

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFLUENCE ON STUDENTS
PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS. A CASE STUDY OF GUCHA
SOUTH DISTRICT SCHOOLS, GUSII COUNTY, KENYA.**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of students' socio-economic background on academic achievement in public secondary schools in Gucha south District, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to; determine the effect of type of public secondary school on academic achievements, determine the effect of parental income on academic achievement of student's in public secondary schools, determine the effects of parent's occupation on student's academic achievement. The study covered a period of one month and involved form three students, teachers, deputy head teachers and head teachers in public secondary schools. The study utilized a descriptive survey research design and the target population was 189 teachers, 33 deputy head teachers, 33 head teachers, and 1634 parents' and 1634 students' sample size of 475 was selected to participate in the study. The deputy head teachers and head teachers were obtained through purposive sampling while teachers and students were obtained by simple random sampling. The study used questionnaires to collect data. The researcher obtained an introductory letter from Mount Kenya University and a research permit from National council for Research Science and Technology. The researcher personally administered the instrument to the participants and allowed them 3 days to fill all the items. Before data analysis, it was cleaned to remove outliers. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze quantitative data. Specifically, frequency counts and percentages were used for quantitative data while qualitative data was discussed thematically. The results were presented in form of tables and graphical illustrations. The study found that most of the schools were in rural high agriculture area and were district schools. Fee paid by students per term was 15,000-20,000. Income levels of the parents affected their children choice of school. Parents were not able to spend part of their income to buy learning resources. The study found that the children were involved in after-school activities. The parents were peasant farmers. The study concludes that type of school affected the student's academic achievement. Income levels of the parents affected their children choice of school. Parents' education background affected the student's academic achievement. The study recommends the government should add resources to this district. This will benefit low income students. The government should work with the community to uplift their economic level thus reducing poverty. The schools need to mix students whose parents are in different economic activities and occupations. Parents should be enlightened on the need for education.