

FAMILY SOCIOECONOMIC PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN PUBLIC MIXED DAY
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NYAMIRA NORTH DISTRICT, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study compared the influence of family socioeconomic factors, as predictors of academic performance of students in selected Public Mixed Day Secondary Schools in Nyamira North District, Kenya. Performance of the District in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations had been dismal for some time. The purpose of this study was to examine family socioeconomic predictors on students' academic performance in KCSE in Public Mixed Day Secondary Schools in Nyamira North District. The study was carried out amongst 857 parents of KCSE candidates and 22 head teachers of Public Mixed Day Secondary Schools in Nyamira North District. The objectives of the study involved: establishing how family income affects students academic performance in selected public mixed day secondary schools in Nyamira North District; finding out how parents' occupation affects students' academic performance in selected public mixed day secondary schools in Nyamira North District; establishing how parents' level of education affects students' academic performance in selected public mixed day secondary schools in Nyamira North District; and establishing strategies that have been put in place to address the likely negative influence of family socioeconomic status on students' academic performance in KCSE in Nyamira North District, Kenya. The study was informed by the Social capital theory by Pierre Bourdieu. The study adopted ex- post facto research design. A randomly selected study sample made up of 265 parents and 21 head teachers of Mixed Day Public Secondary Schools was used for the study. Primary data were collected by use of questionnaires and interview schedules. Data were analyzed for descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and Chi square test to establish differences and relationships between variables. The analysis was done with the aid of the Scientific Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The study findings revealed that Family income; parents' occupation and parents' level of education influenced students' academic performance in selected Public mixed Day Secondary Schools in Nyamira District. Aspects such as domestic chores, influenced the academic performance of candidates in the KCSE of 2010. The findings also showed that the main strategies being used by head teachers to curb any negative influence of family socioeconomic status included: fostering a good relationship with parents, reminding parents to take responsibilities of performing domestic chores to enable children concentrate in education, encouraging parents to guide and counsel their children to motivate them, educating parents on the importance of education so that they can give their children enough time, use of team work between parents and teachers, and provision of supplementary books to enable them perform well. These findings will be important as they will be used in assessing the cause of poor academic performance in Nyamira North District, Kenya. Following this finding, the study recommends: involvement of the Government and other interested stakeholders in uplifting the socioeconomic status of families/parents for enhancing academic performance. Finally the findings may form a basis for policy formulation by the Ministry of Education to address students' needs.