

**STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS RANKING IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS' NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS IN KENYA: A CASE OF WEST
POKOT SUB-COUNTY**

By

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DECLARATION

Declaration by Candidate

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my beloved father, Mr. Thomas Lotunale for nurturing me and instilling the highest values in my life; you have taught me that the sky is the limit and that I can achieve anything in my life with God.

My son, Clement Plilan Amon, you have been the greatest motivation and memory in this process.

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ABSTRACT

The Government of Kenya abolished ranking among schools in the year 2014 which took effect from the year 2015. This was put in place in order to eliminate cut-throat competition among institutions and to end unethical practices by teachers in the rush for top positions. ranking in West Pokot County drew different reactions and perspectives from different stakeholders of education. This explains why the researcher conducted the study on stakeholders' perception towards ranking in Secondary Schools National Examination in Kenya guided by the following objectives; to investigate teachers perception on ranking of schools in National examinations, to establish the effect of school ranking on students' commitment to academic performance, to determine how school ranking influences parents commitment to academic performance, and, to examine how ranking influences Ministry of Education Officials commitment to academic performance in West Pokot County. The research design adopted in this study was descriptive survey. Cluster sampling (probability sampling) and non-probability (purposive sampling) techniques were adopted to determine sample size. Questionnaire and interview guides were used in data collection. Descriptive statistics was adopted for quantitative data analysis. Qualitative data were categorized and analysed according to themes. Theoretical framework was based and guided by Talcott Persons Structural Functionalism Theory. In the conceptual framework, the independent variable in this research is, ranking of schools while the dependent is the result of ranking. Findings from the study indicated that ranking had a lot of negative outcomes compared to positive effects and the proposal be reverted for better results in our schools. The study concluded that, ranking motivates teachers to cover syllabus, change institutional practices, makes them focus their teaching activities towards examination neglecting other aspects of education but has no impact on their self-esteem. It also encourages completion among departments but can lead to unhealthy competition among different categories of schools. However ranking leads to narrowing of curriculum and encourage malpractices in national examination. On students' commitment on academic performance, ranking acts as motivating factor to performing students but might destroy morale to underperforming ones. Students however become less concerned with performance when ranking is abolished. Ranking influences parents to buy extra teaching and learning materials. It also impacts negatively on parental involvement on school academic programs but does not influence parental support for homework. Ranking impacts negatively on ministry of education officials' commitment of academic matters at it affects their involvement in issues like resource allocations. The study recommends that; the decision of abolishing of ranking by government should be reverted or should be practiced by schools at different levels, it should also be done continuously throughout the academic year to get trends of performance and schools should provide psychological support to all students' especially underperforming ones. Education stakeholders should define measures to curb malpractices in examination among students.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CPE	Certificate of Primary Education
EACC	East African Certificate of Education
EACCE	East Africa Certificate of Education
GAS	Government African School
HSE	High School Education
KACE	Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education
KCE	Kenya Certificate of Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KNEC	Kenya National Examination Council
LNC	Local Native Council
PSE	Primary School Education
WB	World Bank

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Assessment	a method of evaluating student performance and attainment.
Autonomy	personal independence.
Curriculum	an integrated course of academic studies. It's a system of education.
Examination	the act of giving students test to determine what they have learnt or know through a formal systematic questioning.
Malpractices	a wrong doing or improper conduct of a person for example student cheating in an examination
Motivation	something that keeps driving you or keeps you moving.
Perception	a way of conceiving something or what you think about a given situation.
Performance	it's a recognized accomplishment.
Population	a total group of individuals under study.
Ranking	giving a position or ratings or someone according to performance in relation to others.
Reliability	it is the degree to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials in a research study.
Self-esteem	a feeling of pride or confident of yourself.

Stakeholder	a person with an interest or concern in something and is directly involved in it for example in education sector.
Validity	validity is the degree to which results obtained from analysis of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

The chapter introduces background the study on the Stakeholders perception towards ranking secondary schools' National Examination. The chapter is structured as follows; it begins with the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objective, research questions, justification of the study, scope and limitation of the study and finally the conceptual framework of the study.

1.2 Background to the Study

In the United States, teachers' unions, school leaders, principals and teachers have tended to oppose policies linking assessment to accountability on the grounds of perverse effects including narrowing the curriculum to the practice of teaching to the test and incentives for teachers to cheat (Evers & Walberg, 2003). Evidence suggests that agencies alter the timing of their actions and engage in cream skimming in response to specific performance measures (Hickman, Henrick & Smith, 2002). They exclude weak students from sitting for examinations. Cheating was mentioned as another unproductive type of response to accountability incentives and misreporting of school dropout rates (Peabody& Markley, 2003). Schools also excluded weak students by engaging in cream skimming at the point of admission. This is because the higher the ability of students admitted, the better the output and the higher the schools relative position in the league tables (Wilson, 2001). Performance tables for England have been published annually since 1992 (Wilson, 2003). Currently they are used to describe the difference between 'materials brought in and the finished product' and thus measures the value added by the production process (Wilson, 2003). However, other studies indicate that, despite the use of league tables in Kenya,

Senegal and elsewhere, several factors indicate that their use is complicated and misleading. If students differ from school to school in their level of achievement when joining the schools, a measure of achievement at a later date that does not take this into account. This will be inequitable and misleading in that it will not adequately reflect a school's success in moving students from their initial entry level to their present level of achievement as reflected in a public examination (Kellaghan & Greaney, 2000)

In Kenya, ranking dates to as far back as colonial time. Kenyan education history started after the establishment of Local Native Council (LNC) and independent schools (Bogonko, 1992). These schools were ranked alongside the existing missionary schools and by the early 1940s; their performance was way above that of missionary schools. Ranking was also done among the Government African Schools (GAS) whose first batch of pupils sat the Primary School Examinations (PSE) in 1938. During colonial period, examinations were organized by the British and after independence; the organization of examinations was localized in East Africa. The Cambridge syndicate that was conducting examinations was replaced by East African Examinations Council in 1973 which offered East African Certificate of Education (EACE) and East African Advanced Certificate of Education (EAACE). In 1980, an act of parliament empowered the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) to manage examination in Kenyan schools (Eshiwani, 1993). With the introduction of 8-4-4 system of education, Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) was replaced by Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) from 1984. The Kenya Junior Secondary Examination (KJSE), Kenya Certificate of Education (KCE) Examination and Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education (KACE) Examination were also phased out in 1985, 1987 and 1989 in that order (Eshiwani, 1993). Under the 8-4-4 system,

the four year secondary school education cycle ends with the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination which replaced KCE in the old 7-4-2-3 system of education. This was followed by a radical change in the ranking of schools according to performance index. Up to 2007, there have been seven categories of ranking examination results at the secondary school level used. These are: the overall, National schools, Provincial schools, District schools, Private schools, most improved schools and Students' categories. The publication of mean performance statistics for the top schools in the respective categories and top students in the nation and provinces was meant to make it possible for schools to compare their performance with other schools. This form of ranking was strictly based on students' academic performance in national. It also fails to take into consideration the difference in facilities and students' intake mark in form one among other factors.

There is low transition rate from Primary to Secondary in the West Pokot County standing at 52%, while the national transition rate is 79% as at the year 2013. (District statistics office, Kapenguria) The county of West Pokot has been doing well in national examinations for example in the year 2013 it was ranked second and fourth in the year 2014 in K.C.S.E.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The ranking of Secondary schools and students in national examinations encourages positive competition. However, the extent to which this affects the commitment of the stakeholders in particular has been evidenced by mixed feelings and anxiety during the release of Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) results, where names of students and schools have graced the print and electronic media. Posting of results has reinforced a widely held belief that there are good and bad schools in Kenya thus

a possible effect on the general commitment of the stakeholders in academic performance. Despite proposed national ban on ranking, schools are still ranked at the County level, West Pokot County being one of them. The mixed reactions range from praise and criticism for promoting unfair competition among schools. This is because the comparisons between schools fail to take into account differences in the KCPE intake marks, social and physical conditions under which the different schools operate. Ranking individual students and schools creates fierce competition which sometimes leads to departure from teaching to preparation for passing examinations and cheating. Unfair competition among schools and students, malpractices in national extermination can be attributed to ranking. Therefore, it is against this background that this study intends to investigate the effects of the abolishment of secondary school rankings on the stakeholders' commitment to academic performance.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The study examined stakeholders' perception towards ranking of students and schools in national examinations in secondary schools in Kenya.

1.5 Specific Objectives

- i. To investigate teachers perception on ranking of schools in National examinations
- ii. To establish the effect of school ranking on students' commitment to academic performance
- iii. To determine how school ranking influences parents commitment to academic performance

- iv. To examine how ranking influences Ministry of Education Officials commitment to academic performance in West Pokot County

1.6 Research Questions

- i. What is teachers' perception on ranking of schools and students in national examinations?
- ii. How does ranking of school affect students' commitment to academic performance?
- iii. What is the effect of secondary school ranking on the parents' commitment in students' development in West Pokot County?
- iv. How does ranking of schools influence Ministry Officials' commitment to academic performance in West Pokot County?

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions:

- i. There would be reliable secondary data on ranking in education sector from books, journals, internet and other sources.
- ii. The research would not inconvenience operations in the study area.
- iii. The respondents would be willing to give information during data collection.

1.8 Significance of the Study

Upon completion of the study, results may be beneficial to school managers, students, teachers, parents and Educational policy makers. These stakeholders may find this study useful in making decisions on what to consider when ranking and specifically the benefits accruing from the ranking. The study might help students know what is expected of them and more importantly the benefits or challenges of ranking since it

might not be a factor in academic performance. Parents used this study to decide on how they can assist their children in order to enhance their academic performance bearing in mind the effects attached to secondary school ranking. Educational policy makers immensely benefited from the study too. This is because it enabled them to plan well for effective ranking or otherwise abolishment of ranking of schools in West Pokot County. This will go a long way in informing the benefits or detriment of ranking secondary schools in West Pokot County.

1.9 Justification of the Study

The issue of ranking schools has been a challenge and a point of concern to educational sector of developing countries specifically Kenya. Consequently, efforts to curb and abolish ranking has drawn different perceptions to stakeholders in education sector. Challenges associated with ranking have been left to the Ministry of education authorities. Publication of results might lead to schools that are perceived to be doing well to attract students of high levels of ability while those perceived to be doing badly were left with lower achieving students (Kellaghan 1996). Schools also excluded weak students by engaging in cream skimming at the point of admission. This is because the higher the ability of students admitted, the better the output and the higher the schools relative position in the league tables (Wilson, 2001).

In contrary, assessment is critical to the functioning of schools. It serves as a motivator of student performance. In addition, it provides a feedback to the teacher on the effectiveness of teaching and student achievement. It also communicates to the students, parents and others what has been learnt (James 1998). The publication of league tables showing performance in public examinations is both a symptom and a cause of greater competition (Bray, 2003).

Ranking of schools' national extermination was abolished in the year 2014. This decision by the Ministry of education drew different perceptions among stakeholders in educational sector.

1.10 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in West Pokot Sub County and only covered secondary schools. The independent variable in the study was ranking of schools and the dependent variable was the effects of stakeholders' commitment to academic performance. It was therefore the intention of the study to investigate whether the independent and dependent variables had impacts that can be measured. Finally, since the secondary schools across the country had adopted ranking and could be faced by the same challenge of commitment by stakeholders', the results can be generalized to other Counties in Kenya.

1.11 Limitations of the Study

1. Fluency in language – Some of the respondents who were students had difficulty in expressing their ideas. The researcher overcame this by seeking help from teachers in identifying smart students.
2. Financial constraints – there were challenges with regard to mobility by the researcher as there were no funding. This was however overcome by the researcher visiting nearby schools within the same time frame.
3. Accessibility - access to some respondents became a problem in a way. Respondents especially principals and county education workers needed numerous follow ups in order to complete interview schedules. They were told some days prior to the interview date.

1.12 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Talcott Parsons Structural Functionalism Theory (Savage S.P 1977). According to this theory, formal organizations consist of many groupings of different individuals, all working together harmoniously towards a common goal. The working could also be promoted by having the same commitment towards the achievement of a particular common goal. It argues that most organizations are large and complex social units consisting of many interacting sub-units which are sometimes in harmony but more often than not they are in diametric opposition to each other. Functionalism is concerned with the concept of order, formal work in organizations and in particular how order seems to prevail in both systems and society irrespective of the changes in goals and commitment which constantly takes place. The theory seeks to understand the relationship between the parts and the whole system in an organization and in particular identify how stability is for the most part achieved. In this case the commitment of stakeholders on academic performance would be facing a number of effects owing to a divided allegiance to either adopting ranking fully or abolishing it. For the stakeholders to be fully committed towards academic performance, all the involved parties have to function well and agree on a common course towards school ranking. The school as a social system has within its precincts a series of sub-systems which interact with each other and the environment. Their interactions should be harmonious for effective achievement of a common commitment towards academic performance.

1.13 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the research has independent variable which is stakeholders' perception of the ranking of students and schools while the dependent is

the result of ranking. It therefore links the research with its objectives hence making it binding. The consequent results that emanate from ranking can be felt in the case where students commitment decline.

Ranking of schools might encourage teachers' to be committed towards performance but since ranking has been abolished, teachers might become reluctant. This may result in decline in performance from all possible angles including stakeholders, and the various ministry officials. The relationships between independent and dependent variables are illustrated in Figure 1;

Independent Variable

Dependent Variables

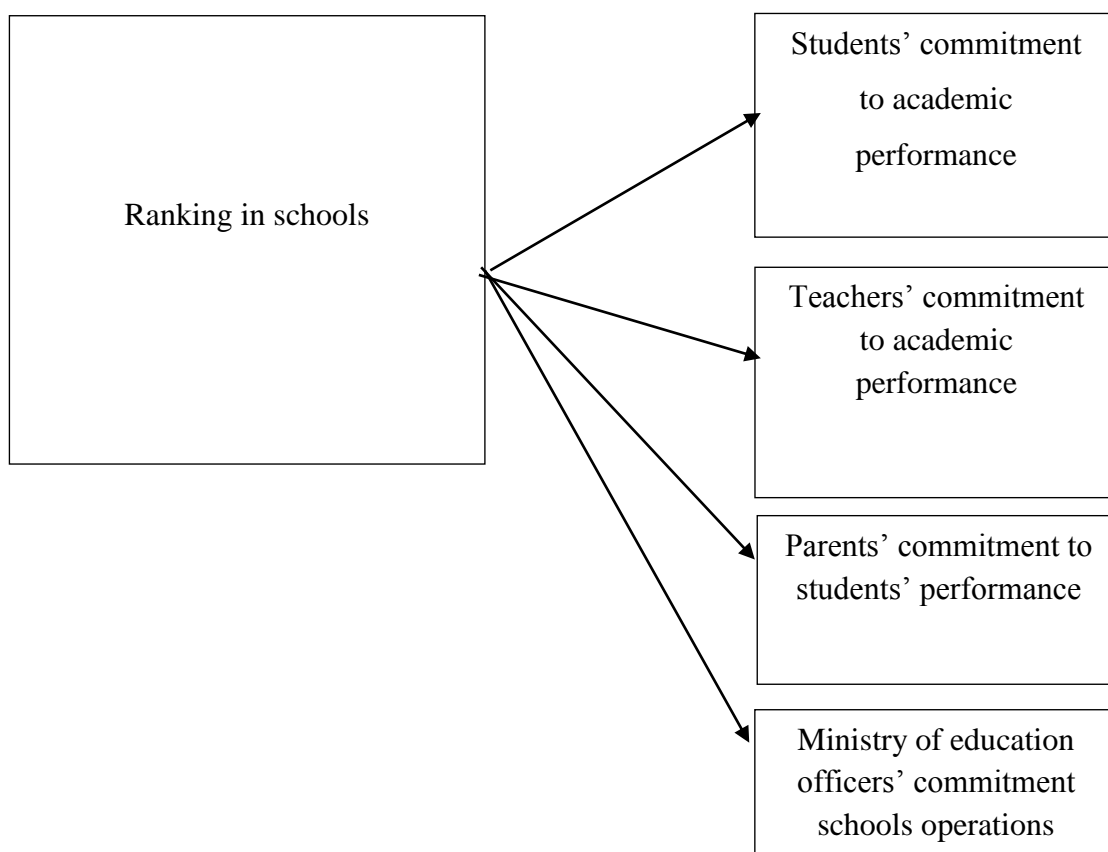


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed literature on ranking of schools in Kenya that were current and relevant to the study. It covers ranking of schools in Kenya, cognitive impact of ranking on curriculum implementation, effective impact of ranking on students, perception of school ranking, and challenges of ranking schools. The chapter is organized thematically based on the specific objective of the study.

2.2 Ranking of Schools in Kenya

Ranking of schools in Kenyan education history started during the establishment of Local Native Council (LNC) and the independent schools (Bogonko, 1992). Schools were ranked alongside the existing missionary schools and by the early 1940s; their performance was way above that of missionary schools. Ranking was also done among the Government African Schools (GAS) whose first batch of pupils sat the Primary School Examinations (PSE) in 1938. During colonial period, examinations were organized by the British. After independence, the organization of examinations was localised in East Africa. The Cambridge syndicate that was conducting examinations was replaced by East African Examinations Council in 1973 which offered East African Certificate of Education (EACE) and East African Advanced Certificate of Education (EAACE) (Eshiwani, 1993).

Kenya follows an 8-4-4 system of education, where primary school consists of eight years and secondary school and university are each four years. Both primary and secondary school ends with nationwide standardized exams that are centrally graded

and determine which students qualify for the next level of education. Upon completion of primary school pupils take the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exam. The KCPE comprises 5 compulsory subjects, is graded from 0 to 500marks, and is used in the secondary school admissions process. At the conclusion of secondary school students take the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exam. For the KCSE students take seven to nine subject exams out of the thirty possible examination subjects. English, Swahili and mathematics are compulsory subjects as are at least two sciences: humanity and practical subject.

The maximum score on the KCSE is twelve points. Students may take up to nine subject exams with the KCSE score computed as the average of seven scores: the compulsory subjects, the highest two science scores, the highest humanities score, and the highest practical score. Students register for the KCSE exam near the start of their final year of secondary school. A student's course load in their final year is then limited to the KCSE exam subjects for which they had registered. In addition to certifying secondary school completion, the KCSE score is used for admission to post-secondary institutions (i.e. universities and vocational and technical training institutions) and as an employment qualification.

In 2004, almost six hundred and fifty five thousand students graduated from the approximately twenty one thousand governments and private primary schools that administered the KCPE. Four years later in 2008, thirty five percent of these cohorts graduated from one of five thousand, one hundred and fifty eight secondary schools and took the KCSE. Across all secondary grades the 2004 gross enrollment rate was forty eight percent with a forty percent net enrollment rate (World Bank 2004). Each Kenyan government secondary school belongs to one of three tiers: national,

provincial, or district. The national schools are the most elite government schools and the most prestigious secondary schools in the country. They are also among the oldest schools in the country, often modeled after British public schools. In 2004, these eighteen single sex boarding schools admitted approximately three thousand of the top primary school candidates from across the nation with places reserved for students from each district.

The issue of assessment is critical to the functioning of schools. It serves as a motivator of student performance. In addition, it provides a feedback to the teacher on the effectiveness of teaching and student achievement. It also communicates to the students, parents and others what has been taught (James, 1998). The publication of league tables showing performance in public examinations is both a symptom and a cause of greater competition (Bray, 2003).

The publication of results might lead to schools that are perceived to be doing well to attract students of high levels of ability while those perceived to be doing badly will be left with lower achieving students (Kellaghan, 1996). It may also lead to the transfer of more able teachers, lower morale in individual schools and create ghetto schools. Although, Burgess (2002) argues that, provision of information on school performance is a prerequisite for informed parental choice, the World Bank (2001) feel that where parents with social and/or economic advantage are encouraged to support schools with good results, morale and performance in poorer performing schools can be depressed.

In the United States, teachers' unions, school leaders, principals and teachers have tended to oppose policies linking assessment to accountability on the grounds of perverse effects including narrowing the curriculum to the practice of teaching to the

test and incentives for teachers to cheat (Evers & Walberg, 2003). Evidence suggests that agencies alter the timing of their actions and engage in cream skimming in response to specific performance measures (Hickman, Henrick & Smith, 2002). They exclude weak students from sitting for examinations. Cheating was mentioned as another unproductive type of response to accountability incentives and misreporting of school dropout rates (Peabody & Markley, 2003). Schools also excluded weak students by engaging in cream skimming at the point of admission. This is because the higher the ability of students admitted, the better the output and the higher the schools relative position in the league tables (Wilson, 2001).

2.3 Cognitive Impact of Ranking on Curriculum Implementation

There is ample literature featuring either the strong influence of assessment or the lack of it on the breadth and depth of student's learning, their approach to study, and retention. Amrein and Berliner (2003)'s archival time-series analysis using the data of 18 states on four well-respected student achievement measures: the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), the ACT (American College Test), the AP (Advanced Placement) tests, and the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) asserted that high-stakes testing programmes negatively affect the breadth and depth of student learning by narrowing the curriculum and abusing drill activities tied to the state tests. The comparison of each state's data on each summative assessment tool against the national data yielded no measurable improvement in student learning, but a much stronger account that 'high-stakes testing policies hurt student learning instead of helping it' (ibid., p. 35).

On the contrary, Black & William (1998) extensive review of 250 published studies yielded a impactful conclusion that formative assessment does improve student

learning with an impressive yet challenged effect size of 0.4. Moreover, many of the reviewed studies concluded that appropriately communicated formative assessment has positive impact on low achievers in particular, as 'it concentrates on specific problems with their work, and gives them both a clear understanding of what is wrong and achievable targets for putting it right' (Black & Wiliam, 2001, p. 6). Thus, formative assessment is envisaged to reduce the gap between high and low-achieving students while raising achievement overall.

From a more holistic perspective, Sambell *et al.* (1997) reported on a two and a half year longitudinal project on the consequential validity of both traditional and alternative assessment methods on student learning. The study hails a triumph of alternative assessment methods (open-book exams, projects, peer assessment, & Arecls Vol.11, 2014, 90-106. group assignments) over traditional ones (multiple choice testing and essay question exams) in long-term retention, educational worth, fairness, and channeling students' effort to achieve deep learning. The interviewed students voiced that more potential high-quality level of learning is associated with alternative assessment; however, this also implies that the assessment tasks can be more demanding and require much more motivation as well as time and effort investment to accomplish (Sambell *et al.*, 1997, p. 359). Alternative assessment is also addressed as meaningful and worthwhile with the potential to measure would-be-transferable qualities, skills and competences, and encourage and reward genuine learning achievements. The students' perceptions of poor learning, lack of control, arbitrary and irrelevant tasks in relation to traditional assessment contrast sharply with those of high quality learning, active participation, feedback opportunities and meaningful tasks in relation to alternative assessment (*ibid.*, p. 365).

In a more focused study, Slater (1996) found that students like portfolio assessment. They enjoyed the time spent on creating portfolios and believed that it helped them learn. They further elaborated that portfolio could facilitate their retention better than other assessment formats on account of their internalization, in-depth thinking, and creative and extensive application of the concepts over the duration of the course. Educational impact on the students' professional development of 'the learning portfolio' was also investigated by Klenowski *et al.* (2006). The explicit emphasis on the learning processes enables the course participants to understand the learning process itself (the purposes and the effects of context, emotional, and social elements) and how others have made use of portfolio for learning (*ibid.*, p. 278). As a consequence, the participants become more aware of their own learning, through a process of Meta learning, they are able to support others' learning, which makes the learning portfolio an effective form of professional development (*ibid.*).

On the less bright side, Sadler (1989) observed that good quality teacher feedback does not necessarily result in student development. Sadler noted, "The common but puzzling observation that even when teachers provide students with valid and reliable judgments about the quality of their work, improvement does not necessarily follow. Students often show little or no...development despite regular, accurate feedback. (Sadler, 1989, p. 119)"

Sadler further explained that autonomy is required for their improvement. The students must develop the capacity to monitor the quality of their own work, the appreciation of what high quality work is, the evaluative skill to objectively compare the quality of their work against the higher standard, and a store of tactics or moves for modification if necessary (*ibid.*).

In Norton (2007)'s case study however, showed positive signs that assessment using Psychology Applied Learning Scenarios (PALS) may discourage students from taking a strategic, mark-orientated approach and equip them with the power of knowledge to apply into authentic situations. The entire learning experience was designed upon the combination of a team presentation of a PALS case and a 3000-word essay exploring that PALS case in greater depth and using the assessment as learning criteria. Such assessment criteria as the use of up-to-date journals, the critical evaluation in terms of research methods, and the appropriateness of the selected PALS case were reinforced in the team presentation with resource sharing and further feedback from peers and the lecturer. This study is an exemplary case of how assessment can be blended into teaching and learning to create positive learning outcomes.

2.4 The affective Impact of Ranking on Students

It is a common occurrence that assessment impacts learner's moods, their victorious moments as well as their haunted despair as student make an emotional investment in an assessment and expect some 'return' (Higgins *et al.*, 2001). Despite its discernible emotional attachment, this aspect of assessment consequence has hardly been elaborated in literature, evidenced by just 19 relevant studies in the review on the impact of summative assessment on motivation for learning conducted by Harlen & Deakin Crick (2003).

Though emotion is highly subjective, assessment is alleged to inherently induce stress and tension. Coutts *et al.* (2011) quantitative search (n=137) using the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory and the Brunel Mood Scale provided concrete evidence for the impact of assessment on mood and motivation in first-year students. Most significantly, they found a time coincidence between the major changes in mood and

the greatest number of due assessment items per student in week seven. More specifically, the increasing amount of assessment was alleged to associate with an increase in negative moods such as tension, depression, anger, fatigue and confusion and a decrease in the positive mood of vigor and the intrinsic motivation variables of interest/enjoyment and perceived competence.

Their claim is supported by the participants in Drew (2001)'s study who viewed the pressure of coursework, the fear of failure, confusion, being overwhelmed and even 'bogged down' with too closed deadlines as the downsides of assessment on learners' emotion. They, however, viewed effective feedback as being critical to build their self-confidence, helping them with self-evaluation and being a powerful motivator, a major vehicle for learning. Yet, the extent of affective impact on mature students depends heavily on their self-esteem (Young, 2000). 'There is a tendency for students with low self-esteem to take any comment as an indictment of themselves; high self-esteem students see the comments as bearing on their work only' (ibid., p. 414).

Most noticeably, the reciprocal relation between test and anxiety so called 'test anxiety' has been the theme of discussion by many assessment researchers in different levels of the education system (Wine, 1971; McDonald, 2001; Norton *et al.*, 2001). The review by McDonald (2001) yielded considerable evidence of the prevalence of the fear of tests and its detrimental effect on test performance of children in compulsory education. Pollard *et al.* (2000) argued that the anxiety that the pupils felt might be a consequence of being exposed to greater risk as performance was attributed with higher stakes by the teachers. Also on anxiety but in higher education, both Joughin (2007) & Huxham *et al.* (2010) reached the same conclusion that oral assessment might induce more anxiety than written assessment as the former is

associated with a richer conception of the oral task, a deeper understanding and a need to explain to others. While Joughin (2007) attributed that anxiety to the relative lack of experience in oral assessment, many students thought that it is more useful than written assessment (Huxham *et al.*, 2010)

On the bright side, if appropriately conducted, assessment is a sharp tool to empower the learners (Leach *et al.*, 2001). By using a version of criterion referencing for the learners to select the evidence they will present in portfolios, allowing them to choose and/or negotiate the criteria, and giving them the opportunity to assess their own work and contribute to their grade in a negotiated process, the research group was able to design an assessment regime that balances between the obligation to the society-at-large and the need to respect individual and cultural differences. In other words, their model strives to reach a balance between ‘external fairness’ and ‘internal fairness’ with the internal being a key ingredient in empowerment. Though the impact varied due to the learners’ varied perceptions of assessment and the power relation between them and the teachers, several plausible empowerment influences were observed such as their decision-making, their control over self-assessment, their judgments of issues, their challenge and resistance to hegemonic ideas, their establishment of criteria, and their affirmation of knowledge.

2.5 Perception of Secondary School Ranking Among the Stakeholders’ Commitment to Academic Performance

It is human nature to make comparisons against one’s peers. Individuals make comparisons in terms of characteristics, traits and abilities. One such shortcut would be to use simple ordinal rank information instead of detailed cardinal information. Rather than working out where one stands in relation to the group mean, one might

say 'I am taller than Gill but shorter than Sarah'. In this simplified way of conceptualizing the world, when making decisions one would be placing weight on ordinal rank as well as relative or absolute information. Indeed, it has recently been shown that ordinal rank, in addition to relative position, is used when individuals make comparisons with others (Brown et al., 2008; Card et al., 2012). If people are ranking themselves amongst their peers, then ordinal in addition to cardinal information has the potential to affect investment decisions, which in turn could in turn determine later productivity.

Performance of national examinations globally is a sensitive issue because it determines the direction and future an individual. Each country's national examinations are based on national curricula and content standards. The Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2000) in the Republic of Kenya observes that performance in examinations is one indicator of educational effectiveness. It allows educational stakeholders to assess whether a school is declining or improving in the performance of national examinations. According to Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) annual report (2010), titled Education: The Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) 2015 had three hundred and thirteen thousand, four hundred and thirty eight out of three hundred and ninety seven thousand, four hundred and eighty eight candidates scoring C- and below. The large number accounted for an astonishing sixty percent of those who sat for the examinations. Whereas the examination was sat by three hundred and fifty seven thousand, four hundred and eighty eight candidates, only twenty seven percent obtained mean grade of C+ and above, which was considered the minimum university entry benchmark. A notable one hundred and fifty four thousand, eight hundred and thirty students representing forty three percent of the total candidature obtained D+, D, D- and E, the lowest

grades in the KCSE ranking. Further the number of candidates who obtained grades of D- and E in year 2010 stood at forty seven thousand, four hundred and five , compared to only eight thousand, one hundred and thirty on students who obtained the first two top grades of A and A- nationally.

In New South Wales for instance, a student's final mark in each subject is determined by a combination of school based assessments conducted throughout the Higher School Certificate (HSC) component of the course which forms fifty percent and externally administered final examinations held in October or November of every year (Board of Studies NSW, 2008). In Chile schools are evaluated on the basis of their improvement in student assessment scores, physical improvements by school administrators, working conditions of teachers, equality of opportunity through retention rates, promotion and avoidance of discrimination practices on basis of gender or disability and teacher-parents integration in school. The factors are weighted and adjusted to arrive at a final score entitlement for school.

Enrolment in the winning school accounts for twenty five percent of the score. The schools are stratified into homogeneous groups so that competition is roughly between schools that are comparable in terms of student population, socio-economic status of the community where the school is based. Schools are ranked within each group according to score index and awards given to teachers of schools in that order to be divided among themselves according to hours worked (McMakin, 2000).

In Kenya, the low levels of transition rates between standard six and seven was partially explained by the fact that schools discouraged weaker pupils from taking KCPE for fear that it would lower the mean scores in published league tables (Akers, Migoli & Nzomo, 2001). The publication of mean performance statistics for each

school and for each district in league tables made it possible for schools to see where they stood with respect to other schools in the district and for districts to compare themselves with other districts. This was a key feature of the Kenya examination reform in which this kind of information was called incentive information (Somerset, 1987). The underlying idea was that dissemination of information would create competition between schools which would motivate teachers to change their instructional practices (Chapman & Synder, 2000). However, according to Ndago (2004), there is no moral justification in ranking schools where no genuine competition really existed because some schools admit the best KCPE candidates and have the best resources which creates uneven playground. In addition, IPAR (2004), maintain that ranking in national examinations at the individual student and also at the school level has resulted in fierce competition.

The fierce competition sometimes leads to departure from teaching to preparation for passing examinations. Ndago (2004) argued that, instead of ranking schools using the percentage of candidates who attained a certain level of performance, we should use deviations (positive or negative) of the KCSE grades from the KCPE mark. Marenya (2007) also argued that the annual practice of ranking was not the best practice internationally. In addition, it was immoral to rank schools as if they were competing on equal terms when others were facilitated to do well by taking the cream of standard 8 candidates, giving them reasonable facilities and ensuring that they were taught by competent and conscientious teachers while students in other schools were condemned to inescapable failure by the absence of the same conditions. Marenya advocated for a grading system that captures and rewards everything that the school teaches and nurtures including talent.

2.6 Challenges of Ranking School on Stakeholders' Commitment to Academic Performance

Performance tables for England have been published annually since 1992 (Wilson, 2003). Currently they are used to describe the difference between 'materials brought in and the finished product' and thus measures the value added by the production process (Wilson, 2003). However, other studies indicate that, despite the use of league tables in Kenya, Senegal and elsewhere, several factors indicate that their use is complicated and misleading. If students differ from school to school in their level of achievement when joining the schools, a measure of achievement at a later date that does not take this into account will be inequitable and misleading in that it will not adequately reflect a schools success in moving students from their initial entry level to their present level of achievement as reflected in a public examination (Kellaghan and Greaney, 2001).

In general, high stakes may be associated with malpractice. In their effort to obtain high grades, students and sometimes teachers resort to various forms of cheating designed to give a candidate unfair advantage over others. This takes many forms including copying from other students during examinations, collusion between students and supervisors, use of material smuggled into the examination rooms and purchasing of examination papers (Kellaghan & Greaney, 1996)

According to Amunga (2010), the challenge of ranking schools brings about the disapproval among the concerned stakeholders. It makes weak students to be registered in the low ranked schools further lowering their mean scores and affecting promotions to senior positions. It can also result in cheating to maintain a positive improvement index and false rank, low self-esteem among some students from low

ranked schools and general indiscipline. In other scenarios, stakeholders' might sometime feel that ranking is unfair because competition seems skewed by a number of factors for example, schools could not be having level playing ground as they are diversified in terms of availability of resources and the entry behavior of the students (Amunga et al. 2010). It can also lead to teachers being overworked. Some schools and students can resort to unorthodox ways of achieving good results like teaching exam oriented materials in order to maintain or improve their ranking. It also violates some of the national educational objectives like education for all because of enforced repetition that sometimes resulted in dropping out of school altogether.

2.7 Summary of Literature

From the literature review, it's evident that ranking affects students' performance and stakeholders' commitment either positively or negatively. Ranking of schools in Kenya started during the establishment of Local Native Council (LNC) and the independent schools.. Ranking or assessment in general is critical in schools functioning. It serves as a motivator to students' performance; provide feedback to teacher on effectiveness of teaching and student achievement as well as communicating to teachers, students and parents on what has been taught (James, 1989). Ranking however is both a symptom and cause of greater competition (Bray, 2003) and leads to under enrollment in some schools (Kelleghan, 1996). According to World Bank (2001), parents with social and/or economic advantages are encouraged to support schools with good results depressing morale and performance of poorly performing schools. In United States of America, parents, teachers and principals tended to oppose policies linking assessment development and accountability as it results in narrowing of curriculum to the practice of teaching to test incentives of

teachers to cheat (Evers & Walberg, 2003). This resulted in investigating effects of ranking in national examination in Kenya to students' performance and how stakeholders of education perceive it.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter addresses the following aspects; study area, research design, target population, sampling design, sample size, data collection methods, validity and reliability of research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The study was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The research design adopted was a descriptive survey. Descriptive survey is primarily concerned with determining “what is” (Mutai, 2000). Its execution can yield important information about a phenomenon of study. Surveys are excellent means for collecting original data for studying the attitudes and orientations of very large population. Using descriptive survey design, a large population can be studied with only a portion of that population being used to get required data. It is the most appropriate when the purpose of the study is to create a detailed description of phenomenon of study, (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005). Descriptive survey research design was ideal because it involves collecting quantitative and qualitative data in order to answer questions or test hypotheses concerning the current status of the subjects of the study (Kerlinger, 2000). According to Orodho (2009), the technique produces data that is holistic and in-depth. The design therefore aided the researcher in examining the attitudes, opinions, perception and characteristics of the stakeholders’ commitment to ranking of schools in west Pokot County.

3.3 The Study Area

The focus of the study was within West Pokot County specifically West Pokot sub County. The researcher chose West Pokot Sub County because it has the highest number of schools and has both urban and rural which was deemed balanced by the researcher. It involved all secondary schools as they engage in school ranking. The study area was arrived at because of its accessibility. The area also has different categories of schools unlike other sub-counties within West Pokot County. This however prompted for a need to be researched upon.

3.4 Target Population

The target population of the study comprised of 2298 students, 354 teachers (Heads of Departments), 59 principals and 20 Ministry of Education Officials which totaled 2731 from available data from the schools and Ministry of Education Office. The target population was ascertained during a pre-visit conducted prior to data collection. West Pokot Sub-County consists of two national schools, two extra county schools, 18 County schools and 37 sub- County schools unlike other sub-counties. According to Kerlinger (2000), target population is the entire group of individuals, objects, item, cases, articles or things with common attributes or characteristics from which samples are taken for measurements. It is therefore a critical segment of the study since they possess crucial information about the problem under study.

3.5 Sample size

The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling procedures to select target groups in the study. The sample size comprised of 229 students, 34 teachers, 7 principals and 4 Ministry of education Officers.

3.5.1 Sampling of Schools

Schools were sampled using stratified sampling technique according to their status. Each school category was put in their respective strata. The sampled schools consisted of two national schools, two extra county schools, five county schools and five sub county schools. For ethical issues, county and sub county schools were randomly assigned letters A, B, C, D, E... There are two national schools and two extra county schools in West Pokot whereby all were included in sampling. The names of faculties remained the same. This confidentiality was maintained due to the nature of sensitivity associated with performance of schools. Stratified random sampling method was adopted in selecting five county schools (A, B, C, D and E) and five sub-county schools (F, G, H, I and J). The basis for stratification was school category, specifically county and sub county schools. Stratified sampling resulted in selecting schools both county and sub county schools, which were geographically situated in West Pokot County and within the Rift valley.

The selected schools constituted twenty three per cent of their respective population. This choice was justified by homogeneity criterion of ten percent as advanced by Kerlinger (2004), who recommends a sample size of at least ten percent and twenty five percent for homogeneous and heterogeneous population respectively. In this study the homogeneity was in terms of departments, work experience and year of study orientation.

3.5.2 Sampling of Students

The study employed probability sampling technique to select students who participated in the study. The lists of students were obtained from Director of Studies offices in any school selected. The study was not interested in gender as a sampling

criterion as most schools were of single gender as it was not a factor in the study. The students were classified as under their category of school. Stratified sampling method was deemed appropriate. A total of 229 questionnaires were administered to the students. Forty (40) for national schools, 40 for extra county schools, 78 for county schools and 71 for sub county schools. The students, who participated in the study, were selected using stratified sampling.

3.5.3 Sampling of teachers, principals and ministry of education officials

All the heads of department from the sampled schools were included in the study. This included six teachers for each selected school. Seven principals of the selected schools were considered instrumental in providing relevant data on various dimensions of the study. Four officials from the Ministry of education were selected and were reached based on their convenient time.

3.6 Sampling Matrix

The distribution of students of all the schools selected is shown in Table 1, which shows the total population of students and the expected sample size in each category of schools respectively.

3.7 Sampling Procedures

Any statement made about the sample should be also true of the population (Orodho, 2003). It is however agreed that the larger the sample size the smaller the sampling error, (Gay, 1992). According to Bell (2005), a minimum number equivalent to a third of entire population for statistical analysis provides a useful rule of thumb for each study category.

The study used probability sampling technique in particular stratified sampling. Stratified sampling is where a population is subdivided into non overlapping groups called strata. A researcher collects a random sample from the population in each stratum. This ensures that observations from all relevant strata are included in the sample. All schools were stratified to its category. These are national schools, extra county school, county schools and sub-county schools.

This is illustrated in table 1 below.

Table 1: Sampling Frame of Students and Schools

s/no	Category of School	Total Number of Schools per Category	Number of Schools Picked per Category	Total Number of Students Per Category	Number of students picked per Category
1	National School	2	2	410	40
2	Extra-county School	2	2	396	40
3	County School	18	5	783	78
4	Sub-county School	37	5	709	71
TOTAL		59	14	2298	229

(Comprised of form four students only)

Source: (Data from Schools)

3.8 Data Collection

Data collection is the process in which relevant research data and information were obtained.

3.8.1 Sources of Data Collection

Diverse methods of data collection were employed at various stages of the study. This was within the confined and appropriate sampling techniques. The main types of data collected were;

3.8.1.1 Primary Data

Primary data was collected from the teachers, learners, and Ministry of education officials. This data was collected from the distributed questionnaires and interview schedules where teachers, learners, parents, officers and Ministry of Education officials were required to provide information based on the questions asked from the questionnaires and interviews conducted.

3.8.1.2 Secondary Data

This was employed in the study due to its factual and authoritative nature. Secondary data, which was mainly used in preparation of literature review, was collected from various literatures including books, journals, dissertations, thesis reports, government policy documents, document analysis and reports that were relevant to the study. The method provided the basis for the study since it helped draw information from previous studies on the effects of school ranking on the commitment of stakeholders to academic performance in West Pokot County. This also helped in identifying gaps in the previous research conducted by other researchers on the same.

3.9 Data Collection Instruments

They include:

3.9.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire was used as the main research tool for this study. This was used to obtain data from heads of departments and students. The questionnaire was perfect in this case as it provided a more comprehensive view than any other research tool. Questionnaires were used to obtain primary data from the sampled population. All the respondents were asked the same questions in the same order. The questionnaire contained both open and closed ended questions. It was standardized and completely pre-determined. The questionnaires produced both qualitative and quantitative data. The main advantage of the instrument was that it allowed the researcher control and focus responses to the research objectives thus enhancing relevancy of data collected.

3.9.2 Interview Schedules

Information was also to be collected from key informants by use of interview schedule. It comprised of open ended questions in which a given stakeholder would give his or her views as per the question. This included interviewing parents, School Principals and Ministry of education officials. This was because of the role they play in the education sector as a whole. The interview schedule was important as it helped elicit effective responses from the respondents regarding the subject of the study. The information collected formed part of the primary data. The interview schedule comprised of structured and semi-structured questions.

3.10 Pilot study

Pilot study is a distinct preliminary investigation conducted before conducting the main study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Before the actual data collection, the

researcher conducted a pilot study in Kwanza sub-county, Trans-zoia County where two extra county schools were selected. 2 principals, 6 teachers, 12 students and 2 ministry of education officials were selected. The purpose of the study was to enable the researcher ascertain the reliability and the validity of research instruments and to familiarize with the kind of study to be conducted.

3.11 Validity and Reliability

3.11.1 Validity

Kothari (2004) holds that validity refers to the degree to which results obtained from analysis of the data represent the study subject. Validity is defined as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which is based on the research results (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). In this study, validity is the degree to which results obtained from analysis of the data regarding effects of ranking on school performance actually represent the phenomenon under study. All assessments of validity are subjective opinions based on the judgment of the researcher (Wiersma, 1995). For instance, the observation that ranking takes both positive and negative aspects with regard to performance would be made if another similar research is conducted using similar tools of study. The pilot study helped to improve face validity of the instruments because the researcher was able to observe possible challenges hence finding ways to overcome. Content validity of the questionnaire was improved through expert judgment guided by the supervisors and through engagement of key educational officers at the County level just as stated by Borg and Gall, (1989). As such, the researcher sought assistance from supervisors, who as experts in research, helped improve content validity of the instruments

3.11.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

The reliability of a research instrument refers to the degree to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials (Mohsen & Dennick, 2011). Reliability refers to the level of dependability of the items in the research instruments and the internal consistency of the research instruments. The researcher conducted a pilot study using the questionnaire which helped in establishing its ability to collect information and the possible challenges thus enabling the researcher to shape up. In order to get proper reliability, the method of computing preferred in the study was internal consistency method. This approach was deemed best because in establishing the effects of ranking on school performance, the similar questions posed to the respondents would have the same concept hence connected to interrelatedness of items within the test as espoused by Mohsen and Dennick, (2011). The internal consistency method provided an estimate of reliability for the academic staff questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha method. Cronbach's Alpha is the most common measure of internal consistency. It is mostly commonly used when a research instrument has multiple likert questions (Mohsen & Dennick, 2011).

3.12 Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive statistics method was used to analyze data collected. These include percentages, mean, mode and median. It also involved presentation of numerical data from questionnaires and interview schedules in form of themes and narratives.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

Permission to carry out the study was sought from National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and from the participants who participated in the study. The nature and purpose of the research was explained to the respondents by

the researcher. The researcher respected the individual's rights to safeguard their personal integrity. During the course of data collection, the respondents were assured of anonymity, confidentiality and they were assured of their ability to withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to do so. No names or personal identification numbers reflected on the questionnaires except the numbering for questionnaires which is for purposes of identification of data during editing. Finally, the results of the study were availed to the relevant authority and to those participants who were willing to know the results.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected and discusses them accordingly in relation to the research objectives. The purpose of the study was to establish stakeholder's perception towards ranking of students and schools in national examinations in secondary schools in Kenya a case study of secondary schools in West Pokot County. Data was collected by use of questionnaires and interview schedules and classified into meaningful categories. The collected data was analysed and presented using tables, pie charts and graphs.

The findings of the research were presented on the following research objectives:

- i. To investigate teachers', students', principals' and Ministry of education officials' perception on ranking of schools in National examinations
- ii. To establish the effect of school ranking on students' commitment to academic performance
- iii. To determine how school ranking influences parental commitment to academic performance

The findings were arranged according to the objectives.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 34 head of departments, 229 secondary school students, 7 principals and 4 Ministry of education officers were involved in the study. The response rate was at 90.429 % in that 14 school principals and 56 teachers were targeted.

4.3 Demographic Data

The study was able to capture some demographic information of respondents mainly the heads of departments of several schools, on teaching experience, academic qualifications, and category of schools. The analysis is presented in table 2

Table 2: Demographic information of heads of departments

Aspect		Frequency	Percent
Teaching experience	1-5yrs	14	14.2
	6-10yrs	8	23.5
	11-15yrs	5	14.7
	15 and above	7	20.6
	Total	34	100
Academic qualification	Diploma	5	14.7
	Degree	22	64.7
	Masters	7	20.6
	Total	34	100
Category of school teaching	National school	6	17.6
	Extra county school	6	17.6
	County school	11	32.4
	Sub county school	11	32.4
	Total	34	100

Source: (Researcher, 2016)

4.3.1 Teaching experience

From table 2, 14.2% of the respondents who were the head of departments had a teaching experience of between 1 and 5 years, 23.2% of them had a teaching experience of between 6 and 10 years, 14.7% of the respondents had a teaching experience of between 11 and 15 years while 20.6% had a teaching experience of 15 or more years. This indicates that majority of the respondents had a teaching experience of 6 to 10 years followed by those who had 15+ teaching experience. Minority had a teaching experience of between 1-5 years.

4.3.2 Academic Qualification

14.7% of the respondents who were teachers had attained a diploma, 64.7% who were the majority had attained a Bachelor's Degree and the remaining 20.6% had attained a Master's degree. Majority had a Bachelor's Degree.

4.3.3 Category of the school

On levels of schools taught by the respondents, 17.6% of the respondents were teaching a national school, 17.6% were teaching extra county school previously known as provincial school, 32.4% were teaching in a county school whereas 32.4% of the respondents taught in a sub-county school. Majority of the respondents were from county and sub-county schools.

4.4 Stakeholder's Perception on Ranking of Secondary Schools in National Examinations

The first research objective was to establish stakeholders of secondary education perceptions on ranking in National examination in West Pokot County.

4.4.1 Head of Department Perception on Ranking of Schools

Analysis on Heads of Department perception on ranking of schools is presented in Table 4.

Table 3: Head of Department Perception on Ranking

Statement	SD	D	UND	AG	SAG
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Ranking motivates teachers to cover syllabus	5 (14.7)	2 (5.9)	2 (5.9)	10 (29.4)	15 (44.5)
Ranking among departments encourages competition	0 (0)	5 (14.7)	6 (17.6)	13 (38.2)	10 (29.4)
Ranking enhances interschool competition	4 (11.8)	2 (5.9)	5 (14.7)	9 (26.5)	14 (41.2)
Ranking creates unhealthy competition between different categories of schools	9 (26.5)	4 (11.8)	4 (11.8)	6 (17.6)	11 (32.4)
Ranking encourages malpractices	5 (14.7)	7 (20.6)	4 (11.8)	5 (14.7)	13 (38.2)
Teachers are geared in their teachings to the examination but not learning	3 (6.8)	8 (23.5)	6 (17.6)	7 (20.6)	10 (29.4)
Ranking leads to concentration of examinations and ignore dimensions.	5 (14.7)	2 (5.9)	7 (20.6)	7 (20.6)	10 (29.4)
Ranking results to narrowing of curriculum	5 (14.7)	3 (6.8)	6 (17.6)	11 (32.4)	9 (26.5)
Ranking serves as a motivation to students performance	2 (5.9)	8 (23.5)	8 (23.5)	8 (23.5)	8 (23.5)

Ranking provides feedback to the teacher on the effectiveness of teaching and student achievement	5 (14.7)	3 (6.8)	6 (17.6)	10 (29.4)	10 (29.4)
Ranking communicates to the teacher what has been learnt	4 (11.8)	4 (11.8)	4 (11.8)	13 (38.2)	9 (26.5)
Ranking motivates teachers to change instructional practices	4 (11.8)	6 (17.6)	6 (17.6)	11 (32.4)	7 (20.6)
Ranking has no effect on teachers self-esteem because they regard their role in school as a duty	8 (23.5)	5 (14.7)	6 (17.6)	7 (20.6)	8 (23.5)

Key: *SD- strongly disagree, D- disagree, UND- undecided, AG- agree, SAG- strongly agree. F- Frequency.*

Source: (Researcher, 2016)

Fifteen (44.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that ranking in national examination encourages teachers to cover syllabus. Ten respondents which represented 29.4% agreed of the same, five (14.7%) strongly disagreed, two respondents (5.9%) agreed while two (5.9%) were undecided. This show that majority of the respondents agreed that ranking motivates teachers to complete syllabus. Similarly, 29.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that ranking among departments encourages competition; majority (38.2%) agreed with it, 17.6 % (six) were undecided, while 14.7 % (five) disagreed on ranking among departments encourages competition. Akers, Migoli & Nzomo, (2001) findings showed that publication of mean performance statistics for each school and for each district in league tables made it possible for schools to see where they stood with respect to other schools in the district and for districts to compare themselves with other districts or different departments.

41.2 % (fourteen) strongly agreed that ranking encourages competition among schools, 26.5% of the respondents agreed, 14.7% of the respondents were undecided, 17.7% disagreed to the aspect of study. The findings conquer with Bray, 2003 findings that publication of league tables showing performance in public examinations is both a symptom and a cause of greater competition.

Additionally, 50% (twenty three) of the respondents agreed that ranking creates unhealthy competition between different categories of schools like national school, extra county schools, county schools and sub-county schools. However, 38.3% of the respondents (thirteen) disagreed to the same while 11.8% of the respondents had undecided on the vice. This is due to the notion by the respondents that schools should be ranked according to their categories. These findings agree with Kellaghan (1996) findings that publication of results may lead to schools that are perceived to be doing well to attract students of high levels of ability while those perceived to be doing badly will be left with lower achieving students. According to Ndago (2004), there is no moral justification in ranking schools where no genuine competition really existed because some schools admit the best KCPE candidates and have the best resources which creates uneven playground.

On other aspect; ranking encourages malpractices among students, 52.9% which represented eighteen respondents agreed to the aspect, 11.8% of the respondents were undecided on the aspect while 35.3% of the respondents disagreed to the aspect. Some students engage in exam malpractices in order to achieve high grades and make their school ranked higher than other schools. These however agree with (Kellaghan & Greaney, 1996) findings that high stakes may be associated with malpractices. In their effort to obtain high grades, students and sometimes teachers resort to various forms

of cheating designed to give a candidate unfair advantage over others. This takes many forms including copying from other students during examinations, collusion between students and supervisors, use of material smuggled into the examination rooms and purchasing of examination papers.

On perception that teachers are geared in their teachings towards examination and not learning due to ranking, 50% of the respondents (seventeen) agreed to the aspect. However, 17.8% Of the respondents (six) were undecided while 32.3% of the respondents disagreed to the aspect. The findings indicate that majority of the respondents agreed that teachers teach towards passage of examination and not to instill knowledge to students. Other findings (Amunga et al. 2010) suggest that can lead to teachers being overworked. Some schools and students can resort to unorthodox ways of achieving good results like teaching exam oriented materials in order to maintain or improve their ranking.

However, 58.8% (twenty) respondents agreed which represented the majority believed that ranking only leads to concentration on examination and not to other aspects of education. 20.6% (seven) of the respondents disagreed on the aspect while the remaining 20.6% (seven) respondents were undecided.

58.9% of the interviewed heads of department agreed to the aspect that ranking leads to narrowing of curriculum. 17.6% of the respondents (six) were undecided on the matter while the remaining 23.5% of the respondents (eight) disagreed on the aspect. The findings shows that majority agreed and believe that ranking causes narrowing of curriculum which conquer with findings that in the United States, teachers' unions, school leaders, principals and teachers tended to oppose policies linking assessment to accountability on the grounds of perverse effects including narrowing the curriculum

to the practice of teaching to the test and incentives for teachers to cheat (Evers and Walberg, 2003).

On perception that ranking serves as motivation towards student's performance, 47% (sixteen) of the respondents agreed to the perception and believed that when students are ranked higher they are motivated to work harder and maintain the higher rank. However, 29.5% (ten) of the respondents disagreed on the same while 23.5% (eight) of the respondents were undecided.

64.6% of the respondents (twenty) agreed to the aspect that ranking communicates to the teacher on what has been learnt in that in case of a positive deviation from the previous rank, teachers are assured that what was taught was well undertaken. Despite this, 23.6% (eight) of the respondents disagreed on the same while 11.8% (four) were undecided. This finding is in line with (James, 1998) that it also communicates to the students, parents and others what has been learnt.

Majority of the respondents 58.8% (twenty) agreed to the aspect that ranking provide feedback to the teacher on effectiveness of teaching and students' achievement as teachers teach expecting improvement in students' performance, 17.8% (six) ad undecided mind while 23.4% (eight) disagreed on the same. Ranking provides a feedback to the teacher on the effectiveness of teaching and student achievement (James 1998). On ranking motivating teachers to change institutional practices, majority of the respondents which was 53% (eighteen) agreed on the aspect. However, 29.4% (ten) of the respondents disagreed on the aspect as 17.6% of the respondents were undecided. These findings concur with Chapman and Synder, (2000) findings in which the underlying idea was that dissemination of information

would create competition between schools which would motivate teachers to change their instructional practices.

In the last aspect on H.O.Ds perception, 43.5% (fifteen) agreed to the aspect that ranking has no effect on teachers' self-esteem as they regard their role in school as a duty. 17.6% (six) had undecided mind while 38.7% (thirteen) of the respondents disagreed. These findings tend to differ with Kellaghan (1996) that ranking may lead to the transfer of more able teachers which lower morale in individual schools and create ghetto schools.

4.4.2 Principals' Perception on Ranking in Schools

On the general view of ranking, 85.71% of the respondents spoke of ranking impacting negatively on performance in schools. Most issues raised by the respondents include of students and teachers towards academic performance. However, 14.29% of the respondents claimed that it was the right move by the government. Some viewed that it created unhealthy competition among students and different categories of schools.

The other aspect was to study the effect of ranking on students' performance. On this, 71.42% of the respondents claimed that ranking resulted to drop in levels of academic performance and wished that the decision be reverted. One of the comments on this was, "ranking leads to poor performance of schools and students because competition among students will be down." However, 28.58% believe that it has no impact on students' as one claimed, "Ranking has no impact on performance of students since performance is based on individual effort and not by ranking."

On impact of ranking on parental commitment on students' academic performance, 72% viewed it to impact negatively of their involvement in students' academic

performance. A comment to illustrate this is, “lack of ranking will impact on parental support for homework.” Despite this, 28% of the respondents believed that ranking has nothing to do with parental involvement towards students’ academic performance as their claim was, “parent support their children irrespective of their positions and all wish their children the best.”

On how ranking affects performance, majority of the respondents claimed that it will result to poor performance. One of the comments to support this was, “stakeholders will relax knowing that they are not compared with others. Why struggle or work hard when your efforts can’t be compared with others or appreciated?” another respondent claimed that it will have minimal impact on individual performance but impact on national mean.

Another aspect was to explain on how ranking affects ministry of education. Most of the respondents believed that it impacts negatively on the ministry on aspects such as allocation of resources, students’ placement, and effective evaluation of school and also government involvement in specific schools. One claimed that, “it is not easy for the ministry to plan for some areas which need support in human and curriculum innovation. However, some never wanted to comment on this.

One question was to indicate was to indicate on how ranking affects teachers’ performance, most said that it increases laxity among teachers to support students and their efforts won’t be recognized. A comment to support this is, “Teachers will relax since ranking is a motivation to a performing teacher.” However, some say it doesn’t affect teachers’ performance in any way as teachers work on a curriculum and all their expectation is to complete syllabus and impart knowledge on students.

The last aspect was to explain on continued ranking of schools in the county. On this, some say that it's a good move and the government should think of reverting it as one claimed, "Ranking is a norm of the world. Organizations, institutions and associations use ranking to improve service delivery as well as performances." Some respondents claimed that it's a source of hard work, good performance and encourages healthy competition among schools and government should bring back ranking.

4.5. Students' Perception of Ranking on their Commitment to Academic Performance

Data was collected to establish how ranking affected students' commitment to academic performance in order to answer the second research objective. Sampled students had different views and can be summarized as below.

Table 4: Students' Perception on Ranking.

Aspect	SD	D	UND	AG	SAG
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Ranking leads to negative perception on performance	113 (49.3)	47 (20.5)	15 (6.6)	32 (14.0)	22 (9.6)
Ranking destroys students morale	89 (38.5)	55 (24)	19 (8.3)	34 (14.8)	32 (14)
Ranking leads to under enrolment in some schools	38 (16.6)	18 (7.9)	20 (8.7)	73 (31.9)	80 (34.9)
Lack of ranking leads to poor performance as a result of poor administration and leadership practices	42 (18.3)	31 (13.5)	11 (4.8)	54 (23.6)	91 (39.7)

Ranking do not provide a systematic and intervention system to improve learner achievement	98 (42.8)	47 (20.5)	23 (10)	33 (14.4)	28 (12.2)
Ranking affects students preparation in exams	79 (34.5)	18 (7.9)	13 (5.7)	60 (26.2)	59 (25.8)
Students become less concerned about performance when ranking is abolished	41 (17.9)	52 (22.7)	9 (3.9)	35 (15.3)	92 (40.2)
Ranking hampered students' performance	36 (15.7)	26 (11.4)	15 (6.6)	57 (24.9)	95 (41.5)

Key: *SD- strongly disagree, D- disagree, UND- undecided, AG- agree, SAG- strongly agree. F- Frequency*

On students' perception on several aspects of ranking, the findings indicated that 69.8% (one hundred and sixty) of the respondents disagreed to the notion that ranking leads to negative perception on performance. This is because of their view that ranking is associated with positive performance. However, 23.6% (fifty four) of the respondents agreed to the notion while 6.6% (15) were undecided on the same. These findings differ with other findings that schools discouraged weaker pupils from taking KCPE for fear that it would lower the mean scores in published league tables (Akers, Migoli & Nzomo, 2001).

Also, majority of the respondents 62.5% (one hundred and forty four) disagreed to the aspect that ranking destroys students' morale at school. This is because they believe that ranking motivates them to steer forward to achieve better ranks or maintain them. Despite this, 28.8% (sixty four) of the respondents agreed to the notion while 8.3%

(nineteen) were undecided. 66.3% (one hundred and fifty three), indicating the majority, of the respondents agreed to the belief that ranking leads to under enrollment in some schools. The reason being; some schools take small numbers of manageable students in order to achieve higher rank in their intakes. However, 24.5% (fifty six) students disagreed to it while the remaining 8.7% (twenty) of the respondents were undecided. Evidence suggests that agencies alter the timing of their actions and engage in cream skimming in response to specific performance measures (Hickman, Henrick & Smith, 2002) that exclude weak students from sitting for examinations which results in under enrollment in schools.

On other aspect of study that lack of ranking leads to poor performance as a result of poor administration and leadership practice. 63.3% (one hundred and forty five) of the respondents agreed to the aspect as most of some school administrations would not care on the performance of their students since there is no one to compete with. 31.8% (seventy three) disagreed while 4.8% (eleven) of the respondents were undecided. Majority of the respondents, 63.3% (one hundred and forty five), disagreed to the notion that ranking do not provide a systematic and intervention system to improve learner achievement. This is because the notion is in contrary to belief that the purpose of ranking is to enhance students' performance and achievement. Despite this, 26.6% (sixty one) of the respondents agreed to the notion while 10% (twenty three) of the respondents were undecided on the same.

52% (one hundred and nineteen) of the respondents indicated that ranking affects students' preparation in examinations. Ranking makes some students to work order to achieve the best rank as no one wants to be a loser. However, 42.4% (ninety seven) disagreed to the belief whereas 5.7% (thirteen) of the students were undecided

indicating that the percentage of those who agreed is slightly higher than those who disagreed. On other aspect that students become less concerned about performance when ranking is abolished, 55.5% (one hundred and twenty seven) of the respondents indicating the majority agreed to the aspect as 40.6% (ninety three) of them disagreed whereas 3.9% (nine) were undecided. Majority agreed as most of the parents have great expectations of the students and the only way they can do that is to surpass others.

The last aspect was to examine students' perception on the notion that ranking hampered students' performance. From this, 66.4% (one hundred and fifty two) of the respondents indicating the majority agreed to the aspect as ranking indicates the best and worst student and when abolished, no one cares about performance as no one knows who was best of dummy. 27.1% (sixty two) of the respondents disagreed to the notion while 6.6% (fifteen) of them were undecided. In Kenya, the low levels of transition rates between standard six and seven was partially explained by the fact that schools discouraged weaker pupils from taking KCPE for fear that it would lower the mean scores in published league tables (Akers, Migoli & Nzomo, 2001) thus affecting students' results.

4.6 Ranking on Parental Commitment to Students' Academic Performance

The third research objective was to determine how ranking influences parental commitment towards academic performance. The respondents were students who gave their views on their parents' commitment towards academic performance due to ranking.

Table 5: Students' Perception on how Ranking Influences Parents Commitment to Academic Performance.

Aspect	SD	D	UND	AG	SAG
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Ranking influences parents to buy extra teaching and learning materials	54 (23.6)	33 (14.4)	20 (8.7)	52 (22.7)	70 (30.6)
Ranking Influences parental support for homework	78 (34.1)	52 (22.7)	30 (13.1)	35 (15.3)	34 (14.8)
Ranking impacts negatively on parental involvement on school academic programs	47 (20.5)	47 (20.5)	25 (10.9)	40 (17.5)	70 (30.6)

Key: *SD- strongly disagree, D- disagree, UND- undecided, AG- agree, SAG- strongly agree. F- Frequency*

Source: (Researcher, 2016)

53.3% (one hundred and twenty two) of the respondents believe that ranking influences parents to buy extra teaching and learning materials. This is due to a notion that parents wouldn't know the progress of their children. Every parent wishes the best for their children and would support them when the student performs below others. However, 38% (eighty seven) disagreed to the aspect while 8.7% (twenty) were undecided.

On others aspect that ranking influences parental support for homework, 56.8% (one hundred and thirty) disagreed to the aspect and believes that has got nothing to do with parental support for homework as it depends on the will of the parent. However, 30.1% (sixty nine) agreed to it as they believe parents offer homework assistance to the lowly ranked to improve their scores and ranks. 13.1% (thirty) were undecided on the same. 48.1% (one hundred and ten) of the respondents agreed that ranking impacts negatively on parental involvement in academic programs. This is due to

believe that parents get demoralized with their children who are ranked and motivated with those who are ranked among the best. However, 41% (ninety four) of the respondents disagreed to it while 10.9% (twenty five) of the respondents were undecided. These findings conquer with Burgess et al (2002) who argue that, provision of information on school performance is a prerequisite for informed parental choice, the World Bank (2001) feel that where parents with social and/or economic advantage are encouraged to support schools with good results, morale and performance in poorer performing schools can be depressed.

4.7. County Education Officers Perception of Ranking

The fourth research objective sought to investigate how ranking influences Ministry of Education and County Education officials' commitment to academic performance in West Pokot County. The findings are discussed as below.

On general view of ranking, half of the respondents claimed that it was the right move by the government as they view ranking to exert pressure on teachers and students to achieve better results which may result in malpractices. Another half believed that the decision to abolish ranking was a wrong one as one commented, "Ranking in schools is worth taking because of the fact that performance will be improved in most schools.

Another aspect was to give their views on the impact of ranking on students' performance. 75% of the respondents claimed that it will lead to poor performance in schools as one commented, "It will demoralize students therefore affecting performance negatively". However, 25% claimed that students' performance is independent of ranking as one claimed that students know what they are doing in school and their achievement will not be affected by ranking.

On effect of ranking on parental commitment towards students' achievement, half of the respondents stated that ranking doesn't impact on parental involvement in students' performance as one claimed, "parents know their responsibilities so as teachers and ranking will not affect their responsibilities." A quarter of the respondents will be more committed to buy more teaching and learning materials as they teachers will be relaxed. Another quarter of the respondents' claimed that it will lower parental commitment as one commented, "Basically, it will lower commitment in that they will no longer see the need for to support."

50% of the respondents had a view that ranking will impact negatively on performance. A claim to ascertain this is, "it will negatively affect performance since the rate of competition would have gone down." However, another half believed that ranking as no impact on performance as one claimed, "It does not affect performance as a bright student will still do well irrespective of ranking when focused."

On impact of ranking on Ministry of Education, majority claimed that it will impact negatively on involvement in activities such as student placement and monitoring development in individual schools as one claimed, "Absence of ranking will make Ministry officials to become less involvement in academic programs and activities in some schools." However, a few believed that doesn't not have any impact since the officials have duties and responsibly which drive them and not ranking.

On effect of ranking on teachers' performance, three quarter claimed that it will impact negatively as one commented, "Teachers will become less committed on academic matters, reduces teachers' efforts in achieving better results and laxity at work." However, quarter of the respondents claimed it to be a good move as teachers will not be subjected to unhealthy competition anymore.

Another aspect was to comment on continued ranking of schools despite its abolishment. Majority of the respondents gave their views that continued ranking among schools is a good move to continue ranking as it helps check on progress of some schools, creates healthy competition which will improve results and also help to eradicate laxity among some stakeholders. However, a few claimed that it's against code of conduct of teachers as all schools must operate as per the directive of the ministry and continued ranking is illegal.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

It is the last chapter of the study and for proper summary of the study it is divided into the following major sections; summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations. The summary of the findings is presented in line with the research objectives of the study. The conclusion is made on the basis of the general views made by the researcher. They are as thought of by the researcher shaped by the study observations made. The research provides recommendations that would assist to ensure positivity in perception on the ranking by the stakeholders. It winds by giving possible research areas that can be conducted as the research did not explore on all possible outcomes from ranking other than the critical view of stakeholders perception.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study was carried out to analyze the effect of ranking in national examination in West Pokot County. The study was guided by the following research objectives: to investigate teachers perception on ranking of schools in National examinations, to establish the effect of school ranking on students' commitment to academic performance, to determine how school ranking influences parents commitment to academic performance, and to examine how ranking influences Ministry of Education Officials commitment to academic performance in West Pokot County. The study was guided by developed conceptual framework that explains the relationship of the independent and dependent variables together with the research objectives. Further to the conceptual framework was the use of Talcott Persons Structural Functionalism Theory to explain on the many components in schooling that constitute the

stakeholders all working together to achieve the goal of good performance. The theory explains the interconnectivity existing from the interactions by the stakeholders despite of the possible complexity bringing forth challenges in the educational sector. Data was collected by use of questionnaires and interview schedules. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. A total of thirty four teachers, two hundred and twenty nine students, seven principals and four county education officers were involved in the study. The summary was done based on the research objectives as follows;

5.2.1 Stakeholder's perception on Ranking of Schools in National Examination

In order to ascertain the stakeholders' level of understanding of the subject matter, the students who participated in the study were as selected by their teachers. They were asked their class or form so as to know how long they may have been in the school. This was important because the more the student has moved from one class to another, the more they understand the schools culture and therefore would have a view regarding performance together with ranking. The teacher respondents were asked on their level of study. The question was meant to ascertain their level of understanding of the issue of ranking which could be influenced by their level of study. It was however established that majority 22(64.7%) of the teachers had attained first degree which would imply they dynamically understand the issue of ranking and the possible impact on academic performance.

Questions were asked on the stakeholders of secondary education perceptions on ranking in national examination in West Pokot County. The reason was to find out the existing perceptions because they would have both direct and indirect consequences to performance. The findings from the study showed that majority of teacher

respondents affirmed that ranking motivates teachers in one way or another. For instance 15(44.5%) of the heads of departments strongly agreed that ranking motivates teachers which may be explained by the timely coverage of syllabus in schools. Some of the student respondents would affirm to this by citing early coverage of syllabus by the end of form three of their studies so that the last fourth year marks their revision and preparation for final examinations. The idea of ranking is however not supported fully by all the stakeholders as from the questions posted to the heads of departments in various schools in West Pokot County as 2(5.9%) of the teachers disagreed with the idea that ranking motivates teachers to cover syllabus. The notion is that ranking may not be favourable to all because it can lead to students or teacher demoralization and that some of the subjects have longer syllabuses than others.

It was also evident that ranking among departments encourages competition which can lead to positive results. This however is in the case of intra-school ranking where the departments compete. However, majority of the respondents agreed to the belief that ranking encourages competition among various departments which can steer to betterment of results. There were some 5(14.7%) of the respondents who disagreed with the idea that interdepartmental competition betters the results. Although this may be a representation of few holding the idea, it may imply that ranking creates unhealthy competition between different departments and the reward awarded to the teachers of the most performing departments may kill the morale of the ones of least performing departments hence the consequent result being average or general deterioration of school performance. The study further showed that ranking encourages inter-school competition. For instance, majority 14(41.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed. However, there were those undecided respondents informed by the likely result of unhealthy competition emanating. For instance, some

schools will do all they can to be among the best performing which would include high instances of exam cheating. The majority 11(32.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that ranking of schools would in one way or another influence performance leading to examination malpractices. If schools ranking were to be done best according to the researcher may be through ranking on the basis of categories of schools like national school, extra county schools, county schools and sub-county schools and schools.

Ranking of schools may be good or bad depending on the perceptions of the stakeholders. The findings for instance affirmed that ranking encourages malpractices in examination as some students engage in exam malpractices in order to achieve high grades and make their school ranked higher than other schools. Majority of the respondents 13(38.2%) strongly agreed with the notion that ranking of schools encourages the malpractices. The explanation may be that teachers are geared to teach towards passage of examination and not to instill knowledge to students due to ranking. Some 7(20.6%) of the respondents however disagreed with the idea that ranking spurs examination malpractices. It is thought that with or without ranking, students or teachers that engage in exam irregularities would continue because it is something within them. Cheating or not cheating is based on the moral upbringing of the self and therefore is a difficult to change practice.

It was deduced from the findings that ranking makes students to only concentrate on examination and not to concentrate on other aspects of education. The kind of study where students and schools are ranked based on the results narrows concentration and therefore limiting the career progression of the students. The thinking of the learners is confined to academic excellence at the expense of technological advancement,

innovation and development of other talents like sporting among others. It was also found that the interviewed heads of department agreed to the aspect that ranking leads to narrowing of curriculum. Once the focus is on syllabus coverage, some of the teachers will concentrate on areas that they deem to be more examined which may create impartiality in imparting knowledge. The focus may be shifted to the examinations and those areas that would have contributed to an upright social being may be left or ignored. This at the end would have effects to the society and the wellbeing of the people. Moreover, the students may end up pursuing careers that are not the choice based on the performance hence lacking the passion to it. Further to this is a possible career societal conflict due to the pursuit of a wrong career.

Ranking could serve as motivation towards student's performance. The respondents with varying perceptions were of equal representation as 8(23.5%) of the participants ranged from those who disagree, those undecided, those who agree and strongly agree simultaneously. Those who agree and strongly agree are a representation of those stakeholders who believe that when students are ranked higher, they are motivated to work harder and maintain the higher rank. There were few 2(5.9%) who strongly disagreed with the idea that ranking serves as a motivation to students performance. Performance is not determined by ranking but the effort of the individual student and their ability to understand concepts. Every student would have strength and a weakness. The alternate way that could serve best is assisting eliminate the weaknesses and improve on individual strengths. Ranking may demoralize the learner and create unnecessary stigma that gives forth continued failure.

It was however found that ranking communicates to the teacher on what has been learnt in class and help identify areas that may need emphasis. In case of a positive

deviation from the previous rank, teachers are assured that what was taught or revised was well undertaken. Positive feedback is thought to arise from ranking of students, schools and subjects. The idea from the findings is that majority of the respondents believe that ranking provide feedback to the teacher. This feedback would aid in identifying areas that teachers need to relook into, emphasize or on those well understood by the students. They may play a role of assessing the methods used by the teachers to disseminate knowledge which identifies the best approaches and those that should be shaped in order to ensure their effectiveness. It was also found that ranking motivates teachers to change institutional practices that they find it necessary to change, as majority of the respondents attested to it. The findings showed that ranking has no effect on teachers' self-esteem as they regard their role in school as a duty. There were however those respondents who disagreed with the view comprising 5(14.7%) and 8(23.5%) who strongly disagreed. The assumption for those disagreeing is that best ranked teachers feel motivated through the students' outcome and may be recognized by the parents as well as the students positively. Those whose subjects are poorly performed bear the burden of being associated with failure thereby associated with failure. This may lead to continued decline in general performance. Since feedback can be positive or negative, such teachers may end up feeling inferior hence continued inability to deliver due to general negative viewing by other stakeholders.

On the general view of ranking, most respondents spoke of ranking impacting negatively on performance in schools. Most issues raised by the respondents include students and teachers being the key contributors towards academic performance. From majority of the respondents, it was found that ranking resulted to drop in levels of academic performance and the decision should be reverted. On impact of ranking on parental commitment on students' academic performance, it was found that

ranking impacts negatively on involvement in students' academic performance. On how ranking affects performance, it was found that ranking results to poor performance. One of the comments to support this was that stakeholders may relax knowing that they are not compared with others. However, it was also found that, ranking impacts negatively on the ministry on aspects such as allocation of resources, students' placement, and effective evaluation of school and also government involvement in specific schools. Another finding was that ranking affects teachers' performance, most of the respondents said that ranking increases laxity among teachers in support for students and their efforts would not be recognized. It was also found that continued ranking of schools in the county should continue in the county. On this, some say that it's a good move and the government should think of reverting it.

5.2.2. Students' Perception on Ranking

Students are stakeholders of education because they are the reason why schooling is there. Without them there is nothing like education. It was therefore important to find out the students perception on ranking. Ranking has different viewing from the stakeholders. Majority of the student respondents 113(49.3%) strongly disagree with the idea that ranking leads to negative perception on performance. They believe that ranking would assist in highlighting the subjects that need more focus while at the same time enabling the teachers to find possible strategies in their teaching methods to see into it that there is improvement in the least performing subjects. Most students belief that ranking is only associated with positive performance. There were those respondents who were undecided as to whether ranking leads to negative or positive perception on academic performance. They think ranking may either encourage or discourage depending on the viewing. An observation made is that ranking enhances

academic performance if it assists at one point the least performed subject gets improved and does not remain low ranked every time ranking is done. In the case where a subject is consistently the least performing, it would influence the perception of the stakeholders into a generalization that ranking would negatively influence performance.

There is mixed reactions by the students about their perception on whether ranking destroys their morale. There are those who agree 34(14.8%) or strongly agree 32(14%) that ranking destroys their morale. This could be because they put a lot of efforts on performing and once they are ranked and continuously happen to underperform, they feel unable and therefore lose morale. This is mostly the ranking done at an individual level. Ranking of schools or subjects may also contribute to low performance as the students feel demoralized as well as the teachers of the low performing subjects. There are those students who believe that ranking has both positive and negative impacts on performance because it encourages the least performing to work harder or discourage them to perform poorly. There were however those students 89(38.5%) who strongly disagreed that ranking destroys their morale. They believe that ranking at individual level gives room for improvement of areas ranked low. Some of them think that ranking is a way of assessing and would contribute to collective efforts of improving as those performing well will assist the less performing colleagues in order to have either a subject or their school ranked best. Going by the majority of the student respondents it would be generalized that ranking does not destroy students' morale at school. This is because it is believed that ranking motivates students to steer forward to achieve better ranks or maintain them.

Ranking of schools creates a viewing of schools in the people's minds as those schools ranked the best would lead to the desire by parents to have their children

conduct their studies there. This simply put means there would be under enrolment in some schools depending on where ranking places them. There were varied opinions from the respondents as to whether ranking leads to poor performance as a result of poor administration and leadership practice. For instance it was established that 91(39.7%) of the respondents held the view that ranking brings forth competitiveness that leads to improvement in performance. However, 42(18.3%) disagreed with the idea. This may have been informed by their earlier views that ranking discourages the stakeholders' participation. On addition, it was observed that some of the respondents who disagreed stated that there is no relationship between rankings of schools and the schools administration and leadership although poor leadership can lead to students' dissatisfaction hence decline in performance. Majority of the respondents 98(42.8%) disagreed to the notion that ranking do not provide a systematic and intervention system to improve learner achievement. This is because the perception is in contrary to belief that the purpose of ranking is to enhance students' performance and achievement. Ranking is meant to provide reasons for the various performances that can be well explained through a thorough highlight of the good or bad performances. Some of the benefits of ranking may come in the form of development of proper policy framework or curriculum development that will suit the learners. In so doing, the government may come with proper intervention system hence improved learner achievement.

It was noted from the findings that ranking affects students' preparation in examinations. This was established from 119 of the respondents. The explanation from the respondents is that ranking makes some students to work hard in order to achieve the best rank as no one wants to be a loser. Ranking creates the urge and desire to perform which is explained furthered by the student urge to join the best

institutions of higher education as well as pursue the best courses. However, it was found that students become less concerned about performance when ranking is abolished as supported by majority 92(40.2%) of the respondents. Ranking acts as stimulant for the desire to perform by the students. There were some of the respondents who have the view that ranking does not influence students because it is an individual desire. This may only be affected by the schools structures and the availed learning resources.

Moreover, the findings indicated that ranking hampers students' performance. This is informed by things like competitiveness, hard work and teachers' commitment as a result of ranking. Ranking according to some 15(6.6%) of the respondents may or may not have impacts depending on the associated assumptions by the stakeholders.

5.2.3. Effects of Ranking on Parents Commitment to Academic Performance

The study sought to find out how ranking would influence parental participation to the schooling of their children. There were different opinions exhibited by parents on this. It was found that ranking to a large extent influences parents to buy extra teaching and learning materials for their children. Some of the respondents 70(30.6%) who strongly agreed that ranking influences parents to buy learning materials for their children pointed to the weak areas that their children have and therefore informs their decision onto knowing the right area for emphasis. However, there were some of the respondents who disagreed 54(23.6%). It was observed that some of those who disagreed were of the opinion that parents should be responsible and at the front in ensuring their children have the right learning resources. One was categorical that those parents influenced by ranking to purchase learning materials for their children are irresponsible and lack concern for their children.

The issue of parental commitment is however not determined by ranking although from the study some of the parents are willing to assist their children in order to have good academic results. There are parents 30(13.1%) who are undecided whether ranking influences their support for students during homework times. Such parents are not sure whether their provision of good study environment at home equals their support for the children. There exists the assertion however from the parents that ranking enables them to know the progress of their children. The idea of general ranking is confusing as a mixed reaction emanates from total ranking of schools but intra-school ranking is supported by a majority. This is due to a notion that parents would not know the progress of their children in absence of ranking.

Some of the parents are guided by ranking of schools and students to believe that their children are better placed to achieve good results. When ranking of schools is abolished, some of the parents become reluctant to participate on students' academic programs. Their commitment is to a large extent tied to the desire to have the school ranked better. Others become concerned because they would want to see their children being ranked among the best performers. However, there are some of the respondents who had different view on ranking and parental commitment to academic activities of their children.

Similar representation of 40(20.5%) strongly disagreed. The idea is that parents are either involved or not involved on their children's academic activities depending on the schools organization. The back at this point is on the schools administration and planning and the level of parental involvement is deemed to be the spillovers. The study also showed that ranking of schools would make some of the parents to lack commitment hence impacting negatively on parental involvement in academic programs. ranking creates a multifaceted opinions though from the study majority of

the respondents held the opinion that the time ranking is done away with, parents stop their commitment and therefore low levels of participation in academic activities and events.

5.2.4. Ministry of Education Officials' perception on ranking to commitment in academic performance in West Pokot County

The government is a key stakeholder in education because it plays a critical role in achieving educational standards for all. It plans for the students learning by taking consideration of the educational providers. Development is dependent of the skills imparted to the learners and the future is dependent on the knowledge given to the young. It was important to incorporate the educational officers both at national and county levels in this study. From the opinion of majority of the educational officers, the move by the government to abolish ranking of schools was good because to them it exerted unnecessary pressure on the teachers and students to achieve results. The idea of having tuition was informed by ranking of schools. However, there were those who held the opinion that ranking was bad. The idea to them is that ranking is a motivator and schools work hard collectively in order to have their students ranked among the best and for the school to appear among the top ranked.

Ranking to some of the educational respondents discourages the students generally. It was observed from the responses that ranking demoralizes the less performing students and schools. The focus is lost because there are several determining factors for performance such as the available structures and resources. There is variation of schools based on their level whether national or Sub County or depending on the location as the ones in the arid lands cannot be compared with those in the suburbs. According to 25% of the respondents who were educational officer, ranking has no

effect on student performance if the student is aware of his or her role in the pursuit of academic excellence. The learners should be well informed of the need to focus on what they would want to achieve and the government to come in by supporting the teachers and enabling a conducive environment to the learners.

Ranking as per 50% of the responses from the education officers does not impact on parental involvement in students' performance as parents support their children irrespective their ranks. The level of support from the parents to the students is determined by the parental income. With or without ranking, parental support exists to the level of their capability. This is despite of the assertion that ranking makes teachers to work harder in delivering and being committed to their work. Despite of this, 25% of the respondents believe that ranking motivates the parents to being committed to the schools and students. Some of the parents would sacrifice on improving the resources of the school in order to uplift the general results.

Ranking has taken two dimensions. First, there are those who think ranking acts as a source of competition that would encourage the teachers and students to go extra mile in order to achieve results. If ranking is therefore abolished, performance will decline because both the teachers and the students would relax instead of working extra mile. Secondly, there are those who believe that ranking would have no impact on performance. The assumption is that a bright student would still perform whether ranking is there or not. If not, ranking encourages cheating in exams as the competition would take a dimension of whatever it is as long as the results are good.

It was observed from the Ministry of Education Officers that ranking would make students' placement to be difficult and the officers may find it difficult to monitor individual development in schools. Ranking has been used by the Ministry officials in

planning and participating in academic activities of schools. Abolishing it therefore would make the officers be reluctant in the process of assessment as well as in policy development. This may be despite of the officers being at the grass root levels where they are to get the first hand information.

Ranking from 25% of the respondents felt that it may impact negatively on performance. A claim to ascertain this is, “it will negatively affect performance since the rate of competition would have gone down.” On impact of ranking on Ministry of Education as was established is that majority it would impact negatively on involvement in activities such as student placement and monitoring development.

Despite of the government abolishment of ranking, the exercise is still there. It would be difficult to assess the students without ranking them in the school and among other schools. Secondly, schools would still practice interdepartmental ranking as a way of teacher motivation as well as the students. Thirdly, although schools ranking was abolished, students are still ranked through their performance together with their schools. This makes the practice to still continue hence the government should reverse the process and develop other criteria of ranking that would be accompanied by strict policies and regulations in the case of examination malpractices.

5.3. Conclusion

Ranking has been viewed from different angles depicting both positive and negative notions from scholars and stakeholders perspectives. For instance, it can be deduced that ranking motivates teachers to cover syllabus. They do so in order to put their students at better chance of getting better scores and put their school in a better rank compared to other schools or get better mean than other subjects.

There are some who may view ranking as a motivating factor to performing students as they may put more and more efforts in order to achieve better results or maintain top rank. It may play a role of communicating to the teacher on what has been learnt as better through continuous assessment tests, teachers may know areas which were well understood and those that still need revision. Additionally, ranking lays a focusing foundation as teachers are geared to teach towards examination and among other aspects of education. Ranking also motivates teachers to change institutional practices as well as provide feedback on effectiveness of teaching and learning as a general and also students' achievement.

There is a significant relationship between syllabus coverage and interschool competition. This indicates that syllabus coverage and interschool competition goes hand in hand and depends on each other. There is also significant relationship between teaching/instructional practices and examination preparation in that the two factors are dependent on each other. Ranking can provide a systematic and intervention system to improve learner achievement.

In as much as ranking may create a competitive environment among the learners and schools thus posting positive results, ranking may have negative impacts on the learners as well as the stakeholders leading to deterioration of results. For instance, ranking may encourage unhealthy competition among departments. This kind of competition arises among different categories of schools like the national schools, extra county schools, county school and sub-county schools. Every department would want to emerge the best in terms of performance which may lead to conspiracy by the teachers to using whichever available means for their subjects to be the best.

Such practices further lead to the desire to have the school emerge victorious either at the national or county level. Students and teachers may engage in orthodox methods of achieving better results in order to achieve better rank than other schools. Ranking results in narrowing of school's curriculum where school's personnel tend to oppose policies linking assessment to accountability on the grounds of perverse effects including narrowing the curriculum.

The entire idea of whether to rank or not to rank schools rests on the underlying perceptions of the stakeholders. For example, ranking can destroy morale of non-performing students as they get demoralized and feel inferior compared to their colleagues. The ultimate effect may be under enrollment in schools as school's admiration would try to get only the top performers leaving out those who underperformed. Consequently the spill overs arising from the process may result in poor performance as a result of poor administration and leadership practices.

There may however be no effect on teacher's self-esteem based on ranking if the teachers are to conduct themselves based on the code of conduct as defined by their guiding principles. There is however significant association between ranking influence on parents as they end up buying extra teaching and learning materials. Ranking influences parents because they end up finding ways to motivate performance of their children which can be through purchase of extra teaching and learning materials. Ranking may have also negative effects such as little or no parental involvement in school academic programs as well as decline in parental check on progress of their children in school. It can therefore be concluded that there is consequent relationship between students' level of performance and ranking concern leading to general decline on results.

5.4 Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations can be adopted:

1. The decision of abolishing of ranking by government should be reverted as from the findings there is enough evidence that it has a great impact on students' and teachers' performance. Teachers will be able to complete their syllabus in time, provide a good competition among schools of the same category which can result in betterment of results.
2. On malpractices that may arise from ranking, government should enact strict measures to curb the vice. Teachers should also be educated on their roles and duties to make them avoid exerting pressure to students to perform better and should not only think of examination passage but also to remember on impacting knowledge to students.
3. Ranking should also be done continuously as parents may get to know progress of their children at school as well as to know specific areas in which they need to focus in provision of academic and moral support such as support for homework. Parents should also be educated on ranking so that they will not punish their children in case they get lower ranks but provide them with necessary support.
4. Schools should provide psychological support to all students especially underperforming ones. This will enable reduce the negative perception of ranking on performance from students as well as boost their morale. Teachers should also work hard in their teachings irrespective of presence or absence of ranking to improve performance as well provides better administrative and leadership practices. Schools should also seek better methods of improving

students' performance but not to punish them or discontinue others to suit their ambitions as this may result in under enrollment in schools.

5. Ministry of Education should provide resource and moral support to schools irrespective of ranking positions or its presence or absence and treat schools equally.
6. The government should explore on other technological advancements that can be used to monitor examination malpractices in schools such as introduction of cctv cameras on examination blocks. Other ways could be the already introduced change in the curriculum whereby students are examined using various activities and continuous study that provided room for career progression.
7. In order to have a fair ground for all the students, it is recommended that the government improves on schools infrastructural development as well as proper consideration of the trained teaches posted to a school in relation to the students' enrolment. It is important that schools have a fair set up where access of information and learning materials is at ease.

5.5. Suggestion of Further Area of Study

This study focused on the stakeholders' perception on ranking of schools in relation to performance. There are therefore several areas that should be researched on by other scholars which are not exhausted. It is suggested that the following areas can be researched further;

- The influence of ranking on students' choices of courses in universities and colleges

- The possible influences of ranking on universities and colleges intake of students
- The possible ways to make ranking effective in schools without leading to examination malpractices
- The effects of ranking on academic performance of Kenyan schools

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Students

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess stakeholders' perception towards ranking of students and schools in national examination in secondary schools in Kenya. The questionnaire herein is intended to collect reliable and valid information from you, which will only be used for research purpose. Confidentiality of information collected is highly guaranteed.

Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Joyline Limangura

Instructions: Tick and/or provide answers where necessary.

Please tick or provide appropriate information where necessary.

1. Which class or form are you in?

2. What is your recent level of performance?

a) A ()

b) B ()

c) C ()

d) D ()

3. Ranking affects student's commitment to academic performance. Indicate your level of agreement in relation to the above statement.

STATEMENT	SD	D	N	A	SA
Ranking affects students preparation in examinations					
Students become less concerned about performance when ranking is abolished					
Students attitude of performance has been hampered by ranking					
Ranking encourages students hard work towards better placement of their school					
Ranking leads to negative perception especially on performance					
Ranking destroys students morale, do not take into consideration students entry behavior					
Ranking made students abandon low ranked schools for top ranked ones leading to under enrolment in those schools					
Lack of ranking leads to poor performance as a result of poor administration and leadership practices					
Ranking do not provide a systematic and intervention system to improve learner achievement					

4. How often should schools get ranked in academic performance in one year in within county
- a) Often ()
 - b) Very often ()
 - c) Not often ()
 - d) Not very often ()
5. Does ranking influence your parents' commitment to supporting school academic activities or programmes?

<u>STATEMENT</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
Commitment to buy extra teaching and learning materials					
lack of ranking influences parental support for homework					
Absence of ranking impacts negatively on parental involvement on schools academic programmes.					

Appendix 2: Questionnaires for Teachers.

The purpose of this interview guide is to assess stakeholders' perception towards ranking of students and schools in national examination in secondary schools in Kenya. The questionnaire herein is intended to collect reliable and valid information from you, which will only be used for research purpose. Confidentiality of information collected is highly guaranteed.

Thank you in advance.

Joyline Limangura

Section A: General information

1. What is your academic qualification?

a) Diploma ()

b) Degree ()

c) Masters ()

d) PhD ()

2. Which category of school do you teach?

a) National school ()

b) Extra county school ()

c) County school ()

d) Sub-county school ()

e) District school ()

3. How many years have you been teaching?

a) 1-5 years ()

b) 6-10 years ()

c) 10-15 years ()

d) 16 years and above ()

Section B: specific information

i) Teachers' perception on ranking of schools in national examination?

Statement	SD	D	UN	A	SA
Ranking motivates teachers to cover syllabus					
Ranking among departments encourages competition					
Ranking enhances interschool competition					
Ranking creates unhealthy competition between different categories of schools					
Ranking encourages malpractices					
Teachers are geared in their teachings to the examination but not learning					
Ranking leads to concentration of examinations and ignore dimensions.					
Ranking results to narrowing of curriculum					
Ranking serves as a motivation to students performance					
Ranking provides feedback to the teacher on the effectiveness of teaching and student achievement					
Ranking communicates to the teacher what					

has been learnt					
Ranking motivates teachers to change instructional practices					
Ranking has no effect on teachers self-esteem because they regard their role in school as a duty					

Key: *SD- strongly disagree, D- disagree, N- not decided, A- agree, SA- strongly agree*

ii) What is your general view of ranking?

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iii) Influence of ranking on parents commitment to student academic performance.

STATEMENT	SD	D	N	A	SA
Commitment to buy extra teaching and learning materials					
Lack of ranking influences parental support for homework					
Absence of ranking impacts negatively on parental involvement on schools, academic programmes					
Ranking enables parents to know well performing schools and poor performing schools in Kenya					

Schools ranked best, attract students of high levels of ability while those perceived to be doing badly will be left with lower achieving students.					
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iv) How often do schools get ranked in academic performance within the county?

- a) Often ()
- b) Very often ()
- c) Not often ()
- d) Not very often ()

v) Identify challenges faced when ranking secondary schools in examination?

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vi) In your own opinion what is the attitude of your students towards school ranking?

- a) Very positive ()
- b) Positive ()
- c) Negative ()
- d) Very negative ()

vii) In your own opinion, how does school ranking influence Ministry of Education and its officers at county level?

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Appendix 3: Interview Schedules for School Principals and County Education

Officers.

The purpose of this interview guide is to solicit in depth information on stakeholders' perception towards ranking of students and schools in national examination in secondary schools in Kenya. The inter views herein is intended to collect reliable and valid information from you, which will only be used for research purpose. Confidentiality of information collected is highly guaranteed.

Thank you in advance.

Joyline Limangura

1. What is your general view on ranking of schools?
2. Give your views on ranking to students' academic performance?
3. What effects does ranking have on parental commitment to students' academic performance?
4. In your own view, how does ranking affect performance?
5. Provide an explanation on how ranking affects ministry of education?
6. In your own opinion, explain how ranking of schools impacts on teachers' performance?
7. Please explain on continued ranking of schools.

Appendix 4: Map of Area of Study