

Abstract

The role of parents in children's education globally is a central issue in education policy and research. Due to concerns on how to improve students' academic achievement, the role of parents and family-school partnership are considered among the most successful educational strategies. Though research findings indicate that parents play a significant role in the learning process especially in secondary schools, their direct and indirect influence on academic achievement had not been adequately studied in Kenya and specifically in Imenti North Sub County. This study therefore sought to ascertain the influence of parental involvement in school related activities on students' academic achievement in public day secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 3,349 respondents consisting of 3,328 students and 21 head teachers in all day secondary schools in the district. The accessible population was 735 form 3 students and 21 head teachers from which a sample was selected using simple random sampling technique. A sample size of 180 respondents consisting of 175 form 3 students and 5 head teachers from 5 public day secondary schools was used in the study. Data was collected using a students' questionnaire and an interview schedule for head teachers. A pilot study was conducted in two day secondary schools from the neighbouring Imenti South Sub County to establish the reliability of the instruments by use of test-retest technique. A correlation coefficient of 0.88 for students and 0.85 for head teachers was achieved respectively. Validity of the instruments was enhanced through an expert judgment of supervisors. Descriptive statistics involving frequencies and percentages were used to analyze quantitative and qualitative data. Data collected was presented in form of tables, graphs and charts. It was established that parents in Imenti North Sub County were lowly involved in the academic achievement of their children. It was also established that parental involvement in school related activities influenced students' academic achievement. It was suggested that schools should establish regular open days to provide parents with opportunities to consult with teachers over their children's academic work. It is expected that the findings of the study will assist education planners, teachers and other stake holders to understand and utilize the potential of parental involvement in school related activities in enhancing students' academic achievement.