



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL LEVEL OF EDUCATION ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF PUPILS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KISUMU WEST SUB COUNTY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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#### ABSTRACT

Although the Government of Kenya and parents value primary school education, disparities have continued to exist in academic performance in each school. Academic achievement of pupils in Kisumu West Sub County had remained low in comparison with other neighboring sub counties for the period 2011 to 2014, yet studies linking poor performance with level of education status of parents in this particular area of study were limited. Between 2011 and 2014, Kisumu West's mean score was 243.17; Kisumu East 256.19; Kisumu Central 278.14, Nyando 248.66 and Muhoroni 258.46. The purpose of this study was therefore to establish the influence of parental level of education on pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County. It was conceptualized in the study that pupils' academic achievement depends on parental level of education and these variables helped to guide the study. The study established that Parental level of education had positive influence on pupils' academic achievement. The influence was moderate as signified by r -value of .503 at a p-value of .000, and accounted for 25% of the variation in pupils' academic achievement. The study concluded that parental level of education moderately influences pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools. The study recommended that parents regardless of their level of education, should be encouraged to enhance their children's education by instilling into them academic discipline.

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## INTRODUCTION

Successful learning in a child is dependent upon many factors. Similarly, child development involves multiple interactive systems of influence and dynamic interactions between the child, the education system, and wider social contexts over time (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2012). From a broader perspective, education is represented as a shared responsibility between parents, educators, governments and others, rather than being the exclusive domain of schools. Socio economic status of parents is vital for pupils' academic achievement since children look up-to their parents for guidance, protection and motivation to live a great life (Ntitika, 2014). It has been argued that children brought up in less favorable conditions obtain less education, despite the large financial returns attributed to schooling (Heckman and Masterov, 2005). Indeed there is a large correlation between the education level of parents and their children (Björklund and Salvanes, 2011). De Lange, Dronkers, and Maarten (2014) investigated the influence of single family parent forms on children's educational performance among secondary school

students from European countries using Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. The study revealed that there is influence of form of family on educational performance: Students living in single-mother families' score nearly 14 points lower than students living with a mother and father, while those living with a mother plus guardian score on average 10 points lower. On the other hand, Abudu and Fuseini (2013) examined the influence of single parenting on pupils' academic performance with a focus on whether academic performance differed between child from single parents home and those from two parent homes. Data analysis involved using cross tabulation and t – test. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the academic performance of pupils from single parent homes and those from two parent homes. The main conclusion drawn from this study is that single parenting has negative impact on a child's academic performance. However, both studies did not focus on how other aspects of marital status (like being widowed, separated, or divorced) other than single parents influence academic achievement. Moreover, the gender of the single parent could also influence academic achievement of the child. The current study assessed the influence of various aspects of socio

economic status of parents on pupils' academic achievement. Chevalier, Harmon, O' Sullivan, and Walker (2013) investigated the relationship between early school-leaving and parental education and income using UK Labour Force Survey data- a quarterly survey of households in the U.K. Using children aged 16 to 18 living at home, so as to match parental information to the child's record only when children are living with their parents. They found that, when using paternal occupation as instrumental variables, the results showed that one year of paternal education increases the probability of his daughter staying on in school by seven percent. In contrast, maternal education has no statistically significant impact on the probability of remaining in education for either sons or daughters. A similar study in Malaysia by Jabor, Krissana, Kungu, Yahya, and Mohd (2011) sought to determine if parent educational status influences the achievement in high school science. This study utilized the student's Grade Point Average for science during high school years to measure achievement. It was found that majority of graduating high school students were either parent graduate from college. Most of graduating students attended public schools. Most graduating high school students had better than C grade in science. "Either Parent College Graduate" students had higher Grade Point Average scores on science than the scores of "Neither Parent College Graduate" students. The study concluded that parents play an important role in their children's learning. Aside from being actively involved in their children's education, parents also provide a home environment that can affect learning. Parents serve as a model for learning, determine the educational resources available in the home and hold particular attitudes and values towards education. It is, however, critical to note that the two studies reviewed did not indicate the level of academic achievement that a pupil is capable of attaining due to a particular parental educational level. There was therefore need to compare the academic achievement of pupils under the lenses of particular education levels of their parents.

### Research Objective

The research objective was: To Determine the influence of parental level of education on academic achievement of pupils in primary schools from Kisumu West Sub County

### Synthesis of literature on the influence of education level of parents on pupils' academic achievement

Students' academic achievement and educational attainment have been studied within different frameworks. Many of them have a focus on parents' education, occupation or home background. There is evidence that parents' education will affect students' academic achievement in Mathematics (Akinsanya, Ajayi, and Salomi, 2011). Many studies have focused on the relationship between parental level of education and academic achievement of learners. Chevalier, Harmon, O' Sullivan, and Walker (2013) investigated the relationship between early school-leaving and parental education and income using UK Labour Force Survey data- a quarterly survey of households in the U.K. Children aged 16 to 18 living at home were interviewed in the LFS, so parental information can be matched to the child's record only when children are living with their parents. Their sub-sample consisted of those children observed in LFS at ages 16 to 18 inclusive (and therefore have made their decision with respect to post compulsory education participation) which is approximately 56,000 observations, or 4% of all LFS respondents.

They found that, when using paternal occupation as instrumental variables, the results showed that one year of paternal education increases the probability of his daughter staying on in school by seven percent. In contrast, maternal education has no statistically significant impact on the probability of remaining in education for either sons or daughters. However, the above study (Chevalier, et al., 2013) did not relate the influence of parental level of education on academic achievement of students, by indicating clearly how academic performance was measured. Similarly in Malaysia, Jabor, Krissana, Kungu, Yahya, and Mohd (2011) sought to determine if parent educational status influences the achievement in high school science. This study utilized the student's Grade Point Average for science during high school years to measure achievement. The data for this study came from the National Assessment of Educational Progress High School Transcript Study 2005 consisted transcripts from about 640 public schools and 80 private schools, constituting a nationally representative sample of 26,000 high school graduates, representing approximately 2.7 million 2005 high school graduates. It was found that majority of graduating high school students has either parent graduate from college. Most of graduating students attended public schools. Most graduating high school students had better than C grade in science. "Either Parent College Graduate" students had higher Grade Point Average scores on science than the scores of "Neither Parent College Graduate" students. The study concluded that parents play an important role in their children's learning. Aside from being actively involved in their children's education, parents also provide a home environment that can affect learning. Parents serve as a model for learning, determine the educational resources available in the home and hold particular attitudes and values towards education.

Alokan, Osakinle, and Onijingin (2013) investigated the difference between the academic performance of students from parents with high educational background and students from parents with low educational background. It also investigated the influence of having study facilities at home on academic performance. The population for this study comprised all public secondary school students in Ondo State. The sample consisted of 240 students from 6 randomly selected schools. Expert judgments were used to ensure face and content validity. Test-retest method was used to determine the reliability and a reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. Data collected were analyzed by using t-test. The result revealed a significant difference between academic performance of students from parents with high educational background and students from parents with low educational background. A significant different was also found between the academic performance of students having study facilities at home and students with no study facilities at home. Ogwen, Kathuri, and Obara (2014) sought to determine the influence of family characteristics (family income, family size and family level of education) on the students' academic performance in Agriculture Subject. Co-relational design was used alongside stratified sampling to select schools for the study. The target population was students taking Agriculture Subject. There were 754 students taking Agriculture Subject at Form Four. The sample size was 254 students upon whom questionnaire were administered. Data was analyzed using both descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and multiple regressions) for statistical tests with levels of significance set at a 0.05 alpha level. Statistical Package for

Social Sciences software was used for data analysis. The study found a positive correlation between level of education of the mother and students' performance. Furthermore, multiple regression results on family characteristics found no significant influence of family characteristics on students' performance in secondary school agriculture in Rachuonyo North District, thus the hypothesis was accepted. It is important to note from the reviewed studies on education levels of parents and academic achievement of pupils that academic achievement has not been clearly measured. Similarly, the level of academic achievement that a pupil is capable of attaining due to a particular parental educational level has not been clearly measured.

There was therefore need to compare the academic achievement of pupils in light of particular education levels of their parents, as is adequately covered in the current study.

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual frame work (Figure 1) postulates that parental level of education influences pupils' academic achievement. The conceptual framework shows the relationship between parental level of education of parents and academic achievement of pupils in primary schools. The conceptual framework shows that academic achievement of pupils

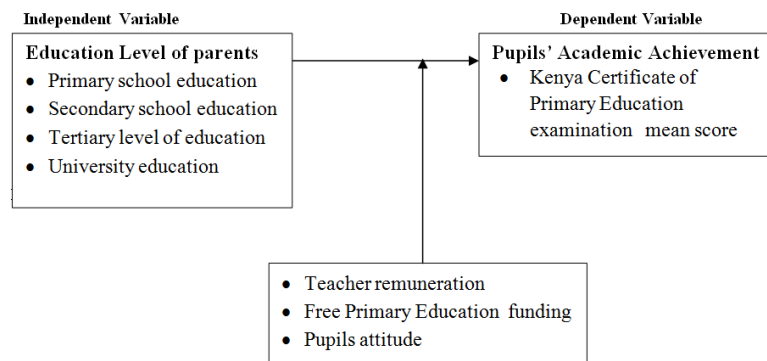


Figure 1. A Conceptual Framework showing the influence of Parental Level of Education on Pupils' Academic Achievement

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Headteachers and Teachers

Demographic Characteristics			Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Head teachers	Male	28	63.64
		Female	16	36.36
	Total	44	100	
	Teachers	Male	24	54.55
		Female	20	45.45
Total	44	100		
Age	Headteachers	25 – 30	00	00
		31 – 35	00	00
		36 – 40	5	11.36
		41 – 45	7	15.91
		46 – 50	14	31.82
		51 – 55	16	36.36
		>55	2	04.55
	Total	44	100	
	Teachers	25 – 30	3	6.82
		31 – 35	11	25
		36 – 40	14	31.82
		41 – 45	8	18.18
		46 – 50	5	11.36
51 – 55		2	04.55	
>55	1	2.27		
Total	44	100		
Marital Status	Headteachers	Single	02	4.55
		Married	36	81.81
		Widowed	04	9.09
		Separated	02	4.55
	Total	44	100	
	Teachers	Single	13	29.55
		Married	23	52.27
		Widowed	04	9.09
		Separated	04	9.09
	Total	44	100	
Education level	Headteachers	P1	12	27.27
		Diploma	17	38.64
		Degree	15	34.09
	Total	44	100	
	Teachers	P1	16	36.36
		Diploma	9	20.45
		Degree	19	43.18
Total	44	100		

depends on parental level of education. The independent variable of the study was parental level of education and the dependent variable was pupils' academic achievement. The parental level of education is considered to have influence on academic achievement of pupils (the dependent variable), which is measured by the mean scores attained in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination results. Further, the relationship between parental level of education and academic achievement of pupils could also be moderated by intervening variable. For instance, school factors like effective teaching, school infrastructure (availability or not of facilities like enough desks, toilets, classrooms and so on), and general climate in school (like discipline level, bullying, and other hostilities). Similarly, government policies on teacher recruitment, teacher remuneration, teacher training and retraining, and timely disbursement of free primary education funds to schools moderate the influence of parental level of education on pupils' academic achievement. The researcher however held these intervening variables constant to enable the determination of relationship between independent and dependent variables.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey and correlational research designs were adopted for the study. Target population was 50 head teachers, 53 class 8 teachers, and 2340 parents whose children were enrolled in class 8 for Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination in 2016. Through Yamane's formula, a sample size of 44 head teachers and 46 class 8 teachers was selected. Random sampling was used to select 40 parents. Questionnaire was used on head teachers and class 8 teachers, while interview schedule was used on parents whose children are in class 8. Reliability of the instruments was determined by test re-test method whereby head teachers questionnaire had a coefficient of .78 and teachers' questionnaire was .83 at p-value of .05. Validity was determined by experts from educational management and foundations. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of frequency counts, means, percentages and regression analysis. Qualitative data was transcribed and analyzed in emergent themes and sub themes.

## RESULTS

**Demographic Characteristics of Head Teachers and Teachers:** The demographic characteristics of head teachers and teachers were gender, age, marital status and education level. Table 1 presents demographic characteristics of head teachers and teachers. Table 1 illustrates that 63.64% of the sampled head teachers were males while 36.36% were females. This means that most public primary schools are headed by male persons, although there are a significant number of institutions headed by female persons. This factor could be attributed to the absence of women in leadership positions that have become common all over the world (Sabatier, 2015). With regard to the sampled class eight teachers; Table 1 indicates that 54.55% were males while 45.45% of them were females. Concerning age distribution, Table 1 illustrates that 36.36% of the sampled head teachers were between 51 and 55 years old; 31.82% were between 46 and 50 years; 15.91% were between 41 and 45 years; 11.36% were between 36 and 40; and 4.55% were aged 55 years and above. Table 1 also indicates that 31.82% of the sampled teachers were between 36 and 40 years of age; 25% were between 31 and 35 years of age; 18.18% were between 41 and 45 years; 11.36% were

between 46 and 50 years; 6.82% were between 25 and 30, while another 4.55% were between 51 and 55 years. The remaining 2.27% of the sampled teachers were 55 years and above by age. This indicates that only 25% of the teachers were less than 35 years of age. With regard to marital status, Table 1 indicates that majorities (81.81%) of the sampled head teachers were married; 9.09% were widowed; 4.55% were separated; and another 4.55 of the head teachers were single. These findings mean that most of the head teachers lived or are still living as couple. This therefore means that the school administrators were better placed to assess and respond to issues concerning families within varied households, such as socio economic factors that might interfere with the academic achievement of learners. Table 1 also indicates that majority of the sampled class eight teachers (52.27%) of the sampled class eight teachers were married; 29.55% single; 9.09% widowed while another 9.09% of the sampled teachers were separated. Lastly, Table 1 illustrates that 38.64% of the head teachers had diploma level of education; 34.09% of them had degree level of education; while 27.27% had P1 level of education. This indicates a fair level of academic qualification among the sampled school administrators. This therefore means that the head teachers were in a better position to understand issues related to socio economic factors that may affect pupils' academic achievement. For class eight teachers, the table shows that 43.18% of them had degree level teachers had diploma level of education. With over 56% of class eight teachers holding diploma and degree levels of education, the respondents were expected to have adequate understanding of pupils' responses to class instructions and relate the same to home environment where the child comes from.

### Research Question

The research question responded was: What is the influence of parental level of education on academic achievement of pupils in primary schools from Kisumu West Sub County. Parental level of education was quantified by assigning the following numerals: 1= Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination; 2= Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination; 3 = Certificate; 4 = Diploma; 5 = Bachelors Degree 6 = Masters and 7 = PhD. These numeric data was therefore used in the regression analysis. The computed results were as shown in Table 4.4. Table 2 Indicates that the influence of parental level of education on pupils academic achievement was significant ( $r=.503$ ,  $N=308$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). This means that increase in parental level of education, improved pupils' academic achievement. In essence, parents with high education level improved pupils' academic achievement more than those with lower level of education. The influence of parental level of education on pupils' academic achievement is illustrated by the Adjusted R- Square coefficient of .250 which indicates that parental level of education accounts for 25% change in pupils' academic achievement. The remaining 75% of change in the achievement is due to other factors other than education level of parents. To establish as to whether level of education of parents was a significant predictor of pupils' academic achievement, Analysis of Variance was carried out (Table 3). From Table 3, it can be noted that parental level of education is a significant predictor of pupils academic achievement ( $F(1, 306) = 103.377$ ,  $P<0.05$ ). Given that the significance value of F statistics is .000, education level of parents is accepted as a factor that explains variation in the academic achievement of pupils in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination.

**Table 2. Regression analysis on the Influence of Parental level of Education on pupils' Academic Achievement**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.503	.253	.250	51.170	.253	103.377	1	306	.000

Predictors: (Constant), Parental level of Education.

**Table 3. Analysis of Variance of the influence of Parental Level of Education on Pupils Academic Achievement**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	270,677.536	1	270,677.536	103.377	.000
	Residual	801,218.162	306	2,618.360		
	Total	1,071,895.698	307			

Dependent Variable: Kenya Certificate Of Primary Education examination marks

Predictors: (Constant), Educational level of parents.

**Table 4. Linear Regression Analysis of influence of Parental level of Education on Pupils Academic Achievement**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	240.945	5.116		47.093	.000
	Educational level of Parents	19.277	1.896	.503	10.167	.000

Dependent Variable: Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination Marks;

Regression Equation:  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$

To establish the actual influence of parental education level on academic achievement of pupils, linear regression analysis was computed. Table 4 presents the linear regression analysis results. Table 4 indicates that for every one unit increase in Parental level of education there was 19.277 units' increase in pupils' academic achievement as signified by the coefficient 19.277. The regression equation  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1$ . That is, Pupils academic achievement =  $240.945 + 19.277 X_1$

## DISCUSSION

Most public primary schools were headed by male persons, although there was a significant number of institutions headed by female persons. This factor could be attributed to the absence of women in leadership positions that have become common all over the world (Sabatier, 2015). Parental level of education has relatively low influence on pupils' academic achievement. This is because educated parents have an understanding of the value of education and therefore they will struggle to ensure that their children also have received good education by providing them with conducive learning atmosphere at home and the necessary reading materials. There is gender balance in the population of teachers in the sampled public schools. Issues of gender bias were therefore not expected to interfere with the opinions of the respondents. Gender of the respondent was important in this study because both male and female parents were represented, with regard to parental level of education both gender support their children regardless of their levels in socio economic status. Parental level of education indeed influences the pupils' academic achievement. Parents look upon themselves as main drivers of their children success therefore they either support their pupils qualitatively or quantitatively by providing materials and services required. Their status varies and therefore the context in which they support their children depends on where they are endowed qualitatively or quantitatively. This therefore means that invoking gender in collecting data enriched the study. If one gender was left out then the study would not be real complete since in most cases the child is brought up by both gender and in exceptional cases one gender influence may be hidden particularly in cases of single parents.

Class eight teachers who participated in the study were of relatively mature age, thus were expected to be objective in their opinions concerning influence of parental level of education on academic performance of pupils. This meant that the respondents were mature and could understand the concept of socio economic status of parents as well as academic achievement of their children. Since most of them were also parents, they had experience in parenting. Age of the respondents was important in this study because parents of varied age groups were represented; with regard to parental level of education all age groups of parents support their children regardless of their levels in parental level of education. Parental level of education of parents indeed influences the pupils' academic achievement. This therefore means that age of parents influence pupils academic achievement since parents have individual responsibility to look upon their children to achieve their academic success. Parental level of education vary with their age therefore, the context in which they support their children depend on whether they are strong enough to provide enough resources to support their children economically. This therefore means that invoking age in collecting data enriched the study. Marital status of the respondents was important in this study because all aspects of marital status of the parents were represented. With regard to parental socio economic status, parents take up the responsibility to support their children regardless of their marital status and socio economic status to achieve the success of their children; this therefore means that indeed parental socio economic status influence pupils' academic achievement. The respondents therefore had experience in bringing up children from varied marital status therefore their views were relevant to this study, this mean that invoking marital status in collecting data enriched this study. If one aspect of marital status was left out then the study would not be real complete since children are brought up from different marital status background. Similarly, the fair levels of education possessed by class eight teachers meant that they were able to implement the class eight curriculum effectively, and disparities in pupils' academic achievement could only be attributed to home factors and not teacher factors. Level of education of the respondents was important in this study because the varied parental levels of education were represented. Parents of all levels of

education support their children to achieve their academic success regardless of their levels in parental level of education. This therefore means that indeed the parental level of education of parents influenced pupils' academic achievement. The context in which the parents support their children depends on where they are endowed qualitatively and quantitatively. This therefore means that invoking level of education in collecting data enriched this study.

## Conclusion

Parental education level accounted for 25% variation in pupils' academic achievement and it was a significant predictor of pupils' academic achievement. The model revealed that improvement in parental level of education improved pupils' academic achievement.

## Recommendations

In view of the findings that parental level of education accounted for 25% of the variation in pupils' academic achievement, the study recommended that, parents be encouraged by the head teachers and teachers to fully provide academic guidance and counseling to their school going children with a view to going beyond their parents level of education. Furthermore the highly educated parents be encouraged to serve as role models to the pupils.

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