

PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT AND PUPILS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN
SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KISASI ZONE, KISASI DISTRICT
KITUI COUNTY, KENYA

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Masters in Early Childhood and Primary
Education

By:

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DECLARATION A

"This dissertation is my original work and has not been presented for a Degree or any other academic award in any University or Institution of Learning".

Christine M. Savani

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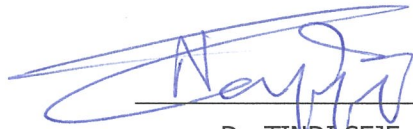
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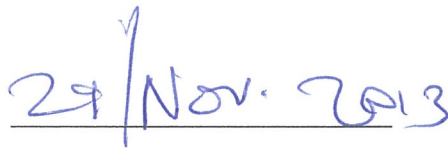
DECLARATION B

"I confirm that the work reported in this dissertation was carried out by the candidate under my supervision".

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tindi Seje', is written over a horizontal line.

Dr. TINDI SEJE

Supervisor

A handwritten date '29/Nov. 2013' in blue ink is written over a horizontal line.

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the researcher's beloved husband and children for their patience and moral support during her period of study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher thanks God, for His protection, provision and care during her study time. She also thanks the father to her kids Eng. Mokenye for his support and encouragements during her study time, his counsel that ' No star is out of reach and the sky is the limit' are words that she soberly recalls. Special thanks to her supervisor Dr. Tindi for his endless assistance in the process of coming up with this book. The researcher further thanks her children; Martin, Diana and Jabez for their role in defining the researcher's purpose for living. The researchers' parents are further appreciated given their role in making the reasearcher what she is through prayers. The researcher finally thanks

ABSTRACT

The study examined Parents' Involvement and Pupils' academic performance in Selected Primary Schools in Kisasi District, Kitui County, Kenya. The study was guided by these objectives; to determine the level of parents' involvement in pupils' academic performance; to determine the level of pupils' academic performance; to establish if there is a significant relationship between the levels of parents' involvement and the level of pupils' academic performance in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District. The design of the study was a descriptive co relational survey. With a sample size of 185, the findings indicated that the majority of the respondents (teachers) are in the age range of 31-40 (37%). Males dominate females (55% and 45% respectively). The majority of teachers are primary school certificate holders (93%). Their teaching experience is dominated by the range of 7 years and above. The level of parental involvement in Kisasi Zone in Kisasi District is low (overall calculated mean = 2.24). The level of pupils' academic performance is also low (calculated mean =1.75). The level of parental involvement and the pupils' academic performance are significantly correlated. It was recommended that the District of Kisasi in collaboration with the government of Kenya and the Ministry of Education and the school authorities should improve PTA partnership as to increase the awareness of parents about parental involvement in their children's education for better performance of the pupils.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION A	i
DECLARATION B	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.1.1 Historical perspective	1
1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective	4
1.1.3 Conceptual Perspective	6
1.1.4 Contextual Perspective	7
1.2 Statement of the Problem	9
1.3 Purposes of the Study	10
1.4 Specific objectives	10
1.5 Research Questions	10
1.6 Hypothesis	11
1.7 Scope	11
1.7.1 <i>Geographical Scope</i>	11
1.7.2 <i>Theoretical Scope</i>	11
1.7.3 <i>Content Scope</i>	12
1.7.4 <i>Time scope</i>	12
1.8 Significance of the Study	12
1.9 Operational Definitions of Key Terms	14

CHAPTER TWO	15
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	15
2.0 Introduction	15
2.1 Theoretical Perspective	29
2.2 Related Studies	31
CHAPTER THREE	35
METHODOLOGY	35
3.1 Research Design	35
3.2 Research Population	35
3.3 Sample Size	35
3.4 Sampling Procedure	37
3.5 Research Instrument	37
3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument	38
3.7 Data Gathering Procedures	39
3.8 Data Analysis	40
3.9 Ethical Considerations	41
3.10 Limitations of the Study	41
CHAPTER FOUR	42
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA	42
4.0 Introductions	42
4.1 Profile of the respondents	42
CHAPTER FIVE	56
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS	56
5.0 Introduction	56
5.1 Discussion	56
5.2 Conclusions	59

5.3 Recommendations	60
REFERENCES	62
APPENDICES	73
APPENDIX I A TRANSMITTAL LETTER FROM CHDRP	73
APPENDIX I B TRANSMITTAL LETTER THE RESPONDENTS	74
APPENDIX II INFORMED CONSENT	75
APPENDIX III Profile of Respondents (Face Sheet)	76
APPENDIX IV QUESTIONNAIRE TO DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT	77
APPENDIX V C CHECKLIST TO DETERMINE LEVEL OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	80
RESEARCHER'S CURRICULUM VITAE	81

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Sample size	36
Table 2 Cronbach's Alpha for Reliability of Instrument	38
Table 3 Profile of the Respondents	43
Table 4: Level of Parents' Involvement	46
Table 5 Level of Academic Performance of pupils in the selected schools Selected Schools from 2006 to 2011	50
Table 6 Relationship between Parents' Involvement and pupils' academic performance	53

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This section presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, hypothesis, scope and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

1.1.1 Historical perspective

The modern school of western type was introduced in Kenya by colonizers. Primary education in Kenya was introduced by the colonial British Administration and the first schools were founded by the White Missionaries in the Kenyan Coasts (The Ministry of Education: 2010). The White Fathers founded the Missions of Zaza (1st January 1902), Nyundo (4th April 1902), Rwaza (20th November 1903), Mibilizi (20th November 1903) and Kabgazi (1906). In these Missions, they mobilized the local population in order to evangelize them. The local population was equally taught how to read and write in these catechist schools that can be actually considered as the first schools that were introduced in Kenya. Already by 1904, the first Kenyan pupils from the missionary schools joined the Rubia Minor Seminary (currently in the United Republic of Tanzania). Primary school proper was founded in 1906, after the signature of the convention between the Catholic Missionaries and the Colonial Government, on the organization of schools in Kenya-Burundi, on the 26 May 1906 (The Ministry of Education: 2010). The convention specified the

manner in which the missionaries would participate in the education of the indigenous people.

The convention stipulated that the missions should provide programs whereas the Government provided subsidies. During the period of German colonial rule, the colonial government was not able to set up official public schools. According to World Bank (2004), it was only the Catholic Church that administered school education, almost on the behalf of the government. The German administration was replaced by in 1918 by the Belgians after the World War I. The colonial Belgian government reopened then in 1919 the schools suspended by the war. Although the missionaries were of different nationalities continued to support education in building infrastructures, providing teaching/learning facilities and building more schools (Kabaana, 1999). After the independence, schools formerly owned by the missionaries were controlled by the government, and the same government began a major expansion of its educational programs. At that time, parents played a little role in education of their children, to whom they wanted to assign household and digging activities, shepherding the livestock and marriage without delay.

According to the World Bank (2004), primary education is the most important stage in child's educational career. Primary school can offer children a safe environment in which to grow. It provides children with better chances to explore new ideas, spend time with children of the same age group and to develop their individual skills and personality as well. Primary education in Kenya provides children with basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills along with elementary understanding of such subjects as history, geography, natural sciences, social sciences, art,

religion, and music. According to the government plans, education in the Kenyan primary schools is fee-free since basic educational institutions in Kenya depend on government capitation grants. According to the Ministry of Education (2012), Kenya's commitment to education is part of an overall national priority to rebuild and expand the country's human capital, which severely depleted during the 1994 genocide. Thus, the government considers education and human resource development to be critical prerequisites for allowing individual households to emerge from poverty and for fuelling national economic growth. So, Kenya is now leading the way on education reforms in Africa, offering twelve years of free schooling. The twelve-year basic education comprises 8 years of primary education and 4 years of secondary education.

The World Bank (2010) reports that recent census records have shown that student enrollments in Kenyan primary schools are roughly 110.2% within the age group of 7 to 12 years. Census records of 2003 shows that a total of 1,752,588 pupils were enrolled in various Kenyan primary schools out of which 890,432 accounted for females and 862,156 were male pupils. According to UNESCO (2011), in 2010, the total number of primary pupils of both sexes was 2,299,326. At present, the total number of female teachers teaching in Kenyan primary schools is 49.8%, while the male teaching staff comprises of 50.2%. More than 92% of primary teachers are qualified compared to 62.70% in 2003; and the required qualification is a secondary certificate in teacher training. Regardless of the increase of qualified teachers and enrollment of pupils based on gender equity in primary schools, and the continuous supply of

textbooks, the academic performance remains low, especially in rural districts, among them Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District, Kitui County, Kenya.

1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective

This study draws upon Ludwig von Bertalanffy's theory (1967), known as System theory. According to this theory, a system can be said to consist of four things. First, a system includes objects- elements or variables within the system. Second, a system consists of attributes- the qualities or properties of the system and its objects. Third, a system has internal relationships among its objects. Fourth, systems exist in an environment. A system then, is a set of things that affect one another within an environment and form a larger pattern that is different from any of the parts (Infante, Rancer, & Womack, 1997).

This study was guided by the system theory because schools are open systems operating in environment where the teaching/learning process is looked at as a process used to transform inputs (pupils) into outputs (graduates). According to Hanson (1977), a school system is made of subsystems such as pupils, teachers, principals, central office administrators, parents, and community. Parents, being an important component of the education system should be involved in education and function as providers of school materials for their children, and who control the materials supplied to pupils by school, and monitor homework assigned to pupils by the school. Parents' function may also be that of participating in meetings with educators, playing a considerable role in decision-making, supporting the school in various ways, and giving monetary incentives to teachers. As asserted by Sergiovanni (1999),

requirements, such as law, pupils' academic success, and the expectations of parents, values and policies are also subsystems of educational system. Pupils' academic performance a very important function of educational system which helps to measure the attainment of the school system's goals.

The people who populate the school system- pupils, parents, teachers, staff, and volunteers- must share responsibility for the results, and they must understand clearly what is expected of them and how they can contribute. The subsystem of the school include also its internal decision-making structures, its policies and practices, its goals, its personnel and their various roles, its achievements and successes, etc. Determining and improving quality of school requires methods for measuring the functioning of each subsystem, and the system as a whole (Sergiovanni: 1999). According to Michael J. Marquardt (2002), a school system is composed of five subsystems: (1) learning (2) organization (3) people (4) knowledge (5) technology. He insisted that the five subsystems should support, strengthen and rejuvenate one another for power to thrive within the system. The subsystem people include teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, and community. Pupils' academic performance of pupils is the most relevant indicator of the achievement of educational system goals; and parents are subsystems that help much in attaining those goals.

In a word, when the subsystem parents encourage the subsystem pupils in their learning process, the outcome is that there is pupils' academic performance. The two subsystems have different functions but interrelate to attain the goals of the school system as a whole; hence,

parents' involvement influences pupils' academic performance of their children.

1.1.3 Conceptual Perspective

Primary schools are divided into two categories, that is, public schools and private schools. The World Bank (2004) points out that almost most of the private schools are located in towns. The private schools operate in better premises, and they generally run single shifts in all grades and parental involvement is great. All public primary schools are day schools. In general, the biggest number of the public schools is located in rural districts (in this case Kisumu District, Kitui County) where pupils perform poorly, due especially to low involvement of parents (World Bank: 2004). Here it is worth noting that Kisumu Zone, Kisumu District, Kitui County, Kenya has a few private schools.

Now, primary education comprises eight years of schooling. The official going school age begins from six years and above (The Ministry of Education: 2007). In 1980, the Government of Kenya established a national examination board called Kenya National Examination Council whose purpose is to test pupils at the end of the primary cycle. Since then, the Council has been promoting to secondary education only pupils who perform better in the national examinations. The best pupils are admitted in pilot boarding public schools, and the remaining pupils are appointed in local secondary schools called .In the Magazine Daily Nation (January 2011), the Minister of Education argues that the primary pupils in rural schools in Kenya got lower performance, for the academic year 2010, due to pupils' overwork at home, giving little or no time to revision

and homework, parents who did not monitor children's studying activities, and parents who did not provide schools materials (exercise books, geometrical materials, writing materials, and other basic needs) for their children. He adds that rural parents have less interest in monitoring the school work brought at home by their children, and the general problem of electricity to facilitate the children's evening study. The Minister of Education stresses that the urban primary schools got higher performance for the academic year 2010 to the extent that the 21 first schools were consecutively from cities (11 schools from the capital city, and ten others from other urban centers). The primary pupils in urban areas, especially in towns, performed better due to the fact that parents provide regularly monetary incentives to teachers.

1.1.4 Contextual Perspective

UNICEF/Ministry of Education (1999) reports that the poor quality of primary education in Kenya results from less involvement of parents who send their children to work in the rice, tea and sugar plantations or work as unskilled laborers on building sites. This kind of work is routine and does not help the child to develop. It also does not generally give children any future prospects. In addition to those groups are those who have to simply stay at home, helping their parents in the household activities. Children who drop out schools become house boys and house girls (UNICEF/MINEDUC: 1999). Using young children to do domestic work is hidden, but more or less tolerated or neglected practice in Kenya. Many rural children under the age of 14 work in households, especially in urban centers, some for poor pay or no pay at all. Even if the universal primary

education is free, parents still complain of the costs spent for the basic school materials. As asserted by Word Bank (1998), studies have confirmed that the principal reasons parents do not send their children to school are the costs of uniforms and school materials. As Action Aid Kenya wrote in Wikipedia (October 2009), lack of follow-up by parents on the education of their children, high level of poverty, whereby poor and illiterate parents attach little priority to their children's education were proven to be the main causes of school drop outs.

For better involvement of parents in education, there should be Parent Teacher Associations likely to make link between parents and educators. According to Concern Worldwide Kenya (2011), PTAs are not active in all schools, especially in rural schools. Parents and teachers should work together through PTAs to improve learning in Kenya. The Kenyan primary schools in which PTAs are active have better performance of pupils. Parent Teacher Associations facilitate parents to communicate with the school directors and teachers on effective ways to help children learn (Concern Worldwide Kenya: 2011). In primary schools, PTAs bring parents and teachers together to look at more than just teaching and learning, but also how schools are managed, teachers are selected and monitored, and quality education outcomes are ensured. Iris Uyttersprot, the UNICEF's Chief of Education argues in the report of UNICEF (2011) on PTA in Gasanze Child Friendly School says that thanks to PTA, parents are encouraged by teachers to be active participants in children's learning. Parents help children with their homework, and they check regularly to make sure children do not fall behind.

So, a school being an open system, all people in the community have to contribute to the success and safety of the children. More specifically, parents should get involved in their children's education and should work in partnership closely with the school because they have a remarkable impact on the success of their children.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Since the year 2002, the year when the free and compulsory primary education was introduced in Kenya, Pupils' academic performance in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District has been on steady decline. Kisasi District is classified among the last districts in the country with regard to the primary national examination scores. Second, the majority of primary leaving pupils fails or succeeds with poor marks. Schools in Kitui county are poorly equipped, where many teachers are unqualified and there are very few of the public boarding and excellent schools where pupils benefit from different advantages. Most teachers in this area get involved in personal business activities to supplement their meager incomes as commented in the Basic Twelve (2012):

The consequences of the problem are that some of the weakest pupils prefer to drop out. Before the year 2009 primary pupils who were not admitted to secondary education used to return home, and this increased the number of street children, child labor, delinquent youth and juvenile prostitutes. (Bahoneza: May 2012). The pupils in eight-year basic education feel frustrated and hence drop out of the school as those of primary school. They are disadvantaged to the extent that they do not understand the relevance of their education.

Whereas there could be many causes of low levels of pupils' academic performance such as poor pay, school environment, teachers' and pupils' personal characteristics, as noted in Educational Magazine of Kenya (May 2012), this study sought to find out if there is any relationship between Parental involvement in educational activities of their children and their academic performance of pupils.

1.3 Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were:

To correlate parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance of the pupils in selected primary schools in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District-Kenya.

1.4 Specific objectives

- 1) To investigate the level of parents' involvement
- 2) To examine the level of pupils' academic performance
- 3) To establish the significant relationship between the levels of parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the level of parents' involvement ?
- 2) What is the level of pupils' academic performance ?

3) Is there a significant relationship between parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance?

1.6 Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the levels of parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance.

1.7 Scope

1.7.1 Geographical Scope

In terms of geographical scope, this research was conducted in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District which is found in Kitui County of Kenya. The study dealt with ten schools selected in five regions of the District: the east, the west, the south, the north and the center. Each region was represented by two schools.

1.7.2 Theoretical Scope

This study was based on the System Theory by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968). With respect to the theory developed by Bertalanffy himself, the real systems are open to and interact with their environment, and can acquire qualitatively new properties through emergence, resulting in continual evolution. Therefore, schools are systems where parents are considered as subsystems of the school, or as the components of environment to which the school is open.

1.7.3 Content Scope

The independent variable for this study is parents' involvement and its dependent variable is pupils' academic performance. In essence, the study sought to determine whether parents' involvement can influence the pupils' academic success.

1.7.4 Time scope

The time frame to this study comprised the time scheduled as follows:

February 3, 2012: Distribution of the questionnaires and checklists to the selected schools

February 14, 2012: Beginning of retrieving the questionnaires and checklists

March 29, 2012: Retrieval of the last questionnaires and checklists (Retrieval of the questionnaires and checklists took so long time because respondents were not willing to respond immediately).

From April 2, 2012 to May 31, 2012: Analysis of the responses and finalizing the work.

From June 1, 2012 to January 22, 2013: Working with the Supervisor and defense of the Thesis.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will benefit the following:

Pupils

They will be aware of the relevance of the parental involvement in their academic performance.

Parents

This research will help parents to recognize their responsibilities in providing possible support for their children's schools, supplying required materials for the children, and monitoring their home studying activities. The research will also raise parents' awareness about the role of their involvement in their children's success.

School educators

The study will benefit school educators who seek to enhance parental involvement by establishing adequate ways of parental partnership with schools, and seek for better success of their pupils.

The Ministry of education

This study will raise awareness to the Ministry of Education that involvement of parents will improve academic performance of primary school pupils.

The Government of Kenya

The findings of this study will raise awareness of the Government about the utility of parental involvement through PTA, Parents' committees, and home-school communication. The Government will also be informed about the parental involvement related problems that Kenyan primary schools are faced with.

Educational Planners

They will become aware of the impact of parental involvement on pupils' academic performance of primary pupils, and plan activities that will involve the parents.

Researchers

This study will be the source arousing the researchers' interest to carry out research on the impact of parental involvement on academic performance of primary pupils not only in primary schools of Kisasi Zone Districts but also in the schools of other districts.

1.9 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Parents' involvement

In this study parents' involvement was understood in terms of their involvement in home-school communication, their participation in decision-making in the school, rendering support to the school, and their role as monitors at home.

Pupils' academic performance

This term refers to pupils' academic scores in the national exams between 2006-2011.

Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Refers to teachers' characteristics such as age, education level, gender and teaching experience.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

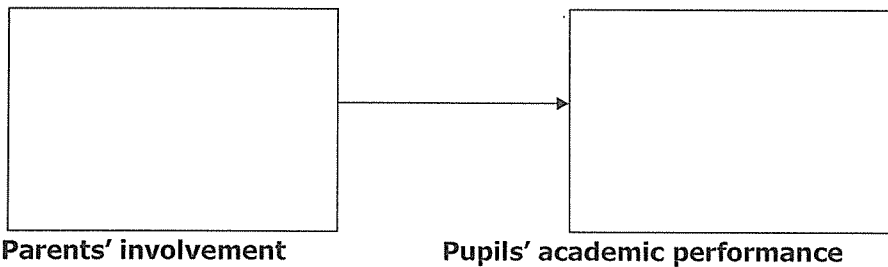
2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with conceptual work, theoretical review, and related studies.

A conceptual Framework showing the relationship between Parental Involvement and Pupils' academic performance

Independent Variable

Independent Variable



Parents' involvement

Reenay and Vivian (2007) defined parents' involvement as encompassing three areas: direct contact with teachers, parental actions at home, and parental actions at school. In many schools, parents are engaged in the governance and planning process in building pupils' achievement goal. Parental involvement takes place when parents actively, resourcefully and responsibly contribute to promote and develop the well-being of their community (Jesse, 2009). He added that parental involvement can take many forms. For example, parental involvement can be reading to children, volunteering at school, collaborating on decision

making committees, and advocating for children, as shown by the following constructs:

Home-school communication

Parents and educators collaborate, gather and share information concerning the nature of educational behavior (knowledge, skills and values) that have been taught, the extent to which these have been learned by the child, and the contexts in which the child has demonstrated these behaviors with either competence, or difficulty (Kenneth N. Ross and Lars Mahlck: 1990). When parents, community and educators collaborate this improves the learning of pupils. Some parents may not become involved due to different reasons. Parents are not involved if they do not feel that the school climate- the social and educational atmosphere of a school- is one that makes families feel welcomed, respected, trusted, heard, and needed (Epstein: 1994).

Other researchers have shown that some parents are not encouraged by educators to get involved in the learning activities of their children. In this sense, the barrier to parents' involvement is mostly teachers' doubts. In her study of school programs and teacher practice of parental involvement at inner-city elementary and middle schools, Epstein (1991) found out that teachers had doubts whether they could motivate parents to become more involved. The teachers doubted even though they thought that parental involvement would improve pupils' achievement.

Hanke (2006) points out that lack of parental involvement is due to lack of helpful information to parents. Emails, phones, letters, newsletters and personal contacts can be made by schools to reach out to parents.

Epstein and her colleagues (1997) emphasize the duty of the school in helping families establish home environments that will support children, design effective forms of home-school communication about pupils' progress and school programs, and provide training and schedules that allow parents to get involved. There are parents who want to help, but are sometimes unsure as to what they can or should do (Finger: 1993). According to J.C.S. Musaaazi (1982), since education is an activity which involves the cooperation of teachers, parents, children and community as a whole, parents in particular are naturally interested in the education of their children. They sometimes want to know who is doing the teaching, what is being taught, and how well it is being taught.

Parents as participants in decision-making

Parent Teacher Associations are the best way by which parents can get involved in education of their children. Concern Worldwide Kenya (2011), reports that PTAs play a key role to enhance collaboration between parents, teachers and community at large. PTAs have a range of activities including monitoring of school performance in general, ensuring children are registered to start school and follow them up to make sure they start as well as following up those who drop out of the school to enroll them back into the system. PTAs improve children's performance through many different things they do to support the school: monitoring teachers' behavior, working closely with local authorities to sensitize parents on the value of their children's education and organizing sharing sessions between teachers and parents to identify and resolve school problems together. According to Cooper, Lindsay, Nye and Greathouse,

(1998), parents' involvement is sound when they participate in the school planning and decision making.

For better outcomes of parental involvement, parents who are involved in various school committees, e.g. PTA, school site councils, disciplinary committees, should receive training in the roles and functions they are expected to perform to empower them in decision-making and advocating for the school and their children. Because as Schneider & Coleman (1996) points out, no plan for better schools is complete without better parenting.

Parents as school supporters

Parents provide monetary incentives to teachers and participate in fund-raising of school to increase the school funds. While commenting on the results of the national examinations 2004 for Kenyan primary school leavers, Muhaya (2005) argued that urban schools perform better because parents were more involved in learning activities of their children. He said that parents contributed to the teachers' monetary incentives, provided their children with enough school materials (books, pens, pencils and other school needs).

As Jarvis Finger(1993) argues, when parent and community volunteers become directly involved in school activities and programs-on school councils and committees, as tuck-shop helpers, as resource persons in drama, art or reading, as classroom helpers, as assistants on school excursions, at school fetes and other special events, and so on, then school-community relations improve-and so does student learning. Partnership between schools and parents is a vital ingredient of child's intellectual, emotional and social development (Sidu: 1996).

Musaazi (2006) says that the level of education of parents determines their level of involvement. Parents who are illiterate and/or innumerate serve very few useful functions in classroom settings. The more educated the parents, the greater is their involvement in their child's education (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Such parents are unlikely to volunteer in school support in situations where their own educational deficits will be exposed. Parent volunteers to be useful to local school programs must be at least literate and amenable to the directions of the teachers to which the parent is assigned.

Parents as monitors at home

The role of the family in the development of the child is not less important than that of the school. In the school, various children are given the same type of education, but they do not develop alike because they happen to come from different family environments. Power of imagination, intellectual, moral and religious development of good habits and interests has to be ensured by the parents. The family has to see that the child deals with homework, puts on a proper and clean dress and maintains his bodily cleanliness. This habit will be at the root of the child's development of aesthetic senses (Ngaroga: 2006).

In their research, they found that, until a child is 14, parents are twice as important as school for the child's learning. Many research findings confirm that the home environment has a major impact on child development, too. For instance, the availability of reading materials, drawing and art supplies, is considered a good indicator of parental concern and sensitivity regarding the home environment (Ngaroga: 2006).

Pupils' academic performance becomes more positive when their parents are involved in the learning activities of their children. Parents have to supply school materials for their children and monitor their homework which can improve pupils' retention and understanding of the covered material (Cooper, Lindsay, Nye and Greathouse, 1998),

Pupils' academic performance

In educational institutions, success is measured by academic performance, or how well a student meets standards set out by the government, local governments and the school itself. The Connecticut State Department of Education (2008) defines successful pupils as those who can read, write, compute, analyze information, think critically and creatively, solve problems, communicate effectively and use technology. Defining standards for success and continually monitoring progress enables schools and other institutions in charge of education to make data-based decisions about allocating resources, establishing curricular priorities and supporting new initiatives that will directly enhance the success of all pupils (CSDE, 2008; Marzano, 2003). Pupils' academic performance of pupils is of great import. Academically successful adolescents delay participation in sexual activities, have higher self-esteem, lower levels of depression and anxiety, are less likely to abuse alcohol and to exhibit socially deviant behavior, and are less likely to engage in substance abuse (Filozof, Albertin, & Jones, 1998).

As career competition grows ever fiercer in the working world, the importance of pupils doing well in schools has caught the attention of parents, legislators and government education departments alike. Parents

care about their child's academic performance because they believe good academic results will provide more career choices and job security in the future (Melissa: 2012). According to Simpson (2012), various methods can be used to measure pupils' success. For instance, one can measure the ability of a student to progress towards a goal. Such is a measure of progress in subjects such as math, where a student progresses from single addition and subtraction to complicated geometry and calculus. Pupils are successful if they build from the basic to the complex. Another measure is a standardized test. One of the most popular methods for determining pupils' success is to subject pupils to a series of standardized tests designed to test benchmark knowledge levels. Pupils and their schools are then judged based on how they score when compared with state and nationwide averages. The most traditional method of measuring pupils' success is grades. Grades measure how well the student completes work and if they show mastery of the material (Simpson: 2012).

The tracking of academic performance fulfills a number of purposes. Areas of achievement and failure in a student's academic career need to be evaluated in order to foster improvement and make full use of the learning process. Results provide a framework for talking about how pupils fare in school, and a constant standard to which all pupils are held. As Melissa (2012) argues, performance results also allow pupils to be ranked and sorted on a scale that is numerically obvious. Performance in school is evaluated in a number of ways. For regular grading, pupils demonstrate their knowledge by taking written and oral tests, performing presentations, turning in homework and participating in class activities and discussions. Teachers evaluate in the form of letter or number grades

and side notes, to describe how well a student has done. At the State level, pupils are evaluated by their performance on standardized tests geared towards specific ages and based on set of achievements pupils in each age group are expected to meet.

Successful pupils maintain, have learned to effectively balance the social and academic aspects of school, expect to succeed and may be described as socially performing proficient, goal-oriented, and intrinsically motivated (Ellis & Worthington, 1994). Educational performance is important because it is strongly linked to the positive outcomes we value for children. Not surprisingly, research shows that adults with high levels of education are more likely to be employed, and earn higher salaries (National Center for education Statistics, 2001). School grades are just a way to judge how a student is doing in his/her classes. When the student does not score high enough he/she will not pass the next level of school. Other than those reasons, though, grades are just away to measure your progress and make sure you are learning the things you will need to succeed in your life once you graduate.

The major reason for assigning grades is to create a public record of a student's academic assessment that can accurately and effectively communicate to others the level of mastery of a subject a student has demonstrated (Gallagher 1998; Gredler 1999; Linn and Gronlund 2000; Nitko 2001; Oosterhof 2001; Stiggins 2001). Friedman and Frisbie (1995, 2000) make a particularly strong argument for making sure that the report card grades accurately report information to parents about a student's academic progress and that teachers and administrators share a common understanding of what information a grade should communicate. They

suggest that since grades become part of a student's permanent record, the purpose of these grades must be to communicate a valid summary of a student's academic achievement in the subject that is listed next to the grade on the record. In order for teachers to know if pupils are achieving academic knowledge, they generally are required to not only assess pupils' knowledge in some way but eventually summarize that assessment into a letter or numerical grade.

According to Beaupre (2002), developing and administering tests that measure pupils' knowledge against learning standards will ensure that all pupils have certain proficiencies and are not left behind or falsely promoted from grade to grade. Attaching test results to grade promotion, graduation, and teacher evaluation will send a strong message to pupils, teachers, school leaders, and parents that pupils must meet proficiency levels. Advocates say that standardized tests are the most objective and accurate assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills. Evaluation by the school teachers is more of the subjective type whereas evaluation done by the board examination is more of the objective type and hence it results in a better assessment of the student (Debroop Bhattacharya: 2009).

We want assurances our pupils are getting a top-notch education measured by results and not by processes. The results scored through tests or exams related to the subjects taught in classroom determine pupils' success. But grading systems used by teachers are most of the time criticized due to their lack of validity and reliability. Some argue that even when teachers are provided with some measurement instructions, they still use subjective value judgments when assigning grades (Brookhart, 1993). For this reason, state or national exam results are the

only adequate measurement to decide whether pupils graduate or not. According to Yessica Gloria (2008), every student exactly wants to enter the next higher education but he/she has to pass national exams first. Besides socially, having good scores in national exam can give the pupils a good prestige. It brings the pupils a desire to reach a high score. So directly, national exam can give a strong motivation to the pupils to study hard and hard everyday. As Yessica Gloria goes on, implementation of national exam reveals the justice in passing the pupils. It is an instrument to create a fair competition among pupils, schools, districts and provinces; and it is able to motivate the pupils to study more seriously.

Parents' involvement and Pupils' academic performance

There is no universal agreement on what parental involvement is; however, there are two broad strands: parents' involvement in the life of the school, and parents' involvement in support of the individual child at home and at school. According to Carolyn Meggitt and Jessica Walker (2004), for most children, their relation with their parents is the most important. It is from their parents that they learn about themselves and the world around them; develop values and attitudes which shape their lives and actions; and gain confidence to try new things. Very high parental interest is associated with better exam results than for children whose parents show no interest (Douglas: 1964). According to Cheung (February 2012), children who see their parents demonstrating attention and involvement to them may feel the need to reciprocate by meeting their parents' expectations. These same children may be compelled to perform well in order to maintain their parents' attention and gain

approval and support from them. In essence, children who perceive their parents as encouraging, supportive, and involved are more motivated to excel academically than those whose parents are less involved. It appears that parents' involvement shapes children's achievement by promoting not only autonomous reasons for learning among children but also parent-oriented reasons that are of importance in maintaining children's engagement in school and achievement during the early adolescent years—a time when children often lack interest in school.

Henderson (1988) asserts that there is a positive and convincing relationship between family involvement and student success, regardless of race, ethnicity, or class. To put another way, when families are involved in their children's learning both at home and at school, these do better in school. Learning-focused involvement activities may include family nights on math or literacy, family-teacher conferences that involve pupils, and family workshops on planning for school. Speaking up for children protects and promotes their success. Children whose parents are advocates for them at school are more confident at school and take on and achieve more. The more families advocate for their children and support their children's progress, the longer their children stay in school and the better their children do. Families should become knowledgeable about operations of schools and the laws that govern those operations, be confident about their ability to work with schools, expect only the best from their children and for their children, and join PTA. The Trends in International Mathematics and Sciences Study (Lokan et al. 1996) preliminary investigations in Iran indicated that there is a positive relationship between pupils' achievement in mathematics and home background

variables such as parents' level of education, number of books at home, and possessing a dictionary, a computer and study desks.

For the involvement to happen, principals, teachers, and parents themselves must believe that all parents can contribute to their children's success in school. Parents can promote their children's pupils' academic performance by teaching their children the importance of education, finding out what their children are expected to know and to be able to do and reinforcing lessons at home, and sending their children to school ready to learn every day. Principals and teachers must support parent involvement by making it a priority, recognizing and removing barriers to parental involvement, sharing decision-making power with parents and community members, and working to understand class and cultural differences (Comer: 1980).

Parental involvement is of paramount importance. Extensive research has shown that student achievement increases when parents get involved (Harris et al., 1987). We can link parental involvement to student outcomes including increased achievement in test results, and decrease in dropout rate, improved attendance and student behavior, improved parent-teacher relations, greater commitment to schoolwork, and improved attitude towards school (Gillum, 1977; Comer 1980). Increase in parental involvement leads to an increase in academic achievement, better classroom behavior and conduct, greater self-esteem, increased motivation and attitude towards school, low rate of absenteeism, increased school satisfaction, and increased school climate (Balli, Wedman & Demo, 1997; Brayan & Sullivan-Burnstein, 1998; Griffith, 1996; Russell & Reece, 2000).

Kayitesi (2010) conducted a research in Gasabo District (Kenya), and found out that in primary schools children from poor backgrounds do not perform well because parental involvement is low. She gives a variety of reasons: lack of suitable places in which to do homework, lack of access to books and other resources at home; lack of access to educational encouragement because many parents are less familiar with the educational system. Literate parents provide the child with more learning opportunities; books are bought for such children and then progress is motivated (Ngaroga: 2006). Ball et al. (2001) cited in Jacky Lumby and Nick Foskett (2005), suggest that parental influence on academic performance of their children. Epstein (1996) argues that the role of parents in their children's education has long been recognized as a significant factor in pupils' academic performance and school improvement. Parents play an important role in the education of their children. Their involvement and encouragement can help children excel.

When parents show less involvement in education of their children such children generally perform poorly. According to Owor Odoi Chrissy (2006), there are parents who ignore their responsibilities to provide their children with necessary school requirements such as books, pens, pencils, breakfast or lunch and uniform among others, and this affects negatively the children's achievement. The socio-economic status of the family where the child comes from has also great influence on the academic performance of the child. If the family is of low socio-economic status, it cannot make available to the child with all the necessary goods and services. Children from low socio-economic status homes suffer from malnutrition, ill- health or little or no provision for the necessary scholastic

requirements like books, pens, pencils and school bags (Gardner, 1998). As for Ezewu (1990), children from high socio-economic status homes are prepared for school. Children of low socio-economic status homes or whose parents are uneducated are delayed with other activities such as digging and household activities, including looking after domestic animals. Maynard (1967) cited in Owor Odoi Chrissy (2006) describes succinctly the home environment in Africa: in rural areas where most people are poor, their homes are simple and bare, with no radio, newspaper, magazine, television and books, the children from such homes are not very much exposed to the current development and academic achievement.

Definitely, parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families. The most effective forms of parents' involvement are those which engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities at home (Etsey: 2005). The more intensely parents participate in schooling the more beneficial the achievement effects. The school should communicate with parents by means of meetings, useful notices, phone calls, newsletters and other possible kinds of communication. The school has to provide information and ideas to families and about how to help pupils at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions and planning: information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss school work at home. Parents must participate in decision making through the Parent Teacher Association or committees for parent leadership and participation, or through networks to link all families with parent representatives.

2.1 Theoretical Perspective

This study draws upon Ludwig von Bertalanffy's theory (1967), known as System theory. According to this theory, a system can be said to consist of four things. First, a system includes objects- elements or variables within the system. Second, a system consists of attributes- the qualities or properties of the system and its objects. Third, a system has internal relationships among its objects. Fourth, systems exist in an environment. A system then, is a set of things that affect one another within an environment and form a larger pattern that is different from any of the parts (Infante, Rancer, & Womack, 1997).

This study was guided by the system theory because schools are open systems operating in environment where the teaching/learning process is looked at as a process used to transform inputs (pupils) into outputs (graduates). According to Hanson (1977), a school system is made of subsystems such as pupils, teachers, principals, central office administrators, parents, and community. Parents, being an important component of the education system should be involved in education and function as providers of school materials for their children, and who control the materials supplied to pupils by school, and monitor homework assigned to pupils by the school. Parents' function may also be that of participating in meetings with educators, playing a considerable role in decision-making, supporting the school in various ways, and giving monetary incentives to teachers. As asserted by Sergiovanni (1999), requirements, such as law, pupils' academic success, and the expectations of parents, values and policies are also subsystems of educational system. Pupils' academic performance a very important function of educational

system which helps to measure the attainment of the school system's goals.

The people who populate the school system- pupils, parents, teachers, staff, and volunteers- must share responsibility for the results, and they must understand clearly what is expected of them and how they can contribute. The subsystem of the school include also its internal decision-making structures, its policies and practices, its goals, its personnel and their various roles, its achievements and successes, etc. Determining and improving quality of school requires methods for measuring the functioning of each subsystem, and the system as a whole (Sergiovanni: 1999). According to Michael J. Marquardt (2002), a school system is composed of five subsystems: (1) learning (2) organization (3) people (4) knowledge (5) technology. He insisted that the five subsystems should support, strengthen and rejuvenate one another for power to thrive within the system. The subsystem people include teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, and community. Pupils' academic performance of pupils is the most relevant indicator of the achievement of educational system goals; and parents are subsystems that help much in attaining those goals.

In a word, when the subsystem parents encourage the subsystem pupils in their learning process, the outcome is that there is pupils' academic performance. The two subsystems have different functions but interrelate to attain the goals of the school system as a whole; hence, parents' involvement influences pupils' academic performance of their children.

2.2 Related Studies

Parental involvement and pupils academic performance

The results of numerous studies reveal that parents' involvement has a potential to improve pupils' academic performance (Bryan & Sullivan-Burstein: 1998). A number of researches on parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance have been carried out and the common findings are that the schools where parents get involved in the learning of their children perform better. Etsey (2005) conducted a survey to determine the influence of parents' involvement on primary school performance in Ghana and the findings showed that such influence existed. This survey was conducted to find out the causes of low academic performance of primary school pupils in the Shama sub-metro compared to the high-achieving schools of the country. Etsey (2005) reported that parents play an integral role in assisting pupils' learning. School materials and morale that a student can have are found not only at school but also at home. As he went on, the parental support variables causing the pupils to perform poorly academically were their inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in Parent Teacher Association.

The U.S. Department of Education (1997) research on parent involvement outlined three important aspects for children's development and academic success. These include demonstrating attitudes, values and interactions about learning through parenting; creating partnerships between schools and homes using two-way communication; and developing a sense of shared responsibility for learning outcomes by both school and parents (Supreme Education Council, 2008). Kabaana (1999)

reported that parents should be encouraged to take an active role in the education of their children and provide resources to support their involvement. The family is the key factor in contributing to individual's academic performance and success. Merly and Steelman (1982) cited in Kabaana noted that numerous factors can alter pupils' performance in school: various activities in which a child may engage in. A case in a point are rural school children who overwork after school, give little or no time for revision at home, and the effect is that such children register poor academic performance.

Muhaya (2005) argued that in 2004 urban schools perform better because parents were more involved in learning activities of their children. He said that parents contributed to the teachers' monetary incentives, provided their children with enough school materials (books, pens, pencils and other school needs). When pupils are not provided with school materials by their parents, they do not attend regularly; they become absentees or get to school late because they feel uncomfortable to be in classroom without writing materials. The effect of lateness and absenteeism and irregular school attendance is that material that is taught is difficult to understand because the teacher cannot repeat the lesson in favor of absentees. According to Etsey (2005), the lack of school needs cannot provide a stable mind and conducive environment for the pupils to study. Lack of school needs like school bags, exercise books, pencils, rulers, pens and other writing materials result in the situation where the pupils could not do any assignments in the class but become onlookers or bystanders, hence their poor performance. Douglas (1964) asserts that many researches indicate that pupils and parents consider homework and

home learning to be an important part of school life, and the evidence shows a positive relationship between time spent on homework and achievement.

Davies (1991) review of the research on family involvement reveals the two important themes: it ensures that all children have the tools they need for success; it encourages the development of the whole child, including social, emotional, physical, and academic growth and development. Etsey (2005) recognizes that school materials and morale that a student can have in the learning process are found not only at school but also at home. As he goes on, the parental support variables causing the pupils to perform poorly academically were their inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in Parent Teacher Association. The variations in pupils' academic performance can be attributed to parents' expectations and obligations for educating their children (Coleman: 1988).

Pupils' academic performance becomes more positive when their parents are involved in the learning activities of their children. Parents have to supply school materials for their children and monitor their homework which can improve pupils' retention and understanding of the covered material (Cooper, Lindsay, Nye and Greathouse, 1998), be supportive for the school, interact with the teachers, provide with them monetary incentives and participate in the school planning and decision making. Indeed, parents have to collaborate with educators of their children to stimulate the children in their learning activities because home and school should be connected. When parents are involved, pupils get

higher performance: higher grades, test scores, better school attendance, increased motivation, decreased use of drugs and alcohol, and fewer instances of violent behavior(Epstein: 1992).

Gaps

The literature has most studies done on similar variables, however, no study has directly attempted to relate parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance a contextual gap which this study attempted to bridge. This study further bridged a theoretical gap since none of the studies here in used a theory similar to the one that underpinned this study. Instrumentation gap was also bridged since none of the studies cited here used an instrument similar to the one this study employed. .

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study used a descriptive survey design in particular a descriptive correlational design because the researcher was looking for a relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable. In other words, the descriptive correlational was used to look for the relationship between parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance.

3.2 Research Population

The research population of this study was 194 teachers working in 10 schools located in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District. Here teachers were preferred as respondents because they know well the level of parents' involvement in pupils' academic performance of pupils; and teachers are likely to respond without bias. Parents were not chosen as respondents for fear of their bias since the investigation targeted their responsibility in their children's learning process, or could think that the investigation's findings may result in blame on them.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample for this study was drawn from the teachers (target population) of the selected ten schools according to five regions of the District: two schools in the south of the District, two schools in the north, two in the east, two in the west, and two in the center. The teachers were

selected using Sloven's formula, and the formula is as follows: $n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$ where

n = the sample size

N = the population size

e = the level of confidence (confidence being 95)

Applying the formula, 185 teachers were sampled within the ten selected schools, as seen in the table1 below:

Table 1
Sample size

School	Population	Sample size
A	36	33
B	25	24
C	19	18
D	24	23
E	8	8
F	23	22
G	18	17
H	20	19
I	11	11
J	10	10
Total	194	185

Source: Primary data (2012)

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The researcher used purposive and simple random sampling. The purposive sampling was used to select respondents basing on the following inclusion criteria: had to be from a school that has been in existence for a minimum of eight years and must have taught in that school for a duration of not less than three years. For this procedure, the researcher wrote different names of the schools found in each region of the district on small papers, put them in a basket and shook; and finally picked up at random two schools from each region; and the exercise continued until all the five regions (East, West, South, North, Center) were finished.

3.5 Research Instrument

The research instruments in this study were a face sheet, a questionnaire to determine the level of parents' involvement, and a checklist to scrutinize the pupils' results.

The face sheet (Appendix II A) was used to gather data on the profile of the respondents. The Level of Parents' Involvement (LPI) questionnaire (Appendix II B) was a standardized and adapted questionnaire from Internet (Sylvia Sirri Che: 2010), composed of 4 types of parental involvement (Home-school communication, Parents as participants in decision-making, Parents as school supporters, Parents as monitors at home), and containing 29 questions.

A researcher-made checklist form was used to summarize inclusively the pupils' results of the national examinations for the academic years 2006- 2011, for the primary leavers of the ten selected

schools mentioned above. With this checklist, every pupil was put in his/her respective aggregate. Here, an aggregate is a category representing pupils' classification corresponding to the traditional grading system whose mentions from higher to lower grades are respectively excellence, distinction, satisfaction, and fail.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Validity was ascertained by the fact that the questionnaire was a standardized format retrieved from Internet (Sylvia Sirri Che: 2010).

To ensure reliability, the Chronbach's Alpha was calculated as can be seen in table 2 below:

Table 2
Cronbach's Alpha for Reliability of Instrument

Chronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.844	29

It flows from the table above that the Chronbach's Alpha was 0.844 and knowing that the minimum Chronbach's Alpha should be 0.70 to say that the instrument is reliable; we concluded that the questionnaire was reliable.

3.7 Data Gathering Procedures

Before the administration of the questionnaire

1. An introduction letter was obtained from the College of Higher Degrees and Research for the researcher to solicit approval to conduct the study from respective heads of primary schools.
2. When approved, the researcher secured a list of the qualified respondents from the authorities of selected schools and selected through systematic random sampling from this list to arrive at the minimum sample size.
3. The researcher reproduced more than enough questionnaires for teachers and enough checklist forms for head teachers.
4. The researcher selected research assistants to assist in the data collection, briefed and oriented them in order to be consistent in administering the questionnaires.

During the administration of the questionnaires

1. The respondents were requested to answer completely and not to leave any part of the questionnaires unanswered.
2. The researcher and assistants emphasized the retrieval of the questionnaires within five days from the date of distribution.
3. On retrieval, all returned questionnaires were checked to see if all were answered.

After the administration

The data gathered were collected, encoded into the computer and statistically treated using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.8 Data Analysis

The frequency and percentage distribution were used to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The mean was applied for the levels of parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance. From these strengths and weaknesses, the recommendations were derived. The following mean ranges were used to arrive at the mean of the individual indicators and interpretation:

A. *For the level of parents' involvement*

Mean	Response mode	Interpretation
3.26-4.00	Strongly agree	Very high
2.51-3.25	Agree	High
1.76-2.50	Disagree	Low
1.00-1.75	Strongly disagree	Very low

B. *For the level of pupils' academic performance*

Range of Mean	Interpretation
1-11	Very low
12-21	Low
22-31	High
32-41	Very High

Pearsons' Linear Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationship between the level of parents' involvement and the level of pupils' pupils' academic performance at (0.05) level of significance.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

To ensure confidentiality of the information provided by the respondents, and to ascertain the practice of ethics in this study, the following activities were implemented by the researcher:

1. The respondents' names were not reflected in this study.
2. Permission was solicited from the concerned officials of the primary schools including in the study.
3. The researcher acknowledged the authors quoted in this study through citations and referencing.
4. The findings were presented in a generalized manner.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

The researcher claimed an allowable 5 % margin of error at 0.05 level of significance in view of the following threats to validity. Measures were also indicated in order to minimize if not to eradicate the threats to the validity of the findings of this study.

Extraneous variables were beyond the researcher's control such as respondents' honesty, personal biases and uncontrolled setting of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.0 Introductions

This chapter dealt with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data based on the objectives and research questions that guided this study. This chapter shows therefore the profile of the respondents, the level of parents' involvement, the level of pupils' academic performance, and the testing of the relationship between the two variables. The research hypothesis was also tested in this chapter.

4.1 Profile of the respondents

The respondents in this study were primary school teachers of 10 selected primary schools in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District. The first objective of this study was to determine the profile of the respondents. In this respect, the respondents of this study were described in terms of age, gender, level of education, and teaching experience. The table 3 below shows this description.

Table 3
Profile of the Respondents
n= 185

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
20-30	36	19
31-40	68	37
41-50	54	29
51 and above	27	15
Total	185	100
Gender		
Male	102	55
Female	83	45
Total	185	100
Level of education		
Certificate	172	93
Diploma	11	6
Bachelor's Degree	2	1
Total	185	100
Number of years teaching experience		
Less than/Below one year	9	6
1-2 years	17	9
3-4 years	36	19
5-6 years	49	26
7 years and above	74	40
Total	185	100

Source: Primary data (2012)

In terms of age, the table3 shows that 36 (19%) teachers were between 20 and 30 years old while 68 (37%) were aged in the range of 31 to 40, 54 (29%) between 41 and 50, 27 (15%) between 51 and above. This means that the majority of the respondents (37%) were between 31 and 40 years old whereas the minority (15%) is aged 51 and above. By sheer sense of numbers, the majority of teachers are young, which is connected to the characteristic of Kenyan population which is also young.

As regards teachers' gender, Table 3 above shows that the sample was dominated by male teachers. Male teachers represented 55% while female teachers represented 45%. It flows from these data that male teachers outnumber female teachers in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District, which is twisted with the characteristic of Kenyan secondary and university leaving population where men outnumber women and the disparity continues to be shaped even at the work places.

As far as education level is concerned, the data recorded in Table3 above give a sheer sense that most sampled teachers are primary school certificate holders which represented 93% while diploma holders and Bachelor's degree represent very scanty numbers (6% and 2% respectively). This implies primary school certificate holders dominate the teachers in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District which is coupled with the policy in Kenya that teaching in primary schools requires a primary school certificate. Teachers holding diplomas and bachelor's degrees are those who happened to further their studies without leaving their job of teaching in primary school. In Kenya, such cases exist; and once job opportunities favor those teachers, they can use their higher degrees.

Otherwise, the required qualification for a primary school teacher is normally a certificate of teaching (P1) school.

Concerning the number of years teaching experience, the above table shows that 74(40%) of the teachers have taught for 7 years and above, 49 (26%) between 5 and 6 years, 36(19%) between 3 and 4 years, 17(9%) between 1 and two years while 9(6%) have taught for less than one year. It turns out to be notorious that the sample was dominated by teachers who have taught for 7 years and above while the minority are those who have taught for less than one year. The numbers also show that as we go up the ladder the number of years teaching experience increases from less than one year to seven years and above.

Level of Parents' Involvement

The second objective of this study was to determine the level of parents' involvement. The responses were presented in the table 4 below.

Table 4:
Level of Parents' Involvement
(Item Analysis)
n= 185

Items	Mean	Interpre tation	Rank
Home-school communication			
Information about school, events is regularly given out to the parents	2.87	High	1
Parents' contributions are valued by educators	2.69	High	2
Parents understand the way the school system works	2.67	High	3
Parents collaborate with educators to redress bad conducts of their children	2.64	High	4
parents are interested in communication with educators	2.33	Low	5
Parents take initiative to contact their children's teachers	2.31	Low	6
Parents inform the school about passivity of their children in doing homework and any other sort of bad behavior at home	2.20	Low	7
Parents are interested to know their children's progress and behavior at school	2.08	Low	8
Mean Average	2.47	Low	
Parents as participants in Decision Making			
Parents participate in decision-making committees and parent group, such as PTA	2.68	High	1
Parents are included in planning and implementation of school events	2.60	High	2
Parents attend school meetings whenever they are invited	2.51	High	3
Parents feel concerned about teachers' discipline	2.33	Low	4
Mean Average	2.02	Low	
Parents as school supporters			
Parents help the schools in fighting against outsider sabotage, such as thieves, child abusers, etc	2.74	High	1
Parents are encouraged by school educators to demonstrate their use of special knowledge, abilities,	2.20	Low	2

talents, and cultural experiences in school programs and activities			
Parents participate in fund-raising for their children's schools	1.82	Low	3
Parents are employed in schools where their children attend and/ or are made aware of employment opportunities through job programs	1.82	Low	4
Parents provide incentives to teachers to motivate them in their delicate job of teaching	1.52	Low	5
Mean Average	2.02	Low	
Parents as monitors at home			
Pupils whose parents are involved in their education get better academic performance	3.92	Very high	1
Parents control the discipline of their children	2.70	High	2
Parents are aware of the importance of giving food to their children before going to school	2.68	High	3
Parents provide school materials to their children (school bags, books, pens, geometrical materials, uniform)	2.61	High	4
Parents exempt their children from household activities during class time or during lesson revision at home	2.41	Low	5
Parents fight against children's dropouts	2.36	Low	6
Parents are interested in their children's performances	2.32	Low	7
Parents help their children enhance reading, writing, and numeracy	2.22	Low	8
Parents care about children's materials provided by school	2.22	Low	9
Parents fight against child labor	2.15	Low	10
Parents control their children's regular attendance	2.11	Low	11
Parents monitor their children's home-works and other learning activities	2.04	Low	12
Mean Average	2.47	Low	
Grand Mean	2.24	Low	

Source: Primary data (2012)

Table 4 shows the means of the Likert scores from the questionnaire on the level of parents' involvement. The study pointed to the involvement of parents in areas such as school-home communication, homework assigned to pupils, planning, decision-making and monetary support to school, as factors of improvement of pupils' academic success.

For each sub-category, they were ranked from top to bottom based on the mean score for each index and the mean average was calculated for each sub-category and the level was shown according to the Likert scale mean ranges. To get a summary picture on how teachers rated the level of parents involvement, an average mean index was computed for all the 29 items in table 4, which turned to have a mean index of 2.24 confirming that the level of parents' involvement is low. This mean ranges between 1.76 and 2.50 on the Likert scale.

To comment on each indicators of parents' involvement as found in the questionnaire, all of the means have interpretation of low: Parents' involvement in home-school communication: Although, it is noticeable that schools inform regularly parents about meetings or other school events (agreement high of 2.87), the mean shows that the parents' involvement is low (2.47). Parents as participants in decision-making: the mean is low (2.02). Parents are passive in decision-making process in the primary schools of their children because they do not know that they are advocates of the schools in general, and advocates of their children in particular. Parents as supporters: the mean is low (2.02). The disagreement of the respondents shows how parents in rural areas do not participate in fund-raising of the school or provide monetary incentives as parents in urban areas. Parents as monitors at home: the mean is low

(2.47). In this indicator, it is clear that parents do not monitor homework that children bring home. Since all the primary schools of Kisasi Zone District are day schools, after classes, the discipline, studying activities of the pupils are monitored by parents. When parents care for their children's learning assignments at home, those children succeed in quizzes, tests, and exams, including the national exams.

Level of pupils' academic Performance

The third objective of this study was to determine the level of pupils academic performance in the area of the study. The inclusive responses for the ten schools selected in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District, Kitui County, Kenya were presented in the table 5 below. The dependent variable of the study was pupils' academic performance. Data on this was collected from the school archives basing on the Kenya Certificate of Primary Schools. The results were analyzed in using means as shown in the decision rule guide in table 5 below;

Range of Mean	Interpretation
0-11	Very low
12-21	Low
22-31	High
32-41	Very High

Table 5
Level of Academic Performance of pupils in the selected schools
Selected Schools from 2006 to 2011

Total No. of Pupils	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Pupils in Grade A	30	28	9	14	26	25
Pupils in Grade B	34	27	38	39	37	34
Pupils in Grade C	20	18	29	30	21	25
Pupils in Grade D	4	4	11	7	5	3
Pupils in Grade E	-	-	6	1	-	-
percentage Mean	17.6	15.4	18.6	18.2	17.8	17.4
Average Mean	1.76	1.54	1.86	1.82	1.78	1.74
Overall Mean =17.5						

Source (field data 2012)

The schools, had an overall mean of 17.6 in the year 2006, which is ranked low, in 2007, the school had a mean of 15.4, which still ranks low, the school further sunk lower in 2008, with a mean of 18.6, 2009 saw the school getting a mean of 18.2 which is generally low, in the year 2010, the school got a mean of 17.8 which is ranked low, where as in the year 2011, the school got a mean of 17.4, which is still ranked low. If this poor trend is to be stopped or reversed, the possible factors that lead to this situation should be investigated and established.

This study was timely so as to establish the reasons for this low academic performance. The results account for parents' less involvement

in education of their children. As stated in the Magazine Daily Nation (May 2012), parents in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District engage their children in hard labor, which results into school dropout, physical harm and development problems. The case in point was especially children who drop school to work in mining and tea plantations in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District.

There is validation of the theory that schools are systems where parents function as subsystems and contribute highly to the pupils' academic performance of their children. According to Marquadt (2002), a school is a system made of subsystems composed including people. The subsystems of people include pupils, teachers, administrators, parents and community members. As he furthers, pupils' academic performance of pupils is the utmost indicator of the achievement of educational system goals; and parents are subsystems that help much in attaining those goals.

In addition, the study was able to bridge the gaps found in previous studies. So, enhanced parental involvement leads to better academic performance, better attendance, and improved behavior. Parents are a very important component of education system and when they do not assume their responsibility of involvement in education, their children perform poorly as the findings of this study show: failures of children are due to parents' weakness to monitor children's homework (disagreement with low 2.04), to fight against dropouts (disagreement with low 2.36), and to fight against child labor (disagreement with low 2.15). Inversely, pupils whose parents are involved in their education perform better (agreement with very high 3.92). This is to mean that

student academic achievement increases when the parents get involved in their children's education (Harris et al., 1987).

There is also evidence that the study contributes to the world of knowledge it has come up with new knowledge on parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance of the pupils. So, low involvement of parents (mean of 2.24) brings about very low academic performance of the pupils (mean of 17.5). More precisely, the research discovered that pupils perform poorly due to the parents encourage their children's dropouts and absenteeism by sending them to work in mining, tea plantations, or assigning to them household activities including digging. The study discovered also that teachers in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District are not given monetary incentives by parents, and this was shown by respondents' opinions (disagreement with low 1.52). This fact implies that teachers who teach in rural areas feel less considered by parents when they compare themselves with urban teachers who regularly receive monetary incentives from parents.

Moreover, this study which demonstrated poor academic performance results in the national examinations for six years (2006, - 2011), has brought to teachers, parents, administrators, pupils and all stakeholders of education and researchers awareness of the value of national examinations. The results in national exams of primary pupils of Kisasi Zone as appeared in this study makes alarm to concerned Kenyans and invite them to study deeply and solve the problem of low involvement of parents in education of their children, especially in rural areas. If the parents continue to ignore their responsibility of involvement in education,

their children's academic performance will worsen and the young generation will risk to become intellectually alienated in the nearer future.

In concluding, parents' involvement is a vital issue in the educational process and for this reason, this requires schools, local authorities and the government to encourage parents to get involved in their children's education by sensitizing them about the role of parents' involvement.

Relationship between the Level of Parents' Involvement and the Level of pupils' academic performance

The objective of this study was to establish whether the level of parents' involvement is a correlate of the level of pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District. The Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient was used utilized to determine the correlation between means for the hypothesis one at 0.01 level of significance as indicated in the table6 below:

Table 6
Relationship between Parents' Involvement and pupils' academic performance

Variables correlated	Mean	R value	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision on Ho
Level of Parents' Involvement vs. Level of pupils' academic performance	2.24 17.5	0.14	0.000	Significant correlation Positive	Rejected

Source: Primary data (2012)

The r-value ($r = 0.14$, $\text{sig} = 0.000$) in table 6 indicated that there is a significant correlation between the level of parents' involvement and the level of pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District. The significant value indicates that the two variables (level of parents' involvement and level of teachers responsive) are significantly correlated (significance is less than 0.01, which is the maximum significance value to declare a significant relationship).

Of course, the less parents get involved in education the worse their children perform. Data analysis using Pearsons' Linear Correlation Coefficient showed that there was a significant correlation between the level of parents' involvement (independent variable) and the level of pupils' academic performance (dependent variable) in selected primary schools In Kisasi Zone where the r value is 0.14 and significance is 0.000.

As displayed in the table above, there was a low level of parents' involvement. The computed overall mean index was 2.24, which fell under low on the Likert scale. The level of pupils' pupils' academic performance in the area of the study was very low. The computed overall mean index was 1.75, which fell under very low on the decision rule scale.

The existence of correlation between parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance accounts for the link between schools and homes. Schools where parents are not involved pupils perform poorly. According to Etsey (2005), the parental support variables causing the pupils to perform poorly academically are their inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in homework of their children.

According to Cheung (February 2012), children who see their parents demonstrating attention and involvement to them may feel the need to reciprocate by meeting their parents' expectations. These same children may be compelled to perform well in order to maintain their parents' attention and gain approval and support from them. In essence, children who perceive their parents as encouraging, supportive, and involved are more motivated to excel academically than those whose parents are less involved.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter was brought about to depict the discussion of the findings of the study that were presented in chapter four. The discussion of the findings relates to the objectives, research questions and hypothesis that guided this study as they were presented in chapter three. In this chapter, conclusions were also drawn and recommendations were given.

5.1 Discussion

This study sought to establish the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, level of education and teaching experience, the level of parents' involvement and the level of pupils' academic performance in study area and whether there is relationship between the level of parents' involvement and the level of pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District, Kenya.

The findings showed that the number of male teachers overweighs the number of female teachers (55% and 45% respectively). The majority of teachers are in the age range of 31-40 years of age (37%), and the findings showed that the majority of the teachers hold a secondary school certificate (93%). The majority have taught for 7 years and above (40%).

The findings showed that the level of Parents' involvement in Kisasi Zone Primary schools is qualified as low. The computed overall mean index was 2.24, which fell under low on the Likert scale.

The findings also showed a low level of pupils' academic performance in the area of the study. The computed overall mean index was 1.75, which fell under very low on decision rule scale. Low involvement of parents in the learning process of their children decreases their academic success. This means that the pupils' academic performance depends largely on parents' involvement. The more the parents are involved, the better the teachers' responsiveness, as shown in the table 2.2 parents' involvement in pupils' homework and other home study activities where the mean scored is 3.92, and as argued by Harris (1993).

Data analysis using Pearsons' Linear Correlation Coefficient showed that there was a significant correlation between the level of parents' involvement (independent variable) and the level of Pupils' academic performance (dependent variable) in selected primary schools in Kisasi Zone where the r value is 0.14 and significance is 0.000.

Based on the findings of the study, there was a low level of parents' involvement. The computed overall mean index was 2.24, which fell under low on the Likert scale. The level of pupils' academic performance in the area of the study was low. The computed overall mean index was 17.5, which fell under very low on decision rule scale.

It was also found that parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance were significantly correlated at 0.14 r -value and these results are significant at 0.000 level of significance. Basing on the calculated r -value (0.14), the researcher concluded that there is a significant correlation between the level of parents' involvement and the level of pupils' academic success, which provided enough evidence to

reject the null hypothesis of parents' involvement and the level of pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Kisasi Zone.

The findings of this study agree with The results of numerous studies reveal that parents' involvement has a potential to improve pupils' academic performance(Bryan & Sullivan-Burstein: 1998). A number of researches on parents' involvement and pupils' academic performance have been carried out and the common findings are that the schools where parents get involved in the learning of their children perform better. Etsey (2005) conducted a survey to determine the influence of parents' involvement on primary school performance in Ghana and the findings showed that such influence existed. This survey was conducted to find out the causes of low academic performance of primary school pupils in the Shama sub-metro compared to the high-achieving schools of the country. Etsey (2005) reported that parents play an integral role in assisting pupils' learning. School materials and morale that a student can have are found not only at school but also at home. As he went on, the parental support variables causing the pupils to perform poorly academically were their inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in Parent Teacher Association.

The U.S. Department of Education (1997) research on parent involvement outlined three important aspects for children's development and academic success. These include demonstrating attitudes, values and interactions about learning through parenting; creating partnerships between schools and homes using two-way communication; and developing a sense of shared responsibility for learning outcomes by both

school and parents (Supreme Education Council, 2008). Kabaana (1999) reported that parents should be encouraged to take an active role in the education of their children and provide resources to support their involvement. The family is the key factor in contributing to individual's academic performance and success. Merly and Steelman (1982) cited in Kabaana noted that numerous factors can alter pupils' performance in school: various activities in which a child may engage in. A case in a point are rural school children who overwork after school, give little or no time for revision at home, and the effect is that such children register poor academic performance.

5.2 Conclusions

In this section, conclusion is given basing on the findings of the study.

The study concluded the number of male teachers overweighs the number of female teachers (55% and 45% respectively). The majority of teachers are in the age range of 31-40 years of age (37%), and the findings showed that the majority of the teachers hold a secondary school certificate (93%). The majority have taught for 7 years and above (40%).

that the level of Parents' involvement in Kisasi Zone Primary schools is qualified as low . the study also concluded that there is a low level of pupils' academic performance in the area of the study. The study finally concluded that there is a significant correlation between the level of parents' involvement and the level of Pupils' academic performance

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations rose from the findings:

1. The school educators should motivate parents to participate actively in PTA, and enhance the ways of communication: visits, phone calls, phone messages, and newsletters. Parents need to be informed and guided by the school on parental involvement activities. It is the responsibility of the school to make the first move in reaching out to the families to involve them in education.
2. Parents have to take responsibility to monitor their children' homework and other studying activities done at home. They are concerned about their children's education and should take an active role in the education process. Parents should help their children in reading, writing and numeracy.
3. The authorities of Kisasi Zone should encourage parents to play their role of supporting schools by school fundraising and providing monetary incentives to teachers.
4. The Government should remind the parents the role of their involvement in pupils' academic performance: monitoring the discipline of their children, providing their children with school materials and being interested in children's achievement.
5. Further research could seek to answer the following questions:
 - (i) Why are parents less involved in education of their children in Kisasi Zone and possibly in other Kenyan districts, especially those located in rural areas?

- (ii) Why do schools fail to make parents get involved in education of their children while the policy of PTA has been implemented by the government?
- (iii) Are school heads and teachers trained on parental involvement?

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I A

TRANSMITTAL LETTER FROM CHDRP



KAMPALA
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

Ggaba Road - Kansanga
P.O. Box 20000, Kampala, Uganda
Tel: +256 - 414 - 266813 / +256 - 772 - 322563
Fax: +256 - 414 - 501 974
E-mail: admin@kiu.ac.ug
Website: www.kiu.ac.ug

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT, EDUCATION, OPEN AND
DISTANCE LEARNING
COLLEGE OF HIGHER DEGREES AND RESEARCH (CHDR)

Date: 16th August, 2012

RE: REQUEST OF CHRISTINE MWIKALI SAVANI MEE/21643//112/DF
TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR ORGANIZATION.

The above mentioned is a bonafide student of Kampala International University
pursuing Masters in Early Childhood Primary Education.

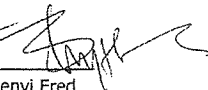
She is currently conducting a research entitled "**Parents Involvement
and pupils academic performance in Selected Primary Schools in
Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District, Kitui County, Kenya**".

Your organization has been identified as a valuable source of information
pertaining to her research project. The purpose of this letter is to request you to
avail her with the pertinent information she may need.


Any information shared with her from your organization shall be treated with
utmost confidentiality.

Any assistance rendered to her will be highly appreciated.

Yours truly


Dr. Ssemugenyi Fred
Head of Department,
Education, Open and Distance Learning (CHDR)

NOTED BY:


Dr. Sofia Gai T. Gaite
Principal-CHDR

APPENDIX I B
TRANSMITTAL LETTER THE RESPONDENTS

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a candidate for Master in Early Childhood and Primary Education at Kampala International University and currently pursuing a thesis entitled **"Parents' Involvement and Pupils' academic performance in Selected Primary Schools in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District, Kenya"**. In view of this empirical investigation, may I request you to be part of this study by answering the questionnaires? Rest assured that the information that you provide shall be kept with utmost confidentiality and will be used for academic purposes only. As you answer the questionnaire, be reminded to respond to items in the in the questionnaires, thus o leave any item unanswered. Furthermore, may I retrieve the filled out questionnaires within five days from the date of distribution.

Thank you very much in advance

Yours faithfully

Christine M. Savani _____

APPENDIX II
INFORMED CONSENT

In signing this document, I am giving my consent to part of the research study of Mrs. Christine M. Savani that will focus on "Parents' Involvement and Pupils' academic performance in Selected Primary Schools in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi District.

I shall be assured of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality and that I will be given the option to refuse participation and right to withdraw my participation any time.

I have been informed that the research is voluntary and that the results will be given to me if I ask for it.

Initials: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX III
Profile of Respondents (Face Sheet)

Code # _____ Date Received by Respondents _____

Gender:

Male a)

Female b)

Age:

20-30

31-40

41-50

51-above

Number of years Teaching Experience (Please Tick)

_____ (1) less than/below one year

_____ (2) 1-2 yrs

_____ (3) 3-4 yrs

_____ (4) 5-6 yrs

_____ (5) 7 years and above

Level of education

Certificate

Diploma

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

APPENDIX IV
QUESTIONNAIRE TO DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF PARENTS’
INVOLVEMENT
(For primary teachers)

Direction1: Please write your rating on the space before each option which corresponds to your best choice in terms of parents’ involvement in the pupils’ academic performance of their children. Kindly use the scoring system below:

Response Mode	Rating	Description	
Legend			
Strongly Agree	(4)	Very high)	VH
Agree	(3)	High	H
Disagree	(2)	Low	L
Strongly Disagree	(1)	Very low	VL

PARENTS’ INVOLVEMENT INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
Home-school communication				
1. Information about school events is given out regularly to parents by educators				
2. Parents are interested in communicating with educators				
3. Parent’s contributions are valued by the school				
4. Parents understand the way the school system work				
5. Parents take initiative to contact their children’s teachers				
6. Parents collaborate with school educators to redress bad conduct of their children				
7. Parents are interested to know their				

PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
children's progress and behavior at school				
8. Parents inform the school about passivity of their children in doing homework and any other sort of bad behavior at home				
Parents as participants in decision-making	4	3	2	1
9. Parents are included in the planning and implementation of school events				
10. Parents feel concerned with teachers' discipline				
11. Parents participate in decision-making committees and parent group, such as PTA				
12. Parents attend school meetings whenever they are invited				
Parents as school supporters	4	3	2	1
13. Parents provide monetary incentives to teachers to motivate them in their delicate job of teaching				
14. Parents participate in fund-raising for their children's schools				
15. Parents are encouraged by school educators to demonstrate their use of special knowledge , abilities, talents, and cultural experiences in school programs and activities				
16. Parents are employed in the schools where their children attend and /or are made aware of employment opportunities through job programs				
17. Parents help the schools in fighting against outsider sabotages, such as thieves, child abusers, etc				
Parents as monitors at home	4	3	2	1
18. Parents monitor their children's homework and other home learning activities				
19. Parents control the discipline of their				

PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT INDICATORS	4	3	2	1
children				
20. Parents are interested in their children's performance				
21. Parents provide school materials to their children (school bags, books, pens, geometrical materials, uniform)				
22. Parents help their children to enhance reading, writing, and numeracy				
23. Parents care about children's materials provided by school				
24. Parents fight against child labor				
25. Parents fight against children's dropouts				
26. Parents control their children's regular class attendance				
27. Parents are aware of the importance of giving food to their children before going to school				
28. Parents exempt their children from household activities during class time or during lesson revision time at home				
29. Pupils whose parents are involved in their education get better academic performance				

Source: www.edadm821.files.wordpress.com/.../how-do-schools-get-parents-involved.

Thanks for your cooperation

APPENDIX V
CHECKLIST TO DETERMINE LEVEL OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
(For Teachers)

Total No. of Pupils	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Pupils in Grade A						
Pupils in Grade B						
Pupils in Grade C						
Pupils in Grade D						
Pupils in Grade E						
Average Mean						
Overall Mean						

Thanks for your cooperation

RESEARCHER'S CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DATA

NAMES: Christine Mwikali Savani
DATE OF BIRTH: 1977
ID No.: 20623090
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RELIGION: Christian
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CAREER OBJECTIVE: A duty to grow and climax in service to humanity, corporate and social excellence

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

2011 – 2012: Accomplished Masters in ECPE, Kampala International University, Uganda waiting for graduation.

2008 – 2010: BEd ECPE, Kampala International University, Uganda

2005 – 2006: Diploma in ECD, Mwingi ECD College

1999 – 2001: P1, Nyanchwa Adventist Teachers College

1991 – 1994: Kilonzo Secondary School
KCSE D+ Mean Grade
School Responsibilities: Debating Club Official, Christian Union Official, School Choir Leader, Girl Guide, Class Representative of Science Club

1983 - 1991: Kisasi Primary School

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

- BEd ECPE
- Diploma in Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) December 2006
- Primary Teacher's Certificate, Grade P1

CURRENT OCCUPATION

- 2007 to Date: Employed by Teachers Service Commission. Primary School Teacher at Kisasi Primary School, in Kisasi Zone, Kisasi Division, Kisasi District.
- Sep 2003 to 2007: Employed by Teachers Service Commission. Primary School Teacher at Mukundi Primary School, in Kisasi Zone, Chuluni Division, Kitui District.

HOBBIES: Reading, Beautician (Salons), Listening to Music

REFEREES

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
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