

Factors Contributing to Students' Poor Performance in Mathematics at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Kenya: A Case of Baringo County, Kenya

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Abstract

Performance in Mathematics by students has persistently been poor. This study sought to investigate the factors contributing to the poor performance and to establish the strategies that can be adopted to improve performance in Mathematics by students in secondary schools in Baringo County in Kenya. The study to determine the school based factors that affect students' performance in Mathematics in secondary schools, socio-cultural factors that affect them and their personal factors that affect performance in Mathematics, and established the strategies that can be adopted to improve performance in Mathematics. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The target population was 1876 respondents which comprised of Form Three secondary school students in Koibatek District, 132 Mathematics teachers and 9 head teachers. The data for the research was collected by use of three questionnaires; student, teachers and head teachers questionnaires. Factors contributing to poor performance include under staffing, inadequate teaching/ learning materials, lack of motivation and poor attitudes by both teachers and students, retrogressive practices. Improving on these factors and sensitization of the local community to discard practices which prohibit student's effective participation in learning mathematics could improve performance in Mathematics. It is anticipated that the findings of this study will give curriculum developers new insights into emerging issues on performance and influence the Ministry of Education on policy formulation. Students are also expected to benefit from the findings; because improved mathematics performance will give them opportunities to pursue science related courses in higher institutions of learning and middle level colleges.

Key Terms: Factors, Mathematics, Performance, Poor

Full text link: <https://karuspace.karu.ac.ke/handle/20.500.12092/1703>