ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to identify the school-based factors influencing students’ academic performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations in public schools in Makadara district, Kenya. The objectives were: To establish the effects of provision of teaching and learning resources on students’ KCSE performance in Makadara district. To determine the influence of head teachers' supervision in teaching and learning processes on students performance at KCSE examination in Makadara district. To identify the effects of physical facilities, on the students’ performance at KCSE in Makadara district. To establish whether the availability of teachers has an effect on performance at KCSE examinations. To identify the effects of teachers work load on the performance at KCSE examinations in Makadara district. The literature review comprised of information under the following sub-titles; provision of teaching and learning resources by the head teachers and school performance, supervision of teaching and learning processes and school performance, head teachers’ provision of physical facilities and school performance, availability of teachers and school performance, teachers workload and the school performance. It presented information about theoretical framework and conceptual framework of the study.

The study employed ex-post facto design. The sample size consisted of a total of 311 respondents in 8 public secondary schools: 8 head teachers, 53 Form Four subject teachers and 250 Form Four students. Data were collected using three sets of questionnaires, that is, the head teachers, Form Four subject teachers and Form Four students. The instruments were piloted and tested for validity and reliability. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the data analysis.

Findings of the study revealed that the school –based factors which affected performance were inadequate instructional materials and other related resources such reference books and guides for teachers. Some of the schools in the district did not have adequate teachers. Cases of teachers being transferred from the schools without replacement led to inadequate teachers which affected teaching and learning and ultimately affecting performance. Teachers gave assignments often but were not able to mark the assignments due to much work load and many classes to teach. The study revealed that most of the schools had inadequate physical facilities like the libraries, laboratories, classrooms and dormitories.

Based on the findings, the study made recommendations to arrest the school based factors which affect performance. The recommendations were as follows: The government should provide teachers to schools so that the teaching load could be minimized hence enabling teachers to perform effectively. School should be provided with learning resources by the government and parents to facilitate learning hence improves the academic performance thus the government and parents could assist in the provision of the required resources. Teachers should be provided with the opportunities for more exposure through in service programs. This would encourage professional growth of the teacher which quit significant in KCSE performance. The head teachers should be on the frontline in supervising their teachers then teaching-learning processes and making necessary interventions as far as academic performance is concerned. This could make teachers more effective in teaching.
The study also made suggestions for further research. All these suggestions were geared towards improving the academic performance of public secondary schools in Makadara district. These suggestions included among others that the researchers school conduct a study on other factors that may influence performance in KCSE other than school-based factors. A similar study should also be conducted covering the entire Nairobi province for concrete analysis. Finally, a study focusing on private secondary schools performance should also be conducted.