

## **Influence of Selected Teacher Factors on Pupils' Academic Performance in public Primary Schools in Keiyo South Sub-County, Kenya**

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**Abstract:** - Teachers are central to pupils' success in primary schools and teacher quality forms a significant factor in predicting learning in schools. Over the past seven years (2008-2014), pupils' performance in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) has been average and inconsistent. The study utilised descriptive survey research design. The target population for the study comprised of 114 Head teachers and 1046 teachers. A total of 86 head teachers and 278 teachers participated in the study forming a sample size of 364 respondents. Data collected was analysed using quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics; frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). In qualitative analysis, responses from interviews were discussed in themes that related to the objectives of the study. The study results showed that teachers perceived that the level of commitment (88.4%) and experience (85.0%) influenced pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County. The findings of this study will inform the ministry of education, teachers' service commission and school administrators on the importance of the selected factors on pupils' academic performance..

**Key words:** *academic performance, Perceptions, Teacher level of commitment and Teacher experience*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Teacher quality is a central factor to learners' academic performance (Elliot & Crosswell, 2002; Ndirangu, 2004; Wanjohi, 2007). Amongst education researchers, teacher quality is widely considered an important school factor and maybe even be the most important factor of students learning (Ladd 2008; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain 2005; Day, Elliott & Kington, 2005). Ndirangu (2004) posits that teachers play an important role in the development and implementation of the curriculum. According to the Republic of Kenya (2003), a teacher is one of the most important inputs in the education system. The quality of education is directly related to the quality of teaching and learning (Kimani, Kara & Njagi 2013). The study sought to look at various teacher characteristics that define the quality of teaching and learning and influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County. These characteristics involved teacher qualifications and experiences, their level of motivation, personal attributes, attitude, and commitment. Studies show that when teachers are motivated and love the teaching profession, students are motivated to learn the content taught by their teachers more effectively (Abadzi, 2009; Phamtose, 2009). Therefore, for learners to be able to make a connection between what is taught in school and its application in problem solving in real life, teachers have to be effective in their teaching.

Teacher experience in classroom instructions has been a significant determinant of academic performance among learners in schools. Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2007) established that competent teachers versus those who had the least experience had greater academic success than the later. In Israel, Zuzovsky, (n.d) suggests that while inexperienced teachers were less effective more than senior teachers, the benefits of experience levelled off after a few years. In Kenya, studies agree that teaching experience is positively correlated with higher students' achievement even though findings about them vary (Yara & Wanjohi, 2011; Kosgei, 2013). Mukhwana, Chelagat and Jepkorir (2013) observed that teacher experience had significant effects on pupils' academic performance. Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005) on the other hand found differences among teachers in terms of their value added impact on learners achievement and went on to note that the variation was not readily explained by factors such as graduate degrees or experience after the first few years in the profession. The problem in Sub Saharan Africa could be compounded by the fact that majority of African countries (Kenya included) have been reducing their investments in teacher training and recruiting non-professional teachers both

as a cost-cutting measure and as a quick-fix solution to teacher shortage (Phamtose, 2009; Nabukenya, 2010; Yara & Wanjohi, 2011) Institute of Education and Action-Aid, 2010). This study looked at teachers' perceptions on the influence of teacher qualifications in Keiyo South Sub-County on pupils' academic performance to see if the results were coinciding with the above mentioned studies.

On the relationship between teacher commitments and academic performance, a research done in Mauritius on students' achievement believed that the falling level of academic achievement is attributed to lack of commitment of teachers (Morakinyu, 2003). According to Ajao (2000), low quality education depends on teachers as reflected in the performance of their duties. Ajao added that teachers are responsible for translating policy into action and principles based on practice during teaching and learning (Ajao, 2000). In Kenya, a study done in Bondo Sub-county stated that poor academic performance was because of teachers' lack of dedication to their duties. It claimed that some teachers were traders while others were drunkards. An inspection made in public primary schools showed that teachers report to duty late, come drunk and utter unprintable words (World Bank, 2007). It is worth noting that in Kenya today the most important thing in our education system is academic achievement and excellence in examination results (Ndirangu, 2004; Mbwiria, 2010). Every year, primary schools are rated as to how well or how poorly they achieved in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examinations. This is done in total disregard to factors that might have hindered their achievement. High achievers in these examinations are considered as successful individuals while low achievers are regarded as failures in life (Chepchieng & Kiboss, 2004). Stakeholders have claimed a variety of factors although no substantive research has been conducted to see whether teacher personal attributes contribute to pupils' academic success in Kenya extensively. Harris and Sass (2006) adds that factors that could have led to the poor results in Kenya are given little attention, if any at all. The same dismal performance has been reported in Keiyo South Sub-County..

### **Statement of the Problem**

There has been inconsistent performance of pupils in KCPE for the past seven years in Keiyo South Sub-County (2008-2014). For the past seven years, KCPE average percentage score has improved by only 1.89%. Several efforts have been put in place by the school management, government and parents' committees but the results of pupils at the end of 8 years are not convincing. Teachers play a central role in determining pupils' success. Studies have been conducted to determine the relationship between teachers selected factors: experience and commitment on pupils' academic performance in Kenyan secondary schools but few have looked at primary schools. Attempts have been made to research on the same area for example; studies have looked at how teacher characteristics affected pupils' academic achievement in secondary schools. None of the studies looked at primary school situation that forms the basic ground for pupils' future learning. It is against this backdrop that this study investigated teachers' perceptions on the influence of selected teacher factors; experience and commitment on pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County, Elgeyo-Marakwet County, Kenya.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To establish teachers' perceptions on the influence of teacher experience on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County.
2. To establish teachers' perceptions on the influence of teacher level of commitment on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County.

## **II. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The study targeted a population of 114 public primary schools in the three divisions that are Chepkorio (60); Soy (17) and Metkei (37) totalling to 114 schools. In these 114 schools, the study targeted 114 headteachers and 1046 teachers. Quantitative and qualitative were collected using questionnaires and interviews. The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and qualitative data were analysed thematically. The qualitative analysis involved the idea of using themes and categories in analysing text and phrases from interview schedules.

## **III. RESULTS**

### **Demographic Data of Teachers**

Results showed that 135 (57.0%) of teachers who participated in the study were female while 102 (43.0%) were male. most 194 (81.9%) were from day primary schools while 43 (18.1%) came from boarding schools. It is true that there are few public boarding primary schools in the Sub-County and this explains why majority of teachers who participated came from day primary schools. The findings showed that 100 (42.2%) were aged 36-45 years,

68 (23.6%) were aged more than 46 years, 56 (23.6%) ages ranged between 26-35 years and only 13 (5.5%) were found to be aged less than 25 years. The findings indicate that majority of teachers were middle aged (less than 45 years). Computed results for KCPE shows that they scored a maximum of 376 and a minimum of 212 while on normal examinations, the minimum score was 171.79 with a maximum score of 382.00. Moreover, calculated means showed that KCPE average performance stood at 266.45 while normal school examinations stood at 271.74. The statistics shows that schools performance in Keiyo South Sub-County was on average.

### **Influence of Teacher Experience on Pupils' Academic Performance**

The first objective of the research sought to establish head teachers' and teachers' perceptions on how teacher experience influenced academic performance of pupils in primary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County. The teachers were asked to indicate the number of years they had been in the teaching profession. The results are given in Table 1.

**Table 1: Teacher work experience**

<b>Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 1 year	8	3.4
1-3 years	20	8.4
4-6 years	38	16.0
7-9 years	14	5.9
10 years and above	157	66.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Teacher questionnaire (2015)

From their responses, 157 (66.2%) had worked for more than 10 years, 38 (16.0%) for 4-6 years, 20 (8.4%) for 1-3 years, 14 (5.9%) for 7-9 years and only 8 (3.4%) had worked for less than 10 years. The results suggests that majority of teachers had worked for so many years and therefore understood the influence of their period of work on academic performance of pupils. This was revealed by Kosgei *et al.*, (2013) research in Nandi South Sub-County, whereby teachers who had less than 3 years of experience; students' academic achievement was below average (83.3%) as compared to teachers who had 12 years and above teaching experience whose students' academic achievement was high (100%). In addition, UNICEF (2011) report indicated that teachers' skills and experience were important for pupils learning. However, in some schools, some head teachers indicated that their teachers were not experienced and therefore required to be updated on new modern classroom techniques and emerging issues. Moreover, when asked to indicate the number of years they had taught in their current schools, 63 (26.6%) said that they had stayed for more than 10 years, 58 (24.5%) for 1-3 years, 48 (20.3%) for 4-6 years, 35 (14.8%) for less than a year and 33 (13.9%) had stayed for 7-9 years. The more the number of years they had taught in one particular school, the more they were accustomed to teaching and learning processes. Another aspect that the study asked teachers to indicate was on the frequency to which they had attended in-service training. Professional development activities can be conducted by many different organizations, in school and out of school, on the job or during sabbatical leave (Mukhwana *et al.*, 2013). On these occasions, practicing teachers update their content knowledge and teaching skills to adjust to the introduction of new curricula, new research findings on teaching and learning, changes in the needs of the learners' population (Kimani *et al.*, 2013). The teachers were asked to indicate the frequency to which they attended in-service training courses within and outside the school. The results are illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2: Frequency to which teachers attend in-service training**

<b>Extent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Never	24	10.1
Rarely	28	11.8
Sometimes	113	47.7
Occasionally	61	25.7
Always	11	4.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>100.0</b>

According to the results in Table 2, only 11 (4.6%) of teachers reported that they attended in-service training courses regularly. A significant 113 (47.7%) mentioned that they sometimes attended training, 61 (25.7%) said that they occasionally attend, 28 (11.8%) said that they rarely attended while 24 (10.15) said that they had never attended in-service training courses. This shows that majority of teachers occasionally attend in-service development training. This is in agreement with cross country study by Michaelowa and Wechtler (2008) who found out that majority of teachers in sub Saharan African countries did not regularly attend in-services training

programmes offered during school days and holidays. This shows that teachers lack of regular attendance of regular training is common across several sub Saharan African countries. However, Enamul *et al.*, (n.d) established that teacher attendance of in-service training was common among Bangladesh schools. The study went further to investigate teachers' perceptions on the influence of their competencies as experience measurement on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Keiyo South Sub-County. Through statements measured on a Likert scale; 1-Strongly Disagree (least) and 5-Strongly Agree. The descriptive results are given in Table 3.

**Table 3 Teachers' perceptions on the influence of their experience on academic performance of pupils**

Perceptions	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
i) When teachers are always prepared in teaching, they deliver content well leading to achievement of objectives	237	2.00	5.00	4.7764	.56429
ii) Marking all class work, CATs and exams on time provides room for remedial work averting failure	237	2.00	5.00	4.7637	.55528
iii) School mean score is improved if good class control strategies are used	237	2.00	5.00	4.7553	.58152
iv) Teachers answering questions asked by pupils precisely encourages positive attitude hence pupils' achievement	237	1.00	5.00	4.7004	.70630
v) Considering individual differences boosts self esteem hence learners' achievement	237	1.00	5.00	4.5105	.81621
vi) Excellent mastery of subject matter in all subjects raises academic standards	237	1.00	5.00	4.4599	.81529
vii) Improvisation of teaching resources creates a good atmosphere for learning	237	1.00	5.00	4.2574	.81641
viii) Attractive teaching aids induces attention which motivates pupils learning	237	1.00	5.00	4.0253	.84835
<b>Mean perception on experience of teachers and academic performance</b>				<b>4.5311</b>	<b>0.71296</b>

Results from Table 3 shows that teachers strongly agreed (M=4.78 and SD=0.56) that when teachers are prepared in teaching, they deliver curriculum content well leading to achievement of objectives. This shows that adequate teacher preparation as a professional competency leads to better learning environments in schools and later good academic outcomes. This shows that teachers are organised and prepared in teaching. The result coincides with Jacob and Lefgren (2004) who established that teachers who were professionally prepared conducted their lessons very well. Furthermore, the findings also show that teachers also strongly agreed (M=4.76 and SD=0.56) that marking all class work, CATs and exams on time provides room for remedial work averting failure. Teacher habit in marking all examinations will ensure that he/she conducts revision faster and therefore learners are able to correct their mistakes and this prepares them to tackle future examinations well. However, Slow marking of exams and other evaluation assignments negatively affects academic performance of pupils in primary schools. The findings corresponds with Gbore and Daramola (2007) study that showed that teachers in Nigeria regularly examined students in CATs so as to evaluate their academic performance in schools. This shows that teachers role in examining learners academic progress is critical to their improved academic performance.

It was also evident that most teachers also strongly agreed (M=4.76 and SD=0.58) that school mean scores were improved if good class control strategies were used. This implies that teachers understand their responsibilities in ensuring that they meet their daily, weekly and termly targets on time by regulating and planning all their activities well. Fehler *et al.*, (2008) also indicated that when teachers have good classroom management strategies, learning and performance improves. The authors argued that when teachers tend not to control their classrooms, teaching and learning process is usually affected. The results of the study further showed that most teachers also strongly agreed (M=4.70 and SD=0.70) that teachers who answer questions asked by pupils precisely and clearly lead to positive attitude development by learners which increases their academic performance scores. Mukhwana *et al.*, (2013) results coincide with study findings which established that for conducive learning to be experienced in the classroom, constant questioning and discussions between teachers and learners was important. In addition, the teachers also tended to strongly agree (M=4.51 and SD=0.81) that teachers consideration of individual differences boosted self-learning, self-esteem leading to better academic results. This shows that for the years they had been teaching, they had been able to learn the

needs and expectations of learners based on their weaknesses and challenges in learning. Another positive observation from them is that they respond to learners' queries on time thereby improving their engagement in the classroom. This finding is in agreement with Zuzovsky (n.d) who established a positive relationship between content-focused professional development activities and student achievement.

The results further showed that majority of teachers had positive perceptions (M=4.46 and SD=0.81) that excellent mastery of subject matter in all subjects raised school academic standards. This is because a teacher becomes effective when he/she exhibits mastery of curriculum content and this ensures that learners understand concepts being taught in class (Murnane & Phillips, 2009). Similar to the study findings, Ladd (2008) established that teacher mastery of curriculum content was based on their experience in teaching and this affected academic performance of students in Iowa schools. Study findings further revealed that teachers agreed (M=4.25 and SD=0.81) that improvisation of teaching resources created a good atmosphere for learning in schools. The improvisation of instructional resources is one of the qualities of an experienced teacher; this improves learners understanding and creates thirst for new knowledge in them. Kimani *et al.*, (2013) also acknowledged that teacher competence in improvising educational resources was an important predictor of academic performance. The teachers also tended to show positive perceptions (M=4.02 and SD=0.84) on the statement that attractive teaching aids induced attention which motivated pupils learning in the classrooms. This therefore shows that teachers improvise teaching and learning resources to ensure that learning is interactive and lively thereby promoting pupils understanding of the subject matter. The findings concur with Etsey (2005) which informs that the availability and use of teaching and learning materials affect the effectiveness of teachers' lessons in the classrooms. Furthermore, the study wanted to check on teachers' perceptions on whether their experience determined academic performance of pupils in a Likert scale; strongly disagree to strongly agree. The results are summarised in Table 4.

**Table 4: Whether teacher experience influence academic performance of pupils**

Experience in teaching influence academic performance of pupils	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	11	4.6
Disagree	5	2.1
Undecided	19	8.0
Agree	88	37.1
Strongly Agree	114	48.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Results from Table 4 reveal that most 114 (48.1%) of teachers agreed that their experience in teaching affected academic performance of pupils, 88 (37.1%) agreed, 19 (8.0%) were neutral, 11 (4.6%) strongly disagreed while 5 (2.1%) disagreed. This indicates that teachers perceive that their experience in teaching is a determinant of performance of their pupils in examinations. One head teacher supported this argument by indicating that teachers who are experienced are able to handle academic issues with ease and produce good results as opposed to inexperienced ones. Moreover, the number of years a teacher has taught, the better the results. Experienced teachers also explain deeply the subject content to learners (Clotfelter *et al.*, 2007). In addition, an experienced teacher has improved teaching approaches compared to an inexperienced one who has not mastered all teaching methodologies (Olopot-Okurut *et al.*, 2005). The results are supported by previous findings; for instance, Wenglinsky (2000) established a positive relationship between teacher experience in attending in-service training and learner academic performance in special schools in New Zealand.

**Influence of Teacher Level of Commitment on Pupils' Academic Performance**

The second objective of this study was to establish head teachers and teachers' perceptions on the influence of teacher level of commitment on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Keiyo Sub-County. The teachers were asked the frequency to which they completed the syllabus. The results are presented in Table

**Table 5: Extent to which teachers complete their syllabus**

Rate of syllabus completion	Frequency	Percent
Rarely	4	1.7
Sometimes	57	24.1
Occasionally	46	19.4
Always	130	54.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From their responses, 130 (54.9%) said that they always finished on time, 57 (24.1%) said that they sometimes finished, 46 (19.4%) said that they occasionally finished while 4 (1.7%) said that they rarely completed school syllabus. The result suggests that teachers who are committed tend to prepare and complete their syllabus well. Kimani *et al.*, (2013) supported these results, they found out that timely completion of Form Four syllabus significantly affected academic achievement. Schools where teachers completed the syllabus three months before the examinations had higher grades compared to schools where teachers completed the syllabus in time for or a month to KCSE in Nyandarua county. Even in Ghana Etsey (2005), the results showed that fewer teachers in the Shama sub-metro completed the syllabuses than the teachers in the high-achieving schools. The completion of the syllabus for each subject in each class provides the foundation for the next class to be built upon. When the syllabus is not completed, content that should be taught in the next class that is based on the previous class could not be taught. As this continues, there would be a backlog of content not taught and this would affect the performance of the pupils in primary schools. The non-completion of syllabus by almost 50.0% of teachers could be due to understaffing in primary schools, lack of adequate materials and overcrowded classes.

**Teachers' perceptions on the influence of commitment on pupils' academic performance**

Despite the challenges brought about by free primary education, the study sought to establish the commitment of teachers towards curriculum implementation in schools. Therefore, teachers were asked to indicate their perceptions on the influence of the level of commitment of teachers on academic performance of pupils in public primary school in Keiyo South Sub-County. The results are given in Table 6.

**Table 6: Teachers' perceptions on the influence of commitment on pupils' academic performance**

Perceptions on commitment	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
i) Teachers who always prepare for their lessons everyday their pupils tend to perform better	162	68.4	54	22.8	19	8.0	2	0.8	0	0.0
ii) Teachers who give their best despite pay and motivation from school get best results from pupils	173	73.0	44	18.6	15	6.3	5	2.1	0	0.0
iii) Teachers who are dedicated to pupils affairs in school bring better performances amongst pupils	173	73.0	44	18.6	16	6.8	1	0.4	3	1.3
iv) Providing extra instructional materials to pupils boost learning	92	38.8	84	35.4	47	19.8	13	5.5	1	0.4
v) Regular monitoring of pupils progress records ensures good performance	176	74.3	42	17.7	18	7.6	1	0.4	0	0.0
vi) Arriving to school early to plan days work encourages confidence and competence amongst pupils during exams	165	69.6	48	20.3	20	8.4	2	0.8	2	0.8
vii) Assisting pupils always plan for their homework and assignments leads to more acquisition of knowledge and better results	137	57.8	63	26.6	31	13.1	5	2.1	1	0.4
viii) Possessing all records of pupils assist teacher in guidance and counselling	186	78.5	33	13.9	16	6.8	2	0.8	0	0.0
<b>Average perception on teacher commitment</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>66.7</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.4</b>

The results in Table 6 show that 162 (68.4%) strongly agreed that teachers who always prepared for their lesson everyday their pupils tend to perform better, 54 (22.8%) agreed, 19 (8.0%) were undecided while 2 (0.8%) disagreed. This implies that majority of teachers prepared for their lessons before teaching, a professional practice expected to be performed by teachers and this resulted to their learners performing well in school. This is in line with past studies (Reynolds, 2008; Taylor, 2011; Kiplagat *et al.*, 2012) who found out that those teachers who regularly prepared themselves professionally, had their learners performing well in school. When asked as to whether teachers who give their best despite pay and motivation from school get best results from pupils, 173 (73.0%) strongly agreed, 44 (18.6%) agreed, 15 (16.3%) were undecided while only 5 (2.1%) disagreed. This shows that majority of teachers are not motivated by pay but rather than their desire to implement curriculum objectives in the classrooms which translate to better academic results. In Kenya, Kiplagat *et al.*, (2012) found out several schools could have designed various motivational strategies aimed at increasing teacher level of commitment in their duties and responsibilities and this had resulted to positive academic outcomes.

Results from Table 6 show that 173 (73.0%) of teachers strongly agreed that teachers who are dedicated to pupils affairs in school bring better performances amongst pupils, 44 (18.6%) agreed, 16 (6.8%) were neutral, 1 (0.4%) disagreed while 3 (1.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement. This shows that majority of teachers are concerned with their pupils at school and this brings better performance. This is explained by Tugrul (2013) who argued that committed teachers recognize and endeavor to fulfill their responsibilities to their learners. The degree of loyalty committed teachers have towards their profession is one of the distinguished characters which shape their level of commitment in schools. This was evidenced among teachers in Keiyo South Sub-County. The results further showed that 92 (38.8%) of teachers strongly agreed with the statement that providing extra instructional materials to pupils boosted learning, 84 (35.4%) agreed, 47 (19.8%) were undecided, 13 (5.5%) disagreed and 1 (0.4%) strongly disagreed. This shows that half of the teachers provided extra support to pupils while others provided the said resources seldom motivated learners to perform better. The result is consistent with Anand (2010) who found out that the level of commitment that the teachers showed was moderate but significant in predicting academic performance. When asked as to whether the teachers monitored their pupils' progress to ensure good performance; 176 (74.3%) strongly agreed, 42 (17.7%) agreed, 18 (7.6%) were undecided while 1 (0.4%) disagreed. The findings indicate that majority of teachers supervised and checked learners progress to ensure that they performed well in their studies. McCombs and Miller (2006) suggested that regular monitoring and evaluation of pupils' performance progress was important. Findings from head teachers also showed that a regular teacher at class knows his/her learners, knows the number of learners to be assisted in what and where. The findings further showed that 165 (69.6%) strongly agreed with the statement that arriving to school early to plan days work encourages confidence and competence amongst pupils during exams, 48 (20.3%) agreed, 20 (8.4%) were undecided, 2 (0.8%) disagreed while 2 (0.85) strongly disagreed. This implies that teachers have made significant efforts in ensuring that they arrive at school early (different from official duties) to plan their classes and other activities to be done during the day. The findings are similar to Etsey (2005) research in Ghana that found out that 70.4% of the pupils from the high-achieving schools reported that their teachers came to school before morning assembly all the time. This would also make learners to be committed since a teacher is a role model to learners. It was also revealed from the study findings that at least 137 (57.8%) of teachers strongly agreed that assisting pupils to always plan for their homework and assignments leads to more acquisition of knowledge and better results, 63 (26.6%) agreed, 31 (13.1%) were undecided, 5 (2.1%) disagreed while 1 (0.4%) strongly disagreed. This shows that teachers occasionally assist pupils with their work at school although this was constrained in some schools due to overcrowding. The findings are consistent with Oredein and Oloyede (2007) who found out those teachers were committed in their duties as they gave their learners assignments and reviewed them in class which improved pupils' academic performance. Moreover, Kimani *et al.*, (2013) also found out the number of assignments that a teacher gave learners; ensuring that students completed the them and timely marking of the them significantly affected academic achievement. This suggests on the need for teachers to regularly give students assignments and be firm on them to complete the assignments. Moreover, school administrators must regularly supervise teachers work and ensure that students' assignments are marked.

Lastly, when asked to give their perceptions on the statement 'possessing all records of pupils assists a teacher in the guidance and counselling of pupils most 186 (78.5%) strongly agreed, 33 (13.9%) agreed, 16 (6.8%) were undecided and 2 (0.8%) disagreed. This shows that teachers in Keiyo south sub-county are able to guide and counsel their pupils well because most of them keep all pupils records. These findings concur with Nabukenya (2010) who said that committed teachers are really involved in the school and their work. He added that they show internal motivation, enthusiasm, efficacy and effectiveness in their work which influences performance of pupils Kiplagat, Role and Ndiku, (2012) are also in agreement with the findings by saying that committed teachers are responsible and accountable for their classroom and students. Calculated average statistics on teacher level of commitment showed that 158 (66.7%) perceived themselves to be highly committed

in their work, 52 (21.7%) were moderately committed while 28 (11.16%) were lowly committed. The findings correspond to Mbwiria (2010) whose results showed that a slight majority 51.7% of the teachers were committed to the teaching profession in Imenti South Sub-County, Kenya. Contrary to the study findings by Mugo (2008) study in Kirinyaga who found that 52.5% (N = 120) of the teachers had low commitment to the teaching profession and thus expressed intentions to quit the teaching career (in Mbwiria, 2010). Therefore, it is seen that majority of teachers are committed to their jobs and this may affect academic achievement of their pupils. The results corresponding to head teachers interview results where one remarked that:

*...yes of course, teacher commitment plays a role in the academic achievements because without the commitment of a teacher, you cannot expect to harvest without extra work. Teachers have to be committed on their work to at least get more marks.*

Another said that:

*Teachers are committed when they take pupils through practical approaches in daily learning. Commitment is seen when teachers make learners learn through their peers and when they make learning child-centred most of the time.*

Therefore, from the above information, it is clear that teacher level of commitment to work plays an important role in pupils' academic achievement. Since teachers do their work as expected of them. It is also evident from teachers and head teachers' responses that a committed teacher has the following characteristics; diligent in work, making teaching aids, planning, doing remedial classes and completing topics in time hence enhancement of performance. The findings are in agreement with Etsy (2005) research in Ghana where majority of teachers who were committed reported early for school, had few incidences of absenteeism and were able to complete their syllabus on time. In Iraq, Tugrul (2013) also found out that teachers with high level of commitment were more loyal to schools where they worked; similarly, Tugrul established that teachers with high level of commitment contributed to learners' achievement effectively. The above observation shows that level of commitment by teachers is praiseworthy because it facilitates learning.

#### **IV. Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study as discussed in the previous chapter, the following conclusions are made. The experience of a teacher in the teaching profession determines pupils' academic performance in school. Teachers' classroom management methods and utilization of instructional resources were perceived to influence pupils understanding of subject matter hence improved academic performance in examinations. Most teachers' perceived that their commitment to teaching influenced academic performance of pupils in examinations. Commitment of teachers in their work was found to influence pupils' academic performance in schools. This was because; the more a teacher was committed in his/her duties the better the results of pupils in examinations. Therefore, teachers should give their best in ensuring that learners are taught and their records of work are regularly monitored. Following the results of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers in schools need to be supported for in-service education during school days and holidays. This keeps them abreast with emerging trends in education; teaching methods and even utilization of instructional materials.
2. To address teacher level of commitment, the study suggests that teachers should monitor pupils' progress and ensure that all the pupils' records are kept. This will help the teacher to effectively guide and counsel learners for them to achieve better results. This will help them to appreciate and be committed in their profession making pupils achieve better in their national examinations.

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