

ABSTRACT

Academic achievement is important in the determination of students' future prospects. Educationists and other stakeholders have consistently used students' academic achievement results as basis of advancement and employment opportunities. The learners' academic self-esteem and academic interaction correspondingly shape the learning environment of students. The purpose of this study was to examine students' academic interaction, academic self-esteem and academic achievement relationships in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. Correlational research design and both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used in the study. The population of the study comprised 23,309 that is 11,938 boys and 11,371 girls from three students from 294 public secondary schools in Nakuru County. A total of 29 public secondary schools and 378 form three students were selected using stratified random sampling. The study used purposive sampling to sample 29 class teachers from the selected public secondary schools in Nakuru County. The total sample size for this study was therefore 407 respondents. The study used closed-ended questionnaires to collect data from students and interview schedule to collect data from class teachers. Data for academic achievement was obtained from school examinations results record. To ensure content validity of the research instruments, the researcher developed questionnaires and an interview schedule in line with the objectives of the study in consultation with the supervisors and lecturers from the Faculty of Education and Community Studies. To test the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was done on one secondary school that was not part of the actual study. Cronbach's Alpha test of internal consistency were established whereby the items had reliability coefficients of 0.870, 0.871, 0.875 and 0.873 which were considered acceptable. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 while qualitative data was analyzed using NVivo version 12. The study established that there was a statistically significant relationship between students' academic interaction and academic achievement in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. It was also established that there was a significant relationship between students' academic interaction and academic self-esteem in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study also found out that there was a significant relationship between students' academic self-esteem and academic achievement in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. It was further found that the model to predict academic achievement of students using student-student, student-teacher, student-parent academic interactions and student academic self-esteem as predictor variables

explained the highest percentage of variation in academic achievement. The study concluded that students' academic interaction and academic self-esteem had a linear relationship with their academic achievement. In respect to this, the study recommends Kenyan teachers training institutions to advance teaching methods that seeks to improve students' academic interaction and academic self-esteem for better academic achievement. Findings on students' academic interaction, academic self-esteem and academic achievement will be beneficial to Nakuru County Director of Education, researchers and academicians in coming up with strategies of making the learning environment conducive for the learners' development of self-esteem and appropriate forms of interaction.

Keywords

Self-Esteem and Achievement