

**INFLUENCE OF LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS.
A CASE OF KIANJIRU ZONE,
MBEERE DISTRICT
KENYA.**

***BY
NDWIGAH ROBERT NJERU
BED /7044/51/DF***

**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF
OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING (IODL) IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD
OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION OF
KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

JULY 2008

DECLARATION

I **ROBERT NJERU NDWIGAH BED/7044/51/DF** do hereby declare that this research report is entirely my original work and that it has not been submitted before to any university or institution of Higher learning for the Award of a Degree.

SIGNATURE

DATE

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

25th July 2008

APPROVAL PAGE

This research report has been submitted for examination with my approval as the candidates University supervisor (s).

Name: **WOMUZUMBU MOSES**

Date : 01/10/2002

Signature : 

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher wishes to acknowledge the contribution of individuals and institutions that greatly assisted in the production of this study report . Special gratitude to Mr. **Womuzumbu Moses** under whose directive and scholarly advice this study report was completed and who critically evaluated the manuscript. I also extend my appreciation to Mr. Kathuri for his moral support and constructive criticism during data collection and compilation.

I also wish to extend my gratitude to the headteachers, teachers and parents of Kanothi, Mutus, Munyori , Kamwimbi and Kamunyange Primary schools for their relentless support and acceptance during data collection.

Finally, I am immensely indebted to my wife Madam Lucy Wawira for her patience, moral and emotional support during the study period.

God bless you.

DEDICATION

To my family, employer and friends who encouraged and supported me
throughout my study period both morally and financially

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Learning environment :- is defined as any area where attitudinal changes are expected after undergoing instruction.

Academic performance :- it refers to an individual achievement after undergoing instructions for a period of time.

Learner:- any person undergoing instruction in the process of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitude.

Instructional materials :- refers to person, materials or things that establish a condition which enable the learner to acquire knowledge, skills and attitude.

Resources:- Are materials that can be used to aid teaching and learning process.

KIE:- Kenya Institute of Education

FPE:- Free Primary Education.

QASO:- Quality assurance and Standards Officer .

| TABLE OF CONTENTS | PAGE |
|---|-------------|
| Declaration | i |
| Approval | ii |
| Acknowledgement | iii |
| Dedication | iv |
| Definition of terms | v |
| Table of contents | vi |
| Abstract | viii |
| CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION | |
| 1.0 Background of the Study | 1 |
| 1.2 Statement of the Problem to Be Investigated | 2 |
| 1.3 Objectives of the Study | 3 |
| 1.4 Research Questions | 3 |
| 1.5 Scope of the Study | 4 |
| 1.6 Significance of the Study | 4 |
| CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE | |
| 2.0 Introduction | 5 |
| 2.1 The School Experience On Academic Performance | 5 |
| 2.2 Use of Learning Resources and Performance | 7 |
| 2.3 Social Economic Status and Performance | 9 |
| 2.4 Role of Teachers on Academic Performance | 11 |
| 2.5 Discipline and Performance | 12 |
| 2.6 Attitudes Work Habits and Motivation | 14 |
| CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | |
| 3.0 Introduction | 16 |
| 3.1 Research Design | 16 |
| 3.2 Population and Sampling | 16 |

| | |
|--|--------|
| 3.3 Research Instruments | 18 |
| 3.4 Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument | 19 |
| 3.5 Data collection procedure | 20 |
| CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDING | |
| 4.0 Over View | 22 |
| 4.1 Demographic Data of Study Participants | 22 |
| 4.2 Learning Environment and Academic Performance | 23 |
| 4.3 Learning Resources and Academic Performance | 28 |
| 4.4 Teachers Effort and Academic Performance | 30 |
| 4.5 Government Role in Boosting Academic Performance | 32 |
| 4.6 Parents Contribution on Academic Performance of Learner | 33 |
| 4.7 Summary of the Findings | 34 |
| CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION | |
| 5.0 Overview | 35 |
| 5.1 Discussion | 35 |
| 5.2 Conclusion | 36 |
| 5.3 Recommendation | 36 |
| REFERENCES | 38 |
| APPENDICES | 39 |

ABSTRACT

This study determined the influence of learning environment on academic performance of learners in public primary school a case of Kianjiru Zone Mbeere District in Kenya . It in addition checked the effect of learning materials, effort made by teachers and the role of government on academic performance of learners.

The study adopted a descriptive study design. The data was collected using primary data, interviews schedule for parents and two set of questionnaires were employed to collect data from his headteachers and teachers from five out of 20 schools in the zone . A total of 20 respondents from the 5 sample schools formed the sample size. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and pie charts .

The major findings indicated that teaching resources influences learners participation and academic performance. It was also found that motivation of both the teachers and learners affects the performance in the teaching and learning process. Parents contribution and participation in learning process influences learners academic performance. In addition there is substantial provision of teaching and learning resources, provision of policy framework and monitoring of standards by the government of Kenya.

This study noted that there is need to provide more resources to enhance concept development in learners in addition to motivating them. Parents need to be more sensitized on the need to participate in learning process of their children. There is also need to motivate teachers so that they become more efficient and productive. In addition teachers should be more encouraged on the use of teaching resources / materials in every lesson.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Learning Environment may be defined as specially defined precincts where attitudinal changes are expected after disseminating the required information. In very basic terms this may be reduced to a classroom, lecture theatre, lecture hall and so on. However provided there is a disseminator in this case a teacher, a lecturer and the recipient in this case a student a learning environment is instantly established. In all cases necessarily a teacher is expected to have a great command in terms of knowledgeability of the subject at hand but no necessarily a professionally trained teacher. However for purposes of validity and evaluation a properly trained and qualified teacher is of paramount importance.

A stimulating environment for growth and development. According to K.I.E(2000)any learning environment need to have love affection, protection , safety, care and nurturing. To promote total growth and development of the young children. The physical environment also should have concrete materials that are safe, appropriate and stimulating like toys, books, blocks for the learners to manipulate, explore and experiment with and learn from . Enough and safe space to facilitate freedom of movement, exploration, experimentation and discovery of ideas and concepts. Performance in primary education continues to experience many challenges relating to access and equity. These include overstretched facilities overcrowding in schools especially in urban schools and high pupil-teacher ratio. Additionally to above challenges there are also problems in quality learning.

The current policy of education on primary should be able to teach all the 7 subjects in the primary school curriculum. However the two years of teacher training is not adequate for the trainee to acquire mastery in subject content and skills of pedagogy in all the seven subjects. These compromises the quality of teaching offered after the training.

1.2 Statement of the Problem to be investigated.

The Government of Kenya through its agencies, departments, women organizations and NGO's has lately been putting in a lot of effort in enhancing learning environment for primary schools especially since 2003. For example the McKay Education Commission (1988) highly recommended the construction of modern workshops, laboratories to improve on proper learning environment by putting up infrastructure that are modern and up to the required standards.

Currently the learning environment may be described as appalling due to their poor status. These take the form of congestion due to small or sub-standard class sizes, inadequate desks, tables and general furniture and not forgetting the un-supporting parents especially since the inception of Free Primary Education (FPE).

Due to emerging flourish of khat growing in the zone, learning Environment of Kianjiru Zone has been negatively impacted by this menace. Also the exploitation of natural resources of quarry stones, sand harvesting and murram excavation has contributed to low participation of learners within the schools hence leading to poor performance.

The main purpose of the study was to investigate on the influence of learning environment on academic performance of pupils in public primary school in Kianjiru Zone of Mbeere District in Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were :-

1. To find out the influence of learning environment on academic performance.
2. To investigate on effect of learning materials on academic performance.
3. To investigate on the efforts made by the teachers on learners academic performance.
4. To investigate on the role of the government of Kenya on academic performance of learners.

1.4 Research questions

1. Does learning environment influence academic performance?
2. Do the use of learning materials affect academic performance?
3. How does the effort made by teachers affect learners academic performance?.
4. What is the contribution of the government of Kenya and its effect on academic performance of learners?

1.5 Scope of the study

The study was carried out in Kianjiru Zone Gachoka Division Mbeere District Kenya. The zone has 20 schools, all of which were targeted for this study. The content scope covered the influence of environment on academic performance. The variables considered were environment and academic performance.

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings of the study will be of great significance to Ministry of Education dealing with enhancement of learning environment. Parents intends to benefit in that they will acquire new insights on measures they could take to ensure favourable learning environment in their schools. Teachers also will benefit by acquiring data on various factors that may affect or lead to poor learning environment. Education planners will gain information that may be useful in policy and curricula development that may help to deal with the challenge.

Finally, the researchers will gain by acquiring data that could guide future studies on this important area .

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter contains the review of literature related to the study. Primary sources were used in the area of this study and the literature review criticized other researchers indicating strength and weaknesses of the approaches used at the analysis conducted and the findings reported. The chapter is divided into six subsections. These are the school experience, learning resources, socio economic status, role of the teachers, discipline and performance, attitudes, habits and performance .

2.1 The school experience on academic performance

Each school has its own atmosphere, its own feeling, some are orderly, other have a carnival atmosphere. Interest in education has increased in the last few years, due mostly to government reports, highlighting problems in education. Recent evidence indicates that achievement in the basic skills is improving and the elementary schools have escaped some of the blasts of criticism Donaldson (1978). Performance in schools is usually differently. Although what characterizes an effective school are factors like safe and orderly environment, an understanding of the goals of the school, administrative leadership, a climate of high expectations , allocation of time to instruction in the basic skills and frequent monitoring of student progress have been suggested Lezotte (1982), Cohen (1982).

Also a good relationship between the home and the school is important, especially in the early grades and in schools where students require remedial work, smaller classes are an advantage Rutter (1983) . Children in one class in a school may be doing very well, while student in the next door may not be . Many researchers have attempted to discover which attributes form the personality or abilities of superior teachers but no one pattern dominates. Some have emphasized the importance of flexibility, the ability to personalize teaching, the ability to empathize with students, the willingness to try out new approaches , skill in asking questions, knowledge of subject areas, being appreciative of positive student behaviour , and using an informal easy going style Hamachek (1969) . Other studies found that effective teachers are task-oriented, business like, enthusiastic, imaginative and well organized, responses behaviour Centra and Potter (1980). One aspect of teaching that is well related to effective learning is the result of time spent in direct instruction Davis (1983); Brophy (1982), Rutter (1980).

Therefore the above research indicates that certain schools and teachers are more successful than others. A number of instructional approaches are successful, but most involve spending time and effort on direct instruction of the basics. In addition monitoring student progress and providing remedial work when necessary are important.

2.2 Use of Learning Resources and Performance

Learning resources are very essential in any learning atmosphere. Brown et al (1969); identified that children learn better what they do. The instructional materials, the teachers uses are very crucial because they determine the activities in which boys and girls engage in. If the materials provide the learners with the kind of practice which the teachers instructional aim require the material are good ones .If on the other hand they engage them in activities which are not consistent with the teachers objectives the materials are poor one. So the materials used in Copper[1971], supports the idea by saying .The choice of learning materials is governed by the general idea of the lesson, the particular purpose the teacher has in mind, the nature of the subject matter the children will study and classroom situation. In order to make a sensible choice , the teacher has to know what various available teaching aids can do, must know the classroom situation intimately, the teacher must know the children's learning needs and capacities. What resources the school has to offer and the physical layout of the classroom. Basing on what has already featured Heinirich, Molenda and Russeau (1989) noted without a good conceptual rationale, use of specific materials may become simply mechanical with the hope that what is presented to learners will eventually become meaningful to them. Instructors can develop conceptual and theoretical bases on which to chose specific materials and methods by knowing their relationship between media, learning and instruction.

Field trips are other media very useful in learning. They make possible the utilization of the phenomenal which cannot be brought into classroom, or a trip of several days to

tour historical location. Regardless of time and distance, a filed trip helps the young children with the ability of seeing and listening. However recent studies have shown adults as well learn more from real life experiences .

The use of learning resources Langdon (1978) asserts can be simple yet effective. Some resources like audios are neither expensive nor complicated. Just a simple tape recorded in the house or village can be taken to class and capture the attention of pupils and aid the learning. The audios are advantageous because the teacher can manipulate them easily to stop and replay the message and this can give a chance to ask questions and then play again. If the message is not clear it can be rewound .

Therefore the users of media in school, Morrow and Suid (1977); advice should know how the media is defined. Its grammar not by latest technology. Therefore there is value in what could be called the “do – it – yourself” teaching condition. The learners can be asked to formulate learning aids especially those which are locally made .

Evans (1978) advocated for the use of the overhead projectors since they are without doubt versatile items of audio – visual equipment, developed in recent years. The advantages are listed below:-

- a. They are ideal for use with larger groups.
- b. Can be used in daylight or artificial light due to the intensity of its light source.
- c. The teacher is not only in control of the class but is able to direct more efficiently and effectively the pace of the lesson.

- d. They are portable and can be moved from classroom to classroom.
- e. Can be stored and used time and time again.

Patel and Mukwa (1993); argues that a teacher intending to help his pupils to understanding the learning concept must use codes with which his students are conversant. The teacher should use the same level of language making simple examples from learners experience. According to the research by Eshiwani, et al (1988); it was identified that most of the schools which performed poorly spent less money on the purchase of teaching resources.

Therefore for the schools to perform well the use of learning resources is inevitable. Resources like desks and chairs are important part of learning environment pupils need those furniture to follow the lesson with comfort and attention. Their handwriting which is important in note taking needs smooth, flat and wide desks. Without comfort in the classroom environment , the actual learning cannot take place .

2.3 Socio – Economic Status and Performance

This concerns the level of an individual in society . It is usually measured on how rich, how poor or low educated one is . The degree of these categories places a person in the level of the people of his equals. Concerning performance in education Macions (1997) asserts that the extent of schooling in any society is closely tied to the levels of economic development . Low income countries have limited access to schooling most of which are found in Asia and Africa .

In connection Malan (1988), says that Eshiwani discovered that; If any region of the country lags behind either in the number of pupils who attend schools or been in the number of pupils who pass important national examinations , then that region cannot participate in the democratization of education . The social- economic development of such region is likely to be retarded . This finding shows that socio-economic status and performance in education make vicious cycle in that socio –economic status affects performance and performance affects ones level in the society.

Anderson and Sharrock (1984) agree that on this and say sociologists have always documented that the inequalities in education attainment are related to social factors . Lower class do less compared to their counterparts . Wanjohi [1981] laments and sympathizes with African Child pointing out; the black child has no toys. He does not find around him any occasion to arouse intellect what he sees happen in front of his rusting eyes is not nature to excite his mind. The early childhood of black always takes place in an environment intellectually inferior to any imaginable Europe in intellectual education. The black child remains inactive for long hours. He thus undergoes terrifying head shrinking from which it is virtually impossible to recover. The neural centers of his cortex which should normally be used for exercise do not receive the necessary stimuli for their environment.

The fact that children from poor socio – economic backgrounds do not do as well in school as children from middle – class families is well established Anderson and Faust (1973); Coleman (1966). Children from poor families live in crowded conditions,

with poorer health care are not exposed to middle class experiences such as trips and books, have lower career aspirations and may not know how to succeed in school Biehler (1982), Mandell and Fiscus (1981), children from lower socio-economic backgrounds come to school less advanced cognitively. This leads to failure in life. Children expectations for success are lower as well although they increase with age Fulkerson et al, (1983).

2.4 Role of Teachers on Academic Performance

Teachers expectations also have an important effect on pupils academic performance. Sometimes these expectations are verbalized. The teacher returns work that is unacceptable and compliments students when their work has met standards. Teachers may also communicate their expectations to pupils on a less than conscious level and may not be aware of what they are telling their pupils Chaikan et al (1974) Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968). The success of the pupils lies primarily in the hands of the teacher, it was discovered by Arcaro (1995); that teachers are expected to be all and do all that take place of the family, church, social agents etc. Sometimes it seems that sharing knowledge is last in the list. It then becomes all easy to get bogged down in teaching facts more and still more facts with the regard for learning.

The teacher therefore need to know tactics through which learning can take place learning which can be applied relatively whenever required. It is true no teacher can be teaching all what the learners is required to know; neither can the pupils learn everything they need to know for their future. Covering material is not learning the

focus should be the essential knowledge without just memorizing facts, realizing that factual knowledge provides foundations, for future learning (Ibid).

Data (1984) attributes the African teacher according to the following duties:-

- a. Agriculture officer – because he teaches the mode and methods of agriculture.
- b. Medical doctor- for he identifies the sick and gives them first aid or takes them for treatment.
- c. Forest Guard- for he looks after trees in the school garden.
- d. Judge- for settling the disputes among pupils.
- e. Belongs to education department for he teaches pupils all departments.

However he should be careful to specialize in some areas since the Jack of all is a master of none.

Musvosvi (1988) feels that teachers in addition to other important roles must be role models and become what they expect of their learners . Children can learn by seeing their teachers modeling the behaviours they want to learn.

2.5 Discipline and Performance

Discipline for teachers and pupils is very important in learning. A need for high discipline is inevitable if a school is to perform. Schools with high moral conducts enjoy good atmosphere. According to United States Education Department (1986) when there is discipline the academic performance will go high because behaviour and academic success are intertwined such lay on the hands of the administrator.

It is further stressed that where there is no discipline the learners engage in their unwanted behaviour which affects their learning such behaviour includes absenteeism. Absences are major problems at all levels of school. Students who miss a lesson lose an opportunity to learn. Too many missed opportunities can result in failure, dropping out of school or both. Regular attendance exposes students to greater amount of academic content of instruction .

Musvosvi (1998) attributes indiscipline among pupils to their background and school environment. Packing too many pupils in a tiny classroom results into indiscipline behaviours , they only elevate such behaviours from the children whose backgrounds are undisciplined . This is why parents should be more in involved controlling the behaviour of their children from their infancy .

Teachers should be very wise when dealing with disciplinary cases. Musvosvi (1998) advises them to adapt what Strauls and Sayless call progressive discipline. This gives the steps at correcting the child as outlined below;-

- i. An oral warning .
- ii. A written warning
- iii. A disciplinary suspension
- iv. Dismissal

In following steps, the disciplinarian should always remember that the Godly discipline should be redemptive not punitive .The societies from which some children

come are so undisciplined and it's from them that they (learners) transfer such behaviours to school. Undisciplined parents cannot help their children to internalize good behaviour. Meril (1960) cautions parents and teachers on use of punishment and says "punishment merely suppresses responses while it is administered". After punishment is withdrawn the responses re-occur. The punishment merely brings about temporary cessation of undesired behaviour and appears to postpone rather than eliminate the appearance of behaviour for which it (punishment) administered. It doesn't treat the cause but the symptom. Discipline in schools cannot be complete if it is one sided. If only the pupils are disciplined and teachers are not, the school may achieve very little. The school administration must make sure discipline is maintained among teachers as well. They can do this by providing for their needs and creating rapport with them. Musvosvi (1998) advises administration to: - Spend time with employees use effective techniques and know their expectation, and they should know yours.

2.6 Attitudes, Work Habits and Motivation.

Every teacher has stories about students who, though lacking certain academic skills, worked so hard that they did well in class. On the other hand, most people also know of students who despite having a good grasp of the basic skills, fail tests because they don't care or don't study. A child's attitudes towards school, the teacher and the subject itself influence academic achievement. One reason put forward for male superiority in math in the later grades is that males expect to do better. These higher expectations are found as early as the first grade, even though boys grade and abilities

are not superior to those of girls Entwisle and Baker (1983) . Attitude towards math are particularly important, because they relates to mathematical performance in both sexes Paulsen and Johnson (1983). Differences in performance are not inevitable, especially when females have positive attitudes towards Mathematics Paulsen and Johnson (1983).

Work habits also affect academic achievements and this is an area of great concern today. Students are frustrated when they study for a test but do not do well because they either do not know how to study for a test but do not do well because they either do not know how to study or studied the wrong material. Efficiency and effective work habits contribute to achievement. Finally, motivation is important Nicholus (1979) . Motivation may affect attention in class or influence the amount of study time devoted to a particular subject directly influencing academic achievement.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, details on how the research was conducted are presented. The chapter is divided into five sections; the research design, population and sampling, research instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments and data collection procedures.

3.1 Research Design

The study will adopt a descriptive survey design. The design is considered appropriate for the study because according to Kothari (1985) survey is concerned with describing recording analyzing and reporting conditions that exist or existed. Kerlinger (1973) argues that survey method is widely used to obtain data useful in evaluating present practices and in providing basis for decisions.

3.2 Population And Sampling

The population was all the primary public schools and the target population were schools in Kianjiru Zone, Gachoka Division Mbeere District. All teachers, headteachers and parents comprised the population of the study.

The researcher used random sampling technique to select 5 from the 20 public primary schools in the Kianjiru Zone Gachoka Division.

Table below shows schools in the zone .

| <u>Name of the school</u> | <u>Number of streams</u> | <u>Number of pupils</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| KAMWIMBI | single | 200 |
| KAURARI | single | 249 |
| KIRIMA | single | 227 |
| KAWERU | Single | 160 |
| KABURURI | Single | 306 |
| KANOTHI | Single | 267 |
| GIKIRO | Single | 284 |
| GATAKA | Single | 279 |
| NYANGWA | Double | 390 |
| MURINDI | Single | 101 |
| MUTUGU | Single | 157 |
| MINURI | Single | 194 |
| MBITA | Single | 217 |
| NGANDURI | Single | 211 |
| KAMUNYANGE | Single | 277 |
| MATHIGAMERU | Single | 134 |
| RWETHE | Single | 128 |
| KIAMETHO | Single | 249 |
| MUNYORI | Single | 286 |
| MUTUS | Double | <u>382</u> |
| Total | | <u>4698</u> |

Source . District Education Office, Mbeere (March 2008)

Random sampling technique was chosen because it gives all members of the population an equal chance of being selected. Random sampling was used in selecting the respondents.

Sample Size

A sample is a small portion of a target population sampling means selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population. Any statements made about the sample should also be true of the population Ordho (2002). It is however agreed that the larger the sample the smaller the sampling error.

The researcher targeted 20 public primary schools in Kianjiru zone with a public population of 4698 learners. This included 2165 boys and 2533 girls out of which he selected 5 schools on a random sampling technique.

From the sample schools the researcher targeted 20 persons as respondents. That included 15 professional teachers in male to female ratio of 10:5. Out of these teachers 11 had a teaching experience of more than 10 years while 4 had a teaching experience of between 5-10 years. The researcher also includes 5 parents as respondents in the male female ratio of 2:3. All parents had a school parenting experience of more than 6 years. All these groups served as the researchers sample .

3.3 Research Instruments

The study employed two sets of questionnaires for data collection. These were questionnaires for head teachers and teachers. The researchers used the questionnaires

because through them one can collect the required information from a large sample within a very short time.

A questionnaire was used for data collection because as Kiess and Bloomquist (1985) observed, it offers considerable advantages in the administration. It provides an even stimulus potentially to large numbers of people, simultaneously; it provides the investigation with an easy accumulation of data. Gay (1976) maintains that questionnaires gives respondent's freedom to express their views or opinions to make suggestions. It is also anonymous; anonymity helps to produce more candid answers than is possible in an interview.

An interview schedule was used to guide interviews held with parents. An interview schedule is considered appropriate when the samples small since a researcher is able to get more information from respondents than would be possible using questionnaires Kiess and Blomquist (1985). A checklist was used to collect data during the study.

3.4 Validity And Reliability For Research Instruments

3.4.1 Validity is defined as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results Mugenda and Mugenda , (1999) . In other words, validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represents the phenomena under a study. Validity according to Borg and Gall (1989) is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure.

All assessments of validity are subjective opinions based on the judgment of the researcher Wiersma, (1995). The pilot study helped to improve face validity of an instrument is improved through expert judgment. As such, the researcher sought their assistance from his supervisor, in order to help improve content validity of the instrument.

3.4.2. Reliability

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define reliability as a measure of the degree to which research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial. To enhance reliability of the instruments a pilot study was conducted in 2 schools in zone, but which were not to be in the final study. The reason behind pre-testing was to assess the clarity of the questionnaires, checklists, and interviews schedules. So that those items found to be inadequate or vague were either discarded or modified to improve the quality of the research instruments thus increasing their reliability. In order to improve the reliability of the instruments the researcher employed test– retest technique, whereby the questionnaire were administered twice to the pilot sample. The researcher then manually assessed the consistency of the responses on each pair of the pilot questionnaires and made a judgment on their reliability.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher got an introduction letter from Kampala International University and a research permit from the Ministry of Education (MOE). After this, the researcher booked an appointment with the sample schools through headteachers to visit and

administer the questionnaires and conduct the interview and made observations using the observation checklist. The researcher then visited each of the schools and administered the questions himself, the respondents were given instructions and assured confidentiality on the information they would give. The researcher was available throughout to offer assistance to respondents and made any necessary clarification during the data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR:DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.0 OVERVIEW

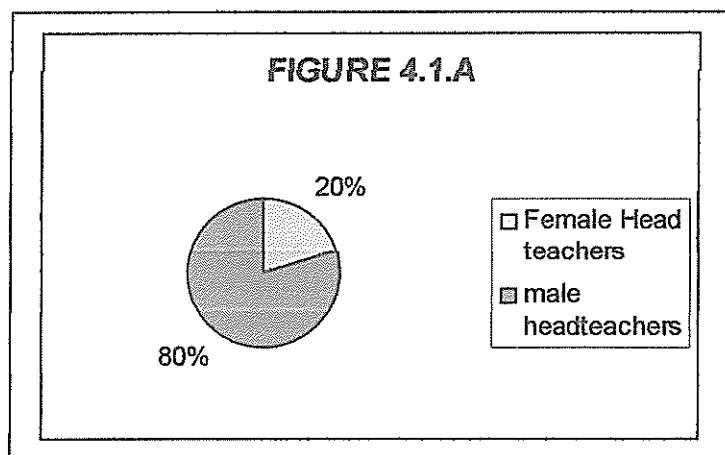
The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of learning environment on academic performance of learners in public primary school a case of Kianjiru Zone Mbeere District . Data was collected from five different schools in the zone among headteachers , teachers and parents . The results are presented in this chapter based on the four research questions of the study.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

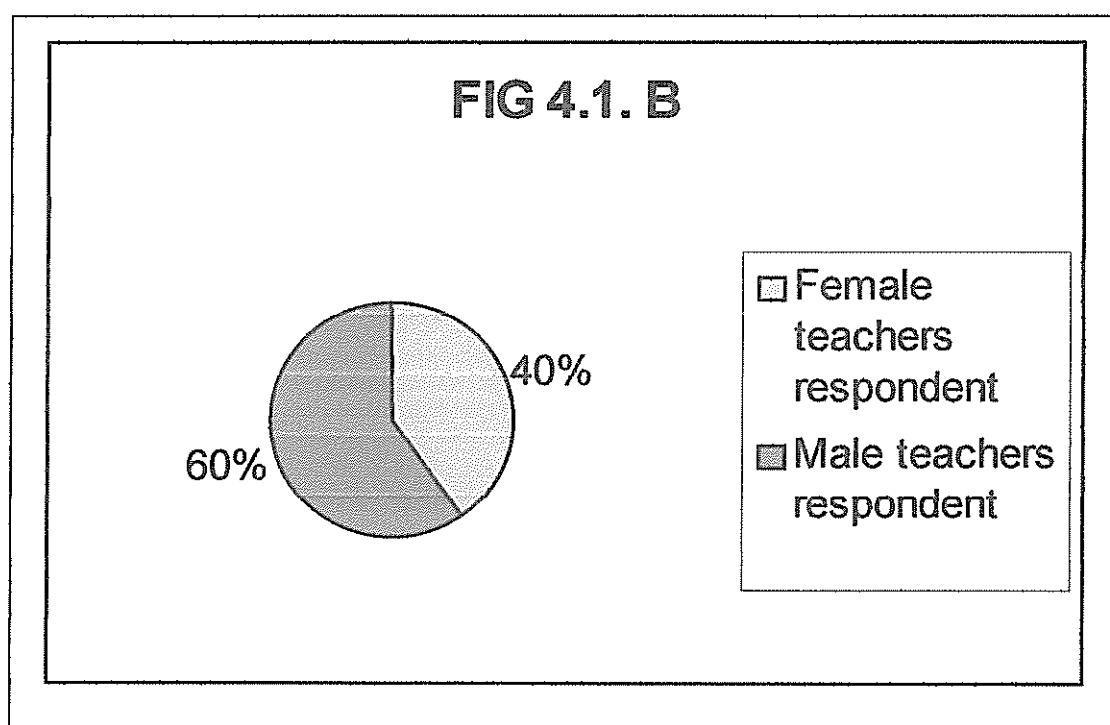
Five head teachers participated in the study out of which four were male and one female respondent. Ten teachers two from each five study schools formed the study respondents. Six of the teachers were male and four female teachers respectively. One parent from each study school was also interviewed.

All the head teachers respondents had a teaching experience of over ten (10) years. Six teachers respondents had a teaching experience of ten years and above while four had a teaching experience of between 5 -10 years . Two schools had a class enrolment of between 36 – 45 pupils while three had an enrolment of between 21 – 35 pupils

4.1 a. Headteachers respondents



4.1 b. Teachers respondents



4.2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The research questions asked: Does the learning environment contribute to good academic performance in public primary school in Kianjiru zone?

4.2a i General academic performance

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| Very Good | - | - |
| Good | 1 | 20% |
| Average | 3 | 60% |
| Below Average | 1 | 20% |
| Total | 5 | 100% |

It is evident from table 4.2.(i) that the general academic performance is average and below average in Kianjiru zone represented by 80%. Only 20% of the schools had good performance .

4.2.a (ii) Adequacy of teaching staff

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| Strongly agree | 3 | 60% |
| Agree | 1 | 20% |
| Disagree | 1 | 20% |
| Total disagree | - | - |
| Total | 5 | 100% |

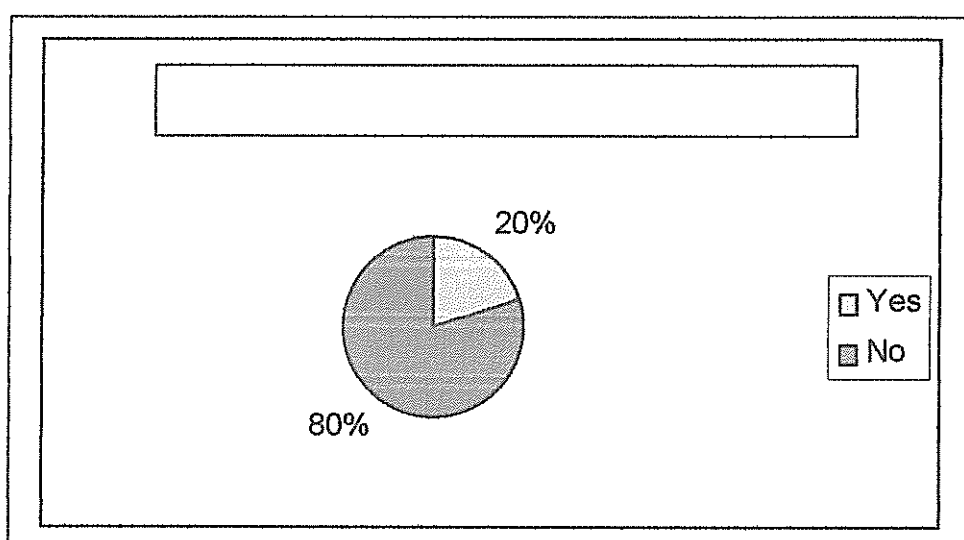
There is also enough evidence from table 4.2a (ii) that 80% of the schools have adequate teaching staff required to boost academic work and performance in school. Only 20% of respondent had understaffing problem hence something need to be done.

4.2a iii State of physical facilities

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Excellent | - | - |
| Good | 1 | 20% |
| Fair | 2 | 40% |
| poor | 2 | 40% |
| Total | 5 | 100% |

The analysis in table 4.2 iii clearly shows that only 20% of respondents had their school with good physical facilities, 40% had fair state and other 40% have poor physical facilities. This might be probably the cause of poor academic performance because poor facilities curtail efficient learning in schools.

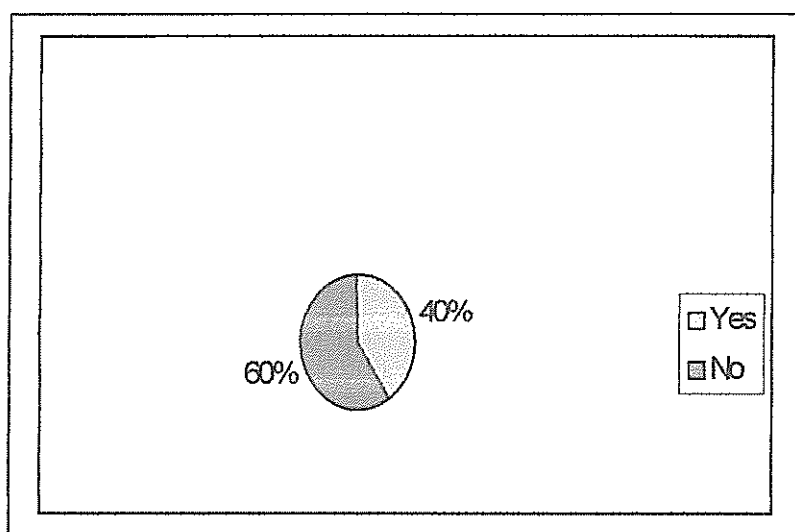
4.2a Iv Adequate Parental Support



It is also evident from figure 4.2 a v that 80% of the schools do not receive support of parents in matters of academic performance . Therefore such parents

might be the cause of poor performance . Its only 20% of respondents who agreed to receive support from parents and such schools had good performance

4.2a v Favourable school environment



It is also clear from Figure 4.2 a.v that 60% of the schools in Kianjiru zone do not have favourable school environment. Therefore this might probably be one of the reasons for poor academic performance because unfavourable environment does not arouse learners curiosity probably leading to poor academic performance . Only 40% of the schools agreed that they have fairly favourable environments.

4.2. B TEACHERS RESPONSES

Table 4.2. b.i Class Enrolment

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| 0 -20 | - | - |
| 21 – 35 | 8 | 80% |
| 36-45 | 2 | 20% |
| 46 above | - | - |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

The analysis in table 4.2.b.i clearly indicates 80% of teachers respondents have manageable class which should boost academic performance. About 20% have relatively high enrolment which sometimes is difficult manage during teaching process.

Table 4.2. b ii Enabling class environment

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Strongly agree | - | - |
| Agree | 3 | 30% |
| Disagree | 6 | 60% |
| Totally disagree | 1 | 10% |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

It is also clear from table 4.2.b ii that only 30% of the schools have enabling class environment . 70% of the respondents said they do not have enabling class environment probably this might be the cause of decline in academic standards in the zone.

4.2.b. iii Supportive parents

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Strongly agree | - | - |
| Agree | 2 | 20% |
| Disagree | 7 | 70% |
| Totally disagree | 1 | 10% |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

It is also evident from table 4.2.b iii that 20% of the teacher respondents receives support from the parents while 80% agreed that they do not get support from parents. This impacts negatively and probably may be one of the causes of poor performance in some schools.

4.3 LEARNING RESOURCES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The research questions stated: Does the use of learning resources affect academic performance in public primary school in Kianjiru zone ?

4.3 A HEADTEACHERS RESPONSES.

4.3. a(i) Adequacy of physical facilities

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Strongly agree | - | - |
| Agree | 1 | 20% |
| Disagree | 4 | 80% |
| Totally disagree | - | - |
| Total | 5 | 100% |

The analysis in table 4.3. a(i) shows clearly that only 20% of schools have adequate physical facilities . This actually boosts academic performance in those schools. However 80% of his respondents indicated that their schools do not have adequate physical facilities. This probably might be one of the reasons of poor academic performance.

4.3. a (ii) Adequacy of teaching resources

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
| Adequate | 1 | 20% |
| Fairly adequate | 2 | 40% |
| Not adequate | 2 | 40% |
| Total | 5 | 100% |

There is enough evidence from table 4.3. a (ii) that teaching resources are inadequate in most schools. 20% of respondent agreed that they have adequate resources , 40% said have fairly adequate and 40% have inadequate teaching resources , probably is one of the factors causing decline in academic performance.

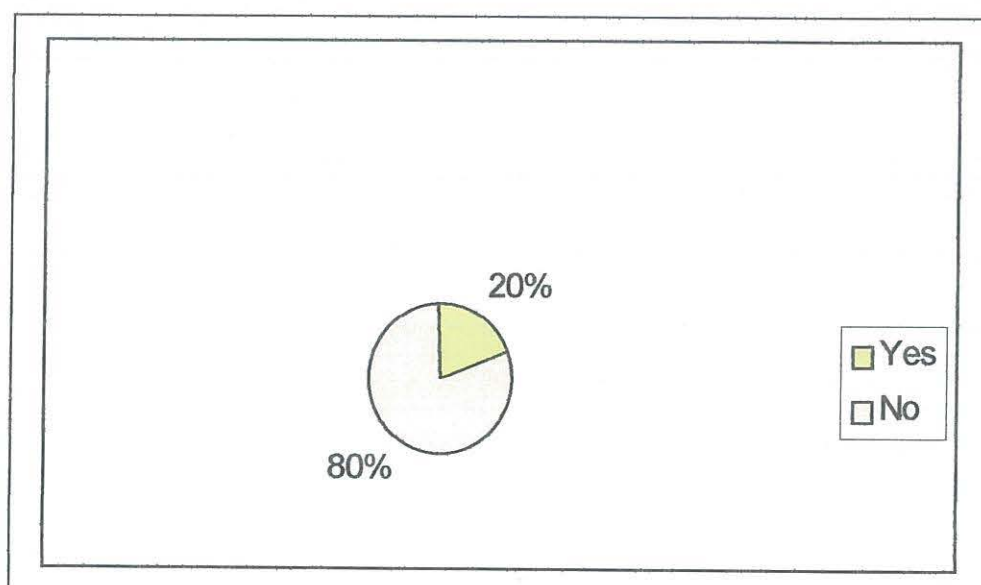
4.3 B TEACHERS RESPONSES

Table 4.3. b(i) Frequency of usage of learning resources

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Every lesson | - | - |
| Some lesson | 9 | 90% |
| Rarely | 1 | 10% |
| Not at all | - | - |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

It is evident from the analysis on table 4.3. b(i) that teachers in the zone do not use teaching resources in every lesson .90% of the respondents said that they use resources in some lesson which boosts academic performance . Only 10% of the respondent said that they rarely uses resources which leads to poor development of concept during teaching and learning process.

Figure 4.3.b ii Adequacy of learning teaching resources



It is also clear from that Fig 4.3. b (ii) 80% of the respondents do not have adequate resources in their schools. This might be one of the factors leading probably to low academic performance. 20% of the schools respondent shows that they have an adequate resource which boosts academic performance.

4.4 TEACHERS EFFORT AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Table 4.4. a(i) Motivation effect to teachers

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 5 | 100% |
| No | - | - |
| Total | 5 | 100% |

It is evident from table 4.4. a(i) that the level of motivation offered to teachers affects academic performance . 100% of the respondents agreed that motivated teaching staff produces improved and good academic performance .

Table 4.4. a (ii) Lesson preparation by teachers

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Always | 1 | 20% |
| Sometimes | 3 | 60% |
| Rarely | 1 | 20% |
| Not at all | - | - |
| Total | 5 | 100% |

The analysis in table 4.4. a(ii) shows clearly that 20% teachers prepare their lesson . Always 80% respondents do not regularly prepare probably being one of the causes of poor performance in the zone.

4.4. B TEACHERS RESPONSES

Table 4.4. b(i) Rewarding learners

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 10 | 100% |
| No | - | - |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

It is evident from table 4.4. b(i) that all the teachers respondent rewards their learners during teaching process. This improves the rapport with the learners which should encourage them to do better.

Table 4.4.4 b(ii) motivation by administration

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Always | - | - |
| Sometimes | 2 | 20% |
| Rarely | 3 | 30% |
| Not at all | 6 | 50% |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

The analysis in table 4.4 b(ii) indicates that most of the school administrators do not motivate their staff represented by 80%. This probably is one of the causes of decline in education standard in the zone . while only 20% of respondents said that they are sometimes motivated .

4.5 GOVERNMENT ROLE IN BOOSTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The research question was:-

What is the role of government in ensuring quality learning environment and academic performance of learners in schools .

4.5 A HEADTEACHERS RESPONSES

Table 4.5a Supportive government in academic performance

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Strongly agree | 3 | 60% |
| Agree | 2 | 40% |
| Disagree | - | - |
| Totally disagree | - | - |
| Total | 5 | 100% |

From the table 4.5 a 60% of respondents welcomed and appreciated the support of government of Kenya which is inform of instructional materials, policy framework and performance monitoring in schools.

This is making sure that school activities are well coordinated hence improving the performance .

The other 40% of respondent agreed that there is support from the government however there is need to improve the assistance and monitoring .

TABLE 4.5 B TEACHERS RESPONSES

Table 4.5 b Adequate support from government

| CATEGORY | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Strongly agree | 2 | 30% |
| Agree | 6 | 60% |
| Disagree | 1 | 10% |
| Totally disagree | - | - |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

It is clear from table 4.5 b that 90% of the respondent appreciates the support from the government especially during this Free Primary Education (FPE) time. Such includes provision of provision of instructional materials, maintenance of physical facilities like desks, tables and classrooms. Only 10% of teacher respondent disagreed that there is inadequate support of government which cannot sustain meaningful improved performance.

4.6 PARENTS CONTRIBUTION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS IN SCHOOLS.

The research question was ; -What is the role of parents in contributing to the performance of their children?

All parents respondents agreed that the parents have a major role to play on their children academic performance in schools.

All parents interviewed gave different views and suggestion on how to contribute to the performance of their children. Some agreed that their economic activities adversely affects their children's performance because they sometimes use their children in the economic activities especially khat harvesting. All of the interviewed parents said that there is no relationship between economic status and academic performance citing that sometimes children from lower economic status families do better than their counterparts from higher economic status.

4.7 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS.

There are several factors in the school learning environment which influence learning and performance . These are:-

- Provision of adequate learning resources such as teaching and learning material influence the learners participation and performance in class.
- When teachers are motivated, they are able to teach better , appreciate their job and motivate their learners to higher performance.
- Parents contribution is vital in the learning process inorder to ensure good academic performance in schools, where parents are not supportive, performance is usually low.
- The government of Kenya is playing a major role in terms of policy framework, provision of teaching and learning materials which inturn enhance learning and performance in school. The next chapter discusses the findings , draws conclusion and makes recommendation from the study .

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 OVERVIEW

The chapter introduces the reader to discussion, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

5.1 DISCUSSION

The study found that resources play a major role in learning. They enhance concept development meaningful learning and generally they motivate learners. This finding confirms what Brown et al (1969) identified that children learn better what they do . The instructional materials the teacher uses are very crucial in the learning process because they determine the activities in which boys and girls engage in.

It was also found that motivation of teachers in any teaching process affects the performance of learners. This is in terms of giving them incentives to teach, appreciating their effort in boosting the performance by rewarding them. This consequently motivates learners in different ways to participate in learning hence better their performance. These findings are consistent with Nicholls (1979) findings that “motivation affects attention in class or influence the amount of study time devoted to a particular subject thus directly influencing academic achievement.

The study also found that parents contribute to learning process in terms of providing moral support and care taker role of the child. They are also supposed to ensure security of the child and meet their health needs. By this they encourage their children to learn better and perform better.

The government is playing an important role in providing learning materials, inspecting schools to ensure quality learning, monitoring progress, policy development and implementation.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that learning and performance in class are influenced to a greater extent by several factors like ; resources , contribution of teachers , parents and government . Therefore learners excel in classroom learning when these factors are provided adequately to them.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that:-

- i. More resources need to be provided to schools learning environment in order to boost learners performance . This is in terms of more teaching materials and resources.
- ii. There should be more and regular inspection of schools management by zonal QASO to ensure quality service delivery in schools by the management committee and teachers .

- iii. The zonal QASO should call a workshop involving all stakeholders like parents, teachers, local priests and administrators and sensitize them on the topic of motivation. This should be followed up with massive campaigns in schools, churches and in village meeting.
- iv. There is need to cultivate a greater parental awareness on the academic needs of the learners. This should be through regular parent meetings in schools, chiefs, baraza and in local church.
- v. Teachers need to be sensitized on the need to use learning resources in all lessons especially during this era of FPE where the government has provided enough instructional materials to all schools. Therefore teachers should make sure that resources are put into good use and not stored. Where they may not be enough or available teachers should make effort to improvise.
- vi. Similar studies could be done in other zones in the district on the same topic to determine the similarities or differences of the study findings. There is also need to carry out more study on motivation and performance to establish if there is relationship.

REFERENCES

1. Arcaro, Janice (1995). Creating Quality in the classroom. London, Kogan page Limited.
2. Artinson, Norman J.(1965). Modern Teaching Aids London. Maclaren Ltd.
3. Copper, Hellen (1971). Wall Sheets Choosing, Using Making London ; University of London Institute of Education.
4. Data-Ansu (1984). Education and Society: Sociology of African Education. New York St. Martin Press.
5. Eshiwani , G.S. (1983). Factors Affecting Performance . Nairobi Bureau of Educational Research Unpublished Study.
6. Evans, Tom (1978). Audio Visual Aids. An Introduction; Nairobi ; East African Literature Research
7. Kerlinger ,F.N (1973). Foundations of Behavioural Research (2nd Edition) : New York Holt Rinehart and Winston Inc.
8. Kothari C.R (1985). Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques, New Delhi Wiley Eastern Ltd.
9. Macioris , J.J. (1997). Sociology 6th Edition. Upper Saddle river, Prentice – Hall , Inc.
10. Musvosvi, D.B. (1998). Alternative Approach to Education Administration. Kendu Bay, Africa Herald Publishing house.
11. Mbiti David M. (1978). Foundations of School Administration .Nairobi University Press.
12. Mugenda O.M. (1999). Research Methods, Quantitative Approaches. Acts Press Nairobi.
13. US Department of Education (1988). What works Research about Teaching and Learning. Washington DC.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER

This questionnaire seeks to establish the influence of learning environment on academic performance of learners in Public primary schools in Kianjiru zone, Mbeere district Kenya..

The question are purely meant for research work and the responses will be treated confidentially and will not be directed for any other purposes.

Please answer the following questions by ticking (✓) within the provided square. Any extra explanation on the space provided.

Please tick one

Name of the school-----

Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

Years of teaching experience 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 10 above ☐

1. What is the enrolment of your class?

0-20 ☐ 21-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46 above ☐

2. Am comfortable with pupil -teacher ratio in my class

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Total disagree ☐

3. Learning environment in my class in enabling to achieve good academic performance.

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Totally disagree ☐

4. How often do you use resources during teaching / learning resources in lessons?

Every lesson ☐ Some lesson ☐ Rarely ☐ Not at all ☐

5. Do you have adequate learning resources in your class

Yes ☐ No ☐

If No briefly comment why

6. How often do school administration reward good academic performance?

Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Not at all ☐

7. How often is discussion aimed at promoting good academic performance held in your school?

Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Termly ☐

8. Do you reward learners in your class

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes list a few methods commonly used -----

9. Parents in my class are supportive in promoting academic performance

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Totally disagree ☐

10. There is adequate support of government in promoting good academic performance

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Totally disagree ☐

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADTEACHER

This questionnaire seeks to establish the influence of learning environment on academic performance of learners in Public primary schools in Kianjiru zone, Mbeere district Kenya..

The question are purely meant for research work and the responses will be treated confidentially and will not be directed for any other purposes.

Please answer the following questions by ticking (✓) within the provided square. Any extra explanation on the space provided.

Name of the school-----

Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

Years of teaching experience 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 10 above ☐

1. When was the school established ?-----

2. Teaching staff is adequate in relation to streams .

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Totally disagree ☐

3. How has been the general academic performance for the past three years

Very good ☐ Good ☐ Average ☐ Below average ☐

4. In your own opinion what do you think contributed to the 3 above ? briefly
comment -----

5. My school has adequate physical facilities to promote good academic
performance

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Totally disagree ☐

What is the state of physical facilities in your school?

Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐

6. In your own opinion , do you think your school environment is favourable to achieve good academic performance ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Does the level of motivation offered to teachers affect academic performance in your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes / no briefly comment-----

8. How often do teachers prepare their lessons in our school .

Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Not at all ☐

9. Do parents cooperate in promoting good learning environment in your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes / no briefly comment -----

10. How adequate are teaching resources used in your school?

Adequate ☐ Fairly adequate ☐ Not adequate ☐

11. Government of Kenya plays a major role in maintaining the quality of learning in my school ?

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Totally disagree ☐



**KAMPALA
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**

Ggaba Road - Kansang
P.O. Box 20000, Kampala
Tel: +256- 41- 266813 / +256- 41- 2676
Fax: +256- 41- 501974
E- mail: admin@kiu.ac.ug,
Website: www.kiu.ac.ug

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
INSTITUTE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING (IODL)

DATE: 25/04/2008

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR ~~MS/MRS/MR~~ ROBERT NJERU N.

The above named is our student in Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a ~~Diploma~~/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/She wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

INFLUENCE OF LEARNING ENVIRONMENT ON
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS

Case Study: KIANJIRU ZONE, GACHOKA, MBEERE DISTRICT
KENYA.

The research is a requirement for the award of a ~~Diploma~~/Bachelors degree in Education.

Any assistance accorded to ~~her~~ ^{him} regarding research will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

MR. MUHWEZI, JOSEPH
HEAD, IN-SERVICE