

# Influence of Parents Level of Education on Student's Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Makueni Sub-County.

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**Abstract :** *The study aimed at finding out parents' level of education as a contributor to students' performance. This study was based on Potter Lawler theory on expectancy theory, Socio constructivism theory by Vygotsky, Beans theory on psychological theory. The researcher provided information that will be useful to the principals, teachers, parents, and policy makers. The population of the study was 460 respondents distributed in 20 public secondary schools across the entire geographical area. The researcher assumed a descriptive survey design based on a target sample of 135 respondents from Makueni sub-county, Makueni County. The sample size included; teachers, principals, parents and students from the sub-county. The researcher used questionnaires and interview guide for data collection. Reliability of the instrument which was used in the study was done by piloting the instruments in two secondary schools. Data was collected from 9 schools covering 6 teachers, 4 parents and 5 students per school totaling to 135 respondents. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively using pie charts, bar charts and graphs. The research findings were that students with educated parents performed better academically was at 55%, educated parents are serious with their children education was at 50%, educated parents provide learning resources to their students was at 72%, students not doing assignments was at 64% and withdrawal from class was at 85%. The study concluded that parents educational level has direct impact on their students' educational aspirations.*

**Key words:** Contributor, academic performance, level of education.

## Introduction

Schools as learning institutions have no worth without students. Students are most essential assets for any educational institute. The students' performance that is the academic achievement

plays an important role in producing the best quality graduates who will become great leaders and man power for the country thus responsible for the country's economic and social development Ali et al, (2009). Educated parents can provide such an environment that suits best for academic success of their children. The academic performance of students heavily depends upon the parental involvement in their academic activities to attain the higher level of quality in academic success Bernard, (2004).

Muola, (2010) while doing a study at Machakos district observed that students' motivation to do well in academic works depend on the nature of their parents' income and their level of education. According to the study conducted by Kunje (2009) there is a significant relationship between parental level of education and the student's education aspirations. Ogoye (2007) showed that illiterate parents were unable to assist their students in doing homework. It has been assumed that academic achievement of students in Makueni county may not only depend on the quality of schools and the teachers, rather the extent of environmental factors has vital role to play in academic achievement of their students. Students are more likely to have higher academic achievement levels when the environmental factors are favorable Bryan, (2005). The aim of the study was to establish the influence of parents' level of education on students' academic performance in public secondary school in Makueni sub-county.

## 3.0 Methodology

The researcher used descriptive survey design to collect information. The design was effective in securing evidence concerning all existing situations; identify standards with which to compare present conditions Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). The information was obtained through the use of questionnaires. The study was carried out in Makueni Sub County which is situated in Eastern Kenya. It is located between 37.3° and 38.20° East

of the Greenwich meridian and 1.7° and 26° South of the Equator. The population of the study was 23 respondents from the 20 public secondary schools which was totaling to 460 respondents. Stratified sampling was used to sample the schools. The sample size comprised of secondary school teachers, parents and students purposively selected from a total of 9 schools. This formed more than 30% of the entire target population and is considered enough representation of the whole.

This is in agreement with Turkmen's assertion (1988) that a sample of 25% or a quarter and above of the study population is enough representation and adequate for collecting reliable information or data for study, provided that consideration is made on the distinct characteristics of the population. Three sampling methods were used in this study; first stratified sampling method was used to categorize schools into boarding or days schools. Secondly, purposive sampling was used to select teachers. Sample random sampling was used to select the students.

The study sample included 3 mixed day secondary schools, 3 girls boarding and 3 boys boarding secondary schools with 15 respondents from each school making a total of 135 respondents.

The researcher used questionnaires to the teachers and students because of their convenience.

Pre-testing through piloting was done in two schools in Makueni Sub County so as to establish the reliability of the questionnaire. The schools used in piloting were not included in the study. Feedback obtained from the pilot study assisted the researcher in revising the questionnaire to ensure that it covers the objective of the study. Raw data obtained from the questionnaires was analyzed qualitatively by using detailed information from the questionnaires. The data was interpreted and conclusion drawn by use of tables, pie charts and graphs. High confidentiality was assured to the respondents. The researcher analyzed the data in a manner that avoided misstatement, misinterpretation or fraud rent.

#### 4.0 Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation

In order to analyze the structured section of the questionnaires, content analysis technique was used.

##### 4.1 Demographic information

The distribution of the respondent according to the above demographic characteristics was shown in tables and graphs below.

**Table 4.1 Gender of respondents**

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Parents	Female	30	83.3
	Male	6	16.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>
Teachers	Female	36	67
	Male	18	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.1 indicated that majority of the respondents were females as shown by 36 which is (67%) of teachers and 30 which is (83.3%) parents while 18 which is (33%) teachers and 6 which is (16.6%) parents were male.

**Table 4.2 Age of the respondents**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Parents	Below 30 yrs	6	16.7
	30-40 yrs	10	27.8
	Over 40 yrs	20	55.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>
Teachers	Below 30 yrs	5	9.3
	30-40 yrs	26	48.1
	Over 40 yrs	23	42.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

9.3% of the teachers were below 30 years of age while 48.1% of the total respondents had ages between 30-40 years. 42.6% of the respondents had ages over 40 years. This shows that the teachers'

respondents were mature enough to respond to questions. Most of the parents were also mature enough as indicated by 55.6% of the parents being over 40 years and 27.8% of the respondents

ranging between 30-40 years. A few of the parents were below 30 years which is 16.7%).

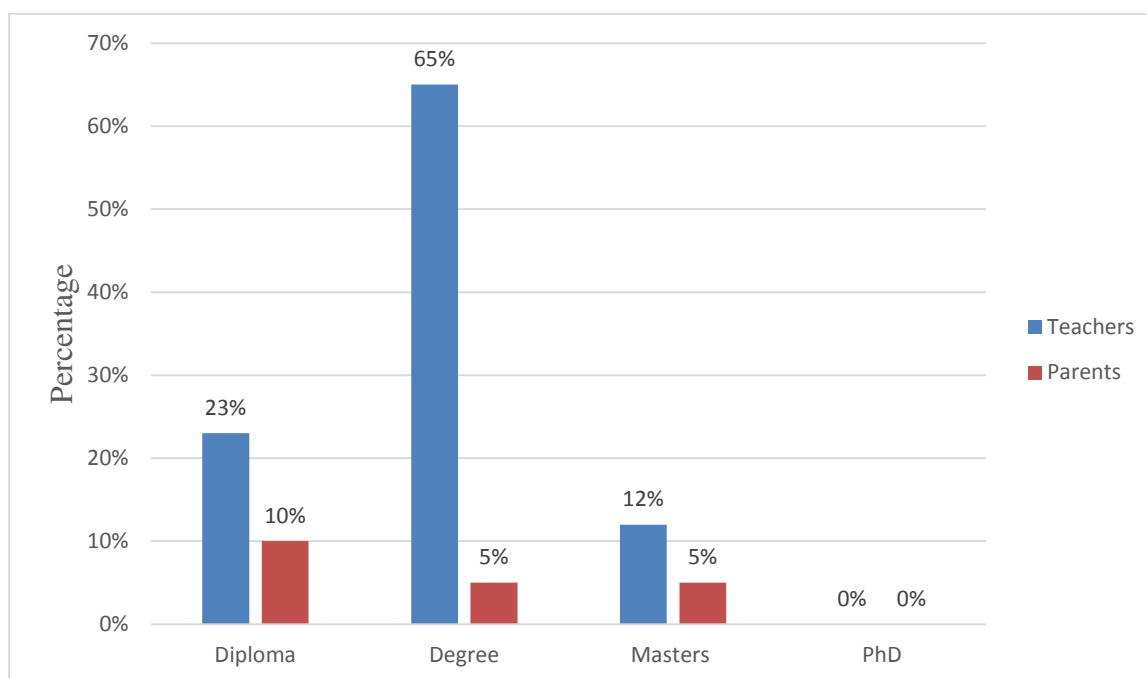
Above yrs	10	10	18.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Table 4.3 Experience of the teachers**

Years worked	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 yrs	14	25.9
4-5 yrs	20	37.1
5-10 yrs	10	18.5

The findings indicated that majority of teachers had a frequency of 20 which is (37.1%) worked for between 4-5 years. This shows that the teacher respondents have enough experience to offer reliable information.

**Figure 4.1 Education level of the respondents**



The figure 4.1 shows that majority which is 65% of the teachers had a degree as their highest level of education while 23% had a diploma. This findings show that the respondents had the required qualification to teach at secondary level and would understand environmental determinants influencing academic performance of secondary schools. Majority of the parents above 20% had a diploma, degree and masters so they were suitable in the responding of the questionnaires.

**4.2 Parents' level of education**

The objective of this study was to establish the influence of parents' level of education on students' academic performance in Makueni County. To achieve this objective the following question was answered. Are there indicators that show that the parents' level of education is high? To answer this question, descriptive statistics inform of frequencies, percentages were used and results presented in table 4.4 below

**Table 4.4 Indicators to show that parents' level of education is high.**

Indicator	Respondents	SA	A	D	Strong D	Total
Students with educated parents perform better in KCSE	Parents	20 55.6%	16 44.4%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>36</b> <b>100%</b>
	Students	25 55.6%	10 22.2%	10 22.2%	0 0%	<b>45</b> <b>100%</b>
	Teachers	30 55.6%	14 25.9%	5 9.3%	5 9.3%	<b>54</b> <b>100%</b>
Educated parents are serious with their children education	Parents	16 44.4%	10 27.8%	10 27.8%	0 0%	<b>36</b> <b>100%</b>
	Students	20	15	5	5	<b>45</b>

		44.4%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	<b>100%</b>
	Teachers	34 63%	10 18.5%	10 18.5%	0 0%	<b>54</b> <b>100%</b>
Educated parent provide learning resources to their students	Parents	30 83.3%	6 16.7%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>36</b> <b>100%</b>
	Students	30 77.7%	10 22.2%	5 11.1%	0 0%	<b>45</b> <b>100%</b>
	Teachers	30 55.6%	19 35.2%	5 9.3%	0 0%	<b>54</b> <b>100%</b>

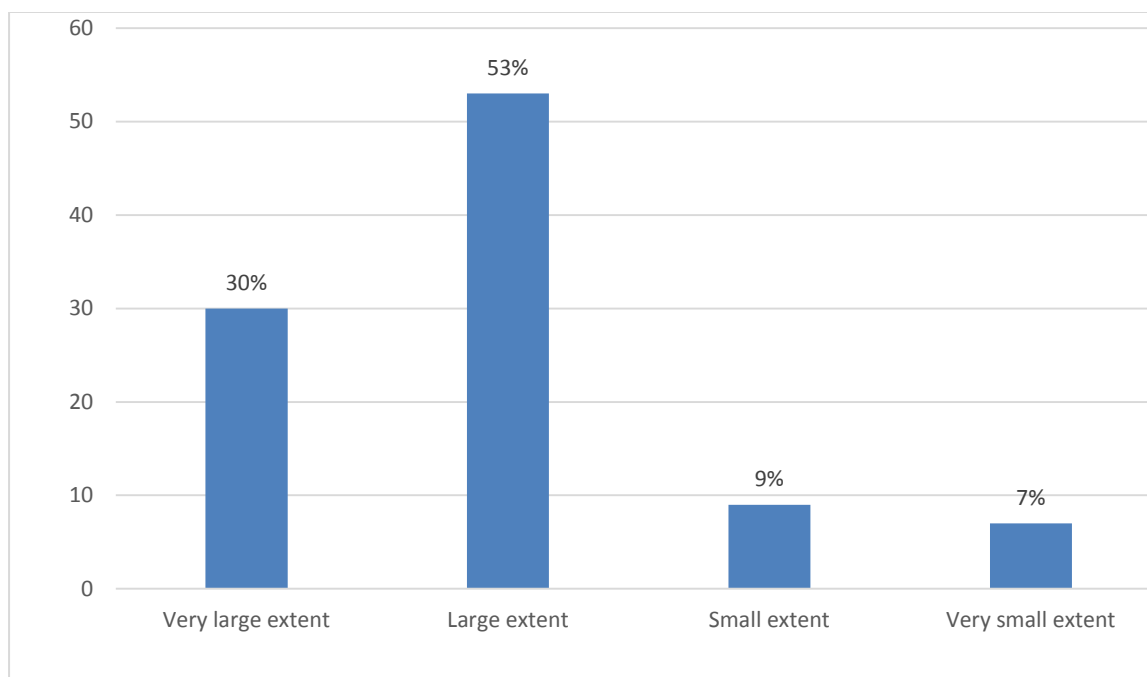
From the table above 55.6% (30) teachers strongly agreed that students with educated parents perform better in K.C.S.E. 25.9% (14) agreed to the same while 9.3% disagreed to the opinion as 9.3%.strongly disagreed. 55.6% (25) of the students strongly agreed that students from educated parents perform better in K.C.S.E backed by 55.6% agreeing to the same. 22.2% disagreed while 0% strongly disagreed. After the parents were interviewed, 100% of the parents agreed with the opinion. No parent disagreed with the given opinion.

Teachers who strongly agreed that educated parents are serious with their children education were 34 which is 63% echoed by 10 which is 18.5% who also agree with the opinion compared to only 10 which is 18.5% disagreeing that educated parents are serious with their children education. Above 35 equivalents to 77.9% of students agreed with the

question compared to only 10 same as 22.2% disagreeing with the question. After the interview was carried out over 50% of the parents disagreed with that educated parents are serious with their children education while below 50% disagreed with the opinion.

90% which is 49 of the teachers strongly agreed that educated parents provide learning resources to their students compared to only 9.5% disagreeing with the opinion. 99% of the students also agreed to the opinion that educated parents provided their children with the required learning resources. Less than 20% disagreed with the opinion. All the parents who were interviewed agreed strongly. None of the parents disagreed. This is a clear indication that students with educated parents performed better academically compared to those with uneducated parents.

Figure 4.2 Extend of parental level of education influence on students' KCSE performance



The researcher found out that majority of the respondents that is 53% agreed that parents' level of education influenced students' KCSE performance to a large extent. These were followed by 30% who agreed to a very large extent. This finding was also heightened by the parents' who indicated that parents' level of education influenced students' academic performance. It can

therefore be concluded that parents' education influences greatly students' academic performance and therefore should be enhanced. Parents' educational value has direct impact on their students' educational aspirations. The researcher then investigated the level of agreement that students with educated parents perform better in KCSE.

**Table 4.5 Indicators to show that parents' level of education is low**

Indicator	Respondents	Agree	Disagree	Total
Students not doing given assignment	Parents	20 55.6%	16 44.4%	<b>36</b> <b>(100%)</b>
	Students	30 77.7%	15 33.3%	<b>45</b> <b>(100%)</b>
	Teachers	32 59.3%	22 40.7%	<b>54</b> <b>(100%)</b>
Students lacking learning resources	Parents	26 72.2%	10 27.8%	<b>36</b> <b>(100%)</b>
	Students	35 77.8%	10 22.2%	<b>45</b> <b>(100%)</b>
	Teachers	34 63%	20 37%	<b>54</b> <b>(100%)</b>
Withdrawal from class	Parents	30 87.3%	6 16.7%	<b>36</b> <b>(100%)</b>
	Students	30 77.7%	15 33.3%	<b>45</b> <b>(100%)</b>
	Teachers	49 90.7%	5 9.3%	<b>54</b> <b>(100%)</b>

From the table 4.5 above indicated that above 50% of the teachers agreed that most of the students were not doing given assignments compared to less than 50% respondents who disagreed that students were not doing given assignment. 77.7% of students agreed while only 33.3% disagreed. After the parents were interviewed on the same, 55.6% of the parents agreed while 44.4% disagreed. Over 60% of the teachers, students and parents agreed that students were lacking learning resources as an indicator that their parents' education was low compared to less than 40% of the same respondents disagreeing. The respondents highly agreed that students were being withdrawn from classes to go for levies which affected their learning, this is indicated by above 80% agreeing to the opinion compared to less than 20% respondents disagreeing. As cited by Considine and Zappala (2009), in their study that families where parents are educated foster a higher level of achievement in their performance because of providing psychological support to their children.

**5.1 Summary of the findings**

Data analysis and interpretation of interview and questionnaire responses from teachers, students and

parents revealed that students with educated parents performed better academically compared to students with uneducated parents. The results of the findings showed that slightly over half of the teachers agreed. 55.6% students as well as the parents also agreed to the opinion. 63% teachers and above 50% of the students and parents agreed that educated parents were serious with their children education. Above 80% of the respondents agreed that educated parents provided their learners with learning resources.

From the teachers' results 59.3% teachers, 77.7% students and 55.6% parents were in agreement that students' not doing given assignment was an indicator that parents' level of education was low. Over 60% of the respondents agreed that students' lacking learning resources was an indicator of parents' education being low. 90.7% of teachers agreed that students were being withdrawn from the class to go for unpaid school levies which was a clear indicator of parents' level of education being low. 87.3% of the parents agree to the same.

**5.2 Conclusion**

The study established that parents' level of education influenced students' performance because of the following indicators: Students with educated parents performed better in KCSE, educated parents were serious with their children's education and students were provided with learning resources.

### 5.3 Recommendations

The study found out that education levels of parents influenced the students' academic performance. Therefore, school administrators and policy makers should make an effort to investigate ways to increase parents' involvement on the students' education and demonstrate to parents that their involvement is related to their students' academic performance.

Future policy should focus on developing and promoting school programs that enable parents to increase attention on their students' academic performance. For instance, school administrators may set aside time in the curriculum for mentorship programs involving motivational speakers to share to the students, teachers and parents as a team in focus of improving the academic standards. This study identified mechanisms by which parental level of education is related to student performance and it is the hope that these findings lead to further research and new policies to increase students' academic performance.

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