

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO POOR PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN THE KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (KCSE) IN ISIOLO
NORTH, ISIOLO COUNTY, KENYA**

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EDU-G 4-1472-21


**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR IN
EDUCATION ARTS OF GREYSA UNIVERSITY**

NOVEMBER 2024

STUDENT DECLARATION

STUDENT DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award of Bachelor in Education Arts or for any similar purpose in any other institution.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my family, relatives and friends for their continued support and inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank and praise the Almighty God for His wonderful grace that I have had throughout my studies. I also thank Gretsia University and its whole fraternity for giving me a chance to have my university studies here. I'm also indebted to my parents for their support, I owe my success to them.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

K.C.S.E –Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of poor performance among students in Isiolo North secondary schools, Isiolo County has emerged as a critical concern, demanding a comprehensive investigation into its root causes. The research in this study is to investigate on the factors for poor performance in the KCSE among secondary school students. Through an extensive review of literature and empirical research, this abstract seeks to shed light on the myriad complexities surrounding this issue. The following objectives guides the research on this study: to understand the underlying factors contributing to poor KCSE performance, which may include educational, environmental or socio-economic factors by identifying the root causes, improve teacher training and professional development programs to enhance instructional quality and student engagement, to evaluate the availability and accessibility of educational resources such as textbooks, learning materials, libraries and technology in Isiolo North Secondary schools. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analyses of academic records with qualitative insights gathered through interviews and surveys. This research seeks to contribute to the discourse on educational reform by providing a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted nature of poor performance in secondary schools. By recognizing and addressing the diverse array of challenges faced by students and educators, it aspires to pave the way for targeted interventions and policy measures aimed at fostering a conducive learning environment for all.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Education is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and understanding through formal and informal means. It typically involves the imparting of information, concepts, and principles to individuals often in structured settings like schools, colleges, and universities but also through self-directed learning and experiences. Education can take various forms including formal education (schooling), informal education (learning from daily experiences), and non-formal education (structured learning outside traditional classrooms). It is a fundamental aspect of human development and plays a significant role in shaping individuals and societies.

Since gaining independence from British colonial rule in 1963, education in Kenya has seen significant developments and changes. After independence, Kenya focused on expanding access to education for its citizens. This led to the construction of more schools and the recruitment of teachers to ensure that more children could attend school. In 1985, Kenya replaced the 7-4-2-3 education system with the 8-4-4 system. Kenya has also diversified its education system to include various pathways such as technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions and universities, to cater to different career aspirations. Kenya conducts national examinations including KCSE which play a crucial role in determining access to higher education. Kenya continues to work towards enhancing its education system to meet the demands of a changing world and to prepare its citizens for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

In the educational landscape of Kenya, the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination stands as a pivotal assessment, acting as both a culmination of students' secondary education and a gateway to higher academic pursuits. However, the persistent issue of suboptimal performance in the KCSE examination among a significant cohort of students prompts a critical examination of the underlying factors contributing to this phenomenon.

Recognizing that education is inexorably intertwined with socio-economic factors, the research extends its gaze beyond the confines of the classroom. Economic status, family background, and access to supplementary educational resources are considered as crucial elements that shape a student's academic journey. Additionally, societal expectations, cultural influences, and the degree of parental involvement in a student's education are examined to comprehend the broader socio-economic context in which poor KCSE performance unfolds.

In recognizing the holistic nature of student life, the study delves into the psychosocial dimensions. Stress levels, peer relationships, and motivational factors during the KCSE examination period will be dissected to unravel the intricate interplay of emotions on academic outcomes. By acknowledging the psychological challenges faced by students, the research endeavors to illuminate avenues for developing comprehensive support systems.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

The problem of poor performance in the Secondary schools in Isiolo North, Isiolo County is a pervasive issue that warrants comprehensive research attention. Despite the implementation of various educational reforms and interventions, the underlying causes of poor performance in Isiolo North remain complex and require a deeper understanding. Therefore, the central problem under investigation is to explore and analyze the factors contributing to poor academic performance in secondary schools in Isiolo North, with the ultimate goal of identifying effective strategies and interventions to address this issue and promote equitable access to quality education for all students.

This problem statement provides a clear and focused direction for the research, it highlights the significance of the issue, its persistence, and the need to uncover the underlying causes and potential solutions for poor academic performance in Isiolo North secondary schools.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

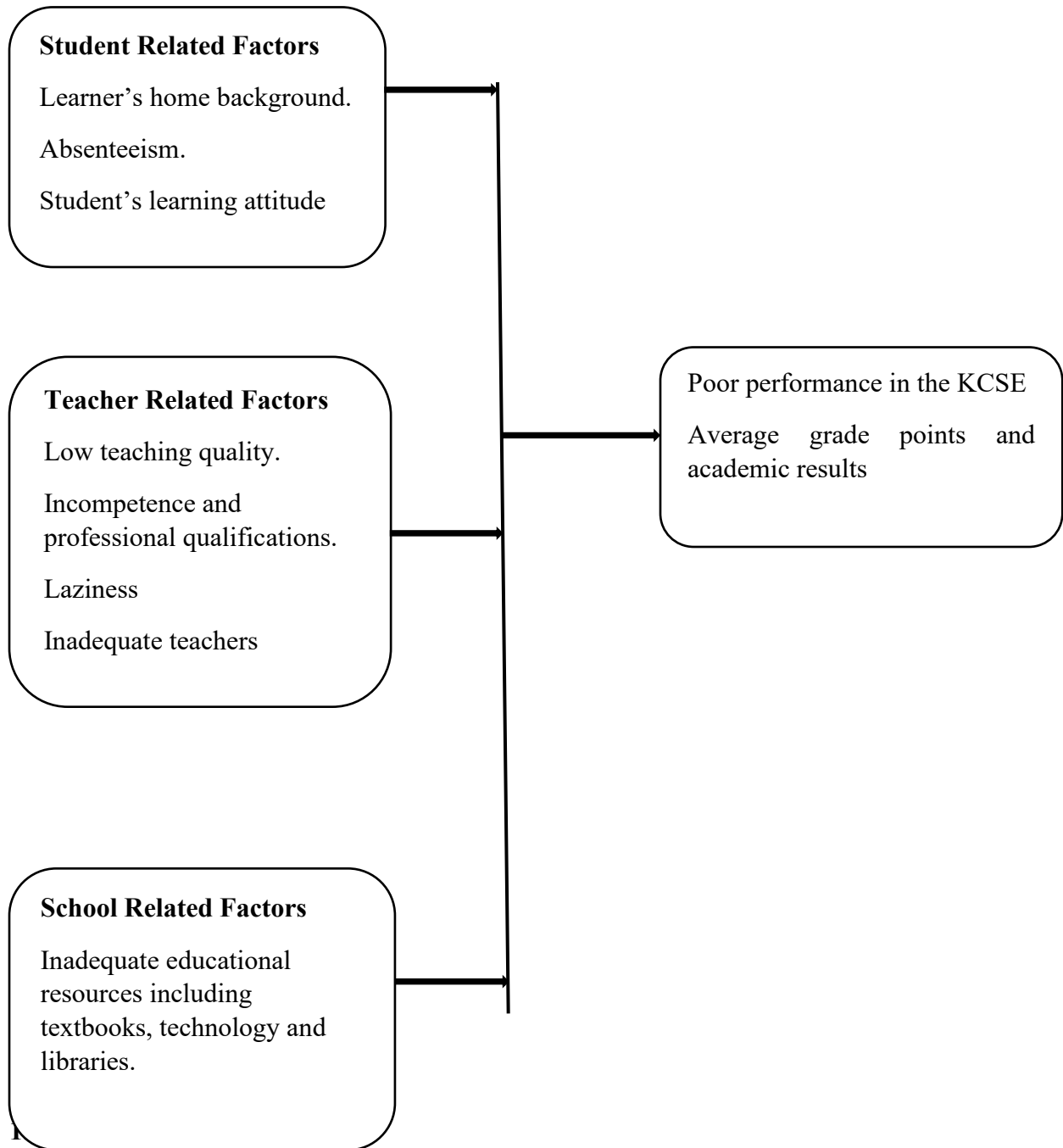
The purpose of this study was to investigate and research the poor performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education by the Secondary Schools in Isiolo North, Isiolo County. It serves the overarching goal of improving the quality, equity, and effectiveness of education systems, ultimately benefiting both individual students and society as a whole.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

Here's a simplified conceptual framework for a research study on the poor performance in the KCSE by Isiolo North Secondary Schools.

Independent variables

Dependent variable



- I. What are the primary factors contributing to poor KCSE academic performance among Isiolo North secondary school's students?
- II. What role do teacher quality and teaching methods play in influencing the student's KCSE performance?
- III. How does access to educational resources, including textbooks, technology, and extracurricular activities influence KCSE performance, and how can access be improved?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

1.6.1 General Objective

The main objective was to determine the possible factors contributing to KCSE's poor performance in Isiolo North Secondary schools understand the complex dynamics at play and find effective strategies to improve educational outcomes for students in the area of study.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

- I. To establish the extent at which teachers are endowed with skills of teaching the subjects.
- II. To evaluate the availability and accessibility of educational resources such as textbooks, learning materials, libraries, and technology in Isiolo North Secondary schools.
- III. To find out how student's attitude towards learning affect their KCSE results.

1.7 Hypotheses of the Study

In trying to answer the arising questions in the research, the following null hypotheses were tested.

H0 1; Teacher training and professional development do not significantly affect students' KCSE outcomes.

H0 2; providing additional or adequate educational resources to schools does not lead to a significant improvement in the KCSE performance.

H0 3; There is no significant relationship between students attitude and their KCSE results.

1.8 Significance of the Study

Understanding the root causes and factors for poor KCSE performance can inform targeted interventions and reforms to improve the quality of education and results in Isiolo North. By delving into these factors, the knowledge empowers policymakers to design targeted initiatives aimed at fostering a more equitable and inclusive educational environment.

Moreover, this study scrutinizes the allocation and utilization of educational resources, revealing discrepancies that require attention. It informs resource distribution strategies, ensuring that schools receive the materials and support needed for effective teaching and learning. By closing resource gaps, this research leveled the playing field giving students the tools they need to excel in the KCSE. The impact of teachers and their training comes to scrutiny leading to improvements

in teaching and teacher development programs. This enhances teaching quality translating to better student performance. The study also enhances parental involvement by fostering collaboration between schools and parents therefore creating a supportive educational environment.

Research in this area ultimately seeks to enhance the overall quality of life for students and their families by improving educational outcomes. This is because it addresses critical issues related to education, equity, and socioeconomic development.

1.9 Delimitation or Scope of Study

The scope of this research was delimited to schools with KCSE poor performance for the last 3 years. This study was carried out in 8 Isiolo North secondary schools and it was only concerned with the factors for poor KCSE academic performance within the area of study.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

Researching poor KCSE performance in Isiolo North, like any research endeavor, has its limitations and challenges.

- I. As a researcher, I faced resource constraints, including funding and time limitations, which affected the depth and breadth of this research study.
- II. This research study may have suffered from sampling bias therefore limiting the generalizability of these findings.
- III. The study confined itself to investigating factors for poor performance in the KCSE. The results were, therefore, interpreted only in this context of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This literature review embarks on an exploration of existing research and scholarly works to delve into the multifaceted effects of poor academic performance in secondary schools. By drawing upon a wide range of literature, this review seeks to synthesize the current state of knowledge and provide a comprehensive understanding of how poor performance impacts students, schools, and communities in the Isiolo North sub-county.

2.2 Poor performance in Secondary schools.

The issue of poor academic performance in secondary schools is a topic of perennial concern in the realm of education. Secondary education represents a critical phase in students' academic journeys, shaping their futures and socio-economic prospects. As such, understanding the causes, consequences, and potential interventions for poor performance is of paramount importance. This literature review draws upon a comprehensive array of research studies, scholarly articles, and empirical works to explore the multifaceted nature of poor academic performance in secondary schools.

One common thread that emerges from the literature is the multifaceted nature of poor performance in secondary schools. It is not a singular issue but rather a complex web of interconnected factors. Socioeconomic status often plays a pivotal role, with students from disadvantaged backgrounds facing greater challenges. Research by Smith (2017) underscores the impact of poverty on educational outcomes, highlighting the correlation between low family income and low academic achievement.

Teacher quality and teaching methods are also central to the discourse on poor performance. Johnson et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of effective teaching strategies, noting that uninspiring or inexperienced teachers can hinder students' progress. Furthermore, a lack of access to quality educational resources, such as textbooks and technology, can exacerbate the problem.

Another noteworthy aspect is the influence of the peer group. A study conducted by Brown and Williams (2019) found that peer pressure and negative peer influences often contribute to poor academic performance. Students who associate with peers disinterested in learning or engaging in risky behaviors may be more likely to underperform academically.

Curriculum and educational policies also warrant consideration. Smith (2020) suggests that an outdated or irrelevant curriculum can disengage students and hinder their motivation to learn. Additionally, rigid assessment practices that emphasize standardized testing over holistic learning experiences can fail to capture students' true abilities.

Parental involvement is a critical factor in addressing poor performance in secondary schools. Research by Anderson (2016) underscores the significance of a supportive home environment. Students with involved parents tend to perform better academically and are more likely to complete their secondary education.

Mental health and well-being cannot be overlooked in discussions of poor performance. Johnson and Miller (2021) highlight the prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression among secondary school students. These mental health challenges can have a profound impact on academic performance, leading to absenteeism and reduced focus.

2.3 Students' related factors in relation to poor performance

A comprehensive literature review of research on student factors related to poor academic performance reveals a complex interplay of individual characteristics and circumstances that can influence students' educational outcomes. Here, we delve into these factors, their implications, and their potential impact on policy and practice.

Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated a strong link between socioeconomic status and academic performance (Sirin, 2015). Students from low-income backgrounds often face greater challenges due to limited access to educational resources, inadequate housing, and increased stressors associated with poverty. Parental education levels and involvement in a child's education are significant predictors of academic success (Hill et al., 2016). Parents who actively support their children's learning and engage with schools can positively influence their performance.

Peer influence can shape students' behaviors and attitudes toward academics (Wentzel et al., 2019). Negative peer associations, bullying, or a lack of supportive friendships can hinder academic engagement. Students' beliefs about their own abilities and future educational goals can impact their performance (Pajares, 2005). Students with low self-efficacy may lack the confidence to tackle challenging academic tasks.

Regular school attendance and active participation in classroom activities are critical for academic success (Gottfried, 2010). Frequent absenteeism and disengagement can lead to poor performance. Effective time management, organization, and study skills are essential for academic success (Zimmerman et al., 2018). Students lacking these skills may struggle to meet academic demands.

2.4 Teacher-related factors in relation to poor performance among secondary school students

A comprehensive literature review of research on teacher factors related to poor student performance reveals a range of critical variables that influence educational outcomes. Understanding these factors is crucial for improving teaching quality and student achievement.

Research consistently indicates that teacher qualifications and professional development play a pivotal role in student performance (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Teachers with strong content knowledge and pedagogical training tend to foster better academic outcomes. Several studies have suggested a positive correlation between teaching experience and student achievement (Ingersoll, 2019). Experienced teachers often have refined classroom management skills and a better understanding of instructional strategies.

Teacher expectations can significantly impact student performance. Research has shown that biases based on students' gender, race, or socioeconomic status can affect grading and classroom interactions, leading to disparities in student achievement (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Effective instructional practices, such as differentiated instruction, formative assessment, and active learning, can positively influence student learning outcomes (Hattie, 2017). Teachers who employ research-based methods tend to have higher-performing students. **Teacher-Student Relationships:** The quality of teacher-student relationships can profoundly affect student engagement and motivation (Roorda et al., 2017). Teachers who establish positive and supportive connections with their students often see improved academic performance.

The ability to maintain a well-structured and disciplined classroom environment is essential for effective teaching (Brophy, 2006). Poor classroom management can lead to disruptions and hinder student learning. Teachers who are culturally competent can better connect with and support students from diverse backgrounds (Gay, 2002). Lack of cultural competence can create barriers to learning and achievement. Providing constructive feedback and effective assessment practices

are crucial for student growth (Black et al., 2018). Teachers who offer timely, informative feedback can help students understand their progress and make necessary improvements.

High levels of teacher burnout and stress can lead to lower teacher effectiveness and poorer student performance (Kyriacou, 2001). Addressing teacher well-being is vital for maintaining instructional qualifications. Collaboration among teachers and with other educators in the school community can positively impact student outcomes (Bryk et al., 2015). Sharing best practices and learning from colleagues can enhance teaching quality.

Teacher factors significantly influence student performance, and recognizing these factors is essential for improving educational outcomes. Policymakers, school administrators, and educators should consider these factors when designing professional development programs, teacher evaluation systems, and support structures to enhance teaching quality and promote equitable learning environments. Addressing teacher factors related to poor performance can ultimately contribute to improved educational outcomes for all students.

2.5 School factors related to poor performance

A comprehensive review of the literature on school factors related to poor academic performance highlights a range of interconnected variables that contribute to students' underachievement. This review explores these factors in depth and discusses their implications for educational Research consistently shows that the quality of teaching is a critical determinant of student outcomes. Teachers who are well-trained, experienced, and skilled in classroom management and instructional strategies tend to have a positive impact on student performance (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Ingersoll, 2019). In contrast, the presence of underqualified or inexperienced teachers can hinder students' progress.

Smaller class sizes and lower student-teacher ratios have been associated with improved academic performance, especially in the early grades (Hattie, 2017). Fewer students in a classroom can allow teachers to provide more individualized attention and support to struggling students. The availability of a well-designed curriculum and adequate educational resources, such as textbooks, technology, and teaching materials, significantly influences student achievement (Schmidt et al., 2018). Schools with outdated or inadequate curricula may fail to meet the diverse needs of their students. Effective school leadership, including strong principals and supportive administrative practices, plays a pivotal role in shaping school culture and performance (Leithwood et al., 2019).

Schools with visionary leaders who foster a positive learning environment tend to have better student outcomes.

A positive and inclusive school climate can foster student engagement and motivation, while a negative or hostile environment can hinder academic progress (Cohen et al., 2018). Factors such as bullying, disciplinary practices, and school safety are crucial aspects of school culture that impact student performance. Schools that actively engage parents and the broader community tend to see improved student outcomes (Epstein et al., 2019). Parent-teacher collaboration and community support programs can enhance students' educational experiences. Schools that prioritize evidence-based instructional practices, differentiation, and personalized learning tend to have better student achievement (Hattie, 2017; Tomlinson et al., 2020). These practices can cater to the diverse learning needs of students. Schools that effectively implement inclusive education and provide appropriate support for students with disabilities or special needs can help these students achieve their full potential (Schneider et al., 2021).

2.6 Theoretical Framework

Cognitive Development Theory, as pioneered by Jean Piaget, provides a compelling framework for understanding the phenomenon of poor academic performance among students. In the context of poor performance, this theory suggests that a mismatch between the cognitive stage of a student and the educational materials or instructional methods can be a significant factor. For instance, if a curriculum is too advanced or abstract for students who are in the concrete operational stage, they may struggle to comprehend and apply the concepts presented, resulting in academic difficulties.

Another critical concept in Cognitive Development Theory is the notion of schemas. Schemas are mental structures that individuals construct to organize and make sense of information. These schemas evolve and become more complex over time. Poor academic performance may occur when students lack the necessary schemas to understand and integrate new information into their existing cognitive framework.

The theory emphasizes the processes of assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation involves fitting new information into existing schemas, while accommodation entails modifying existing schemas to incorporate new information. When students encounter novel concepts or challenges

that require significant accommodation, they may face obstacles in their learning journey, potentially leading to underachievement.

Cognitive Development Theory underscores the importance of executive functions, metacognition, and individual differences in cognitive development. Executive functions, including working memory, attention, and problem-solving abilities, play a crucial role in academic performance. Students with deficits in these areas may struggle with tasks that demand planning, organization, and sustained attention.

Metacognition, or the ability to monitor and regulate one's own learning, also develops over time. Poor performance can result from a lack of metacognitive awareness, preventing students from effectively managing their learning processes, setting goals, or adapting their study strategies to meet their needs. Individual differences in the pace and pattern of cognitive development should be considered. Not all students' progress through these stages at the same rate, and some may excel in certain cognitive skills while lagging behind in others, leading to variations in academic achievement.

Cognitive Development Theory offers a valuable perspective for investigating poor academic performance by illuminating the cognitive factors that may influence students' learning experiences. Recognizing these cognitive dynamics can inform interventions and instructional strategies aimed at better supporting students facing educational challenges.

2.7 Summary of identified gaps in the literature

Identifying gaps in the literature is a crucial aspect of any research endeavor as it helps researchers understand what areas need further investigation. Many studies focus on individual factors (e.g., socioeconomic status, motivation) or school-level factors (e.g., teaching quality, curriculum), but there is a need for research that adopts an intersectional perspective. Exploring how different factors intersect and interact, especially across diverse student populations, could provide a more nuanced understanding of poor performance.

While there is a substantial body of cross-sectional research on poor performance, there's a relative scarcity of longitudinal studies that track students over an extended period. Longitudinal research could shed light on the developmental trajectories of academic performance and help identify

critical intervention points. More cross-cultural and context-specific studies are needed to account for variations in educational systems, cultural norms, and social structures.

Identifying and addressing these gaps in the literature is essential for advancing our understanding of the complex factors contributing to poor performance in education and for developing effective strategies to support students in achieving their full academic potential.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is on the methods and techniques that were used for conducting the research. It also contains justification for using the methods. This part outlines the research methodology used in the current study. The section is divided into five subsections: research design, sampling technique, data collection methods, data analysis techniques and the logical and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), a research design is the procedure that one uses to collect and analyze data. It involves specifying the type of research you are conducting, how you will collect the data, and the kinds of analyses you will do.

The study will use both qualitative and quantitative research methods. In practice, this mixed-methods design is highly beneficial. Combining both quantitative and qualitative research facilitates the triangulation of findings, providing a more comprehensive understanding of poor KCSE performance. It also offers a deeper understanding of the underlying experiences and contexts contributing to poor performance in KCSE.

The study will also employ the descriptive survey design. The design is ideal since it describes a situation or an area of study factually and accurately. Descriptive research describes areas like possible behavior attitudes, values, and characteristics. The KCSE results from county education office schools will offer the necessary information needed for the study. Schindles and Coopers (2003) state that descriptive studies are structured with clearly investigative questions. Variables used include teacher-student ratio, peer pressure, school resources, students' motivation, and family background. This choice of research design depend on the research objectives and the depth of understanding required.

3.2 Study Area

Isiolo North which is selected as the area of the study, is among two constituencies in Isiolo County. The constituency has 2 sub-counties which are Merti and Isiolo. It covers an area of approximately 15.8 square kilometers with over 10 secondary schools spread across the study area. Some parts of the constituency have very poor infrastructure which makes it inaccessible, especially in very remote districts. As a researcher, I am interested in conducting this study in Isiolo North and not in another area because it is among the lagged-behind areas in Kenya where people are not involved in education issues and most of them depend on livestock-keeping activities. Therefore, the area is selected by the researcher because it is one of the areas in the Northern Region that has poor performance in the form four National examinations. So it has the characteristics relevant to this study.

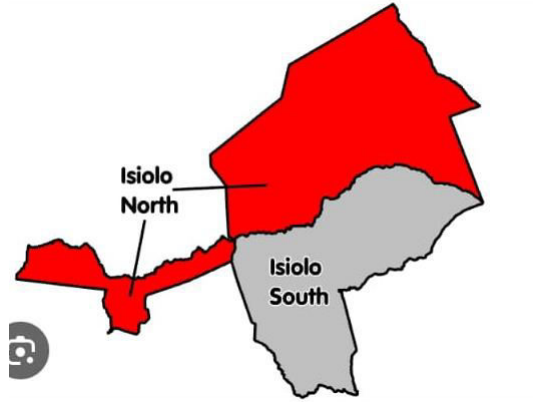


Figure 3.1; A map of Isiolo county and its constituencies.

3.3 Target Population

The target population of this study is to be acquired from four schools out of eleven schools in Isiolo North secondary schools. These include teachers and students in the secondary schools.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

This study adopted a census survey where each and every member of the target population is to be used in the study. Census survey was adopted since the target population is deemed not large enough.

3.5 Sample Size

The sample size is the number of individuals or items selected from a larger population for a study according to Richard and Sarah. The study in this research considered the schools in question as a good sample size for the study.

Table 3.1: Schools sample size

Number Targeted	Number Sampled	Percentage
11	4	36.36%

3.6 Measurement of variables

On the measurement of drug addiction as a variable in student's poor performance, the study was to measure the frequency, duration, and type of drug used. Self-report questionnaires and drug testing will be used to collect this data.

Educational resources are to be measured by measuring the teaching and learning materials in relation to the number of students and teachers in each of the selected schools. The researcher is to create and administer some surveys and questionnaires to access students' and teachers' perceptions of teaching quality and its impact on academic performance.

3.7 Research Instruments

Research instruments, also known as data collection tools or research tools, are specific methods or devices used to gather data and information for research purposes. The choice of research instruments depends on the research questions, objectives, and the type of data needed. This research is to use structured questionnaires with closed-ended questions for collecting quantitative data. It will also use in-depth interviews to gather qualitative data.

3.8 Validity of Measurement

Measurement validity refers to the degree to which a measurement instrument accurately assesses the variable it is supposed to measure. The questionnaires and interviews in this research study are designed in content and construct validity.

3.9 Reliability of Measurements

Reliability refers to the consistency or stability of measurement over time and across different conditions. Internal consistency reliability would be an appropriate reliability measurement to measure the degree to which items within a measurement instrument are interrelated or consistent with each other. Cronbach's alpha is a commonly used statistic for assessing internal consistency. A high Cronbach's alpha (usually above 0.70) will indicate good internal consistency.

3.10 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques are used to gather information and data related to factors contributing to or associated with poor academic performance. The choice of data collection techniques depends on the research objectives, research design, and the specific factors being investigated.

In this study, surveys and questionnaires will be used to collect self-reported data from students, teachers, parents, or other relevant stakeholders. Questions will be designed to gather information on learners' home background, absenteeism, learning resources, and attitudes towards education. Each questionnaire will be coded and encrypted to make sure I am the only person to know which person responded.

3.11 Data Analysis

Data analysis involves the cleaning, coding, and transforming data into actionable information to help make decisions. In my research, this is according to Paul E. Spector (2020). I will start by cleaning the collected data to remove errors, inconsistencies, and missing values. Ensure data accuracy and reliability. I'll also create visual representations of the data, including histograms and bar charts. Test research hypotheses to determine if specific factors are associated with poor performance. This study combines both quantitative and qualitative data, therefore, I will consider a mixed-methods approach to integrate and triangulate findings from both data types.

3.12 Logical and Ethical Considerations

Conducting research on poor academic performance necessitates careful consideration of both logical and ethical aspects to ensure the validity of the study and the well-being of participants.

On the logical front, the research design should be thoughtfully selected to align with the research objectives. The research sampling techniques, sample size, research instruments and the data collection techniques chosen have justifiable selection criteria and are validated for their reliability and relevance to the research.

Ethically, participants' informed consent will be obtained, ensuring they understand their involvement in the research. Confidentiality and privacy will be safeguarded through data anonymization. Voluntary participation will be a core principle, granting participants the right to withdraw without repercussions.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Analyzing and interpreting research data on underperformance in schools involves several key steps to derive meaningful insights. This chapter therefore includes a statistical analysis and

discussion regarding the variables that lead to students in Isiolo County’s Secondary schools performing poorly, with a particular focus on Isiolo North Sub County.

4.2 Response Rate

In regard to this, 27 teachers from every subject and 189 students each received a questionnaire in order to survey and provide data for the research. 4 principals from the targeted schools received an interview as well. 4 principals, 26 teachers and 188 students out of the 220 respondents responded to the questionnaires. As a result, there were 218 responders, yielding a response rate of 99.11%, which was extremely high and probably represented the target group accurately. There were several questions that both teachers and students had to answer.

4.3 The Data Analysis

The computer programs SPSS and MS-Office Excel data analysis package were used to analyze the qualitative data that was gathered through questionnaires and structured interviews.

In order to comprehend the demographic makeup and analyze some factors like the distribution of genders and the type of schools were included in the study, the researcher gathered basic background information on the respondents.

4.3.1 Respondent’s Gender

The researcher was interested in the respondents’ composition. The outcomes are as shown in table 2.

Table 4.1; Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Males	128	58.7
Females	90	41.3
Total	218	100

From the respondent’s gender findings, male respondents made up 58.9% of the total sample while female respondents made up 41.1%. This gender disparity could be explained by the fact that males

tend to advance further in secondary schools than females, which results in a higher percentage of male respondents in the secondary education.

4.3.2 Type of school

The researcher was interested in knowing if the respondents attended boys’ boarding, girls’ boarding, mixed boarding or mixed day schools. The results were as follows in table 3 below.

Table 4.2; Type of School

School Type	Frequency	Percent (%)
Mixed boarding	29	13.3
Girls boarding	7	3.2
Mixed day	190	87.2
Total	218	100

Teachers and students were questioned on the distribution of the sampled schools by type in order to have a thorough grasp of the composition of secondary schools in the sub-county. With 87% of all respondents attending mixed-day schools, 13% attending mixed-boarding schools and 3% attending girls-boarding schools, the results demonstrated that mixed-day schools made up the majority of the educational institutions in Isiolo North Sub-county.

4.4 Student’s response regarding the materials available in the classroom for instruction and learning.

The availability and quality of learning materials and resources can have a profound effect on students' performance in the KCSE. The availability, quality, and effective use of learning materials and resources play a vital role in shaping students' performance in the KCSE. Schools,

educators, policymakers, and stakeholders should collaborate to ensure that all students have access to the necessary resources to achieve their full potential in this critical examination. Top of Form Bottom of Form

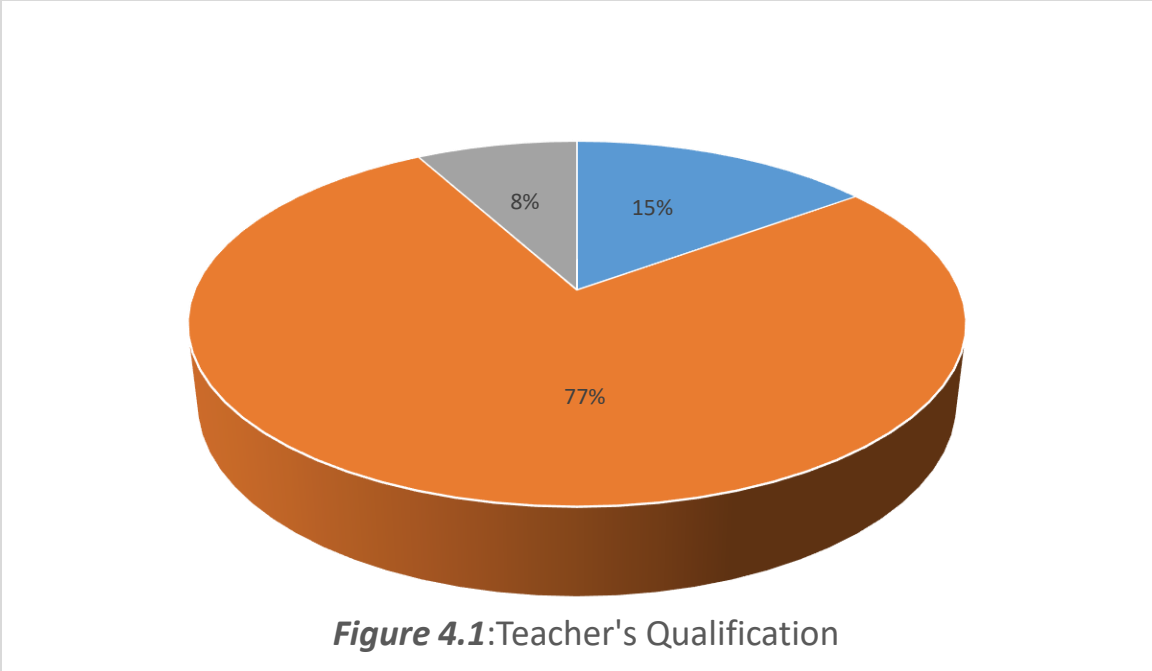
Rating	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly disagree	31	16.5
Disagree	35	18.6
No Opinion	33	17.6
Agree	40	21.3
Strongly agree	49	26.1
Total	188	100

Source: Field Data

Most of the students (26%) who responded to the questionnaires strongly agreed that a shortage of resources is the cause of the current low performance. The teachers also mentioned this as a significant contributing issue, as neither students nor teachers had access to the necessary knowledge to help them do well on tests. Even at the schools with libraries, there is lack of supplemental books and an insufficient amount of textbooks.

4.5 Professional Level of Teachers

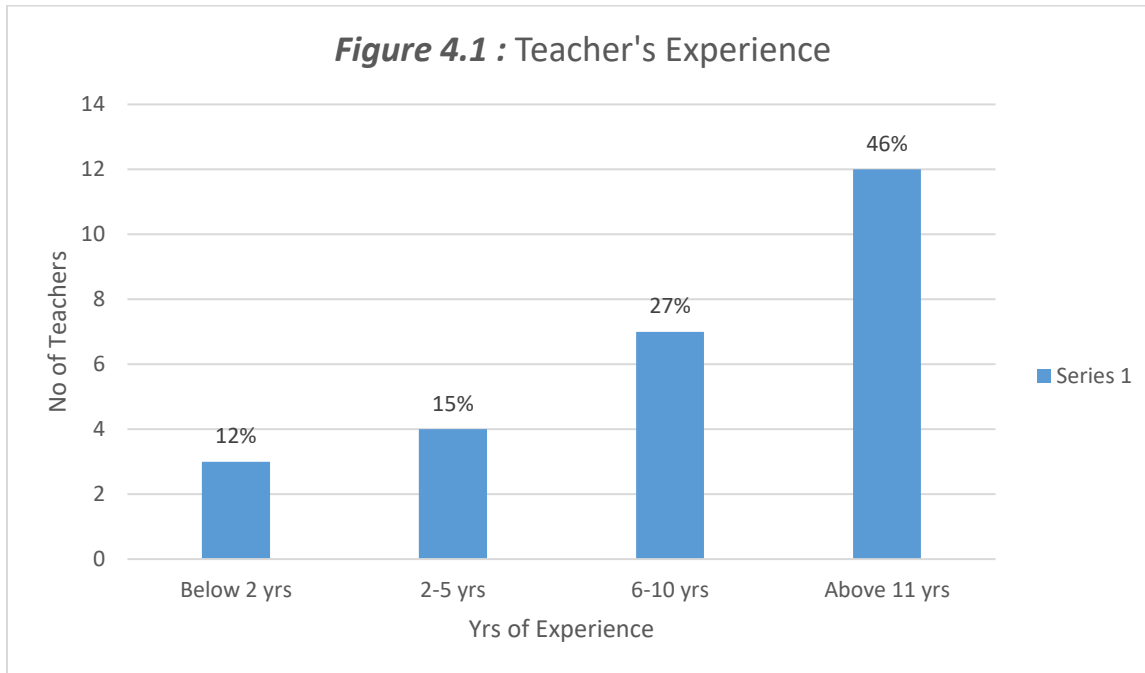
The response to the researcher's request for details regarding the teacher's educational background is shown in figure 3 below.



Source: Field Data

According to figure 3 above, every teacher was properly qualified to teach secondary students. Twenty (77%) teachers held bachelor's degrees in education, two (8%) held master's degrees, and four (15) held diplomas in the field. This result demonstrates that each teacher had received professional training and was qualified to teach the subjects they were teaching. According to Saha (1982), teachers with training outperform those without training in terms of student outcomes. Similarly, Huron (1977) discovered that there was a relationship between students' behavior and the length of teacher training in his study conducted in Malaysia.

4.6 Teacher's Experience



Source: Field Data

According to the above figure, three teachers (12%) had less than two years of experience, while four teachers (15%) had two to five years of experience. Twelve teachers (46%) had more than 11 years of experience, while seven (27%) had between six and ten years. This demonstrates that the majority of the instructors had adequate background knowledge in their fields. Teaching and learning would significantly increase if these teachers made the most of their experience, which would enhance the KCSE scores in Isiolo North Sub County.

In KCSE, students taught by more experienced teachers outperform those who were taught by less experienced.

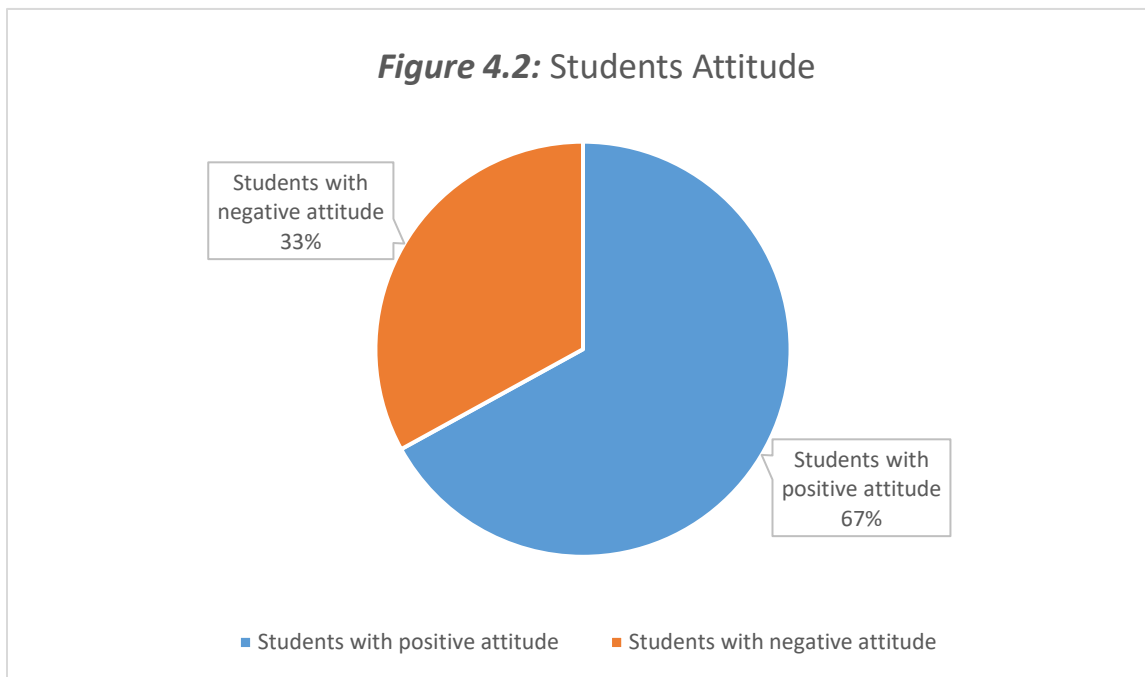
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Disagree	15	14.4
Undecided	28	26.9
Agree	50	48.1

Strongly agree	11	10.6
Total	104	100

4.6 Students Attitude towards learning

Students' attitudes can significantly influence their academic performance in secondary schools. Students with low self-esteem and a negative attitude towards learning may believe they are not capable of understanding the material or achieving good grades. This defeatist mindset can become a self-fulfilling prophecy, as they may not even attempt to do well academically.

The researcher aimed to ascertain whether the students' disposition toward learning was positive or negative. The results were summarized as follows:



Source: Field Data

According to the figure 5 above, 70 students (37%) reported they had a positive attitude toward learning and loved it, whereas 118 students (63%) indicated they had a negative attitude and did not enjoy learning. Students blamed certain teachers for their lackluster classroom behavior and

failure to engage them in the learning process, which led to low self-esteem and a bad attitude toward learning. According to Wales's (2001) research, low student motivation results in a bad attitude toward learning.

4.7 Absenteeism Rate

When students are absent, they often miss important lessons, assignments, and discussions. This can result in incomplete learning of key concepts and topics that are tested in the KCSE exams. Without a comprehensive understanding, students may struggle to perform well on exams.

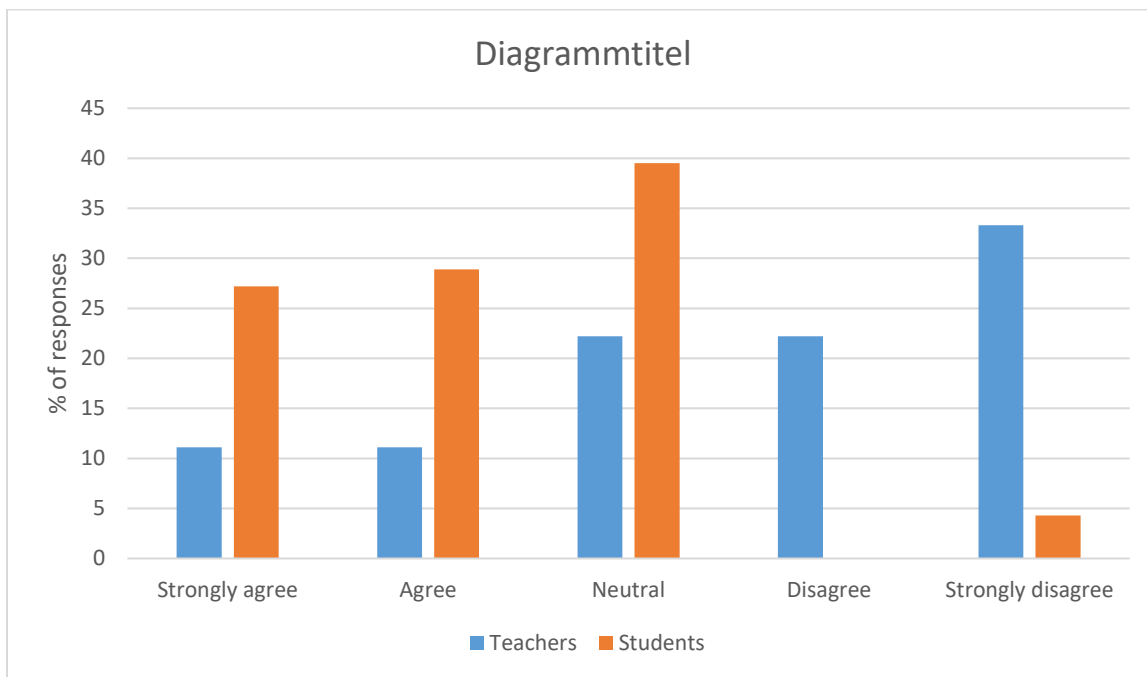


Figure 4.3; Rate of Absenteeism

Figure 6 above shows that the students and the teachers disagree about the rate of absenteeism in their schools. A large number of students (56.1%) indicated that the rate of absenteeism in their school is high while the teachers, (55.5%) indicated a disagreement. This might show that the understanding and perceptions of absenteeism between teachers and students differs.

4.8 Test for hypothesis

The study tested the significance of the independence variables as follows using descriptive statistics (frequency distribution tables, graphs, and charts):

H0 1; Teacher training and professional development do not significantly affect students' KCSE outcomes in Isiolo North Sub County.

H0 2; providing additional or adequate educational resources to schools does not lead to a significant improvement in the KCSE performance Isiolo North Sub County.

H0 3; There is no significant relationship between student's learning attitude and their KCSE results Isiolo North Sub County, Isiolo County.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

An overview of the major findings, conclusions, and suggestions is provided in this chapter. In this chapter of the dissertation, the research findings are discussed in light of the study's objectives as outlined in chapter one. The following sequence is followed while discussing the results in relation to the study's particular goals: To establish the extent at which teachers are endowed with skills of teaching the subjects, to evaluate the availability and accessibility of educational resources such as textbooks, learning materials, libraries, and technology in Isiolo North Secondary schools and to find out how student's attitude towards learning affect their KCSE results.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of the study was to find out what causes secondary schools in Isiolo County's Isiolo North sub county to perform poorly on the KCSE. The study specifically ascertained the degree to which educational inputs, as defined by the KCSE results, such as school type, student gender, learning facilities, and student attitude toward learning, impact the quality of education in learning.

In this study, which focused mostly on the secondary schools in Isiolo North Sub County, Isiolo County, a descriptive survey design was employed. The researcher was able to conduct research in four (4) of the constituency's eleven (11) secondary schools. Open and closed questionnaires for principals, teachers, and students were created by the researcher. Methods for gathering both primary and secondary data were both employed. In the study, discussions, interviews, and observations were conducted. The District Education Office and the school records provided secondary data for the research study.

The research instruments were distributed, and the responders were allowed some quiet and humble time to review the information and adjust their answers. The researcher then made sure that the questionnaire's contents were understood by the respondents and that the study's findings would be reported in confidence and anonymity to principals, teachers, and students. After reviewing all completed questionnaires, the researcher processed each one and produced a descriptive narrative report. This was accomplished by computing percentages and tabulating the results using frequency means.

5.3 Findings of the study

The research found multiple factors that lead to poor academic performance on the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in secondary schools in Isiolo North Sub-County. These were the findings;

Teacher Quality: Schools with less qualified or motivated teachers often experienced lower academic outcomes, as teaching effectiveness directly impacted student learning.

Student Engagement and Motivation: Student engagement in learning and motivation to succeed are crucial factors. Students who are actively involved in classroom activities, participate in extracurricular, and have clear academic goals tend to perform better academically. Conversely, disengaged students often struggle to stay focused and motivated.

Inadequate facilities such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of libraries, and poor sanitation facilities contributed to a less conducive learning environment, impacting students' ability to study effectively.

5.4 Conclusion

The study comes to the conclusion that improving the elements that have been found can significantly raise secondary school day students' performance. It is imperative to improve school infrastructure, student's positive attitude, and teacher preparation in order to raise the standard of education. In order to give every student equal opportunities, socioeconomic obstacles must be removed.

5.5 Recommendations for policy and practice

Enhancing teacher training through continuous professional development programs will boost teachers' teaching skills and motivation.

Allocating resources to upgrade school facilities, including classrooms, laboratories, and libraries, will improve school infrastructure.

Implementing programs that promote and facilitate greater parental participation in their children's education can increase parental involvement.

Many teachers mentioned the latter as a method they use to decrease the occurrence of absenteeism.

5.6 Recommendations for further research

Interventions and Strategies: Investigate effective interventions or strategies implemented in schools that have successfully improved KCSE performance. Evaluate the impact of government policies or educational reforms aimed at addressing poor performance.

Student Perspectives: Conduct qualitative research to explore students' perceptions of the challenges they face in preparing for KCSE exams. Investigate how student attitudes towards education and career aspirations influence their academic performance.

Technology and Education: Study the impact of technology (e.g., e-learning platforms, digital resources) on KCSE performance. Explore disparities in access to technology and its implications for academic achievement.

Parental and Community Involvement: Examine the role of parental involvement in students' academic success, particularly in contexts where parental engagement may be low. Evaluate community-based initiatives or partnerships that support educational outcomes for students preparing for KCSE.

Longitudinal Studies: Conduct longitudinal studies to track the academic progress of students from primary through secondary education, identifying critical points where interventions could improve KCSE performance.

Comparative Studies: Compare KCSE performance trends across different regions within Kenya or across different countries in the region to identify best practices or common challenges.

Gender Disparities: Investigate gender disparities in KCSE performance, focusing on factors that contribute to differential outcomes between male and female students.

Impact of Curriculum Changes: Assess the impact of recent curriculum reforms on KCSE performance, including changes in content, assessment methods, and learning outcomes.

Each of these areas could provide valuable insights into understanding and addressing the issue of poor KCSE performance. Depending on your resources, access to data, and specific interests, you could choose one or several of these topics to delve deeper into for your research project.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTION LETTER

SOLOMON M KIMANI,
GRETSA UNIVERSITY,
P.O BOX 3-01000,

THIKA.

THE PRINCIPAL,

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

As an undergraduate student at Gretsa University, I am carrying out a research on factors contributing to poor performance in secondary schools in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) in Isiolo North, Isiolo County, Kenya.

I humbly request you to allow me in completion of the questionnaire attached. The responses given will be applicable only for the study. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

Solomon M Kimani.

EDU -G - 4 - 1472 - 21

APPENDIX 2: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES

Please indicate the correct option as honest as possible by ticking one of the options in the questionnaire below.

Part One: Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your gender

Male []

Female []

2. What's your highest level of professional qualification?

P1 []

Diploma []

O-level certificate holder []

Bachelors []

Masters []

3. How long is your teaching experience?

Less than 2 years ()

2-5 years ()

5-10 years ()

More than 10 years ()

Part Two: School Learning Facilities

4. Does your school have enough classes to cater for all your students?

Yes []

No []

5. Does the school have enough learning materials?

Yes []

No []

6. Do you have a fully equipped library in your school?

Yes []

No []

Part Three: Suggestions for improving the performance of your students in the K.C.S.E

7. What do you suggest should be done so as to improve the performance of the learners in the National Examinations?

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APPENDIX 3: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear student,

Thank you for accepting to be my respondent. Please indicate the correct option and be honest by ticking one of the options. Kindly respond to all the questions.

Part One: Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your gender.

Male []

Female []

2. What's your age?

13-16 years ()

17-19 years ()

above 19 years ()

3. Category of your school.

National []

County []

Extra County []

4. What is your attitude towards learning?

Positive []

Negative []

Part Two: School Learning Facilities

4. Does your school have enough classes to cater for all the students?

Yes []

No []

5. Does the school have enough learning materials?

Yes []

No []

6. Do you have a fully equipped library in your school?

Yes []

No []

Part Three: Suggestions for improving the performance of the students in the K.C.S.E

7. What do you suggest should be done so as to improve the performance of the learners in the National Examinations?

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