

**THE CAUSES OF STUDENT'S ACADEMIC FAILURES
IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
MASHUURU DIVISION, KAJIADO
DISTRICT, KENYA.**

BY:

LETUATI B. ZAKAYO

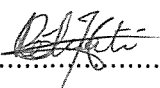
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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT OF THE AWARD OF BACHELORS'
DEGREE OF SCIENCE WITH EDUCATION OF
KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**

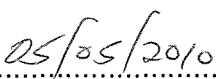
APRIL 2010

DECLARATION

I LETUATI B. ZAKAYO declare to the best of my knowledge that this research report is my original work and has never been submitted to any university or any other institution for any award.

Signed.....

Letuati B. Zakayo


Date

APPROVAL

The "causes of student's academic failures" has been under my supervision and it is ready for examination as a university supervisor.

Signature.. 

Ms. Nakawungu Faridah

Date.. 

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents Mrs. Ann Letuati and Mr. Paul Letuati, siblings Joseph, John, Timothy, Joel, Josphert, Stellar, and Nakaet. Friends like Harrison, Sharon, and others who gave me assistance and support both morally and financially.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to my competent professional supervisor, Ms. Nakawungu Faridah, who guided me, all this time in all the stages of development of this research report.

I would like to thank all our lectures at Kampala international university for their valuable support and encouragement.

Special thanks also go to all my class mates and all friends. I will always remember your contributions and are deeply in my heart. THANK YOU and May GOD bless you all.

Finally I thank the almighty God who has given me the will, ability and guided me throughout this research report.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the "causes of student's academic failures" with the objectives of finding the causes of student's academic failures in secondary schools and find out the possible solutions to curb or eliminate this problem.

The researcher used sample random method to collect information from various respondents in Mashuuru division, Kajiado district in Kenya. The researcher used descriptive survey design with the aim of collecting information from respondents on their opinion in relation to student's academic failures in Mashuuru division, Kenya.

The study found out that three factors are the most contributors for student's academic failures. Namely parents/ family causal factors, teachers/academic causal factors and the students/ personal causal factors; implying that these three parties are not joining their efforts together to produce better results.

Conclusively Both students and teachers agreed positively to a significant degree on poor study habits, lack of personal discipline, and to some extent absence, emotional disturbance, lack of capacity necessary for high school works as indicators of failures. Moreover, from one to form three high school subjects that revealed the most number of failures were in Mathematics, chemistry, physics and in English areas of learning.

This study recommended that Teachers should widen students' awareness of the advantages one can get from attending classes regularly and studying his lessons habitually. In addition, Parent attitudes toward underperforming gifted children should be positive to impact motivation.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Kenya's education system consists of early childhood education, primary, secondary and college. Early childhood education takes at least three years, primary eight years, secondary four and university four or six years depending on the course. At the end of primary education, pupils sit for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), which determines those who proceed to secondary school or vocational training. For those who proceed to secondary level, there is a national examination at the end of Form Four – the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), which determines those proceeding to the universities, other professional training or employment.

Independent Kenya's first system of education was introduced by British colonists. After Kenya's independence on December 12, 1963, an authority named Ominde Commission was formed to introduce changes that would reflect the nation's sovereignty. The commission focused on identity and unity, which were critical issues at the time. Between 1964 and 1985, the 7-4-2-3-system was adopted – seven years of primary, four years of lower secondary, two years of upper secondary, and three years of university. All schools had a common curriculum.

In 1981, the Presidential Working Party on the Second University was commissioned to look at both the possibilities of setting up a second university in Kenya as well as the reforming of the entire education system. The committee recommended that the 7-4-2-3 system be changed to an 8-4-4 system (eight years in primary, four years in secondary, and four years in university education).

The current 8-4-4 system was launched in January 1985. It put more emphasis on vocational subjects on the assumption that the new structure would enable school dropouts at all levels either to be self-employed or to secure employment in the informal sector.

The causes of academic failure in secondary schools are numerous in number ranging from: poor communication, dictatorial administration, defiant behaviors of the youths today, peer pressure and truancy, need to change leadership systems among others.

Failure refers to the state or condition of not meeting a desirable or intended objective, and may be viewed as the opposite of success

However different interested groups have taken outstanding measures in order to solve the problem of failure in schools. For example, states through the ministry of education makes continuous revision of the syllabus and recruiting teachers so as to give quality education to the learners.

Parents have been called to schools by the administrators to give view of the possible ways of curbing this alarming situation. It was expected that these measures would put to an end the wave of academic failure, but the incident however has continued to occur. It's then clear that there is an urgent need to address these issues in a more precise and clear way.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Over the past ten years performance in high schools has been falling drastically in Mashuuru division, Kajiado district. The performances of students who enroll in form one and successfully completed form four has been decreasing in the region. The major cause of this has been lack of responsibility from parents, poor resource management, deviant behavior among students, and unethical student-teacher relationship among others.

The learning institutions therefore need to overcome and survive the causes of academic failures so to achieve general objectives toward quality education.

The need to address the issue of academic failure should be taken into great consideration by all departments of education. This is to ensure that students acquire quality education, desired performance and production of responsible citizens in the learning fraternity. Thus it is because of such backgrounds that the researcher was forced to carry out this study.

1.2 The Purpose of the Study

This study was set out to identify the causes of students' academic failures in secondary school, and suggest possible solutions to curb these failures so to obtain quality education.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General

The main objective of this study was to find the causes and suggest possible solutions of academic failures in secondary schools in Mashuuru Division, Rift valley Province and to make recommendations.

1.3.2 Specific

- i.** Find out the causes of students academic failures in secondary schools.
- ii.** Find out possible solutions to curb or eliminate this problem.

1.4 Research Questions

- i.** What are the causes of student's academic failures in secondary schools?
- ii.** What measures under taken to solve this problem?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The research report will help the researchers to develop a perfect concern regarding the causes of student's academic failures in the institutions of learning especially in secondary schools.

The research will help the ministry of Education and the school Administrators to identify and fully comprehend the causes of student's academic failures in the institutions of learning.

The ministry of education and school administration is in a position to identify the causes of student's academic failures in the school hence address them in the right time so as to avoid consequences of academic failure for the progressive survival of schools.

The study also will help the students to be loyal to their administrators, teachers and themselves since this will affect their academic desires and wants.

The study will empower the custodians of youth in learning institutions, put in place interventions to curb academic failures. The findings of this study were beneficial to other institutions:

1.6 Scope of the Study

The researcher focused the study on Mashuuru division, Kajiado district where data was collected in some selected secondary schools. The study was carried out in five out of six secondary schools starting from January to august 2009.

Mashuuru Division is a subsection of Kajiado District in Rift Valley region of Kenya called Rift Valley province.

Kajiado District has two constituencies. That is, Kajiado North and Kajiado Central, within the division.

The division has frequently experienced low performance in academics that has been a heartbreaking experience for the parents, teachers, administrators and the education officers involved. It has been a great problem for the heads of these schools to make the anticipated progress in academic performance. The main issue is that the heart causes of these unadmirable academic results have not been addressed with concern and regularity. The researcher has identified this area to be the most convenient, since it is within the reach of the researcher, and information can easily be gotten with fewer struggles.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1. Microscopically – closely observed, deeply.
2. Management – the body responsible for planning and the smooth running of an institution.
3. Combat – alleviate, to do away with something.
4. Confound – confusing, perplexing, and mind mixing situation.
5. curb- put in a standstill, prevent

1.8 Limitations of the Study

There were delays in the study because accessing to departmental heads of schools, the administration and students required booking appointments in advance; Difficulty in approaching some interviewees while some respondents failed to fill in the questionnaires.

The time allocated for the research was not enough to carry out an exhaustive study on the causes of academic failures and suggesting possible Solutions. Therefore the researcher was forced to work up to the late hours of the day so as to get elaborate information from the respondents

Means of transport were not readily available hence the researcher had to walk for very long distances to reach where the selected schools.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter looked at all literature of different authors related to the topic, which includes causes and the solutions of student's academic failures, leading the researcher to chapter three.

Among these causes include; lack of concern from parents, peer pressure, poor background, poor language skills, poor primary preparation, and dictatorial management in the school, among others

2.1 Causes of students academic failures

Poverty, civil strife, regional conflicts, and negative cultural or religious practices and HIV/AIDS factors are some of the major causes of poor academic performance. This is according to the daily nation 13th November 2003 page 37, Dantengo who stated that education is increasingly becoming elusive for many children in Africa.

The challenge of large number of students in class leads to the inability of the teachers and the school management to provide individual attention to learners and understanding their socio-psychological and academic needs, is the major problem causing academic failures. This is stated out by the daily nation news paper Monday 6th of January 2003, page 8

The system of education is overwhelming to children as they are subjected to long hours of learning and have no time to do house chores. In addition the deal with corruption in school funds are misappropriated because most committee members are illiterate or do not bother to verify expenditure. This was sited out In January 23rd 2003, by Alfred Wakubwa in the daily nation newspaper

The present study extends these failures by focusing on another potential risk factor. Physical health problems have been found to undermine academic performance in child hood and job performance in adulthood. Although a relatively healthy stage of life, adolescents do have health problems. Furthermore, considering that adolescent experiences direct multiple life pathways, uncovering the link between health problems and academic performance could enhance knowledge. This is according to the Education Research and Review vol3 (10) pp.304-308, October 2008 Academic Journal

Low achievement in schools may be motivated by fear of failure (high need for acceptance), incuriosity (low need for cognition), lack of ambition (low need for power), spontaneity (low need for order), lack of responsibility (low need for honor), and combativeness (high need for vengeance). This is according to Reiss, Steven Journal Articles; Reports – Descriptive c .e odaetetl (1997) comparative education by vikas publishing house put limited new deahi, India

High school studies may be considered important to parents, to teachers, to employers, to people searching for a job, or to students who have defined career goals. But some high school students get into academic difficulty because high school is not really very important to them. They may have heard about the necessity of university and college education, but if they do not really understand the importance of studying in secondary and if they let other activities get in the way, chances are they will not do very well in their studies. This is according to

Dr. Robert Pitcher of the Educational Development Center have came up with what he believes are the primary causes of failure in secondary schools.

Vagueness about long-range goals; the desire for pleasure and fun is also a very strong need among adolescents. However most mature adults realize that success in secondary school demands a great deal of hard work. Goals do not have to be specifically defined, but they must be one's own. A student must have a sense of working toward a goal or reward that he or she really wants, whether it is the pleasure of a good grade, a still undefined career, or status and security. High school work is likely to seem grim, difficult and even meaningless if it is not related to personal goals and objectives. This is according to Alfred wakubwa, the daily nation newspaper, 23rd January 2003, page 17

Inappropriate choice of a subjects; There are few humans with a very clear idea of themselves at the age of 18 or 19; consequently, many students initially may choose inappropriate fields of study. One of the purposes of secondary education is to help students discover or create their identities through education. This process of change reflects not a lack of character, but the development of it. Students must be aware of their own development and adjust previous goals and decisions to accommodate personal growth. This is according to the daily nation newspaper, Monday 6th January 2003, page

Poor language skill; to a large extent, the success or failure of a student in secondary school directly hinges on mastery of the language. A student must be able to read, to write, to speak, and to listen effectively. Being ineffective in even one of these language abilities can lead to academic difficulty. All high school students, no matter how bright, are expected to improve their language skills. Listening with comprehension is a particularly neglected skill, and students often must overcome a life-time of poor listening habits. This is according to James M. Henslin, Social Problems 7th Edition, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Failure to assume responsibility, Perhaps the greatest change and challenge facing students is dealing with the increased freedom which students experience when they are away from home. Choices are presented regarding the use of time, personal habits, social activities, and even whether or not to attend class or do assignments. These choices are accompanied by consequences. Although friends, parents, and faculty may advise, the choices and consequences are ultimately the responsibility of the student. According to Petraitis J., Flay B. R. and Miller T.Q (1986). Reviewing Theories of Adolescent Substance Use: Organizing Pieces in the Puzzle.

Lack of ability and/or poor high school preparation, some students' find that their educational background or their lack of effort has not prepared them for the academic demands of the subjects they have chosen in high school. They may need remedial programs to make up for past deficiencies.

Most students who do not complete school do so because of family problems. Girls, especially, want to get married and start a family. Some parents are not interested in education and do not support their children in studying. Social problems are also a contributing factor. Education is compulsory but, despite this, some people do not take it seriously. Furthermore, jobs are available even if students do not have a good education. The third reason is work pressure. Some families are poor and need their children to work in order to increase the income. All these problems will create young people who do not have any skills and who will not be able to improve their lives for the family and the country. According to http://wiki.answers//the_causes_of_poor_academic_performance_in_schools_of_kenya on 10th April 2010

2.2 Solutions to student's academic failures

Establishment of the 'National Assessment of Educational Progress' (NAEP). In order to improve learning, productivity, concentration, and teacher – student communication, several Department of Education had to establish some groups/organizations which work on designing methods, curriculum, parameters, and achievement of schools. They conduct an assessment of the public school that work on their framework. This is according to Kandle, D.B (1980). "Antecedents of Deviant Behavior response: predicting from a general theory of deviant behavior". Journal of youth adolescent 6:77-87.

Prevention of violence by providing security in Public schools; According to Vaishali Satwase, O'Malley, P.M, Bachman, and J.G (1998) National Survey Results on academic performance the "Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1997", Volume1: Secondary School Students. Teaching through audio and visual aids makes it more proactive. Homework can be designed in a way that students enjoy studying at home. Sundays or holidays can be utilized for play activities, visiting to a zoo, museum or cultural places. In this way, schools can pay individual attention to each student as per his talent. Home schooling is a new option that provides extra teaching hours for some students.

There are various bullying prevention programs available, most of which are based on the work of Dan Olweus of Norway whose program successfully reduced bully/victim problems by 50% or more. These include

Parents can work with teachers and schools by asking for a school conference to address the problem. Parents should keep a detailed record of harassment and the ways in which the school is handling the situation. Parents should ask if their school already has a bullying prevention committee and if the answer is no – they can work to establish a bullying prevention committee in their school. The most effective of these committees have representatives from administration, teachers, school mental health teams and parents. These committees develop programs that look at the total school environment and work to educate everyone to create a network of adult support for children. Such a network is particularly needed in the middle-school years, where children are learning to negotiate a social environment that is no longer primarily overseen by one teacher

Teachers can be encouraged to involve students in creating classroom rules against bullying. Teachers should have a serious talk with the bully, explaining such behavior is not acceptable and explaining the negative consequences. Involving the bully's parents in these discussions can be very helpful. Of course, teachers also should listen to the victim's concerns and document episodes of bullying. There are many creative classroom solutions that will ease children's fear of retaliation, including anonymous drop boxes and surveys of bullying and harassment among the student population.

Parents should be encouraged to send their children to school. Schools with baby-minding facilities should be opened specially for married students. The government needs to stress the importance of education and even offer financial support to students to continue. This will encourage students to stay at school rather than start working. This is according to Petraitis J., Flay B. R. and Miller T.Q (1986). Reviewing Theories of Adolescent Substance Use: Organizing Pieces in the Puzzle.

In today's world of talent, competition and merits are considered important. Therefore, public schools should enforce latest learning and teaching guidelines every year. If required, they should provide extra classes or tuition facilities to some students. This is according to Bence, M Brandon, R, Lee, I, & Tran, H. University of Washington (2000). Impact of peer substance use on middle school performance in Washington.

However, teachers can make teaching and learning interesting through innovative methods like storytelling, games, painting and dancing. The school atmosphere needs to be child-friendly and child-centric, and at the same time, it should also motivate the teachers.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter puts forward and describes how the research was conducted. It shows the methods/procedures that were used in the study and the reason why such methods were chosen. These methods/procedures were used to collect the appropriate data upon which findings, interpretations and conclusions were made. These procedures include research design, area and population of study, Sample selection and size, data collection methods, and limitation of study.

3.1 Research Design and technique

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The qualitative method tried to investigate male and female's knowledge and experience about student's academic failures and why they increased highly.

The researcher used descriptive survey design with the aim of collecting information from respondents on their opinion in relation to student's academic failures in Mashuuru division, Kenya. This design was chosen because it describes the attitude of the population in relation to the failures of the students, in a systematic and accurate manner, and was found appropriate for the researcher

3.2 Sample Size and sampling strategy

The study was carried out in 5 out of 6 secondary schools of Mashuuru division. these are; Maasai High School, Elerai boys' secondary School, Elerai girls' secondary School, A man bright future Secondary schools and Mashuuru secondary School. A sample of 10 students in all seniors, teaching and non-teaching staff were used to represent the whole population in each school. This was to enable adequate data collection for analysis because the whole population could not be studied as a whole due to the nature of the study

The selection of respondent was based on random and non random sampling methods. Head teachers and teachers were selected using non – random technique while students were selected using random technique.

The survey received a total of 145 responses of 5 head teachers, 40 teachers and 100 students making the responses. The sample justifiably gave equally reliable representative information.

3.3 Research instruments

The research in this case used such instruments as self administered questionnaires, face to face interviews, observation and document analysis to capture information from respondents.

3.3.1 Primary data

Primary data involved use of the questionnaires and interviews.

Questionnaires

These are set of questions designed and given to the respondents to fill in order to obtain data on a proposed topic in research. They can either be administered in person by the researcher or sent to respondent by post e-mail through office or home delivery. Questionnaires have same questions in same order but use still same words. There therefore two types of questions which include open ended questions which are designed to permit free response from the respondents. The question merely raises an issue but does not provide or suggest structure for the respondents reply. Another type is closed ended questions where in these questions responses of the subjects (respondents) are limited to stated alternatives such as Yes/No.

3.3.2 Secondary data

Other sources of the researcher's information was obtained from the annual reports, journals, magazines and other written materials related to the research topic. For example magazines that brings out the impacts of academic failures on academic performance among others.

Document Analysis

Documents review

This is the process of collecting a sample of documents forms and records (Jeffrey L Whitten, 1995). Written documents include reports, forms, manuals, memos, business plans and policy statements. Documents are a good source of information because they tell the researcher how things are supposed to be done. As the researcher reviews the existing documents he/she will be required to take notes and even draw pictures.

Document analysis is a credible technique since it offers first hand information just like the observation. This is a documented account and is factual unlike other techniques. The researcher of this study has high analytical skills and thus able to verify facts, opinions, prejudice, malice, assumptions, and projected visions documented in the records.

3.4 Procedure

The researcher got introductory letter from the University. Also he presented the letter to the Educational Officer Kajiado District who introduced the researcher to the respective schools in the selected area. The interviews were conducted at the schools. The respondents were allowed to carry home the questionnaires. Data collection was through visits to their schools. The head teachers, teachers and non-teaching staff were interviewed at times they considered convenient for each of them. The student heads i.e. prefects were also interviewed. A general observation was made on the student's behaviors and disciplinary records examined.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATIONS, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to explain the researcher's findings. The information was gathered by use of questionnaires, observation and interviews. Personal identifiers such as names and addresses were removed so that information given cannot be traced back to each specific respondent.

4.1 Data Analysis

In general, there are three main causes of students' failures: Parents or family causal factors, Teachers or academic causal factors, and Students or personal causal factors. More often than not, failure among students somehow comes from the teacher's factors.

Furthermore, learners' performance in the classroom is affected by external factors such as home environment, teaching methodologies, and personal motives. Learners learn at different speeds because of the effect of diverse culture and individual differences.

4.1.1 Teacher's/academic causal factors

The success and failure of the learners in their academics depend largely on their teacher's employment of the different learning styles and strategies. It is clearly noted that autocratic teacher mostly end unsuccessful because of poor classroom management. Such poor management is the inability to understand the learner's unique individuality in the learning process. On the other hand, democratic teachers produce better learning results than those who dominate, control, or manipulate learning situations.

The researcher interrogated an average of seventy students and ten teachers in the five different schools on the effectiveness of classroom management and effective teaching techniques, in relation to student's performance. The data below shows their response.

Table: 1. teaching methods versus student's performance

Respondent opinions	Frequency.	Percentage.
a larger extend	46	57.5%
a smaller extend	23	28.75%
Not at all	11	13.75%
Total	80	100%

While some educators have already taken the personal and professional responsibility to stay away from students no matter what the age is, others have not been able to grasp a hold of this forethought; thus, leaving themselves open for inappropriate relationships and possible sexual charges. Many of the respondents expressed their concerns in relation to unethical relationship of teachers to their students.

The girl child specifically has been disadvantaged because of a number of their teachers who use their positions to seduce the girls in exchange with high marks or cheap goodies such as a cup of tea. These students end up terminating their studies only to regret at the end. Most of the society members continually point fingers to the poorly performing students but the root cause of their failure is not these students but it is the unpleasant relation hold by most of the teachers.

The research has found out that for many teachers, weaknesses in subject knowledge or pedagogical understanding limit the extent to which they can make full use of effective teaching methods or strategies. It is unfortunate that in all the schools in this division, almost a quarter of the staff members are untrained teachers who are employed by the parents due to understaffed schools in the whole country as a result of the free primary education introduced in the year 2003 by the government of Kenya. These teachers try their best to deliver the content but unfortunately lack good approach to the learners who ends up missing the teacher's points leading to failures.

The information below shows the responses on average of both students and teachers in relation to content mastering versus students academic performance

Table: 2. content mastering versus academic performance

Respondents opinions	Frequency	Percentage
Key to academic success	67	83.75%
Not key to academic success	13	16.25%
total	80	100%

The study found out the causes of low self-esteem usually is because of things students were told constantly while growing up. Often, these students were told they were no good or even worthless. Hearing that often enough they started to believe it.

Many of the students interviewed by the researcher were accusing their teachers of being demoralizing and some goes to the extent of abusing the students by nicknaming them "sleeping headed," "sheep born of a human being," "good for nothing," and other statements which make them have low self esteem.

However confirming this from other respondents, some principals and parents were very open to the researcher by accepting the fact that some teachers were not observing the clearly outlined professional ethics. Constantly informing a person they have no value may make them feel inferior, and can destroy their belief in themselves and their self-confidence.

Most of the teachers, students and parents the researcher interrogated in all the five schools said that this habit did not only started in secondary school but it is also in primary where children need more encouragement and motivating statement so as to help them aim higher in their education. The information below shows the quantitative analysis of this information as collected from the various respondents who said they received these discouraging words in schools.

Table: 3. performance versus motivation in every school

Respondents/schools	Elerai boys secondary	Elerai girls secondary	Mashuuru secondary	Merrueshi Maasai high school	A man bright future
Students who said yes	85%	80%	75%	85%	80%
Students who said no	15%	20%	25%	15%	20%
Teachers who said yes	60%	70%	65%	80%	90%
Teachers who said no	40%	30%	35%	20%	10%

On average therefore the data is represented below

Table: 4. average performance versus motivation

Respondent/schools	Elerai boys	Elerai girls	Mashuuru	Merrueshi	A man bright
Yes	72.5%	75%	70%	82.5%	85%
No	27.5%	25%	30%	17.5%	15%
total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Most of the student's feelings about themselves are built in childhood. If they were fortunate to have loving parents who conveyed their worth in their relationship to them, and if they grew up in a safe environment with positive relationships with peers, teachers and role models, then it is likely they will feel reasonably good about themselves. However, if faced with negative influences in childhood, it may not take much to tip the balance the other way.

4.1.2 Students/personal causal factors

Students who have not been disciplined at home arrive at school with no appreciation for rules and how they should behave. This results in bad temper, poor schoolwork, feeling left out, and developing a hatred for school. Sometimes these students can even become bullies to other children. In the division, the popular traditional practices of the Maasai people take captive the youthful stage of boys and girls hence they view school life as the second option in their life. Many teachers and parents admitted that most of their students come to school with some hangovers of the life of warriors which they mostly practice at their homes.

In this respect therefore, the researcher has found out that competing desires is a big reason that students fail to make changes in their lives. They may claim a lack of self discipline or personal power, but don't notice the effects of conflicting desires on their habitual choices. These conflicting desires in the mind set up a conflict of agendas.

The interview with most teachers and the parents of the five secondary schools in Mashuuru division showed the following results as represented in the table below

Table 5: Indiscipline versus poor performance

Respondent/schools	Elerai boys	Elerai girls	Mashuuru	Merrueshi	A man bright
Those who said yes	65%	75%	70%	80%	70%
Those who said no	35%	25%	30%	20%	30%
total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The study also found out that personal desire is a key factor to consider when looking at the ability to change a failure habit into a success pattern. The stronger the student desire the faster the change will occur. What we may think of as a lack of personal power or self discipline might just be a lack of real desire.

Many of the respondent told the researcher that a higher percentage of the students come to secondary level without personal urge or desire within themselves to learn and attain good grades. "It has become a culture that student comes to secondary because their friends are but most of them do not know the main reason for coming to secondary school" exclaimed one of the principals.

The problem for many students isn't that they lack personal power and discipline. It is that they have already invested it in agreements about being powerless. Peer pressure is nothing but the continual desire of teenagers to be perceived as 'happening' and 'cool' in order to belong to a particular group. Often at high schools, students are always forming groups, and there is a lot of group politics and bullying than you can ever imagine

Another cause of students failure in the division is peer pressure which is inevitable since there always exists one 'cool group' at school – which basically includes a bunch of youths who do all the things that they are not supposed to do and make it seem like a 'cool' or 'happening' thing to do. Students, who are too sincere at studies, have often been at the receiving end of ridicule, and a lot of meaningless bullies at school. Indulging in unsafe sexual practices, alcohol, drug abuse, poor academic performance and smoking are some of the peer pressure phenomenon.

Many students from the five schools admitted that peer pressure has been one of the greatest factors leading to academic failures. This information collected from the student is represented by the pie chart below

Table 6: Peer pressure versus academic performance.

Respondents/schools	Elerai boys secondary	Elerai girls secondary	Mashuuru secondary	Merrueshi Maasai high school	A man bright future
Students who said yes	85%	80%	90%	85%	80%
Students who said no	15%	20%	10%	15%	20%
total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Calculating these results on average, the researcher that only 14% of the students are taking this factor on a lighter note that it contribute to the academic failure of the students, as opposed to 86% who admitted that it is a cause of academic failure.

The study found out that students are absent from school in large numbers for a countless of well-known reasons including illness, suspension, poor transportation, and fears of personal safety. Students work for long distances to their respective schools tracing their way through thick forests and crossing of rivers. Due to these reasons most students especially the girls miss most of their classes leading to poor performance. However they also miss school for less obvious reasons, such as, malingering, school policies that push them out, family or work related responsibilities and unwelcoming schools.

Poor reading is another common cause of academic failure, found by the researcher. Reading is regarded as the most important skill that a child must acquire at school, because one must learn to read in order to be able to read to learn. The implication of this is that the learners who are poor reader will usually also be a poor learner. Most of the teachers mountain claims on the primary school teachers explaining that at secondary level, students are expected to know how to read so as to understand the content.

4.1.3 Parents/family casual factors

Many school leaders had some pretty harsh things to say about parent involvement in their schools. These are secondary principals, parent involvement coordinators, class teachers, and school counselors.

Many said parents don't care and efforts to involve them aren't worth the aggravation to the school. "Parents are irresponsible; they use the school as a childcare service, don't show up for school events or even for conferences." These are some of the teacher's comments about their parents. They said parents are openly disrespectful of teachers and administrators. They want special treatment for their children and, above all, they don't want anything negative to happen to their kids they protect their children from having to accept responsibility for their behavior.

Table 7: Parents involvement versus student's performance.

Respondents/schools	Elerai boys secondary	Elerai girls secondary	Mashuuru secondary	Merrueshi Maasai high school	A man bright future
Irresponsible parents	65%	60%	70%	65%	70%
Responsible parents	35%	40%	30%	35%	30%
total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Students also may bring their problems at home to school with them. If a student's family is experiencing violence, unemployment, alcohol or drug use by a family member, problems with the law, or any other upsetting experience, it can be difficult to concentrate on schoolwork. Many students who are having family problems might have trouble controlling their anger and frustration at school, and they may end up in trouble because of their behavior. Some students who are overburdened at home by circumstances that make it necessary for them to care for an ill or impaired parent or sibling may find it challenging to keep up. Many times students who face overwhelming family or personal problems keep these problems to themselves. School counselors can help support a student and prevent failure if they are made aware of the problem.

4.0.4 External factors

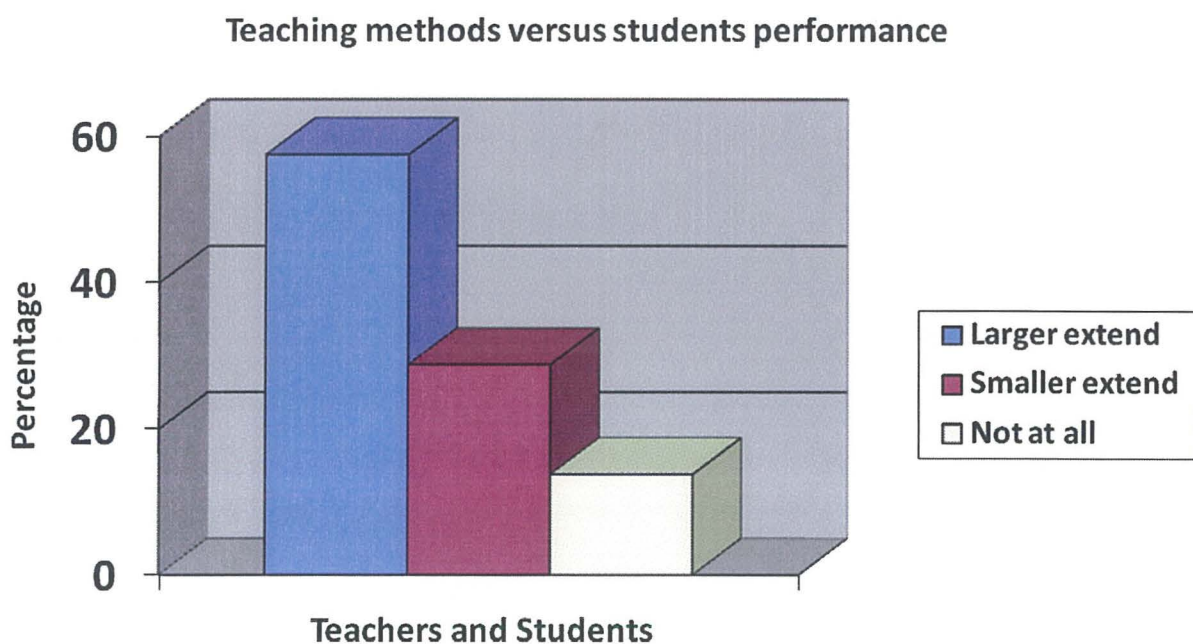
The study found out that most textbooks used in secondary schools treat topics with a "mile-wide, inch-deep" approach. A typical Kenyan math textbook deal with about 16 topics needed to be covered every year. In addition, they do not show more innovative approaches to finding, for instance, the volume of a pyramid. Students breeze through long division by the use of Calculators and they concentrate on how to use math rather than how to do math, and with less entanglement in social philosophy.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter aims to discuss the researcher's findings and give sound conclusions and recommendations basing on the information gathered by use of questionnaires, observation and interviews.

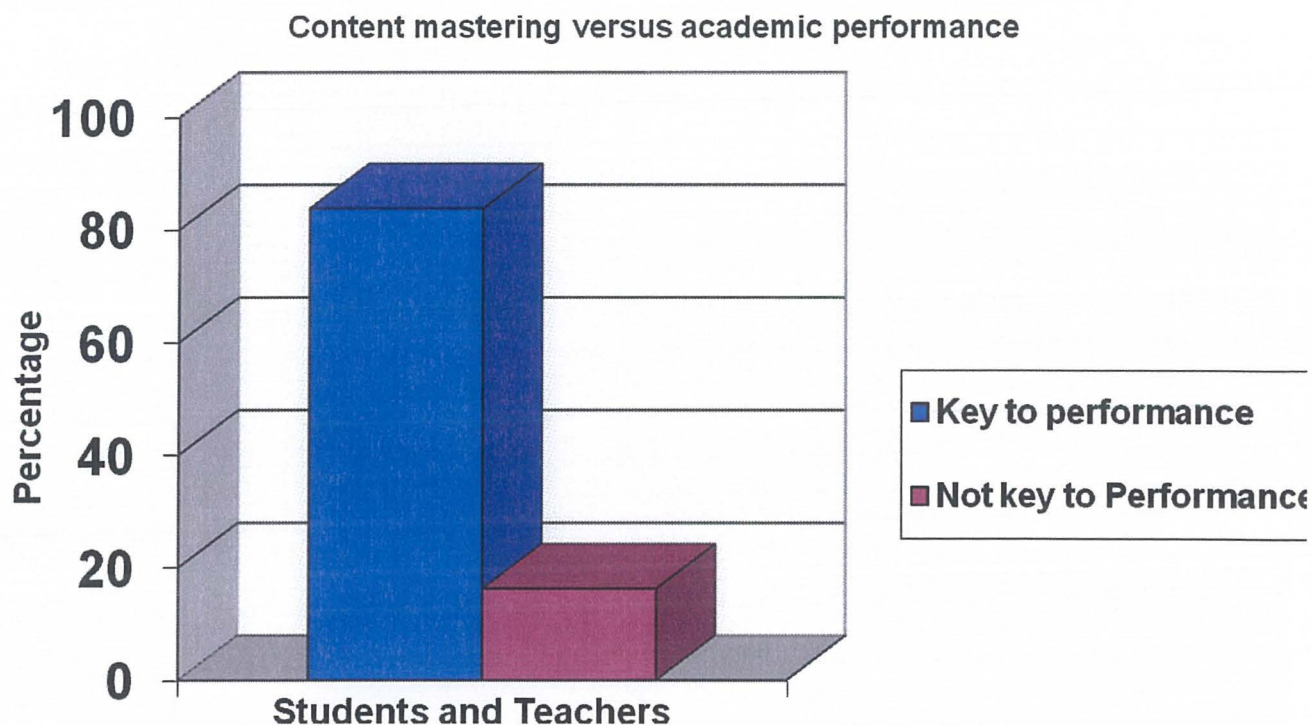
The study found that the autocratic teacher tend to dominate the whole activities appertaining to the learning process and the student's ends up viewing him/her as the custodian of knowledge, with them being partial receivers of knowledge from the "all knowing teacher. "As a result of this, students are denied the opportunity to participate in the learning process or to give their views. By the end of the term, all learners are required to write down correct answers from the given questions minors their "knowledge custodian. " To a larger percentage therefore many students fail with the surprise of the teacher who has believed that he has been delivering and his student understands him/her.



Less than 15% of the total population the researcher interviewed was not admitting that the method used by the teacher can be a cause of the student's performance in the whole division. However compared this percentage with the more than 20% of the population admitting that it is a contributing factor only to a smaller extent and the larger 60% population who totally accept to be a contributing factor this clearly shows that teaching methods and techniques used by teachers is a very big determinant of the final results of the students.

This citation concurs with the study carried out at the Faculty of Education, Nairobi University (Kenya), which sought to identify factors associated with academic failure of secondary student's management and found out that factors including teachers' behavior; teaching methods; lack of commitment to study; problems with learning environment; problems with subject content and examinations; and problems of time are the common causes of student's failure.

Gaps in teachers' knowledge of their subject and weaknesses in their teaching methods are threatening to limit improvements in reading, writing and numeric. Many teachers will need to be highly skilled and more knowledgeable about teaching methods than is currently the case.

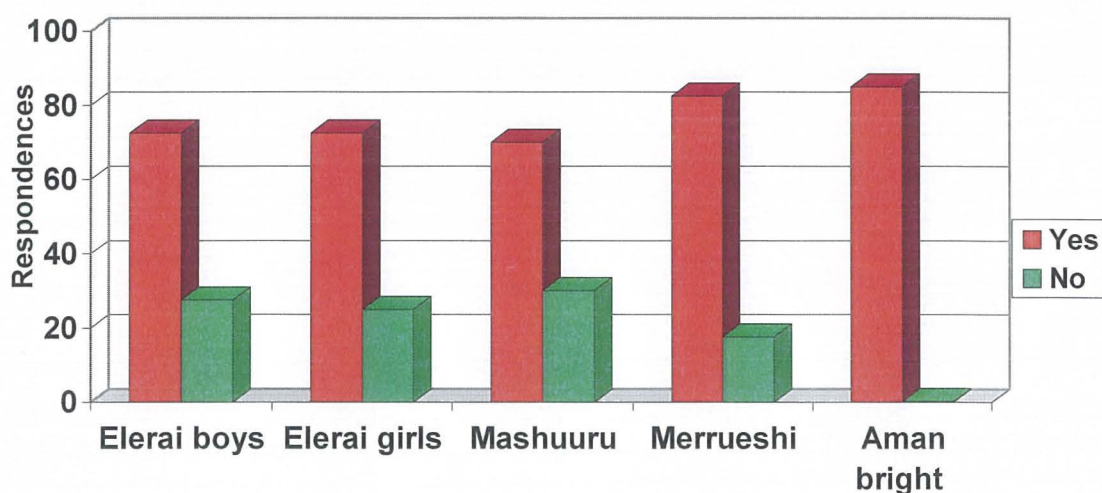


The graph above shows that more than 80% of both teachers and the students accept that the extent to which the teacher masters the content of his or her subject is proportional to the performance of the students in that particular subject, as opposed to a less than 20% who do not accredit this factor as a determinant of students performance.

Most of the teachers in the division did not possess the required qualifications so as to be in a position to teach effectively in the secondary level to a larger extend therefore this has contributed to the poor methods of teaching used by the teachers.

Students with low self- esteem have become that way due to a constant source of criticism. After they are constantly criticized, they started believing they are incapable of doing anything right. When children grow up without their basic needs met, they also feel unworthy. They feel so unimportant to their parents that they must not deserve proper care or the basic necessities. They surely question for some time at least, why other children are better cared for, but at some point they start to accept that they are not as good as other children.

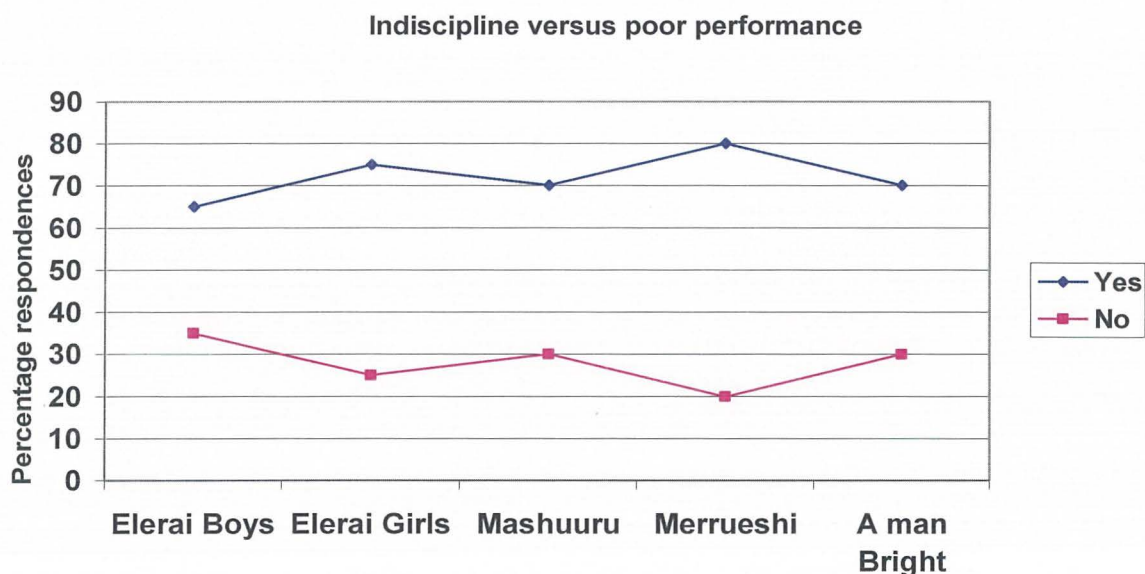
Performance versus motivation



In all the secondary schools where the study took place, the graph clearly indicates that 65% to 90% of the population in every school admits that when students are motivated it helps them develop personal self esteem which eventually leads to higher performance.

However if students receive demoralizing words from the teachers, this kills their aspirations and finally ends up performing poorly. Researchers like Robert Laurer, Jeanette C. Laurer, Social Problems on Quality of life 8th Edition, U.S International University had earlier pointed out that problems with subject content and examinations; psychological problems of student; unsatisfactory relationship with family; and problems of time are the Causes of Academic Failure.

Learners take long to accept the influence of school life and abandon the traditional way of learning. This was largely associated to the poor performance in the division as given by a large number of teachers and parents. Other things that happening to students as a result of indiscipline include; use of alcohol and drugs at an earlier age, start hanging out with the wrong crowd, dismissing teacher's instructions and exhibit all around poor behavior and bad choices



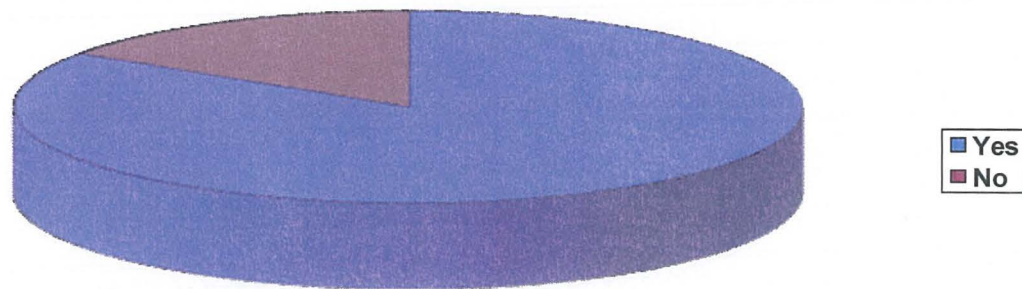
The graph above shows that 65% and above of the population in every school gave out indiscipline among the students as a big contributing factor to students academic failures. In every school less than 40% did not give this as the reason for failures. This indicates that it is one of the causes of failures in the division.

Robert Laurer, Jeanette C. Laurer, *Social Problems on Quality of life* 8th Edition, U.S International University pointed out that Lack of ability and/or poor high school preparation, is one of the major factors of poor performance. Some students' find that their educational background or their lack of effort has not prepared them for the academic demands of the subjects they have chosen in high school. They may need remedial programs to make up for past deficiencies.

In addition to this, Petraitis J., Flay B. R. and Miller T.Q (1986). *Reviewing Theories of Adolescent Substance Use: Organizing Pieces in the Puzzle* wrote that indiscipline, is perhaps one of the greatest change and challenge facing students in dealing with the increased freedom which students experience when they are away from home. Choices are presented regarding the use of time, personal habits, social activities, and even whether or not to attend class or do assignments.

Most of the teachers and parents the researcher interviewed explained that learners report to form one with innocent and sincere motives to adhere to all the school rules and regulations. Unfortunately within duration of one year some of the students seem to be out of control and the teachers are left with the option of suspending the students or even others given total expulsion.

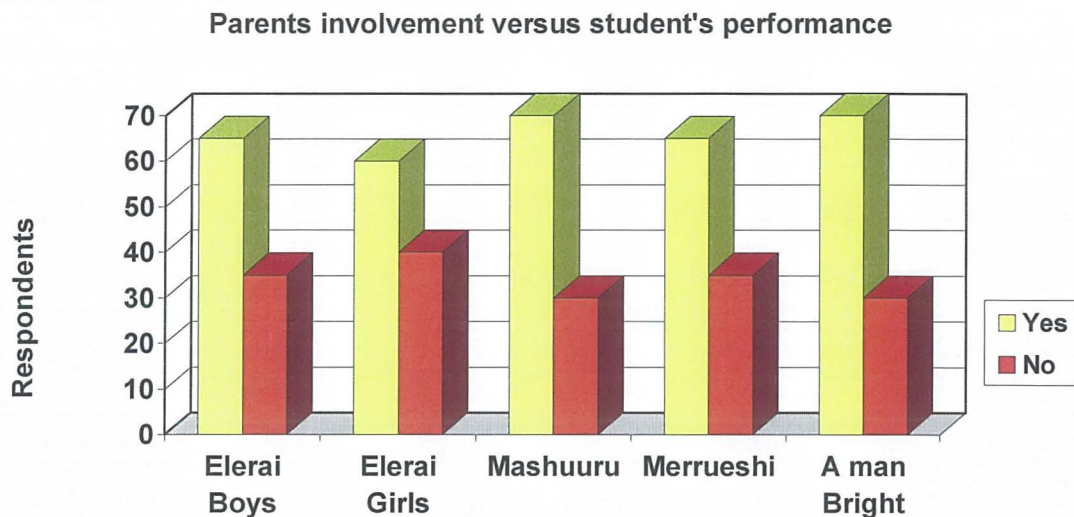
Peer pressure versus academic performance



The pie chart above shows only 16% of the total population in the five schools is saying that peer pressure is not a contributing factor to student's academic failures. This percentage is absolutely small compared to 84% of the population who reported that peer pressure is one of the contributing factors to the student's failure. Basing on this data therefore, the study found out that peer pressure among the learners has been largely contributing to the failures in the division.

Alfred wakubwa, the daily nation newspaper, 23rd January 2003, page 17 pointed out that the desire for pleasure and fun is also a very strong need among adolescents. However the influence of frosty groups in the schools blindfolded students of working toward a goal or reward that he or she really wants to achieve in the long run.

Principals have told the researcher stories about calling the parents of children who have been so disrespectful to a teacher that the entire class is disrupted, only to hear the same kind of disrespect from the parent who accepts no responsibility for the child's behavior and says, 'Don't tell me about your problems. You are the expert, you fix it!'



In the five secondary schools, 65% and above are in agreement with the parents negligent in the running of the school and students welfare is one of the contributing factors to student's failure in the division. Only 40% and below in every school did not accepted this as contributing factor.

Relating this to the work of James M. Henslin, (Social Problems 7th Edition, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville), Most students who do not complete school do so because of family problems. Girls, especially, want to get married and start a family. Some parents are not interested in education and do not support their children in studying. Social problems are also a contributing factor. Education is compulsory but, despite this, some people do not take it seriously. Furthermore, families are poor and need their children to work in order to increase the income. All these problems will create young people who do not have any skills and who will not be able to improve their lives for the family and the country

5.0.1 Possible solutions to student's academic failures

Both teachers and the parents should find time to supervise and follow-up the schedule of activities of the students (parental involvement). The study has found the overwhelming majority of parents really do want to be helpful. Whether parent involvement is always pleasant or not, whether it is sometimes more irritating than rewarding is not the issue. The fact is that parents *are* partners in the education of their children and it is to our advantage and that of our students to work with parents, show them how they can help their kids succeed in school, respect and listen to them as genuine partners and make that partnership as effective as it can be.

There should be partnership among homeroom advisers and the rest of the faculty staffs to help students budget their time in studying so that they will have specific schedule for their subjects, extra-curricular activities and for leisure activities (collaboration)

Parents should explain to their children the significance of education and the fruit of education for their future life and to give more attention and care to their children and encourage them to willingly and enthusiastically cooperate with school administrative staffs in solving their problems in school.

Administrators should publish test schedules ahead of time and the principals should accommodate supervised and guided study period across the curriculum so as to ensure that student are prepared enough before they sit for their exams.

The whole school staff should employ remedial classes to the disciplines revealed where failures occur most often; guidance counselors to reinvent and redefine guidance services in the school to suit the need of learning at present

The solution to the problem of unethical student-teacher relationship is simple. If a teacher and student want to be together romantically and/or sexually, then the teacher or student should leave the school all together. It makes no sense to allow persecution from Staff members, students and legal constituents to be birthed. Teacher's having the authority and power over students leaves no opportunity for the word "consensual" to exist, even if the student is of age. Despite this fact, these relationships are forming and are ruining the expectations of teachers and the institutions they work for.

For effective teaching to take place, a good method must be adopted by a teacher. A teacher has many options when choosing a style by which to teach. The teacher may write lesson plans of their own, borrow plans from other teachers, or search online or within books for lesson plans. When deciding what teaching method to use, a teacher needs to consider students' background knowledge, environment, and learning goals. Teachers are aware that students learn in different ways, but almost all children will respond well to praise. Students have different ways of absorbing information and of demonstrating their knowledge. Teachers should use techniques which cater to multiple learning styles to help students retain information and strengthen understanding. A variety of strategies and methods are used to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn. A lesson plan may be carried out in several ways like Questioning, explaining, modeling, collaborating, and demonstrating.

5.1 Conclusions

In view of the problem stated at the outset of the research, the following were the most salient findings:

Both students and teachers agreed positively to a significant degree on poor study habits, lack of personal discipline, and to some extent absence, emotional disturbance, lack of capacity necessary for high school works as indicators of failures. Moreover, from one to form three high school subjects that revealed the most number of failures were in Mathematics, chemistry, physics and in English areas of learning.

Clearly the problem and the solution are not in the child alone. If students are to change, it is largely because teachers and parents have been willing to make changes in the curriculum, school, and home environments that promote learning. Indeed, the story of learning disabilities is full of parents and teachers who refused to accept the status believed in their children, and fought long and hard to fix the schools so their students would succeed.

It is worth noting that it is not just where we rank competitively in terms of academic performance against other emerging economic powers, but just what kind of society we want to be in the very near future. We all know that high-value, stable jobs, the underpinning of our economy and prosperity, are increasingly dependent on workers with skills and talents that, are just not being learned by too many students.

5.2 Recommendations

In response to various predictable growing causes of failures, the sturdy urge the school teachers and administrators to design programs that would trim down such obstruction, by observing the following.

The researcher recommends for, the government to work with classroom teachers in the schools to develop individualized leaning pathways, and then give each student the tools and support they need to make progress at his or her own speed, and provide detailed reporting back to teachers and their schools so each student's progress can be tracked closely.

Tools are important, but backpacks and calculators won't guarantee a child's academic success. Parents should stand in the gap between their failing child and the school.

Parent attitudes toward underperforming gifted children should be positive to impact motivation.

Teachers should widen students' awareness of the advantages one can get from attending classes regularly and studying his lessons habitually. The state should also use data to identify schools with high rates of chronic absenteeism and poor grades, and target these schools for interventions to reduce this absenteeism.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE HEADTEACHER

NAME OF THE RESEARCHER.....

I request you to answer the questions in the questionnaire regarding the causes of student's academic failures in secondary education.

Tick where appropriate

SECTION A

1. What is the population of your students in the school?

100-200

300-500

500-above

2. Are the students who have been suspended out of school due to their academic failures? If yes how many?

1-10

11-20

21-30

35-above

3. If yes, what do you think might be the core reason for their failure?

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SECTION B

4. Who do you involve when trying to solve their problem before you give them a transfer letter?

Teachers

Parents

students

Others

5. What common answer do you often receive from these people?

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6. How does academic failure affect the entire running of the school?

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7. Suggest possible solutions for this problem

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

SECTION A

NAME OF THE RESEARCHER.....

I request you to answer the questions in the questionnaire regarding the causes of academic failures in secondary schools.

Tick where appropriate

1. What is the population of your students in the class?

20-30

40-60

60-70

80-above

2. Do you have students transferred to other schools or dropped out of school because of academic failures? If yes how many?

1-5

6-10

11-15

16-above

3. What do you think might be the reason for their failures?

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SECTION B

4. Who do you involve when solving the student's problem before you give him/her a transfer letter?

Head teacher Other Teachers Parents

Students Others

5. What common answer do you receive from these people?

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6. How does the student academic failure affect the entire progress of the school?

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7. Suggest possible solutions for this problem

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**KAMPALA
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**

Ggaba Road, Kansanga P.O. BOX 20000 Kampala, Uganda.
Tel: +256 (0) 75 2 934526 Fax: +256 (0) 41 - 501974
E-mail: admin@kiu.ac.ug Website: <http://www.kiu.ac.ug>

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Office of the Dean**

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

RESEARCH INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Mr. /Ms. /Mrs. LETUATI B. ZAKATO Reg.No. BCE/14136/62/DF

is a student in the Faculty of Education. He/She is now carrying out
a study about The Causes of Students Academic failures in
Selected Secondary schools in Mushuru Division Kyad. as one of the
requirements for the completion of his/her studies. He/She is thus
introduced to you.

Kindly help him/her accordingly.

Thank you.

DR. S.A. OYEBADE

DEAN, FACULTY OF EDUCATION