

**POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOLS SITUATED IN SLUM AREAS OF
NAIROBI COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

Poor academic performances of learners whose families live in informal settlements have been noticed since time immemorial. The main cause of this problem has been noticed as poverty, which is indeed a problem in all the slum areas of Nairobi County. It has been quite evident that poverty is the most relevant factor in determining the outcome of a person's educational journey. The research hypothesis that guided this study was that there is poor academic performance in schools situated in slum areas of Nairobi County due to the lack of basic needs and other educational necessities. The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the challenges facing learners who hail from the slum areas of Nairobi County are the causes of their poor academic performance. The main objective of this study was to investigate whether the challenges facing learners who hail from the slum areas of Nairobi County are the causes of their poor academic performance. Based on this objective, the research questions were posed. Are the challenges facing learners who hail from the slum areas of Nairobi County the causes of their poor academic performance? How does lack of the primary basic needs and other learning facilities and equipment cause poor performance of learners who come from slum areas of Nairobi? How does trauma and loss of parents or guardians due to HIV / AIDS pandemic cause poor performance of learners who hail from slum areas of Nairobi County? And .how does language barrier and inadequate Teacher-Learner Ratio cause poor performance in schools situated in slum areas of Nairobi County? Previous researches around the topic were studied to gain a better knowledge for the subject. The focus was put on Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs. The study employed both purposeful and simple random sampling and survey designs as well as open aimed interviews, questionnaires and document analysis guides in collecting information. The study was carried out in Mathare slum areas in Nairobi County. Several students from different schools situated in the slum area were interviewed by use of questionnaires. Some teachers working in the slum areas in Nairobi were interviewed. The questionnaires and interview guides were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The study revealed a great need of a wide range of experiences for teachers working with students from the slum areas. Findings revealed critical problems facing the most vulnerable groups of learners dwelling in slums. These include: exposure to HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) via poverty-driven commercial sex; traumatizing domestic violence and child abuse; unwanted teenage pregnancy and unsafe abortion spurred by high levels of early sexual activity; and to their parents, poor access to family planning and health services as a result of social, geographic isolation, low income, and illegal residence. The learners in schools situated in slum areas are cumbered with these challenges, among others, as they come to school. Some of the results that came up were that teachers saw it as important to provide learners with their basic needs in school. The teachers also said that learners had different reactions towards trauma and it was of great importance for them to be able to both channel their expressions after the trauma but also to forget the trauma for the moment to be able to concentrate in school. Some teachers felt inadequate due to the extra work put on their shoulders in their work with the learners from the slum areas. Unless these problems facing slum dwellers are overcome, they remain a great threat to the learners in schools situated in slum areas in Nairobi County.