

**FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH IN THE  
KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN TETU SUB COUNTY,  
NYERI COUNTY**

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DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS) OF GREYSA UNIVERSITY**

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## DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

This research work is my original work and has not been presented in any other institution.

Signature:  .....

Date: 28/10/2025 .....

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### SUPERVISORS' APPROVAL

This research project has been submitted with my approval as university supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

First and foremost, I dedicate this project to the Almighty God, whose guidance, grace and wisdom have been my strength throughout this journey. Without his blessings, this achievement would not have been possible.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the Almighty God for granting me strength, wisdom, and good health throughout the course of this project. His guidance has been my source of inspiration and success.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to my mother Winrose Maina for her endless love, encouragement and unwavering support both moral and financial throughout my studies. Your belief in me has been the driving force behind my accomplishments

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## **ABSTRACT**

English has remained the core language used in Kenyan schools throughout the years. Student performance in English therefore directly affects their overall performance, bearing in mind that the majority of the subjects are taught and examined using English. Low performance in English therefore is often tantamount to poor grades across other subjects. The aim of this study was to investigate determinants of students' performance in English language in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in secondary schools under Tetu Sub-County, Nyeri County. The research aims were to investigate the availability of teaching and learning resources, assess students' and teachers' attitudes toward English, and determine the impact of teaching procedures on students' performance. The sample involved students in secondary schools and English teachers from the sub-county. The descriptive survey study design was employed, with stratified random sampling to obtain a representative sample of participants and schools. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews and analyzed using qualitative and quantitative approaches, including descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Poor pedagogical practices and learning resources, unfavorable subject attitudes, and inadequate instructor training were the principal drivers of underperformance in the English subject, according to the research. Intensive intervention in resource management, instructor development, and attitude change programs is recommended by the research to improve students' performance in the English subject as well as their overall academic performance.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

English is not just important as a subject in Kenyan educational curriculum, but also nationally and internationally. The Kenyan Constitution acknowledges English, together with Kiswahili, as a national and official language. At the global level, English is the reigning language of technology, the internet, and social communication Baker (2000). Thus, for Kenyan students, being proficient in English is not merely important for official communication but also pivotal in determining their academic and professional futures. In the majority of African nations where English is an official language, the subject is a critical one at all educational levels—from primary to university levels. In Kenya, English is used to teach most school subjects and is thus the main medium of instruction. For this reason, the academic performance of student's hinges, to a great extent, on their English proficiency level. Orgunsijili (2009) asserts that English proficiency significantly affects students' academic performance overall. Research in Tanzania has shown consistent problems in students' English performance in national exams. A significant percentage of the students—both rural and urban—scored between divisions four and zero, a sign of poor proficiency in the language Nyamubi (2003) Yohana (2012). Consequently, most students exit school with poor command of English. Similar to other multilingual communities, Tanzania is still struggling with problems associated with English language performance. In Kenya, scholars have conducted various studies to understand the root causes of underperformance in English at the national level. For instance, Njuguna (2012) in his research in Bomet District, found that teacher and student motivation are key factors influencing performance. Other factors such as teacher experience and parental

involvement also played a role. Similarly, Mekonge (2012), in a related study in Turkana, concluded that the teaching methods used and the influence of mother tongue on English speaking were among the major factors affecting student performance in the subject. The Ministry of Education in Kenya has been concerned with the downward trend of performance in English at the KCSE level, as noted in the 2006 KNEC report. The trend was also seen in the 2023 KCSE results, where the Cabinet Secretary noted a significant decrease in the performance of English relative to other subjects. Although there has been a change to the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), English is still a core subject. In order to attain a good grade to be accepted into university, students are required to excel in English at the KCSE level. The role of English in raising educational attainment due to improved communication skills cannot be overemphasized. Students with poor communication in English tend to be poor in other subjects as well since the language of instruction and textbooks in most Kenyan schools is English Olanipekun (2013). This research, thus, aims to determine factors affecting English performance in secondary schools in Tetu Sub-County. Specifically, it looks at school-based factors, and how the presence or lack of teaching and learning materials, as well as the attitude of students and teachers towards English, relate to general performance in the language.

## **1.2 Statement of Research Problem**

The education system in Kenya has traditionally been driven by test results where students' performance has been largely measured by the outcome in the national examinations. Before the introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), there were few internal measures to assess learning achievements at the continuum of education. Student performance in Kenya has been at the center for quite some time with examination results

being the de facto proxy for education quality. In the secondary education environment, most subjects except Kiswahili classes are taught and examined in the English language. A learner's English proficiency is therefore the decisive factor in the performance in the broad Kenyan Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination. Despite the continued monetary investment by the government in basic education in Kenya, English fluency continues to pose a critical barrier. Various factors have been identified as antecedents leading up to the barrier in question, ranging from the lack of proper teaching material, shortcomings in teacher education, and negative attitudes towards the teaching and learning of English by both teachers and students.

Given the prominent position granted English in the curriculum in schools, we can hypothesize a linkage between the improvement in speaking in English and the subsequent performance in various fields in academics. With respect to this consideration, the current investigation seeks the determinants influencing English-speaking competence in secondary schools in Tetu Sub-County.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The study set out to establish the factors influencing the performance of English as a subject in KCSE examinations in secondary schools in Tetu sub- county in Nyeri county, Kenya.

## 1.4 Conceptual Framework

Independent variables

Dependent variable

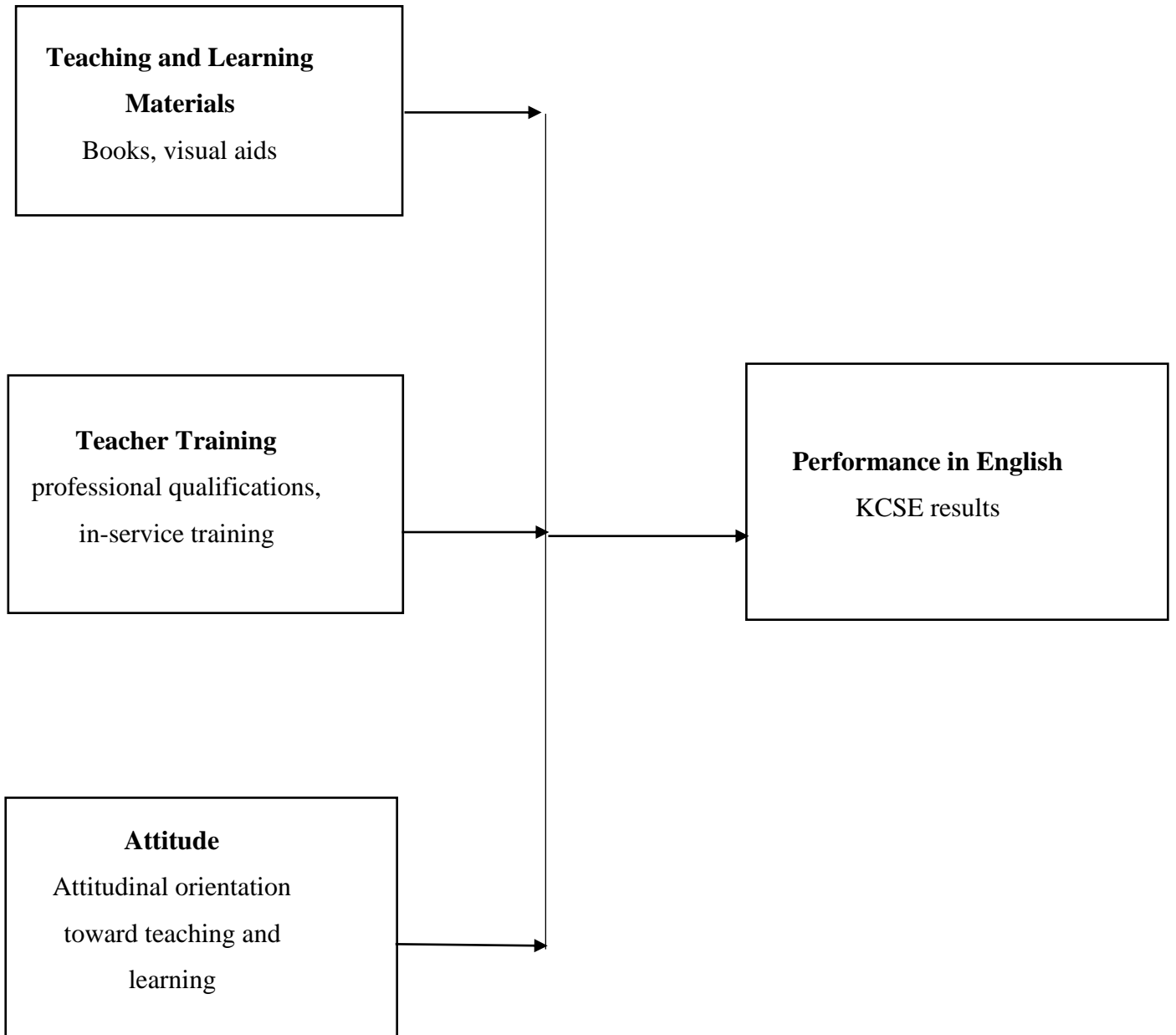


Figure 1.4 Conceptual Framework

## **1.5 Research Questions**

1. Does availability of teaching and learning materials influence students' performance in English in KCSE in Tetu Sub-county, Nyeri County, Kenya?
2. Does the training of teachers influence students' performance in English in KCSE in Tetu Sub-county, Nyeri County, Kenya?
3. Do the attitudes of teachers' and students' towards learning English influence the performance of English in KCSE within Tetu Sub-county, Nyeri County, Kenya?

## **1.6 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.6.1 General objective**

To investigate the factors influencing the performance of English as a subject in KCSE examinations within Tetu sub county.

### **1.6.2 Specific Objective**

1. To establish the influence of teaching and learning materials on performance of English in KCSE within Tetu Sub-County.
2. To establish the influence of teacher training on performance of English in KCSE within Tetu Sub-County.
3. To examine the influence of teachers' and students' attitude towards the teaching and learning of English in Tetu Sub-County.

## **1.7 Hypothesis of the Study**

H1: Teaching and learning materials do not affect the performance of English in KCSE examinations

H2: The level of training of teachers do not affect English performance in KCSE examinations.

H3: Attitude of teachers and students do not influence the performance of students in KCSE examinations.

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

A perfect example of excellence in the English language in the KCSE examinations provides a motivating prospect for the continued academic success at the university level, where English is the most dominant medium of teaching. The current research examined various strategies beneficial to both students and educators in developing English proficiency in the secondary education context. Moreover, the research has valuable findings and practical applications at offering recommendations for secondary schools in invoking effective methods in the learning and teaching of English as a curriculum area.

### **1.9 Scope of the Study**

The focus was limited to Tetu Sub-County in Nyeri County basically because of constraints involving resources and logistics. Nevertheless, in order to provide comprehensive understanding regarding the topic under focus, the study included a representative population involving secondary schools in the sub-county. The main focus of the research was on school influences on students' performance in English involving the accessibility of teaching and learning resources, the quality and exposure of teachers, as well as the attitudes displayed by both teachers and students towards the topics in question. Although the results may lack universal applicability throughout the whole country, they provide valuable lessons which can help inform the design of more inclusive education approaches in similar rural or sub-county settings across the nation.

## **1.10 Limitations**

Though this research was carried out with a lot of care and attention, it had a few inevitable limitations. In the first place, it was confined to secondary schools in Tetu Sub-County, and as such, the findings may not have captured the complete picture in other areas with varying contexts. Time limitations were also barring since the researcher had to operate within a short time frame, restricting the chances of in-depth data gathering. Financial constraints also impacted the extent of the reach in terms of covering more schools or employing sophisticated equipment. The availability of respondents, particularly teachers and students, was at times outside control due to school timetables or personal engagements, and this might have affected the comprehensiveness of the responses. Because the research was based on questionnaires and interviews, there was also the risk that some respondents might not have responded truthfully, particularly on delicate matters. Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic's lingering impacts might have had some effects on school performance and operations that were hard to quantify at the time of carrying out the research.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature on factors affecting students' performance in the English language in KCSE examinations within Tetu Sub-County, Nyeri County. The review is organized according to the study's objectives.

### **2.1 Teaching and Learning Materials and Performance in English**

Teaching and learning materials are foundational to effective English instruction. They not only stimulate creativity and abstract thinking but also help learners connect classroom content to real-life contexts. As Nyamburi (2003) explains, quality English resources promote deeper learner engagement by offering concrete examples that simplify complex ideas. Kapoli (2001) similarly emphasizes the value of authentic materials—those that relate directly to real-world communication—as crucial tools for fostering meaningful language development. Internationally, UNESCO (2003) affirms that textbook availability is strongly linked to improved student outcomes. The World Education Report (1998) also highlights how inadequate infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms can significantly undermine learning. In a Kenyan context, the Free Primary Education (FPE) initiative introduced in 2003 was a landmark policy that enhanced access to instructional materials at the foundational level (Ministry of Education, 2005). Under the current Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), the government continues to prioritize the distribution of materials, reaffirming the central role of English in the national curriculum Gathumbi & Masembe (2005). However, challenges persist. Studies by Mokamba (2012) and Ngaruiya (2013) indicate that many schools—especially in rural areas like Tetu Sub-County—still experience shortages of core English materials such as set books, grammar references, and multimedia resources. This situation is compounded by large class sizes, which limit teacher-student interaction. As Michael, Daniel, and Steffi (2011) observe, classrooms with

more than 40 students often correlate with reduced academic performance. Students' academic success also hinges on access to facilities such as libraries and computer labs, which remain limited in many Kenyan schools Karemera (2003) Schneider (2003) Ubogu (2004).

## **2.2 Teacher Training and Performance in English**

The quality of English instruction is deeply influenced by the training and professional development of teachers. Clotfelter et al. (2007) found that experienced teachers consistently contribute to higher student performance. In line with this, Farooq and Shahzadi (2006) demonstrated that professionally trained teachers produce significantly better results than their untrained counterparts. Effective English teaching also depends on a teacher's subject mastery and confidence. Research by Wenglinsky (2003) shows that teachers with strong content knowledge in English have a more positive impact on student achievement. Similarly, Lafayette (2009) and Kailani (2009) highlight the importance of teacher confidence in language use, noting that it facilitates more effective and engaging instruction. In the Kenyan context, Njuguna (2012) and Mokamba (2012) report that while many teachers hold formal qualifications, opportunities for continuous in-service training remain scarce. As a result, many teachers rely on outdated pedagogical methods, lacking exposure to learner-centered or communicative strategies. Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) advocate for more structured teacher development programs that support modern teaching approaches and technology integration in English instruction. This study builds on existing research by exploring how teacher qualifications and ongoing training—or the lack thereof—affect students' performance in English in public secondary schools within Tetu Sub-County.

### **2.3 Attitudes and Performance in English**

Attitudes, both from students and teachers, play a central role in the learning of English. Gardner (2002) established that learners with positive attitudes and intrinsic motivation are more likely to succeed in acquiring a second language. Xu (2008) further supports this view, emphasizing that learners who enjoy English are more likely to invest effort and show resilience in overcoming language barriers. Teacher attitudes are equally influential. Omulando (2004) argues that a teacher's enthusiasm for the subject directly shapes classroom culture and affects how students perceive English. Ngaruiya (2013) adds that job satisfaction and self-confidence among teachers are often reflected in student performance, especially in language subjects that require daily reinforcement and continuous practice. In many Kenyan schools, English is viewed not just as a subject but as the gateway to academic and professional advancement. Yet, this perspective can also create pressure. Learners may view English as difficult or elitist, especially when they struggle to master it. Conversely, when students and teachers alike approach English with interest and encouragement, it transforms into a subject of confidence and pride. Given the diversity of schools in Tetu Sub-County—some with limited resources, others with multilingual student populations—this study explores how student and teacher attitudes influence outcomes in KCSE English.

### **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

This study is informed by the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, rooted in the sociolinguistic theory proposed by Dell Hymes in the 1970s. CLT emphasizes the use of language in authentic social contexts and prioritizes interaction over rote grammar drills Hymes (1972). According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), this learner-centered model encourages students to use English meaningfully, fostering both fluency and accuracy. In a classroom guided by CLT, the teacher becomes a facilitator of communication, encouraging dialogue,

collaboration, and exploration. Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) argue that communicative strategies are particularly effective in the Kenyan classroom, where learners benefit from practical, real-life applications of English rather than abstract grammar rules. By aligning with the CLT framework, this study aims to assess how classroom practices—especially those related to teacher methodology and student engagement—shape English performance in the KCSE.

### **2.5 Summary of Reviewed Literature**

English serves as the foundation for education in Kenya, as it is the medium of instruction for most subjects beyond lower primary school. Yohana (2021) affirms that without a strong grasp of English, students face challenges not only in the subject itself but across the curriculum. Maleka (2003) cautions that in multilingual societies, language barriers—especially when English is not the first language—can significantly hinder comprehension and academic success. Across the reviewed literature, three major factors consistently emerge as determinants of performance in English: the availability and use of teaching materials, the quality and consistency of teacher training, and the attitudes held by both teachers and learners. In the Kenyan context, these factors intersect with broader systemic challenges such as uneven resource distribution, lack of infrastructure, and large class sizes Njuguna (2012) Mokamba (2012). This study, therefore, seeks to understand how these variables manifest in the unique environment of Tetu Sub-County, and how they influence English language outcomes at the secondary school level.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology employed in the study. It includes a detailed account of the research design, the study area, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, measurement of variables, research instruments, data collection methods, validity and reliability, data analysis procedures, and ethical considerations.

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive research design, which was appropriate for examining the current situation regarding English language performance in secondary schools. As noted by Mugenda (2008) descriptive designs are effective for exploring and explaining phenomena as they occur naturally, without manipulating variables. The aim of the study was to establish the status of English performance and identify underlying factors influencing it.

### **3.2 Study Area**

The research was conducted in Tetu Sub-County, Nyeri County, Kenya. This location was selected due to the continued low performance in English language observed in recent Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) results.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The target population encompassed secondary schools in Tetu Sub-County, which, according to local administrative records, consists of 64 schools. The study population included students, teachers, and school heads who were directly involved in English language instruction and learning. “The target population refers to the entire group of individuals or items that the researcher intends to study” Ngechu (2004).

### 3.4 Sampling Techniques

The study utilized a combination of simple random sampling and purposive sampling. Simple random sampling was applied to select students and teachers, ensuring that each individual had an equal chance of being chosen. This technique enhanced the study's objectivity and minimized selection bias. Purposive sampling was used for school heads due to their administrative roles and in-depth understanding of instructional policies and performance trends in English. Their deliberate inclusion allowed for the collection of critical insights from a leadership perspective.

### 3.5 Sample Size

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) a representative sample should consist of at least 10% of the total population. Table 1 below illustrates the sample distribution:

Table 3.5: Sample Size

Respondent Category	Target Population	Sample Size
Students	3000	300
Teachers	600	60
School Heads	6	6

This sampling framework ensured a balanced representation of key stakeholders involved in English teaching and learning.

### 3.6 Measurement of Variables

Table 3.6: Measurement of Key Variables

Variable	Measurement Scale
Teaching and Learning Materials	Ordinal Scale
Teacher Training	Ordinal Scale
Attitude Towards Learning	Ordinal Scale

All the key variables in this study were measured using ordinal scales, which ranked responses based on levels of perception, agreement, or access, enabling a comparative analysis across respondents.

### 3.7 Research Instruments

The primary instruments used for data collection included:

- Structured questionnaires for students and teachers,
- Interview schedules specifically designed for school heads,
- Observation checklists to gather real-time insights into classroom behaviors and resource availability.

As Kothari (2004) asserts, questionnaires are effective tools for collecting large volumes of data in a consistent format, while interviews and observations provide rich qualitative insights.

### 3.8 Validity of Measurement

Content validity was ensured by reviewing the questionnaire items to confirm alignment with the research objectives. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) content validity assesses how well the items represent the domain being measured. Expert reviewers from

the university were consulted to critique and refine the instruments for relevance and clarity.

### **3.9 Reliability of Measurements**

Reliability refers to the consistency of the instrument across repeated applications. As Gibson (2007) emphasized, a reliable instrument yields consistent results over time. The research tools were pilot-tested, and feedback was incorporated to eliminate ambiguity and enhance language appropriateness.

### **3.10 Data Collection Techniques**

Primary data was collected using three methods:

- Questionnaires for quantifiable responses,
- Scheduled interviews with school heads for qualitative depth, and
- Classroom observations to assess the actual use of instructional resources and teaching behavior.

These triangulated methods strengthened the validity of the findings.

### **3.11 Data Analysis Techniques**

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and percentages. The analysis focused on interpreting Likert-scale responses and identifying trends related to teaching materials, teacher training, and attitudinal factors. Qualitative responses were reviewed thematically and categorized into major patterns to support and explain quantitative findings.

### **3.12 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical standards were strictly adhered to throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and no

respondent was coerced into participation. Ethical clearance was sought from relevant authorities to ensure compliance with research ethics protocols.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **4.0: Introduction**

This chapter presents the data collected from students, English teachers, and school heads in public secondary schools within Tetu Sub-County, Nyeri County. The purpose of the analysis is to examine how teaching and learning materials, teacher qualifications and training, and attitudes of both teachers and students influence performance in English at the KCSE level. Data are presented through both descriptive statistics and qualitative themes, with a mixed-methods interpretation aligning with the study's objectives.

A five-point Likert scale was used to assess most quantitative responses, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Mean scores were interpreted as follows:

1.00–1.80 = Strongly Disagree

1.81–2.60 = Disagree

2.61–3.40 = Neutral

3.41–4.20 = Agree

4.21–5.00 = Strongly Agree

### **4.1 Response Rate**

The study targeted 366 respondents: 300 students, 60 English teachers, and 6 school heads. Of these, 336 returned the questionnaires fully completed, reflecting a high response rate as shown in Table 3: The remaining 30 participants either declined participation, were unavailable due to school scheduling conflicts, or submitted incomplete responses that were excluded from the final analysis. Although non-response was minimal (8.2%), it was distributed proportionally across categories and did not appear to introduce any systematic bias. Therefore, the findings can be considered reflective of the target population in Tetu Sub-County.

Table 4.1 Response Rate by Category

<b>Category</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Responded</b>	<b>Response Rate (%)</b>
Students	300	276	92
Teachers of English	60	54	90
School Heads	6	6	100

#### Demographic Characteristics

Teachers' Experience: Majority (42.6%) had 10-15 years of teaching experience.

Teacher Qualification: 75.9% held a Bachelor's degree in Education.

Class Sizes: 58% reported classes with 45-60 students per class.

These factors suggest that while teachers are generally experienced and qualified, high student-teacher ratios remain a concern.

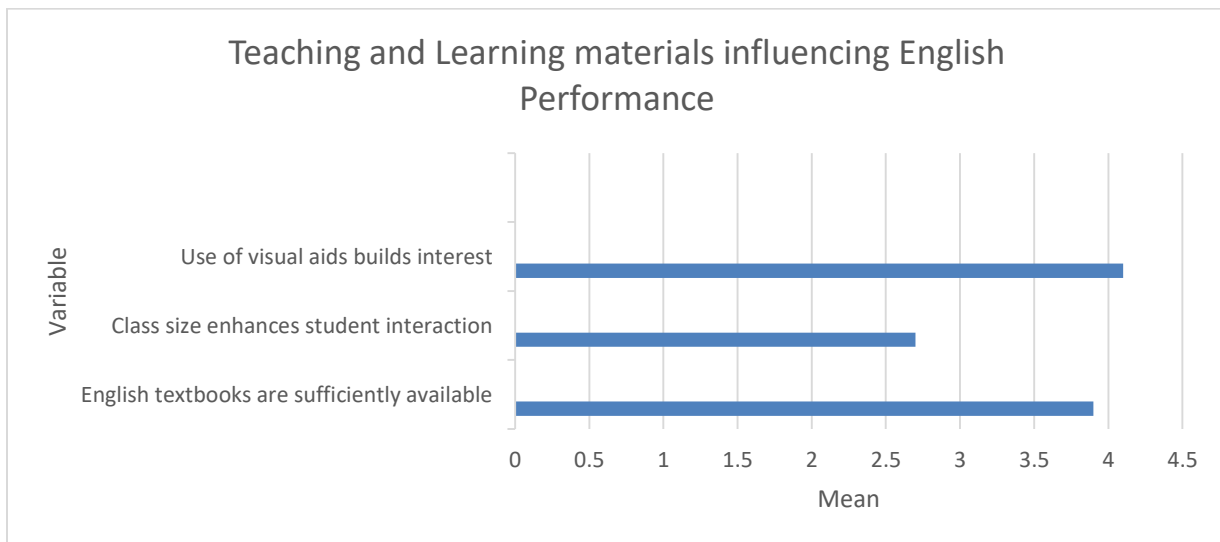
## 4.2: Teaching and Learning Materials

This section examined how availability (or lack thereof) of teaching and learning materials influenced English performance. Table 4 represents the quantitative findings.

Table 1.2 Perceptions on Teaching and Learning Materials (N=276 Students, 54 Teachers)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
English textbooks are sufficiently available	3.9	0.84	Agree
Class Size enhances student interaction	2.7	1.10	Neutral to Disagree
Use of visual aids builds interest	4.1	0.79	Strongly Agree

Figure 4.2. Relationship between teaching materials influencing English Performance and Learning



The findings indicate that most respondents agreed textbooks were available ( $M = 3.9$ ), while access to visual learning aids received the highest rating ( $M = 4.1$ ). However, class size received a relatively low rating ( $M = 2.7$ ), suggesting that overcrowding limits interaction and effective pedagogy.

Qualitative data reinforced these concerns. One teacher stated, “We have just one class set of readers, and we rotate them among four streams. It’s frustrating when students can’t take books home.” Similarly, a student noted, “Lessons are more interesting when the teacher uses charts or videos, but that only happens rarely.”

These findings support the literature by UNESCO (2003) and Kapoli (2001), which link learning materials with improved comprehension and student engagement.

#### **4.3: Teacher Training and Professional Development**

This section examined whether teacher preparation and continuous development affect students’ English outcomes. Table 5 shows teachers’ views on their training.

Table 4.3: Teacher Training and English Performance (N= 54 teachers)

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Trained Teachers produce better results	4.3	0.66	Strongly Agree
In-service Training enhances teaching	4.0	0.73	Agree
Schools support English teacher	2.9	1.02	Neutral

training			
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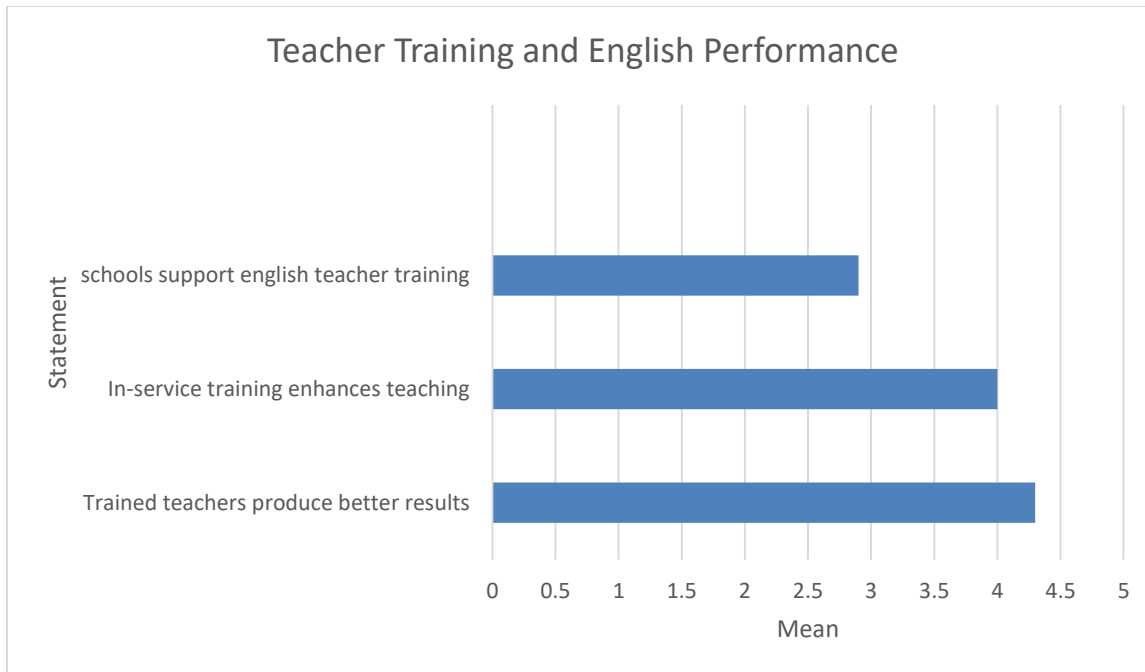


Figure 4.3. Illustrates the relationship between teacher training and English performance. Most teachers strongly agreed that formal training enhances performance ( $M = 4.3$ ). While there was general agreement on the importance of in-service programs ( $M = 4.0$ ), institutional support for such training was rated neutrally ( $M = 2.9$ ). One teacher observed, “We rely on personal effort for growth; workshops are rare and usually underfunded.”

Student responses corroborated these findings: 79% agreed their teachers were competent, and 68% felt teachers adapted methods to suit learners. However, gaps in continuous development may hinder the adoption of evolving pedagogical strategies.

These results align with studies by Goe (2007) & Clotfelter et al. (2007) which found that both certification and ongoing professional development significantly impact student outcomes.

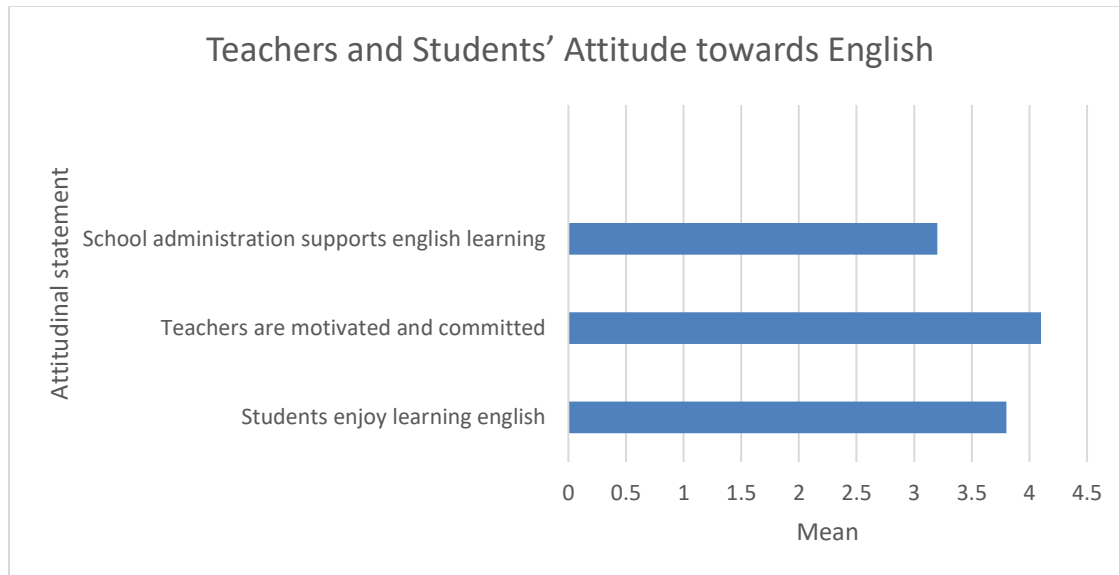
#### 4.4: Teachers' and Students' Attitude towards English

This section evaluated both teacher and student attitudes and how they influence performance. Table 6 summarizes key attitudinal variables.

Table 4.4 Teachers and Students' Attitude towards English ( N=276 Students, 54 Teachers)

Attitudinal Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Students enjoy learning English	3.8	0.90	Agree
Teachers are motivated and committed	4.1	0.70	Strongly Agree
School Administration supports English learning	3.2	0.98	Neutral

Figure 3.4. Illustrates the relationship between teachers and students' attitude towards English



The results suggest generally positive attitudes toward English. Most students ( $M = 3.8$ ) enjoyed learning the subject, and teachers rated their motivation highly ( $M = 4.1$ ). However, institutional support was moderate ( $M = 3.2$ ), indicating inconsistent emphasis from school leadership.

Students' comments supported these findings. One remarked, "I love English because it helps me in writing other subjects too." Another stated, "Sometimes we feel discouraged because English is seen as a punishment in some schools."

Teachers similarly emphasized the psychological aspect: "Our enthusiasm impacts the learners directly. When I'm enthusiastic, they are too."

These findings affirm Gardner's (2002) conclusion that motivation and attitude are pivotal in second language acquisition.

#### 4.5 School Heads' Perspectives

All six school heads interviewed emphasized systemic barriers affecting English performance. Key themes that emerged included:

- I. Over-enrollment: High student-teacher ratios restricted personalized instruction.
- II. Limited Resources: Some schools lacked libraries, computer labs, or visual teaching tools.
- III. Policy Disconnect: School leaders felt insufficient support from education offices regarding English resource allocation and teacher development.

As one head teacher noted, “We try, but without materials and ongoing training, we’re fighting uphill.”

These perspectives underline the institutional challenges that exacerbate underperformance despite student and teacher effort.

#### 4.6 Summary of Key Findings

Table 4.6 Summary of Variables and Key Observations

Variable	Key Observations
Teaching Materials	Inadequate supply of textbooks and aids in most schools.
Teacher Training	High qualification levels but limited in-service training.
Attitudes	Generally positive among students and teachers.
School Leadership	Mixed support levels; leadership capacity requires strengthening.
Class Size	Overcrowding limits personalized attention.

These findings collectively suggest that improving performance in English requires a multi-pronged approach involving resource provision, capacity-building for educators, and leadership engagement.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents a synthesis of the key findings from the study, draws conclusions based on the data analyzed, and proposes actionable recommendations. These are aimed at improving students' performance in English at the KCSE level within Tetu Sub-County, Nyeri County, Kenya.

### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

The study sought to investigate the factors affecting performance in English, and several insights emerged:

- **Teaching and Learning Materials:** The study revealed that many secondary schools lacked sufficient teaching and learning resources. This inadequacy negatively impacted student engagement, comprehension, and overall academic performance. The absence of key materials such as revision texts, grammar references, and literary set books created a learning environment that limited learners' ability to adequately prepare for national examinations.
- **Teacher Training and Professional Development:** Although a majority of English teachers in the sampled schools possessed formal training, the study found that opportunities for continuous professional development, such as in-service workshops and refresher courses, were either infrequent or entirely absent. This gap hindered the adoption of contemporary pedagogical approaches.
- **Learner and Teacher Attitudes:** The study found that students generally displayed a positive disposition towards English as a subject. Many learners expressed a desire to improve, motivated by the importance of English in future career prospects.

Teachers, too, were largely enthusiastic and committed. However, new students often faced integration challenges, and in some schools, a lack of administrative support diminished morale and teaching motivation.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The research concluded that students in Tetu Sub-County possess the interest and capacity to excel in English. However, structural and systemic barriers continue to impede progress. These include a shortage of learning materials, large classroom sizes, and limited teacher support and training. Furthermore, inconsistent administrative backing weakens the implementation of effective English teaching strategies. Nonetheless, the evident passion among educators and students signals a strong foundation for future improvements. With the right interventions and support systems in place, there is great potential for significant progress in English performance across the sub-county.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the study findings, several key recommendations are proposed to enhance the teaching and learning of English in Tetu Sub-County:

1. **Provision of Adequate Teaching Resources:** Schools should prioritize the procurement of sufficient and up-to-date learning materials, including textbooks, revision guides, and instructional aids. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with school boards and donors, should ensure equitable distribution of these resources, especially in marginalized and under-resourced schools.
2. **Enhancing Teacher Capacity:** Regular in-service training programs and professional development workshops should be organized to equip teachers with modern instructional

skills. Emphasis should be placed on learner-centered pedagogies, integration of technology in language instruction, and differentiated instruction for diverse learner needs.

3. Reducing Class Sizes: Overcrowded classrooms compromise the quality of instruction. Education stakeholders should work towards hiring more teachers and expanding infrastructure to reduce student-teacher ratios, allowing for more personalized and effective instruction.

4. Positive Attitudinal Reinforcement: Both students and teachers should be supported in maintaining a healthy, motivated outlook toward English. Schools can foster this by establishing recognition programs for academic improvement, offering mentorship opportunities, and promoting English-related extracurricular activities such as debates, drama, and essay competitions.

5. Strengthening Administrative Support: School heads and education officers should be actively involved in supporting English departments. This includes providing logistical support, facilitating access to teaching aids, and ensuring teachers receive necessary professional development opportunities.

If fully implemented, these recommendations have the potential to transform the English learning landscape in Tetu Sub-County. They would empower both learners and educators, contribute to higher KCSE scores, and ultimately enhance students' readiness for further education and the professional world.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDICES 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This questionnaire seeks to research on factors influencing performance of English in KCSE in Tetu Sub-County.

Background information [ use a tick in the boxes provided] 1. How many years have you been teaching?

1-5 years                      5-10 years        10-15 years                          over 15 years   

Qualifications

Diploma                       Degree                          Masters   

How many English lessons do you have per week?

How many students are there in class on average

25-35        35-45        45-60        over 60   

In this section, use the scale of 1 to 5 to show the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the given statements.

1- Strongly Disagree [ SD] , 2 Disagree [ D], 3 Neutral [ N] , 4 Agree [ A], 5 Strongly Agree [ SA]

Teaching and Learning Materials

S/N	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
	The school has got sufficient English teaching and learning materials					
	Availability of teaching and learning materials improves the effectiveness of teaching					
	The class sizes of the school are small hence hindering student teacher interaction while teaching					
	Sufficient time is allocated for learning English thus facilitating improvement					
	Presence of learning materials has built					

	interest in learning English					
	Use of a variety of materials stimulates students' involvement in the learning process					
	Availability of enough teachers has improved students' performance in English					

Teacher Training

S/N	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Training is a key requirement in teaching English in school					
2	Trained teachers produce excellent students in performance of English					
3	In- service training helps in improving teaching methods of teachers					
4	Qualification of teachers of English determines performance of English students					
5	Teachers well trained in English produce better student achievement					
6	Through training the teacher acquires confidence in mastery of English language					
7	The school provides training opportunities for teachers of English regularly					

## Attitude Towards Learning English

	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The school administration supports teachers of English in improving their skills					
2	Teachers have positive attitudes towards teaching English					
3	Newly admitted students have negative attitude towards learning English					
	Students are highly motivated towards speaking and learning English					
4	Teachers support weak students by building their motivation in learning English					
5						

## STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

In this section, tick where appropriate using the scale below

1 Strongly Disagree[ SD] , 2 Disagree [ D], 3 Neutral [N], 4 Agree [A], 5 Strongly Agree [SA]

	Statement	S D	D	N	A	SA
1	The school provides enough textbooks for English					
2	There are enough English revision materials					
3	We feel we have the best teachers of English					
4	Our teachers are sensitive to our individual needs					
5	The teachers are committed to helping the students					
6	English is my favorite subject					
7	I like studying English					
8	Presence of learning aids makes learning of English interactive					
9	Speaking in English makes me proud					

## TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

In this section, tick where appropriate using the scale below

1 Strongly Disagree [ SD] , 2 Disagree [ D], 3 Neutral [N], 4 Agree [A], 5 Strongly Agree [SA]

	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The school registers high performance in English					
2	Students perform better in English than other subjects					
3	English speaking improves performance					
4	Teachers have been highly committed to improve school performance in English					
5	Performance in the school has steadily been improving					