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PARENTAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IKOLOMANI SUB-COUNTY, KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA.

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to investigate to what extent the socio- economic background of parents influence the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub- County, Kakamega County. This study was guided by the following research questions: How does parental level of education influence students' performance? How does parental occupation level influence students' performance? How does parental income level influence students'performance? What are the socioeconomic challenges facing parents in enhancing students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub-County? What are the possible solutions to enhance students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub-County?

Methodology: The study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The study employed proportionate stratified random sampling to select the schools while purposive, cluster sampling and simple random sampling was used to select the students. Teachers were selected using stratified and simple random sampling. Principals, parents' representatives and Education officer were purposively selected. Data were collected using questionnaires, document analysis and interview guide. Qualitative and quantitative data were concurrently collected and analyzed. Statistical package for Social Science (SPSS version 23) was used to analyze quantitative data while qualitative data was analyzed thematically to obtain views and perceptions of the respondents.

Results: The study found that parental socio-economic background played a key role in enhancement of students' academic performance.

Recommendations: The study recommended that parents should be encouraged to start small income generating business so as to cater for the educational needs of their children.

Key Words: *Parental Level of Education, Parental Occupation Level, Parental Income, Level, Socioeconomic Challenges and Academic Performance*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Education is an essential component of human quality for high income generation and sustainable socio- economic development (Ogawa, 2010). Improving the quality of life of societies depends in part on the quality of education that children receive. Poor performance in education may mean students are getting low quality education or may mean learners' are not well prepared to attend to education calling. One way of improving education quality is through academic performance by ensuring students are well prepared for learning. One of the factors that can influence preparedness of students to learn and perform well is the role of parents at home. This notion is supported by Sanga (2004), who claims that home preparation before schooling contributes significantly to the academic performance of students at school. Therefore, improving the academic performance of learners must take into account the role of the background of parents. To date, there is marginal information that links the academic performance of learners' to the background of their parents. Globally, there is emphasis on the quality education. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2012) acknowledge that quality education enables the individual to acquire problem-solving skills, enhance confidence and inspiration. Quality education equips the citizen with the knowledge and skills that enable them to make an informed judgment and economic growth. The quest for quality education implies that learners' performance needs to be enhanced.

However, there has been an outcry about the lackluster performance of students in Kenya's secondary education certificate (KCSE), as such, intervention mechanisms are needed to improve this performance and to ensure that students have the opportunity to pursue their studies. One way to deal with this problem is to understand the relationship between parents' backgrounds and academic performance. This study attempts to assess such link among students in Ikolomani Sub-County. This Sub-County is ranked among the poorly performing in Kenya certificate of secondary education (KCSE) in the country. Academic performance entails various aspects of learning and examination. Students are graded according to the scores attained in exams and these rank from an E to an A. In most cases, students' who score E do not advance to tertiary institutions. Several studies have attempted to explain the relationship between extracurricular factors of academic performance, such as social influence, parental background and government. Considine and Zappala (2002) conducted one of these studies to determine the relationship between academic performance and the socio-economic status of parents. The author found out that the "socio" and the "economic" parts of the influence had varying degrees of relationship to academic performance. For instance children whose parents had higher socio- economic status performed better because these parents were in position to provide educational requirements to their children that encouraged them to perform well in their studies. They also found that the low socio-economic status of parents had a negative impact on their children's academic performance, because these parents could not provide their children with important learning materials and this created stress in their studies. The study is instrumental in pointing out the differences in degrees of influence of socio and economic factors however, it was done in Australia.

Carpio and Torner (2005) conducted a study on socio-economic determinants of students' performance in high school in Florida in America. The study revealed that a student who has not eaten for days and has no clothes that fit him or her cannot focus in class. Children coming from poverty are not provided with the same tools as the wealthy ones and are entering schools already behind those living in wealthy conditions. These are major factors influencing students' academic performance. It was recommended that parents and guardians be enthusiastic about the performance and progress of their children in schools. Qaiser (2012)

carried out a study on the effects of socio-economic parental status on the academic achievement of high school students in Karak District, Pakistan. The study showed that those children whose socio-economic strengths were stronger showed better academic performance and those with poor socio-economic status showed poor academic performance. Further it was also found that parental income, parental education and occupation influenced students' academic achievement. It was recommended that poor students should be provided with scholarships and free books. Also it was further recommended that the government should up take the responsibility of raising the socio-economic status of the parents. Raheem (2015) carried out a study on the socio-economic status of parents in the academic performance of secondary school students in Ekiti State in Nigeria. The study found that the academic performance of students was influenced by family size, parenting background, parenting qualification and parental income. It was recommended that parents with low education endeavor should send their children to home lessons after school hours, weekends and holidays to improve their academic performance. The government should embark on programs that can bridge academic gaps between children of the rich and the poor.

Kapinga (2014) assessed the impact of parental socio-economic status on the academic achievement of students in secondary schools in Tanzania. The study found that most high school students were of low socio-economic status. Furthermore, it was established that the majority of parents did not participate in the education of their children or in school improvement programmes. It was recommended that the government review the cost-sharing policy and make it free for O-level students, in particular those with low socio-economic status. In addition, schools should have professional guidance and counselors to help students with problems to reduce the gap between low and high socio-economic status. Study by Kamwilwa (2010) on the relationship between the socio-economic status of parents and the academic achievement of students in public high schools in the Kitui district of Kenya. The study found that most parents were unable to provide their children with books because the majority of them were farmers. In addition, the study found that most parents did not visit their children in schools to monitor their academic development. It was recommended that all educational stakeholders work towards the implementation of programs designed to improve academic performance in the district, such as academic forums to improve the overall academic performance. A study carried out by Nadenge (2015) on the socio-economic status of parents and the academic performance of students in selected secondary schools in urban informal settlements in the Westlands Division, Nairobi. The study revealed that Parents' low ability to finance education, coupled with poor status of physical and instructional resources were factors that inhibited academic achievement of students at the study site. It was recommended that the government take steps to increase people's socio-economic status and also control unemployment. Poor students should be provided with scholarships and free books aiming at improving academic performance.

Juma (2016) on the influence of socio-economic parental status on the academic performance of students at public high schools in Tana River County, Kenya. The study found that the income of parents, the level of education of parents, the occupation of parents and the involvement of parents greatly influence the academic performance of students. It was recommended that parents be sensitized on the benefits of parental involvement in their children's education and that the government needs to increase the allocation of bursaries to students from poor families in order to keep them in school. The studies provide useful tips for improving the academic performance of students in schools, they do not examine all socio-economic variables related to the socio-economic background of parents. The current study therefore focused on parental level of education, occupation and income in of parents in public high schools in Ikolomani Sub- County, Kakamega County, Kenya. Ikolomani Sub-

County is unique from other studies because is one of the two hundred and ninety (290) elective Sub-County in Kenya situated in the Kakamega County. It is bordered by Lurambi Sub-County to the North, Sabatia and Emuhaya to the South, Shinyalu to the East and Khwisero to the West. The Sub- County covers an area of 143.6 square kilometres of which 118.9 square kilometres is arable mainly under subsistence agriculture with a very small percentage under tea and sugarcane which are cultivated as cash crops.

The Sub-County has also both boarding and day schools, numbering twenty nine. Some of the schools are mixed while others are gender based. Socio-economic problems in Ikolomani included gold mining whereby majority of the boys went for mining in order to get quick money, others went for betting, drug abuse, early marriages and alcohol drinking, all these affects academic performance in the Sub-County. There are more public secondary schools in the Sub-County of Ikolomani, most of which have a negative impact on the academic performance of the Sub-County. This is regardless of several government interventions, such as the provision of adequate learning materials, the deployment of qualified teachers, the creation of more classrooms, intensified monitoring of the teaching process by the inspectorate, free secondary education, well equipped laboratories and providing health care to students. The average and unsatisfactory academic performance in public high schools in Ikolomani Sub- County makes the current study on parental socio-economic background and academic performance in public high schools in Ikolomani Sub- County timely and necessary.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Students in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub-County have persistently performed poorly in KCSE raising concern among stakeholders. In Ikolomani Sub-County over a period of nine years from 2006 to 2014, the KCSE Mean Scores has stagnated below the average of 6.0 (C plain). This Sub-County is ranked among the poorly performing in Kenya certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in the country. According to results published by Advanced Africa (2017) no school from Ikolomani Sub-County made it to top 100 schools in the country. It is a clear sign that the students in this Sub-County do not achieve the minimum qualification for university admission, which is C+ and above. This poor academic performance has raised concerns from parents and educational stakeholders, some of whom blame teachers and students' for poor academic performance. This is regardless of various government such as provision of adequate learning materials, deployment of qualified teachers and intensified monitoring of the teaching by the inspectorate. Thus other intervention mechanisms are needed to improve academic performance and to ensure that students have the opportunity to continue their studies. One way of intervening in this problem is to understand the relationship between Socio-economic background of parents and academic performance of students. Although some studies have been conducted in different areas of academic performance, there is a lack of literature to show clearly how the socio- economic background of parents influenced the academic performance of students in the sub-county under discussion. For instance, Simatwa & Waseka (2016), Were (2011), Musasia & Nakhanu (2012), Wekesa (2013) all cited students related factors such as participation in co-curricular activities, students' indiscipline, absenteeism and peer influence as major factors influencing academic performance in their areas of studies. However, parental socio-economic background was hardly mentioned. Against this background, the researcher has therefore developed the need to explore the socio- economic background of parents and the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub- County, Kenya to fill this gap in knowledge.

1.2 Research Questions

- i. How does parental level of education influence students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub-County?
- ii. How does parental occupation influence students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub-County?
- iii. How does parental income influence students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub-County?
- iv. What are the socioeconomic challenges facing parents in enhancing students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub-County?
- v. What are the possible solutions to enhance students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ikolomani Sub-County?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Maslow's Theory of Motivation (1943)

Maslow proposed that motivation is a function of five basic needs, namely: physiological, safety, love, self esteem and actualization. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory has been used to interpret the entire range of human behaviour. These needs are arranged in the predictable stair-step fashion. He also explained that a person's physiological needs must be first met followed by safety needs, and love. The fourth need is self-esteem and lastly self-actualization (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2007). According to this theory then, the parents' needs are expected to affect the way the students are educated. In other words, the parents' involvement in the students' education will depend on the hierarchy of needs. The parent who is at the physiological level will struggle to provide and participate in the students' education. Such a parent will be preoccupied with meeting the physiological needs of food, shelter and water. A parent who is at the safety and belonging stage will be involved in the students' education, but will probably do so with an emphasis on education as a way of providing the student with future security. For such a parent, the emphasis will be on the academic performance of the child during national examinations in the form of grades. Those parents who are at the level of self-esteem will strive to participate in the education of their children in order to ensure that the students end up in a high social class or professions, for example doctors, engineers and bankers. These are the kind of parents who will insist that their children study a certain profession even if the child is not interested or gifted for such a profession. Finally, those involved in self-realization will be involved in the education of their children as a way to develop the talents of the child. The emphasis is on what the child wants to be according to the child's talents. Self-actualized parents, will be looking for the child's talents development and not necessarily the final examination grade.

Some of the advantages of Maslow theory include the identification of the needs of the students, parents and other stakeholders who are involved in education. For example the theory helps bring out the students' needs for example love and belonging, which are critical to academic performance. It also identifies the parent's physiological needs, which unless met, it is difficult for parents to participate fully in the child's academic progress. The needs of the teachers too must be met. For example if the teachers' salaries are not paid on time or are low, then the teachers will not concentrate on their work, which in turn will affect the students' academic performance. Among the criticism of Maslow's theory, is the fact that human needs are not mechanically structured. One does not necessarily have to first satisfy a need completely before moving to another. For example, parents can try to provide education to their children even before they have met their physiological needs. It is

therefore not unusual for children to be sent to school without food. Even struggling parents can look for their children's scholarships and send them to boarding schools even if these parents do not have adequate shelter. Teachers in expensive schools can end up sending their own children to less expensive schools. Thus it is possible to mix the hierarchy of needs.

Systems Approach Theory

The Systems Approach Theory was developed in the 1950's. The authors who have made significant contribution to this theory are Trist, Rice, Kast, Rosenzweig, Johnson, Kahn, Katz and Boulding (Saleemi, 2006). According to the Systems Approach Theory, an organization is considered as being made of dynamic and interdependent parts, which work together in unison to produce a product. The parts can be thought of as subsystems, if one subsystem is removed then the whole system is changed. Thus an organization can be looked at as having inputs, which are processed to generate an output. In a school setup the inputs are the students, teachers, parents, government funding, and the community. Then the process is the planning, organizing, controlling and motivating. The results are students' academic performance (Bazimaziki, 2015). According to this theory, an organization is open, dynamic and interacts with its environment. This implies that the organization will also be changing continuously as its environment changes. The influence is not a one-way traffic; the organization may indeed also influence its environment and change it. This means that management is always on the outlook for opportunities to exploit and threats to guard against in order to ensure optimum performance (Bazimaziki, 2015). One of the advantages of the Systems Approach theory is that it is holistic, in that it considers all the parts (subsystems). These parts are interrelated and interdependent. This study considered the parents, who are related to the students; the teachers who are related to the administration and some may even be parents in the same school. The government provides the funding from money raised in taxes paid by the parents. The government is interested in the whole welfare of its citizens while the parents are interested in the good academic performance and eventual high paying career of their children. The children are interested in the both the immediate academic performance, which will lead them to their desired career. The next advantage is that the Systems Approach theory provides a framework for effective interaction of the sub-systems. For example the parents, students, teachers and government all come together in a school set up to achieve a common goal of better academic performance of the children. The third advantage of the Systems Approach Theory is that it considers the environment. This is important because the environment where the children live, study, grow and play is has a lot of influence on their academic performance. Also when the students complete their studies they end up in the community, where they contribute to its general welfare (Bazimaziki, 2015). One of the limitation of the Systems Approach Theory is that it has many subsystems, which are difficult to integrate into a unified whole. For example the school has teachers, students, parents, community, government and religious leaders. These sometimes have conflicting needs or requirements and expectations. Thus it is not easy to bring their roles together (Saleemi, 2006).

2.2 Conceptual framework

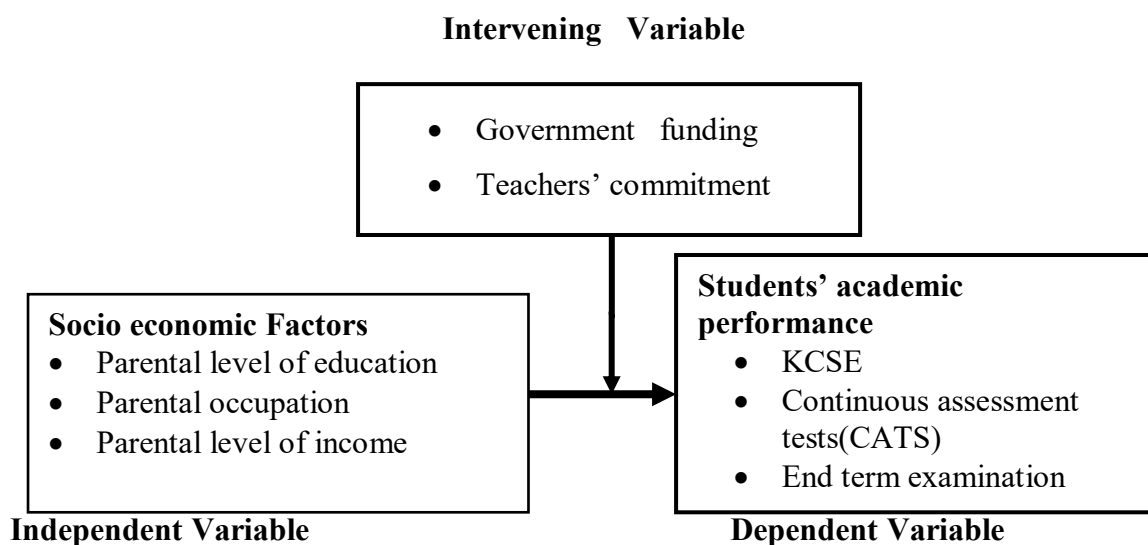


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed mixed methods design which is quantitative and qualitative approaches specifically concurrent Triangulation design. The design was chosen since according to Boeije (2010), it allows qualitative and quantitative approaches to be combined and gives a more complete understanding of a research problem than any standalone approach. The study was conducted in Ikolomani Sub- County, Kakamega County and targeted nine (9) parents' representatives for form three students' nine (9) principals, (54) teachers, (333) public high school students in Ikolomani Sub-County and one educational officer in the Sub-County. The study used a mixture of stratified sampling, purposive sampling and simple random sampling in coming up with a sample of 415 respondents. The study used questionnaires and interview guides in collecting data from teachers and students and from Principals, parents' representatives and Education officer respectively. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze quantitative data with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Descriptive statistics which included frequencies, tables and percentages were used to summarize the quantitative data which was presented using tables and bar graphs. Qualitative data from open-ended questions in the questionnaires and interview guides was organized according to themes, analyzed and used to describe the major findings. The findings were interpreted and discussed in relation to the research questions. The researcher made conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.

4.0 RESULTS

The researcher administered a total of 407 research instruments to the target respondents. A total of 406 were filled in and returned giving a percentage return rate of 99.8%. This was a reliable response rate for data analysis because it is way above Mugenda and Mugenda's recommendation of 60.0% response as adequate for data analysis. Table 4 shows the distribution of responses according to the respondents

4.1 Parental Level of Education and Academic Performance of Students

The researcher evaluated the level of parental education in order to determine whether effective partnerships between parents, children and schools promote improved academic

outcomes for learners. Education of parents is significant because the researcher believes that parents or guardians are the first and continuing educators of their children.

4.2 Parent Father's Level of Education

Parent father's level of education was evaluated with the aim of establishing whether it played a role in determining a child's future success at school or contributed to inheritance of vicious cycle of poverty that is passed down from parents to children. The findings are showing in figure 2.

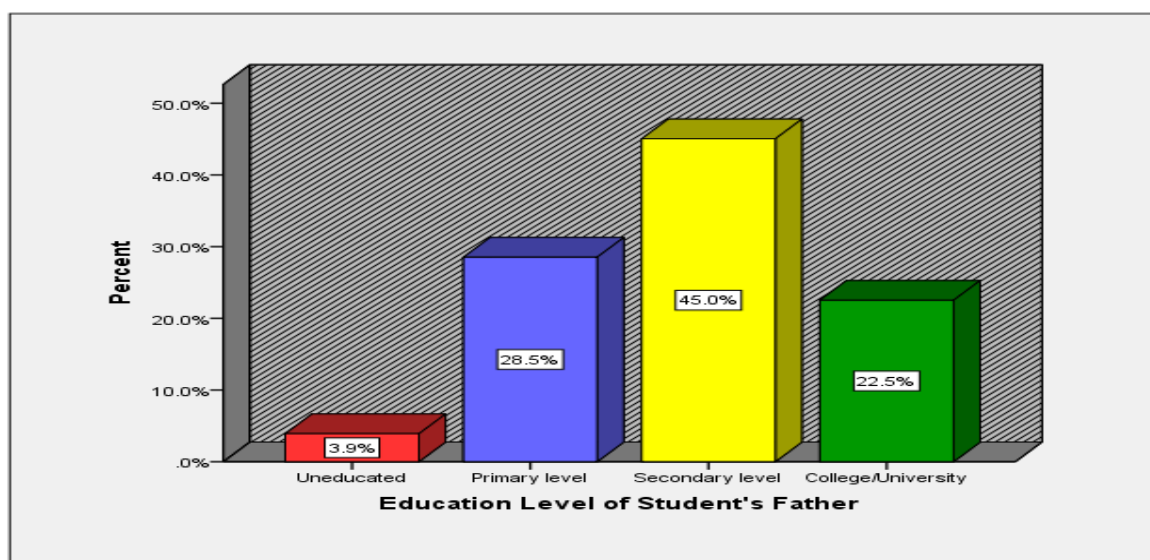


Figure 2: Education level of students' father

As shown in figure 2, the study established that 45.0% of the students' parental father had secondary level of education whereas 22.5% of the parental fathers had college or university education and 28.5% of the students' fathers had primary education while 3.9% had no formal education. This finding implies that attainment of education among students' parents was relatively low with only 22.5 percent with university or college education, whereas more than 70 percent of parents had primary and secondary education as their highest level. The findings are consistent with Ngure and Amollo (2017), who investigated the impact of parental education on the academic achievement of pre-school unity children in Embakasi, Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings showed that most parents had a low academic level because most of them were KCSE certificate holders and were therefore not able to guide their children on academic issues leading to poor academic achievement. This indicated that parents found it difficult to help their children with their homework, as they are not well aware of the academic issues affecting their children. They are also unable to participate fully in school activities, because they do not see the importance of education because their education level is low. This means that parental education is a factor which influences their children's academic performance.

4.3 Parental Mother's Level of Education

The mother's level of education was important for the study because parent mothers play a significant role in shaping a child's cognitive growth and development through socialization. Parent mothers bond with children birth and therefore this attachment is likely to influence educational outcomes of the child in the future. The findings are shown in figure 3.

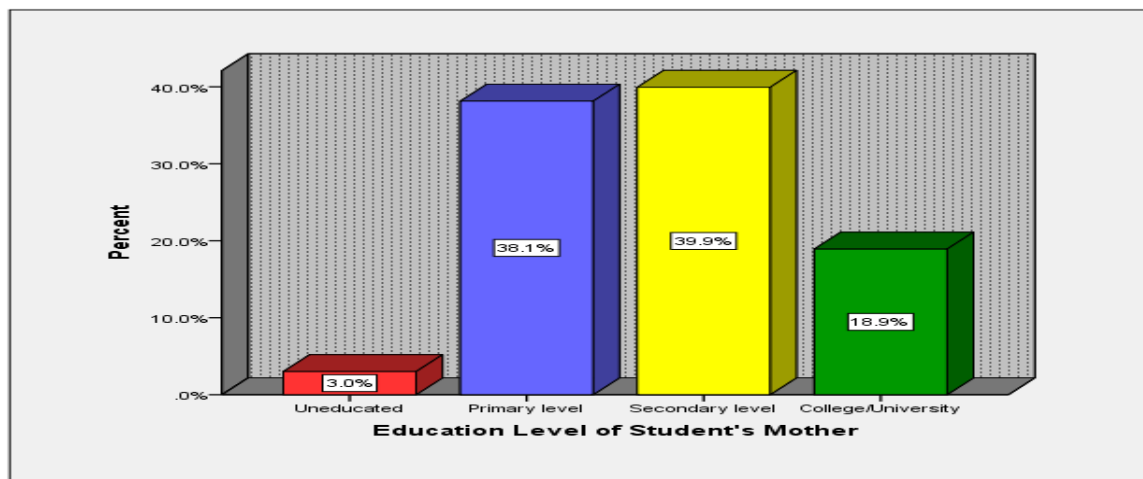


Figure 3: Education level of students' mother

As shown in figure 3, shows that 39.9% of the students' mothers had secondary education whereas 38.1% had primary education and 18.9% had college or university while 3.0% had no formal education. These findings imply that education attainment among parental mothers was relatively low with more than 78% of the parental mothers having primary and secondary education as the highest qualification. Jerubet (2013), who studied the influence of parental education on the achievement of pre-school students in the Mukuru slums, Makadara, Nairobi County, Kenya, confirms the findings. The results showed that the majority of parents in Mukuru slums with children in early childhood schools were mainly withdrawals or certificate holders. This leads to poor jobs that do not pay well, which means that most parents may not be motivated to worry about their children's learning achievements.

4.4 Students Views on the Influence of Parental Education on Academic Performance

The students were asked to share their views and opinions on the influence of parental education on the students' academic performance. This question was important because students are major players in the development of education. Experiences and perceptions were considered crucial for the study, because they were deemed to understand the role parental education plays in promoting children's educational outcomes. Figure 4 shows the findings.

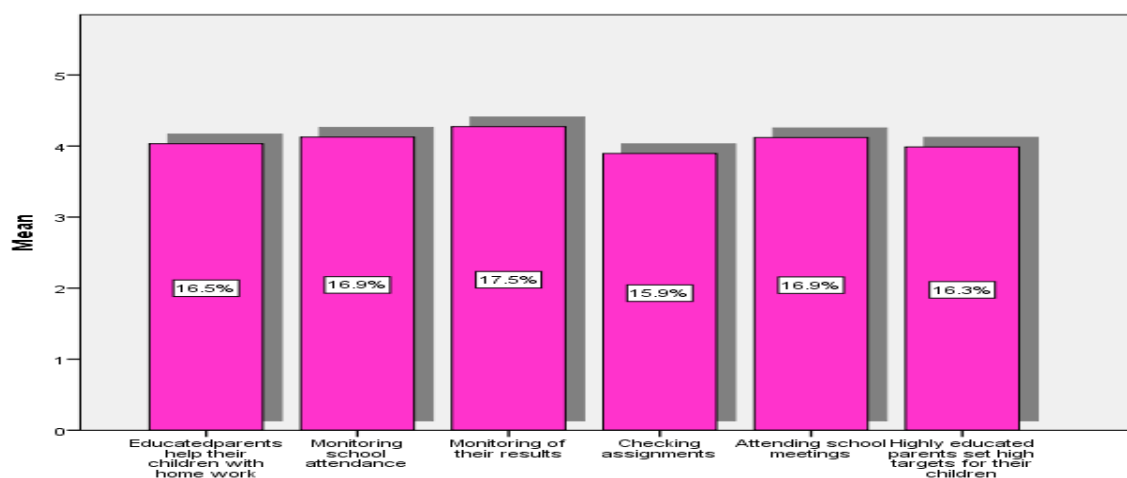


Figure 4: Students Views on the Influence of Parental Education on Academic

4.5 Performance

According to figure 4, shows that 16.5% of the students opined that educated parents help students' to complete their homework. Those who stated that the level of education of parents was vital in monitoring the attendance of students at school were 16.9 percent, while 17.5 percent of students felt that parental education was important in monitoring the academic results of students. In addition, 15.9 percent of students felt that parental education was crucial in monitoring student assignments, while 16.9 percent of students said that parental education influenced the participation of parents in school meetings, while 16.3 percent felt that highly educated parents set high goals for their children. The findings are supported by a study by Mudassir and Abubakar (2017) on how parental education and parental education affects the academic performance of high school students in Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia. The findings showed that parents with high educational qualifications were more involved in the education of their children, for example, they can make a timetable for them when they are at home, help them do homework, provide learning materials and monitor their academic progress by working with the teachers. While on the other hand, parents with lower academic qualifications have poor academic performance because the parents are less concerned with the education of their children, which leads to poor academic performances. This means that parental education has a great influence on the academic performance of their children.

4.6 Teacher's Views on the Influence of Parental Education on Academic Performance

Teachers were asked to share their personal experiences and conceptions about how parental education affects students' academic achievement.. This was important for the study because teachers interact regularly with their learners' and parents and therefore they were deemed to have knowledge on how parental level of education affect students' academic performance. The findings are presented in figure 5.

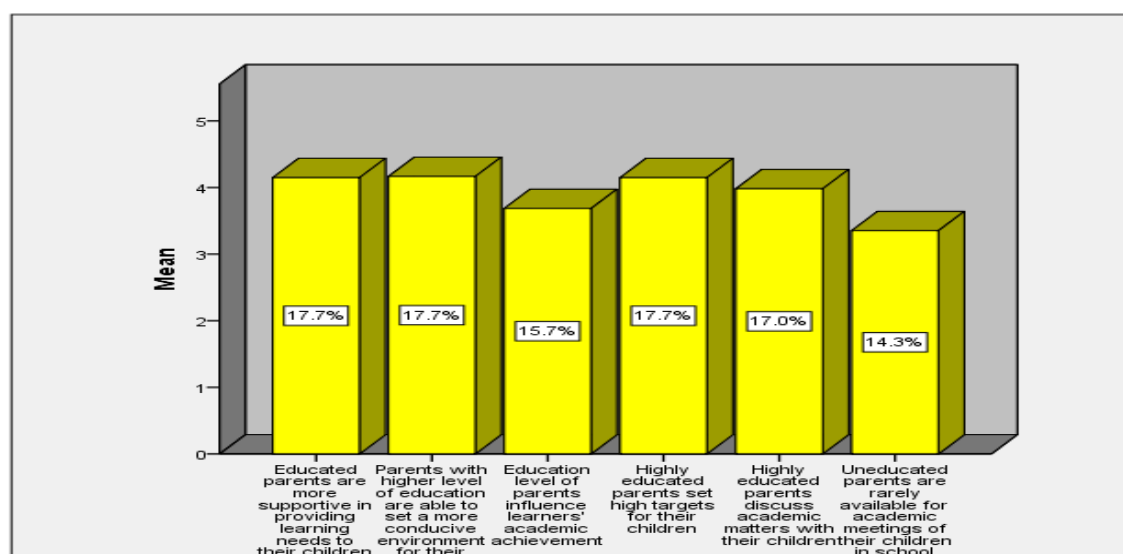


Figure 5: Teacher's Views on the Influence of Parental Education on Academic Performance

According to teachers, educated parents are more supportive in meeting the students' 'educational needs of 17.7 percent and in creating a conducive learning environment of 17.7 percent. The study also showed that teachers believe that parent education influences the academic performance of students by 15.7% and that highly educated parents set high targets for their children by 17.7%. In addition, teachers believed that highly educated parents discuss academic issues with their children at 17.0% and that uneducated parents hardly

participate in their children's academic meetings. The results are consistent with Khan, Iqbal and Tasneem (2015), who conducted research on the influence of parents' education level on the academic achievement of high school students in Rajanpur, South Punjab, Pakistan. The findings showed that parents' education level has a positive influence on the academic achievement of high school children. Parents with a high level of education provide a better learning environment for their children at home, while parents who have not gone beyond the secondary level cannot help their children in their educational challenges properly. Of the nine principals interviewed, eight stated that the majority of parents were not educated, which affected their involvement in the education of their children. Most of them have been unable to monitor their academic progress with their children. In addition, due to the language barrier, most parents were not able to participate fully in the parents' teachers' meeting. One of the Directors had to say: "When I call for a meeting most of those who attend are mothers and few fathers. When I want to discuss agenda for the meeting I find it very difficult because majority of the parents are not present when it comes to involvement in school activities due to limited knowledge. Furthermore, some parents' are not cooperating in providing learning materials for their children such as pens, shoes, school uniforms, set books and this affects academic performance of their children.(Interview:13th July 2018)".

From the parents' representatives interview most of the parents' representatives accepted that they had low level of education and this affected their participation in educational activities of their children. One of the parents' representatives expressed the following: "I'm uneducated and this affects my participation in my children's education. I cannot fully advice my children on matters concerning education. I'm unable to collaborate with the teachers in following up of their academic progress, assisting in assignments and checking on school attendance (Interview: 14th , July 2018)".

From the interview with the parents, it was found that most of the parents could not monitor the academic progress of their children. This was because they were uneducated and this affected the academic performance. Another parents' representatives had these to say: Many parents do not view education of their children as an investment for the future. As a result they do not see any need of spending on education (Interview, 15th July, 2018). From the study findings, most of the parents had a negative attitude towards education of their children.

In an interview with the education officer on parental level of education on learners' academic performance. He revealed that: "Majority of the parents have low level of education which affects directly academic performance of their children. Most of the parents are very ignorant of the importance of education of their children. When called upon for to participate in school activities they are not taking them seriously. Furthermore, some parents' are not even able to buy their children the necessary school requirements such as exercise books, pens and set books (Interview: 18, July 2018)". From the interview with the education officer, it was found that most parents were unaware of the importance of education. They were not prepared to provide basic educational needs to their children, which affected academic performance. The researcher used document analysis to assess the effect of parental socio-economic background on academic performance in the nine sampled schools. In the analysis the researcher was concerned with performance of continuous assessment tests, end term examination and Kenya certificate of secondary education (KCSE). And the reasons for poor performance were also explored the results which are presented in table 8. Also the researcher conducted document analysis to ascertain what was reported by teachers and students in the questionnaires. The concern was to find out the percentage of parents who attending annual general meetings and the reasons for not attending the result as shown in table 10.

4.7 Parental Occupation and Income on Students Academic Performance

Parental occupation which includes the nature of parental job or economic activity as well as daily or monthly income play a significant role in child’s education. This is because continuing students’ or even new students’ should be supported with scholastic materials such as books, pens, uniforms and shoes, a responsibility that solely rests on parents. Equally, parental occupation play an important role in shaping a child’s career choice from tender age. The findings are presented in figure 6.

Students Views on the Influence of Parental occupation and Income on academic performance

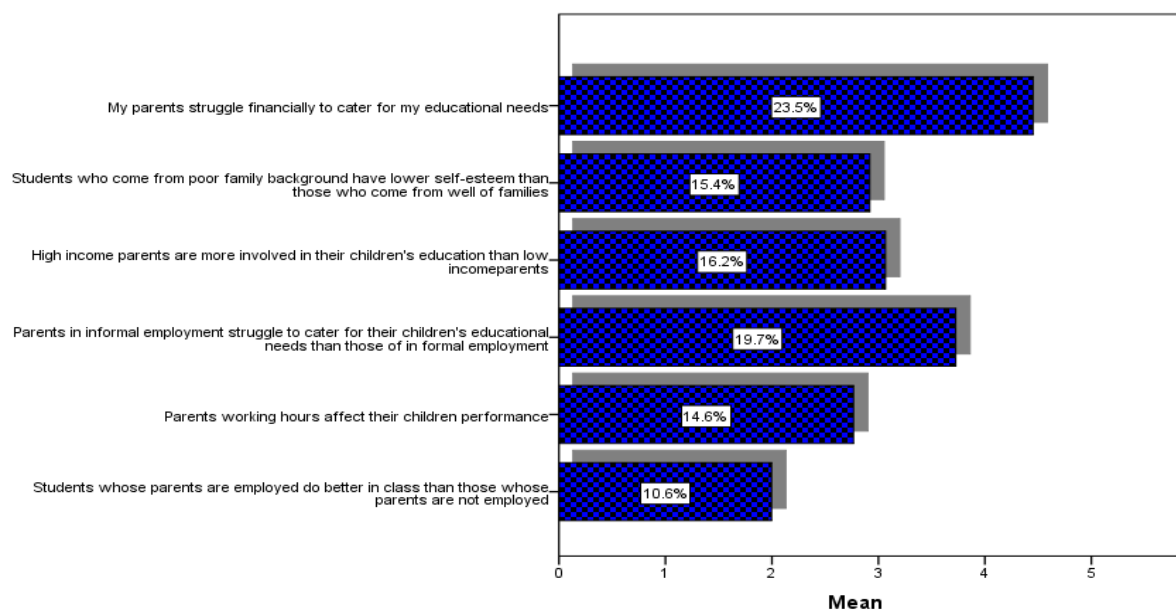


Figure 6: Students Views on the Influence of Parental occupation and Income on academic performance

According to the respondents, learners whose parents are employed do better in class than those whose parents are not employed 10.6% while 14.6% of the respondents indicated that parents’ working hours affect their children’s academic performance. In addition, the study found that parents in informal employment struggle to provide their children with education, unlike those employed in the formal employment, with 19.7 percent. The study showed that high-income parents are more involved in the education of their children than low-income parents 16.2 percent, while 15.4 percent of respondents felt that students from poor backgrounds have low self-esteem than those from well-to - do families. In addition, the study found that many parents struggle to meet the educational needs of students. The findings indicate with the study carried out by Ngare, Maronga, Tikoko and Sigei(2017) on parental occupation in public mixed- day secondary schools in Nyamira North Sub County in Kenya. The findings revealed that most parents were involved in low- paying manual occupations, which attracted low payments and therefore limited parental participation in the education of parents. Similarly, Githinji (2012) conducted a research on impact of family income and constraints it presents to primary school participation in Buuri district, Meru County in Kenya. The findings indicated that majority of parents were facing constraints in financing pupils’ participation in primary schools which contributed to their children’s poor academic performance.

Teacher’s Views on the Influence of Parental occupation and Income on academic

Performance of Students

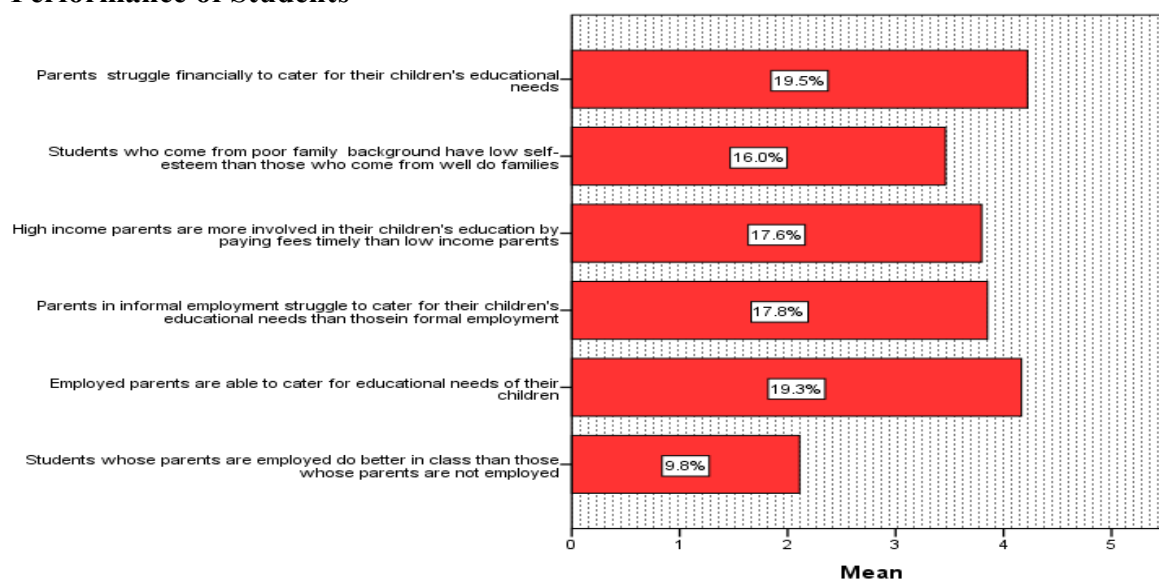


Figure 7: Teacher's Views on the Influence of Parental occupation and Income on academic performance of Students

According to figure 7, 9.8% of the teachers indicated that students whose parents are employed do better in class than those students whose parents are not employed. Those who said that employed parents can meet their children's educational needs were 19.3 percent, while those who said that parents in informal employment struggle to meet their children's educational needs were 17.8 percent. The percentage of teachers who said that high-income parents are more involved in education by paying timely fees than low-income parents was 17.6 percent, while those who said that students from poor family backgrounds have low self-esteem than those from well-to-do families and that parents struggle financially to meet the educational needs of their children were 19.5 percent. The findings are in line with Ngetich study (2015) on family factors affecting the academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in the soy division of Eldoret West Kenya. The main objective of the study was to determine how the family occupation of pupils influences their academic performance in public elementary schools in the soy division of Eldoret. The results showed that parents with a low occupation had more children with poor performance. This meant that the lower the occupational level of the parents, the poorer the academic performance of the students. Githinji (2012) conducted a research on impact of family income and constraints it presents to primary school participation in Buuri district, Meru County in Kenya. The main aim of the study was to determine the major sources of income among families. The findings indicated that majority of parents were facing constraints in financing pupils' participation in primary schools. This was because most parents were small farmers, who were unable to provide their children with basic learning materials, such as school fees, uniforms and books to support their children's education. Korir, Mizingo and Ngeno (2017) also studied the influence of parental income and learning resources on the academic performance of students in Kipkelion, Kenya. The study focused on the home environment, which included parental income and academic performance of the students. The results showed that the academic performance of learners was influenced by home learning resources and parental income. This meant that the majority of parents were unable to provide their children with basic educational needs, such as textbooks, furniture, electricity and study rooms at home, which resulted in their children's low academic performance.

From the principals who were interviewed on parents' occupation and level of income on learners' academic performance in their schools, expressed that the common occupations were subsistence farmers, household and jobless parents. This means that most parents earn very little income, which prevents them from supporting their children's education. One of the heads revealed: "Majority of the parents are not able to pay school fees, so this forces their children to stay at home instead of attending classes. Furthermore, most of the girls get affected during menstruation because their parents' are not able to buy for them sanitary pads this makes them to be absent from the school and this negatively affects their academic performance (Interview: 20 July, 2018)". From the results of the study, it was found that most parents had low incomes, which made them work throughout the day to maintain their families, leaving them little time to participate in the education of their children. Representatives of parents interviewed on parental occupation and income levels for academic performance of learners revealed that some of the parents faced financial challenges that prevented them from participating actively in the education of their children. One of them actually explained: "Most of the parents' are subsistence farmers, household and small scale business. Parents from this low paying income jobs are all the time stressed and thinking about how they will provide food for their children in the family. This prevents their involvement in their children's education (Interview: 23rd, July 2018)".

The results of the study showed that low- income jobs limited the full participation of parents in their children's education. As a result, their children were forced to participate in income-generating activities such as gold mining. Interview with educational officer on parental occupation and level of income on learners' academic performance revealed that: "Majority of the parents in Ikolomani Sub-County main occupation is subsistence farming and so they strain so much to get money to educate their children. As a result most of the time their children are sent home for school fees. This makes them lag behind in their studies. Furthermore, some of the parents are not able to provide their children with basic educational needs hence this leads to poor academic performance. (Interview: 24th, July 2018)". The results of the study showed that the main occupation of parents was subsistence farming. This negatively affected their involvement in their children's education due to low incomes per month. The researcher also analyzed the school attendance register which was availed to the researcher for confirmation by the principals. The researcher noted that there was rampant absenteeism in the school attendance registers upon the inquiry majority of the principals revealed that was due such as bull fighting that takes place within the school locality, betting where students join to get money instead of attending classes, gold mining in the area and this makes majority of the boys not to attend school and prolonged funeral attendance.

Socio-economic Challenges Facing Parents in Enhancing Students' Academic Performance

Interviewees were asked to identify the socio-economic challenges facing parents while attempting to improve the academic performance of students. According to the findings, some of the major socio-economic challenges faced by parents include: lack of sufficient income for parents to pay school fees for their children, which leads to absenteeism and the lack of academic performance of the learners, inadequate parental education has also led to a lack of proper guidance for the academic performance of their children, ineffective parenting, for example parents. For example, lack of reliable employment makes it difficult for parents to support their children's education, social interactions such as lack of good parent-child relationships and lack of role models in the family, peer pressure and drug and substance abuse, such as alcohol, have affected the academic performance of the learners. Limited

cooperation between members of the family who do not support students, which affects their academic performance. Separation of parents' where single parents' struggle too much to provide for learners' educational needs and some children live with grandparents who care less for the children's education which in turn affect their academic performance. The pastoralists parents' leave their children to take care of the animals than go to the school also high rate of poverty has also contributed to poor performance among the learners' because parents are not able to support their children in buying requirements such as set-books.

4.8 Discussions

Parental level of education and Students' Academic Performance

According to the findings, parental education plays a significant role in students' academic performance. The study established that educated parents offered support to learners in form of learning materials, guiding and discussing with their children about their academic progress. In addition, educated parents assisted their children with homework, monitored their attendance at school, actively participated in school meetings, high objectives for their children that motivated them to perform better academically and also to create a more conducive home for their children. Educated parents are very keen on the education of their children because they see education as an investment in the future of their children and encourage their children to work hard.

Parental occupation and Students' Academic Performance

The study found that parental employment played a major role in the academic performance of students. The study established employed parents were able to provide their children with reading materials such as textbooks and set books, to buy uniforms and shoes for their children, parents can provide their children with enough food and this leads to a better academic performance of the students. Parents with permanent employment improve their classroom performance.

Parental income and Student's Academic Performance

The study showed that parents with high incomes are more involved in the education of their children by paying fees in time, allowing them to stay in school and focus on their studies. Parents with high incomes can provide their children with basic needs such as shelter, clothing and good education. They can provide their children with good materials for revision and a conducive environment for home studies, such as the provision of study room and electricity.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that the parental level of education, employment and income had a major impact on the performance of students in schools. In particular, the study showed that parental education plays an important role in the learning process for a child. According to the findings, an educated parent is more likely to help students with homework and tasks, monitor the progress of the learners, participate in the learning of a child, set high goals for the child and meet the educational needs of the child. The study also found that the majority of parents were low-income earners, struggling to meet the learners' education needs. Besides, the study revealed that learners from rich backgrounds were likely to do well in class due to access to learning resources. In addition, the study revealed that in pursuit of enhancing student's academic performance, learners were faced with a range of socio-economic challenges such as lack of enough income, inadequate education, ineffective parenting, lack of reliable employment, social interactions, peer pressure and drug and substance abuse. The study therefore concludes that socio-economic issues of students'

background should be addressed in order to improve the overall academic performance of students.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Students' should have positive attitude towards their education and be focused in their studies so as to improve on their academic performance. Students should perform their duties when they are given by teachers and be informed about the importance of good academic achievement. Students' should work hard despite their socio-economic challenges in order to get good results by making their own personal study timetables, consulting their teachers by asking questions where they have not understood in order to get good grades, using their time appropriately and doing more work to improve on their performance. Students' should have high self-esteem about themselves and should not regard the state they are in whether poor or rich but put into consideration their studies. Students' should improve on their reading skills and set their own targets in their examinations they do. In order to improve their academic performance, students should have positive attitudes towards all subjects and teachers. Students' should be self-driven in doing more revision in order to improve on their academic performance. Furthermore, students' should be disciplined for instance listen to their parents and teachers.

Parents should be fully involved in the learning process of their children since their support is greatly associated with students' academic performance. Such involvement should include advising their children on the importance of education even if they themselves are not educated. Parents and guardians should closely follow the academic performance of their children in schools. Parents should engage in small income-generating businesses to meet their children's educational needs. Parents should give their children ample time to guide and advise them on matters relating to their academics in order to improve their performance. Parents should teach their children to continue to work hard to obtain a better future in their studies. Parents should employ all measures in offering good parenting to their children. Parents should not involve their children with too much house hold work at home which affects their academic performance. The parents should attend the academic meetings of their children in order to know how they are performing in school. The parents should take up roles as parents because most of them were less concern about the education of their children. Parents' should not involve their children in illegal business such as selling of alcohol in their families. Parents should provide enough support to their children not only financially but also spiritually and should also provide conducive home environment for them to study well and be focused. Parents should be actively encouraged to work together as a team with teachers, children and school administration to improve schools' academic performance. Despite their level of education, employment and income, the researcher encourages parents to adopt a positive attitude to education.

Teachers should create good relationship between students and their parents in order to enhance good academic performance. Teachers should be friendly to the learners' so as to understand their home background very well. Giving students assignments and encouraging them to do in order to improve on their academic performance. The teachers should motivate their students' to work hard in their studies for better performance. Teachers should educate the students' on the importance of education in their life. Teachers should be positive towards their students in order to improve good relationships that promote academic performance by making polite and encouraging comments when dealing with students in their lessons. Teachers should be close to the parents so as to understand the family background and cultures from where the students come from. The teachers should provide physical wellbeing by guiding and counselling those students who have learning and

emotional problems in their studies. Further, teachers should help students to develop confidence in themselves so as to improve on their academic performance. Teachers should show love to the students as their own children and try all ways to meet their academic social and psychological needs.

Since academic performance is a key element in each school, school administrators should organize motivational talks for the parents, students and geared towards improving academic performance. The school administrators should also conduct seminars and workshops on the importance of education for their children to uneducated parents. School administrators should provide serious guidance and advice in their schools to help raise the self-esteem of students from poor socio-economic backgrounds. School administrators should empower poor parents by allowing them to pay in kind, such as part-time work in schools, for activities such as weeding the school compound and cooking for the students. School administrators should promote joint efforts by teachers and parents to improve academics. The school administrators should encourage mentorship programmes to enable learners to be re-energized in their studies. School administrators should encourage parents to engage in income-generating projects such as poultry, which can boost their income and help them to provide their children with basic educational needs in schools. The school administrators should advise parents about the importance of providing their children with a good home environment to improve their academic performance. The school administrators and teachers should appreciate the learners despite their family background for them focus on their studies seriously. School administrators should ask for a written report from parents about the involvement of their children in their studies at home and also encourage parents to communicate verbally with teachers about the commitment of their children to their studies. The government should establish school rules that allow parents to have a strong relationship with the school.

Government should develop programs to improve academic performance in the sub- county, such as loans and grants, to help financially challenged parents meet their school children's needs. The government should institute well supported and effective guidance and counselling structures that can provide forum to educate the mass on the importance of positive socio-economic backgrounds in relation to academic performance. The Kenyan government and National government organizations should try to provide enough learning resources to schools especially to those in the rural areas. The government should encourage adult education in the entire country this kind of education is expected bring about change in learners' academic performance. The government should provide income- generating projects in the sub-county for unemployed parents to improve their economic status, so that they can meet their school childrens' basic educational needs. The government should come on board and provide job opportunities in future for the youth so that when later they become parents should be in position to pay fees for their children. The government should invest greatly in education for instance by paying school fees for the needy students'. The government should create awareness to the parents on the importance of the students' education and their role in enhancing students' academic performance.

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