

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO POOR PERFORMANCE IN  
CHEMISTRY IN MWINGI CENTRAL DISTRICT, KITUI COUNTY, KENYA.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Performance in Chemistry by Students has persistently been dismal. This study sought to investigate the factors contributing to the poor performance and to establish the strategies that can be adopted to improve performance in Chemistry by students in secondary schools in Mwingi Central District in Kenya. The study sought to determine the school based factors that affect students' performance in Chemistry in secondary schools that affect them and their personal factors that affect performance in Chemistry, and establish the strategies that can be adopted to improve performance in the subject. The study also sought to provide answers to the following questions which caused poor performance in KCSE Chemistry examination, what is the effect of the learners attitude on their performance, what are the effects of teachers qualification and instructional approaches on the out-come of Chemistry result in the national examination and what effect does the availability of resources have on the final outcome of the national Chemistry examination in Mwingi District. Descriptive survey research design is adopted for the study. The study also employed the motivational theory as stated by Abraham Maslow (1943). The target population is 1000 respondents which comprised of Form four secondary school students in Mwingi District, 25 Chemistry teachers and 10 head teachers. The data for the research is collected by use of three questionnaires; student, teachers and Head teachers interview schedule. The main factors contributing to poor performance included under staffing, inadequate teaching and learning materials, lack of motivation and poor attitudes by students. Improving on these factors and sensitization of the student's participation in learning Chemistry could improve. It is anticipated that the findings of this study will give curriculum developers new insights into emerging issues on performance and influence the Ministry of Education on policy formulation. Students are also expected to benefit from the findings; because improved Chemistry performance will give them opportunities to pursue science related courses in higher institutions of learning and middle level colleges.