

X/A1

**FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN BIOLOGY IN
KENYA. A CASE OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN UASIN-GISHU
WEST DISTRICT.**

THE MARGARET THATCHER
MOI UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

29 JUN 2012
P. O. BOX 3900
ELDORET
MOI UNIVERSITY

BY

SAMIKWO C. DINAH
This book is donated to
UNIVERSITY
by
MOI UNIVERSITY

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN SCIENCE EDUCATION
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA (CIEM)**

MOI UNIVERSITY

JUNE, 2012

MOI UNIVERSITY
20096394

ABSTRACT

Students' performance in Biology at the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education has been unsatisfactory over many years. Biology is the study of life. It enables one to understand himself/herself and the surrounding environment. The knowledge acquired in Biology is applied in many fields such as medicine, pharmacy, nursing, dentistry and agriculture. Various reasons have been put forward by scholars to explain the cause of the poor performance. Students on the other hand have their reasons for the cause of the poor performance, hence the purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influence academic performance in Biology.

The objectives for this study were firstly, to find out the attitudes of students towards Biology and how it influences their performance in Biology. Secondly, to find out the extent to which availability and use of teaching/learning resources influences performance in Biology. Thirdly, to identify the students' aspirations with respect to the study of Biology-based careers and how these influences performance in Biology, and fourthly, to identify student's school life characteristics and how it influences performance in Biology.

A descriptive survey design was used. Data was collected by use of questionnaires, observation checklists, interviews and document analysis. The sample for the study comprised 215 students drawn from 15 secondary schools in Uasin Gishu West district. The study respondents comprised from three students. Stratified random sampling was used to categorize schools into provincial, district and private. Simple random sampling was then used to select 15 schools from the 51 secondary schools in the district. At school level, the researcher applied simple random sampling technique to select 215 students who filled the questionnaires.

The data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics with the aid of SPSS computer programme. The data collected was coded, tabulated and represented using frequencies, tables and percentages.

The study findings showed that, students with positive attitude towards Biology subject register better performance in examinations. Availability and adequate use of teaching/learning resources in schools impacted positively on students' achievement in Biology examinations. Anticipated Biology-based careers contributed to good performance in Biology examinations and finally that schools which had good attributes such as established excellence trends scored highly in Biology examinations.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that: schools should motivate students so as to build on positive attitude towards sciences, career guidance and counseling heads of departments should advice students on career choices, schools without a science laboratory, that is, teaching/learning resources should not be registered by the Ministry of Education and schools should strive to build on good image.

It is hoped that these recommendations will be useful to policy makers, Biology teachers, Ministry of Education officials and curriculum developers.