FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA: A CASE OF TRANS-NZOIA WEST DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated factors affecting academic performance in secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia West District. The study was guided by the following objectives: to establish the school factors, individual and home factors that affect the academic performance of students. In addition, the study sought to establish whether rural or urban environment influenced the academic performance of students. The theory that guided this study was derived from the Education function by Monk, (1992). The education production function assumes that inputs determine the output of an education system. Monk (1992) describes production function analysis as the relating of an input measure to an output using correlation of multivariate analysis. The key variables in this study were the factors that affect performance. The independent variables in this study were family, school, environmental and student factors that affect students' performance in secondary schools. In this study the dependent variable was students' academic performance. The study targeted ten principals/managers, teachers, students, who gave data on the different inputs into performance from their areas of operation as its population. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select the sample in this study. The schools were selected using stratified sampling. Two of the schools were four streamed, three were triple streamed, and three were double streamed while two were single streamed schools. The students were sampled purposively. Form three students were purposely used as they were well acquainted to the school and environment. A sample size of 159 respondents was used. This included 10 principals, 51 teachers and 98 students. The data collected was qualitative and quantitative. Questionnaires and interviews were used in data collection. The raw data was categorized through coding and tabulation. Editing was done to improve the quality of the included percentages and frequencies. The study established that school factors greatly contribute to the academic performance of the students. The presence of a well-stocked library, relevant and sufficient text books, well trained teachers with pedagogical skills, spacious classrooms are factors that can contribute to good academic performance. Therefore, secondary schools whether public or private should endeavor to have well stocked library, enough reference books, textbooks, trained teachers with pedagogical skills who will give students enough time, and classrooms that are spacious.