

**INFORMAL COMPARISON STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE OF KCSE, A CASE OF IMENTI SOUTH AND IMENTI  
CENTRAL IN MERU COUNTY.**

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## ABSTRACT

Education is the best legacy a nation can give to her citizens, especially the youth. This is because the development of any society depends much on quality of education of such a nation. The purpose of the study was to determine factors that lead to dismal performance of KCSE in Imenti central, as informally compared to Imenti South Sub County in Meru County. The researcher was guided by four objectives and four matching research questions. The location of the study was Imenti central and Imenti south sub counties of Meru County. The target population was 5616 subjects. The number of secondary schools consisted the unit of analysis. The sample size was 702 subjects which constituted of the head teachers, class teachers, students, parents, community leaders and quality assurance officers. The study used ex-post facto research design. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. The pilot study was done in two schools from each sub county but the schools were not in the sample size. The pilot test results were used to validate the instruments as well as the reliability of the instrument. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Results were grouped according to the research objectives. Frequency tables and bar graphs were used to present the results. The study established that schools in Imenti south sub county perform better than schools in Imenti central sub-county partly because schools in Imenti south have adequate staffroom, libraries, laboratories, reference books, wall maps and charts, staffroom furniture and library furniture than schools in Imenti Central sub-county. It was also established that schools in Imenti south sub county perform better than schools in Imenti Central sub-county partly because high rates of student absenteeism in Imenti Central due to truancy and suspension. It was also established that poor parental participation in academic work of their children and lack of communication between parents and students among parents of students in Imenti Central could partly explain the differences between students' performance in KCSE in the two sub-counties. The study also found out that the differences in politicians' involvement in educational issues in the two sub-counties might be one of the reasons behind the differences in student performance in KCSE in the two sub-counties. The results also indicated that teacher characteristics are almost similar in the two sub-counties and hence do not account for the differences in students KCSE performance between schools from the two sub-counties. The study recommended that stakeholders in education sector in Imenti Central Sub-county should improve physical and teaching/learning resources in schools to help in improving students' performance in KCSE. The study also recommended that parents in Imenti Central Sub-county should be sensitized on the importance of participation in academic work of their children and positive communication with their children in fostering performance in KCSE. Finally, the study recommended that politicians in Imenti Central should concentrate on capacity building of education stakeholders in the sub-county in order to improve KCSE performance.