

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya

By

¹Isabel Adhiambo Oyoo

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Corresponding author: belaadhiambo@gmail.com

²Sr. Dr. Elizabeth Piliyesi

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

³Dr. Jared Anyona

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

The study investigated the school culture and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Awendo Sub County, Migori County, Kenya. This study was anchored on management theory coined by Fayol (1949) which is best remembered for its contribution to school of management thought. Convergent mixed research design was employed in the study. The target population included 26 public secondary schools, 26 principals and 248 teachers and 1960 form four students in Awendo Sub- County, while the study sample consisted of 12 principals and 74 teachers which constituted 30 percent of the school and teacher population, and 100 students which accounted for 5.6 percent of students in the Sub County respectively. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedules and documents analysis. Face and content validity were used to ensure that the tools collected the intended data, while test- retest reliability was employed to ensure consistency of the data collected. Students' academic performance in 2015-2019 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations was obtained from school examination records. Data analysed through descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages was generated by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 and presented in bar charts and tables. The researcher factored ethical considerations by obtaining research permit from National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NCSTI) to collect data and informed consent from participating schools, and ensured confidentiality, anonymity, and right to privacy of the participants. Plagiarism and fraud were guarded by acknowledging all the secondary sources of materials used in the current study. The study findings showed that schools whose respondents had greater mean ratings for strongly agreeing to the statements on various aspects of school culture in their schools had higher mean KCSE examinations score. The study concluded that positive school culture has strong bearing on the performance of public secondary schools in KCSE examinations. The researcher recommends increased government funding for schools to support activities and functions meant to create positive school culture, non-governmental organization to conduct sensitization campaigns on stakeholders participation in school activities and functions meant to create positive school culture, community based programmes to sensitize students and parents on the need for active involvement in creating positive school culture, school management to organize sensitization fora for teachers and students on ideals of positive school culture, parents to actively participate in teacher- parents meetings, teachers to embrace collaboration among themselves and students, and develop positive attitude towards subject, teaching and students.

Key words: Kenya, School culture, School Ceremonies, School Rituals, School Values and Norms, Collaboration, Medium of Instruction, Academic Emphasis, Strict Discipline, Trust and Unity of Purpose, Attitudes and Beliefs, Students Academic Performance, Awendo Sub-County, Migori County

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya

By

¹Isabel Adhiambo Oyoo, ²Sr. Dr. Elizabeth Piliyesi and ³Dr. Jared Anyona

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

School culture is defined differently by different scholars. Sagwe, Ajowi and Mwebi, (2016) define school culture as unwritten rules on how to think, feel and act in schools that affect student's academic performance. Karadağ, Kiliçoğlu and Yilmaz, (2014) see school culture as the historically transmitted patterns of meanings including the norms, values, beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, traditions and myths shared by and guide actions of members of school community. Regardless of the definition, school is as unique as its culture that makes up its 'persona'.

Empirical evidence is easily available showing that depending on the culture, schools can either enhance or hinder academic performance of students since the culture sets the parameters of a students' learning experience. Schools with positive culture have been found to outperform those with negative culture as they give importance to positive culture indicators (Cheng, Chan, Tang & Cheng, 2010). Such schools embrace shared decision-making (Karadağ, Kiliçoğlu & Yilmaz, 2014) foster collaborative activities (Jerie & Zamri, 2011), build commitment, motivate students and teachers and aid in focusing attention and daily behavior on what is important and valued (Thien & Ong, 2015) leading to better student performance.

Negative school culture on the contrary has norms that reinforce inertia and impairs students' performance (Johnson, 2014), de-motivate teachers and students, and distracts their attention and daily behavior on what is important and valued, leading to poor student performance (Suraya & Yunus, 2013). It is therefore important for schools to cultivate positive culture which would ensure improved academic performance.

School ceremonies such as academic days, prize giving days, form 4 prayer days and parent's day are some of the school culture elements which many scholars have found to influence students' academic achievement. A study by Sumbwanyambe (2017) showed that school events such as Prize-Giving Day (PGD) ceremonies meant to rewarding teachers and student often motivate them to work harder leading to improved academic performance. Zühal (2012) found that holding and celebrating social and cultural events, special days and weeks influenced academic performance of elementary schools in the city of Eskişehir, Turkey. The findings by Jelagat (2014) was more elaborate when she established that beyond prize giving day ceremonies, closing day, academic day and opening day ceremonies also influenced students' performance in KCSE examinations in Makadara Sub County, Kenya.

Brooks, Schroeder, Risen, Gino, Galinsky, Norton and Schweitzer (2016) observed that enacting some rituals improved performance in public and private domains by decreasing anxiety. Common rituals performed in schools include extra-curricular and out of school experiences, staff meetings, staff- parents' meetings and school assemblies. A study by

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

Potvin and Hasni (2014) revealed a positive relationship between students' participation in summer camps and performance in science and technology at elementary and secondary school levels in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa and South America continents. Fernando, Maria and Antonio (2016) also found that average GPA scores for sports participants were higher than for non-participants among students at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Spain. Kariyana, Maphosa, and Mapuranga (2018) concur when they found that participation of learners in co-curricular activities was beneficial for academic performance in both private and public schools in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Were (2011) also found that public secondary schools in Kakamega North Sub County, Kakamega County, which valued going for geography field trips performed better in the subject than schools which did not value going for trips.

However, there is no common agreement among scholars on the educational benefits resulting from participation in hidden curriculum. Singleton (2016) for example found no significant disparity between the grade point averages and graduation rates of student athletes and non-athletes.

Regular school meetings including staff meetings, teachers and parents' meetings and teachers- student meetings have shown to contribute to improved academic performance. A field experiment by Asad (2016) to examine the effects of such meetings on children's educational outcomes in remote rural communities in Khulna and Satkhira districts, Bangladesh revealed that increased parental involvement in teacher- parents meetings had significant positive effects on students' test scores. Harerimana and Adegoke (2017) also found a positive relationship between periodic and regular staff meetings, where members gave views on reward systems for best performing teachers as means of eliciting competition among themselves, and students' performance in mock and national examination in secondary schools in Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda. The findings concur with Macharia (2014) who revealed that attending school meetings by parents contributed to enhanced academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Nakuru- North Sub County.

Conducting school assembly rituals where teachers and students meet to discuss academics performance has also been found to enhance performance. Nzisa (2014) found a positive relationship between school assembly rituals and students' performance at KCSE examination in Matungulu Sub County, Machakos County. A study by Jelagat (2014) also revealed positive relationships between the battle preparation, initiation, school improvement, passage and greeting rituals and schools' performance in KCSE.

Embracing some school norms and values have also been found to impact on students' academic performance. Values are defined as standards that reflect the philosophy, ideology, moral and ethical codes, goals, or ideals essential to guide judgments about what is right or wrong by an organization (Karadağ, Kiliçoğlu & Yilmaz, 2014). The common school values and norms include teacher collaboration, and trust and unity of purpose; emphasis on medium of instruction; valuing academic emphasis; giving extra work and strict school discipline.

Valuing teacher collaboration has been established to enhance academic achievements among students. A study by Israel (2016) revealed that students' achievement in mathematics and reading was higher in the U.S., Canada, and European countries schools where teachers worked with better collaboration. The study agrees with Emunemu, Adu and Yusuf (2014) who found that valuing teachers' collaboration contributed significantly to

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

students' academic performance in public and private secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. Namango and Bichanga (2014) also found that collaborative working relationship among teachers contributed to improved students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kimilili Sub-County, Bungoma County, Kenya.

Trust and unity of purpose which is closely related to collaboration has been found to influence academic performance. A study by Quin, Deris and Bischoff (2015) revealed that unity of purpose correlated positively with academic achievement of students in elementary, middle, and high schools in Southwest Mississippi. Ngalo-Morrison (2017) concur when he found that supportive and trusting relationships with peers, mentors, faculty and administrative staff enabled the undergraduate sponsored students at the University of the Western Cape University, South Africa to excel in academic performance. The studies are in agreement with Mwangi (2013) whose study revealed that trust, unity and cooperation among the teachers and pupils enhanced pupils' performance at KCPE in public primary schools in Central Division of Machakos district, Kenya.

Studies have shown that strong emphasis on medium of instruction impacts on students' academic performance. Racca and Lasaten (2016) found significant positive relationship between English language proficiency and performance in Science and Mathematics among grade 8 students in Philippine. Magulu (2016) also found that the use of English had a negative impact on teaching and learning of history in public and private primary schools in Shinyanga municipality in Tanzania. A study by Kamau (2014) showed that the performance in subjects taught in English such as mathematics, sciences and social studies were outstanding among urban refugees in Mwiki and New Eastleigh primary schools, Kenya.

Odumbe, Simatwa and Ayodo, (2015) observe that academic emphasis ensures quick syllabus coverage and allowing enough time for revision leading to high mean scores in examinations. Melesse and Molla (2018) identified aspects of academic emphasis practices to include home-work, class-work, assignment and other related practices that enhance academic achievement. Others include giving students extra work, self-regulated studies, private studies and continuous assessment test.

A study by Maxwell, Reynolds, Lee, Subasic and Bromhead (2017) demonstrated that academic emphasis augmented achievement in literacy and numeracy tests by secondary school students in Australian. The finding agrees with Nkuba (2015) who found that schools which performed poorly in Mvomero District, Morogoro, Tanzania had teachers and students who didn't take academics seriously. In Kenya, Nzisa (2014) also found that majority of schools who administered continuous assessment tests on students posted better performance in examinations in Matungulu Sub County, Machakos County. Isiyee (2015) found that extra work given to students influenced students' academic performance in Mumias west sub-county, Bungoma County. Mutweleli (2014) found a significant relationship between self-regulated learning among students and academic achievement of public secondary school students in Nairobi County, while Njuguna (2011) found positive correlation between private studies and student performance in Muranga County.

There is a growing body of research which link school discipline practices with lower student academic achievements at different levels of education (Whisman & Hammer, 2014). Whisman and Hammer (2014) found that students in public district schools in West Virginia, USA with more discipline referrals scoring below proficiency in mathematics than those who

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

had less discipline referrals. Semali and Vumilia (2016) found that widespread indiscipline affected students' academic performance in Tanzania. Odoyo, Odwar and Kabuka, (2016) found that discipline related positively with academic performance among class eight pupils in public primary schools in Muhoroni Sub-County, Kenya.

There is no common agreement that indiscipline affect students' academic performance. Gakure, Mukuria & Kithae (2013) observed that that discipline had minimal and uncertain influence on pupils' performance in examinations in Gatanga District, Kenya.

Teachers and students' attitude and beliefs are additional factors which influence the school culture and therefore academic performance. Mensah, Okyere and Kuranchie, (2013) define attitude as a psychological orientation developed as a result of one's experiences which influences how a person views situations, objects or people, and how she or he appropriately responds to them. They further posit that attitude has serious implications for the learner, the teacher, the immediate social group with which the individual learner relates, and the entire school system.

Several studies have shown that students' attitude and belief affect their academic performance. Khun-Inkeeree, Omar-Fauzee and Othman (2017) found that 6th grade primary students in Southern Thailand taught by cooperative learning developed more positive attitude towards learning mathematics and posted better performance than the students taught using traditional method. A study by Funke and Oyewumi (2016) also revealed that secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State, Nigeria who had more positive attitude towards the learning of Biology performed a lot better than those who had negative attitude towards the subject. The findings agree with Mugambi (2015) who had found that students' attitude towards school affected their performance in the Day Secondary Schools in Nairobi County, Kenya.

While many studies point to the fact that students' attitude and beliefs influence academic performance of students there is no universal agreement on this since some studies render contrary findings. Langat (2015), for example, found that though most students in public secondary schools in Kiambu County had a positive attitude towards mathematics and perceived it as doable, learnable and important, they did not attain good grades in the subject.

Teacher's attitude significantly influences student's own attitude and attention in classrooms (Perkins, 2013) which in turn influence school culture and students' academic performance (Ghamrawi, 2013). A study by Balzer (2014) revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between a teacher's beliefs and mathematics achievement among students in middle urban school district in Texas. Rashidi and Moghadam (2014) also established that teachers' beliefs in students' capabilities significantly contributed to achievement score among students at the Bahar Language Institute in Shiraz, Iran. Omotola (2018) concur when he found that teacher's attitude had significant impact on academic performance among senior secondary school students in Nigeria. A study by Munala (2016) revealed that students in Nairobi County schools where teachers had positive attitude towards teaching French performed better in the subject compared to schools where teachers displayed negative attitude.

From the background of the study, it is evident that there is no common agreement among scholars about the influence of various aspects of school culture on student academic performance. This confirmed by Singleton (2016), Langat (2015), Gakure, Mukuria, and Kithae (2013) whose findings contradicted the conventional assumptions that school culture

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

ought to influence students' academic achievement. Furthermore, none of the previous studies on school culture and performance of public secondary schools focused in Awendo Sub County. The inconsistency of the findings and the identified gap necessitated this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The continued unimpressive performance in KCSE by public secondary schools in Awendo Sub county has been of great concern to education stakeholders in the sub county and the community. The concern by the stakeholders is precipitated by the high government investment in education sector which Odumbe, Simatwa and Ayodo (2015) estimates at 40% of the annual public expenditure, while for the community the source of worry is the form one admission criteria to public secondary schools where up to 80% of students are selected from resident counties. This means that continued poor performance by these schools will largely affect students from the sub-county with the consequence of the sub county stagnating in educational achievements leading to limited number of professionals, increased unskilled labour, high unemployment rate, poverty, increased crime and ultimately social disorders.

Given the uniform support the government extends to all public secondary schools in terms of infrastructure, curriculum, textbooks and trained teachers, the public secondary schools in the sub county are expected to share similarities with and post comparable performance as the better performing national and county contemporary schools. However, this has not been the case and the researcher attributes the low performance in KSCE examinations to weak school culture which informs the basis of the study.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on management theory by Henri Fayol (1949). The theory has 14 principles including: division of work; authority; discipline; unity of command; unity of direction; subordination of individual interests to the general interests; remuneration; centralization; scalar chain; order; equity; stability of tenure of personnel; initiative; and esprit de corps.

Fayol believed that if organizational leaders used the 14 principles of management, they would be able to achieve excellent performance. For this reason, the study employed the theory in explaining the relationship between school culture and performance of public secondary schools in KCSE examinations in Awendo Sub County. This was done by relating various principles of the theory to elements of school culture. For example, remuneration which serves as rewards and source of motivation for workers is mirrored in ceremonies like prize giving days where well performing students and teachers are rewarded. The unity of direction where members of an organization work towards the same goals is mirrored in shared school values and norms. The unity of command is mirrored in school rituals such as school assemblies attended by teachers and students to give direction, guidance and feedback between school administration and students. Discipline is mirrored in school discipline.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is a hypothesized graphical model illustrating the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Orodho, 2012).

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies* - 165.

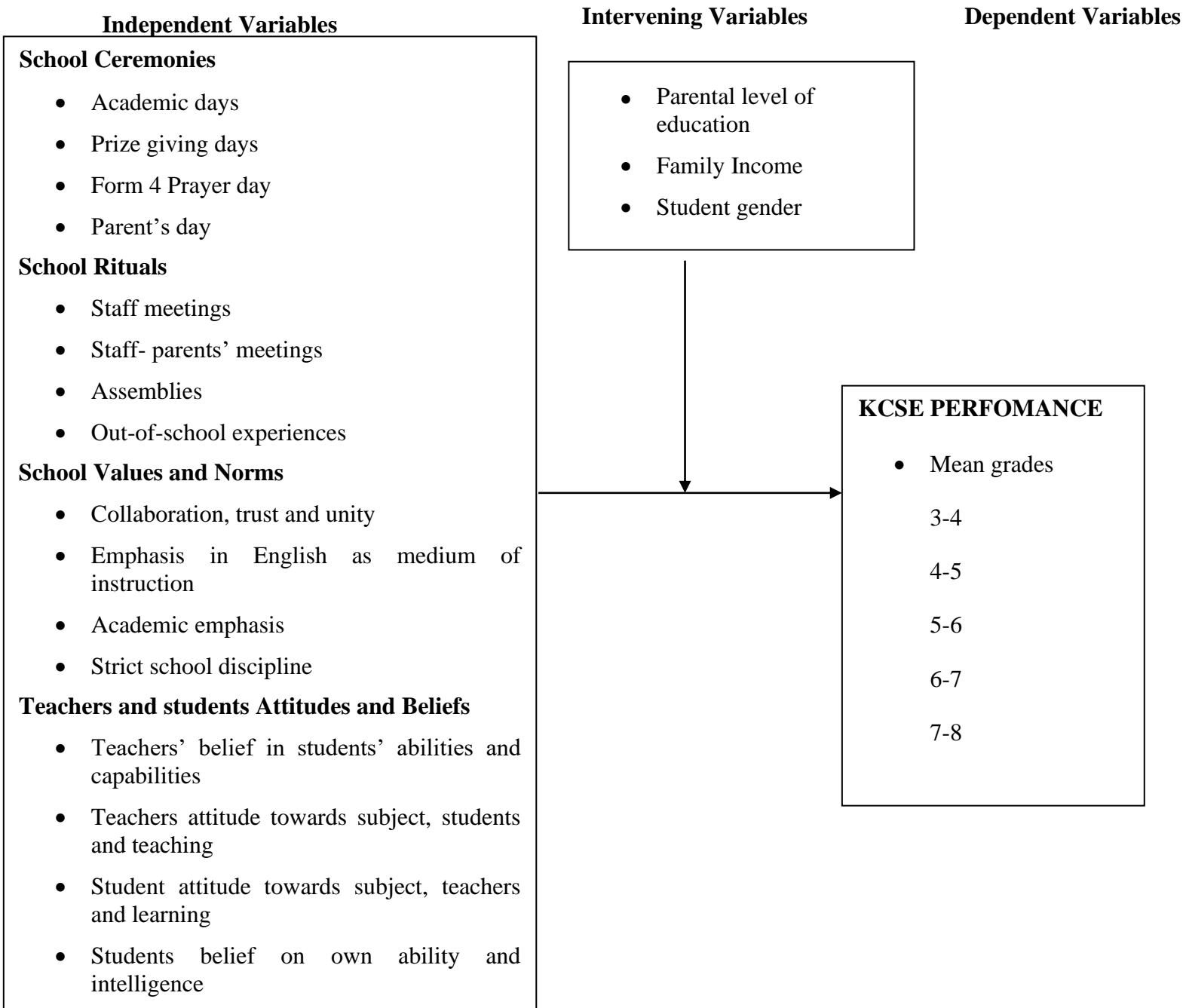


Figure 1: A Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship Between Independent and Dependent Variables

Source: Authors (2020)

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

Figure 1 was used to focus on the relationship between school culture elements including school ceremonies, rituals, attitude and beliefs, values and norms as independent variables and students' mean score in KCSE examinations as dependent variable. When independent variable is manipulated it impacts on the dependent variable.

School ceremonies including opening-day, closing day and prize giving days held to celebrate school success, communicate values, and recognize special contributions of staff and students often motivate teachers and students leading to excellent academic performance.

Attitudes and beliefs have the potential to either facilitate or inhibit learning which affect academic performance. Students with positive attitude are normally more committed to school and more motivated to learn and perform better than those with negative attitude. Similarly, students who believe in own ability perform better than those who doubt their intelligence. Teacher's attitude towards students and teaching significantly influence student's attention, attitude towards learning and classroom practices which ultimately impact on student academic achievement.

Schools which embrace strong values and norms including teacher collaboration and with strong emphasis on medium of instruction, academic excellence, extra work, continuous assessment tests, school discipline, trust and unity among teachers and students are likely to post better academic performance than those with weak norms and value systems.

The intervening variables including parental level of education, family income and students' gender further explained the observed relationship between independent and dependent variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003 as cited in Odumbe, Simatwa, & Ayodo, 2015). The parental level of education could influence performance since parents with higher level education are likely to assist students with homework.

The level of family income may affect the ability to pay school fees. The students whose families are not able to pay fee in time are likely to be sent home to collect fee and, in the process, miss some lessons leading to poor performance. The gender of students may also influence the academic performance in the sense that female students unlike the male counterparts are normally given more domestic chores at home which limit their time for studies and may affect their academic performance.

All the variables had influence on academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Awendo Sub county, Kenya.

2. Research Design and Methodology

The study employed convergent mixed research design to understand school culture and performance of public secondary schools in KCSE examinations. The location of the study was Awendo Sub County in Migori County- Kenya where public secondary schools exhibited perennial dismal low performance in KCSE examinations.

The study population was 26 public secondary schools, 26 principals, 248 teachers and 1960 form four students. The study sample was 12 schools including 4 boys' boarding schools, 4 girls' boarding schools and 18 mixed day schools, seventy-four (74) teachers and 100 students selected through proportion sampling technique to guarantee all categories in the population adequate representation in the sample.

The study employed questionnaires to collect data from teachers and students, interview schedule to collect information from principals and documents analysis guide to obtain secondary data. The instruments were validated by peers and supervisors at the

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

Catholic University of Eastern Africa. Reliability of the instruments was established by piloting and pretesting using test re-test method in two public secondary schools in the Sub County not part of the study sample.

The Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient computed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 for each item in instruments were found to be between 0.828 and 0.935 indicating high reliability in accordance to categorization by Collis and Hussey (2014). Data was analysed through descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages generated by SPSS version 26 and presented in tables and bar charts.

3. Presentation and Discussion of Findings

The researcher compared the average percentage of respondents (principals, teachers and students) who strongly agreed to the statements on school ceremonies, rituals, norms and values as well as attitude and beliefs with the frequency of attaining the highest mean score of 7-8 posted by the schools in KCSE examinations in the five years under study (Appendix D).

3.1 The Influence of School Ceremonies on the Performance in KCSE Examinations

Figure 2 shows the influence of school ceremonies on the performance of public secondary schools in KCSE examination.

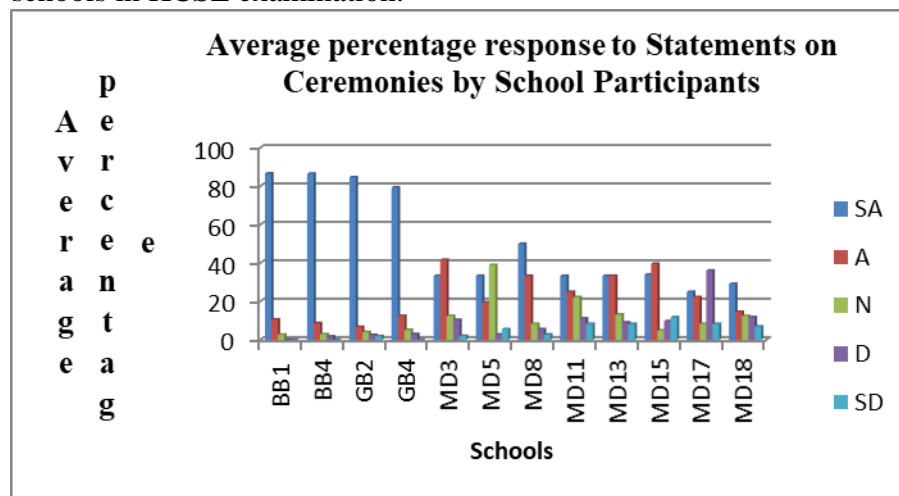


Figure 2: Average percentage of respondents to statements on school ceremonies (n=160)

Source: Field Data, (2020)

The study revealed that schools BB1, BB4, GB2 and GB4 which had average percentages of 86.69%, 86.51%, 84.69% and 79.36% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statements on school ceremonies also attained 45.45%, 27.27%, 18.18% and 9.09% of the highest mean grade of 7-8 posted by schools in KCSE examinations respectively. Similarly, schools MD17 and MD18 with percentages of 25% and 29.17% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statements attained 0.00% of the highest mean grade of 7-8 posted by schools in the examinations.

The findings show that schools with higher mean percentage of respondents who strongly agreed to statements on school values had higher mean grade attained in KCSE

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

examinations. The findings concur with Sumbwanyambe (2017) who found that schools which embraced ceremonies such as price giving days posted better academic performance in KCSE examinations.

3.2. The Influence of Rituals on the Performance in KCSE Examinations

Figure 3 shows the influence of rituals on the performance of public secondary schools in KCSE examinations.

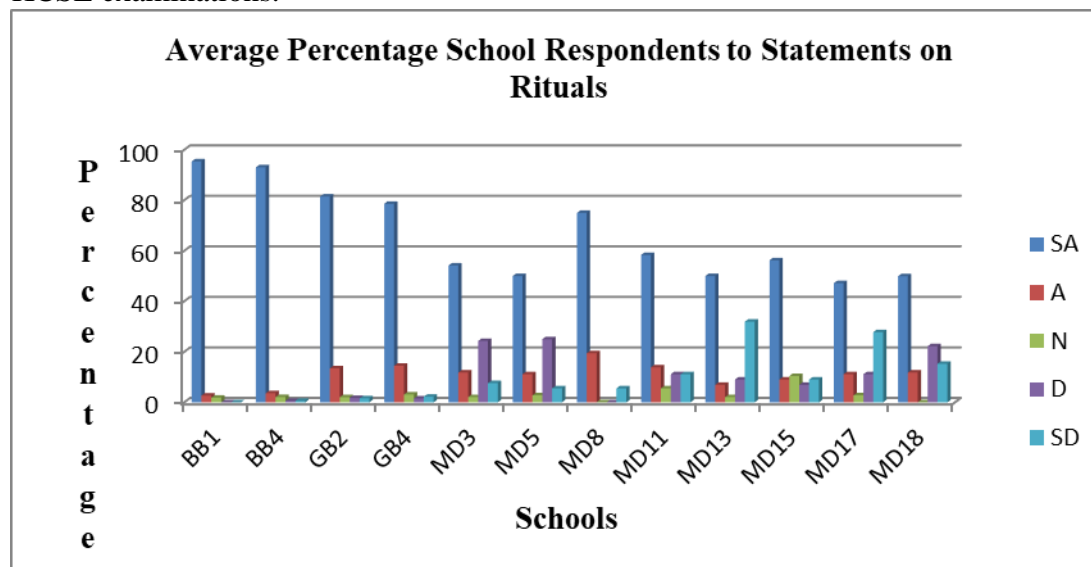


Figure 3: The Average Percentage of Respondents to the Statements on School Rituals (n=160)

Source: Field Data (2020)

The study revealed that schools BB1, BB4, GB2 and GB4 which had average percentages of 95.40%, 93.06%, 81.51% and 78.60% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statements on school rituals also attained 45.45%, 27.27%, 18.18% and 9.09% of the highest mean grade of 7-8 posted by schools in KCSE examinations respectively. Similarly, schools MD17 and MD18 with percentages of 47.22% and 49.92% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statements attained 0.00% of the highest mean grade of 7-8 posted by schools.

The findings show that schools with higher mean percentage of respondents who strongly agreed to statements on school rituals had higher mean grade attained in KCSE examinations agreeing with Kariyana, Maphosa, and Mapuranga (2018) who found a positive relationship between students involvement in co-curricular activity such as holding periodic and regular staff meetings with students' academic performance.

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

3.3 The Influence of School Norms and Values on the Performance in KCSE Examinations

Figure 4 shows the influence of norms and values on the performance of public secondary schools in KCSE examinations.

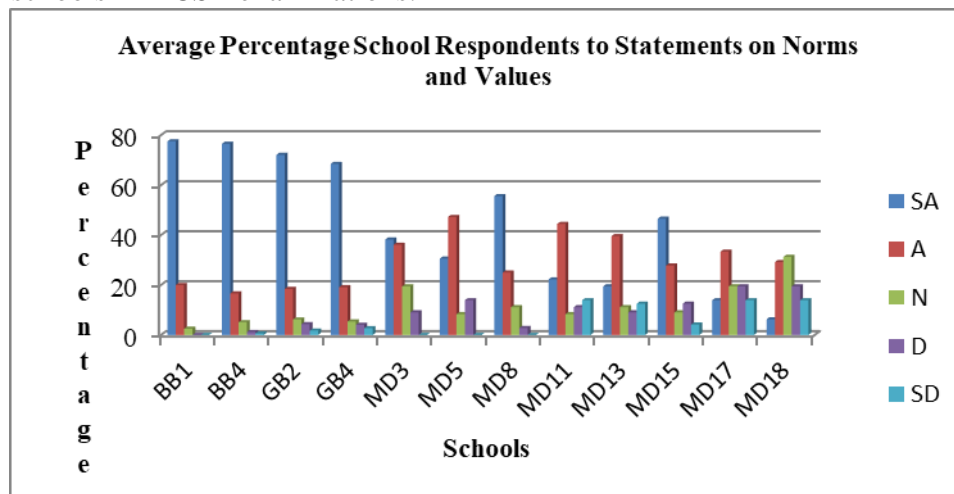


Figure 4: The average percentage of respondents to the statements on school norms and values (n=160)

Source: Field Data (2020)

The study revealed that schools BB1, BB4, GB2 and GB4 which had average percentages of 77.50%, 76.52%, 72.07% and 68.46% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statements on school norms and values also attained 45.45%, 27.27%, 18.18% and 9.09 % of the highest mean grade of 7-8 posted by schools in KCSE examinations. Similarly, schools MD18, MD17, MD13 and MD11 with percentages of 6.25%, 13.89%, 19.44% and 22.22% for respondents who strongly agreed with the statements attained 0.00% of the highest mean grade of 7-8 posted in the examinations.

The findings show that schools with higher mean percentage of respondents who strongly agreed to statements on school norms and values had better mean score in KCSE examinations. The findings concur with Morrison (2017) who found that school norm of nurturing support and trusting relationships with peers enabled students to excel in academic performance.

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

3.4. Influence of Attitude and Beliefs on Performance in KCSE Examinations

Figure 5 shows the influence of attitude and beliefs on performance of public secondary schools in KCSE examinations.

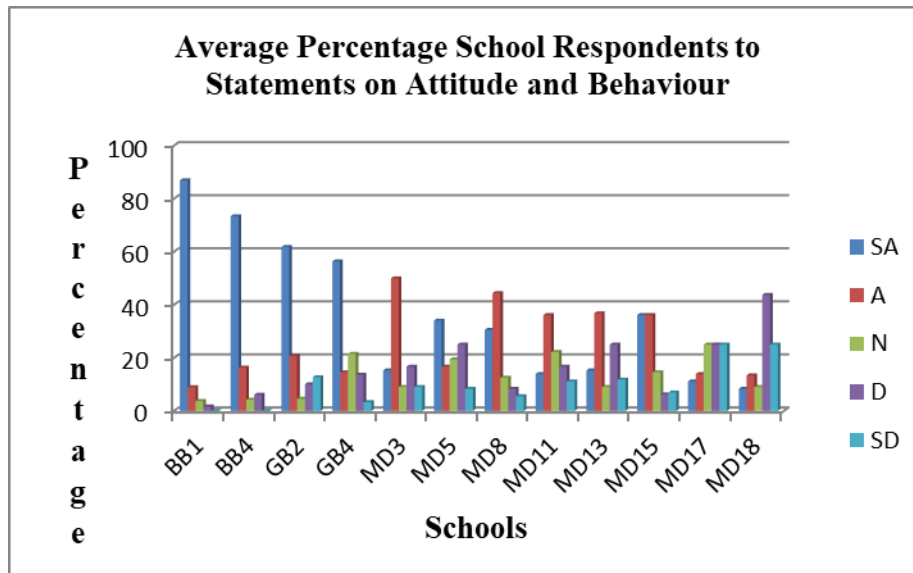


Figure 5: The Average Percentage Respondents to the Statements on Attitude and Beliefs per School (n=160)

Source: Field Data (2020)

The study revealed that schools BB1, BB4, GB2 and GB4 which had average percentages of 86.94%, 73.35%, 61.83% and 56.35% for respondents who strongly agreed with the statements on school attitudes and beliefs attained 45.45%, 27.27%, 18.18% and 9.09 5%, of the highest mean grade of 7-8 posted by schools in KCSE examinations during the five years under study respectively. Similarly, schools MD18, MD17, MD13 and MD11 with percentages of 8.33%, 11.11% and 13.89% for respondents who strongly agreed with the statements attained 0.00% of the highest mean grade of 7-8 posted by schools.

The findings show that schools with higher mean percentage of respondents who strongly agreed to statements on attitude and beliefs pertaining in schools had better mean score in KCSE examinations. The findings concur with Omotola (2018) who found that students' and teachers' attitude had significant impact on academic performance and agree with Asakereh and Dehghannezhad (2016) and Balzer (2014) who found positive correlation between students' and teachers' beliefs and academic achievement respectively.

3.5 The Challenges Encountered in Nurturing Positive School Culture

The study established that approximately 90% of principals cited lack of funds to support parents' day, teachers and parents meeting, and the out of school activities challenges encountered in nurturing positive school culture for improved school performance, while 30% felt students' indiscipline and poor attitude towards school, teachers and learning hindered creation of positive school culture. About 10% of the principals cited negative attitude of teachers towards teaching and non-collaborative nature amongst themselves.

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

Approximately 50% of the teachers cited indiscipline among students, while 40% of them blamed principals' high handedness and their non-collaborative nature as some of the reasons impeding creation of positive school culture, while 30% cited lack of parental concern for students' education as the major source of poor school culture and 75% blamed teachers' negative attitude towards teaching and students as the major cause of negative school culture. Approximately 60% of the students blamed unfriendly nature of school principals as a hindrance to creating positive school culture, while 45% blamed lack of unity and respect among themselves as major barrier for creating positive school culture.

The findings of the study agree with the findings of some previous studies. For example, Njabulo (2017) pointed out insufficient funds to run day to-day school activities as a barrier to nurturing of positive school culture. Sarah (2016) identified indiscipline, weaker relationships among teachers and students, low academic orientation and expectations as challenges to creation of supportive school culture. Similarly, Odongo (2013) blamed indiscipline and lack of cooperation among students and staff and financial constraints as serious constraints to nurturing of positive school culture.

3.6 Remedies to Overcome Challenges Encountered in Nurturing Positive School Culture

The principals proposed following interventions: enhanced government funding for schools to support activities meant to create positive school culture; scrapping of fee capping guidelines on the maximum payable fees by students; involvement of schools in income generating activities to supplement the fee and the government capitation; reintroduction of corporal punishment, expulsions, and guidance and counseling as strategies to ensure school discipline; government policy making participation of parents in the learning process of children mandatory and corresponding fines for non compliance.

The teachers proposed the following remedies: adopting democratic style of leadership by principals; reintroduction of corporal punishment, and guiding and counseling to ensure school discipline; government policy making participation of parents in the learning process of their children mandatory.

The students proposed that principals and teachers to adopt friendly attitude towards them and creating more bonding seasons to enhance unity and respect among themselves.

Some findings of this study concur with previous studies. Hamida (2018) recommended high staff expectations and belief in students' ability to master school's essential curriculum and parents' involvement in children's education at school while Njabulo (2017) recommended availing of playing fields for students, creation of good student-teacher relationship as well as guidance and constructive criticism for students as ways of creating positive school culture. Sarah (2016) identified adopting restorative approach to discipline, promoting strong in-school relationships, assuming great deal of responsibility for students learning by parents and focusing on students' strength as interventions which addressed barriers in creating positive school culture.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The school culture has strong relationship with students' academic performance. Schools which exhibit positive culture by conducting and performing various forms of ceremonies and rituals respectively outperformed those which didn't do the same. Similarly, schools

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

where principals, teachers and students embraced positive norms and values and possessed the right attitude and beliefs also posted better results than those schools where principals, teachers and students did the opposite.

5. Recommendations

The study made the following recommendations: Government to enhance funding for schools to support activities and functions meant to create positive school culture; Non-governmental organization to conduct sensitization campaigns to create awareness among education stakeholders including parents on the need to participate in school activities and functions meant to create positive school culture; community to take lead in instilling on children positive life values necessary in creating positive school culture; school management to facilitate sensitization fora for teachers and students with school culture experts as resource persons; active involvement of parents in school activities such as teacher- parents meetings meant to discuss students' academic performance and discipline; teachers need to embrace collaboration among themselves and with students, and exhibit positive attitude towards subject, teaching and students. Further studies to look at school culture and student performance in KCSE examinations by private secondary schools in Awendo- Sub County is recommended.

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

6. References

- Asad, I. (2016). *Parent-Teacher Meetings and Student Outcomes: Evidence from Field Experiments in Remote Communities*. Working Paper, International Growth Centre.
- Asakereh, A., & Dehghannezhad, M. (2016). Student satisfaction with English Foreign Language (EFL) speaking classes: Relating speaking self-efficacy and skills achievement. *Educational Research*, 25(4): 345-363.
- Balzer, J. F. (2014). *Relationship Between Teachers' Beliefs and Student Achievement in Middle School Mathematics*. A PhD Thesis, Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University, Texas, USA.
- Brooks, A. W., Schroeder, J., Risen, J., Gino, F., Galinsky, A. D., Norton, M. I., & Schweitzer, M. E. (2016). Don't stop believing: Rituals improve performance by decreasing anxiety. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 137: 71-85.
- Cheng, M. H. M., Chan, K. W., Tang, S. Y. F., & Cheng, Y. N. A. (2010). Pre-service teacher education students' epistemological beliefs and their conceptions of teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25:319-327.
- Collis, J. & Hussey, R., (2014). *Business Research: a practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*. 4th ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan Higher Education.
- Emunemu, B. O, Adu, E. O., & Yusufu I. O. (2014). The Influence of Selected Elements of Schools Culture on Students' Academic Performance in Southwestern Nigeria. *Ghana Journal of Development Studies*, 11(1): 58–77.
- Fernando, M., Maria J. S. & Antonio, V. (2016). The influence of sports participation on academic performance among students in higher education. *Sport Management Review* 20: 365-378.
- Funke, A. R. & Oyewumi F. A. K (2016). Students' Attitude and Interest as Correlates of Students' Academic Performance in Biology in Senior Secondary School. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research*, 4(3), 1-6.
- Ghamrawi, N., (2013). Never underestimate the power of the sandwiched middle leaders and school culture. *Journal of Education Research and Review*, 2(2): 29-41.
- Hamida, S. A. (2018). *Influence of School Culture on Students' Performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in Public Secondary Schools in Mombasa County, Kenya*. Master of Education Research Project, Kenyatta University.
- Harerimana, J. P., & Adegoke, O. T. (2017). Investigation on the Influence of Leadership Styles on Students' Academic Performance in Selected Secondary Schools: A Case Study of Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda. *Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 7(2):18-26.
- Huseyin, K. (2011). Primary 6th Grade Students' Attitude Towards the Social Studies Lesson Aided with Geographic Information Systems (GIS): Karabuk Case. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 7(3): 401-406.
- Isiye, M. C. (2015). *Factors influencing the academic performance of day scholars in public secondary schools in Kenya: A case of Mumias West Sub-County*. A research project, The University of Nairobi.
- Israel, A. (2016). *Effects of Teacher Collaboration on Student Achievement in Elementary School*. MEd Thesis, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

- Jelagat, B. (2014). *Influence of school culture on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education performance of public schools in Makadara District, Nairobi County, Kenya*. Unpublished Master of Education, Research Report, University of Nairobi.
- Jerie, L. A. P., & Zamri, M. (2011). Attitude and motivation among Iban Pupils in Primary School in the learning of Malay language as second language. *Malaya Educational Journal*, 1(1): 13-25.
- Johnson, B. (2014). *Introduction in Culture and Structure at a Military Charter School*. Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Kamau, F. W. (2014). *Influence of Language Related Factors on Academic Performance Among Urban Refugees, A Case of Mwiki and New Eastleigh Primary Schools, Kenya*. A Research Project, Med, University of Nairobi.
- Karadağ, E. Kiliçoğlu, G., & Yilmaz, D. (2014). Organizational Cynicism, School Culture, and Academic Achievement: The Study of Structural Equation Modeling. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 14(1): 102-113.
- Kariyana, I., Maphosa, C., & Mapuranga, B. (2017). The Influence of Learners' Participation in School Co-curricular Activities on Academic Performance, Assessment of Educators' Perceptions. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 33(2), 137-146.
- Khun-Inkeeree, H., Omar-Fauzee, M. S., & Othman, M. K. H. (2017). The Effect of Students Confidence Level toward Mathematics Performance among Southern Thailand Primary School Children. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 6(2): 20-31.
- Langat, A. C. (2015). *Students' Attitudes and Their Effects on Learning and Achievement in Mathematics: A Case Study of Public Secondary Schools in Kiambu County, Kenya*. Med Reserch Project, Kenyatta University, Kenya.
- Macharia, D.W (2014). *Parental Influence on Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools in Nakuru North District, Nakuru County, Kenya*. Research Project, Kenyatta University, Kenya.
- Magulu, H. B, (2016). *The Impact of The Language of Instruction on Teacher-Pupils Classroom Interaction in History Subject in Primary Schools in Tanzania, A Comparative study of English and Kiswahili Medium Primary Schools in Shinyanga Municipality*. A thesis, University of Oslo.
- Maxwell, S., Reynolds, K. J., Lee, E., Subasic, E., & Bromhead, D. (2017). The Impact of School Climate and School Identification on Academic Achievement: Multilevel Modeling with Student and Teacher Data. *The Journal Frontiers in Psychology*, 8 (2017),1-21.
- Mensah, J. K., Okyere, M., & Kuranchie, A. (2013). Student attitude towards Mathematics and performance: Does the teacher attitude matter? *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(3),123-138.
- Melesse, S. & Molla, S. (2018). The Contribution of School Culture to Students' Academic Achievement: The Case of Secondary and Preparatory Schools Ofassosa Zone, Benshangul Gumuz Regional State, Ethiopia. *Research in Pedagogy*,8(2):190-203.
- Mugambi, C. N. (2015). *Factors Influencing Students' Performance in the Kenyan Public Day Secondary Schools (A Case of Langata Division)*. Research Post Graduate Diploma Project Report, University of Nairobi.

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

- Munala, E. (2016). Influence of Institutional Factors on Learners' Academic Performance in French at the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Nairobi County, Kenya. *Research Project*. University of Nairobi.
- Mutweleli, S. M. (2014). *Academic Motivation and Self-Regulated Learning as Predictors of Academic Achievement of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Nairobi County, Kenya*. A PhD Thesis, Kenyatta University.
- Mwango, N. J. (2013). *Influence of School Climate on Pupils' Performance at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Central Division of Machakos District, Kenya*. A Project Report, University of Nairobi.
- Namango, D. W., & Bichanga, W. O. (2014). Influence of Strategic Planning on Academic Performance: A Case of Public Secondary Schools in Kimilili-Bungoma District. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development*, 3(3): 482-496.
- Ngalo-Morrison, L. (2017). *Factors Influencing the Academic Attainment of Undergraduate Sponsored Students at the University of the Western Cape, A Strength-Based Approach*. A Thesis, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.
- Njabulo, S (2017). *Promoting A Positive Learning Environment: School Setting Investigation*. MeD Thesis, University of South Africa.
- Njuguna, R. N. (2011). *Factors Influencing Academic Performance of Public Primary Schools in Makuyu Division, Murang'a South District, Kenya*. A Research Project, Kenyatta University, Kenya.
- Nkuba, L. L. (2015). *The Influence of School Climate on Secondary Schools' Performance in Mvomero District, Morogoro, Tanzania*. MEd Dissertation, the Open University of Tanzania.
- Nzisa, M. M. (2014). *Effects of School Culture on Students' Performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) Examination in Matungulu District, Machakos County, Kenya*. MEd Project Report, University of Nairobi.
- Odoyo, S., N, Odwar, J. A & Kabuka, E. K, (2016). Impact of Discipline on Academic Performance of Pupils in Public Primary Schools in Muhoroni Sub-County, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(6) 164-173.
- Odongo, Z. (2013). *Influence of positive school culture on performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Kenya*. A Research Project University of Nairobi.
- Odumbe, A.G., Simatwa, E.M.W., & Ayodo, T.M.O. (2015). Factors Influencing Student Academic Performance in Day-Secondary Schools in Kenya. A Case Study of Migori Sub county. *Greener Journal of Educational Research*, 5(3), 78-97.
- Omotola, A. (2018). *Factors Affecting Academic Performance Among Senior Secondary School Students in Nigeria*. 22nd Annual Conference, Marquis BR Salon 6 (ML2) (Marriott Marquis Washington DC).
- Orodho, J. A. (2012). *Techniques of Writing Research Proposals and Reports in Education and Social Sciences*. Kanezja Hp Enterprises Nairobi, Kenya.
- Perkins, C. D. (2013). *Perkins Act of 2006 Implementation Guide*. Florida Department of Education.
- Potvin, P., & Hasni, A. (2014). Interest, motivation and attitude towards science and technology at K-12 levels, A systematic Review of 12 years of Educational Research. *Studies in Science Education*, DOI, 10.1080/03057267.2014.881626.

Citation: Oyoo, I. A; Piliyesi, E & Anyona, J. (2020). School Culture and Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Awendo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 148 – 165.

- Quin, J. L., Deris, A. R., Bischoff, G., & Johnson, J. T. (2015). The correlation between leadership, culture, and student achievement. *The Online Journal of New Horizons in Education*, 5(2), 55-62.
- Racca, R.M.A.B., & Lasaten, R.C.S. (2016). English Language Proficiency and Academic Performance of Philippine Science High School Students. *International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics*, 2(2), 44-49.
- Rashidi, N. & Moghadam, M. (2014). The Effect of Teachers' Beliefs and Sense of Self-Efficacy on Iranian EFL Learners' Satisfaction and Academic Achievement. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 18 (2), 1-21
- Sagwe, G. K. B. M., Ajowi, J., & Mwebi, B. (2016). Pedagogical Influences on Students' Academic Achievements in KCSE in Public Secondary Schools in Manga Sub County, Nyamira County- Kenya. *International Journal of Recent Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 3(1), 115-120.
- Semali, L. M. & Vumilia, P. L. (2016). Challenges Facing Teachers' Attempts to Enhance Learners' Discipline in Tanzania's Secondary Schools. *World Journal of Education* 6(1) 50-67.
- Sarah, K.A.V. (2016). *Strategies for Improving School Culture: Educator Reflection on Transforming the High School Experience for Black and Latin Young Men*. The research Alliance for New York City Schools.
- Singleton, S. (2016). *The Impact of Sports Participation on the Academic Achievement of African American Girls*. A Dissertation, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA.
- Sumbwanyambe, L. (2017). *School and Home Factors Contributing to Poor Academic Performance among Female Secondary School Pupils in Lusaka, The Views of Teachers, Pupils and Parents*. A Dissertation, University of Zambia, Lusaka.
- Suraya, W. H., & Yunus, J. N. (2013). School Cultural and Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools of Perak, An Exploratory Outlook. *Malaysian Journal of Research*, 1(1), 37-44.
- Thien, L.M., & Ong, M.Y. (2015). Malaysian and Singaporean students' affective characteristics and mathematics performance, evidence from PISA 2012," *Springerplus*, 4(1), 563.
- Were, A. (2011). *Factors influencing academic performance of students in Geography in K.C.S.E in public secondary schools in Kenya, A case of Kakamega North District, Kakamega County*. Med. Project Paper, university of Nairobi.
- Whisman, A., & Hammer, P.C. (2014). *The association between school discipline and mathematics performance, A case for positive discipline approaches*. Charleston, WV, West. Virginia Department of Education, Division of Teaching and Learning, Office of Research.
- Zühal, C. (2012). The Effect of Hidden Curriculum on Character Education Process of Primary School Students. *Educational Sciences, Theory & Practice*, 12 (2), 1526-1534.