SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE IN AGRICULTURE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

A CASE STUDY OF GITHUMU ZONE MURANGA SOUTH DISTRICT IN KENYA



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DECLARATION

I Gitau Simon Njihia declare that the work presented in this book is my own and has never been presented to any institution before, in part or in full for any academic recognition or award.

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Date 14/8/08

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APPROVAL

MR Mulegi Tom (Supervisor)

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved family who has struggled tirelessly to make my academic endeavors a success. May the Almighty God reward them all for their effort.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background to the study

Agriculture is a back bone of the sector in Kenya economy. According to the 1994-1996 development plan, agricultural sector contributes nearly all the national food requirements; contributes the raw materials used by the agro based industries; employs about 75% of the labor force, is a major foreign exchange earner and it accounts for nearly 30% of the gross domestic product (GDP).

Due to the ever increasing demand for agricultural products both domestic and internationally, the expansion of the agricultural sector is seen by the government as a major catalyst in improving the standard of living of the people. The government policy on agricultural, education as stated in the 1994-96, development plan is that it will continue to ensure that the principles of agriculture and livestock production are firmly incorporated into the syllabus and agricultural training institutes and universities as a gainful source of living and employment.

In an attempt to reduce its expenditure, the government has stated that it is no longer able to bear the entire cost of education or even to guarantee employment for agriculture related graduates and others. Measures have therefore been taken in the secondary schools education systems which are aimed at changing the attitudes of students from seeking employment towards creating employment opportunities through agriculture. Agriculture as a subject has therefore been one of the instrument pf creating self employment as a national goal. The objectives of

introducing agriculture a subject in the school curriculum as stated in the K.N.E.C. 2003-2006 regulations and syllabus were;

Despite the noble objectives and the hitherto significance of agriculture, students at the secondary school level continue to look down upon the subject. The subject is categorized in group IV of the K.C.E.S subject grouping among other technical subjects such as home science, arts and design, woodwork, metal work, building construction, power mechanics, electricity, drawing and design and aviation technology. Out of all these, a pupils is expected to choose one. It was observed that the proportion of students taking agriculture was very low at only 30% of the total.

The low proportion is seen as consequence of the poor attitude and lack of interest in the subject. Also observe is that given the capital lay out of teaching technical subjects, most schools only offer home science as the option to agriculture. Given the limited choice the low proportion of students taking agriculture points at a problem of poor attitude and or lack of interest. It is expected that since the objectives of agriculture suggest better prospects, then about 70% of the students should have been taking agriculture. Even for schools that do not offer home science, it is observed that students opt for commerce which is in group V of the K.C.S.E subject grouping such tendencies to avoid the subject are suspicious of a problem of lack of interest. All the students in form one and two take agriculture as the options are elected after form II in all these schools.

Agriculture is the backbone

As early as 1948, the United Nations recognized education as a basic human right. Education provides the foundation for poverty reduction in terms of sustainable economic growth, social development, and good governance. Donors are committed

to helping developing member countries achieve the millennium development goals by 2015, including achievement of universal primary education, and gender equality in primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Many of the problems of schoolchildren are associated with the poor environment including lack of clean water and poor sanitation with the most prevalent diseases being diarrhea and helminth infections. There is increasing evidence to support an association between widespread iron deficiency, iodine deficiency, and helminth infection and poor school Performance in agriculture.

A range of physical and social aspects of the school environment can influence child Performance in agriculture: inadequate or lack of water and sanitation, contaminated drinking water, poor ventilation, noise, insufficient light or glare, dangerous buildings and furniture, and a hazardous location. For many children, going to school is the first opportunity to be exposed to a range of infectious diseases from other children of diverse backgrounds.

Kenya as a country is committed to the development of human resources through education and training. Its commitment has been demonstrated at both national and international front, like the Education for All policy. Universal primary Education (UPE) is one of the Government of Kenya's main policy tools for achieving poverty reduction and human development. Broadly speaking, its main objectives are to: provide the facilities and resources to enable every child to enter and remain in school until the primary cycle of education is complete; make education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities; ensure that education is affordable by

the majority of Kenyans; reduce poverty by equipping every individual with basic skills.

Children's Performance in agriculture is influenced in many ways by the physical and human environment of the school. Children need a safe and caring human environment in school to be able to learn. In Kenya, most primary schools are built without consideration for water and latrine facilities. In rural areas, most primary schools only have a makeshift pit latrine provided mainly by the Parent Teacher Associations.

1.2 Problem statement

Despite the significant progress that has been made in Kenya towards incorporating agriculture in the curriculum while offering Education for All there continues to be areas of poor participation, especially in rural areas. One area in which some primary pupils are lagging behind is Performance in agriculture. Specifically, some recent research findings from Kenya (Mugenda 2000, Mati 2000, Kariuki et al 2000) have identified school environment (related issues) as having a major impact on school attendance and Performance in agriculture. This impact is all the greater as most Kenyan children reach puberty in primary school. The length of primary school is relatively long (8 years) and for many children, particularly those in rural areas, age of entry is delayed.

Consequently most rural primary schools have been almost entirely abandoned; with no hope of successful revitalization and this has contributed greatly to the process of education and Performance in agriculture of school pupils. Regardless of where a school is located, a healthy school environment is comfortable and secure from

danger radiates a "sense of wellbeing" and a sends a caring message. These healthy school environments are the key to high Performance in agriculture educational levels. Successfully managing a school environment is a necessary and essential educational investment. Research increasingly shows that there is a clear link between environmental quality of primary schools and educational Performance in agriculture of pupils:

1.3 Purpose of the Study

To analyze the impact of school environment on pupil's class Performance in agriculture

1.4 Research Objectives

To investigate the factors that influence pupil's attitude towards agriculture

To investigate how space and equipment affect the performance of pupils in primary schools?

To analyze the strategies used to improve the school environment for Performance in agriculture

1.5 Research Questions

What are the factors the influence pupil Performance in agriculture?

How does space and poor equipment affects pupil Performance in agriculture in school?

What strategies should be used to improve the school environment for Performance in agriculture

How attitude of teachers does affect pupil Performance in agriculture in primary schools?

1.6 The Scope of Study

The study was carried out in Githumu zone Muranga South District. It covered both government and private owned primary schools. For quite some time now there have been concerns of the right teacher education to improve productivity of the human capital in this country. This study therefore lays emphasis on how the environment affects pupil Performance in agriculture. The study considered the period from 1997 when Universal Primary Education was launched to date (2007), to ensure that the required information is fully collected.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study will have a significant contribution to: the policy makers, the teachers and most importantly the pupils who are the root beneficiaries of the education system. The study will expose the challenges facing the education sector in providing primary school education. This will in turn enable government to come up with appropriate policies towards a more suitable formal teacher education system.

The study will in turn lead to an empowered teacher work force if their skills are improved under a proper teacher education system.

The study will also contribute significantly towards better Performance in agriculture of pupils both at school and in the wider socio-economic environment.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of previous works by researchers as well as existing literature relating to school environment and pupil Performance in agriculture in primary schools. In it the researcher has endevoured to make definitions of the different concepts and showed how they relate to the study.

2.2 Influencing Pupils' Attitudes, Giving Positive Motivation towards Agriculture and Rural Life

This rationale has been behind much of the strong political pressure for the introduction of Primary School Agriculture (PSA) since colonial times. Based on the view that education is a leading factor in development, it assumes that school curricula play a dominant role in the formation of attitudes among pupils. It is argued that too many primary school leavers are deserting the rural areas and migrating to towns, because schooling has alienated them from rural life, created negative attitudes towards agriculture and given them unrealistic expectations of white collar jobs available in towns. The urban elite groups, from the colonial administrators to the post Independence government bureaucracy, who designed Primary School Agriculture education reforms, felt concern about the effects, such as the depletion of the rural labour force of able bodied (mostly male) youth and the creation of urban mass unemployment with the feared consequences, such as criminality and political unrest.

Critics of this logic focus basically on three lines of arguments. The first is that the role of education in general and the school curricula in particular, in shaping

attitudes, is being over estimated by those who believe that "ruralisation" of school education could stem migration. As Sinclair (1980) states, "attitudes to rural life are predominantly influenced by the huge differentials in level and security of earnings between the modern and traditional sectors of employment, and even the most charismatic teachers could hardly overcome this factor."

A still much quoted classic is Foster's "Vocational School Fallacy". After field work in Ghana in the late fifties, he concluded that, "those who criticize the 'irrational' nature of African demand for 'academic' as opposed to 'vocational' education fail to recognize that the strength of academic education lies precisely in the fact that it is pre eminently a *vocational* education providing access to those occupations with the most prestige and, most important, the highest pay within the Ghanaian economy." The very essence of Foster's thesis, however, has been quoted much less in the mainstream literature. His findings revealed a "remarkable level of realism" among pupils. Little attention has been given to what this may mean for pupils' attitudes in the nineties, towards agriculture which has, under the drastically changed conditions of the African economies since the fifties, become the only realistic occupation for the majority of them.

Another group of critics would insist that schools do play a role in attitude formation, but rather because of *the way in which Primary School Agriculture is actually implemented* in many African countries. They would focus on the stark contrast between the "written" and the "hidden" syllabus, the latter probably having a stronger impact on attitudes than the former. As Gardner (1985) argues: "the idea that experiencing lengthy periods of compulsory work on a school farm will somehow

reduce the pupils' contempt for those who spend their lives in such hard, back breaking toil is at least naive and at the most ludicruous. Enforced labour of this nature can only serve to increase the young people's ambitions to escape from this type of work and to live where other employment possibilities might exist. The migration from the land and from the rural areas can only be encouraged in this way. In addition, where pupils are not involved in the planning and management of projects and where they do not share directly in either the produce or the profits of the project, their rejection of the work will be the quicker." Another component of the "hidden syllabus" would be the widespread practice of using PSA for disciplinary measures, as has been reported, as one example among many others, by Wenzel (1986), after surveying 91 schools in Kenya.

A third argument to explain negative attitudes towards PSA and "practical" subjects in general, has been suggested by Lillis (1984), who argues that the understanding of "education" held by rural parents may be limited by their own experiences in acquiring practical skills. "African evidence seems to suggest, for example, that 'education' is seen as wholly restricted to reading and writing activities or academic education. Technological development in most rural areas is still at too low a level of non differentiation to suggest that there may be a useful body of theory supporting practice and, therefore, it is assumed that skills development and vocation occurs 'naturally', on the job not in school. Thus, vocational education runs the risk, at all times, of being seen as an illegitimate extension of the concept of 'education' and vocational schools are similarly viewed." Lillis does not elaborate this interesting thesis further, especially the underlying 'evidence' he is referring to. Possibly, parents may just react to the way in which Primary School Agriculture is actually

taught at school, by unqualified and unmotivated teachers, and they may be right in feeling that they themselves could do better in teaching their children how to farm.

2.2.1 Global dimension of pupil performance in agriculture

As early as 1948, the United Nations recognized education as a basic human right. Education provides the foundation for poverty reduction in terms of sustainable economic growth, social development, and good governance. Donors are committed to helping developing member countries achieve the millennium development goals by 2015, including achievement of universal primary education, and gender equality in primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Since 1990, donors has been a major regional supporter of Education for All (EFA) and to achieve this requires an appreciation that poor health and nutrition status in a young child lowers the chance of entering and completing primary school; thus, more attention is needed to ensuring the healthiness of primary scholars.

Many of the health problems of school children are associated with lack of clean water and poor sanitation, with the most prevalent diseases being diarrhea and helminth infections. The UN Sub-Committee on Nutrition reported that there is increasing evidence to support an association between widespread iron deficiency, iodine deficiency, and helminth infection and poor school Performance in agriculture. A range of physical and social aspects of the school environment can influence child health: inadequate or lack of water and sanitation, contaminated drinking water, poor ventilation, noise, insufficient light or glare, dangerous buildings and furniture, and a hazardous location. For many children, going to school is the first opportunity to be exposed to a range of infectious diseases from other children of diverse

backgrounds. Diarrhea, poor hygiene behavior, lack of water and sanitation facilities, fecal-oral contamination Access to safe water and sanitation, hand washing, good hygiene behavior increased school absenteeism; and effected school Performance in agriculture

In circumstances were there is no proper sanitation. Some learners are almost always sick because of unhygienic conditions that they are living in. Lack of water and lack of sanitation encourages diseases, which increases regular learner absenteeism. According to Varma (1993:92), the physical environments in which children are raised are important. Damaging and unhealthy environments take their toll. Poor hygiene increases the risk of infections.

School feeding programs are an intervention option that, under certain circumstances and administrative arrangements, can have an impact on nutritional status, learning ability, attendance (especially for girls), and drop out rates. The quantity and quality of food provided, the time of day it is provided, the nutritional status of the children, and the mechanisms for implementation (locally cooked by mothers vs. industry- produced foods) all affect the measured outcomes of a program. The impact will be increased by other inputs that affect school quality, such as teacher development, curriculum reform, and pupils' assessment

In many developing countries, there are more primary schools than clinics and more teachers than health workers. Linking health program delivery into the wellestablished education system has proven to be cost effective. Effective partnerships can be fostered between the two sectors, teachers and health workers, primary



schools and community groups, and among the students in implementing school health and nutrition programs. Experience has shown that school-age children can provide effective links with their peers (older children teaching younger children). They can carry messages home to their families including younger siblings and connect with the wider community in conveying messages on personal hygiene, hand washing, infant feeding, home dietary planning, and food safety as well as promoting improved sanitation. Many opportunities exist within countries for partnerships of this kind in ADB-supported education projects and these should be explored whenever possible.

2.3 Classroom environment and performance of pupils in agriculture

The classroom is the most important area of a school because it is where students and teachers spend most of their time and where the learning process takes place. However During the past 30 years the effects of classroom acoustics on children's learning and attainment in the primary years have provided the focus for a number of research studies. Rather less research is available on the impact of school environment issues like noise on children's health and behaviour. There are few controlled investigations into the ways in which acoustical treatment and classroom amplification can reduce the impact of poor classroom acoustics. There are various relevant acoustical parameters: noise and reverberation. Extraneous noise may stem from sources internal to and external to the classroom and involve both speech and non-speech. These different sources and types of extraneous noise have differential effects on learning and Performance in agriculture. Poor classroom acoustics can create a negative learning environment for many students, especially

those with hearing impairments, learning difficulties or for whom English is an additional language. Excessive noise has a direct effect on test Performance in agriculture and reduces Performance in agriculture in classrooms. Both pupil and staff are annoyed by environmental noise. The effect of trying to compete with an acoustically-difficult environment may place severe strain on teachers' voices.

A lack of appropriate ventilation or heating leads to less than optimal educational Performance in agriculture. Hot, humid classrooms affect concentration on the task in hand and impair children's learning. Despite this, relatively little research has systematically examined how classroom temperature, humidity, air quality and ventilation affect primary age pupil and their teachers. Temperature, humidity, air quality and ventilation interact with each other. The effects of such interactions on pupil and teachers have been little investigated, but may be significant when aggregated. Existing research on ventilation and heating draws mainly on adult studies, often in work environments. It tends to extrapolate to settings for young children although hard data are lacking to justify the conclusions drawn. From the limited research focusing on young children we know that elevated temperatures and humidity are associated with adverse effects on pupil achievement and behaviour. In the case of humidity there may be health risks as well. For teachers such circumstances may lead to increased teacher stress and reduced classroom effectiveness. Poorly controlled classroom ventilation may lead to raised carbon dioxide levels which in turn are associated with a reduction in concentration and the ability to focus on mental tasks which in turn affects Performance in agriculture of pupils in primary schools.

Effective lighting is central to classroom activity and has been the focus for much recent research. Adequate lighting levels for particular types of classroom task have been precisely identified and defined. Glare arising from reflective surfaces may be disabling, and even when just uncomfortable it may have negative effects on pupil and teacher activity. Contrast between objects and the background on which they lie may have negative effects on pupil and teacher activity if levels of contrast are too low and lighting levels are inadequate. Poorly managed classroom lighting may exacerbate the negative effects of poorly corrected pupil and teacher eyesight and thus affect access to text and other learning resources. Greater exposure to natural light is positively associated with enhanced pupil Performance in agriculture, while having a view from the classroom positively impacts on teacher and pupil wellbeing. There is some indication that light colour and its perceived warmth may be associated with positive individual moods and a sense of wellbeing. There is increasing evidence that low levels of exposure to natural light may negatively interact with individual circadian rhythms and are associated with reduced concentration, disturbed sleep and depressed mental and social activity. This may lead to missed schooling for pupil or absenteeism among teachers.

2.3.1 The absence of significant data

Our understanding of the effects of the built environment on pupil is limited by failures to collect systematic data for large, appropriately identified samples, to report effect sizes where data are collected and to test modifications in a systematic fashion. There are indicative data emanating from research on classroom acoustics to indicate that this is both feasible and an appropriate way to enhance practice and develop policy.

2.4 Essential Environment Considerations of Primary schools

According to Berry (2002), primary schools are not primarily environmental show cases. Primary schools are special environments that exist for the purpose of enhancing the learning process. They are sensitively built environments housing very special segments of the population. Michael (2002), argues that are sensitive environment refers to a place the supports the activities of segments of the population who are very young, very old, or who are experiencing illness. From an environmental health perspective, a sensitive environment, such as school or day care facility, tends to be where adverse health effects manifest themselves in the face of unsanitary conditions.

The importance of a healthy school environment's ability to enhance the learning process has been demonstrated in many studies. However, many school facilities throughout many countries including the United States, estimated at more than 50%, Problems are most related to water damage, have environmental problems. inoperable sewerage systems, and ineffective cleaning. According to Owolabi (2005), even though are the focus of constant public discussion, political attention, and government support, more effort is needed to emphasize and provide "healthy" school facilities by way of design, operation , and maintenance. Berry (2002) further argues that there are many environmental health and safety requirements that all school facilities face. These include numerous fire safety codes, provision for handicapped occupants, and numerous state ad federal environmental statutes as is the case with the United States of America. However, the driving force behind successfully managing a school facility comes from the local community's commitment to a healthy school environment, free of distractions and detrimental health.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section highlights the over all plan for executing the study. It gives light to the research design, study population, data collection methods, sampling techniques, data presentation and analysis, and the limitations of the study if any.

3.2 Research Design

The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, analysis and presentation. It is both a descriptive and an analytical study, critically looking at a cross-section of issues. This study is comparative in nature in terms of the teaching Performance in agriculture of the certificate holder teachers versus those holders of diplomas.

3.3 Study Population

The study population included the parents, teachers, community leaders and pupils from the selected primary schools. Key informants such as the District Education Officers, Head teachers and members of PTA/SMC played a key role in the study.

A total of 100(one hundred) respondents was be used in the study. This included.50 Students; ten from each selected primary schools picked using the simple random sampling technique; 30 teachers six from each selected school picked randomly though with some positive bias towards gender focus, 15 of whom were certificate

holders and the other 15 diploma holders; 10 school management committee members two form each selected school picked using the purposive sampling technique (this is because such members are deemed to have the required information for the study and also they are in a position to influence the budgeting in the primary schools); 5 staff members from the department of education at the District Education Officer, picked using the purposive sampling technique because they are expected to have information related to the education policy in primary schools on teaching and learning skills. Both female and male respondents were employed in the study to avoid positive gender bias in the study. The study also involved both government and privately owned primary schools to ensure that the study is representative.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

The researcher employed both primary and secondary data collection techniques. The primary methods of data collection included observation, interviews (both structured and none structured), and questionnaires. Secondary methods included review of text books, journals, news papers, records of Performance in agriculture from primary schools and the internet. Both Questionnaires and interviews were applied on head teachers and the teaching staff. While to the pupils and members of the management committees, interviews were suffice to collect the required data. Care was however taken to include both male and female respondents to minimize bias and maintain objectivity of the study. Participant observation was used as classes were going on, guided by an observation checklist.

3.5 Sampling

Multiple sampling techniques were employed to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings. Simple random sampling was employed to the pupils however; care was taken to ensure that there was a fair representation between the male and female pupils. Simple random sampling technique was also applied during the selection of the respondents from within the members of the general community were the pupils come from. Purposive sampling was used to the district education officer and the staff in that office because, this category of respondents was deemed to have information and are aware of the requirements of given school facilitation grants at play in given areas of jurisdiction.

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data was analyzed using largely descriptive qualitative methods and simple quantitative methods. Analysis and presentation of data was in form of frequency tables, and bar graphs. The classification, coding and sorting of data was done both manually and by use of simple computer packages like the Spss.

3.7 Ethical Issues in the Study

Since the researcher attaches great significance to the uprightness of the study, ethical issues were rated highly from data collection, analysis, reporting and presentation of the research findings. Great attention was given to the different categories of the respondents to ensure that none was offended both during and after the entire process of study. To fellow researchers and academicians, the researcher took all measures to ensure that there are no intentions of "academic

theft" in the process of study. Most importantly, the researcher also ensured that, to the best of her ability, she complied with the requirements of an objective academic study.

3.8 Limitations to the Study

The main limitation to the study arose mainly as a result of the various categories of respondents with holding and falsifying information. This however was over come through strict adherence to the ethical norms expected of an academic research, with an aim of making respondents build confidence in the researcher, hence making them freely release the anticipated information.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, DICUSSION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, analyzing and discussing them in relation to the objectives of the study. The findings below have been presented according to the objectives of the study as guided by the research questions. Tables, graphs, charts and other statistical techniques are also used to present and analyse the findings. Qualitative techniques have been very instrumental in the descriptive sector of the study.

Figure 4.1: Respondents views on factors influencing pupils attitude towards agriculture in primary school



Source: primary data

Out of a sample size of 100 people, 15 respondents, giving a response that 15% were of the view that, costs of schooling is a vital environmental factor affecting the attitude and Performance in agriculture of pupils at school (in class) This aligns with literature form the UN (2007) that lacks of enrollments in primary education is often attributed to the cost or opportunity costs.

Direct costs according to the findings include; child Labour, distance to school. The researcher in his analysis argues, that school fees as a direct or indirect costs are views as a main discourage, particularly for girls and other disadvantaged children, from enrolling and regularly attending school. By implication, irregular attendance of school or class by these categories of pupils in-turn directly that makes them perform poorer than their male counterparts and those that are able coached.

25 respondents (25%) said that, social customs or cultural norms (which could be economic or political in nature), may hinder school enrollment and school attainment, particularly girls, disabled children and HIV/Aids orphans. Key issues are perceptions about the value of schooling, norms about who goes to school and children rights issues. This argument concurs with literature by Owolabi (1987), that the nature of the cultural and political systems directly and indirectly influence the educational development in the society and of the pupils, In further argument, Owolabi (1987), in the same context, argues that, the value of the dominant groups in the society determine the direction and dimension of educational activities.

In the researcher's final analysis, cultural norms and values directly affect the quality of pupil emanating from a given education system both in class and to the community as a whole.

While 10 respondents (10%) agued that, if no other reasons, teachers matter because they are and will continue to be the biggest recurrent cost in education. Most of the respondents in this category argue that competent teachers are key to quality education and influencing attitude and Performance towards agriculture of pupil in examinations and in routine class exercises. It is however important to note as reflected Maicibi's literature (2007),

That what competence means changes over time and is context specific (are there teacher shortages, what are the educational needs, how much are teachers paid, what support and supervision system are in place).

In the researcher's view, considering the importance of teachers, development agencies doing with government, have put significant resources in this area. By the large, these efforts have focused on teachers training and support. According to Herz (2003) in some parts of the world, the conversation is on teacher Performance in agriculture issues, which include absenteeism and the support and supervision they receive.

15% were of the view that, curriculum (text books), is or are a critical component of the school environment directly linked to pupil attitude and Performance in agriculture in examinations. There are many (local) debates about what is in the school indicated that recently the push has been to get more Math and Science into education, others push relevance and life skills (especially since there are so few places in secondary primary schools and low completion rates).

But most of the Global discussion centers around curriculum on text books. According to UNESCO (2005), there has been a big debate in international education over the past several years, do text books matters?

From the researchers' perspective however, the evidence is not conclusive either way. Despite the fact that development agencies provide resources for text books and push governments to get text books primary schools, into the hands of the children, problems still remain. Perhaps the biggest is the curriculums and text books and teacher training often do not align with each other.

This argument further concurs with the Kenya population, reproductive Health and development reports (2001), that one of the factors necessary is adequate numbers of trained teachers. A large number of trained teachers will be required to accommodate increased primary enrolments as a result of the introduction of free primary education.

However the required large number of teachers has enormous implications both in terms of resources needed to train these teachers and subsequently to pay their salaries.

35 respondents (35%) said that, instructional practice is quite an important factor in the school environment affecting pupil attitude and Performance in agriculture. The discussion here asks whether child catered pedagogy or direct instruction are better suited for the learning needs of primary schools around the Zone. There is no conclusive answer especially as class sizes continue to grow, teachers are not adequately trained, teachers' supervision, if existent is minimal.

According to Smith and Maurer (1995), direct instructions should be used as a starting point given class size and local context, to improve the Performance in agriculture of pupils, others like Owolabi (2005) drawing from the context of community primary schools, suggest, supporting teachers is key. The researcher

however infers that, the language of instruction is also an important consideration. Many countries have a policy in place that calls for use of mother tongue but it is not implemented in other countries/regions, the local reality is that local language is used as teachers and pupil do not have sufficient proficiencies in other languages (English, French, Spanish.)





Source: primary data

The classroom is the most important area of a school because it is where students and teachers spend most of their time and where the learning process takes place. This area of analysis and study attached multiple responses from the sample population. 35 respondents (35%) asserted that children enrolled in primary schools are often only names on register. Attendance rates throughout the country are extremely low, many pupils miss school which has effected their performance in agriculture in primary schools and among other reasons lack of text books was reported as the main factor in influencing pupil performance, 25 respondents (25%) said that, the quality of classrooms especially lighting in Kenya is extremely poor. Effective lighting is central to classroom activity, Adequate lighting levels for particular types of classroom task have been precisely identified and defined. Glare arising from reflective surfaces may be disabling, and even when just uncomfortable. Poorly managed classroom lighting may exacerbate the negative effects of poorly corrected pupil and teacher eyesight and thus affect access to text and other learning resources Teaching is done by rote, using an out-dated classrooms and materials by teachers who lack competence, morale, support and accountability.

15 respondents (15%) said that, lack of appropriate ventilation or heating leads to less than optimal educational Performance in agriculture. Hot, humid classrooms affect concentration on the task in hand and impair children's learning. Poorly controlled classroom ventilation may lead to raised carbon dioxide levels which in turn are associated with a reduction in concentration and the ability to focus on mental tasks which in turn affects Performance in agriculture of pupils in primary schools.

10% of the respondents reported that noise and reverberation was are big factor in influencing the performance of pupils in Agriculture. Extraneous noise may stem from sources internal to and external to the classroom and involve both speech and non-speech. These different sources and types of extraneous noise have differential effects on learning and Performance in agriculture. Poor classroom acoustics can create a negative learning environment for many students, especially those with hearing impairments, learning difficulties or for whom English is an additional

language. Excessive noise has a direct effect on test Performance in agriculture and reduces Performance in agriculture in classrooms. 10 respondents (10%), said that, an over focus other materials drives the curriculum and teaching, and distorts educational objectives. Nevertheless they said that overcrowding and inadequate facilities have a negative impact on the quality of education. In many primary schools, classes house 150 or more children per room. Many buildings are in serious disrepair, and toilets are both inadequate and often non-functioning. Some reports and observation indicated that in some areas, over 200 pupils are forced to share one toilet, despite its obvious negative health and gender consequences. Large numbers of pupils also lack desks, books, and other supplies. Some primary schools have virtually no libraries. This finding concurs with reports from the Kenya Ministry of Education (2001); that "while these problems persist nation wide, there are also large disparities between districts. Some reports indicated that districts in the top quintile had pupil: class room ratios that were four times better than the bottom districts. In the researcher's final analysis, basic education in Kenya is in a crisis. In the typical school today, there is real little learning and opportunity for pupils to develop the skills, aptitudes, creativity and confidence that are vital to life. As one observer puts it, "the main purpose of education in Kenya appears to be to fail pupils". In addition the impact of HIV/Aids is beginning to wreck havoc on the school system, not least through its impact on orphans who are unable to secure livelihoods and teachers who are ill or dying. The implication of these combined effects is enormous. Without a solid educational base, Kenya will be unable to reduce poverty, secure human development, achieve democratization or realize the human rights of its population.

Figure 4.3: Findings on respondent's views on strategies to improve the school environment for Performance in agriculture



Source: primary data

This area of study attracted variety of responses; 10 respondents (10%) said that government both local and center should ensure a relevant curriculum system which is free of discrimination. Teachers' training should sensitize them to learners' diverse needs and teacher recruitment needs to ensure more women teachers to support retention of girls in school. 15 respondents (15%0 were of the view that, communities and parents should take the responsibility to ensure that the children's right to food is protected. They further argued that if the parents can have two square meals a day, then there is no reason why their children should go hungry especially when at school. In the researchers view, communities and parents should take keen interest in the education of their children through the provision of the much needed scholastic materials, community involvement and parents' participation in the education is critical in ending exclusion. 20 respondents (20%) said that, development partners should meet their commitments and demonstrate real

progress rather than yet again disappoint primary schools, pupils, parents and communities with broken promises. Additional spending is needed to ensure that every child can complete basic education of good quality. 30 respondents (30%) were of the view that, civil society organizations should strengthen their advocacy, mobilization, sensitization roles to end exclusion. Movement s like the Girl Child Education Movement, Campaign on Violence against Girls, Campaign to end Hunger and conflict are essential in ending exclusion. Civil society has to play the critical role of social mobilization. This assertion is in agreement with literature according to Murrey (2000) that, civil society organizations should strengthen their alliances, networks and build partnerships to end exclusion through information sharing, campaigns, research and advocacy. The remaining 25 respondents(25%), sad that, the central government in collaboration with the Zone should develop and implement teacher development and management systems that will bring out a lot of well qualified and motivated teachers who are accountable for their educational output. In the final analysis the researcher, infers with the views of the respondents that, while in the past decade, substantial progress has been made in improving access to education following the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE), the government in coalition with the civil society organizations are fundamental in mobilizing teachers and other stakeholders to develop strategies to ensure that all children get access to quality education. The Zone and the primary schools must remain at the fore front in all the campaigns aimed at ending exclusion to quality education for greater good of education and the nation. All the relevant stake holders should play their role and ensure the exclusion ends and all children get access to quality education.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary of Major Findings

5.1.1 Factors influencing pupils attitude towards agriculture in primary school

Out of a sample size of 100 people, 15 respondents, giving a response that 15% were of the view that, costs of schooling is a vital environmental factor affecting the attitude and Performance in agriculture of pupils at school (in class) 25 respondents (25%) said that, social customs or cultural norms (which could be economic or political in nature), may hinder school enrollment and school attainment, particularly girls, disabled children and HIV/Aids orphans. While 10 respondents (10%) agued that, if no other reasons, teachers matter because they are and will continue to be the biggest recurrent cost in education. 15% were of the view that, curriculum (text books), is or are a critical component of the school environment directly linked to pupil attitude and Performance in agriculture in examinations. 35 respondents (35%) said that, instructional practice is quite an important factor in the school environment affecting pupil attitude and Performance in agriculture.

5.1.2 How space and equipment effects pupil's performance in primary schools

When asked about how space affects pupil performance 35 respondents (35%) reported that among other reasons lack of text books was the main factor in influencing pupil performance. 25 respondents (25%) said that, the quality of



classrooms especially lighting was a big factor in influencing performance. 15 respondents (15%) said that, lack of appropriate ventilation or heating leads to less than optimal educational Performance in agriculture. 10% of the respondents reported that noise and reverberation was are big factor in influencing the performance of pupils in Agriculture. 10 respondents (10%), said that, an over focus other materials drives the curriculum and teaching, and distorts educational objectives. Nevertheless they said that overcrowding and inadequate facilities have a negative impact on the quality of education.

5.1.3 Strategies to improve the school environment for Performance in agriculture

This area of study attracted variety of responses; 10 respondents (10%) said that government both local and center should ensure a relevant curriculum system which is free of discrimination. 15 respondents (15%0 were of the view that, communities and parents should take the responsibility to ensure that the children's right to food is protected. 20 respondents (20%) said that, development partners should meet their commitments and demonstrate real progress rather than yet again disappoint primary schools, pupils, parents and communities with broken promises. 30 respondents (30%) were of the view that, civil society organizations should strengthen their advocacy, mobilization, sensitization roles to end exclusion. The remaining 25 respondents(25%), sad that, the central government in collaboration with the Zone should develop and implement teacher development and management systems that will bring out a lot of well qualified and motivated teachers who are accountable for their educational output.

5.2 Recommendations

Given the importance of the environment as a pupil Performance in agriculture strategy and that many barriers that pupils in getting and staying in school the following steps are needed to make sure progress on pupil Performance in agriculture.

5.2.1 Abolishing school fees

National education plans should work towards ending school fees and other hidden costs as part of well planning education reform strategies to encourage girls to attend school. Abolition of all forms of school fees is the single most powerful way to increase pupil access to schooling. For instance when government abolished school fees in Kenya, Tanzania, and Kenya, an extra 8 million children enrolled in primary school.

5.2.2 Quality of education

Education systems should ensure that steps are taken to address quality dimensions of education (that is to say education processes, curriculum content, learning environment) that may be further challenged by the school environment

5.2.3 Targeted financial mechanism

Conditional cash transfers can be used as effective incentives for parents to enroll children in primary schools, so that pupils are not forced to leave school in order to work or to care for young siblings. For example a programme in Mexico that paid a monthly stipend if pupils regularly attended school and family members visited clinics

for nutrition and hygiene education, improved pupil school enrolment from 67% to 75%. Transparency, credibility, effective targeting and delivery and stringent administration procedures are key elements for success.

5.3 Conclusions

Experience and research evidence give a more differentiated picture of the prospects Primary School Agriculture may have, than is suggested by the prevailing scepticism of the major donors. There is reason to believe that the subject can provide agricultural knowledge and skills, and make the teaching of Science and Environmental Education more relevant and effective. It also may benefit girls as the future food producers and provide some nutritional support to pupils. However, the potential impact of Primary School Agriculture on pupils' attitudes towards farming as an occupation and rural life, as well as the contribution of Primary School Agriculture to cost reduction of schooling, and to agricultural development in general, has probably been over estimated in policy papers and justifications for curriculum reforms, as these aspects are influenced by powerful factors outside educational intervention. It may be sustained that Primary School Agricuture has great potential, as long as objectives are reconsidered, and the requirements of implementation are taken more seriously than in the past.

The feasibility or non feasibility of the introduction and/or improvement of PSA on a sustainable basis will, in a particular country, not depend on technical problems (which can be solved) or financial constraints (which would rather favour PSA), but ultimately be determined by support from the political decision makers and government bureaucracy. To be effective, this support will require, in addition to the

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

I am a pupil from Kampala International University carrying out a research on the challenges of teaching and learning English language in primary schools in Makindye East. You are kindly requested to assist me in answering a few questions whose confidentiality will be ensured. The results of this research will in no way reflect you as an individual.

PART A			
Administrat	ive details.		
1.	District		
2.	Sub-county.		
3.	School		
Personal de	etails.		
Tick where a	applicable ($$)		
Gender Male		Female	、 、
Age 18-25		33-40	
25-33		40 and above	
1. What prob	olems face En	glish teaching in	primary schools in this area?
(a)			
(b)			

2. Are local languages one of the problems?

Yes No not sure 3 How has local languages affected the success or failure of English in teaching and
learning?
(a)
(b)
4. What measures are available in primary schools which endle successful teaching
and learning in English in this area school?
(a)
(b)
5. Can the teachers, pupils access English books in these primary schools?
Yes No Not sure
(a)
(b)
(c)If no why?
cut and the tought in these primary schools school?
6. Is English one of the subjects taught in these primary schools construct
Yes No Not sure
If No why? Explain
7. How is English used in the school?
(a)
(b)

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PUPILS

PART A
Administrative details.
4. District
5. Sub-county
6. School
Personal details.
Tick where applicable ($$)
Gender Male Female
Age 08-14 15-19
20-24 25+
1. What problems face the teaching and learning in English in primary schools in this
area?
(a)
(b)
2. Are local languages one of the problems?
Yes No not sure
3. How has local language affected the success or failure English in teaching and
learning?
(a)
(b)
4. What types facilities are available the primary schools that boast English teaching
in this area school?
(a)
(b)

5. Can the teachers, pupils access English materials in these primary schools?

Yes		No	Not sure			
(a)						
(b)						
(c)If no v	why?			·····		• • • • •
6. Is Eng	glish one of the	subjects tau	ght in these	primary schoo	ols school?	
Yes		No		Not sure		
lf No wh	y? Explain					
7. How e	easily is Englis	h used in the	school?			
(a)	•••••					
(b)						

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS/HEAD TEACHERS/DISTRICT EDUCATION STAFF					
1. For how long have you been on the school management committee of this					
school?					
2. What programmes are run in this school?					
a) School Agric programmes b) Sexual education c) Computer lessons					
3. What other facilities exist in this school that boast English teaching and					
learning?					
······					
4. Is there any problem you have been experiencing as a member of the school					
management team regarding the English programmes					
Yes No					
If yes what are these problems?					
5. What do you think contribute to the problem of this school?					
Teachers Pupils Facilities					
the curriculum					
6. Is facilitation one of the problems? Yes No					
7. Has this school been associated with English policy formulation or					
implementation in the past five years?					
8. Have you done something to solve the problem of English teaching and					
Vea No Not sure					
0. If yes what is it?					
(a)					
(h)					
(M)					
39					