## RESEARCH TITLE

# CAUSES OF POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH

# LANGUAGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN TIRIMIONIN

# ZONE, KABARTONJO DIVISION OF

# BARINGO DISTRICT

# KENYA.

BY

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### REG NO: BED/9150/51/DF

# A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

# OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE

# OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION ARTS IN

# ENGLISH/ LITERATURE OF

# KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL

# UNIVERSITY.

**AUGUST, 2008.**

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# DECLARATION

I declare that the study I have carried out has not been carried out by any other researcher and that the work produced is original and has not been submitted to any other university or college known to me.

Name: Chelal c. Stanley

Sign:....*chelal*..............          Date:...25/8/2008.......

# APPROVAL

I certify that the work submitted by this candidate was under my supervision.

His work is ready for submission, to be evaluated for the award of a B.E.D

degree of Kampala International University.

**SUPERVISOR NAME: Mr. Nabiso Salim**

SIGNATURE ................................. DATE:..30/08/08...

# DEDICATION

This work is dearly dedicated to my beloved wife Winnie for constant support, encouragement and advice of endurance that made me be bold and take the course squarely by the horns.

Special dedication also goes to my children Allan, Wycliffe and Vivian.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.

1. FPE- Free Primary Education

2. LAD –Language acquisition device

3. SLA – Second language acquisition.

4. KCPE – Kenya certificate of primary education.

5. EL – English language.

6. MOE – Ministry of education.

7. KIU – Kampala International University.

8. BED – bachelor of education.

9. DOE – Director of Education.

10. KIE- Kenya Institute of Education

# DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Performance** – level of output of teachers as reflected in the results

**Teacher** – any body who can facilitate learning or directly provide knowledge, information or skills required to the other person in the society.

**Motivation** – is the individual internal process that energizes, directs and sustains behavior. Its also the personal force that causes one to behave in a particular way.

**School** – it is an organization or institution where learners are taught and process according to the expectations of the society.

**Head teacher** – he is the school manager or administrator in a primary school.

**Morale** –it's the mental condition on attitudes of individuals or groups, which determine their willingness to cooperate.

**Academic** – it's the general education given to students in schools, colleges, universities and their studies.

**Dismal** –miserable, poorly performed exams.

**Evaluation** – it is to find out how far students have learnt as a consequence of teaching.

**Curriculum** – it is a gist of topics and lessons expected to be covered in a specified period of time in any class.

**Method** – it is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of material.

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# CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background:

The academic performance in Kenya certificate of primary Education in English has had a dismal show for the last five years down the line. The study therefore seeks to dig down to the roots of the problem and unearth what makes it so. This dismal academic performance prompted the study so as to explore and unveil the causes of the poor academic performance through research. The academic performance in English language has a great bearing not only to other subjects but also to the development of the 'whole' students as well.

A student who has a good command in both oral and written English has come along way to prepare himself or be prepared by the teachers to the outside world. Its only the mastery of the subject that helps one to fit properly into the society for now and in future.

The study also seeks to find out whether social economic, cultural factors, experiential status, language capabilities, grade level and learning style have any impact on the academic performance of the students in English language. The researcher also seeks to look at the teaching/learning methods and analyze them on the academic performance of the student. In looking at teaching/learning methods, the study also tries to find out if technology has impacted either positively or negatively to the acquisition of language and hence the academic performance .

In conclusion the researcher shall conduct a research on the causes of a poor academic performance, In relation to the students socio-economic background,

experiential status, their language capabilities grade level their learning styles, the teaching/ learning methods, and the impact of technology on language acquisition and performance/ achievement

## 1.2 Statement of the problem:

It is trying to find out the causes of poor academic performance in English languages, will address the specific causes and their magnitude in relation to the academic performance of the learners. The problem of poor academic performance in English language is a matter of great concern not only to the students, parents and teachers but also to education officers of all calibers in the ministry of Education in Kenya. This makes the problem worth researching and worth addressing.

## 1.3 Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study is to address the issue of poor academic performance in KCPE in English Language and device ways or remedies that can combat these causes so that there is improved performance in English Language. This also helps in the understanding of concepts in other subject areas in whose use of English language is a must.

## 1.4 Research objectives:

## 1.14.1 General objectives:

The study is to investigate causes of poor academic performance in English language exams and the causes addressed at the end of the research. Also at the

of the end of the study the causes of poor academic performance in English language will have their solutions listed down and explained.

## 1.14.1 Specific objectives:

(i)     To investigate methods used to teach English language.

(ii)    To investigate English assessment methods.

(iii)   To investigate the duration it takes to complete the English language syllabuses at the levels.

(iv)    To investigate motivation methods used.

## 1.5 Scope:

The study will be conducted in five primary schools in Tirimionin Zone, Kabartonjo Division, Baringo North District. The issues to be covered include the causes of poor performance in English language and the content, scope shall entail teaching /learning methods, students background and technological effects, and the curriculum.

## 1.6 Limitations of the study:

When carrying out a research /study the researcher will be faced by different problems. In this case the researcher expects challenges such as unwilling respondents, poor interpretation of question, limited time of carrying out the research

## 1.7 Significance of the study:

## 1.7 Significance of the study:

After carrying out the study the researcher will use it for personal use and to improve the standard of English of his learners. Also the research shall be of great importance to primary schools as they will address the issue of causes of poor academic performance in English Language. It will also be of good use to Ministry of Education officers as they can use the information gathered to tackle the issue of poor academic performance in English. The findings will also be useful to English curriculum makers so that they design a curriculum which is balanced, reliable, relevant and covers a scope within which learner's needs are met and addressed in their specific environments.

## 1.8 Theoretical frame work.

This study is based on the behaviorist theory by **Chomsky** (1965) which states that a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) is present in the brain of all human beings. This device enables a child to process the language heard, work out the rules and generate the appropriate speech. However, the inborn ability can only be realized in an interactive environment. The stimulation given to the child through their interaction with the word around them is what kick start their language acquisition ability. Similarly it's the duty of the teacher to kick start their pupils English language acquisition by providing them with an interactive environment and meaningful activities.

In other words Chomsky specifically advocates for classroom talk. This means that teachers should expose their learners to talk so as to ignite their language acquisition devices.

# CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this section the researcher looks at classic work written in text books about the subject matter of the study. On performance, the following are taken as classic works by different authors as selected by the researcher in the following extracts:

In the book' *principles and practices of teaching reading* by **Arthur W. Heilman** 1990:29-30," The teachers should know practices of teaching by being competent and keep in mind that no teaching strategy or method works best for all students all of the time. Students' factors such as socio-economic background, experiential background, Language capabilities, grade level and learning styles are also important to consider. The need to tap students' knowledge on a subject; interact with students in a variety of ways regarding comprehension of new ideas and when and how to use strategies to enhance understanding and practice new skills and strategies using more authentic reading situation rather than isolated exercises.

This extract simply requires teachers to examine the students they teach before hand so that they prepare teaching/learning materials and activities suitable to them.

In the book *language and learning* by **Terry Piper** 1993:92, "The distinction between simultaneous and successive or sequential bilingualism is generally made in the literature on SLA ( Second language acquisition). It is probably accurate to say that educators tend to pay more attention to the latter. The reason is obvious – Educators believe that they need not be particularly concerned

about teaching a 2<sup>nd</sup> language if the child has already learnt it before coming to school. In fact this thinking is misguided. Teachers should be acquainted with both types of bilingualism for the same reason that they should have for the first language acquisition. It is important to know as much as possible about children's cognitive development and bilingualism has a significant impact on cognition. Also by understanding the condition in which children acquire their first and 2<sup>nd</sup> language simultaneous, they might gain insight to guide them in creating successful environments in schools.

This extract requires a teacher to have thorough knowledge on language a acquisition skills and problems associated with bilingualism as they may have side effects in developing children's language if not considered.

The extract from the book " *Educational evaluation* (" Theory and practice) by **Dr Rambhai N Patel** 2001; 120," Keeping in view the psychological needs of students, the sequence and order in certain learning activities are maintained in general so that teaching and learning are effective.

In the book '*Introduction to professional practice*' by the **Mc Graw-Hill companies** 2001:26, it states- In a class all students are taught the same material. That is they read required chapters, do assignments, projects and homework and take tests over the same information. While on co-operative assignments, there are also some common learning experience. In addition to discipline -related technical knowledge; co-operative students generally learn and enhance skills in analysis, decision-making, planning, communication and

interpersonal relations. However, each co-operative student has a learning experience that is unique".

This extract requires teachers to include group work in their teaching for the betterment of skills acquisition, development of knowledge, values and attitudes.

In the book ' *Beyond the boundaries* ' by **Roberta Z. Lavine** and **Margret Ann kassen** 2001:11-12 " so too, has technology changed the means of teaching and learning. Computers and internet are in our schools, classrooms and homes bringing the capabilities of instructional and information technology virtually to all teachers and learners. The research published in the national councils' 1999 publication "*How people learn*: Brain, mind, experience and school (Bransford Brown and cooking 1999) begins to demonstrate the possibilities and the challenges ahead. Unfortunately the publication does not make reference to second language Acquisition (LSA) into a major discipline with rigorous methodology and significant theoretical and applied results.

All these developments have already had an impact on the way we teach and learn language and it is easy to predict a future of greater change. As teachers, there is need to adapt to new and modern teaching methods, read, evaluate and interpret learners background and incorporate technology in preparation of teaching/ learning experiences for effective teaching and learning.

In the book teaching and learning English 2001 (15) the author observes that if you are interested in helping your pupils speak English with confidence, then

you need to give them a variety of opportunities one of ways children and adult

learn a language is through talk and another is through exposure .

In the book *English for life authored* by Gordon P McGregor 2002 (17-18) he writes, it should be clear by now that the good English teacher needs to be sympathetic, energetic, sensitive and imaginative. To these rather romantic qualities (s) he must add one that is very down to earth:-being well organized. An enthusiastic director of Education once told a group of newly qualified recruits: "We want those who have their heads in the clouds but their feet on the ground":- and he was not trying to recruit gymnastics! Being well organized is part of the feet on the ground; bit and just as important as the more spiritual qualities.

Every good teacher will plan each week with time set a side to prepare lessons and to read and assess students' written work so that they can have it back in time to learn from it before the next work is set. The whole terms work must also be planned ahead so that all the necessary books and equipment are ready when needed. Similarly, each teacher needs to think ahead to the next year so that the needs of the present student and those coming into the classes she will teach are anticipated. One of the challenges, therefore, for the teacher who wants to help primary students to improve their spoken English, is to 'get them talking' .We shall return often, in discussing the teaching of all the language skills, to the important balance of between flow and correctness. We need to encourage pupils to talk about subjects and experiences which they are interested in, know about and want to discuss. This will promote a

reasonable level of correctness. They may be suspicious about time being used in the classroom to talk about everyday topics that are not in the syllabus. So the teachers should explain the changes he hopes to bring about, and the achievement of correct speech patterns. .**Professor Ruth Mukama** of Makerere University has summarized, 'The learning of English in our primary schools is not an interactive activity out of a liturgical experience. Pupils are restricted to one-word rejoinders and such recitation leads to the deplorable act of talking without feelings. The relationship between language and thinking in their contribution to learning has long been a strongly contested issue. According to certain authorities, languages is the basis of all learning, while for others, intellectual operations are the decisive factors and language is nothing more than a facilitating instrument .On present evidence however ,language and thinking should be seen as working together so that there is a close match between the stages of language acquisition and other learned elements of child behaviour. Certainly, children who have a lowly level of language development find most types of learning difficult.

Influenced by two particular views of education, teaching methods have tended to concentrate on small areas and types of learning rather than on an overall approach. On the one hand there is the view that the teachers role is to impart knowledge. This resulted in the development of methods for memorizing subject matter, often revolving around rote learning
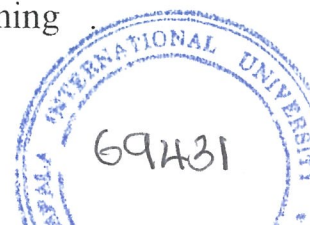
According to the other, the teachers role is basically to encourage the acquisition of those certain skills which would aid learning.

Historically, it came to be assumed that skill learning was the major role of elementary or primary schools whereas secondary schools had the duty of imparting knowledge. No one today would seriously suggest that either role can be entirely separated from the other. Skills learning must always have some content even if that content is used merely as a vehicle for the acquisition of skills. Nevertheless ,our education system still implies that children master skills first and then apply those same skills later to acquire knowledge. All surveys undertaken at primary school level, it will be noted, are of the basic skill attainment type, whereas "O" " A" level examination emphasizes achievement in terms of subject matter.

Which is not to issue a challenge to the education system. Rather it is to draw attention to the fact that in language learning it has been this second skill-oriented teaching which seems to have had most popularity with the result that language learning has often been isolated from the content of the curriculum.

**Spuck** (1974:18-34) in his case study indicated that non-material rewards such as social environment, a sense of accomplishment and self expression where related to job performance and effectiveness. This shows that for teachers to teach effectively there should be motivation to boost their internal satisfaction and hence lead to quality performance and effectiveness.

# CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

## 3.0 Overview:

In this chapter the researcher shall explore the research design employed, sampling procedure, sample, instruments, procedure, data analysis, and review. Each area shall be dealt with in depth as this is the core of the study/research.

## 3.1 Research design:

In this area, the researcher shall explore case studies of 5 primary schools in Tirimionin zone Kabartonjo Division of Baringo North District. The schools are Tirimionin, Kasisit, Sesoi, Sutiechun and Kaptere.

The next part shall look at the sampling procedure.

## 3.2 Sampling procedure:

The researcher will randomly sample the schools to which the research and data is to be collected. This is by writing all the names of the schools in Tirimionin Zone on pieces of paper after which the papers are folded and put into a container, and shaken. The first 5 to be picked shall be the schools to which research or study shall be conducted.

The next sub topic shall deal with the samples in particular.

## 3.3 Samples:

The researcher will deal with the English teachers in the 5 schools under study.

The researcher /study shall be conducted in the schools.

The teachers shall consist of two teachers in every school. These teachers

comprise one English teacher and the head teacher of the school . Preferably

the teachers should be one females to one male per school so that the study will

not be gender biased. The qualification of each teacher should be trained PTE

teacher who has taught for at least five years and are of the age bracket of 25and

over. The marital status of the teachers should rather be single or married.

The subject teachers, the principals of the school are the respondents. This is

because they are the ones who have the problem of poor academic performance

in stake and any effort to salvage the situation shall be a welcome idea. Again

the participants shall fully generate information willingly since they know that

as language teachers they are the beneficiaries of the findings after being given

feedback by the researcher.

## 3.4 Instruments:

The researcher shall use questionnaire and rating scales. These are appropriate

as the questionnaire provides insights into the causes of poor academic

performance in English language and the rating scales shows the marks attained

in KCPE in English for the last five years. Primary data will be collected using

both open and closed ended questionnaires .Secondary data will be generated

from academic work and KCPE records.

## 3.4.1 Reliability.

This is ability of the tool to return the same responses after repeated administration. The researcher used a pilot on the un sampled schools to do test –retest of the tool. This reflected the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results over number of repeated trials(Orodho 2004).

## 3.4.2 Validity.

It refers to the extend to which differences found with a measuring instrument reflects a true difference among those being tested (Kothari 2004). The researcher used the experts in the departments to verify whether the instrument measures the target content.

## 3.5 Procedure:

This shows how the case study will be conducted from the onset of the study, proposal preparation, procedures, access to study sites, data collection and analysis of report. In this case, the researcher shall conduct a case study in 5 primary schools, collect data in the field schools personally, analyze the data and come up with a report for approval by the supervisor. The research shall seek for permission to carry out researcher in the five schools.

## 3.6 Data analysis:

This section deals with data analysis techniques. Data was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution percentage tables and bar graphs would be used to summarize and

interpretate the data. Computer packages and manual computations helped in the analysis and presentation.

## 3.7 Review:

This summarizes the main ideas, points and issues that have been covered in the chapter. It covers key ideas that capture methodology discussed in few sentences and makes conclusions. Data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics. There is the use of frequency tables and bar graphs in presentation.

# CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION.

## 4.0 Overview:

This chapter Majorly looks at the responses captured from the respondents .Part of the chapter highlights the findings in a tabular form while another part looks at the data graphically.

## 4.1 Sufficiency and organization of English language instructional materials.

Respondents were asked, if they had sufficient and organized English language instructional materials.

**Table 1: Sufficiency and organization of English language instructional materials.**

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Yes | - | - | - |
| No | 5 | 5 | 100% |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data.**

Table 1: Clearly pointed out that there is lack of English language instructional materials as shown by 100% all the schools. This impact negatively on the performance of English language exams.

## 4.2 Completion of English language syllabus.

Respondents were asked to state if they completed the English language syllabus.

**Table 2: Completion of the English language syllabus.**

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Yes | - | - | - |
| No | 5 | 5 | 100% |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

Source: Primary Data.

Table 2: Shows that all teachers do not complete the English language syllabus. The 100% mark indicates that there is a wide content to be covered and this impacts greatly on the performance of the learners.

## 4.3 Arrangement for remedial work for weak pupils.

Respondents were asked to state whether there was any arrangement for remedial work for weak pupils.

**Table 3: Arrangement for remedial work for weak pupils.**

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Yes | 2 | 2 | 40% |
| No | 3 | 3 | 60% |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

Source: Primary Data.

Table3: Indicates that only 40% of teachers arrange remedial work for their pupils whereas 60% do not attempt to do so at all. The later percentage indicates that, still there is a lot to be done to salvage the performance of English language.

## 4.4 Economic level of parents.

Respondents were asked to describe the Economic level of parents.

**Table 4: Economic level of parents.**

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Below poverty level | 1 | 1 | 20% |
| Above poverty level | - | - | - |
| Average | - | - | - |
| Economically stable | 4 | 4 | 80% |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data.**

Table 4: points out that 20% of the parents live below the poverty level and 80% are average. This shows that most parents are not economically stable and live from hand to mouth. This kind of living affect the performance of pupils in school.

## 4.5 Teaching methods used.

Respondents were asked to state the Teaching method used.

**Table 5: Teaching method used.**

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Phonic method | 1 | 1 | 16.6% |
| Look and say method | 3 | 3 | 49.8% |
| Role play method | 2 | 2 | 33.6% |
| Total | 6 | 6 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data.**

Table 5:Indicates that 16.6% of respondents used the phonic method of teaching 49.8% used the look and say method and 33.6% used role play as a teaching method.

## 4.6 Attendance of short courses.

Respondents were asked whether they have attended any short courses.

**Table 6: Attendance of short courses.**

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 5 | 5 | 100% |
| No | - | - | - |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data.**

Table 6: indicates that 100% of the teachers in the five sampled schools have attended courses but the courses are too short to have a long term impact on the performance of the learners

## 4.7 Assessment of 4 language skills.

Respondents were asked to explain the methods of assessment of the 4 language skills.

### Table 7: Assessment of 4 language skills.

| Skill | Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Listening | -Respond appropriately.<br><br>- Pay attention<br><br>- Look at the speaker | 1 | 1 | 8.3% |
| Speaking | - Speak and be understood.<br><br>- Use variety of language. | 5 | 5 | 41.7% |
| Reading | - Read allowed.<br><br>- Read silently.<br><br>- Read fast.<br><br>Skim and scan. | 1 | 1 | 8.3% |
| Writing | - Spell correctly .<br><br>- Punctuate correctly.<br><br>- Organization of content | 5 | 5 | 41.7% |
| Total | | 12 | 12 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data.**

Table 7: Shows that 8.3% of teachers assess their pupils listening skills, 41.7%

assess their speaking skills, 8.3% assess their reading skills, and the reading

skills 41.7% assess their writing skills. All the skills should be assessed equally

if the students have to be developed wholly in English.


## 4.8 General methods of teaching

Respondents were asked to state how they organized teaching and learning

experiences.

### Table 8: General methods of teaching.

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Whole class | 5 | 5 | 62.5% |
| Individually | 1 | 1 | 12.5% |
| Groups | 2 | 2 | 25% |
| Total | 8 | 8 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data.**


Table 8: Indicates that 100% of teachers teach the whole class at the expense of

individual pupils. 12.5% attend to pupils and 25% of teachers use group work as

a method of teaching.


## 4.9 Completion of English language syllabus.

Respondents were asked to state whether teacher completed the English
language syllabus or not.

## Table 9: Completion of English language syllabus.

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Yes | - | - | |
| No | 5 | 5 | 100% |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data** .

Table 9: shows that the head teachers indicate a non-completion of the English language syllabus by the teachers 100% of all head teachers point clearly at this.

## 4.10 Preparation before attending lessons:

Respondents were asked to state whether teachers prepared themselves fully before attending lessons or not.

## Table 10: Preparation before attending lessons:

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Fully prepared | 2 | 2 | 40% |
| Not prepared | 3 | 3 | 60% |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data**.

Table 10: Shows that 40 percent of the head teachers indicate that teachers prepare themselves fully before attending lessons, while 60% do not prepare and hence the dismissal performance in English language Exams.

## 4.11 Catering for special needs.

The respondents were asked to state whether teachers catered for special needs.

# Table 11: Catering for special needs.

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Yes | 5 | 5 | 100% |
| No | | | |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

Source: Primary Data .

Table 11: Points out that teachers cater for specially gifted children in different ways. 100% of the teachers do that as indicated on the table.

## 4.12 Assessment of pupils performance .

Respondents were asked to state the methods they used to assess their pupils performance.

### Table 12: Assessment of pupils performance .

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Summative | 5 | 5 | 50% |
| Formative | 5 | 5 | 50% |
| Total | 10 | 10 | 100% |

Source: Primary Data .

Table 12: Indicates that teachers assess the academic performance of the pupils using both summative and formative criterion.

The table indicates 100% use both summative and formative assessment method.

## 4.13 Table 13: Motivation of teachers.

| Response | Frequency | Teachers | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Yes | - | - | |
| No | 5 | 5 | 100% |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 100% |

**Source: Primary Data .**

Table 13: Points out that 100% of the Head teachers point out lack of

motivation as a factor that lowers self-esteem and ego thus impacts negatively

on the performance of the learners.
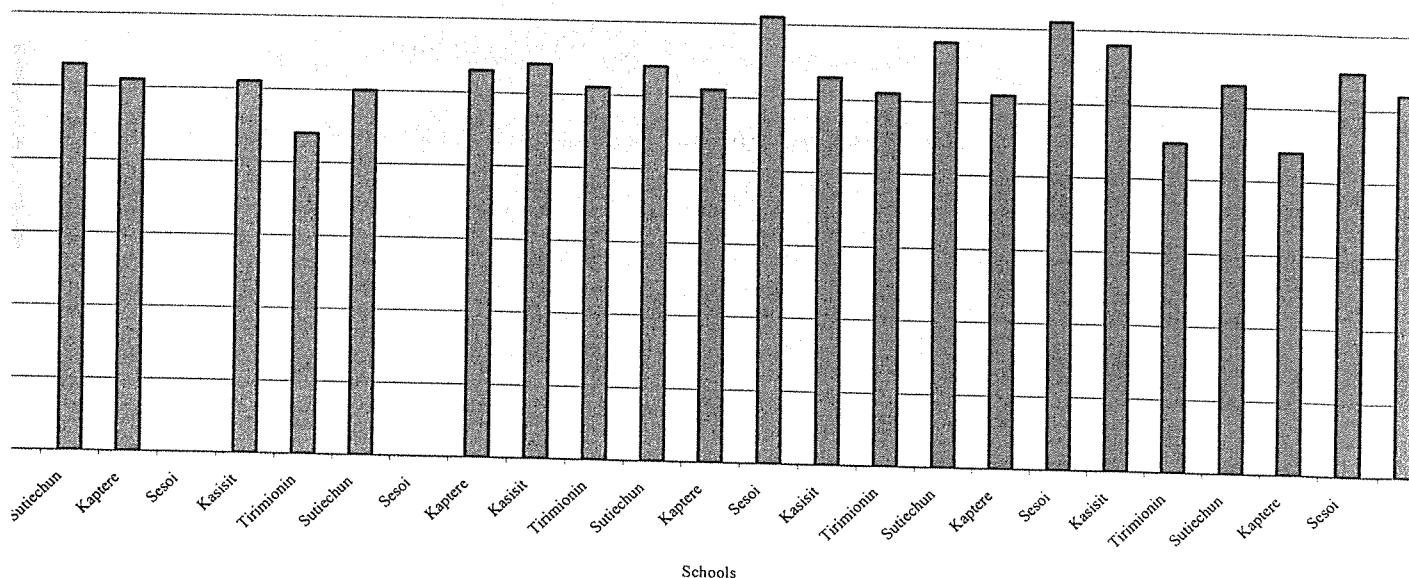


**Source: Primary Data**

The graph above indicates that the highest meanscore attained between 2003 to

2007 by the five schools is 61% whereas the lowest is 44%. Many schools

perform below the 50% half mark. This indicates that the performance in

English language exams is appalling.

perform below the 50% half mark. This indicates that the performance in

English language exams is appalling.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.0 Overview:

This chapter focused on the key findings of the study, pointed out the key conclusion and provides relevant recommendations based on these on these findings.

## 5.1 Summary of the findings:

The findings indicated that 100% of the teachers stated clearly that there is insufficiency and disorganization of English language instructional materials. It therefore emerged that lack of instructional materials in the schools impacts negatively on the academic performance of the learners.

The respondents also pointed out that they do not complete the English language syllabus. It indicated that 100% of the teachers do not complete the English language syllabus at the stipulated time frame. Also 100% of the H/teachers have shown that teachers in their stations do not complete the English language syllabus.

On the arrangement for remedial work for weak children, the findings indicated that 40% of teachers made arrangements to cater for the weak pupils while 60% of the teachers do not bother to assist the weak pupils. On the other hand 100% Of the H/teachers indicated that most teachers catered for the weak children by preparing remedial work.

The respondents were also called to state the economic levels of the parents on their stations. The findings indicated that 20% of the respondents pointed out that parents lived below the poverty level while 80% indicated that parents are of average economic levels.

The finding on the teaching methods employed by teachers in the five schools indicated that 62.% used whole class teaching used while, 12.5% attended to individual pupils and 25% of the teachers grouped pupils. The findings shows that most teachers taught the whole class and forgot to attend to individual pupils so as to cater for individual differences. A mere 25% used group which is an effective method of teaching especially in English language lessons.

The respondents who were H/teachers were asked to state if teachers prepared themselves fully before attending lessons. 40% of the H/teachers showed that teachers fully prepared themselves while 60% showed that teachers did not prepare themselves before attending lessons. The 60% of teachers who do not prepare definitely impact greatly on the performance of the learners. One possible explanation for this is weak administration and negligence of duty. When assessing the learners, the findings indicated that 50% used the summative method while 50% used the formative method. The explanation here is that most if 'not all the schools have a culture of assessing the learners at the end of each term and at the end of the eight years of primary Education. When the researcher looked critically at the percentage of H/teachers who were asked about motivation of teachers , 100% indicated that there was no motivation at all. One explanation on the appalling results in KCPE is lack

motivation of teachers. Many teachers have become down-hearted because they feel that what they do is not recognized and is not appreciated by the parents, pupils, Education Officers.

The graph printed out that the KCPE results for the five schools are still low despite the fact that there was introduction of FPE in primary schools in Kenya in 2003. still the results have not yet improved above 55% except for the new school Sesoi which is doing above 58% in the English language meanscore.

## 5.1 Conclusion:

According to the study findings, many respondents pointed out the non-completion of the English language syllabus. They cited long contents and short time frame as key to the non-completion of the language syllabus. This means that the curriculum makers should streamline the content of the English language syllabus to suit the level of the learners.

The study findings also indicated that many teachers and H/Teachers cited motivation as key to poor academic performance. They cited lack of motivation either by parents or education officials. The morale of the teachers is always down due to lack of motivation is significant to effectiveness of any organization.

The findings also showed that many teachers do not prepare themselves fully before attending lessons. This calls for strict administration and management. One possible explanation for the weak administration is the tedious work load assigned to H/teachers as a result of the introduction of FPE in 2003. The H/teachers have been given too much to do within a short time frame and this has led to stress and hence poor administration and management. The H/teachers have been overworked with other duties like finance at the expense of the students academic work. This impacts greatly on the academic performance of the learners.

The findings also indicated that teachers attended short courses to build their capabilities. Although the teachers attended the courses, they still need further training in particular on teaching of English language.

## 5.3 Recommendation:

a) Teachers need further training or refresher courses on the teaching of English language.

b) The curriculum developers to re-examine the English language syllabus and come up with one that can be completed within the stipulated time frame.

c) Accountants be employed in primary schools to help in matters of finances and relieve the H/teaches of the same.

d) There is need for motivation of teachers so as to boost their morale and increase their efficiency and commitment.

## 5.4 Further Research:

a) To find out other alternative teaching methods other than the usual.

b) To find out the impact of motivation on efficiency of teachers.

c) To find out the impact of FPE on academic performance of learners.

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# TRANSMITTAL LETTER:-

<div align="right">

CHELAL C. STANLEY

BIRINGWEY PRIMARY SCHOOL,

P.O.BOX 66,

**KABARTONJO**

**DATE**

</div>

To whom it may concern:

## RE:CAUSES OF POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAMS

I am a student at Kampala International University (KI U) pursuing a degree

course in English and literature (Arts)

As part of my course work I am expected to carry out research on my area of

specialization. I therefore seek permission to interrogate the respondents to the

above titled study /research .

Your cooperation is highly appreciated in advance.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

**Stanley C. Chelal.**

# Questionnaire for teachers /Head teachers

Questionnaire on causes of poor academic performance in English language exams.

My name is Mr. Stanley C Chelal, registration no.BED/9150/51/DF, a student at Kampala International University (KIU), Institute of Open and Distance Learning.
I am collecting data on causes of poor academic performance in English language exams Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. (KCPE).

I humbly request for your cooperation and promise not to take much of your time.

Thank you

Tick where applicable

Gender   Male   _____        Female   _____
Marital status   _____        Single   _____

| Age Category | Teachers |
|--------------|----------|
| Above   45yrs |  |
| 40      44yrs |  |
| 35      39yrs |  |
| 30      34yrs |  |
| 25      29yrs |  |
| 20      24yrs |  |

Educational   level   _____
University   _____
Secondary   _____
Primary   _____

# APPENDIX B : QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE HEADTEACHER

1. Do teachers complete the English language syllabus?

YES............... NO...............

Comment:


2. Do teachers prepare themselves fully before attending any English lesson?


3. How do teachers cater for specially gifted children in English language?


4. What is the assessment criteria used by teachers in assessing their pupils understanding of English language?


|      | ENGLISH | KISWAHILI | MATHS | SCIENCE | SOC/STUDIES | TOTALS |
|------|---------|-----------|-------|---------|-------------|--------|
| 2003 |         |           |       |         |             |        |
| 2004 |         |           |       |         |             |        |
| 2005 |         |           |       |         |             |        |
| 2006 |         |           |       |         |             |        |
| 2007 |         |           |       |         |             |        |

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Gender    Male    _____        Female    _____
Marital status    _____        Single    _____

| Age  Category | Teachers |
|---|---|
| Above    45yrs | |
| 40      44yrs | |
| 35      39yrs | |
| 30      34yrs | |
| 25      29yrs | |
| 20      24yrs | |

Educational   level    _____
University    _____
Secondary    _____
Primary    _____

# APPENDIX C QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TEACHER

1. are the instructional materials for English language enough and organized in your school? YES........... NO...........

Comment:

2. How long does it take for you to complete the English syllabus?

3. Are any special arrangements to be made for children who experience difficulties in English language learning?

4. What is the economic level of the parents of your pupils?

(A) Below poverty line        (C) above poverty level

(B) Average              (D) economically stable

5. State the teaching methods employed in:

  (i) Lower primary class        i.....................

                             ii.................

                             iii...............

(ii) Middle primary          i.....................

                             ii.................

                             iii.................

(iii) Upper primary         (i).....................

                             (ii)...............

                             (iii)...............

6. Are there short courses you have attended as a teacher that seeks to improve the performance of English language?

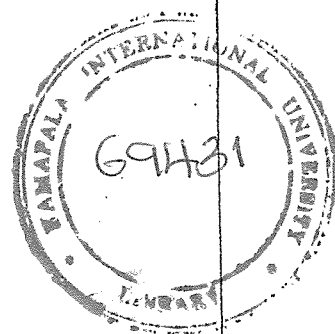7. State how you assess your pupils in developing the four skills.

Listening....................

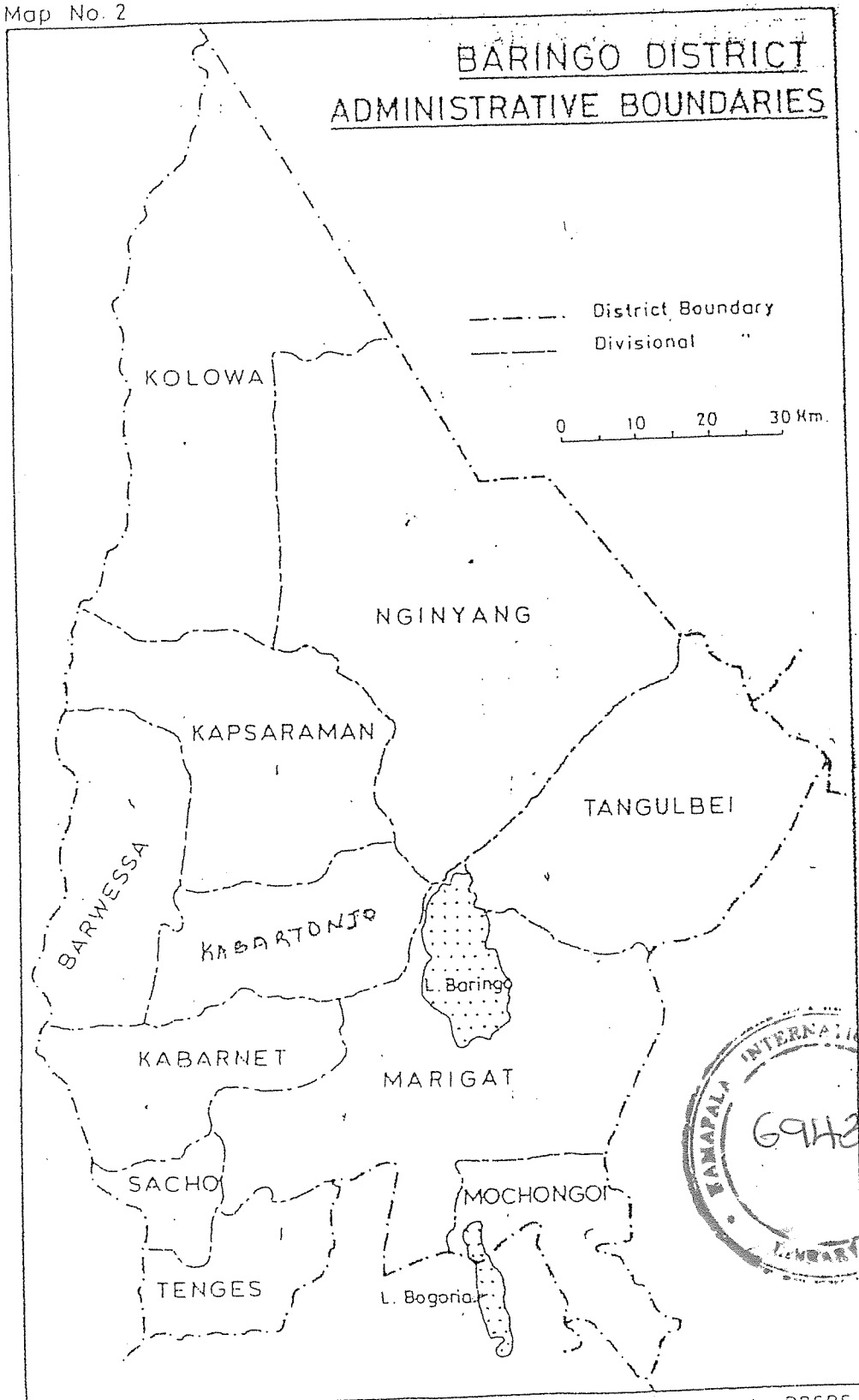Speaking....................

Reading....................

Writing....................

8. Do you as a teacher work with pupils individually, in groups or teach entire class................

# APPENDIX D TIME FRAME

| Activity | Period | Out put |
|---|---|---|
| oposal writing | 4/08 | Proposal submission for approval |
| eld customization | 5/08 | Initial information collection |
| eveloping instruments | 5/08 | Developing instruments |
| ata collection | 6/08 | Coding (entering of data) |
| ata analysis | 7/08 | Analyzing and interpretation of data |
| reparation of report | 8/08 | Submission of report |

# BARINGO DISTRICT
# ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES

—·—·— District Boundary

—·—·— Divisional

0    10    20    30 Km.

KOLOWA

NGINYANG

KAPSARAMAN

BARWESSA

KABARTONJO

TANGULBEI

L. Baringo

KABARNET

MARIGAT

SACHO

MOCHONGOI

TENGES

L. Bogoria

Prepared by DRSRS