

The main objective of this study was to establish the factors which contribute to poor performance in KCSE examinations in secondary schools in Makuyu Division, Maragua District.

The interest for the researcher to choose and study these secondary schools was strongly prompted by their continued poor performance in KCSE examinations.

The study used questionnaires and schedule interview schedule in seven secondary schools out of sixteen secondary schools in Makuyu Division.

These seven secondary schools were:-

- a) Kaharati Secondary
- b) Sabasaba Secondary
- c) Igikiro Secondary
- d) Thaara Secondary
- e) Maganjo Secondary
- f) Makuyu Girl's Secondary
- g) Maragwa Secondary

From these identified schools, seven principals, fifty teachers and sixty eight students who were candidates in 2005 KCSE examinations participated in the study.

The obtained data were then used to establish whether relationships existed between the dependent variables of students poor performance in KCSE examinations and the selected independent variables. Results were presented in percentages, tables and frequency distributions.

Based on the analyses, the students performance in KCSE examination was attributed to:-

- a) School administration
- b) Educational resources and facilities
- c) Guidance from parents
- d) Students home environment

The findings of this study established that most of the schools lacked teaching resources and facilities, ineffective administration, students' home environment and lack of parental guidance.

It was also established that the principals in the sampled schools were not experienced administrators. At the same time, the study found that most of the parents do not advise their children on how to go about their studies in the schools. Most of the parents do not attend PTA meetings.

Recommendations from the respondents were that:-

- a) Non performing principals should be demoted
- b) Principals to be taken for refresher courses
- c) Schools without teaching resources should be closed
- d) Teachers to be using teaching resources as much as possible when they are tackling their subjects

e) Teachers should prepare lesson plans before they go to class.

The study concluded that unless proper mechanism was put in place to avert this scenario, the situation may continue worsen