

ABSTRACT

It is presumed that Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination and Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination results are mainly used to determine who can move to higher education. Students therefore, stand to lose or gain ostensibly from performance in KCSE examinations. In 2013 and 2014, over 50% (728 out of 1336 and 778 out of 1491) of candidates enrolled in CDF built secondary schools in Rachuonyo South sub-County got E t D grades which are below the acceptable minimum quality grade of C+ that enables candidates pursue competitive courses at tertiary and university levels. It is against this background that this study investigated the selected factors influencing academic performance in CDF built secondary schools in Rachuonyo South sub-County. The study objectives were: to establish the influence of students' entry behavior on performance of students at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), to determine the influence of teacher quality on student's performance at KCSE and to examine the influence of physical facilities on performance of students at KCSE. The study was guided by Education Production Function Theory based on the input and output variables. Descriptive Survey and Correlational research designs were used. The study population was 42 principals of CDF built secondary schools and 1 sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. The sample comprised 37 principals of the 37 secondary schools and 1 SCQASO. The principals were sampled using simple random sampling while the SCQASO was sampled using saturated sampling technique. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedule and document analysis guide. The instruments were validated by experts from the department of Educational Management and Foundations, Maseno University for content and face validity. Piloting was carried out in 5 schools in order for reliability to be achieved. Test-retest reliability was established by correlating the two tests and a correlation of $r=.7$ showed that the instruments were reliable. KCPE marks and KCSE results, teacher quality and students' performance, and physical facilities and students performance were analyzed using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient of -1 to +1 and descriptive statistics as well as linear multiple regressions. Entry mark was found to have a strong positive relationship with KCSE performance and it accounts for 64.2% change in KCSE mean score. Teacher quality was found to have a strong positive relationship with students' performance and it accounts for 17% of change in KCSE mean score. Teacher experience was found to account for 3.31% of change in KCSE mean score. Physical facilities were also found to have a relationship with students' performance and accounts for 14% of change in KCSE mean score. It was concluded that the performance of these schools is weak because they admit students with low KCPE marks and KCPE is a strong predictor of KCSE outcome. It was also concluded that teacher quality is key to good performance at KCSE. Physical facilities were also found to be crucial in ensuring good performance. The government should work more in strengthening primary education so that pupils exit with good mastery of numeracy and literacy skills. Government should employ enough qualified teachers and requisite facilities should be put up in CDF schools to guarantee quality education. These findings will be useful to the government and Teachers Service Commission since the information will be used to guide resource allocation to these schools.

