strongly agreed that poverty is a key determinant of a students' academic performance . This implies that poverty is not a key determinant of a student's academic performance.

School factors influencing students academic performance

Location of the school affects academic performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 42.1% strongly disagreed ,26.3% disagreed,23.7% agreed and 7.9% strongly disagreed that location of the school affects academic performance. This implies that location of the school does not affect academic performance.

Students in rural settings perform better than those in town settings.

Majority of respondents rated at 44.8% disagreed,42.1% strongly disagreed,10.5% agreed and 2.6% strongly agreed that students in rural settings perform better than those in town settings. This implies that students in rural settings do not perform better than those in town settings.

School infrastructure affects academic performance.

Majority or respondents rated at 28.9 % disagreed , 26.3 % strongly disagreed while 26.3 % agreed and 18.5 % strongly agreed that school infrastructure affects academic performance .This implies that school infrastructure does not affect academic performance.

Quality of teaching staff and environment of school and its influence on academic performance

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The level of education of teachers influences academic performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 34.2 % strongly agreed , 34.2% agreed , 15.8 % strongly disagreed and 15.8 % disagreed that the level of education of teachers influences academic performance .This implies that the level of education of teachers influences academic performance.

Teaching methods are key to a student's performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 52.6 % strongly agreed,42.1% agreed and 5.3% strongly disagreed that teaching methods are key to a student's performance. This implies that teaching methods are key to a student's performance.

Classroom management is key to student's performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 52.6% agreed,23.7% strongly agreed,13.2% disagreed and 10.5% strongly disagreed that classroom management is key to student's performance. This implies that classroom management is key to student's performance.

Learning environment in terms of space and conduciveness affects students' performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 42.1% strongly agreed,39.5 % agreed,10.5% strongly disagreed and 7.9% disagreed that learning environment in terms of space and conduciveness affects student's performance

Students' motivation in class can cause poor performances.

Majority of respondents 34.2% strongly disagreed ,28.9 % agreed,21.1% disagreed and 15.8% strongly agreed that students' motivation in class causes poor performance. This implies that students' motivation in class cannot cause poor performance. Instead student motivation in class can cause good performance.

Leadership styles contributes to poor performance of students.

Majority of respondents rated at 44.8% agreed,42.1% strongly agreed,10.5% strongly disagreed and 2.6% disagreed that leadership styles contributes to poor performance of students. This implies that the head teacher's leadership styles determines academic performance of students.

Peer influence is key to a students' performance in class.

Majority of respondents rated at 42.1% agreed,26.3% strongly agreed,15.8% strongly disagreed while 15.8% disagreed that peer influence is key to a student's performance in class. This implies that peer influence determines student's performance in class.

Open ended questionnaire responses
Number of Children in secondary school.

Majority of respondents rated at 36.8% had one child followed by those with two rated at 28.9 %,then those with three rated at 15.9% .Those with four children stood at 10.5 % .Finally those with six children stood at 7.9% . This implies that majority of respondents have less children in secondary schools . This is manageable in as far as fees payments and home supervision is concerned. This is because lack of finance and home supervision can contribute to poor academic performance.

Time spent with children concerning their homework.

Majority of respondent rated at 78.9 % spend between 1-2 hours daily with their children concerning their homework,15.8% spend between 3-4 hours and 5.3% spend over 4 hours. This implies that that most parents spent minimum time with their

children concerning homework. This contributes to poor academic performance.

Respondents perception concerning causes of poor academic performance in secondary school

Respondents had a balanced view concerning causes of poor performance in secondary school.50% had a positive perception and 50% had a negative perception. This implies that perceptions concerning academic performance can either be positive or negative.

Respondents perception concerning their children's performance.

All respondents had a positive perception concerning their children's performance. This implies that respondents believe that their children can perform well academically.

What the respondents think is the cause of poor academic performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 31.6% thought that laziness causes poor performance.28.9% thought that poor performance is due to lack of cooperation among stakeholders. 26.3% attributed poor performance to indiscipline, 7.9 % attributed it to school fees and 5.3% thought that poor performance was caused by peer

influence. This implies that with hard work from teachers and students , cooperation amongst stakeholders , tackling indiscipline , payment of school fees and checking of peer influence , poor academic performance can be reversed.

Respondents views on whether poor academic performance can change for the better.

Majority respondents believed that poor academic performance can change for the better. This implies that poor academic performance can change for the better.

What respondents think can be done to improve academic performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 34.2 % thought that students should be guided in order to improve academic performance, 18.4 % thought that joint consultation among stakeholders can lead to improved academic performance. 15.8 % thought that improving discipline will improve academic performance, 13.2 % suggested varying of teaching methodologies, 10.5% thought of equipping schools as a measure of improving academic performance, 5.3% suggested empowering of teachers as a measure of improving academic performance and 2.6% called for provision of proper leadership. This implies that

guiding students , joint consultation amongst stakeholders , improving discipline , varying teaching methodologies , equipping schools , empowering teachers and providing proper leadership are some of the measures which can be put in place for good performance.

Respondents views concerning the meaning of poor performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 42.1% viewed poor performance as performance that is adjudged by the examine/ testee and some other significant as falling below an expected standard, 36.8 % viewed it as performance which falls short of providing the learning needs of students and 21.1 % viewed poor performance as constantly getting lower student outcomes in national examination. This implies that poor performance is constantly getting lower student outcomes in national examinations , falling short of providing the learning needs of students and it is performance that is adjudged by the examinee /testee and some other significant as falling below an expected standard.

Respondents view as to whether they have any poor performance.

Majority of respondents rated at 81.6 % indicated that they have poor academic performance while 18.4% did not have any

poor performance. This implies that there is poor performance.

Respondents Views on their highest scores.

majority of respondents rated at50% indicated that their highest scores range from B- to C+, 34.2 % indicated that their highest scores ranged between C- to D+ and 15.8 % had highest mean scores ranging between A to B+. This implies that majority of the students will not proceed to university and those who proceed will not do competitive courses like medicine.

Respondents views on their lowest scores.

majority of respondents rated at 89.5 % indicated that their lowest scores ranged between D+ to E. 10.5 % had lowest scores ranging between B- and C- . This implies that majority of students leave secondary schools with very low scores.

Respondents distribution on any other issue of concern.

majority of respondents rated at 26.3 % saw the need for strengthening guidance and counseling ion schools as an issue of concern,21.2% want parents to take their roles seriously, 18.4% are calling for cooperation among stake holders,10.5 % are asking the government to equip and fund schools, 5.3 % want school managers trained

on modern approaches for good performance,5.3 % would like the ministry of Education, Science and Technology to set minimum entry requirements to the next classes in all secondary schools ,2.6% want more teachers employed,2.6% want performing students motivated through bursaries,2.6% call for monitoring of language use by students and 2.6% saw boys performance as still low. This implies that stakeholders have several issues of concern about academic performance and that there should be joint consultation.

Conclusion

The study on perceptions of causes of poor academic performance amongst selected secondary school in Kericho Sub- county and its implications for school management therefore concludes the following according to the findings of the study

1. There is a strong relationship between perceptions (Teachers, students, parents) and student performances at any level .

2. In the midst of perceptions , there could be other factors that highlight poor performance among students especially family background.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings of the study , this paper recommends that ;

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1.   The parents need to also spend more time with students in order to encourage them and prepare them for better performance.
2.   The parents need to be sensitized on the importance of spending time with their students and encouraging them to perform better.
3.   The government should improve on its policies of free primary education so as make free   secondary education to become a better stage for the students to perform better.

Suggestions for further research

This study was conducted in Kericho Sub-county only .There was therefore a need to replicate it to other sub-counties in Kenya .
. Future studies can focus on the following suggestions for further research which have been made :
1.   There is need to conduct a research on the relationship between school factors like head

teachers, leadership styles and poor academic performance.

2.   There is need to determine the impact of social economic factors on the academic performance among students in schools.

3.   There is need to examine home factors influencing students' academic performance

Implications for school management.

The findings of the study are based on the perceptions of teachers, parents and students regarding the most important

obstacles and factors which contribute to low performance in secondary schools . It seems clear that these results will provide valuable information to secondary school management . Learning more about teachers , students and parents perceptions regarding the obstacles of good performance could be used as feed back to enhance future student performance and change their attitudes toward KCSE as a difficult examinations . Several important implications for secondary school management are suggested by the results of this study .

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THANKYOU.