

**ANALYSIS OF STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS AND SCHOOL PREDICTORS ON
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY
EDUCATION EXAMINATION IN BUSIA COUNTY, KENYA**

Manasi Echaune

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ABSTRACT

Students' academic achievement in secondary school examination is critical in preparing students for further education and the world of work. This is the very reason unsatisfactory academic achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination that has been witnessed in Busia County over the last three years should be a cause worry to the stakeholders in education. This study analyzed the student characteristics and school predictors on academic achievement in KCSE examination in Busia County. The specific objectives of the study were; to establish whether student characteristics influence students' academic achievement in KCSE in Busia County, to determine the effect of school characteristics on academic achievement in KCSE examination in Busia County, to investigate the effect of teacher inputs on academic achievement in KCSE examination in Busia County and to examine the effect of non-teacher school inputs on academic achievement in KCSE examination in Busia County. The study employed the production function theory. A descriptive survey design was employed. The study targeted 152 principals, 2360 teachers and 7550 students. A sample of 100 secondary schools and 1091 respondents was used. The respondents comprised of 100 principals, 236 teachers and 755 students. The study employed simple random sampling to select teachers and students. Purposive sampling was used to select principals while stratified random sampling was used to select schools. Self administered questionnaires and document analysis guide were used to collect data. Questionnaires were piloted in fifteen secondary schools within Busia County and the schools used to pilot the instruments were not included in the actual study. Test re-test technique was used to ascertain reliability of the questionnaires. The test re-tests of the questionnaires used to collect data yielded reliability coefficients of 0.810 and 0.873 for the student and teacher questionnaire respectively. Experts in the Department of Educational Planning and Management were requested to ascertain both the face and content validity of the instruments. Data was analyzed using STATA version 14. Descriptive statistics including percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations were used in the preliminary analysis of data. Inferential statistics including t-tests, ANOVA, correlation and regression were used to test the study hypotheses. Hierarchical linear modeling was used to test the relationship between academic achievement in KCSE examination, school predictors and students characteristics. The findings of the study were presented in tables and figures. The study revealed that school predictors accounted for the largest variation in academic achievement in KCSE examination (56.86 percent) compared to student characteristics which accounted for 43.13 percent of the variation in academic achievement in the same examination. School characteristic and teacher inputs had no statistically significant effects on academic achievement in KCSE examination. Non teacher school inputs particularly adequacy of physical facilities and textbooks had statistically significant effects on academic achievement in KCSE examination. The study concluded that variation in students academic achievement in KCSE had more to do with school predictors than students' characteristics. National government, County government, educational planners, principals and School Boards of Management will find the findings of the study useful in planning for education and improvement of academic achievement in KCSE examination. The study recommended that the focus should be on the school predictors such as physical facilities and text books which accounted for a larger variation in academic achievement in KCSE examination.