

**FACTORS THAT AFFECT POOR PERFORMANCE OF ENGLISH
LANGUAGE AS A SUBJECT IN MWALA ZONE
SECONDARY SCHOOL, MACHAKOS
DISTRICT, KENYA**

BY

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DEDICATION


To Justus Kioko, my husband for his loving support

To Justin, our son for the promises of great life

To Hellen, my mum for her great support and faith in me

DECLARATION

I MIRIAM NDUKU MAWEU do hereby declare that this work is original, out of my own efforts and that it has never been submitted before to any university or higher institution of learning.

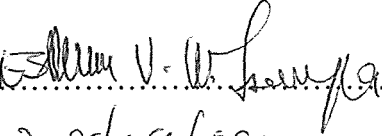
SIGN..........

DATE.....28th Aug 2008.....

MIRIAM NDUKU MAWEU

APPROVAL

This research report has been submitted with the approval as the University Supervisor.

SIGN..........

DATE.....28/08/08.....

VICTORIA SSEMPA.

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My sincere gratitude goes to Mrs. Victoria Ssempe my supervisor for her tireless effort in guiding me throughout this work. Also, great thanks to Cecilia Kitaka for her financial and moral support.

Great thanks to all the teachers for the time they sacrificed to fill the questionnaire.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

Title page.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Declaration.....	iii
Approval.....	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of Content	v
Abstract	vii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1Background of the Study.....	1
1.2Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.3 Purpose of the Study.....	3
1.4Objectives of the Study.....	3
1.5 Research Questions	3
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	4
1.7 Scope of the study.....	4
1.8 Limitations and delimitations of the study	5

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction.....	6
2.1 Factors affecting performance	7
2.2 Teaching methods / strategies used in English.....	8
2.3 Educational Resources used in teaching English.....	12

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction.....	15
Research Design.....	15

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.....17

**CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.0 Introduction.....	28
5.1 Summary	28
5.2 Discussion.....	29
5.3 Conclusion.....	31
5.4 Recommendations	31

REFERENCE.....	32
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research Questionnaire.....	33
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ABSTRACT

English is the official language in Kenya. It is internationally used and anyone who terms themselves educated is judged by their ability to express themselves in the language.

The performance of the English subject has however been poor in Mwala division, Machakos district, Kenya. A lot has been done by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to ensure that the subject improves.

The research aimed at seeking and identifying the determinants of poor performance of the English language subjects. Suggestions and recommendations on how to improve the subject have been given.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

English is the official language of communication in Kenya as well as the medium of instruction in schools, colleges and universities. It is also the language of administration and the pre-eminent language of international communication which helps in interlinking the people in other countries of the world.

According to F.G French, because of rapid spread of industrial development, science and technology, international trade and commerce and the close inter-dependence of nations, English has become a world language.

In being an essential subject, it is a compulsory in Kenya and is taught from the cradle age of learning up to the highest level of secondary school education. Despite this, it has been observed that English subject is performed poorly in both the Kenya National Certificate of Secondary Examination nationally and in other levels. Many students are unable to master English and can not even express themselves fluently in it even after studying the language for more than twelve years.

The 2006 Mwala KCSE results analysis indicates that English was the most poorly performed language in the zone. Below 48% of the total number of candidates scored above average while 60% of the candidates scored below average. On the other hand, 60% of the candidates scored above average in Kiswahili language and 40% has scored below average in the subject.

The results analysis also indicate that the mean score in English depreciated from 3.00 to 2.761 while in Kiswahili an improvement from 3.67 to 3.822 was

observed. From the above facts, it can be easily concluded that English is performed poorly as compared to its counterpart language subject Kiswahili.

The poor performance may be attributed to the fact that English is the second language for most students in Kenya. The poor performance is also attributed to learning difficulties, which affect the learner's ability to acquire new language skills in their environment. These learning difficulties in learners may significantly affect almost all areas of their development and learning.

Dismal though the situation is, we cannot afford to leave the instruction of and the performance of English to take care of itself. Adequate steps need to be taken for its improvement.

The question now is not whether or not English should continue being poorly performed but how to make its teaching and learning more efficient and effective.

It is in this context that the researcher will investigate the causes of poor performance in Mwala zone and make recommendations on how to improve it.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Professionals such as medics, pilots, journalists among others must have excelled in English. It is also a right of everyone to achieve the desired goals in life regardless of race, colour, sex, age and background. This is in line with education for all (EFA) goals.

It is in this regard that the researcher will choose to find out the factors that attribute to the poor performance of the English subject by the learners in Mwala zone, Mwala district in the KCSE.

Recommendations on how to improve in the subject were also made. This might assist both the teachers and the learners to do even better.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The researcher aimed at improving the performance of English subject of all the learners in the inclusive setting – Mwala zone.

The purpose of carrying out this study was to investigate the factors affecting the poor performance of English subject by learners in Mwala zone and suggest on the appropriate ways of successful implementation.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were;

- (i) To find out the factors which lead to learning difficulties.
- (ii) To investigate teaching / learning methods or strategies used by the teachers and students in the teaching / learning of English.
- (iii) To find out the educational resources used in the teaching of English.
- (iv) To find out the support services given to both the learners and teachers.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following questions.

- (i) What are the factors which lead to poor performance?
- (ii) What teaching methods are used by teachers in the teaching of English?
- (iii) What educational resources are used in the teaching of English?
- (iv) What support services are given to learners in semi-arid areas?

1.6 Significance of the study

The results of the study can be used to help teachers develop suitable learning and teaching approaches for handling learning difficulties exhibited by learners in Mwala zone Machakos district.

The results can also be used to assist teachers in selecting appropriate instructional materials that will be able to meet their learner's educational needs.

The findings will also be used to give suggestions to the government and non-governmental organizations on how to support learners from low class families.

The results will also add knowledge and skills to teachers and learners in preparing teaching and learning resources for use by using locally available materials.

1.7 Scope of the study

The study covered a large area of Mwala central zone, in Machakos district, Eastern province of Kenya. It is a small division which occupies a 40% population of Mwala division and 10% population of Machakos district. There are six secondary schools namely; Mwala Girls Secondary, Mwal Mixed Boarding Secondary, Makutano Boarding Secondary, Maweli Day Secondary, Mango Secondary school and St. John's High School – Kangai. The researcher is a teacher in St. John's High School.

The researcher tackled issues pertaining classroom work.

The researcher aimed at finding out the determinants of students' performance in English among students in Mwala zone, Mwala division, Machakos.

The target population was twenty five teachers from six secondary schools.

1.8 Limitations and delimitations of the study

Limitations

The study covered a large area with schools scattered in the whole Mwala zone. It took the researcher a long time to travel to the targeted schools. There were also challenges from teachers who were unwilling to fill the questionnaire. As a self-sponsored student, the researcher also encountered financial problems in the course of carrying out the study.

Delimitations

Being familiar to the respondents and conversant with the local language, it helped the study to be successful. The other added advantage was that the researcher is a resident of the area.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, research was cited briefly. The study captures the factors affecting poor performance, teaching methods / strategies used and the educational resources.

2.1 Factors affecting performance

In most cases, it is not exactly known why or how a child comes to have a specific learning problem. As a result, a variety of factors have been suggested. According to Mwaura (2002), these factors generally fall into four categories. These are educational factors, environmental factors, psychological factors and physiological factors.

2.1.1 Educational factors

Onganda (2002) observed that one of the major factors of specific learning disabilities is inadequate and inappropriate teaching. It involves poor teaching methods in the classroom. Some teachers have not developed the required skills on principles to teach basic subjects. Others have too high or low expectations of child which limit the instructions that are given, lack of motivating activities also cause learning problems.

2.1.2 Environmental factors

There are certain environmental factors that may influence a child's ability to learn. These are nutrition, health and safety. Tasson, Kata and Allan (1990) lament that children from low income household have a higher incident of ill-health and accidents while having lower life expectancy and educational achievements.

A child's learning ability is influenced by poor nutrition. It is therefore important that a child has a balanced diet. The general health of a child is very vital as a sickly child is likely to spend much time out of a classroom.

Children also need to be safe from physical injury. A fall or bang on the head may cause brain injury resulting to learning problems. Quoting Waruguru (2002), inclusive education is the philosophy of ensuring that schools as centres of learning open to all children. This means identifying, reducing or removing barriers within and around the school that may hinder learning. This calls for modification of physical and social environment.

Many children with specific learning difficulties have also emotional and social problems. Referring to Burder (1995), a child's aggression is a symptom of the child's inner problems. Behaviours such as anxiety, insecurity, impulsivity and hyperactivity are evident. Such behaviours are associated with lack of love, security, warmth and acceptance in the home and school. If a child is emotionally deprived, feels unwanted, is physically or emotionally abused, chances are that she will have learning problems.

2.1.3 Psychological factors

Children with specific learning difficulties have problems in basic psychological functions like understanding directions or receiving and recalling information. These are caused by interference with senses that decodes information.

2.1.4 Physiological factors

These are various events and conditions in the development of children which are believed to be the cause of their poor performance. They include genetic factors and acquired trauma. In genetic factors, some families may have more than one child with learning challenges. This suggests that the problem is passed from one family member to another through genes. A child with brain injury

(acquired trauma) may exhibit disturbance in perception thinking and emotional behaviour. All these disturbances may interfere with normal learning process.

2.2 Teaching method / strategies used in teaching English

In an inclusive setting, there are learners with diverse needs ranging from visible to invisible learning difficulties such as educational background, experiences, different levels of understanding, ability and efforts. The principle of inclusive education calls for equal opportunities to all learners to experience normal mainstream activities while making substantial efforts to ensure there is quality education for all.

To meet all the learners' educational needs, teachers should be accommodating, patient and co-operative. According to Quiets (2000), appropriateness, suitability and purpose in the choice of teaching methodology is preventing classroom failure.

In the words of N.P. Pahuja (1995), due to research in various techniques in the field of language learning and teaching some classroom techniques as methods or approaches were adopted in English..... the shortcomings of one approach gave birth to another method. To achieve the objectives of English teaching, the teacher must adopt the adequate approach.

N.P Pahuja (1995) also goes ahead to explain a good method of approach as that through which maximum objectives can be gained. It should be molded for teaching children of different age groups. It should also be capable of teaching English language as well as literature. The method or approach should follow the maxims of teaching, ensuring that the whole course can be completed within the prescribed time. It should also be suitable for both small and large sized classes.

In teaching English, a teacher generally adopts one method at a time. Sometimes it becomes difficult to make the choice about the method which she should choose to teach her students. N.P Pahuja suggests that a teacher can consider the following factors while making a choice her methods.

- (i) The class from which English teaching is started.
- (ii) The age, ability and capacity of students to be taught.
- (iii) The objectives to be achieved by teaching of English.
- (iv) Availability of teaching aids
- (v) Size of the class
- (vi) Location of the school that is urban or rural.

It is only after giving due consideration to these the teacher can choose the best method of teaching English according to her needs.

Below are just a few of the approaches applicable to teaching English language.

2.2.1 The translation – cum – grammar method

In the translation method, the English teacher translates each and every word, phrase and sentence of English in to mother-tongue of the students. In this method the textbooks occupies an important place by having all reading materials specific graded vocabulary, rules of grammar and each lesson with some new words. Champion comments that under the translation method, the meaning of English words, phrases and sentences is taught by means of word for word translation into the mother tongue.

2.2.2 Direct or natural method

This method originated in France in 1901 as a direct consequence of the demerits of the translation method.

According to Webster's New International Dictionary Direct method of teaching a foreign language, especially a modern language, through conversation, discussion and reading in the language itself without use of pupil's language, without translation and without the study of formal grammar. The first words are taught by pointing to objects or pictures or by performing action.

In words of Felix Frank, when meaning and English word are brought into contact without the intervention of the mother-tongue, we have direct method of teaching English.

The main purpose of this method is to make the pupil think in English. It helps the child to express her own thoughts and feelings without the intervention of here mother-tongue. It also enables the child to grasp what she hears or reads in English. Thus the real aim of this method is to make the child to acquire a real command over the language.

2.2.3 Dr. West's new method

Dr. West was of the opinion that English is taught because it promotes internationalism and brotherhood. It is a medium of communication among different parts of the world and it broadens method facilities. His new method lays more emphasis on the development of reading abilities, improvement of vocabulary.

Menon and Patel rightly that Dr. West's new method emphasis on reading rather than on speech militates against the psychological principle that we always learn a new language by first speaking it. So without acquiring speech ability students cannot have good reading.

2.2.4 Substitution method or substitution table method

This is a teaching technique adopted by H.E Palmer to give it the shape of a teaching method. In this method, words of one sentence are substituted by other word.

According to Palmer, it is a process by which any model sentence may be multiplied indefinitely by substituting for any of its words or word groups others of the same grammatical.

Finally, according to P.N. Pahuja, in learning a foreign language the teacher should use the principles of naturalism, exposure, habit formation, use of passive and active vocabulary, motivating the students, selection of the teaching content according to the needs of her learners, gradation, creating interest, learning by doing, being accurate and correct in pronunciation, and the principle of language aptitude.

Learning by doing is actively involving learners in the learning process. As a teacher in an inclusive setting, application of the principles ensures that all learners are involved and thus learners with behaviour problems will have no time to engage in undesirable behaviours. Remember the saying, "What I do I understand and never forget".

To apply these principles, the researcher suggests the use of the following;

- Individual attention based on uniqueness of the learners. This calls for individualized educational programme (IEP).
- In-servicing of teachers in their schools in form of either school based in-services (insets) or seminars and workshops.
- Sharing of resources. Use of relevant educational resources help make learning simple and realistic.

- Networking with fellow teachers and other service providers such as family, neighbours, peers and community. This supports collaboration and consultative factors, which make teaching in an inclusive classroom a big success.

2.3 Educational resources used in teaching

According to Otiato (2002), learning is defined as a relatively permanent change in behaviour due to experience or practice.

Professor C.S Bhandari opines "our aim of teaching English is to impart certain skills without making the process of teaching and learning monotonous".

The materials that are selected by the teacher in the learning process must be effective enough for the child to learn. They should also be able to always address the learner's diversity of needs. The effectiveness of these educational resources implies its relevance to the teaching point, achievement of the instructional objective and appropriate use.

Educational resources focuses at all factors outside and within classroom that makes teaching and learning experiences more meaningful and effective in an inclusive setting. They also enable the teacher to make the lessons interesting and enjoyable.

According to F.W Noel, a good instruction is the foundation of any educational programme and audio-visual training aids are the component part of that foundation.

The government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) has founded all public primary and secondary schools to cater for basic educational resources needed for effective teaching and learning

in schools. Human resources have been developed to address diverse needs of learners in inclusive setting. Though both educational and human resources are not enough, this is a step ahead towards achieving Millennium Development and Educational For All (EFA) goals.

Hiuhu (2002), comments the following as the basic characteristics of a good educational resource.

- Motivating to the learner so as to initiate the learning process.
- Relevant to the activity, subject or field being taught.
- Concrete so as to present learning through practice as some learners with special needs in education cannot learn to draw meaning from abstract ideas conveyed through oral explanations.
- Able to meet the individual needs of pupils at different stages of development. This is particularly important in inclusive classes where learners have diverse needs and abilities.
- Flexible enough to be used in transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes especially in training of basic skills such as social, motor, language, emotional, behavioural and cognitive skills.
- Simple to be understood and manipulated by the learner.
- Made from familiar materials. Learners tend to attach special interest to a resource made from local materials.
- Right size and age appropriate. Educational resource should be relevant to all learners at different stages of development, needs, exceptionality and background.
- Culture free. Educational resource which violates cultural values of the learners would not only affect them but is likely to cause disunity with the local community leading to poor learning environment.

When the education resources are availed from the surrounding environment, they ensure continuous production of the resources as they well as replacement should they wear out or break down.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this section, a summary on how the study was conducted is given. The researcher's approach, research instruments that were used and the procedure of sampling the respondents will be outlined.

3.1 Research design

The researcher used the survey method of educational research as a technique of collecting information.

3.2 Sampling procedure

The simple random sampling method was used for this study.

3.3 Sample

The target population of this study was the English secondary school teachers in Mwala Central zone. The researcher visited the six secondary schools and twenty five teachers in the zone from the five schools, were drawn per school to represent the targeted population.

3.4 Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires to collect raw data. The questionnaires were enough for all the respondents. The questionnaires assisted the researcher in getting reaction from the respondents on the determinants of students' performance in an inclusive area.

The questionnaire had four sections and each section had five items. The response format of section A was yes or no responses, section B, the

respondents were expected to pick out from given choices, section C had short structured response and section D had open-minded responses.

3.5 Procedure

The researcher used qualitative approach in collecting information or raw data. Using this approach, the researcher organized the information in statement form after going physically to the respondents in schools to observe and record her finding.

3.6 Data analysis

The data analysis was presented in tabular form by use of tally marks and frequency distribution.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, a summary of data collected is shown using tables and figures. After collecting data, the researcher presented and analyzed it using frequency tables. Below each table, the observation made, analysis and the outcome of such analysis are shown.

PART A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Table 1: Gender on respondents

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MALE	11	44
FEMALE	14	56
TOTAL	25	100

OBERVATION

With reference to the table above, 14 out of 25 respondents are females while 11 are males.

Analysis

Table 1 seems to indicate that majority of English language subject teachers are females while males are the majority. This disparity in the gender could be as a result of males' perception towards arts subjects as a female specialty and their preference to science subjects.

Table 2: Respondent's age

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
20 – 30 years	2	8
31 – 40 years	13	52
41 – 50 years	8	32
50 and above	2	8
Total	25	100

Observation

As can be seen from the table, 13 teachers had the age of 31 – 40 years, 8 teachers had 41 – 50 years. 2 out of 25 teachers had 20 – 30 years while the other two teachers were 50 years and above.

Analysis

Table 2 shows that majority of the teachers are aged 31 – 40 years, 32% of the total number of teachers are between 41 – 50 years while very few are aged between 20 – 30 years and above respectively.

Table 3: Teachers highest academic qualification

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
K.C.P.E	0	0
O-Level	2	8
Diploma	6	40
University level	17	52
Total	25	100

Analysis

Table 4 shows that 52% of the secondary school teachers in the field are degree holders while 40% are diploma holders. The untrained are few. Currently no P2's in the field.

Observation

Table 3 shows that most of the secondary school teachers had degree holders while 6 out of 25 had diploma. Only 2 teachers are untrained.

Table 4: Teacher's teaching experience

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1 – 10 years	15	20
11 – 20 years	12	48
21 – 30 years	7	28
31 years and above	1	4
Total	25	100

Observation

With reference to the table above, 12 out of 25 had a teaching experience of 11 – 20 years. 7 others had an experience of between 21 – 30 years while 1 teacher had 31 years and above of teaching experience.

Analysis

From table 4, it can be seen that most of the teachers have an experience of 11 – 20 years. This is 48%. About 28% of the teachers in the field have a teaching experience of 21 – 30 years while 20% have an experience of 1 – 10 years. Very few have a teaching experience of 31 years and above.

Table 5: Teachers' work load

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Below 20 lessons	2	4
21 – 28 lessons	21	92
Above 28	2	4
Total	25	100

Observation

As can be seen in the above table, 21 out of 25 teachers teach a work load of above 21 lessons. 28 lessons while only 4 teachers have a work load of 20 lessons and above 28 lessons.

Analysis

Table 6 shows that majority of the teachers have maximum work load which is 92% and a minority are under utilized or over utilized.

Table 6: Teachers exposure

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
0 times	2	8
2 times	12	48
3 times	7	28
4 or more times	4	16
Total	25	100

Observation

Table 6 shows that 12 out of 25 teachers had twice attended seminars and work ships while 7 had attended 3 times, four teachers attended more than four time and to the extreme. 2 teachers had not attended a seminar in the course of the year.

Analysis

Table 6 shows that 48% of the teachers had attended seminars twice, 28% had attended seminars thrice, 16% had attended seminars more than 4 times and a majority 8% had never attended seminars in the course of the year.

Table 7: Teachers' attitude towards their career

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
First choice	6	24
Second choice	19	76
TOTAL	25	100

Observation

Table 7 shows that only 6 teachers had chosen to be English teachers and 19 teachers were forced by circumstances to be English language subject teachers.

Analysis

Table 7 indicates that only a few 16% teachers willingly chose to be English subject teachers while a majority 76% were not.

Table 8: Teachers' concern performance

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very important	10	45
Partially important	10	45
Not important	5	10
Total	25	100

Observation

As can be seen in table, 10 out of 25 think that students' performance is very important for their career, similarly, 10 out of 25 think it is partially important and a few 5 out of 25 think that it is totally unimportant.

Analysis

Table 8 indicates that 45% of the teachers valued their students success, 45% also think it being partially important while a 10% of the teachers think the students' performance is of no importance to them.

Table 9: Factors affecting performance

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Students ability	05	20
Educational background	8	32
Interest	4	16
Inadequate facilities	18	32
No idea	0	0
Total	25	100

Observation

Table 9 indicates that 5 out of 15 teachers concur that students' ability affect their performance, 8 associate performance with educational background. Another 8 indicates lack of educational facilities affect the learners' performance, 4 teachers associated performance with interest.

Analysis

Table 10 seems to indicate that the major factors that affect learners' performance are the child's educational background and adequate or inadequate learning facilities. The student's ability and interest follow slightly behind the former.

Table 10: Learning difficulties from within environment

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Traditional beliefs	6	24
Poor nutrition	12	48
Insecurity	7	28
Insecurity	25	100

Observation

With reference to the above table, 6 out of 25 respondents associated learning difficulties from the environment with traditional beliefs. 12 teachers said that the difficulties are due to poor nutrition while 7 others linked them with insecurity.

Analysis

From table 11, it can be seen that traditional beliefs, poor nutrition and insecurity among others are the major causes of learning difficulties from the environment. Many of these learning difficulties are due to poor nutrition. This can be as a result of shortage or societal taboos on certain types of foods.

Table 12: Causes of specific learning difficulties

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Ignorance	4	16
Traditional beliefs	7	28
Genetic fact	8	32
Acquired trauma	6	24
Total	25	100

Observation

As can be observed from the above table, 4 out of 25 respondents cited ignorance as a cause of specific learning difficulties. 6 teachers associated SLD's with acquired trauma, 7 of them with traditional beliefs while 8 others with genetic factors.

Analysis

Table 12 seems to indicate that the major cause of specific learning difficulties are genetic factors, traditional beliefs and acquired trauma. Though a minor cause, ignorance cannot be overlooked.

Table 13: Suitability on English syllabus

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
True	8	32
False	17	68
TOTAL	25	100

Observation

From the table above, 17 out of 25 teachers commended that the contents of secondary school English syllabus was suitable and wide, 4 of the teachers objected.

Analysis

Table 13 shows that majority of the teachers were uncomfortable with the contents of the contents of the Kenya Secondary syllabus. They recommended that it should be revised to attend to all the learners' level. 32% of the respondents accepted and this can be seen as a suggestion for a review of the syllabus.

Table 14: Testing procedure

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
After a topic	16	64
On unitary basis	9	36
After whole course	0	0
Total	25	100

Observation

According to the above table, 16 out of 25 teachers test their learners after teaching a complete topic. The other 9 teachers test their learners on completion of a unit. None tests after teaching for the whole course.

Analysis

From table 14, it can be seen that testing on unitary basis constitutes to 36% while majority of the teachers that is 64% test their learners after completing a certain topic. This indicates that testing is done regularly and not on a completion of whole course only.

Table 15: Class exercises

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Teacher's own initiative	10	40
From text books	15	60
TOTAL	25	100

Observation

Table 15 above shows that 10 out of 25 respondents said that they draw exercise for use in class by composing while 10 out of 25 said that they use the textbooks available.

Analysis

From the table, it is clear that 40% of the respondents are creative and innovative while 60% of the respondents lack the same.

Table 16: Acquisition of instructional resources

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
School	2	8
Own	6	24
Student	17	68
Total	25	100

Observation

Table 18 above shows that 17 out of 25 respondents said that the instructional materials are acquired through the students. The school constitutes to 8% while only 6 respondents cited their own initiative in provision of instructional materials.

Analysis

The table above seems to indicate that most of the instructional materials are acquired through the learners. There is little school support and teacher's innovations.

PART 3: LEARNING / TEACHING RESOURCES

Table 17: Use of visual aids

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	10	40
Rarely	9	36
Occasionally	4	16
Always	2	8
Total	15	100

Observation

Table 17 shows that 10 teachers don't use visual needs, 9 teachers rarely use the aids while 4 teachers use the visual aids occasionally. Only 2 teachers use visual aids always.

Analysis

From the table, it is clear that visual aids are inadequately used.

Table 18: Commonly used visual aids

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
The black board	12	48
Real objects	4	16
Pictures	6	24
TVs / videos / computers	3	12
Total	25	100

Observation

Table 18 above shows that 12 out of 25 respondents use the blackboard as a visual aid, 4 use real objects, 5 use pictures and charts while 3 respondents used high technology devices like TVs, videos and computers.

Analysis

According to table 18, few teachers use visual aids most of them use the black board.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The researcher was investigating the factors that affects poor performance of the English language subject among learners in Mwala zone secondary school, Machakos district.

5.1 Summary

The researcher started by reviewing the performance of the subject in the area. The information obtained from various sectors showed that attempts to have been made to solve the problems concerning the poor performance of English language subject in the area.

The researcher therefore tried to investigate the problems faced by teachers which lead to poor performance. The factors under investigation were the causes of special learning difficulties, the teaching methodology the educational resources used in the teaching of English subject.

The review of related literature on the above factors was carried out. The literature helped the researcher to base his arguments and avoid researching in the already exhausted areas.

The researcher used qualitative approach which involved collecting raw data on the feelings of the respondents. The researcher used the survey method. The sampling procedure was mainly simple random and the instruments used was the questionnaire.

The researcher prepared the questionnaire for teachers which had eighteen questions each evenly distributed from the objectives. The researcher then recorded data after collecting the information which was analyzed, interpreted and presented in form of tables.

5.2 Discussion

The study was based on the four research questions. After extracting information from the questionnaire, data was presented and analyzed using the frequency table.

From the personal information extracted from the questionnaires, tables 1 to table 6 show indicate that the teachers' own attitude towards teaching as a career, their work load, exposure and educational background is paramount to the performance of the students. Majority of the teachers are qualified teachers but a few chose teaching as their first career option. Many teachers have a manageable work load but few are frequently exposed.

Table 10 to 12 tackled questions on the causes of specific learning difficulties. One of the findings seen from tables was that all learners have different learning difficulties depending on the learners' diversity of needs.

Table 10 gave out the causes affecting, students performance from responses were the student's ability, educational background, interest and inadequate facilities.

Table 11 also gave out the learning difficulties from the environment as additional beliefs, poor nutrition and insecurity. In support of this, Tassan, Kata and Allan (1990) suggest that the environment be modified to reduce or remove any hindrance to learning.

Table 12 associated causes of specific learning difficulties as ignorance, traditional beliefs, genetic facts and acquired trauma.

Table 13 to 15 responded to research question 2 which centered on the teaching methods used by the teachers in the teaching of English. Table 13 responded on the content of English in secondary school syllabus. Majority of the teachers said that it was unsuitable and wide for each class level of learners. On testing procedures, most of the teachers preferred testing their learner after a certain topic has been taught adequately. Motivation was lacking in most of the schools whenever learners showed some improvement in a given skill area. This is discouraging especially on the side of learners. Otiato (2002) in his principles of teaching emphasizes learning by doing as a way of motivating learners. The research highly recommended it.

The last research objective was on the educational resource used in teaching of English subject. Table 16 – 18 responded to this question. Table 16 indicated that teachers rarely use instructional resources and aids. The commonly used visual aid is the black board. Real objects, pictures and charts and T.Vs are seldom used. Most of these learning aids are drawn from the learners environment but they do not address the learners' diverse needs. This is contrary to Hiuhu(2002) who observed that an additional educational resources should be able to meet the individual needs of learners at different stages of development.

5.3 Findings

In response to the research objectives, the following were the findings after analyzing the collected data.

- The causes of specific learning difficulties were ignorance, traditional beliefs, genetic factors and acquired trauma.
- The teaching method used by most of the teachers are rigid.

- Most of the educational resources currently in use do not address the learners' diverse needs.

5.4 Conclusion

From the data collected, most of the teachers acknowledged that learners have diverse needs in learning. The diversity of the learners needs has not been properly handled due to teacher's bulky workload, shortage of skilled personnel and inadequate educational resources and inadequate educational resources and support services. If the above issues are addressed, there can be improved performance not only in English subject but also in all other academic subjects. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is therefore advised to put this into consideration for the success of inclusion.

5.5 Recommendations

With reference to the above findings, the following suggestions are brought;

- Teachers need to give individual attention to learners based on uniqueness of the learner through Individual Educational Programme (IEP).
- There is need for regular exposure for the English language subject teachers through in-service courses, seminars and workshops.
- The Ministry of Education through the Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E) should modify the secondary schools. English syllabus to suit the diverse needs of all the learners in an inclusive setting.

5.6 Suggestions for future researcher

For future research the following suggestions is brought forward;

Further research should be done on preferred causes of specific learning difficulties in our schooling systems.

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RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions and return the complete questionnaire to the person who gave it to you. All information will be confidential and used only for a class project examining the factors that affect the poor performance of English subject.

PAR ONE: PERSONAL INFORMATION

(Please tick ☐ where appropriate)

1. Sex

Male

Female

2. Age group

Below 30 years.....

31 – 40 years.....

41 – 50 years

Above 50 years

3. Educational background

K.C.P.E

K.C.S.E

Diploma

University

4. Job group

ARTS III

Diploma

Graduate

Teaching experience

Below ten years

11 – 20 years

21 – 30 years

31 years and above

PART TWO

1. How many lessons do you teach per week?

- Below 20
- 21 – 20
- Above 28

2. How many times have you attended a seminar or a workshop this year?

- 0 times.....
- 2 times.....
- 4 times.....
- More than 4 times.....

3. Was teaching English your first career choice?

- Yes No

4. How important is it to you that your students perform well in your subject?

- Very important
- Partially important
- Not important

5. What do you think affects the students' performance in English?

- Their ability
- Their educational background
- Lack of interest.....
- Inadequate learning / teaching

6. Have you ever produced your own exercises for use in class?

Yes



What kind of exercises

- For oral
- For reading
- For writing
- Grammar exercise.....
- Tests

No



For what reason

- No time.....
- Not worth
- Too difficult
- No need because the textbook is adequate

What did you do exactly?

.....

Elaborate your reasons

.....

.....

PART C

1a. What of these visual aids have you used in your teaching?

Yourself

The black board.....

Real object.....

Flash card.....

Pictures and charts.....

b. How exactly have you used them?

.....

.....

2. How often do you use them?

Rarely

Occasionally

Always.....

3. Do you think they are worth or struggle

Yes

No

4. Where do you get visual aids for your class?

The school provides

I make them for myself

I ask the students to make them