

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influence pupils' overall performance in KCPE science paper in Bondo division, Nyanza province.

The study had two major limitations, which were that the study was confined to one division in Bondo district and as such findings cannot be generalised to represent the whole district, province or nation. And also the time allowed for the research could not allow a very comprehensive and detailed study of all the possible factors to be carried out.

The respondents in the study consisted of 24 science teachers, 12 head teachers, 12 committee chairpersons, 2 science teachers from 12 primary schools. Also included were the 3 TAC tutors, the 3 zonal inspectors of schools, the assistant education officer, the district education officer and the district inspector of schools.

The 12 schools were chosen by purposive sampling whereby 4 schools from each of the 3 zones were taken. The 4 schools consisted of the best two schools in the zone and the last two schools in the zone. The 2 upper primary science teachers were randomly selected from each school. Three research instruments were used for data collection. These were the questionnaire, the interview and systematic observation. Three questionnaires were used such that there was one questionnaire for science teachers, one for the head teachers and one for the school committee chairperson. The interviews were for all the education officers listed above and the systematic observation was carried out in each of the study schools.

The data was collected and analysed by use of descriptive statistics. The information was grouped in tables form and frequencies of the responses determined, after which percentages were worked out.

The findings of the study were as stated in the following points:

- The teachers in the division mainly use the theoretical approach in teaching science.
- There is scarcity of resources for teaching science in the schools of the division.
- Lack of transportation means hampers the inspection frequency in that inspectors are not able to carry out concentrated inspection work.
- In-service work is lax such that not all teachers get a chance to attend the in-service courses.

Teacher absenteeism is relatively high such that the teacher to pupil contact hours are reduced. Workload of teachers is high because of the shortage of teachers and this affects the quality of their work.

The teachers in the division have suitable academic and professional qualifications. Parents are not sure of the role they should play to help teachers improve performance in science.