

**FACTORS THAT LEAD TO POOR PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH
AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY STUDENTS IN BUNYALA SUB-
COUNTY, BUSIA COUNTY**

BY

OBWARO MAXMILAN MWAIRA

BEDA/000513/3122/20044

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE
AWARD OF DEGREE OF EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION OF
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

AUGUST 2015

ABSTRACT

Apart from the fact that English is an official language, it is also a compulsory subject in primary and secondary institutions where it is the one mainly used as the medium of instruction. This confirms its importance both at local and national levels. Nearly all the examinations that students sit are set in English and its poor performance is therefore felt more than any other subject in schools. The purpose of this study was to establish the reasons for poor performance in English among public secondary students in Bunyala Sub-county, Busia County. The study was guided by the following objectives: to establish the reasons for poor performance in English among public secondary students in Bunyala Sub-county, Busia County, to find out the effect of poor performance in English among public secondary students in Bunyala Sub-county, Busia County and to suggest appropriate ways of improving English performance among public secondary students in Bunyala Sub-county, Busia County. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. There are fifteen public secondary schools in Bunyala sub-county. Ten of these schools were sampled for the study. The study targeted teachers of English, the students especially from three and four and parents. Random sampling technique was used to sample students for the study while purposive sampling technique was used to sample teachers of English and parents. A total of twelve respondents were sampled from each school (consisting 10 students and 2 teachers of English). A total of one hundred and fifty respondents were targeted for the study (consisting 100 students, 20 teachers and 30 parents). Questionnaires and interview schedules were used by the researcher as the instruments for data collection. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were used to summarize the data. The analyzed data was presented in form of tables, pie-charts and bar-graphs where applicable. The study found that economic factors such as poverty and inadequate resources were indeed factors that lead to poor performance in English. This was supported by 82% of the interviewed respondents who associated it with poverty. The study also found that environmental and school factors such as lack of exposure and language policies were also factors that lead to poor performance in English. These were supported by overwhelming majority of 85% and 86% respectively. From the findings, it was concluded that economic factors such as poverty and inadequate resources, environmental and school factors such as lack of exposure and failure to observe language policies were indeed factors that lead to poor performance in English among public secondary school students. The study recommended that the government should economically empower parents to enable them pay fees with ease. The study also recommended that language policies in schools should be strictly adhered to expose more students to English. Finally, the study recommended that another study be done in the sub-county to establish appropriate measures to be taken to improve on the performance of English in the region.