SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AFFECTING COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: CASE OF MVOMERO DISTRICT, TANZANIA

BY

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE. MOROGORO, TANZANIA.

2011

ABSTRACT

There is no doubt that education has an enormous potential to deliver people out of poverty, bridge the inequality gap and accelerate socio-economic growth and development. Community secondary schools currently are important to ensure universal access of secondary education and improve education quality. Efforts have been made to improve the condition in the community secondary schools and poor academic performance. Efforts included increasing teachers' employment but there are many issues that hinder the effectiveness including socio-cultural factors. The overall objective of this study was to determine socio-cultural factors affecting community secondary school students' academic performance in Mvomero district. The study adopted a cross sectional design. The study involved 110 respondents; these are 100 students and 10 key informants. Respondents were obtained through random sampling technique. Data were collected through the structured questionnaire administered to students, Checklist administered to key informants, that is, parents/guardians of students; teachers and people who lived nearby the community schools. Focus group discussions (FGD's) were also used during the study to complement information. Findings were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 16.0 software programme and STATA data analysis software followed by interpretation of results. Study findings illustrated that socio-cultural factors such as family size; family members capable of working; education of the parents; parents' occupations; distance to and from school and students' time spent on doing domestic chores affected students' academic performance. Study findings revealed that there were poor parents involvement in the academic issues related to their children. Moreover, study findings showed that students' behaviours

related to their studies affected their academic performance. The study recommends that there is a need for the education policy makers, planners, officers and other education stakeholders to carry out continuous assessment of learning environments, processes and outcomes and make necessary innovations.

DECLARATION

I, **Flora Komunte**, do hereby declare to the senate of Sokoine University of Agriculture that this dissertation is my own original work and has not been submitted or concurrently being submitted for a higher degree award in any other university.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Among the most difficult words to write, are those that express the depth of my gratitude to the many dedicated people whose efforts have made this work possible. Since it is impossible to mention them all, it is inevitable to mention a few and I wholeheartedly thank them all.

First, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Joyce Lyimo-Macha whose encouragement, patience, guidance and advice enabled this study to reach its present form. Her suggestions, criticisms and discussions greatly directed this work.

Second, I wish to thank the Belgium Technical Cooperation (BTC) who provided me with a scholarship which covered second year costs including research.

Third, my gratitude should go to the Mvomero district officials for giving me the permission to conduct a research in the district, special thanks should go to headmasters of the four community secondary schools: Mongola, Kipera, Mvomero, and Lusanga who allowed me to conduct discussions with their students. Special thanks should also go to officials at District Education Office who kindly gave me information regarding this study.

Fourth, I send a special note of appreciation to students; parents/guardians of the students and teachers who willingly provided me with the information related to this study, their contribution is valued.

Fifth, I specifically send my special thanks to Dr. K. A. Kayunze of Development Studies Institute for his advice during development of research proposal.

Sixth, I am especially grateful to my fellow MARD 2009/2011 students for their support throughout the coursework and research. Special thanks should go to Saverina Byorushengo, Petronella Msechu, Batholomeus M. Rweyemamu, Walter Msigwa, Benjamin Nyamanyi and Ephrahim Rwamatunguru, for their heartiest and optimistic sentiments.

Last but not least I am grateful to my parents who sponsored my studies in the first year and my young sisters and brothers who encouraged me throughout the study.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents Mr. A. M. Komunte and Mrs. B. S. Komunte to whom I am much indebted for the profound foundation they laid for what I am. May the Omnipotent God bless them abundantly.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....ii

DECLARATION iv

COPYRIGHT.....v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....vi

DEDICATION.....viii

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....ix

LIST OF TABLES.....xii

LIST OF FIGURES.....xiii

LIST OF APPENDICES.....xv

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....xvi

CHAPTER ONE.....1

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....1

1.1 Background Information.....1

1.2 Problem Statement.....3

1.3 Justification 4

1. 4 Objectives of the Study.....5

1.4.1 General objective 5

1.4.2 Specific objectives.....5

1.5 Hypotheses.....6

1.5.1 Alternative hypothesis.....6

1.5.2 Null hypothesis.....6

1.6 Conceptual Framework.....6

1.7 Limitation of the Study.....7

1.7.1 Delimitation of the study....8
CHAPTER TWO....9
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW 9
2.1 Definition of Terms 9
(a) Education....9
(b) Secondary school education....9
(c) Community schools....10
(d)Academic performance....10
2.2 Secondary Education Delivery in Tanzania....11
2.2.1 Structure of secondary education in Tanzania....12
2.2.2 Major objectives of secondary education in Tanzania....13
2.2.3 Challenges facing Tanzania's secondary education system 13
2.3 Status of Education and Academic Performance of Secondary Schools in Tanzania....15
2.3.1 Status of academic performance of community secondary schools in Mvomero district 18
2.4 Social Factors that Affect Students' Performance 18
2.5 Cultural Factors Affecting Students Performance 20
2.6 Personal Factors that Affect Students' Academic Performance....21
2.7 Other Factors....22
2.8 Academic Performance in Relation to Sex....22
CHAPTER THREE....24
3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 24
3.1 Description of the Study Area....24

3.1.1 Location of Mvomero district.....24

3.1.2 Population and economic activities.....26

3.1.3 Social Services 26

3.2 Research Design 27

3.3 Sampling Procedures.....27

3.3.1 Population 27

3.3.2 Sampling unit and sample size.....27

3.3.3 Sampling Technique.....28

3.4 Data Collection 28

3.4.1 Primary data collection.....29

3.4.2 Secondary data collection 29

3.5 Data processing and Analysis 30

CHAPTER FOUR.....32

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....32

4.1 Background Characteristics of the Respondents.....32

4.1.1 Sex.....32

4.1.2 Age.....32

4.1.3 Residences.....33

4.1.4 Parents' education.....33

4.1.5 Parents' Occupation.....34

4.2 Socio-cultural Factors.....35

4.2.1 Household size.....35

4.2.2 Household members capable of working.....36

4.2.3 Distance to and from school 37

4.2.4 Time spent on household domestic chores.....38

4.2.5 Time spent on private studies.....39

4.2.6 Cultural factors that affects academic performance.....41

4.3 Students' Behaviours that Affect their Academic Performance.....41

4.3.1 Misuse of time.....42

4.3.2 Time utilized by students to do assignments.....42

4.3.3 Time utilized by students to chat with friends and relatives.....43

4.4 Students' Attitude that Affects their Academic Performance.....44

4.5 Comparison of Academic Performance of Students who live in rent Houses and those who live with their Parents.....47

4.5.1 Conditions of the rented rooms.....47

4.5.2 Students' academic performance 48

CHAPTER FIVE.....50

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....50

5.1 Conclusion.....50

5.2 Recommendations.....51

5.3 Suggestions for further research.....53

REFERENCES.....54

APPENDICES.....59

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Performance of girls vs. boys at CSEE.....17

Table 2: Distribution of students by background characteristics (n=100).....35

Table 3: Distribution of Students by household size and places students conduct private studies 36

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by number of people capable of working (n=74).....37

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by distance in kilometres from home to school and mode of transport (n=100).....37

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by sex on activities performed after school hours.....38

Table 7: Distribution of respondents by time spent on household chores after school hours.....39

Table 8: Distribution of respondents by type of private studies (n=100) 40

Table 9: Students' behaviour and academic performance (n=100) 44

Table 10: Students' attitude and academic performance (n=100).....46

Table 11: Distribution of community secondary school terminal and annual examinations results by average scores (n = 100).....49

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the research.....7

Figure 2: Mvomero district map showing selected community secondary 25

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Results of the regression analysis of the variables.....59

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Students 60

Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussion Guide for Students.....64

Appendix 4: Checklist for key informants 65

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BTC	Belgium Technical Cooperation
CSEE	Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
MARD	Masters of Arts in Rural Development
MDG's	Millennium Development Goals
NGO's	Non Governmental Organizations
NSGRP	National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty
PEDP	Primary Education Development Plan
SEDP	Secondary Education Development Plan
SNAL	Sokoine National Agriculture Library
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TDV	Tanzania Development Vision
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Community schools are currently an important part of the educational landscape in Sub-Saharan Africa and are frequently held up as successful educational interventions in developing countries trying to reach universal access to secondary education and improve education quality. Despite the fact that community education has long been a practice in many countries, the idea of alternative education as a development strategy is relatively new and is often seen as a response to failing public education systems (Graundvaux and Yoder, 2002).

In Tanzania, community secondary schools were introduced as a solution towards increased number of population in the country, primary school children inclusive. Formally, the need to have community secondary schools resulted from Primary Education Development Plan 2002-2006 (PEDP) which encouraged school aged children to be enrolled. The Secondary Education Development Plan of 2004 – 2009 (SEDP) describes that the pressure for expansion of secondary intake is likely to mount quickly as the number of primary school graduates is projected to increase by 61 percent starting in 2007 as a result of PEDP (URT, 2004a). Enrolment in Form 1, the first year of secondary education, increased from 99,744 in 2003 to 243,359 in 2006 (Arvidson and Nordstrom, 2006).

Therefore with increased number of children completing primary education, the need for secondary education emerged as the pupils completing primary education are supposed to join secondary education. To cope with the situation Tanzania

government through the Secondary Education Development Plan of 2004 – 2009 (SEDP I) call for each ward to build a secondary school on which the government will provide teachers (URT, 2004a). The rapid expansion of secondary enrolment has resulted in teacher shortages, and the average student-teacher ratio has risen to 43:1, leading to average class sizes of over 70. Expansion is expected to continue, although at a slower pace, as enrolment continues to increase. The available teachers are unevenly distributed, with the greatest shortages in remote rural schools serving some of the poorest populations. There is a specific shortage of science teachers, and while mathematics and science account for 46% of the curriculum, only 28% of teachers are qualified in these subjects (URT, 2004a).

Secondary education is important as it occupies a strategic place in the education and employment systems. It feeds the tertiary and higher education levels with its graduates. Horizontally, most workers in the formal and informal sectors of the economy are likely to remain secondary school leavers for a long time to come and the expansion of the modern sector depends, to a great extent, on the supply of suitably educated and trained secondary school students (URT, 2004b).

Even though goals of community secondary schools are good, still community secondary schools are faced with challenges as Graundvaux and Yoder (2002) stipulate that the challenges are: poor student performance, poor teacher qualifications, lack of recognition for unofficial teacher training, poor quality of education, lack of support and supervision for teachers, inadequate number of teachers, failure to reach gender equity goals and lack of community financing.

Determinants of students' performance have been the subject of ongoing debate among educators, academicians and policy makers. There have been many studies that sought to examine this issue such as Chediel *et al.,* 2000; Osaki, 2004; Sumra and Rajani, 2006. The findings of these studies point out to hard work and discipline, previous schooling, parents' education, family income and self motivation as factors that can explain differences in students' grades. For example, Siegfried and Fels (2005) conclude that the student's ability is the most important determinant of his/her learning.

The level of examination performance in Tanzania is extremely low, even though the curriculum and teaching is focused towards this goal. The percentage of students passing form four examinations (Division 1-3) has declined sharply from 35% in 2006 and 2007 to under 27% in 2008 (URT, 2009).

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the effort made by government to improve the condition in community secondary schools, the condition in these schools is very poor. The efforts made are fruitless; it is indicated by the fact that there are a lot of complaints about community secondary schools poor academic performance. For instance, the National Examination Council of Tanzania Form Four 2009 examination failure rate showed that Community secondary schools ranked higher (54.79%) followed by Non-governmental schools (18.03%); Government schools and Seminaries came the least (17.84%) and (10.70%) respectively (URT, 2010b). The reasons of failure of the community secondary schools academic performance are much explained by

factors such as students still walk long distances to school; community schools lack enough teachers; due to few buildings there is congestion in the classrooms, there are no facilities such as books, libraries and laboratories. All the efforts made by the government are mostly targeted at infrastructure, facilities and personnel, ignoring the socio-cultural factors. As a result even in the community secondary schools where the facilities are available students' performance is poor. Therefore, the gap that this research is going to fill in is socio-cultural factors affecting community secondary school students' performance, apart from known academic factors.

1.3 Justification

So far no research has been conducted on the socio-cultural factors affecting community school students' performance in Mvomero District. Due to this fact there are gaps in information about the factors which contribute to poor academic performance of community secondary school students in the district. Therefore, this research is important in order to generate empirical information on the socio-cultural factors which affect secondary school students' performance. To the academicians and policy makers this study, therefore can give empirical information which can help design strategies to reduce poor performance of students in these secondary schools. The findings may also provide a basis for suggesting some specific changes in the education programmes targeted at the community schools as well as improvement of relevant public policies.

This study is also in line with Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of which Goal Number 3 target 4 emphasizes on elimination of gender disparity in Primary

and Secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels of education not later than 2015 also Tanzania Development Vision (TDV) 2025 which highlights, Tanzania envisages to be a nation whose people are ingrained with a developmental mindset and competitive spirit also be a nation with high quality of education at all levels; a nation which produces the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge to solve the society's problems, meet the challenges of development and attain competitiveness at regional and global levels.

The study is also in line with National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) Cluster II section of improvement of quality of life and social wellbeing on which goal number one emphasizes on equitable access to quality Primary and Secondary education for boys and girls.

1. 4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General objective

The general objective of the study was to determine socio-cultural factors affecting community secondary school students' academic performance in Mvomero district.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

Specific objectives of this study were to:

(i) Examine socio-cultural factors that affect students' academic performance

(ii) Compare academic performance of students who live in hostels with those who live with their parents/guardians.

(iii) Identify behaviour and attitude that affect their academic performance.

1.5 Hypotheses

Based on the problem and specific objectives of this study, the following hypotheses were tested.

1.5.1 Alternative hypothesis

Socio-cultural factors affect students' scores in community secondary schools.

1.5.2 Null hypothesis

Socio-cultural factors do not affect students' scores in community secondary schools.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

Research conceptual framework leads towards realistic information to be collected. Fig.1 provides the variables which the study assumed to influence academic performance of students and therefore the study investigated their relationship. It shows the set of background information: age, sex, residence, parents' occupation and education of parents. Independent variables were family size; family members capable of working; distance from home to school, time spent on household domestic chores, time spent on individual studies, time spent on chatting with friends and relatives, traditional factors, students' behaviours and attitudes. These variables were considered as socio-cultural factors which influenced the dependent variable, that is, students' academic performance which have been measured using students' average scores obtained from terminal and annual examinations.

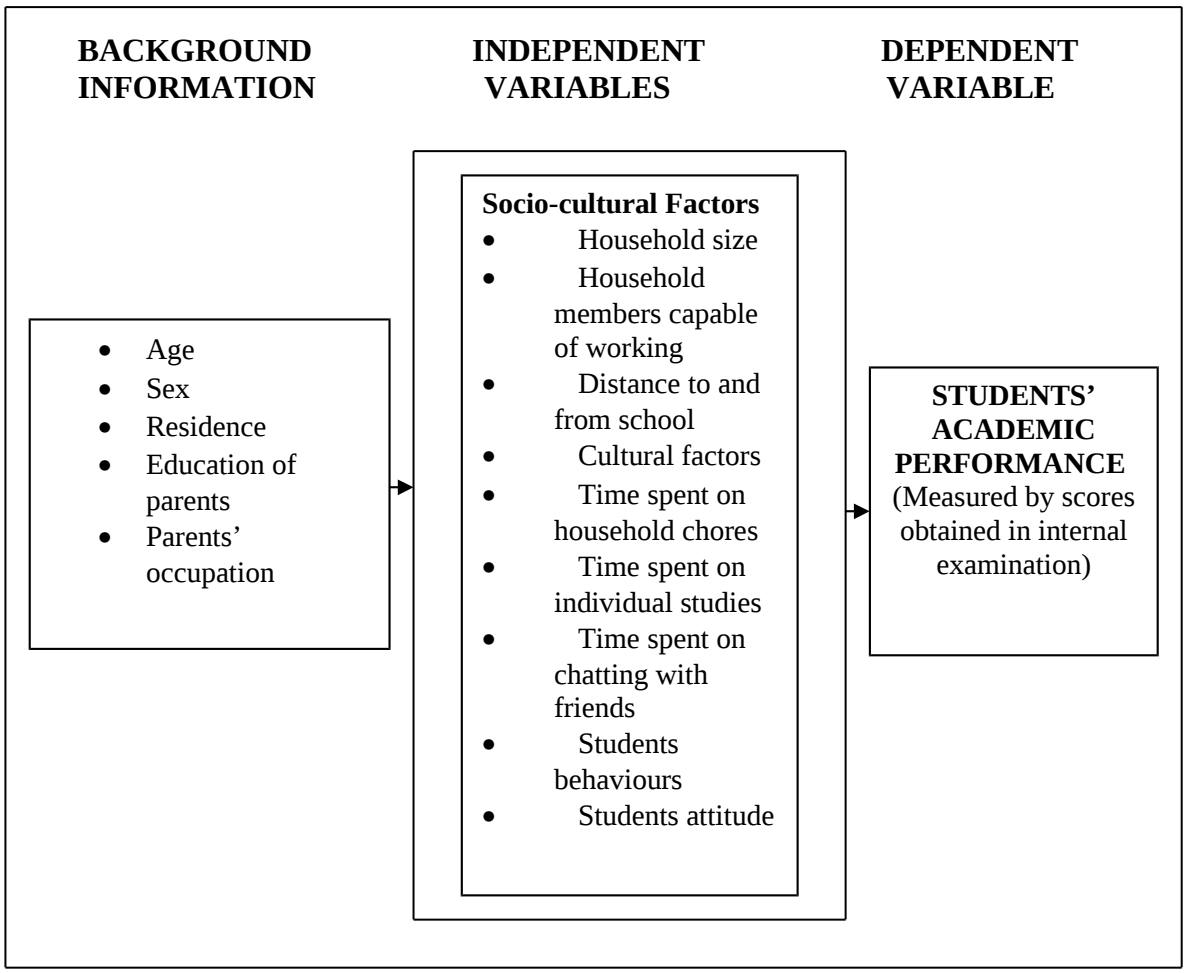

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the research

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This study was conducted in four sampled community secondary schools. The selection of only 4 community secondary schools out of 21 in the district may have limited detailed investigation of some important issues related to the study. The study main data collecting tools were questionnaire and interview which have limitations such as they consume a lot of time and questions are constructed with the interest of the researcher, in this case data outside the cited boundaries were not considered although they might have been of great importance. The use of questionnaire might have caused the respondents to be suspicious and give false

information, thus Focus Group Discussions were conducted to verify information obtained from questionnaires. The checklist was designed purposely for parents and other people who lived around schools and houses where students were accommodated as key informants. Most of these key informants were reluctant in giving information thinking they were giving information which is very critical to be given by them.

1.7.1 Delimitation of the study

This study was delimited to only 4 community secondary schools each are located among 4 wards out of 21 community secondary school found in 21 wards of Mvomero district. The schools under the study were randomly selected. Therefore data obtained from this study cannot be generalized as they are derived from limited number of schools in the district and not the whole country.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of Terms

(a) Education

According to McDonald (2007) education is defined in two senses, that is, in its widest sense and restricted sense. In its widest sense, education is considered to be aggregate of all those experiences that enlighten the mind, increase knowledge, foster insights, develop abilities and attitudes, and strengthen the will. In its restricted sense, education is the systematic acquisition of knowledge through recognized agencies and controlled environment particularly that of the school, from elementary, primary, secondary, to higher education level, in order to attain social competence and optimum personal development.

(b) Secondary school education

In most contemporary educational systems of the world, secondary education comprises the formal education that occurs during adolescence. It is characterized by transition from the typically compulsory, comprehensive primary education for minors, to the optional, selective tertiary, post-secondary, or higher education. Depending on the system, schools for this period, or a part of it, may be called secondary or high schools. The exact boundary between primary and secondary education also varies from country to country and even within them, but is generally around the seventh to the tenth year of schooling. Secondary education occurs mainly during the teenage years (Wikipedia, 2011).

(c) Community schools

Community schools are schools built by the community and run by the government URT (2010b). A community school is a public school that acts as the hub of its community by engaging community resources to offer a range of on-site programs and services that support the success of students and their families.

(d)Academic performance

Robbins (1991) defines performance as a level at which a person or animal accomplishes a particular task. It is a measure of level of achievement for the given duties and responsibilities. For example, students who exert a great deal of effort in preparing for a test or examination and make poor grades are said to have low performance. Academic performance results provide a framework for talking about how students fare in school, and a constant standard to which all students are held. Academic performance results also allow students to be ranked and sorted on a scale that is numerically obvious, minimizing complaints by holding teachers and schools accountable for the components of each and every grade (Sutherland-Addy, 2005).

(e) Social

According to Oxford (1984) social is concerning the organization of and relations between people and communities. It is derived from society which is an extended social group having a distinctive cultural and economic organization.

(f) Cultural

Oxford (1984) defines cultural as something involving culture: culture differences and activities, where culture refers to sum total ways of life include all the knowledge and values shared by a society.

(g) Socio-cultural

Involve the combination of both social and cultural aspects. The word socio-cultural is clearly explained by Socio-cultural theory which looks at the important contributions that society makes to individual development. This theory stresses the interaction between developing people and the culture in which they live. Socio-cultural theory grew from the work of seminal psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who believed that parents, caregivers, peers and the culture at large were responsible for the development of higher order functions (Kendra, 2011).

2.2 Secondary Education Delivery in Tanzania

Education in the largest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense, education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, and values from one generation to another (Wikipedia, 2010).

Education encompasses teaching and learning of specific skills, and also something less tangible but more profound in the imparting of knowledge, positive judgment and well developed wisdom. The imparting of culture from generation to generation is one of the fundamental objectives of education. Education means to draw out, facilitating realizations of self-potential and latent talents of an individual. It is an

application of pedagogy, a body of theoretical and applied research relating to teaching and learning and draws on many disciplines (Wikipedia, 2010).

2.2.1 Structure of secondary education in Tanzania

Structure of Secondary Education in Tanzania consists of two tiers. The first cycle is Ordinary level (O-level) of four years post primary education. The cycle follows both a core or common national curriculum and specialized optional subjects at the end of which students sit for nationally set examinations. The second cycle is advanced level (A-level) which is two years post O-level. The cycle follows a national curriculum and examinations. It is divided between science and arts streams. It prepares students for tertiary and higher education as well as entry into the labour market.

In Tanzania by law, all secondary education must be taught in English (except Kiswahili class). For many students, English is their foreign language. Even though Kiswahili is the national language, there are approximately 120 tribal languages spoken in Tanzania. Specifically in rural areas, Kiswahili is normally the second language learned by children. This has made the secondary school teaching language quite controversial, with those in favour of English arguing that English is vital for preparing students to compete in a global economy, and those opposed arguing that teaching in English medium causes talented students to be left behind and distract from students concentrating on the subject matter.

2.2.2 Major objectives of secondary education in Tanzania

Tanzania's Ministry of Education and Vocational Training recognizes the following as the major secondary education objectives: to consolidate and broaden the scope of baseline ideas, knowledge, skills and principles acquired and developed at the primary education level; to enhance further development and appreciation of national unity, identity and ethic, personal integrity, respect for and readiness to work, human rights, cultural and moral values, customs, traditions and civic responsibilities and obligations; to promote the development of competency in linguistic ability and effective use of communication skills in Kiswahili and in at least one foreign language; to provide opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding in prescribed or selected fields of study; to prepare students for tertiary and higher education, vocational, technical and professional training; to inculcate a sense and ability for self-study, self-confidence and self- advancement in new frontiers of science and technology, academic and occupational knowledge, and skills also to prepare the student to join the world of work (URT, 2010c)

2.2.3 Challenges facing Tanzania's secondary education system

As in many developing nations, Tanzania's education system is faced with challenges resulting from a lack of proper funding. Most schools are overcrowded, often with more than 100 children per classroom. Textbooks and other teaching materials are scarce, often forcing 50 children to share one book. Secondary schools face significant deficiencies in science laboratories and materials, leaving science subjects to be taught theoretically rather than with a practical, hands-on lab

component. The government has set standards for textbooks, class size, bathrooms, and laboratories that most often cannot be met. Further, teachers are in high demand and shortages are common, but incentives for new graduates to become teachers remain low. Teachers' salaries are low, staff housing is largely non-existent, and the government is often late in offering pay cheques. Despite all these physical deficiencies, the public opinion of education as an important means of development remains high and has continued to grow over the years.

Community have significant responsibilities in "creating, constructing, financing, and managing the school, recruiting and paying teachers, and procuring school materials" of community secondary schools. They differ from government schools in their funding sources, governance, management structure, organization, and, often, curricula.

In other countries like Zambia, a community school is a "community-based, owned, and managed, learning institution that meets the basic education needs of pupils, who for a number of reasons cannot enter government schools" (Graundvaux-Miller and Karla, 2002). A committee of community representatives manages and organizes these schools, which can be locally or externally initiated. Community schools target orphans, underprivileged children, and girls. Community schools provide educational opportunities for underserved groups (rural poor, ethnic minorities, girls) at a sustainable cost. They are located within communities that don't have easy access to public schools. Management of the schools involves a partnership among private organizations, communities, and government. Teachers

are recruited, trained, and supported from the local area. Schools use a locally-relevant, child-centred curriculum and pedagogy while covering the basic knowledge and skills required by the formal education system, so that successful pupils can continue in government schools. Community schools often provide education where families have no alternative (Hartwell and Pittman, 1999).

Another view is that community schools are a way to implement educational decentralization. An alternative approach to educational administration and management has been to entrust management decisions downward in the hierarchy, often to community levels. This has been accompanied by governance reforms promoting the participation of stakeholders in educational management (Holsinger, 2000). Critics of community participation think that the limited resources should be used to increase the government's capacity to deliver quality education efficiently and effectively. Mobilizing the community to take over the provision of education only postpones the reform of state institutions. The counter argument is that governments may never have the resources to provide universal basic education and that community support must supplement state efforts, particularly for difficult-to-reach populations.

2.3 Status of Education and Academic Performance of Secondary Schools in Tanzania

The number of secondary schools has increased from 1,083 in 2003 to 2,289 in 2006 (Sumra and Rajani, 2006). In sum, Tanzania has experienced tremendous progress in education in the last five years. After decades of neglect, these efforts were sorely needed. However, the sector is still facing many challenges.

Increased primary enrolments create increased pressure at the secondary level. Expansion of secondary enrolment has been equally impressive, though far from reaching the levels attained in primary education. Enrolment in Form 1, the first year of secondary education, increased from 99 744 in 2003 to 243 359 in 2006 (Arvidson and Nordstrom, 2006). Increases in enrolments are matched by improvements in school infrastructure. New classrooms have been built and new schools constructed.

A total of 28 100 teachers have been recruited and posted to government schools between 2005 and 2008. Also places for teacher trainees have increased, both at degree and diploma level. Whereas there were 6 282 diploma teacher trainees in 2005, there were 14 088 such trainees in 2009. Similarly, there was an only one university training teachers in 2005 (The University of Dar es Salaam) the number increased to more than 10 public and private universities and colleges offering education courses by 2009. However, teacher production from these universities on year basis is still lower than the requirement. Another challenge is that many teacher-graduates do not report to rural schools when they are posted there (URT, 2010c)

The level of community schools examination performance in Tanzania is extremely low, even though the curriculum and teaching is focused towards this goal. Performance varies greatly between urban and rural districts. Taken as a whole a student in an urban areas is about twice as likely to pass the secondary education level examination (UNICEF, 2001) Furthermore, URT (2010b) report shows that the number of school centres has increased by 577 (29.96%) from 1926 of 2008 to 2503 of 2009. The number of mainland school centres has increased by 575 (32.18%)

from 1787 of 2008 to 2362 of 2009. The same report shows that division I-IV pass rate of school candidates in 2009 (72.51%) dropped by (7.17%) compared to that of 2008 (79.68%). Furthermore the report shows that pass rate (Div I-IV) is higher for seminaries (89.30%) followed by government schools (82.16%), non-government schools (81.97%) and then community schools comes the last (67.67%) while the failure rate shows community ranking higher (54.79%) followed by non-government schools (18.03%). Government schools (17.84%) with seminaries come the least (10.70%). Pass rate at Certificate for Secondary Education Examination of Division I – III is still under 40% after 5 years of SEDP-1 (The plan was to increase pass rate from 36% in 2004 to 70% in 2009). The performance of girls is still lower than that of boys as shown in Table 1 (URT, 2010c).

Table 1: Performance of girls vs. boys at CSEE

	Candidate Sat			**Candidates Passed Division I-III**			**% of Candidates passed**		
YEAR	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2005	47,639	37,653	85,292	18,860	9,703	28,563	39.59	25.77	33.49
2006	49,684	36,181	85,865	20,110	10,515	30,625	40.48	29.06	35.67
2007	69,457	55,831	125,288	27,735	15,648	43,383	39.93	28.03	34.63
2008	90,918	71,937	162,855	26,896	13,539	40,435	29.58	18.82	24.83

Source: SEDP II Final Report

There has been great success in ensuring adequate secondary education places in the underserved areas. Some districts in 2004 had less than 3 schools (example Ngorongoro and Kiteto). In 2009 almost all wards had a Secondary School. Regions

which had less than 50 Secondary Schools in 2005 had more than 100 Schools in 2009. Some of those regions are: Lindi from 42 schools to 117 schools, Singida from 44 schools to 150, Tabora from 46 schools to 164, Rukwa from 46 schools to 103, Manyara from 46 schools to 123 and Mtwara from 50 schools to 136 schools. Despite these successes, there are still some challenges to be addressed, including: many community schools still have incomplete infrastructure; the quality of the infrastructure and school site plans is poor; some parents do not take their children to school; insufficient qualified teaching staff especially in the hard–to-reach areas; and insufficient teaching and learning materials (URT, 2010c).

2.3.1 Status of academic performance of community secondary schools in Mvomero district

There are 17 wards in Mvomero district and each ward has a secondary school and some of the wards have more than one secondary school. URT (2010b) shows that only 10 schools among these have already released form four candidates. Just like other community schools in the country, Mvomero community secondary schools performance is poor. For example URT (2010(b)) shows the first emerged school was ranked 684 out of 2135. Furthermore, data shows that only 75 (7%) candidates out of 996 candidates sat for Form Four National Examination in 2009 scored division I-III.

2.4 Social Factors that Affect Students' Performance

Social factors affecting students' academic performance are many. Lack of a proper study environment at home; inability to master the English language, poor

nutrition/health and other related factors are the biggest obstacles students must overcome. It has also been reported that mass fainting is common among schoolgirls, especially at girls' secondary schools. Many a time, this is associated with witchcraft beliefs.

For many parents, enrolling a child at school is an immediate loss of social interventions in terms of less child labour around the house, on the farm, or for another family obligation like early marriage and child delivery. More than ever, however, parents are realizing the importance of education in a child's development, the development of Tanzania, and as a valuable investment for the future of the family.

Factors affecting students' performance can be explained in different facets. For instance, Torso (2006) mentions parents' occupation, education and size of family as economic factors which can deteriorate students' performance. She further narrates those parents who are not employed or occupied in business face problems in educating their children. For instance, a great number of parents, even those aware of the importance of education, are forced to delay educating their children. This has adverse impact to student's participation in studies as s/he is forced sometimes to remain at home in case s/he cannot meet some school costs to be covered.

Parents' education matters in emphasis on children education, as Stuart (1981) cited by Eyembe (2008) asserts that, the level of education attained by fathers is systematically associated with the schooling of daughters. This is not the case of girls only, even boys need to be emphasized and encouraged about education, thus it

is more likely for educated parents to encourage their children to go to school and study for themselves after school hours.

The family size has been mentioned by some authors such as Torso (2006) as a factor which can lead to poor academic performance of students. A reasonable number of family members capable of working act as a relief to students for hostile learning environment. This will allow students to concentrate on their home-works and assignments as well as revising taught lessons. Although large family size in another way causes disturbances, not giving chances for students to revise the learnt lessons.

Distance from home school is another factor which deteriorates or accelerates students' academic performance. The number of schools in most African countries has not kept pace with population growth. Students sometimes have to travel long distances before they get to school. In community secondary schools as most of them are day schools in Tanzania, students travel long distances before reaching school, this decreases their productivity since they arrive in school already tired. Long distances from school promote lateness and truancy among students. Participation and performance in any subject is then hampered (Torso, 2006).

2.5 Cultural Factors Affecting Students Performance

Culture refers to sum total ways of life. Therefore, cultural factors include all factors related to traditions, norms and believe of the society, For example, cultural practices such as household chores, early marriages, female genital mutilation, traditional initiation ceremonies and traditional dances interfere with normal

students routine at school as some of this practices cause truancy among students. Besides, they stay away from school for certain periods of time or terminate schooling totally.

Many cultural practices, negative attitudes and beliefs continue to hinder the education of children, especially girls. Among these are early or forced marriage, initiation rites and circumcision. In most traditions girls are viewed and treated as inferior to boys. Parents, and in particular mothers, also had reasons that made them favour boy's education in that they were dependent on adults sons for "old age insurance"(Mbilinyi *et al.*,1991).

Cultural factors have an impact on students' academic performance as Torso (2006) elucidates that, cultural practices in some societies require the girl staying out of school temporarily or permanently and interfere with her education, because some these traditions require drastic measures on the girl e.g. mutilation of sexual organs, and on occasion, the decision to discontinue school after such a traumatic experience is made by the girl. There are also cultural practices which interfere with male students' education. This depends on the society. For instance, in pastoralist societies boys' education is interfered by boys' responsibility of getting livestock to pasture areas.

2.6 Personal Factors that Affect Students' Academic Performance

Among personal variables most studied are motivation and self-concept. According to Gonzalez (1997) motivation is considered to be the element that initiates the subject's own involvement in learning: when a student is strongly motivated, all his effort and personality are directed toward the achievement of a specific goal, thus

bringing to bear all his or her resources. Although Diaz (2005) in her research of how personal factors affecting low academic achievement in the last analysis of variance, she mentioned academic motivation as the variable with the most explicative ability of the performance varies. She also observed that motivation level also decreases as performance decreases and it decreases with the age although more slowly if performance is good.

2.7 Other Factors

In their study Chediel *et al.,* (2000) asserts that low performance in the Certificate of Secondary Education Examination may be attributable to several factors, including low level of material inputs available to students in the schools, for example textbooks, reference books and equipment; establishment of new secondary schools without the necessary teaching facilities and learning materials; lack of qualified and competent teachers, particularly in community secondary schools, lack of English-language proficiency, which is a medium of instruction; inadequate teaching leading to non-coverage of syllabi and non-conducive teaching and learning environment.

They also observe that government secondary schools performed better than community schools because government secondary schools are guaranteed funding; are staffed with better qualified teachers and have relatively better physical infrastructure and facilities than non governmental secondary schools.

2.8 Academic Performance in Relation to Sex

Globally, it is known that, due to cultural background female are much affected when decisions to be made is concerned with education, it is common to find males

given priorities in education in comparison to females. The condition is worse at the rural areas where due to low economic status, the family can decide to take males to school but not the females.

From 1993-1996, the percentage of boys scoring Grade A was between 0.1%-1.8% and although this is poor, it is still higher than that of girls which was in the range of 0.0% to 0.3%. If grades D and E are considered as failures, then 28.1% of boys and 38.0% of girls failed in the Dar es Salaam region alone (UNICEF, 2001).

According to URT (2010b), the average pass rate of girls (division I-III) has dropped by 7.91% from 20.30% of 2008 to 12.39% of 2009. The overall failure rate of girls has increased by 14.37% from 18.63% of 2008 to 33.00% of 2009. Furthermore, the data shows that for the year 2009, failure rate of girls (33.00%) is 9.60% higher than that of boys (23.40%).

Girls' performance is more likely to be affected by cultural and traditional beliefs rather than boys, for example, Torso (2006) study in Tanzania on extracurricular factors affecting girls' performance in science subjects, study data indicate a general poor performance for both sexes as a result of a very poor foundation, but the situation is worse for girls because they are more vulnerable than boys. They are sexually harassed by both boys and men. As adolescents they tend to adhere to the cheaters and abandon studies. Consequently they fail in their examinations. On top of that, girls are more occupied with household chores on arrival from school than boys. They do not have ample time to study.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Description of the Study Area

3.1.1 Location of Mvomero district

The study was conducted in Mvomero District, which is one of the six districts of Morogoro Region. The district covers a total area of 7325 sq. km. The district is located within 28°22' and 37°00’ longitudes East of the Greenwich and 8° to 10° latitudes South of the Equator. The climate in the study area is a sub-humid tropical climate with humidity varying from a minimum of 70% to a maximum of 98%. Total mean annual rainfall is about 600 to 2000mm. It rains during the months of February to May and October to December. The average temperature is 29°C. Mvomero district borders with the following districts: Handeni District to the North, Bagamoyo District to the East, Morogoro Municipality and Morogoro Rural district to the South and Kilosa to the West. The district headquarters are located about 140 km from Morogoro Town (URT, 2010a).

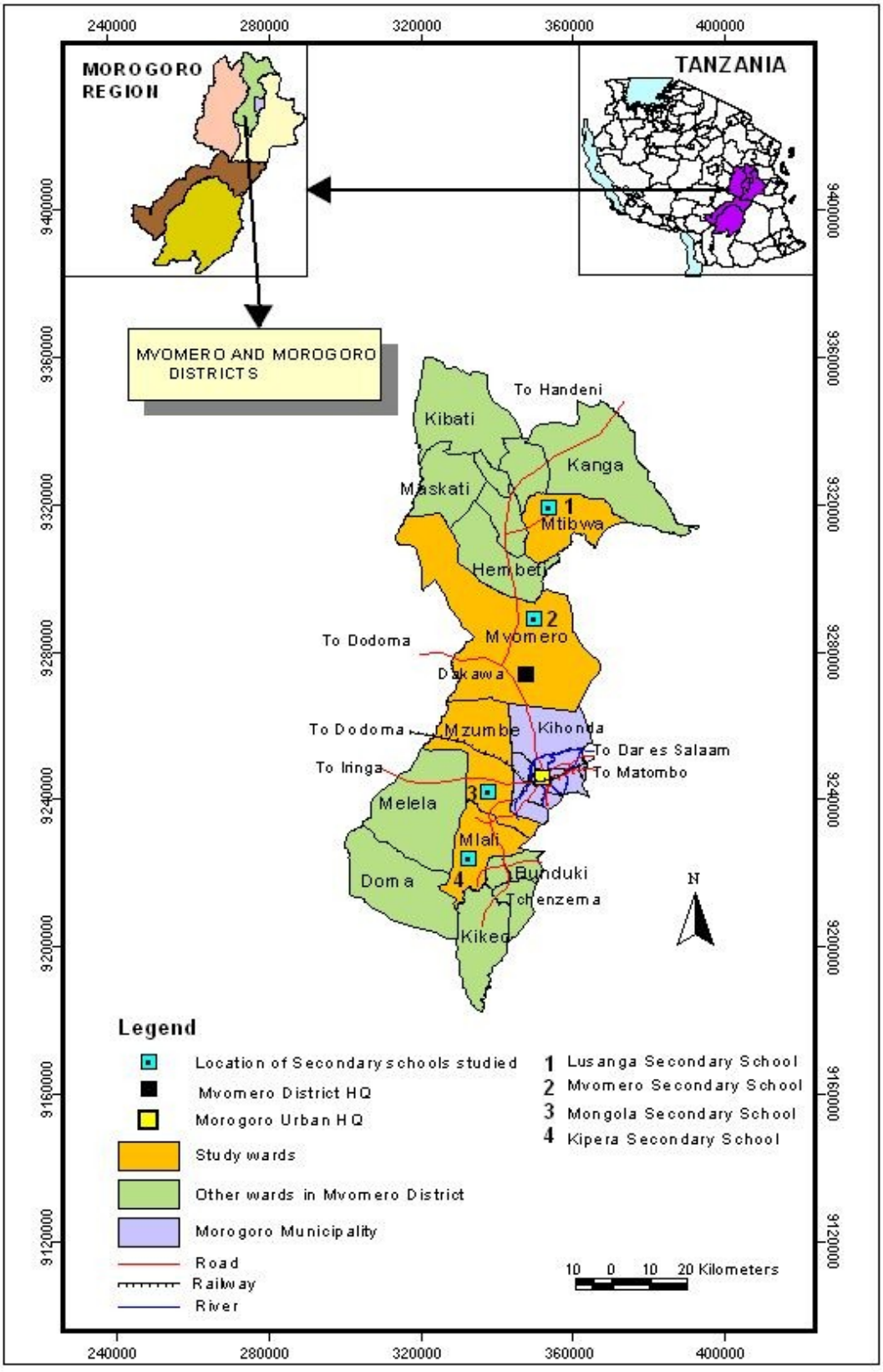

Figure 2: Mvomero district map showing selected community secondary schools

3.1.2 Population and economic activities

Mvomero District has a population of 260 525 people of whom 131 256 were males and 129 269 females, according to National Population and Housing Census of 2002 (URT, 2003). The population growth of Morogoro region is relatively high at a rate of 2.6% per annum but that of Mvomero district is relatively low of 1.7% per annum (URT, 2003). The estimated population in 2006 was 259 347 (URT, 2007). About 82% of manpower in the district engages in agriculture; 7% is engaged in trading activities; 1% is engaged in livestock keeping and 10% is in other sectors. Major food crops produced are maize, beans, cassava, sorghum, paddy, potatoes, yams, fruits and vegetables while cash crops produced are cardamom, paddy, and sugarcane. Livestock raised include: cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, chicken and ducks. The main ethnic groups are Waluguru, Wazigua, Wakwere, Wamaasai and Wasukuma (URT, 2010b).

3.1.3 Social Services

There are nursery schools, primary schools, secondary schools, teachers college and one higher learning institution (Mzumbe University). There are 24 secondary schools, 21 of them are community secondary schools; 1 is a government secondary school and 2 secondary schools are owned privately. There are about 55 centres where health services are delivered. Among these are 3 hospitals, 4 are health centres and 48 are dispensaries. Major sources of water are rivers, springs, ground water, and harvesting rain water, Data show that 138 078 of the district population use clean and safe water, which is 53% of the total population in the district during 2008/09, and 47% of the population, a total of 122 447 people, do not use clean and

safe water. There are about 15 rivers which are used for irrigation and water domestic purposes.

3.2 Research Design

This is a plan outlining how information was gathered. Kothari (2004) defines research design as the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. The study used cross-sectional research design in which data were collected at one point in a time. The use of this design has been recommended by Bailey (1994) and Babbie (1990) because it is more flexible and less costly. Data collected can be used for the purpose of simple statistical description, and it is possible to determine relationships between different variables that were in focus at the time of the survey.

3.3 Sampling Procedures

3.3.1 Population

The study involved students studying in four community secondary schools, these schools are Mongola in Mzumbe ward; Kipera in Mlali ward; Mvomero in Mvomero ward and Lusanga in Turiani ward. Parents/guardians, teachers, members of school board as well as people neighbouring schools were used as key informants.

3.3.2 Sampling unit and sample size

The sampling unit was the household where a student stays after school hours. This is because the study intended to determine socio-cultural factors affecting

community secondary school students' academic performance. Form four Students were preferred due to the fact that they are the target group and their internal examinations scores that were from form three terminal and annual examinations average scores were used to determine their performance. Form four class was selected purposely because it was the class about to be examined in 2011 national examination. The total sample size involved 110 respondents. This sample size was reasonably large, for as argued by Bailey (1994) about 30 cases seem to be the bear minimum for studies in which statistical data analysis is to be done. A total of 25 students from each village and 10 key informants who are the people who live near the community secondary schools, parents/guardians of the students, teachers and representatives of school board were selected from the four villages.

3.3.3 Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling technique was employed to select four villages: Changarawe, Kipera, Mvomero and Madizini with community schools and households where students stay after school hours. Simple random sampling ensured that every sampled respondent had equal chance of being selected (Enon, 1998). Purposive sampling unit used to select the key informants.

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection began in the second week of January, 2011 and was completed after six weeks (third week of February, 2011). Primary and secondary data were gathered according to the study objectives. Pre-testing of questionnaires was done in November, 2010 using 10 respondents the aim was to check availability of study

population and reactions of the respondents and also to test data collection tool to check if they would lead to collection of the intended information.

3.4.1 Primary data collection

Primary data were collected from respondents through the use of a structured questionnaire having open ended and closed ended questions. The questionnaire was essentially focused on respondents' socio-economic characteristics, information concerning time management, socio-cultural factors affecting students' academic performance and perception of students on community schools. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted in the four selected schools. Each group had a total number of twelve respondents as suggested by Escalada and Heong (2009) who alerts that the choice of participants depends on the topic of the focus group and the optimal number of participants is 8 -10. If a group is too small, one person in the group may dominate it; if it is too big, then it may be difficult to control. It involved both respondents who filled the questionnaire and others who did not fill the questionnaire. FGDs were intentionally used to capture qualitative data from pupils while the checklist was used to collect information from key informants who were selected purposely.

3.4.2 Secondary data collection

Secondary data, particularly on secondary school students' academic performance were mainly obtained from various sources including Sokoine National Agricultural Library (SNAL); Morogoro Regional Library; Mvomero District Education Office; Community schools in the study, Websites and also in the schools under study.

3.5 Data processing and Analysis

A combination of analytical tools was employed to achieve the study objectives and to give meaningful results and interpretation. The collected data were coded and analysed using SPSS version 16.0 computer software. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations for studied variables were computed. Regression analysis was employed to analyse factors affecting students' academic performance using STATA computer software. Multiple Regression model with the following form was employed:

$Y_i = \beta_o+\beta_1X_1+\beta_2X_2+\ldots\ldots + \beta_iX_i+\mu_1$ ---------- (1)

Where:

Y_i = Dependent variable that stands for students' scores

β_o = A constant term showing interception of factors affecting students scores

β_1-β_i = Coefficient or parameter for the independent variables

X_1 = Independent variable time spent on household chores by the girl

X_2 = Independent variable number of people in the household

X_3 = Independents variable number of years of education of parents/guardians

X_4 = Independent variable distance from home to school (km)

X_5 = Independent variable number of household members capable of working

X_6 = Independent variable number of hours students spend on individual studies

X_7 = Independent variable number of hours student spent on traditional ceremonies and dances

X_8 = Independent variable number of hours student spent on chatting with friends

μ_1 = Error term

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Background Characteristics of the Respondents

The background characteristics include sex, age, residence, education of the parents' and parents' occupation.

4.1.1 Sex

The study comprised 100 students from four community secondary schools, that is, Mongola, Kipera, Mvomero and Lusanga. Among these students more than a half (57%) were males and 43% were females (Table 2). There are socio-cultural values and attitudes which have already internalized, and these are automatically sex based. That is the reason behind considering sex in the study. Besides, all community secondary schools in the study area are co-educational. In random selection of respondents, boys tended to respond more than girls.

4.1.2 Age

Age is considered as one of the background variables that may likely affect the academic performance of students in this study. Cognitive development and maturity which are associated with age are necessary for a worthwhile performance of students. Since the study targeted secondary school students their ages varied from 16 years to 25 years, 8% of respondents had 16 years and only 1% had 25 years (Table 2).

4.1.3 Residences

The four community schools selected had no hostels, students who were selected from far villages their parents hire rooms for them. From the study 26% of respondents reside at these rent houses while the majority (74%) respondents stay at home with parents and/or guardians (Table 2). The place where a student lives after school hours matters a lot in his/her academic performance, especially if there is no parental guidance because students are free to make their own decisions, most of which might not necessarily be relate to their studies.

4.1.4 Parents' education

Parents' education is fundamental in student academic performance. The educated parent will most likely understand the education needs of the students and accomplish them. The parental perception of the value of education is influenced by the level of education and awareness of benefits of education (Coleman, 2004).The study showed that 70% of the parents had primary education while 4% had no education at all (Table 2). Primary education is a very low level to allow one to judge and even assist his/her children in their lessons.

In Focus Group discussion with students, they admitted that they did not get support such as encouragement and education assistance needed from their parents. This is also suggested by Dowd (2001) cited by Graundvaux-Miller and Karla (2002) that parent and community involvement in education has a positive effect on student outcomes. In developing countries, planners and policy makers see the potential of community support in enhancing pupil outcomes. Community support plays a role in

increasing outcomes in three ways: adding resources to education efforts; extending education coverage or increasing local demand for quality education and enhancing the implementation of education, its relevance, and the accountability of the education system.

4.1.5 Parents' Occupation

Respondents in the study were asked to mention their parents' major occupations, results show that more than a half 62% engaged in activities associated with agriculture, followed by 19% parents and 18% parents who were formal employees and self employed respectively (Table 2). Parents' occupations should be considered in discussing about academic performance because the occupation of the parents determines the fulfilment of student's academic needs as well as other personal needs. As the study shows majority of the students' parents are farmers. This means that even their income level is very low and this can explain the high level of truancy due to lack of fees and other academic needs.

Table 2: Distribution of students by background characteristics (n=100)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Sex			
Male	57	57.0	57
Female	43	43.0	43
Total	**100**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Age (years)			
16	8	8.0	8
17	25	25.0	25
18	37	37.0	37
19	17	17.0	17
20	5	5.0	5
21	3	3.0	3
22	4	4.0	4
25	1	1.0	1
Total	**100**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Residence			
Rent houses	26	26.0	26
Home	74	74.0	74
Total	**100**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Parents' education			
Primary education	70	70.0	70
Secondary education	15	15.0	15
Tertiary education	11	11.0	11
None	4	4.0	4
Total	**100**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Parents' occupation			
Agriculture	62	62.0	62
Employed	19	19.0	19
Self employment	18	18.0	18
Others	1	1.0	1
Total	**100**	**100.0**	**100.0**

4.2 Socio-cultural Factors

4.2.1 Household size

Respondents who stay at home with their parents were asked to write the number of people they live together in their households, the majority of respondents 56% reveal that their households had between 6 and 10 members and only 9.3% respondents revealed that their households had more than 10 members. Household size at home favours education environment to students. The study shows that

majority 67% respondents conduct their private studies at home while only 22% of respondents conduct at their classrooms (Table 3). Those who studied at home requires environment which is calm to allow them to concentrate on studies which is something which is impossible when the household has more than 5 members.

Table 3: Distribution of Students by household size and places students conduct private studies

Response	Frequency	Percent
Household Size		
1-5	26	34.7
6-10	41	56.0
More than 10	7	9.3
Total	**74**	**100.0**
Places		
Home	67	67
Classroom	22	22
Library	1	1
Others	10	10
Total	**100**	**100.0**

4.2.2 Household members capable of working

Respondents who stay at home after school hours were asked to indicate number of people in their households who are capable of working, results show that majority 62.2% respondents their households had 2 people who are capable of working (Table 4). The students who live in the households where the number of people who are capable of working is very low are likely to be involved in assisting some domestic chores at home and the income generating activities. In Focus group discussions respondents explained that, they were engaged in building activities so that they could earn some cash to survive together with their family members. The study also revealed that only 2.7% respondents live in the households where there about 5 members who are capable of working and earn income (Table 4).

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by number of people capable of working (n=74)

Responses	Frequency	Percent
1	18	24.3
2	46	62.2
3	6	8.1
4	2	2.7
5	2	2.7
Total	**74**	**100.0**

4.2.3 Distance to and from school

The study reveals that 54% of respondents live as far as between 1 and 5 kilometres from where the schools are found; 15% respondents live between 5 and 10 kilometres and about 4% respondents live more than 10 kilometres away from the school. The major transport means are on foot this was mentioned by 81% of the respondents, bicycle 16% respondents and only 3% of respondents use public transport (Table 5). The distances where students live determine frequencies of attendance and participation in learning process, students who live as far as 10 kilometres would likely be late at school especially if they depend on public transport which is not reliable in most of the rural areas.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by distance in kilometres from home to school and mode of transport (n=100)

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Distance in Kilometres		
Below one kilometres	27	27.0
Between 1 and 5 kilometres	54	54.0
Between 5 and 10 kilometres	15	15.0
More than 10	4	4.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**
Mode of transport		
Foot	81	81.0
Bicycle	16	16.0
Public transport	3	3.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**

4.2.4 Time spent on household domestic chores

Respondents were asked to mention types of activities they perform at home after school hours, majority (48.8%) of the male and 51.2% female respondents performed domestic chores which included activities such as cooking, washing, fetching water and firewood; 60% male and 40% female respondents revealed that they do farming activities and only male respondents performed shop keeping (Table 6). Information on time spent on household domestic chores by respondents was collected from all students. The study reveals that, majority 33% respondents spent medium time between 4 and 6 hours doing domestic chores, 31% respondents spent between 1 and 3 hours while 28% respondents spent between 7 and 9 hours doing domestic chores when at home (Table 7). However regression analysis results show that there is positive correlation of 0.1329 coefficients between students' academic performance and respondents who didn't perform any activities at home.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by sex on activities performed after school hours

Sex	Activities %				
	Domestic chores	**Farming**	**Grazing**	**Shop keeping**	**building**
Male	48.8	60.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Female	51.2	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Table 7: Distribution of respondents by time spent on household chores after school hours

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Time spent on household chores		
None	3	3.0
Short (1-3 hours)	31	31.0
Medium (4-6 hours)	33	33.0
Long (7-9 hours)	28	28.0
Very long (10 hours and above)	5	5.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**

4.2.5 Time spent on private studies

Researcher was keen to find out if after school hours students engaged in private studies, study findings showed that the majority 30% of the respondents always locate their time for studying and there is 20% of the respondents who never locate their time on studying after school hours and 22% respondents declared to very rare locating their time for private studies (Table 8).

Respondents were also asked how they conduct these private studies, data showed that majority of the respondents 59% conduct group discussions while 41% respondents conduct alone private studies (Table 8). The study findings revealed that majority of these group discussions have more than six members 37% respondents and 22% respondents have less than 5 members (Table 8). Experts of education alert that, in order for the group discussion to be more effective it should be of less than six members. In inquiring number of hours students spent on private studies per week it showed a mean of 14.98, linear regression model denoted positive correlation between hours students spent on private studies with their academic performance and it was significant of $P<0.05$.

Trying to extract more information from the respondents on how they utilize their time, they were asked if they develop learning objectives per week, 28% respondents said they always set learning objectives per week however the same number of respondents 28% said they very rarely set the objectives while 19% respondents said they never set studying objectives per week.

Table 8: Distribution of respondents by type of private studies (n=100)

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Do you locate time for private studies		
Never	20	20
Very rare	22	22
Sometimes	17	17
Very often	11	11
Always	30	30
Total	**100**	**100.0**
Private studies		
Alone	41	41.0
Group discussion	59	59.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**
How many in groups		
1 - 5	22	37.3
6 and above	37	62.7
Total	**59**	**100.0**
Academic objectives		
Never	19	19.0
Very rare	28	28.0
Sometimes	11	11.0
Very often	14	14.0
Always	28	28.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**

4.2.6 Cultural factors that affects academic performance.

Study findings show that almost all the ethnic groups found are those which still value their traditions including rituals and initiation ceremonies. After maturity children are considered as full adults who can make all necessary decisions on their own. They are also required to be responsible to fulfill their basic needs. It is, therefore, not surprising that parents forces their children to participate in these traditional events including local dances within Luguru society which include the 'kumnema mwali' initiation rite rituals around female puberty. This has more effect on girls because not only that it interferes with attendance at school but also it forces them to engage in behaviours which expose them to unwanted pregnancies which force them to drop out of school. During interview with one key informant at the study area he narrated "everyone is aware of bad behaviours of the students in this area……the reason behind is either poor economic background of their parents or it is culture where they are taught things concerning sex at their tender ages and they have to practice"

4.3 Students' Behaviours that Affect their Academic Performance

Secondary school students are human beings with varying interests. Socio cultural and other background factors are expected to limit their behaviour to suit academic activities in varied manner while at school and in their homes. Indeed, these pupils, depending on their age and hobbies have many demands and competing activities like chatting with friends; participating in traditional ceremonies; watching televisions and the like. It is obvious that students' behaviour including time resource management is crucial for good to academic performance. Students were

asked to indicate on a five point likert scale form of questions ranging on how they use their time after school hours.

4.3.1 Misuse of time

Students' response on misuse of time as revealed in the study and presented in Table 9 shows that majority (31%) of the respondents sometimes misuse time followed by 30% of the respondents who very rarely misused their time, 23% respondents said they very often misuse time, 10% respondents never misused time while only 6% respondents of all respondents always misuse time. Students as social human beings they would like to socialize with neighbourhood to get information of what is going on in their community, on doing this they found themselves misuse the time they could use for studying. In Focus group discussions students revealed that most of the time they don't go direct to their houses once they finished studies, they sometimes visits friends or go around to other places. Malila (2003) in his study observed that major causes of time misuse during school hours included students reporting late to schools from holidays, punishment, shortage of teachers, lack of working tools, attending medical treatments, teachers absenteeism, frequent emergencies in schools and schools being on for less than recommended period.

4.3.2 Time utilized by students to do assignments

During the study survey, information was collected from every student using the likert scale to show how they performed home work and assignments given by the teacher. Table 9 shows that majority 34% respondents they very often do their home works, only 5% respondents responded never doing home works given by teachers,

giving reason that they never find time for doing that since at home there are many responsibilities awaits them after school hours.

4.3.3 Time utilized by students to chat with friends and relatives

In presence or absence of mobile phones students like talking to each other, their conversation may interrupt with their normal study routine. In the study findings, data shows that majority 41% respondents declared to use most of their time either chatting with their friends or family members, 26% respondents sometimes they chat with friends and only 7% respondents never chat with friends (Table 9). However, the data findings revealed that there is no significant correlation between times spent on chatting with academic performance.

In Focus group discussions students were asked what the major topics they discuss about are, and whether they discuss about lessons. They honestly said that they never talked about lessons they mostly talked about what was happening in their community; other people businesses and relationships; boys talked about football. They were also asked about conversations with their parents if they have any, majority revealed that they never talk with their parents about lessons all they talk is about their needs once they have ones. Trying to elaborate one student disclosed that her parents never touch her books, she is not even sure if they know what kind of subjects she is taking but she admitted to be given all academic needs. This is also revealed by one of the key informants who said “parents think that since they have not gone to school they cannot advise their children on any academic issue which is not true…they need to emphasize to their children about studying hard” Research

continues to prove that parental involvement is crucial for the academic success of children. According to an article on the Heritage Foundation's website family structure and involvement of parents in their child's schoolwork are two major factors that affect a child's performance in school. Checking homework, helping with projects and daily monitoring of assignments are ways that parents can demonstrate the value they place on education.

Table 9: Students' behaviour and academic performance (n=100)

Time utilization	**Percent Responses**					**Total**
	Never	**Very rare**	**Sometimes**	**Very often**	**Always**	
Misuse of time	10.0	30.0	31.0	23.0	6.0	**100**
Assignments/homework	5.0	16.0	31.0	34.0	14.0	**100**
Chatting with friends	7.0	21.0	26.0	41.0	5.0	**100**
Watching television	29.0	46.0	16.0	5.0	4.0	**100**
Listening to music	24.0	40.0	17.0	12.0	7.0	**100**
Traditional ceremonies	13.0	47.0	24.0	13.0	3.0	**100**
Visiting relatives	16.0	47.0	25.0	5.0	7.0	**100**
Attending prayers	8.0	32.0	33.0	18.0	9.0	**100**

4.4 Students' Attitude that Affects their Academic Performance

Student's attitude affects their academic performance. In this particular study the researcher had interest to find out if students' attitude on school environment and learning outcome had any influence on his/her academic performance. To get this information, the respondents were asked about whether they liked community schools and if they are satisfied with their school performance, the study findings as presented in Table 10 show that majority (37%) of the respondents like much, 30% of the respondents did not like much, 16% respondents and 17% respondents likes very much and not at all respectively. Concerning if they are satisfied with their

recent school academic performance the findings showed that only 17% respondents said Yes while the majority 83% respondents said No. Among these respondents 26% admit not adding any efforts to improve their performance the attitude reveals their negativity on studies. This is also supported by one teacher who was a key informant she said “Nowadays students are very lazy they don’t concentrate even on the little … we gave them”. Further studies reveal that once students are confident of their ability to succeed, they become more engaged and learn more. On the other hand, students are not likely to attempt educational tasks when they feel they cannot succeed. And they are not likely to feel that they can succeed unless they have previously experienced success, along with the support needed to achieve that success (Akey, 2006).

To explore more information on student attitudes, researcher thought to seek information on students’ attendance; respondents were asked if they happened to miss studies in last academic term, the study finding showed that majority 55% respondents responded No while 45% respondents responded Yes, most of respondents that is 23 respondents who did not attend at the school mention sickness as the problem this is (51.1%) followed by lack of school fees 37.8% respondents and 11.1% respondents mentioned other problems of which most related with family problems (Table 10). All teachers who were selected as key informants commented that truancy is the major problem at the study area especially those students who lives on their own because there is no one to push them.

Studies show that health related factors such as hunger; physical and emotional abuse; and chronic illness can lead to poor school performance. Health-risk

behaviours such as drug use, violence, and physical inactivity are consistently linked to academic failure and often affect students' school attendance, grades, test scores, and ability to pay attention in class. Study findings supports the argument as students responded to questionnaire as well as key informants mention the behaviours of students at study area such as prostitution, drug use and alcoholism lead to their poor academic performance.

Table 10: Students' attitude and academic performance (n=100)

Responses	Frequency	Percent
How students like community schools		
very much	17	17.0
much	37	37.0
not much	30	30.0
not at all	16	16.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**
Are you satisfied with your school performance		
Yes	17	17.0
No	83	83.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**
What do you normally do as alternative		
Attending extra teaching	74	74.0
Remain only at home	26	26.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**
Did you face any problem kept you away from school		
Yes	45	45.0
No	55	55.0
Total	**100**	**100.00**
Reasons that kept students away from school		
Sickness	23	51.1
Lack of school fees	17	37.8
Others	5	11.1
Total	**45**	**100.0**

4.5 Comparison of Academic Performance of Students who live in rent Houses and those who live with their Parents

Study findings reveal that there were no selected community schools which had hostel, two schools were in transition period of initiating form five classes and therefore there were hostels which were built purposely to accommodate form five students these are Mvomero and Lusanga secondary schools. Since community schools enrol students from the whole ward there are those who come from very far villages. According to students themselves most of them had to return home after classes but for others who were lucky enough were hired rent rooms by their parents which accommodated them.

4.5.1 Conditions of the rented rooms

The researcher had opportunity to visit rooms where students stayed after school hours. Almost all the rooms accommodated by respondents were in very poor conditions, that is, they were very small, not well ventilated, no necessary services as furniture, water and electricity. Wealth wise the situation of the students was poor thus most of them took a single meal. The students had hard time of getting necessary needs such as soap and sanitary towels for girls. Some of respondents declares that they were very free in these rent houses as no one watched their movements. However, other respondents said their parents told their land lords to watch over them, therefore they were not allowed to entertain any guests even if they were there for academic discussions. They were not allowed to go to other houses even if it was for academic purposes.

In Focus group discussions respondents especially students were very positive on living at these rent houses than at homes arguing that they walked or travelled by bicycle long distances and they had to do a lot of domestic chores which limited them from studying. Some of the respondents declared not to come at school during rainy seasons because of rains and floods which gave hard time to ride during that season.

4.5.2 Students' academic performance

Measurement of students' performance was done using the average scores of respondents in their terminal and annual internal examinations. Generally the performance of the respondents even in their internal examinations is not good, they have mean of 35.15 which is graded as "D", and the majority of the respondents scored 20 which is an "F" grade. The highest average score is 79 graded as "B" while the lowest average score was 10 an "F".

In data analysis it was possible to compare the average scores of respondents who lived in the rent houses with those who lived with their parents, the findings reveal that there is positive correlation between students lives in the rent houses with their academic performance of P-value 0.002 (see Appendix 1 regression results). This implies that students who stay in rent houses have better performance than those who stay with their parents.

Table 11: Distribution of community secondary school terminal and annual examinations results by average scores (n = 100)

Name of school	Average scores					Total
	0 – 20 F	21 - 40 D	41 - 60 C	61 - 80 B	81 - 100 A	
Mongola	12	10	3	0	0	**25**
Kipera	2	15	8	0	0	**25**
Mvomero	3	9	11	2	0	**25**
Lusanga	4	7	10	4	0	**25**
Total	**21(21.0%)**	**41(41.0%)**	**32(32.0%)**	**6(6.0%)**	**0(0%)**	**100(100%)**

Source: Community secondary schools records.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The study was carried out to determine socio-cultural factors that affect community secondary school students' academic performance in Mvomero district. Specifically, the study aimed at examining socio-cultural factors that affect students' academic performance; compare academic performance of students who live in hostels with those who live with their parents and to identify behaviour and attitude that affects their academic performance. The study findings indicated that, socio-cultural factors such as family size; family members who are capable of working; education of the parents; parents' occupations; distance to and from school and students' time spent on doing domestic chores affect students' academic performance. Study findings reveal that there is poor parents' involvement in the academic issues related to their children. The children are not encouraged in their studies by their parents. Besides, the parents do not meet their children academic demands such as buying reference books and other stationeries.

Moreover, the study findings show that students' behaviours related to their studies affect their academic performance; these behaviours include time resource utilization. The findings showed further that there is misuse of time among the students, instead of utilizing most of their time in studying they are much occupied with social activities such as spending much time in doing domestic chores, chatting with friends and relatives, attending traditional ceremonies especially the initiation ceremonies which are more famous in the study area. Most students' have got

timetables for private studies but the study findings reveal that only few students abided to the timetable set. Tiredness due to walking for longer distances and commitment to other activities at home are reasons preventing them from conducting private studies. Most students conduct group discussion as part of their private study, study findings reveal that the organized groups consist of more than ten members which is not recommendable. The groups are gender biased and the medium used is Kiswahili while all subjects are in English with exception to Kiswahili. These factors are barrier for understanding the subject.

In comparing the performance between students who live in hostel and those who live with their parents after schools hours, study findings reveals that no selected school had hostel and therefore students who were selected from furthest villages opted to rent rooms. These rooms are private owned and therefore students live on their own costs. Condition in these rooms is very poor, in order to minimize costs students rent houses with no electricity and poor sanitation. All in all study findings indicate students who live in these rooms perform better in their studies with comparison to those who stay at home, although due to too much freedom students live in the rented houses have bad behaviours such as truancy, alcoholism and prostitution.

5.2 Recommendations

Study findings provide useful information to educational policy makers; educational planners; educational officers; NGO’s, heads of schools, teachers, parents and students. Therefore this study recommends the following:

(i) Students should show high level of discipline in the school regulations and instructions; attend lessons in all school days of the year and make proper utilization of time; have clear vision and objectives of studies; build reading culture and independent study skills.

(ii) Parents should make a close follow up of the children academic progression; are supposed to provide academic requirement to their children; they should work with school administration to improve students' discipline and performance.

(iii) Parents should reduce time used by students in performing household domestic chores and avail time for private studies and homework.

(iv) NGO's should assist the government to finance education in various community secondary school programmes such as hostels buildings in order to reduce distances used by students in walking to and from schools also provision of books, laboratory equipment and other necessities.

(v) Educational policy makers, planners, officers and other education stakeholders should carry out continuous assessment of learning environments, processes and outcomes and make necessary innovations.

(vi) Plans to develop schools should involve grassroots of particular area to enable them to have positive perception and attitude of service delivered and make contributions.

(vii) Government and media should increase mass mobilization on increasing awareness on the effect of harmful traditions which hinder education development of the students and community members for the development of the nation.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

It is suggested that similar studies on socio-cultural factors affecting community secondary school students to be conducted in other places of the country to address the research problem.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Results of the regression analysis of the variables

Variable	Coefficient	Std. error	P > /t/
None time spent on domestic chores [a]	0.1329	0.2941	0.652
Medium time spent on domestic chores [a]	-0.1249**	0.1183	0.003
Long time spent on domestic chores [a]	-0.0001**	0.1341	0.006
Very long time spent on domestic chores [a]	-0.4848*	0.2518	0.058
Education	0.0638*	0.1161	0.054
Distance	-0.0011***	0.0199	0.002
Family capable of Working	-0.0501	0.0474	0.294
None time spent on tradition dances [b]	0.1962	0.1626	0.231
Medium time spent on tradition dances [b]	0.0578	0.1230	0.640
Long time spent on tradition dances [b]	-0.0536*	0.1532	0.072
Very long time spent on tradition dances [b]	-0.2709*	0.2992	0.036
None time spent on chatting with friends [c]	-0.1525***	0.2159	0.004
Medium time spent on chatting with friends [c]	-0.0506*	0.1258	0.068
Long time spent on chatting with friends [c]	-0.1212*	0.1381	0.038
Very long time on chatting with friends [c]	-0.4426*	0.2464	0.076
location	-0.0266***	0.1057	0.002
Hours of private studies	-0.0169***	0.0054	0.003
Constant	3.5184***	0.2402	0.000
No. of obs = 100			Prob>F = 0.0000
R^2 = 0.5625			Adj. R^2 = 0.4991

Legend:

* = P <0.1

** = P < 0.05

*** = P < 0.01

[a] = Dummy variable: reference category for short time spent on domestic chores

[b] = Dummy variable: reference category for short time spent in traditional dances and ceremonies

[c] = Dummy variable: reference category for short time spent on chatting with friends.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Students

Collected information will be used for research purposes only. Please be free to write as much information as possible. Confidentiality is highly considered. Thank you.
F.A. KOMUNTE.

GENERAL INFORMATION
Village ……. Ward …… District ……
Name of school ……. Date of interview ……
Name of Respondent ……. Questionnaire No. …….

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- **Circle the response**

1. Sex: 1= Male 2 = Female
2. Age (years) ……..
3. Which class do you belong to? ……..
4. What is the education of your parents/guardians?

	1	2	3	4
Father				
Mother				
Others(specify) ……				

Key: 1= Primary education 2 = Secondary education
3 = Tertiary Education 4 = Other (specify)…….
5. What is the main occupation of your parents/guardians?
1 = Agriculture 2 = Self employment/employed
3 = Business 4 = Other (specify)…….
6. Where do you stay after school period?
1= hostel 2=home
7. If hostel, how far is the school located from hostel? ……... (distance in km)
8. If home, how far is the school located from home? …… (distance in km)
9. What type of transport do you use?
1= Foot 2= Bicycle 3= Public transport
10. What is your household size?

	Males	Females
Number		

11. What is the number and sex of the family members capable of working in your household?

	Male	Female
Number		

TIME MANAGEMENT

12. How often have you noted misuse of time after school hours?
    1 = Never 2 =Very rare 3=Sometimes 4= Very often 5=Always
13. Do you develop your own academic objectives for a week or a day?
    1 = Never 2 = Very rare 3= Sometimes 4 = Very often 5= Always
14. How do you conduct private studies?
    1= Alone 2= Group discussion
15. If in Groups how many are you in group?
    1= 1-5 2= 6 and Above
16. How do you like group discussion?
    1 = Hate it 2 = Don't like it 3 = It is ok 4 = Like it
    5 = like it very much
17. While at home do you locate your time for private studies?
    1 = Never 2 = Very rare 3= Sometimes 4 = Very Often 5=Always
18. Why? .....
19. Do your parents give you some activities to do after school hours? 1=Yes 2= No
20. If **Yes,** mention them ……...
21. How long do you accomplish home activities?
    1 = 1hr-2hrs 2 = 3hrs-4hrs 3 = 5hrs-6hrs 4= 7 hrs and above
22. At what time do you normally go to bed?
    1 = between 8.00-9.00pm 2 = between 9.01-10.00pm
    3 = between 10.01 and beyond 4 = Others (Specify) …….
23. If you go to bed between 10.01 and beyond, what do you normally do? Mention
    …….
24. Do you happen to attend extra teaching / tuition studies?
    1 = Yes 2 = No
25. If **Yes**, how often?
    1= Very rare 2 = Sometimes 3 = Very often 4 = Always
26. Who pays tuition fees?
    1= Father 2 = Mother 3 = Others (specify)
27. Do your parents / guardians buy you text/reference books?
    1 = Yes 2 = No
28. If no give reason(s) ……
29. How often have you analysed the way you spend your time?
    1 = Never 2 = Very rare 3 = Sometimes 4 = Very often 5 = Always
30. Is your academic performance in one way or another influenced by the way time is utilised after school hours?
    1 = Yes 2 = No.
31. If **Yes**, Give reasons ……
    ……...
    ……
32. What position did you posses in the last annual examinations?
    ……. Out of ……..
33. Where do you normally carry out your private studies?
    1 = Home 2 = Classroom 3 = Library 4 = Others (specify) …
34. In average how many hours of private study do you have per week?
    …….. Hours

35. How much time do you spend in the following? (Tick where appropriate)

	1=None	2=Short	3= Medium	4 = Long	5=Very long
Reading stories					
Charting with friends					
Doing assignments given by teachers					
Listening to music					
Watching television					
Doing domestic chores					
Sports/ games					
Visiting Friends					
Sleeping					
Studying					
Prayers					
Traditional dances					
Others (specify)					

PERCEPTION OF COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

36. Last academic year did you have any problem that kept you away from schooling?

1 = Yes 2 = No

37. If yes what was the problem? ……..

38. In the last academic year how often did you fall sick?

1 = Never 2 = Very rare 3 = Sometimes 4 = Very often 5 = Always

39. To what extent do you think you like community secondary school studies?

1 = Never 2 = Very rare 3 = Sometimes 4 = Very often 5 = Always

40. Are you satisfied with your school performance?

1 = Yes 2 = No

41. If **No**, what do you normally do as an alternative?

(1) Attending extra teaching/tuition (2) Remain only at home

42. Do you think that ordinary level secondary school education is enough to make you
acquire the skills and knowledge of managing any income activities?

1 = Yes 2=No

43. Is there a hostel at your school?

1 = Yes 2 = No

44. Are there any privately owned hostels around your school?

1 = Yes 2 = No

45. What can you explain about the academic performance of the students' living in these hostels?

1 = Very good 2 = Good 3 = Normal 4 = Poor 5 = Very poor

46. If poor, do you think students who live in these hostels have behaviours which contribute to such academic performance?
    1 = Yes 2 = No
47. If **Yes** what are these behaviours?
(i) ……
(ii) …….
(iii) ……..
(iv) …….
(v) ……..

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussion Guide for Students

GENERAL INFORMATION

Village …… Ward …… District ……
Name of School …….. Date of Interview ……

1. How do you explain students' performance in community secondary schools in this district?
2. What are factors hinder students to perform better in their studies at secondary schools?
3. What is the effect of socio-cultural factors on students' academic performance in community secondary schools?
4. When a choice has to be made among children in the family between girl and boy to decide who goes to school, who is likely to go to school? And why?
5. Does household division of labour have any impact on students' academic performance in community secondary school examinations?
6. Why do girls from poor households most likely to never attend school compared to girls from rich households?
7. What are reasons for some students avoiding to attend school?
8. What are reasons for most students dropping out before completing secondary education?
9. Do your parents discuss with you issues concerned your studies?
10. Do you think Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDEP) has an impact on students' academic performance in community secondary schools?

Appendix 4: Checklist for key informants

GENERAL INFORMATION

Village …… Ward …… District ……
Name of Respondent …… Date of Interview ……

1. May I know your designation? .....
2. How long have you been living in this village……years
3. What can you say about performance of students in this school?

1 = Very good 2 = Good 3 = Poor 4 = Very poor

4. What can you explain as reasons behind the performance you have mentioned above?

(i) ……
(ii) …….
(iii)……
(iv)……
(v) ……

5. In your opinion what is the general behaviour of the students studying in the community school?

1= Very good 2 = Good 3 = Bad 4 = Very bad

6. If student behave badly, what are these behaviours?
   (i) ……..
   (ii) ……..
   (iii) ……
   (iv) …….
   (v) …….

7. Are there any hostels for students?
   1 = Yes 2 = No
8. Who own these hostels?
   1 = School 2 = Private People

9. What can you say about supervision of students' discipline in these hostels?
   1 = Very good 2 = Good 3= Normal 4 = Poor 5 = Very Poor
10. In your opinion, who are likely to perform badly in their examinations in this community school, those staying at:
    1 = Hostel 2 = home with Parents/guardians
11. Any reasons for your response
    ……
    …….
    …….
12. Do you think there are factors which cause poor students' attendance and hence poor performance?
    1 = Yes 2 = No

13. If Yes, list them
    (i) ……
    (ii) ……
    (iii) ……..
    (iv) ……..
    (v) ……
14. Among the students do you think are most affected by these factors?
    1 = Male 2 = Females
15. Do you think community involvement on the enhancement of the behaviour of the students are enough?
    ……..
    ……..
    ……...
16. Give scores for the following items

Statement implying attitude	**Maximum Scores**	**Respondents Scores**
Children from well to do families always perform well in their academics	**5**	
Children of educated fellows love studying than those of illiterates	**5**	
Traditional practices is the basis for poor students' performance	**5**	
community schools has contributed much for poor students performance	**5**	
Without government assistance village community can not improve community secondary schools performance	**5**	

Categorization

1. Positive attitude will range from 4-5
2. Undecided attitude will be 3
3. Negative attitude will range from 1-2

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION