

Abstract

The education of children is one of the important priority areas where parents as well as the government show great interest. Much of what students learn in school is planned to meet the needs of society and this is reflected in the government's development priorities. Biology is one of the science subjects taken in secondary school education. There has been a continuous decline in performance of Biology by students at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination in day secondary schools. The main purpose of this study was to find out how selected factors affect the performance of students in Biology in Kenya Certificate Secondary Examination in Day secondary schools, in Kangema Sub-County. Factors which were studied were related to teaching of biology, materials available for learning Biology, and attitudes towards Biology subject. This study employed descriptive survey research design. The district had 13 registered public day secondary schools with approximately 420 biology students in form three where the study was confined. The schools were selected using simple random sampling technique. Purposive sampling was used to select biology teachers for the study. Data for the study was collected by use of questionnaires. Validity of the questionnaires was established from the researcher's supervisors in the department of education at Chuka University. Reliability for the questionnaires was estimated using Pearson product moment correlation formulae, correlation co-efficient of 0.834 was got which was higher than the minimum of 0.700 and therefore it is acceptable for this study. Data analysis was done using Statistical Computer Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) on computer version 17.5 using percentages, means and frequencies. The analysis was done on methods employed in teaching Biology and learning materials in Day secondary schools. Finally, the study sought the relationship between students and teacher's attitudes in achievement of Biology. The findings of the study came up with the recommendations on how to improve Biology achievement in secondary schools. The outcomes of this study will assist education planners and curriculum developers in planning and implementing the curriculum accordingly and improve Biology syllabus in terms of content and evaluations. The findings may also assist Kenya National Examination Council in unveiling the main factors affecting the performance of students in the biology examinations in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination in public day secondary schools.