

Determinants of Students Performance in English in Primary Schools

Case Study: Mathare Slums Nairobi, Kenya

By

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my family members for their love and social support.

DECLARATION

I, **Loise Muthoni Njauni** declare that this report on **Determinants of Poor Performance in English in Primary Schools a case of Mathate slums Nairobi Kenya** is entirely own original work and that it has never been submitted to any other university or institution of higher learning for any award.

Signed: 

Date: 

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APPROVAL

This research thesis on **Determinants of Poor Performance in English** in primary schools in Mathare slums Nairobi Kenya has been submitted for examination with my approval as the candidate's University Supervisor.

Signed: 

Date: 06/10/08

Miss Onego Roseline

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All the teachers from Mathatre slums who voluntarily answered d my questionnaires

Special thanks go to my loving husband and children who gave me social and financial support throughout this study.

All glory and honor are unto my savior Jesus Christ who is always with me in all I do.

Thank you so much.

1.1 List of acronyms

- 1) BBC - Britain broadcasting operation
- 2) KCPE - Kenya certificate of Primary education
- 3) KCSE - Kenya certificate of secondary education
- 4) KNEC - Kenya National Examination Council

ABSTRACT

This research was carried out on determinants of poor performance in English in primary Schools in Mathare Slums Nairobi, Kenya. It concentrated on the lower farms as it was felt that poor performance at the National Examination could be starting at the low levels. The purpose of the study was to examine the factors responsible for the above so that measures would be taken to correct or rectify the situation. The specific objectives therefore ranged from determining the qualified teachers teaching English to the treatment of students in the school situation. In this treatment, factors like co-curriculum activities, ethnic background and physical facilities were investigated. Rational for the study was that the information provided would be used by curriculum implementers to ensure successful implementation of the same. Corrective measures also can be instituted after provision of factors as this paper sought to do. To do this research work took the form of a survey study covering five schools from the selected area. A hundred and fifty students were selected randomly to participate in the study. Among the respondents were also fourteen teachers and a few principals. To collect data, about three instruments were used. These were questionnaires, interview schedules and observation sheets. All collected useful data. This data was collected using discipline methods and it was presented using tables and measures were through the percentages. The study revealed that among others the determinants of poor performance in English was due to poor job satisfaction because most of English teachers did not really train as English teachers. Another factor was lack of utilization of available learning resources. It was also noted that these schools had very few clubs that could really help them to learn English with no exception of ethical background. The main findings in this study were that most of the teachers teaching English through professionally as teachers have actually not been trained to teach the correct integrated English taught in our school. Also involving students in co-curriculum activities provides them with exposure and thus the four aspects of language are learnt in real situations outside classroom. It was found out that students' attitude towards both the teacher and the subject affects their performance. Recommendations were made to the policy makers in matters of English education and also to further researchers.

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Definition of Abbreviations

- 1) **Altitude:** It is a predispositions a favorable or unfavorable manner on to respond towards a Particular person or object in
- 2) **Anglophone countries:** countries formally colonized by Britain
- 3) **Anglo-Saxon countries:** countries formally colonized by France
- 4) **Environment:** Setting, background, backdrop, situation, the conditions in a place that affect the behaviors and development of something.
- 5) **English:** The language, originally of England; now spoken in many other countries and used as a language of international co
- 6) **Home:** the people that the child stays with that impact on her/his learning.
- 7) **Linguafranca:** a language which is used for communication between groups of people who speak different languages.
- 8) **Population:** The totality of the subjects chosen for the purpose of the study.
- 9) **Medium of instruction:** the language through which education programmes or knowledge is parted especially to students or to people in general.
- 10) **National language:** is a language widely spoken and is instituted by government over other languages. It is used to execute developmental and educational issues.
- 11) **Performance:** Results attained after teaching / learning process.
- 12) **School:** a place where children go to be educated.
- 12) **Quota System:** A system of form one admissions where eighty Percent of the total admissions comes from the locality of the school.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background To The Study

Comments and statements about the state of our schools indicate that the standards of education have fallen (Owoeye, 2005). Special references have been made to performance in such subjects as English language, mathematics and biology in the West African School Certificate Examinations (WASCE) many reference have been made to English language and mathematics as prerequisite to success in overall examination at the final examinations level. Those who point to the controversial issue possibly imply that the performance of public schools in Kenya is declining especially in English subject. In fact, anecdotal observation of primary schools in Mathare Slums Nairobi, Kenya unveils the traces of dwindling education quality. Questions are now being raised about what could be the caused of poor performance or falling standards of education.

To this, end many reasons have been attributed for the poor educational quality at the primary school level. Owoeye (2005) attributed the decline in education to students' inability to understand and express themselves in educational instructional (English Language). Some hold the view that then decline is due to loaded curriculum (that is the numbers of subjects that the students offer are more than those in the past). Others have attributed the fall in standards to population, while some others still consider inability of teachers as one of the opinion that is global issue.

Language

In relation to above the previous policies manifest Kenya's quest for viable language policy geared towards instituting an acceptable national language especially through education. Language is a very important aspect of human beings. Without it one doesn't really fit in the world. With language, we create the world we are living in and this is through naming. With it one gets an identity and a sense of belonging. With language we exercise self expression and many other benefits.

English language has dominated because of its association with prestige and because it is rewarding. It is the national and official language; it is the lingua franca and major medium of instruction in the entire academic circle. However, the privilege that it is accorded is contentious basing on nationalistic sentiments because it is not indigenous language.

It can therefore be seen that one of the most important function of language is communication. This could be between persons or groups of persons however not all groups of people share a common language. There is therefore need for language that can be used for different groups.

There are some languages that cut across national boundaries; English is one such a language. It is not only used in continents like Europe and America but also used in Africa.

It is the language used in the international media services like BBC, CNN and others. This is because it can be understood by most people in both the Anglophone and the Francophone countries all over the world.

Closer in Africa, English is a national language in many countries like Uganda and Nigeria. Those who speak in it are highly esteemed and have advantage over those who cannot.

In Kenya, though not the national language is widely used. It is not only the official language but also the instructional language and the language of examination in all schools and in all subjects except Kiswahili.

Mbiti D (1981) observes that in a developing country like Kenya and Nigeria where English has occupied a dominant position in education and where it is the medium of instruction in most urban schools right from nursery school, those first taught in the mother tongue will be disadvantaged especially from rural areas considering that examination at terminal points are in English. This great importance of English in Kenya

has been recognized by the educational bodies in Kenya like the KIE and KNEC. For example, English occupies a very special place in the education system in the country. While subjects like arts and science take three to five lessons in a week in the upper forms, English takes eight lessons. It is also a compulsory subject to all students in all students in all the Kenyan public schools. Many careers and universities demand a pass in it as part of the minimum requirement for entry. Although so much importance is attached to English in the country and in all schools in particular, it is one of the most poorly performed subjects in the most performed subjects in the national examinations especially in the last five years.

There has therefore been a complain that the performance of English is going down and this has been attributed to many things. For example, the daily nation 13/6/92 attribute it to teachers' inefficiency.

Central province Nairobi in Kenya has not been left behind in this. In particular, Mathare Slums has not been performing well. The performance in the National Examinations has been getting worse every year. This can be seen in the table given below:

Table 1.1: Mathare Slums measures scores in English 2003-2006

YEAR	M.SCORE (OVERALL)	M. SCORE IN ENGLISH
2003	4.32	4.92
2004	4.1	4.42
2005	3.38	4.10
2006	3.80	4.13

Source: Kamotho (1996).

This has caused a lot of concern to the people who realize the danger of this drop and its effect not only to the school leaver but also to those left in the schools.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

English language has taken root in Kenya; it is the second chief media of instruction and communication the first being Kiswahili; it is the provisional national language; it is the official language and lingua franca. Fluency in English language is therefore crucial in execution of national development programmes and in academics, but its standard is deteriorating cumulatively. Though very important in the educational system in Kenya, different research shows that it is not performed as would be expected in the national examinations. Despite the fact that there is statistical evidence indicating that there are enough English teachers in government schools in Kenya Primary Certificate National examinations results still show that all is not well with our children's performance. Mathare Slums has not been an exception to this scenario as shown in the table below:

Table 1: English Scores of Mathare Slums From 2003-2006

YEAR	M.SCORE (OVERALL)	M. SCORE IN ENGLISH
2003	4.32	4.92
2004	4.1	4.42
2005	3.38	4.10
2006	3.80	4.13

Source: Kamotho (1996).

Complaints in performance have been plenty in the media and especially the local dailies after the results of KCPE are announced. Among such is the Daily Nation of 18/5/2003 in which Ummuro says English has been among the subjects very poorly done. Corrective measures in this problem have been well established and documented.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

General Objectives

The general objective of this study was to establish the determinants of poor performance in English in Primary Schools in Mathare Slums Nairobi Kenya and to suggest possible solutions to solve the problem.

1.4 Specific Objectives

To assess the factor that affects the performance of English and the causes of its poor performance in Mathare Slums Nairobi Kenya.

- a) To discuss the relationship between social ethnic background and students' performance in English.
- b) To assess the relationship between teachers' qualification and competence and the students' performance in English.
- c) To examine the relationship between Physical facilities and co-curricular activities and how they affect performance in English.
- d) To come up with best strategies that could be adopted to curb the situation.

1.5 Research Questions

- a) What is the relationship between social ethnic background and student performance in English?
- b) Is there any relationship between the teacher's competence and student's performance in English?
- c) What is the relationship between Physical facilities and co-curricular activities and their effect English performance?
- c) What can we do to solve the problem of poor performance in English in primary schools National examinations?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The curriculum implementation to give due time to the teaching of English for success of the whole process of implementation

It may be also useful to researcher by taking this same problem of poor performance in the lower levels and investigates whether the factors identified affects other parts.

Information provided in this study will help the curriculum implementers to give due time to the teaching of English for the success of the whole process of implementation. Information provided will also be useful to teachers in schools to know what to do about the performance.

The information may be useful to teachers' service commission in the equal distribution of qualified English teachers.

1.7 Limitations to the Study

The researcher faced a number of challenges while collecting data. The biggest challenge was that the study itself was controversial in nature; it had its own internal challenges during its execution. This was because some of the educational officers in that Mathare Slums were not ready to accept the fact that learners were not performing as expected in even though they new the naked truth.

Bureaucracies and red tape in some offices demanded that the researcher had to make prior appointments to see relevant officers who were very busy as if they had already scheduled themselves before for other commitments. In relation to this, time was a major drawback in the full actualization of the study.

The research was also limited to the scope of Mathare Slums in Nairobi yet they are many other areas that are facing the same problem which may be having different factors that ar5e responsible for that.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

To facilitate this study, a review of the available literature was done so that the researcher could establish what other researchers in other areas have done. The review was done under three subdivisions. These are

- d) The relationship between social ethnic background and students' performance in English.
- e) Relationship between teachers' qualification and competence and the students' performance in English.
- c) Relationship between Physical facilities and co-curricular activities and how they affect performance in English.

2.1 Social And Ethnic Background And Performance In English

Researchers have studied the effect of ethnic/social background of learners in performance in English as a subject. Among them is Khaemba (1986) who observes that "The school milieu under which the students are brought up in schools and homes is characterized by numerous languages. This greatly affects the spoken ability of the learners for they encounter interferences by the first language and Kiswahili." Khaemba states that learners' performance in English is interfered with by the first language and even Kiswahili.

This is more so when they have been used to speaking their mother tongue and have to change all over sudden. Of the same view is Mbiti D. (1981) who observes that: "In a developing country like Kenya and Nigeria where English has occupied a dominant position in education where it's the medium of instruction most urban schools right from nursery school. Those first taught in the mother tongue will be disadvantaged from rural schools especially considering that examinations at terminal points are in English."

What he is saying here is that those students from urban areas are better than those from rural areas. Githaiga Anne (1996) observes that;" Kiswahili is closely related to Kikuyu

English and students are not well exposed to extensive reading where English is concerned.”

One wonders why this should be the case since English is the language used in examination except in Kiswahili paper. This study will investigate why students are not exposed to extensive reading in English.

Ochieng Felix (1996) goes further and investigates the role of parents in the acquisition and development of English language. He states that: “A student who does not acquire adequate reading and communicative skills during his or her school life can be frustrated in his ability to fully appreciate and comprehend other subjects in the school curriculum.”

Hughes (1989:65) says that “Language usage and development begins at home and quickly becomes a key element of education achievement.” We cannot therefore ignore the background of a learner when it comes to performance.

2.2 Teacher Qualification and Students’ Attitude

There has been a complaint in our country that English is one of the most poorly done subjects at the KCSE level. Kamotho (Daily Nation 4/3/07) says that “English was one of the worst hit subjects in poor performance”. The same observations is made by Umoro (Daily Nation 18/5/06)/

In trying to establish the reasons for this poor performance the efficiency of the English teacher has been questioned.

Bloomfield (1925) is very skeptical of the competence and effectiveness of the teachers of English. He remarks;

“In short, they do not know what language is and yet must teach it and in consequence waste years of every child’s life and reach a poor result.” By this he suggests that most, not all teachers are not fully qualified to teach the language. This is a factor to be investigated in this study.

Githaiga AR (1996) observes that: "It is important to study the teacher because he or she has a lot of influence on the learner especially in the early years of learning. The pronunciation, stress and intonation given by the teachers and are taken as correct by the students. If not corrected, the learner will leave with them and probably even transmit them to another generation."

Githaiga thus notes the important role played by the teacher in shaving English in a student. Thion'go F (1996) goes further in investigating the role played by a primary school teacher. He states that; "The primary school teacher is in the unenviable position of not only building on what was started in kindergarten schools, but also polishing it. In this task several obstacles confront him. Chief among these is the pupils themselves who seem to have little if any interests in mastering language to a level that will enable them communicate with ease." This hints on the altitude of students not only in the English language but also on the teachers teaching them. This study will investigate the same factor in Mathare Slums, Nairobi City.

Wamahiu Muya (1994) feels that teachers are not motivated to teach effectively and efficiently. He states that: "The greatest problem now is that with low teacher moral many of them (teachers) are simply making technical appearances in the classroom." (D.N 6/5/95 p.16 col 3.)

This is a problem being experienced in Kenya now more than ever before with teachers all over the country going on strikes every now and then over poor remuneration. of the same opinion, is Wabungu (1995) when he says that: "Teachers have become a frustrated lot. This causes an estimated exodus of 3000 teachers every year from the profession and are usually better ones." (D.N. 12/11/95 P.14).

This study was attempted to investigate on whether the teachers stated above are replaced with really qualified English teachers and affect it has on performance. Among other factors Gecaga C.M. (1986) identified "Qualification and experience of teachers" as hindering performance.

Gicaga also identifies:

- (a) Teachers not being first speakers of English language.
- (b) Unavailability of facilities relevant to the teaching of English.
- (c) The teaching methodology used by teachers.

As other factors affecting the same factors will be investigated in this study. Concerning the same factor of the teacher qualification and students altitude, Mary Finocchiarco and Christopher Brumfit (1983: 149) have the following to say”:

“Spontaneous, creative use of language may develop only after years of learning, depending upon the age, motivation and attitude of the learner and on the quality of instruction.”

They are in other words saying that instruction may be quality or not quality depending on who is receiving.

Mbiti (1981) has observed that “The greatest shortage of qualified teachers in Primary schools among the English speaking countries of Africa is to be found in such subjects like science English and mathematics. The shortage in these subjects areas are made worse by the fact that teaching is not a career likely to be preferred by many university students.” Why should it not be preferred by many? This and many other factors will be investigated in this paper.

Parent’s Social – Economic Status and Learning of English Language

Although much of the early communication between parent and child takes the form of touch, language quickly establishes it self as the principle medium of social contact and the child who comes from a verbally impoverished, David Fontana in his book, psychology for teachers, 1995-page 78-79 stated that, “By talking to children, by encouraging them With verbal praise, by naming the objects with which they play and simply by conversing with them fluent parents quickly help children to build up a working vocabulary”.



A parent has to act as a model of the language if the child is to learn it. Parents who are learned, and who are fluent in the use of English, can help their children to master English and also practice using it. Such parents will not hesitate to provide the child with relevant and enough learning materials, such as reading book materials such as jigsaws, rhyme, tapes and many others. Anne Sharlock in the Early Childhood Education Development curriculum by Paul Chapman 1980 observed that; "The home environment was more closely related to educational attainment than intelligence Quotient" E.B Castle in growing up 1968 page 57 stated that; Adults are all part of the child's social environment and the most important of the adults being the parents. Rubenstein et al 1972 also added that: "Infants, who receive high amount of social stimulation like being talked to, looked at and played with are likely to become more advanced in some aspects of early cognitive development". Such differences in material style of interaction with the infant have an impact on the child's behaviors, for example, children who are talked to more often vocalize more by themselves. And children who are exposed to a motivating home environment with learning materials, have higher attainment level than children who are deprived.

ibid 1995 when trying to emphasize the skills of reading and writing stated that. "the child should first be provided with the right reading environment. Thus children who are read to and who have exciting ideas and events communicated to by parents through books. And who see parents making use of reading in their own lives and who have ready access to printed words, broadens and enriches life".

2.3 Physical Faculties, Co-Curricular Activities And Interdependence Of English With Other Subjects

It has already been stated that in Kenya, the medium of instruction and examination in schools is English. This is in all subjects apart from languages. The 8:4:4 syllabus states

one of the objectives of teaching English as “to enable a student to express himself logically, coherently, explicitly and intelligently a given topic”. Teaching English therefore has an aim of making a learner on all around student who can communicate with others not just to pass an examination.

Donn Byrne (1976) in his extensive research on the teaching of oral English poses to the following question “Why is it so difficult to teach a foreign language? To a large extent, it is because we are attempting to teach in the classroom. What is normally and perhaps the best learned outside it?” he answers. He was investigating the teaching of oral English and one cannot help but to ask the question whether the case is any different in the teaching of the written English.

In the journal of Nigeria English studies (1976) Babatunde F observes that; “Knowing a language means being able to read it, write it, speak it and understand it when spoken.” It is difficult to think of any without involving the others. This study will therefore investigate on the forum provident by the schools for the development of all the four areas. On the same journal (1976:155) Professor Harold Whitehall has the following to say: “The independency of the four language activities has long been realized by those who have a professional interest in any one or all of them. Skills acquired in speaking will be judiciously transferred, enhanced efficiently, and ability to read efficiently will in turn, help to develop efficiency in speaking, listening and writing.”

An English teacher will therefore need to be fully prepared for the lesson if the four activities have to go hand in hand. Intensive work in only one of them will be as effective as when all the four are used in varying degrees. Gecaga C.M (1986) has the following to say on the same: “Students must be exposed to situations where they can practice using the language. They should be encouraged to express themselves orally in class discussions, opportunities for the role playing drama and debate should be provided.”

This points out to the fact that learners must be exposed. Such exposure would help them to gain more vocabularies and to build confidence in their use of the language that they are learning.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter highlights on the methodology followed on this study. A combination of research instruments were used so that any bias found in one would be taken as one by the others. It is also important to note that time and financial constraints hindered the study of the whole population and so only a sample was used for the study.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted basically descriptive survey design. The design was based on the sub themes of the study which include: The relationship between social ethnic background and students' performance in English, the relationship between teachers' qualification and competence and the students' performance in English. And finally Physical facilities and co-curricular activities and how they affect performance in English in Mathare Slums Nairobi Kenya. The methods used involved basically qualitative methods through the use of questionnaires, interview guide and documentary sources. The qualitative methods were used because they show real experiences necessary in providing a more profound understanding and analysis of all related aspects. Since qualitative methods are information driven, they provided a more holistic picture of the scenario, upon which findings, interpretations, summaries, conclusions and recommendations were made in the subsequent chapters.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A noted before Mathtare Slums quite big with a number of Primary schools and thus it was not possible to carry out the study in all the schools due to time and scarcity. A sample was therefore selected for the purpose of this study in order to do it in time; the following primary schools were purposively selected: **Mathare4A, Huruma, Babadogo, Mathare North**, and **Korogocho** primary School were used to give data for the study.

Further it was not possible to study all the students in the sampled schools. A second stage of sampling was carried out to obtain specific student to participate in the study.

Here purposive sampling was done so that students who have been in schools for at least two years were obtained and who would not be sitting for the final examination at the time primary seven classes simple random sampling was again done to obtain specific respondents.

For every school thirty percent of the total student was taken and this amounted to a total of 150 students.

Concerning the English teachers, it was noted that they were fourteen in total from the five schools selected and it was therefore possible to take all of them for this study. This was considered important so that information given by either the students or the teachers would be compared to given quality data.

3.4 Procedure

Researchers obtained an official letter of introduction to the school from Kampala International University Faculty of Education. The student questionnaire was designed in such a way that students were provided with alternative answers. They were required to choose the most appropriate alternative. One question was however a big open ended which soliciting information about their attitudes.

The teachers' questionnaire was not very different from the student's one. It contained open-ended question as well as close ended one.

Permission was obtained from the schools head teachers in order to issue the students and teachers with questionnaire.

Date was set between the researcher and individual teachers concerning when the questionnaire would be collected.

During these visits to the schools by the researcher, interviews with the head teachers were arranged and held. Most had no problem as a letter seeking their co-operation had been given to them from the university.

3.5 Research Instruments

As stated in the introduction of this chapter, this study is a survey and a variety of instruments for data collection were utilized. They included two types of questionnaires one for students and the other for teachers and also an observation sheet, which the researcher used in the course of the study during the various visits in the schools where possible head teachers/principles were interviewed using the interview schedule as shown in the appendix.

3.6 Instrument Reliability and Validity

To ensure reliability of the instrument used, the researcher tried as much as possible to be physically present during the filling in of the questionnaire and especially those of the students. The pilot study which had been done before also helped a lot in establishing both validity and reliability of the questionnaires and that was the reason why some items in the questionnaire had to be altered.

Piloting

A pilot study had been carried out before the major study was embarked on. It was done on a smaller sample of only twenty students and two teachers from one school which was not included on the sample of this study. This study helped a lot as it led to adjustment of the research instrument and especially the questionnaire. It was done after the discovery that the original questions were not clean and others had been repeated in such a way that they could give a required information.

3.7 Data Collection

It is very important that the respondents know what they are doing and why they are doing it. Data in this research was collected from both students and teachers. This was only done after a letter of permission and introduction from Kampala International

University was submitted to the principles in the affected schools. The principals on the other hand had allowed the researcher to collect data from the entire school community. Most of the head teachers even made announcement to the students and teachers about the study to be conducted in the school and this helped a lot report had been established. However not all did this and in some schools the researcher had to establish report right from the introduction.

Questionnaires were administered by the researcher and after giving the students enough time to think and fill them they were collected for analysis. The teachers' questionnaires were collected as per the agreement made between the researcher and individual teachers.

During the visits to the schools, interviews were held with the principals whenever they were available and information recovered on a notebook.

This was also the time that observation was done on various aspects at the school.

3.8 Data Analysis

Most of the data collected in this study was qualitative and descriptive in nature. It therefore did not need a lot of statistical measures. It was thus analyzed manually. It has been summarized and presented in tables. The only statistical measures used are percentages and some mean grades.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals solely with the portrayal or summary of data collected and its analysis. The tables given are also accompanied by some discussions of the data. Most of the discussions on performance are based on the mean grades obtained in the most recent term (term one of primary). The table below shows the mean grades obtained by the students in standard eight last three terms.

Table 4.1: Students' Performance in the Last Three Terms

Grade	2005		2006		Total No.1
	Class 4	Term II	Term III	Term I	
A	38	1		1	40
B	45	20	19	9	93
C	50	81	33	30	144
D	10	60	59	66	195
TOTAL	150	150	150	150	600

Source: Field work data.

It is clearly seen that the performance in class four was quite good and while so many students had managed grade A in standard four. However there are still those who did not perform well because of factors that will be discussed latter in the study.

4.2 Social -Ethical Background and performance

To determine a student's ethnic background, they were required to identify their home districts and the languages of communication while at home. Table 4.5.1 shows the grade obtained as compared to the ethnic background of students as either Kikuyu or non-Kikuyu since the slum is in the heartland of the Nairobi

Table 4.2: Students' Ethnic Background and Performance

Background	GRADES					
	A	B	C	D	E	TOTAL
Kikuyu	-	3(25)	20(13%)	56(37%)	41(28%)	120(80%)
Luo and others	1	6(7%)	10(7%)	3(2%)	3(2%)	30(20%)

Source: Fieldwork data.

From this table (4.5.1) it is clear that only 20% of all the respondents were non Kikuyu. 80% were Kikuyu and among them only 2.5% had grade B and above which contrasts the 45% of the non Kikuyu with the same grades.

4.6 Involvement in co-curriculum activities and performance

Co-curricular activities go hand in hand with the daily teaching in any school. Table 4.6.1 shows the number of students involved in various clubs. The students were required to fill in the clubs they were active members in.

Club	No of students	% no of students
Drama	77	51
Music	80	53
Wildlife	52	35
Mathematics	15	10
Kiswahili	10	7
Any other		
Home science	5	4
Rangers	31	21
None	22	14

Source: Fieldwork data

From the above given clubs, those that are related to English as a subject by their nature like debate and drama were selected and the grades of the students involved in them were compared. The grades of the respondents who admitted non-involvement in any club are also shown in the table.

4.2 Qualification of Teachers Teaching English

As seen in the literature review, many scholars have attributed poor performance in English to teachers' inefficiency. While a majority of the teachers teaching English were trained teachers an investigation was done on what their specific qualifications were and what subjects they had qualified to teach. The table below shows professional qualifications of the fourteen teachers who took part in this study.

Table 4.2.1: Teachers' Professional Qualification

Grade	No. of teachers	% of teachers
Graduate	2	43
LT/graduate	1	14
Approved teacher	1	7
Diploma	7	36
S1	6	0
P1	6	0
Untrained	3	0
Total	26	100

Source: Fieldwork data

The findings revealed that out of thirty six teachers only two were graduates, and among them were those who were untrained. On further questioning it was further discovered that among the thirty six teachers, only six of them had actually been trained to teach English/Literature. Although they have high professional qualification, they have been trained to teach other subjects but due to shortage of teachers in other subjects they have

been made to teach English. This kind of information was however not disclosed by any principal despite the questions asked.

It should be borne in mind that as we talk of the teaching of English, we are actually talking about English and literature due to the integration of the two.

The table below shows the subjects combinations of the teachers in their training for teaching categories of subjects combinations.

- a) English/SST
- b) CRE/ English
- c) Kiswahili/CRE
- d) Kiswahili/ SST
- e) Science/Mathematics
- f) GC/any one of the above

Table 4.2.2: Subject combinations of Teachers

Category	No. of teachers	% no of teachers
A	6	46
B	2	16
C	1	7
D	3	24
E	1	7
Total	13	100

Source: Field work data

The experience of teachers is also given in the above table below. This is actually the experience they have had in the teaching of English as a subject not teaching in general as it was noted that some who have been in the profession for long only started teaching English recently.

Table 4.2.3: Teachers' Experience in Teaching English

Time duration	No. of teachers	% teachers
Less than one year	2	14
Less than five years	3	22
Over five years	7	50
Over ten years	2	14
Total	16	100

Source: Field work data

Despite the fact that a majority of teachers teaching English have been in the profession for over two years, all of them said they were not contented on the unsatisfying financial benefits they get. About 44% of them said they hated the job as they had so much to do and very little to get for it.

4.3 Students' Attitude to English and English Teachers

In trying to establish the attitude the students have towards English as subject and towards their English teachers they were asked to rate their lesson and English teachers as either very good average or boring. The following responses were received from the 150 respondents.

Table 4.3.1: Students attitude to English and English teachers

Attitude	Very good		Average		Boring	
Lesson	19	13	60	40	71	47
To teacher	26	17	60	40	58	39

Source: Fieldwork data.

These responses were further analyzed closely according to the grades the students had got during the most recent term (term one) the tables below matches ones attitude with the grades they got.

Table 4.3.2: a) Students' performance and attitude towards English teachers

GRADE	VERY GOOD	AVERAGE	BORING	TOTAL
A	1			1
B	8	1		9
C	10	15	5	30
D	6	30	30	66
E	1	20	23	44

Source: Fieldwork data.

Once again it is noted in this table that their English teachers are very good are those with grade C and above while most of those with grades D and E feel their teachers are boring.

4.4 Availability of Learning Resources and Their Utilization

English is a foreign language thought in our schools. As such it requires a lot of learning facilities to aid the learners. It was however noted that in the schools studied in work, some very important learning facilities are missing. None of the schools for example has a language laboratory. All of them also do not make use of slides or films. Although one schools has video tapes, teachers and students in the school admitted that they never make use of them in their English/literature lessons. The table below shows some of the facilities and their availabilities in schools.

Table 4.4.1: Availability and Utilization of Learning Resources

Resource material	No. of schools its available in	No of schools using it
Video tapes	1 (13%)	-
Films	-	-
Audio cassetts	4 (50%)	3 (38%)

Radio	8 (100%)	3 (38%)
Slides	-	-
Language charts	2 (25%)	2 (25%)
TV	4 (50%)	1 (13%)
Language lab		-

Source: Fieldwork data.

Together with these some observations were made concerning the physical facilities in the schools studied and the general situation and learning atmosphere in the schools. Among the things noted was that three (38%) of the eight selected schools at any library. The libraries were however very poorly equipped with only old encyclopedia and books. The principles interviewed said they never knew of any time students had lessons in the library. The students' rate of extensive reading is shown in the table below.

Table 4.4.2: Number of Novels Read By the Students within One Year

No of novels read	No of students	% no of students
1 – 3	71	47
4 - 6	15	10
Over 7	4	3

Source: Fieldwork data

Among those who had read between 1-3 novels, 50 of them which is an equivalent of 83% had read only the literature text, the river and the source. It was also observed that the random sample taken in the schools during the visits was 99% the vernacular speaking outside the classroom. Even 1% was actually not using English but sheng. This observation contradicted the information received from the respondents as can be seen in the table below:

Table 4.4.3: Languages Used By Students outside the Classroom Situation

Language	No. of students	% no of students
Kikikiyu	18	12
Sheng	35	24
English	75	50
Kiswahili	20	13
Any other	2	1

Source: Fieldwork data

The contradiction can be accounted for by the school rules which prohibit vernacular speaking in all the schools. The students' dared not admit their use of vernacular.

Table 4.6.2: Clubs Involvement and Performance of Students

Club						
	A	B	C	D	E	TOTAL
Debate	1	6	5	2	-	14
Drama	-	8	29	31	9	77
Kiswahili	1	5	3	1	-	10
None	-	-	-	8	14	22

Source: Fieldwork data

From the table it is seen that, the twenty students involved in no club at all had grades D and E while those with Grade C and above are actively involved in different clubs.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

The collected data is portrayed in chapter four of this project paper has been analyzed and concluded in this chapter.

Some recommendation have also been made to rectify the situation observation as stated in chapter one. They include some suggestion for the further researches and some education policy makers especially where the teaching and learning resources and environments are concerned.

5.1 DISCUSSIONS

(a) Teacher qualification

Among the fourteen teachers studied six were graduates and actually none of them is below the diploma level of education system requires English teachers to teach both English language and literature since the two have been integrated. However over fifty percent (50%) of this teachers have not been trained for both. This graduation is therefore a great problem. The teachers cannot be effective in teaching what they have not been trained to teach. This is thus a factor that contributes a lot to the poor performance of English and so head teachers just pick on any teachers with either English or literature in their combinations and make them to teach the integrated subjects.

It is also noted from table 4.2.3 that 50% of the teachers studied had been in the profession teaching English for over five years and such teachers needed motivation if they have to continue enjoying their work. If all confessed they were not contented, it shows that they only teach as a last resort. They need better remuneration if the performance of English is to improve in Mathare Slums. It is important that teachers be made to teach what they train for and not when they lack a teacher, as this would make them get job satisfaction on seen their students excel.

(B) Students Attitude to English and Teachers

It is clearly seen from table 4.3.2 that only thirteen percent (13%) of students studied feel very good that their English lessons are very good. The greater numbers of the group who rate them as very boring scored grade C and below. The table shows that a negative attitude contributes towards good performance in English.

The same conclusion can be made from table 4.3.3. The students who feel that their English teachers are very good got high grades i.e. C and above. While grade D and E are more concentrated of those who feel that the teacher is just boring. The attitude one holds towards the teacher will affect performance either negatively or positively.

(C) Learning Resources, Their Utilization and Performance

English is one subject that can be taught using many learning resources. It was however noted in Mathare Slums that very few schools have such resources and even where they exist they are not fully utilized.

The most commonly found used as the Radio as shown in table 4.4.1 but only 40% at the school studied make use of it for teaching purposes. The same percent of schools have Libraries but very poorly equipped ones. This accounts to the poor reading habits as noted in table 4.4.2.

A conclusion can be made that exposure of the students to the four aspects of language mainly writing, speaking and listening as well as reading is very poor. This poor exposure contributes to the poor performance noted in the slum

Students who never communicate in English as observed in these schools will not be expected to do any better in writing examination.

(d) Ethnic Background and Performance

About eighty percent (80%) of the sample selected from the students were Kambas and only twenty (20) percent were non-Kamba.

Among the ten (10) students with grades B and above, seven (7) of them were non-Kamba and this is seventy (70%). Thirty percent were Kambas. This difference can be accounted for by the fact that the non Kamba students live among the Kambas and thus must communicate in English in schools. This has contributed to their better performance when compared to their Kamba counterparts.

(E) Involvement in Co-Curricular Activities and Performance in English

From table 4.6.1 it can be noted that Primary schools in Mathare Slums have very few clubs and thus very minimal club activities goes on in them. Only nine (9) clubs could be identified and even these were concentrated on just a few schools. This implies that students are not provided with co-curricula activities and thus has a lot of leisure time which they spend in speaking vernacular or mother tongue.

Among the students involved in English related clubs like debate and drama, it is noted in table 4.6.2 that the performance is quite good. This is because such clubs provide exposure to creative and practice of the learnt structures and their application to real life situations. It is noted that among the ten students with grade B and above, all are involved in at least one of the selected clubs as shown in table 4.6.2 and those involved in no club at all mainly ranges between grades of D and E actually fifty (50%) percent of them. Co-curricular activities thus promote performance.

In summary the following conclusions have been reached in this story.

1. The teachers teach English in Masinga division are qualified though a number of them teach what they did not train to teach and this result to poor performance in English.
2. The attitude a student holds towards both the teacher and the subject affects their performance in the subject.
3. Ethnic background affects one's performance in English depending on the exposure one gets and the environment one grows in and learns in.

4. Schools in Mathare Slums need to put a lot of emphasis in provision of clubs so as to expose the students more to situation in they can practice what they learn in class in terms of language structure and creativity.
5. The existing learning resources in Primary schools in Mathare Slums are limited and also are under utilized. This contributes to poor performance in English.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Two types of recommendation have been made here. First, there are those that point to the education policy makers and secondly, there are those that point to researchers.

(a) To policy makers

The issue of the quota system should be re-addressed. In it, students from a district grow in and attended schools in it. They interact with only their own people and see no need of using any other language like English since they have their mother tongue. If students from different parts of the country were allowed to mix in school together, the country wide outcry in the performance of English would at least be checked.

At the same time, the integration of English and literature should be considered. This is because an English teacher is not necessarily a literature teacher as these two are taught as different entitles even at the university level.

Lastly, teacher training should include some guidance in some club activities so that these teachers will at least be involved in some clubs of their interest and this will ensure that students are involved in such co-curricular activities.

(b) Towards further research

The interest researchers can take this same problem of poor performance in the lower level and investigate whether the factors identified here affect other parts for example one may want to investigate whether Kikuyus perform when not in Kikuyu land. Researcher can also venture into the investigation of performance on English in primary schools by a

study of the changes in the teaching methods from primary schools to primary schools and the effects of changes in the examination mode.

Suggested topics:

- Factors responsible for poor performance in science subjects
- Analysis of the relationship between average class size and primary schools academic performance
- The effect of social economic class of the family on the performance of children in free Primary Schools.
- Comparison in English performance of public schools and private schools in English.

Proposed budget

Activity	Unit cost (Ug. shs)	Reason	Total cost (Ug. shs)
Stationery	60000	Proposal & Report compiling	180,000
Type setting	50,000	Proposal & Report compiling	150,000
Printing	30,000	Proposal & Report compiling	90,000
Data collection	100,000		100,000
Data analysis	60,000		60,000
Transport	200,000		200,000
Communication	50,000		50,000
Report binding	30,000		30,000
Total			860,000/=

Time budget

Activity	Time						
	Month h 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month h 6	Month 7
Proposal development							
Questionnaire design							
Data collection							
Data analysis							
Report compiling							
Final report and binding							

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Students' Questionnaire

Dear respondents,

This questionnaire is aimed at gathering information that will be useful in seeking to establish the information on the determinants of pupils' performance in English in primary Schools in Mathare Slums. All the information provided will be solely used for academic purposes only, and will be kept confidential.

Instruction: tick or fill in the blank space were necessary

Respondents' profile

class.....

Type of the school.....

Sex: Male/Female

Age.....

1. What grade did you have in mock exams in English?

(a)A- B (b)B- -C+ C (c) C- D+ (d) D- and below

2. How are your English lessons?

(a) Good (b) Average (c) Boring

3. How often does your English teacher mark your assignments?

(a) Never (b) Once a term (c) Weekly (d) Daily (e) any other

4. a) Tick the clubs you are an active member in from the ones given below:

(a) Drama (b) Music (c) Wildlife
(d) Mathematics (e) Debating (f) Kiswahili
(g) None (h) others specify.....

b) Do you have library in your school?

- (a) Yes (b) No

(c) If yes, how often do you go there in your English lessons?

- (a) Once a week (b) Once in two weeks
(c) We never go there (d) daily

5.a) Among the following resources for learning, which one exists in your school?

- (a) Films (b) Radio cassettes/audio cassettes
(c) Radio (d) Slides (e) Language tapes
(f) Video tapes (g) Television (h) Language laboratory
(i) Any other (specify)

b) From the resources ticked above, which one do you use in your English lessons?

6. How is your English teacher?

- (a) Good (b) Average (c) Boring

7. a) Write down your grade in English for the last three terms

Term II 2006

Term III 2006

Term I 2007

b) Are you comfortable with them?

- (a) Yes (b) No

8. Write down the name of your home district (not residential but original) and the language you use at home to communicate.

9. How many novels/story books have you read for the last one year?

- (a) None (b) between 4-6 (c) over 6 (d) between 1-3

If your answer is not (a) above, give any two titles of novels you have read.

1. -----

2. -----

10. Which language do you use in school in your communication with your friends especially outside the classroom?

- a) Kikikuyu b) Sheng c) English
- d) Kiswahili e) Any other (specify).....

APPENDIX II: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear respondents,

This questionnaire is aimed at gathering information that will be useful in seeking to establish the information on the determinants of pupils' performance in English in primary Schools in Mathare slums. All the information provided will be solely used for academic purposes only, and will be kept confidential.

Instruction: tick or fill in the blank space were necessary

1. Which subject do you teach?.....
2. How long has been teaching in your current school?
 - (a) Less than one year
 - (b) Less than five years
 - (c) Over five years
 - (d) Over ten years
3. What is your professional qualification?
 - (a) Graduate
 - (b) VT graduate
 - (c) Approved teacher
 - (d) Diploma
 - (e) SI
 - (f) PI
 - (g) Any other (specify).
4. a) Apart from text books, which other resources do you use in your lesson from the ones given below?
 - (a) Films
 - (b) Audio cassette
 - (c) Radio
 - (d) Slides
 - (e) Language charts
 - (g) TV
 - (h) Any other (specify)

b) How many lessons do you teach per week?
5. Write down the co-curricular activities you are involved in.
 - (a) -----
 - (b) -----
 - (c) -----
6. What is your feeling towards the integration of English and literature?
 - (a) It's good
 - (b) It is not fair
7. Do you have a library in your school?
 - (a) Yes
 - (b) No
8. What were your subject combinations in college?

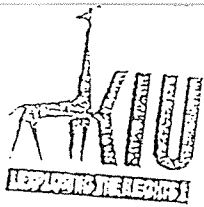
9. Are you contented as a teacher? (a) Yes (b) No

Give reasons.

Appendix Iii: Head Teachers' Interview Schedule

Instruction: tick or fill in the blank space were necessary

1. How many teachers do you have in English department?
- 2 Are they trained to teach English and literature?
- 3) Is there a library in your school?
- 4) Comment on its usefulness to the students and teachers and especially the English teachers.
- 5) Would you rate the school provision of English learning resources as adequate
Or inadequate?
- 6) Explain your answer and give examples of such resources.
- 7) Which language do students use when in the school compound in their interactions?
- 8) Do you think your teachers are motivated to teach English? Explain your answer.



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Office of the Director

24th April 2008

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS/MRS/MR.....

REG. #.....

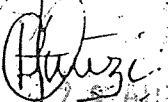
The above named is our student in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/she wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

The research is a requirement for the Award of a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

Any assistance accorded to him/her regarding research will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,


12 5 405 7300
MUHWEZI JOSEPH
HEAD, IN-SERVICE

