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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL CULTURAL FACTORS ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF KWANZA DIVISION, KENYA

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Abstract

The study investigated the effects of social cultural factors on secondary school students' academic performance in Kwanza division of Trans Nzoia County- Kenya. The problem for investigation was the decline in performance of secondary school students at form four in Kwanza division. The objectives to the study were: - to establish Social cultural factors affecting academic performance; to establish the extent to which social cultural factors affect academic performance; to establish the factors affecting effectiveness of social cultural factors in enhancing academic performance. Three research questions were formulated as follows: - What are the social cultural factors affecting academic performance? (ii) What is the extent to which social cultural factors affect academic performance? (iii) What are the factors affecting effectiveness of social cultural factors in enhancing academic performance? The methodology used involved the cross-sectional survey research design. Random section was used to obtain twelve secondary schools in Kwanza division and sample of 275 respondents which included students, teachers, head teachers and division education officer were chosen. Data was collected during the period of April and October 2011 using questionnaires, checklists, interview guides and documentary analysis. Based on the research questions and the responses gathered and analyzed, the following findings were established: - Most schools are provided by teachers employed by TSC. There was evidence that the government promotes and supports teachers by giving them study leave and workshops/ seminars for head teachers. There is an acute shortage of teachers in most schools forcing the administration to have BOG sponsored teachers assisting with the workforce. The students from poor family were encouraged to apply for government sponsored bursary funds. From the foregoing findings two major recommendations can be made; the government should improve the existing structural facilities and enhance security in all schools. Education policy should embrace various aspects related to improvement of student performance.

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Introduction:-

In this chapter the framework is about the study of social cultural effect on secondary student performance in Kwanza division of Trans-Nzoia County in Kenya. The following aspects are covered: the background, the conceptual background, the theoretical background, the contextual background, the problem statement, the general and specific objectives, the research questions, the scope and the significance of the study.

The background:-

The study is concerned with the phenomenon of social cultural effects on secondary school students performance in particular reference to Kwanza division of Trans-Nzoia County- Kenya. The phenomenon of social cultural factors effect on student performance worldwide has drawn attention in many countries over its nature, content, relevance and achievements in relation to the performance in learning institutions more so in secondary schools. According to Oxford learners dictionary (2002) defines performance as an act of perform (Execute), accomplish, achieve, bring into operation, bring to pass, carry into execution, discharge a duty, effect, effectuate, employ oneself, enact, function. The reason why much emphasis is to be laid on social cultural factors is that Marchesi and Martin (2002) observed that personal, family and academic factors affecting low achievement in secondary school considered a key element for pupils' personal and academic development. The value given from teacher to pupil and vice-versa are usually reciprocal, highlighting additionally the personal relationship. Discussions on academic achievement have been going on throughout the world, over content, relevance, importance and goals of education. The reason why there is much focus on education is that education is "a factory" for human resource and yard stick for national development. -Teachers Service Commission (2007). Education plays a very major role in development of human resource, which is the major input in economic production. Social cultural factors are some of the major factors that account for secondary school academic achievement.

Marcos (1990) and Fullana (1995) sought to understand factors which account for low academic achievements. The result of the study revealed that influence of variables such as parents' academic level, gender, motivation and relationships between peers affected academic performance. It was noted from the study that academic failure frequently appears as reactions to conditions of change, such as plans for educational reforms, or response to critical situations. Bishop (1985) asserts that curriculum goes astray when it has no relevance to development of society; that through curriculum the natural desired transformation and modernization of society and the economy can be achieved. However achievement cannot be realized if factors affecting academic achievement are not addressed. According to Sifuna et al (2006), natives had their own curriculum of indigenous education before modern education was introduced in Kenya. The content of this curriculum was purely vocational for the young ones and adults according to gender. The vocational contents included production, technical, leadership, agricultural and environmental skills.

Before the coming of Europeans, Kenyan societies had their own systems of education. There were no classrooms and no special class of people called teachers. All members of the community were involved in the education of the children. Children learnt cultural traditions and customs of their ancestors from the community as well as specific skills from their families and other specialized individuals through apprenticeship programs. Localized, relevant indigenous knowledge was, therefore, very important in the organization and transmission of knowledge. The foundation of modern education was laid by missionaries who introduced reading to spread Christianity. They also taught practical subjects like carpentry and gardening which were useful around the missions. The Frazer report (1909) recommended the establishment of separate educational systems for Europeans, Asians and Africans. This system was maintained until independence in 1963. In 1963, the country gained independence and a commission was set up to make changes in the formal educational system. The focus of the commission was to build a national identity and to unify the different ethnicities through subjects in school such as history and civic education for the masses. Between 1964 and 1985, the 7-4-2-3 education structure modeled after the British education system was followed. The system was designed to provide seven years of primary education, four years of lower secondary education, two years of upper secondary education, and three years of university. - Buchmann (1999).Kerr (1983) defines curriculum as, 'All the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school. The curriculum can only sustain but not develop; curriculum is not a physical thing, but rather the interaction of teachers, students and knowledge. In other words, curriculum is what actually happens in the classroom and what people do to prepare and evaluate. The current documents on education system have sought to address this in a bid to reflect on the social, economic and political realities of an independent Kenya. It is important to note that each of this education commission, task forces before and after independence such as Phelps Stoke commission, Beecher committee, Lugumba et al (1973), Ominde, Gachath, Mackay and Koech

did put emphasis on vocational education as a way of addressing falling academic standards in the country. The MacKay Report (1981) and Sifuna et al (2006) stressed that the 8-4-4 system of education with its emphasis on technical and vocational education would help graduates at every level to acquire scientific and practical skills necessary for self employment, salaried employment or further training. At the same time they hoped it would help address issues of factors affecting academic achievements and educational goals.

Indigenous education was practical and relevant to the needs of society, Fafunwa (1982). The focus of education in old Africa was social responsibility, political participation, work orientation, morality and spiritual values. Learning was by doing, which involved observation, imitation and participation. Jomo Kenyatta (1965), for example, compares Gikuyu education with the idea of progressive education that the US educator, William H. Kilpatrick, defined as “wholehearted, purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment.” Kenyatta further notes that “knowledge thus acquired is related to a practical need, and is merged into activity and can be recalled when that activity is again required. Behavior also is learned from doing things together, and is therefore directed to social activities from the outset.” Education is thus closely integrated with cultural reproduction; given this experience it is no surprise that profound alienation arose later in response to the isolation of formal schools from the social realities of African communities. According to Wertche (2000), social factors include values, attitude, disposition, comprehension and perception that are learnt from social cultural groups to which a person belongs. The definition of social factors in this study is adopted from Keham (1938) as the phenomena that diffuse within the society and charge as a new way of ideas, customs, and arts normally accepted within the society. The operational definition of social cultural factors in this study entailed what affects students’ level of academic achievement in schools. In secondary schools, students are instructed in every aspect of knowledge and concentrate mostly on textbooks; they purely recite poems and formulas to finish examination. The candidates that the researcher collected data from are at a critical developmental stage in life. According to Adel (2002) academic achievement refers to the ability of the learner to realize what has been learned over a period of time. According to Rodriguez (1986), he considered academic failure as the situation in which the subject does not attain expected achievement according to his or her ability, resulting in an altered personality which affects other aspects of life. Motivation family environment among other social cultural factors such as circumcision activities are considered to be elements that initiate the subject own involvement in learning.

Wentzel (1989) was concerned that young adolescents who do not enjoy positive supportive relationships with adults and peers are often at risk for academic problems. He examined specific ways in which supportive relationships with parents, teachers and peers are related to young adolescents’ motivation at school and to academic performance. Wentzel came up with a strong finding that students overall adjustment and success at school requires willingness as well as an ability to meet social as well as academic challenges. He further said that students who are academically successful report trying to achieve socially appropriate as well as academic goals at school. Wentzel also came up with the findings with respect to parents, perceived social and emotional support and family cohesion have been related positively to perceived competence, a sense of relatedness to peers, and academic effort and interest in school. Social and emotional supports from peers have been associated with motivational outcomes such as the pursuit of academic and pro-social goals, intrinsic value and self concept. The most common weakness of Wentzel research is that he does not put into consideration that student academic and social achievements are directly linked to their genetic and past experience. According to Wentzel, his final observation was that having supportive relationships with parents, teachers and peers, has been associated with academic success. Therefore supportive relationships might be related directly to academic achievement independent of their relations to motivational outcomes. Wentzel findings were also observed by other educational scholars like Connell (1990) and Felner (1990).

Most secondary schools in Kwanza division are day public mixed secondary schools. High rates of poverty among the residents of Kwanza division have been listed among the major causes of the rampant cattle rustling in the region. The division economy depends mainly on smallholder subsistence agriculture which is hampered by poor rainfall pattern. Drought is a perennial problem and hostile Pokot neighbors make life difficult at Kwanza division. All secondary schools offer academic subjects and other technical subjects like agriculture and business education among other examinable subjects. According to Kwanza District Development Plan Report of 2008 - 2012, secondary school going age group had 17,678 persons in 1999 which represents 11.8% of the total population in the whole Kwanza district where Kwanza division is the biggest division among the three. The projected population at the start of 2008 Plan period was 23,437 and this was to rise to 28,979 in 2012 at the end of the plan period. Kwanza district is divided into three divisions. The quoted population represents 75% of Kwanza division while the

remaining 25% represent Endebess division and Kaisagat division. The population of secondary school going age children outstretches the available vacancies in secondary schools in the Kwanza division with the introduction of Free Secondary Education-(FSE). Most of children need to continue with their secondary education. Therefore the construction of more schools, expansion of existing schools and recruiting of more teachers to handle the increased educational demand as per Vision 2030 projection should be prioritized.

The budgetary allocation for Central Government remains low due to harsh economy worldwide. The provision of physical facilities by parents remain a major constrain. The need of this population to meet the minimum entry points for university and other middle level colleges remains a major challenge. This requires consulted efforts by parents, stakeholders and students to overcome social cultural factors that are a barrier to students achieving high academic goals. This therefore calls for proper academic planning to educate parents on the need to provide better physical facilities, learning materials, motivate students and teachers to initiate high academic performance in order to score university and college entry marks. Better education in the division would enhance economic growth and developments thus reduce poverty level.

The Problem Statement:

Whereas the objective of secondary education, courtesy of MacKay (1981) report, is to enable learners in secondary schools to proceed to university and middle level colleges and a few to join vocational education institution after school, the situation at Kwanza division is so grave that the Kwanza division candidates hardly join public universities due to low grades attained at national level examination. Few students from Kwanza division who attain C+ and above get admission to private universities or get admission to parallel programs at the public universities which are quite costly. According to District Development Plan (2005- 2012) report, majority of graduates of secondary school and primary level are known to engage in idleness, criminal activities; bicycles and motorbike transport (boda-boda) business. Boda-boda has become a security threat, health hazards and major road carnage on our Kenyan roads. Also according to education inspection reports by the district quality assurance and standards officer – QASO (2009) revealed that the major cause of unrest, dropout and poor academic performance in Kwanza division is dependent caliber of the learners. The recommendations by QASO were that students in secondary school should be properly nurtured by both parents and teachers. The students peer group factors among other social cultural factors also hamper candidates towards achieving academic excellence. Those who ventures into self employment hardly grow their businesses to a sustainable level.

Objectives of the Study:-

1. To establish the social cultural factors affecting academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division.
2. To establish the extent to which social cultural factors have affected academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division.
3. To determine factors affecting effectiveness of social cultural factors in enhancing academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division.

Research Questions:

1. Which social cultural factors have affected academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division?
2. What is the extent to which social cultural factors have affected academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division?
3. Which factors have affected the effectiveness of social cultural factors in enhancing academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division

Significance to the Study:

The study may be significant to parents who expect not just excellent performance but also responsible men and women outside school. It may also interest undergraduates and prospective students who may wish to pursue excellence in their chosen academic career. This study would serve to bridge gap in knowledge, regarding the relationship between social cultural factors and academic achievement in Kwanza division of Kwanza district, Kenya. It would also enhance the existing literature for the benefit of policy makers, scholars, educationists and other stakeholders in Kenya such as the Kwanza District Education Board and Kwanza Division Development Committee. This study would also serve as reference material for scholars and educationists in Busoga University.

Literature review:**Theories:**

This chapter reviews the literature related to the subject under investigation in order to shed light on the subject and also provide a framework for investigations. There is an introduction that sets the overall framework, theoretical framework, the conceptual framework showing the nature of variables at work, the themes related to the literature review mainly to identify the social cultural factors affecting academic performance in secondary schools, the extent at which social cultural factors have affected academic performance in secondary schools and to determine social cultural factors affecting the effectiveness of social factors on academic performance in secondary schools.

This chapter would be concerned with the various opinions of different authors, consultants about identify the social cultural factors affecting academic performance in secondary schools. The different books, journals, reports, magazines and other literature to the topic of the study would be consulted. A great deal of definitions for social is given. The term social refers to a characteristic of living organisms (humans in particular, though biologists also apply the term to populations of other animals). It always refers to the interaction of organisms with other organisms and to their collective co-existence, irrespective of whether they are aware of it or not, and irrespective of whether the interaction is voluntary or involuntary. – Oxford dictionary. The Ominde Report (1964) called for education to serve Kenya's national development. Racially-segregated colonial schools were phased out to provide Africans with the same quality of education once reserved for white settlers. Otherwise, the old system was left intact. However, strong popular demand for education resulted in the foundation of many Harambee schools by fund-drives organized by wealthy patrons. These examples of communal generosity demonstrate a linkage of African tradition with nation-building. Nevertheless, grass-roots demand for education in the 1960s and government neglect of the rural sector caused Kenya to shift policy in the 1970s toward integration of education with rural development. Primary schools were to prepare students for agriculture, family welfare, and community development. Secondary schools were called upon to promote national unity, economic growth, individual development, social equality, respect for Kenya's "rich and varied cultures," and international understanding cited in Kay (1975). In 1983, however, this basic education scheme was dropped with adoption of the 8-4-4 system; once again, secondary and tertiary education became the priority. Current Kenyan policy espouses universal education, with equal opportunity for all.

The core goals reflect traditional values of training in social justice, morality, and responsibility, along with acquisition of life skills needed in the local environment. Modern policy goals include national development and unity along with individual service to the nation. Kenya's social diversity has brought a collateral concern for preservation of cultural heritage, social justice, human dignity, political equality and multicultural education.

Theoretical Framework:

Wentzel (1989) was concerned that young adolescents who do not enjoy positive, supportive relationships with adults and peers are often at risk for academic problems. He examined specific ways in which supportive relationships with parents, teachers and peers are related to young adolescent's motivation at school and to academic performance. Diaz (1990) believed that personal, family and academic factors affect low achievement in secondary school. He also ascertains that parameters which contribute directly to low achievement are a frequent topic. In other words Antonia (1990) believed that student's performance is not independent but a component of other factors ranging from personal, family and academic factors. Other scholars Noel (1995) and Marcos (1990) carried out studies that sought to understand factors which account for low achievement. They were concerned with finding out what determines academic failure that frequently results in plans for education reform or response to critical situations. The very concept of academic failure varies in its definition. Castellanos (1986) considers academic failure as the situation in which the subject does not attain the expected achievement according to his or her abilities, resulting in an altered personality which affects other aspects of life. The most common weakness of Wentzel research is that he does not put into consideration that student academic and social achievements are directly linked to their genetic and past experience. According to Wentzel, his final observation was that having supportive relationships with parents, teachers and peers has been associated with academic success. This study carried out the investigation on the effects of social cultural factors on academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division with emphasis on social cultural factors on academic performance.

Conceptual Framework:

The effects of social cultural factors on secondary school students' academic performance.

In the above model, social factors (IV, i) are conceptualized as family background, social class, drugs and peer influence. The cultural factors (IV ii) are conceptualized as cattle rustling, circumcision, religion and ethnic diversity. Academic performance (DV) on the other hand is conceptualized as university entry score, middle level/vocational college score and failure. The model further hypothesizes that social and cultural factors influences academic performance, but the results may be confounded by other forms of factors (EV) such as Political, Economic, School Environment, School Leadership etc as indicated on the diagram.

Social Cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance:

Marchesi and Martin (2002) carried out studies in secondary school in Spain along social ladder. They observed that the upper-class students show a better use of meta-cognitive strategies than those of lower social class. The influence of social class is mediated by cultural level, which in turn determines family expectations, values and attitudes regarding education. The identification of specific social interaction effects is a daunting task. Not only must the analysis address the endogenous choice of neighborhoods and schools, but it must also separate peer influences from the effects of other school characteristics and account for the fact that student and peer achievement are determined simultaneously. In this section we outline an empirical framework with which to examine peer influences, following closely the work of Brock and Durlauf (2001) and Moffitt (2001) with special emphasis on the educational context.

Attempts to estimate peer effects on educational achievement directly have been relatively limited. Toma (2000) report positive influences of higher achieving peers at least for some students. The evidence on achievement effects of racial composition has been much more voluminous, although the results are no easier to summarize or interpret. -cf. Armor (1995). In general there has been limited attention given to the mechanisms through which peers affect outcomes. The most common perspective is that peers, like families, are sources of motivation, aspirations, and direct interactions in learning. Moreover, peers may affect the classroom process – aiding learning through questions and answers, contributing to the pace of instruction, or hindering learning through disruptive behavior À la Lazear (2001). An outcome measure is regressed on peer group characteristics that are usually constructed as school aggregates of family background variables or achievement. These measures are readily available and, if they adequately capture the influences of families, would seem appropriate for peers. Guardione (1990) also observed that motivation to achieve depends more on parent's level of learning than of their level of income. Castejon and Perez (1998) found that the child's perception of the family support directly affects performance, while mothers' level of studies does so indirectly. Marchesi and Martin (2002) observed that parental expectations have a notable influence on academic results, even when controlling for initial knowledge and socio-economic context. Castejon and Perez (1998) found indirect relationships with performance from the students' perception of how much importance his or her parents assign to study at homes.

Other studies showed that the level of family cohesion (Coplan et al, 2002) and family relationship (Boute, 2001) proved capable of predicting performance. First, the small observed changes in peer circumstances may be related to changes in family conditions that could bias the estimates. An increase or decrease in peer average income or achievement may result from similar changes in own family income that precipitate a school transfer and exert a direct effect on outcomes. Alternatively, shifts in local labour market conditions may cause changes in both own family and peer group average income, making it difficult to disentangle the influences of peers and family.

Second, changes in school characteristics may affect both own achievement and that of peers. For example, the funding and availability of compensatory education programs is linked to school average income, possibly building in a correlation between peer average income and programmatic effects or teacher differences in a specific grade may vary with peer characteristics. Finally, school selection by other families may be driven by attributes of the school, and the effects of such attributes may be confused with peer effects. Consider a school that is becoming dysfunctional, say because of an ineffective principal, and finds that all of its upper income families flee over time. In such a case, achievement of the remaining students could fall along with the incomes of peers, erroneously suggesting that peer income affects achievement even when there is no such relationship. Students performed better when parents showed a lot of interest in their studies through support, affirmation, good relationship and family cohesion. Most studies found this kind of support from parents in wanting. Parents Teacher Associations (PTA) should be supported as it involves parents to directly get involved in the running and participate in school activities for the good of their children. This provides a particularly good linkage between parents, teachers, learners and the community. An outcome measure is regressed on peer group characteristics that are usually constructed as school aggregates of family background variables or achievement. These measures are readily available and, if they

adequately capture the influences of families, would seem appropriate for peers. In peer estimation, ignoring history has a stronger impact. Members of peer groups tend to have similar experiences over time through systematic neighborhood and school choice; many omitted historical factors will be common to the peer group. Perhaps even more relevant, many left out or poorly measured contemporaneous inputs will also tend to be common to the group. - Summers and Wolfe (1977). Kerchoff and Parrow (1979) address the notion that early marriage has detrimental effects on education attainment. Bartz and Nye (1970) suggest that the timing of marriage has an effect on eventual attainments, mediates the effect of social origins on aspirations and achievements levels. Students who do not do well in education find the prospect of continuing education less rewarding than the alternative open to them in manual jobs and marriage.

Extent of Social Cultural Factors influence on Academic Performance:

Before embarking on how social factors influenced academic performance, it was important to start by looking at how teachers influenced academic performance in secondary schools. Marchesi and Martin (2002) observed that personal, family and academic factors affecting low achievement in secondary school considered a key element for pupils' personal and academic development. The value given from teacher to pupil and vice-versa are usually reciprocal, highlighting additionally the personal relationship. The same authors found that teacher's expectations significantly influence students' results. The teacher's assessment was mediated by two variables; (1) Student's intelligence, that is, the greater the intelligence, the better the academic results and the better reciprocal appreciation between teacher and student. (2) Family support for student education also made the student value the teacher more highly -Castejon and Perez, (1998). The goals for education held by teachers, school administrators and society at large reflect desires for children to develop social and moral competencies as well as intellectual skills. Moreover students who were academically successful are reported to have achieved socially appropriate as well as academic goals at school e.g. Wentzel (1989). Teacher-pupil relationships are also mediated by the teachers' attribution of poor performance to the student's performance Georgion et al (2002). According to Marchesi and Martin (2002) the pupil's social cultural level and previous aptitudes indirectly influence the results of learning. Castejon and Perez (1998) observed that socio-metric status of the student influenced performance directly, since it is influenced by intelligence. Other research showed that positive correlation existed between performance and peer relationship - Boute (2002). At secondary school level, it was observed that performance could be influenced by socio cultural factors and previous performances. However peer influence had also proved a strong influence on acquisition of social competence which enabled the learner to achieve highly in academics.

Factors Affecting Effectiveness of Social Cultural Factors in Enhancing Academic Performance:

According to Schiefelbaum (2000) and Simmons (2001) family background is most important and most eighty factor in determining the academic performance attained by the student. Among family factors of greatest influence were social class variables, educational and family environment. The influence of social factors according to Marchesi and Martin (2002) was mediated by cultural level, which in turn determined family expectations, values and attitudes regarding education. In other words, motivation to achieve depended more on the parents' level of learning than on their level of income, Llorente Guardian (1970). The other notable component that affected academic performance according to Castejon and Perez (1998) is a positive cultural environment, insecurity, traditional ceremonies, religion, ethnic diversity have affected academics positively or negatively depending on circumstance. According to Lareau (1987) and Ogbu (1978) ethnic variations in parental involvement in education placed emphasis on the value and utility of education, discrimination and bias experienced at school by many African students. This had resulted into mistrust of school and teachers by many African American parents. Involvement and achievement level varied across ethnicity Jeyness (2007). Students who are not heavy drinkers or who abstain from drinking altogether still suffer negative consequences from other students' alcohol abuse, called secondary effects. Additionally, the institution as a whole suffers as the academic performance is compromised by students who abuse alcohol. Finally, the secondary effects of high-risk drinking can reach as far as neighboring communities, Ford (1982);

Methodology And Design:-

Research Design:

The study was quantitative in nature and was conducted through cross-sectional sample survey research design. The researcher investigated population by selecting sample of secondary schools in which the study about effects of social cultural factor on secondary school students' performance in Kwanza division of Trans-Nzoia County- Kenya was conducted.

Target and Accessible population:

The target population consisted of 200 form four students, 62 teachers, 12 Head teachers and one DEO (Kwanza District Education Statistics 2010). The class (2011) form four students undertaking their final secondary school national exams had an opportunity to be well nurtured by their teachers to cover the syllabus. They gave information of how adequate they had been prepared to achieve better academic grades. The teachers facilitated the teaching process. The head and deputies supervised and managed the implementation of the curriculum for student's academic achievements in their schools. The QASOs inspected and monitored the implementation of the curriculum and students academic achievement among other secondary school activities in the division and district as per Government Teachers (Handbook, 2007).

Sample Population:

200 form four students, 62 teachers, 12 head teachers and 1 education officer took part in the study. The study covered four provincial category schools, 6 district category schools and two private schools category. Of the 800 candidates in the selected schools under study, 200 students accepted to take part in the study representing 25% of the candidates' population. Of the 200 students respondents' 71 were females and 129 males of whom 158 were aged between 15-19 years and 42 were in the age bracket 20-24 years. They were 71 students drawn from district schools and 108 from provincial schools and 21 from private schools. Of these students 88 were from mixed boarding schools; 54 from mixed day school; 41 from single boys' boarding schools and 17 from single girls' boarding schools. Therefore answers given covered a diverse group of students under the major influence of different social cultural factors.

The tables below shows the sample characteristics of the heterogeneous population under study as described above

Table 3.1:- Sample Population.

SR	Population of Section	Target Number	Sample Size
1	Form Four students	800	200
2	Teachers	75	62
3	Head teachers	14	12
4	Education Officers	4	1
	Total	891	275

Sampling techniques:

The study employed simple random sampling, stratified sampling and purposive sampling techniques. A simple sampling technique was used to select the secondary schools under studied. Stratified sampling on the other hand was used to select the students, the teaching administrative staff. For selection of the education officer's purposive technique was used. Simple random sampling technique selected a sample without bias from the target/ accessible population. Stratified sampling identifies sub-groups in the population and their proportion and selected from each sub-groups in the population to form a sample. The researcher used purposive technique to consciously decide who to include in the sample. The researcher was well informed that the target population was not uniform. The students were not necessarily of similar characteristics and even the staffs (21 art teachers and 41 science subject teachers) were from different categories of school environment and the education officer gave his observations independently.

As such the target and accessible population was not regarded as homogenous but heterogeneous. Simple random sampling ensured that each member of the target population had an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. Stratified sampling techniques therefore were used to ensure that the target population was divided into different homogenous strata and that each stratum was represented in the sample in a proportion equivalent to its size in the accessible population. This ensured that each sub-group characteristic were represented in the sample thus raising the external validity of the study. Purposive sampling saved time, money, and was applied to select typically useful cases of the heterogeneous population only.

Findings and Discussions:-

Whereas the objective of 8-4-4 system of education according to the Mackey report (1981) and Sifuna et al (2006) stress on technical and vocational education to help graduates at every level to acquire scientific and practical skills necessary for self employment, salaried employment and further training at middle level colleges or universities; The situation on the ground is that most students academic performance is below pass mark to enable them get access to middle level colleges.

The study established that Students from Kwanza secondary schools who manage to score C+ and above in form four national examination are unable to get admission into public universities due to stiff competition and majority get admitted to high cost private universities or join parallel high cost program at public universities. Most of these students are from poor families and therefore cannot afford unless they secure donors to fund their education. According to the district development plan (DDP) -(2005-2012) report, majority of graduates of secondary schools and primary level are known to engage in idleness, criminal activities, bicycle business which is commonly known as boda-boda business which has become a health hazard and a major road carnage in Kenya.

Also according to education inspection report by the quality assurance and standards officer (2009) revealed that the major cause of unrest, drop out and poor performance in Kwanza division is dependent caliber of the learners. The recommendations by DQASO were that students in secondary school should be properly nurtured by both parents and teachers. It was also established that students peer group factors among other social cultural factors also hamper candidates towards achieving academic excellence. Students who opt to ventures into self employment hardly develop their business to a self sustaining level. It is a fact that the level of academic performance for most secondary schools is low in Kwanza division. It was established that the schools' performances in national examinations are unsatisfactory and most students do not excel to get admission to Kenyan public universities. The study established that the system of education in Kenya was a burden to both teachers and pupils due to the wide scope expected in the numerous subjects studied. The failure of the system was blamed on financial constraints and inadequate training of the implementers. The study established that there were several private schools that offer an international curriculum, including the London education and international baccalaureate (GCE), among others.- Kenya - Educational System—overview(2006). The study established that social cultural factors affected academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division;

Discussions:-

Generally there are numerous students in Secondary schools in Kwanza division due to the government initiative to provide free secondary education in Kenya. The number of students' admission differs in schools as indicted in table 4.1. Kwanza division is classified as a rural center, in reference to Government policy on Education (Free Secondary Education) 2003

There has been witnessed increased number of students in secondary schools enrolment. Some schools have a higher number of Students enrolments than others. The examples of those with high number of students include Goseta Boys Secondary and Friends School Kwanza followed by Friends School Namanjalala and St Francis Kolongolo. The rest of the school have below 300 students enrolment with the least being Kwanza girls with a record of only 110 students.

As regards the number of teachers in the schools under study, the male teachers' recruitment rate dominated in all schools. However, in all schools, there was relative understaffing in all subjects. Considering classified school category, there was no national school represented in Kwanza division as other categories featured dominated by district schools as shown in table 4.1

The first objective of the study was to establish the social cultural factors that have affected academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division of Kenya. The data analysis and interpretation revealed the following findings under this objective. The findings on the opinion of low level of parents' education most respondents believed that this factor had strong effect on academic performance. This finding is in support of Phillips (2005) "It became so definite that, based upon parental education levels; one could predict how the kids would perform academically". What this tells us is that it is critical for students to finish high school, as they are the parents of tomorrow in order to improve the overall performance of students' performance in future. The other findings are that low social classes within the society have affected academic performance in Kwanza division. The acceptability of the above factor was 65%, a combination of strongly agree and agree respondents' opinion on low social class within the society has an effect on the academic performance. This finding is in support of Pop Kin (1991) who asserted that low social classes have an effect on academic performances of students. Those students from low class within the society have difficulties in achieving their optimum level of achievement as they struggle to pay fees, lack proper balanced diets, lack daily necessities and even supportive learning materials. The Kenyan government has initiated bursary funds to needy students so as to make education more accessible to low income families but this has been inadequate. The findings on drugs alcohol abuse among family members showed that the majority of the

respondents who strongly agreed (36%) are in support of studies done by Skaggs (2000) and Krohn (1997) that found exposure to deviant family members and peers has been linked to increase in a wide range of delinquent behaviors including drug use, covert anti social behavior and drop in academic achievement or high dropout rate in academic institutions.

The above findings have been supported by Coplan et al (2002) for level of family cohesion and family relationship proved capable of predicting performance in school. The second objective established the extent to which social cultural factors have affected academic performance in secondary school in Kwanza division. The data analysis and interpretation revealed the following findings under this objective. The finding is that parents attitude towards education has improved was supported by Castejon and Perez (1998) who found that child perception of family support directly affects performance, while mothers level of studies does so indirectly. Studies have shown the involvement of parents had a positive element in the performance of students. This was in support of the introduction of P.T.A that linked the parents, teacher students and community in school activities. The annual general meeting and a class academic open days plus involving the parents in sports and other school functions had opened up awareness for parents to take keen interest in the education of their children.

The other findings were that in most schools, parents who were highly involvement in school activities had a positive effect on academic performance. The acceptability of the above is 69% agreed that most parents' involvement in school activities had a positive effect on academic performance. It concurred with Wentzel (1989) that having supportive relationships with parents, teachers and peers had been associated with academic success. Therefore supportive, relationships relate directly to academic achievements independent of their relations to motivational outcomes. On the other hand from selected schools it was revealed that there is an increase in child-mother/ pregnancy. Bartz and Nye (1970) suggested that the timing of marriage has an effect on eventual attainments and achievements levels of education. Students who do perform poorly in education find the prospect education continuation less rewarding than alternatives like getting manual jobs or marriage. The other findings revealed that there was early marriage due to bad company as revealed by A La Lazear (2001). A great percentage of 38% of the total respondents agreed while 31% strongly agreed that there is early marriage due to bad company. There is a need for schools, parents and churches to put in place guidance and counseling programmes for students to educate them on the negative effect of associating with bad company in order to enhance academic performance.

The third and final objective of this study established that there were some factors affecting the effectiveness of the social cultural factors in enhancing academic performance in Kwanza division, Kenya. The data analysis and interpretation revealed the following major findings under this objective. In the Kwanza division there is lack of effective school leadership leading to low academic performance. Kain (2005) quote leadership influence students learning by helping to promote vision and goals and by ensuring that resources and education programmes are in place to enable teachers teach well. The other findings revealed that, there was lack of enough qualified teachers to effectively improve academic performance. Wiley (1996) is quoted that the empowerment of the teachers as an important factor in terms content, control over method and levels of influence in the school enhances academic performance apart from other factors. The other findings revealed that lack of effective career guidance have contributed to low academic performance Georgion et al (2002). Teacher – pupil relationships through career guidance by the teachers contribute positively to students' academic performance. Guidance and counseling by parents and teachers is a major policy the government of Kenya is encouraging in all learning institutions for the successful performance of learners. The low income levels of parents have led to lack basic learning materials support to students' hence poor performance. Quote Martin (2002) that the upper- class students worldwide show a better use of metacognitive strategies than those of lower social class.

Conclusion:-

The 8-4-4 system of education (Mackay 1981) objectives was to minimize school dropout and increase school and college completion rate, improve on self reliance by offering technical subjects and ensure many students are able to acquire good grades to offer them a chance to pursue higher education at middle level colleges and universities. However according to the Kwanza district analysis of form four exam 2010, the performance at form 4 level registered dismal performances and the same trend has been on the retrogressive trend over the years. The real situation on the ground has led the question being raised about the academic performance and effect of social cultural factors on academic performance. It is on this prevailing situation of poor performance of Kwanza division students especially at form four national examinations that calls attention for investigation in the division education's performance. It is a fact that most of the secondary school students in Kwanza division do not reflect the expectations of the 8-4-4 system of education after completing the cycle of education. The education inspection

reports by the Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (2005) reveal that the poor performance at KCSE is coupled with the negative attitude of parents towards education, frequent tribal classes witnessed every after every general elections in Kenya, poor attitudes towards education by parents and lack of adequate teaching force that have impacted negatively on the performance of National KSCE examination. The perception and the nurturing of candidates at form four have attracted low opinion expectations. However the teaching force and parents ought to be positive minded and encourages form four candidates to work hard towards better performance and be confident of their capabilities to perform just as well as students from other divisions in Kenya.

The study particularly focused on the nature of social cultural factors affecting academic performance in secondary schools, the extent at which social cultural factors have affected academic performance in secondary schools, and the social cultural factors affecting the effectiveness of social cultural factors in enhancing academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division.

It was based on the above study that conclusions were drawn as regard the effects of social cultural factors on academic performance in Kwanza division secondary schools. The effects of social cultural factors and the academic performance of students in Kwanza division should be addressed and given uppermost priority if the worrying trend of KCSE performance in Kwanza division was to be reversed. Teachers, parents and all education stakeholders should work together to eradicate the negative impact of social cultural factors such as low level of parents' education, low social class of families, abuse of drugs and alcohol, polygamous families, group influence among age mates and students so as to foster a conducive learning atmosphere geared towards good academic performance.

In conclusion the government continued provision of adult education programmes, provision of agricultural and business loans, increased workshops and seminars on economic development, and churches involvement and promotion of guiding and counseling programs among students, religious group influence on students and constant interactions of parents in school activities are likely to be good indicators that affect the effectiveness of the social cultural factors enhancing academic performance that ought to be encouraged. However there was need to address adequately the challenges facing the effectiveness of social cultural factors affecting the academic performance. The above studies need to be translated into reality in Kwanza division, Kenya.

Recommendations:-

The researchers' findings reveal that the male teachers dominate in teaching fraternity of all the secondary schools in Kwanza division. The same observations were quoted in Kwanza division Development Plan (2011-2012). As for the social cultural factors affecting schools, more district schools were presented along with more male teachers and students compared to their female counter part. Majority of the respondents in the study agreed that social cultural factors and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Kwanza division of Kenya was an important factor for educational growth and development. Basically social cultural factors and academic performance of students in Kwanza division were related in terms of service, goal delivery and results from the students. There were more effects of social cultural factors and students academic in order to realize good results. The extent of social cultural factors Kwanza division, showing that more factors determined the extent to which social cultural factors affect academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza division. Finally it was confirmed that there are factors that affects the effectiveness of the social cultural factors that enhance academic performance in secondary school students in Kwanza division. It is based on the above background that the recommendations below were made:- As for the social cultural factors affecting academic performance in secondary schools, the Kenyan parliament should enact an education act similar to that of the United States of America, (the smith Hughes Act of 1917) for the following purposes:-

1. To improve more funds for adult education and encourage parents to take further studies.
2. To sponsor principals and deputies for leadership trainings, workshops and seminars.
3. The government to provide adequate fund to train and engage youth in income generating projects.
4. The current free secondary education (FSE) fund should be enhanced to cover complete expenses for secondary school education.
5. Head teachers and school committees should be trained on proper utilization, transparency and accounting of free secondary education funds. This will enable donors to have faith in the governments' proper utilization of the grants and donations.
6. The churches and community leaders should empathetically educate the society on retrogressive social cultural practices that negatively affect academic performance.

7. Religious leaders should educate young people on how to handle social cultural factors during this critical stage of their development that negatively affect their academic performance.

Based on the extent to which social cultural factors have affected academic performance in Kwanza division secondary schools, the Kenyan parliament in conjunction with ministry of education should enact a law to provide a framework of information concerning social cultural factors affecting academic performance. This will equip learners with the knowledge of how to fight negative social cultural factors influence on their education performance. The learners need qualified guidance and counseling professionals to enlighten them on negative effects of illicit alcohol and drugs abuse that affect their academic performance. Also more workshops and seminars for learners that will expose them to challenges of social cultural factors and motivated to improve their academic performances. The Government with other stakeholders in education should provide sponsorship to secondary schools teachers to get trained in guidance and counseling since they are the ones who interact with students often and should be in a position to curb any negative social cultural factors at an early stage before its manifestation. The Government and other stakeholders in education should come up with more girls' secondary schools that are properly equipped. The Government should establish two model national secondary schools as centre of academic excellence to improve academic performance for secondary schools students. One school for male students and the other for female students in every division to be used as a target schools in the area.

The Ministry of Education (M.O.E) be able to handle the factors affecting the effectiveness of social cultural in enhancing academic performance, through the Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E), Kenya National Examination Council and other SAGAS established in the new education strategic plan (2011-2016) through which practiced and guidelines of social cultural and students academic performance in secondary schools ought to be implemented. The Ministry of Education through parliament needs to prepare a frame work for social cultural factors and academic performance of secondary school student through continued training and research update. The Government and other stakeholders shall be encouraged to face challenges of social cultural factors and academic performance of secondary schools students in Kenya. For further research the researcher wishes to propose the following topics:-

1. Determine the influence of the parents on academic performance of secondary schools in Kwanza Division.
2. Establish the effect of students family background and academic performance secondary schools in Kwanza Division; Kenya.
3. To establish the effect of students motivation on academic performance in selected secondary schools in Kwanza Division, Kenya.
4. Determine the role of the government in influencing academic performance in Kwanza Division, Kenya.
5. The effect of school leadership on academic performance in secondary schools in Kwanza Division, Kenya.

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