

**FACTORS INFLUENCING KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY
EDUCATION EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC MIXED DAY
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SABATIA SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (K.C.S.E) performance in Public Mixed Day secondary schools in Sabatia Sub-county of Vihiga. K.C.S.E performance in Public Mixed Day secondary schools in Sabatia Sub-county of Vihiga County has been poor. Poor KCSE performance affects selection and placement of students to Technical/Vocational Institutes, Tertiary colleges and Universities. Specifically, the study sought to identify school related factors that contribute to poor KCSE performance; analyze the effects of parental education and occupation on quality of students' academic performance and to evaluate existing mechanisms used to monitor students' performance. The study used the Ecological systems theory as a basis to assess KCSE performance in Public Mixed Day secondary schools. The study adopted a mixed research methodology approach. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed to recruit respondents for the study. 384 students were randomly selected from the schools. Key informants who included the Principals, Board of Management members, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) members, Parents and Education officers were selected purposively. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from the 384 students and 75 Key Informants. The validity and reliability of the instruments was determined by piloting of the instruments; an alpha Cronbach threshold value of 0.7 was used to ascertain validity and reliability of the instruments. Views of Key informants were also sampled through a 10 item Likert-type Key informant guides and a one on one interview for Curriculum supervisors. Quantitative data obtained from students and Key Informants was subjected to descriptive survey analysis to obtain means, modes, frequencies and standard deviations using the Statistical package for Social Scientists Program (SPSS) Version 22. Qualitative data was analysed by content analysis techniques using themes from comments from answers obtained during interviews. Analysed data has been presented in form of charts, tables and narratives. The study established that the school based factors that lead to poor KCSE performance are related to poor teacher commitment and lack of facilities; these factors include non-completion of syllabi on time, failure by teachers attend all lessons (86%), failure by teachers to carry out experiments/ practical's in science lessons (73.4%), and failure by teachers to demonstrate during lessons (89%). The study also established that most parents have low levels of education and are outside formal employment and this negatively affects the quality of education because of the limited support parents can offer. The study also established that although Principals carry out routine monitoring practices, such monitoring practices have some weaknesses. The study recommends that the Government should fully fund secondary education to reduce the problem of school levies, lack of textbooks and leave parents to fend for other basic needs such as food. Principals need to also carry out more than routine monitoring to ensure that there is effective monitoring. Finally, the study recommends further research to establish the best strategies to utilize the limited time available in the day schools to improve performance in KCSE performance.