

# Influence of Teacher Related Factors on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Makueni Sub-County, Kenya

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**Abstract:-** The academic performance of students in Public Secondary schools in Kenya has distressed the Ministry of education officers, parents, teachers among other stakeholders. Secondary education should fill some roles like provision of skills, knowledge and also prepare students to further their studies. Unfortunately, secondary education has challenges in accomplishing the roles. The main purpose of the study was to investigate on the influence of teacher related factors on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Makueni Sub County, Makueni County. The study focused on finding out how teacher related factors influence the students' academic performance in secondary schools. The study was based on capital theory. The design adopted for this study was descriptive survey design. The study targeted 48 form 3 students, 54 teachers and 36 form 3 parents from Makueni Sub County in Makueni County. Purposive sampling and simple random sampling technique was used in selection of the respondents. The researcher made use of questionnaires and interview guide to collect data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS17) to generate the frequency of answers the percentages, tables and figures. The results of the study revealed that frequent use of lecture method in teaching brought about poor academic performance. The study has recommended that administrators should ensure teachers vary teaching methods and also attended workshops to equip themselves with the current teaching approaches.

**Keywords:-** Influence, Academic Performance, Experience, Level of Education.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The World Bank (2015) opines that instilling education in the people of a nation through learning is one of the elements of national development. The report further affirms that Education should actually make one an asset of the national development. Shariff (2011) asserts that education is the process by which an individual develops knowledge, skills, habits and attitudes which enable one to become a responsible citizen. The World Bank (2017) observed that there was a learning crisis in the low and middle-income countries. The study found out that most of the public secondary institutions emphasized on schooling without focusing on the students' academic achievement.

The Africa-America Institute (2015) supports the findings by affirming that while there are many students gaining access to education in secondary schools, the academic performance of the students is low and they are not gaining basic skills. It also noted that Africa faces severe shortage of highly skilled personnel in most of the secondary schools. In addition, skills that will obstruct today's world challenges will depend on the academic performance of students' with the teacher being part of the process or the pathway to learning. In most of the developed nations including United States of America (USA) emphasize on narrow achievement gaps between the highest and lowest performing student. The education policies of these developed countries focus on the achievement of minimum competencies in the basic skills including several subjects like Mathematics, Reading and Science (Mullis, Martin, Foy and Arora, 2012).

As stated by Rabgay (2015), students with low academic scores find it challenging to cope in a competitive society. Students' successful academic achievement needs multidimensional efforts. Therefore, the parents, teachers and students have a very vital role to play in the learning process (Khan, Iqbal & Tasneem, 2015). In a research report by Uwezo East Africa initiative (2016) gave an explanation on the assessment of students and learning in educational institutions from 2010 to present.

The assessment revealed that students were not learning and thus the schools performance was not improving. Therefore, the study recommended that education reforms should be undertaken in order to make an improvement on the students' performance. The Ministry of Education (2012) documented that education stakeholders are greatly concerned with the declining students' performance in secondary schools in spite of huge investments in provision of education in public secondary schools. The Basic Education Act No.4 of 2013 (The Laws of Kenya, 2013) documented that basic education offered in Secondary schools should be guided by values and principles including; stimulating independent critical thinking; cultivating discipline, skills and capacities for reconstruction and development. Besides, education should impart knowledge, attitudes, values and skills to learners. Despite all the efforts that have been put in place by the educational stakeholders to improve on the academic performance of students, poor performance has been recorded in the recent years. The focus of the study was to examine the teacher related factors on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Makueni sub county, Makueni County which is in the Eastern part of Kenya. It is 73 kilometers from Machakos town on your way to Makindu town. It borders Kathonzi Sub County to the South, Mbooni West to the East, Mbooni East to the North and Mukaa Sub County to the West (SCDE Report, 2017).

## II. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. This type of design usually seeks to find answers to the questions generated from the statement of the problem. Orodho (2009) maintains that descriptive survey design is used on preliminary and exploratory studies to allow the researcher to gather the information, summarize, present and interpret data. Using this design, the researcher attempted to find answers of the research questions by analyzing the variables that relate to teacher related factors influencing the public secondary school students' academic performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) in Makueni Sub County, Makueni County. . The study targeted 480 form 3 students with a teacher population of 216 from the 6 sampled public secondary schools. The information provided in the 6 sampled public secondary school principals summed up to a population of 362 form 3 parents. The study used stratified sampling technique to sample 6 public secondary schools out of 20 which was 30% of the population. The study also used 10% sample of parents and students through simple random sampling procedure thus a sample of 36 parents and 48 students. The study also used 25% sample of teachers using purposive sampling technique giving a sample of 54 teachers. The sample size of each respondent was equally divided among the selected schools. This is in agreement with a study by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) who stated that a sample size of 10-30% from a target population with similar characteristics is enough representation of the whole

population. Data was collected using self – administered questionnaires. Two sets of questionnaires were prepared. The student's questionnaires sought information from the students while the teacher's questionnaire sought information from the teachers. The researcher used questionnaires for the teachers and students because of their ability to collect information from large samples within a short period of time. Additionally, the study also used an interview schedule for the parents to the minimum thus permitting a greater in-depth response from the respondents (parents). These particular responses enabled the researcher to get greater insight into the feelings, decisions and thinking of the respondents. Additionally, the study also used an interview schedule for the parents to the minimum thus permitting a greater in-depth response from the respondents (parents). These particular responses enabled the researcher to get greater insight into the feelings, decisions and thinking of the respondents. The results of data analysis were presented using frequency distribution tables, bar graphs and pie charts. High confidentiality was assured to the respondents.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the study.

### A. Demographic Information

The study had to collect the demographic information of the participants which included gender, age bracket, the performance of schools in previous years and educational level of both the teachers and the parents. The demographic data of participants was summarized in tables and graphs in a following section.

#### ➤ Gender of Respondents

The study established the gender of the parents, students and teachers participants. Table 1 outlines the gender of participants in frequency and percentages.

	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Parents	Female	30	83
	Male	6	17
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>
Students	Female	30	62
	Male	18	38
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>
Teachers	Female	36	67
	Male	18	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1:- Gender of the respondents

The findings in Table 1 revealed that majority of the participants were females as shown by 83 % (30) of the parents, 62 % (30) of students and 67 % (36) of teachers 17% (6) parents, 38 % (18) of students and 33% (18) of the

teachers were male. The results imply that the study sampled both gender and therefore the response is a reflection of both genders, though the findings reveal gender disparity in favour of the female participants. This revealed that female respondents were more concerned with the academic performance of students in Makueni Sub-county as compared to the male respondents. The findings of this study is supported by a research by Chege, Likoye, Nyambura and Guantai (2014) who found out that there are more girls than

boys in school. The findings further pointed out that the female teacher formed the largest population in teaching profession. Female parents are mostly involved in the growth and learning process of their children (Asikhia, 2010)

➤ *Age of the Respondents*

The study sought to establish the age profile for the respondents. The analysis of age is shown in frequency and percentage.

Respondents	Age	Frequency	Percentage
Parents	Below 30 years	6	17
	30-40 years	10	28
	Over 40 years	20	55
<b>Total</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>
Students	15 years and below	11	24
	16-17years	31	65
	18 years and above	6	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>
Teachers	Below 30 years	5	9
	30-40 years	26	48
	Over 40 years	23	43
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2:- Ages of the Respondents

The findings on Table 2 reveal that most of the parents were aged above 40 years as indicated by 55% (20) and 28% (10) of the respondents ranging between 30-40 years. Only 17% (6) were below 30 years. The students aged between 16-17 years were 65% (31), followed 24% (11) who were aged 15 years and 11% (6) were aged 18 years and above. This was a clear indication that the students were capable of providing correct responses. A response of 9% (5) of the teachers was below 30 years of age while 48% (26) of the total respondents had ages between 30-40 years. A percentage of 43% (23) teachers had above 40 years. This clearly revealed that the teachers were capable of providing the relevant information as required by the questions. The findings indicate that most of the teachers' respondents were above 30 years. This clearly showed that the teachers had

sufficient experience in dealing with students and could easily highlight the challenges faced by students in academics.

They study also found out that most of the parents were aged above 30 years. This revealed that they have ideas of challenges encountered by students in academic performance. In addition, most of the students' participants were in the mid and late teenage (16 and 17 years) therefore, were able to provide relevant information concerning their academic performance.

➤ *Education Level of the Teachers and Parents*

The figure below indicates the educational level of the parents and teacher's participants.

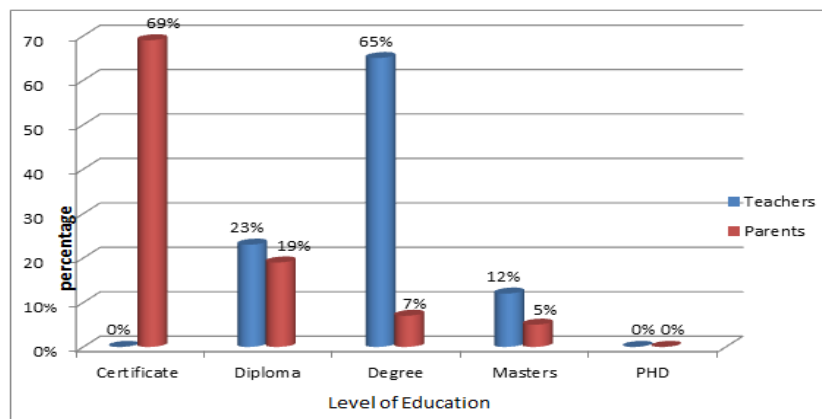


Fig 1:- Education Levels of Parents and Teachers

The findings on Figure 1 reveal that majority of the parents that is 69% had education level of certificate and below, 19% had a diploma, 7% had a degree and 5% had masters so they were suitable in giving responses to the questionnaires. A 65% of the respondents represented majority of the teachers who had a degree as their highest level of education while 23% had a diploma and the least which was represented by 12% had a master's degree. There was no teacher who had a qualification of either certificate or a PhD, these was shown by 0%. These findings show that the respondents had the required qualification to teach in secondary school and would understand socio-economic determinants influencing academic performance of secondary schools.

The findings of the study agree with results of a study carried out in Uasin Gishu district by Koech (2010), which revealed that parents with low education were less involved in parent-teacher partnerships due to their literate level. In addition, Ahmad (2013) argued that most of the educated parents provide emotional support to their learners who in turn adjust to their learning environment thus resulting to high academic performance. Nonetheless, Osuafor (2013) analyzed the academic performance of students from University education and those with primary education. The average scores were 55.10, 53.97 and 52.70 respectively. The analysis revealed a small difference in the scores. However, Rutere (2012) observed that college training was not enough to make someone a good teacher. Thus, teachers need to update their skills through in-service training since knowledge is dynamic and increases with new discoveries and technological advancement.

#### *B. Influence of Teacher Related Factors on Students' Academic Performance*

Objective three sought to establish teacher related factors that influence the academic performance. Some of the indicators assessed included; experience of the teacher and teaching methods.

##### ➤ *Experience of the Teachers*

The teaching experience of a teacher is vital in determining the students' academic performance. A teacher gains variety of skills through experience. More experienced teachers are confident and have an exposure to various approaches in teaching thus; they tend to be more successful at work. Hence, teachers experience has an impact on the teaching and learning process which contributes to the academic performance of students. To determine the teaching experience, teachers were requested to indicate their working experience in terms of years. The table gives a breakdown of the teacher's experience in frequency and percentages.

Years worked	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 years	14	27
4-5 years	20	37
5-10 years	10	18
Above 10 years	10	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3:- Teachers Experience

The findings on table 3 clearly indicate that 37% (20) had worked for a period of 4-5 years. Teachers who had worked for 5-10 years were 18% (10) while those who had worked for 10 years and above, were 18% (10). The teachers who had worked for 1-3 years were represented by 27% (14). Most of teachers that is 34 out of 54 had five years and below working experience. This showed that teachers in Makueni Sub County were relatively young in the teaching service and thus had not acquired sufficient expertise in teaching. The results of the findings concur with the findings of Nambuya (2013), who stated that the performance of teachers as shown by the level of training and teaching experience determines the quality of grades attained in an examination. Murunga, Kilaha and Wanyonyi (2013) added that, to ensure quality education is provided to the youth there is a need to evaluate the characteristics of secondary school teachers regarding to the experience and the technique used in teaching.

The study found out that those teachers who have repeated experience in teaching the same subject area improve more rapidly than those whose experience is in varied subjects. Contrary, Rutere (2012) discovered that experience alone does not make a person a good teacher. The findings further advocated for in-service training because new methods of teaching, new teaching-learning resources and new content are always introduced in the curriculum designs. Thus, they equip teachers with new methodologies of teaching thus improving the academic performance of students. The findings suggest that efforts should be made by the government to distribute teachers with at least some experience more fairly across all public secondary schools.

##### ➤ *Teaching Methods*

The content in curriculum is delivered to students through teaching methods. Therefore, a good teaching method should involve several activities that engage students. Relevant teaching methods enable students achieve instructional objectives in a lesson. Thus, the choice of a teaching method influences the academic performance of students. Varied teaching methods should be used in order to make learning interesting and this leads to high academic performance. To determine how teaching methods influenced academic performance, students were asked to indicate the most frequently used teaching method. The figure 4.6 shows the frequency of teaching methods used.

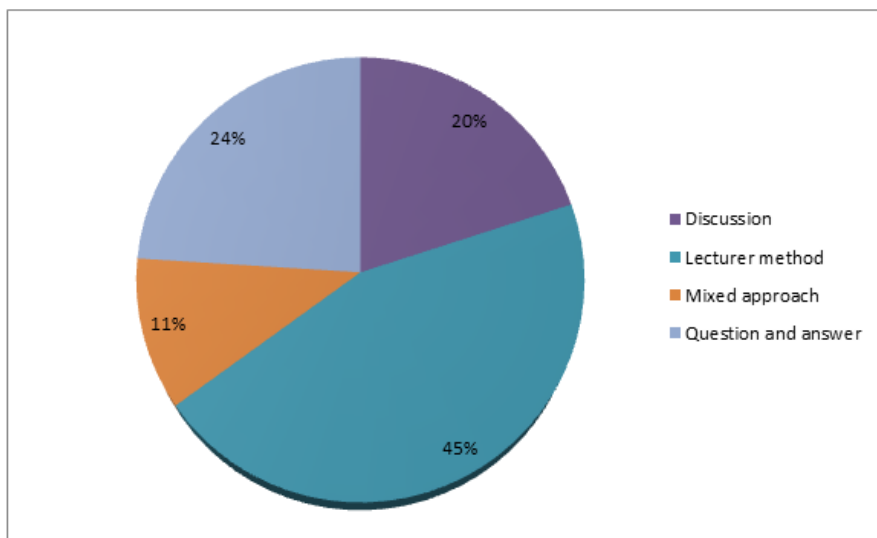


Fig 2:- Teaching methods

The results on Figure 2 indicated clearly that lecture method was the most frequently used teaching method in the sampled secondary schools as shown by 45% (22) students. The second most popular method was question and answer as represented by 24% (11). Group discussion was also used as shown by 20% (10). The least frequently used method was mixed approach which is a combination of teacher centered and learner centered approach as shown by 11% (5).

Parent G from Makueni Girls said that her daughter told her that one of the reasons she was performing poorly in English is that the English teacher gives them literature notes to write on their own and later the teacher comes to explain on the notes. This clearly showed that the methods of teaching used had an impact on the students' subject performance. The results of the study revealed that interaction between the teachers and students was minimal during learning because lecture method was frequently used.

The study concurs with the findings of a study by Ngaroga (2011), which found that lecture method was appropriate as one of the teaching methods. He further affirmed that lecture method when used in teaching stirs the enthusiasm on a specified subject to the students, inform students of the expected outcomes, synthesize learning, reinforce written work and deliver information within a shorter time.

In controversy, Ngaroga (2011) elaborates on the use of lecture method in teaching as appropriate when the subject matter to be taught is complex coupled with low intelligence, experience in education and learners concentration. Therefore the current study finds out that the use of lecture as a method of teaching dominated in most of the schools which limited the inclusion and interaction between the students and teachers.

➤ Factors leading to Poor Performance

Analysis of factors leading to students' poor performance is shown on Table 4.

Factor	Respondents	Agree	Disagree
Inadequate use of instructional resources	Parents	26 <b>72%</b>	10 <b>28%</b>
	Students	38 <b>78%</b>	10 <b>22%</b>
	Teachers	30 <b>56%</b>	24 <b>44%</b>
Irregular in-service training	Parents	30 <b>83%</b>	6 <b>17%</b>
	Students	45 <b>93%</b>	3 <b>7%</b>
	Teachers	40 <b>74%</b>	14 <b>26%</b>

Table 4:- Factors leading to Poor Performance.

The findings on Table 4. indicated that 72% (26) parents, 78% (38) students and 56% (30) teachers agreed that inadequate use of instructional materials was a cause to poor performance. A group of 28% (10) parents, 22% (10) students and 44% (24) teachers disagreed with the opinion. The results imply that almost half of the public secondary school teachers were rarely making use of teaching/learning materials during teaching and this influenced the students' retention rate on what was taught. A group of 83% (30) parents, 93% (45) students and 74% (40) teachers agreed that irregular in service training was a cause to poor performance. This is in comparison to 17% (6) parents, 7% (3) students and 26% (14) teachers who disagreed. The findings suggest that irregular in-service training influenced the academic performance of students.

The findings of the study concur with Ko, Sammons and Bakkum (2013), affirm that teacher related factors determine the students' progress and effective teaching in schools. Amos, Folasayo and Oluwatoyin (2015) have emphasized that teaching is successful where there is an interaction between a teacher and a student, including availability of material inputs and motivation. The findings of the study contrast with results of a study by Asikhia (2010) on factors influencing student performance, the results found out that a teacher does not take any responsibility on students' failure.

#### IV. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study found out that majority of the teachers had an experience of 5 years and below. Therefore, teachers who were highly experienced were few and this could influence the students' academic performance. A large number of the participants agreed that the most frequently method of teaching used was lecture method as compared to the other methods of teaching which lead to students performing poorly. A large number of respondents agreed that inadequate use of instructional resources was a cause to poor performance. A large percentage of respondents agreed that irregular in service training to teachers was influencing the students' academic performance. The study further found out that there was insignificant positive influence of teacher related factors on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

The study attested that there was frequent use of lecture method in teaching which influenced the students' performance. It was also concluded that most of the teachers lacked sufficient experience in teaching which could be influencing the students' academic performance. It was confirmed that some of the factors contributing to poor performance of students was irregular in-service training of the teachers and inadequate use of instructional resources while teaching. Therefore, there was an insignificant positive influence of teacher related factors on the academic performance of students.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS ON RESEARCH FINDINGS

Teacher related factors were found to influence students' academic performance. For instance, teaching experience influenced the academic performance of students. Therefore, school administrators should ensure that the newly employed teachers are allocated form one and two classes for them to gain experience before they start teaching form three and four. The study also confirmed that lecture method was adversely used by teachers and they also lacked irregular in-service training. Thus, school administrators should ensure that teachers attend workshops and seminars regularly which

inculcate new skills and teaching methodologies which may result to improvement in academic performance.

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