EFFECT OF EXAMINATIONS AS A DOMINANT EVALUATION APPROACH ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM IN KENYA

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction, of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology.

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other award in any university

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of this thesis for examination with our approval as University Supervisors. The thesis is entitled "**Effects of Examinations as a Dominant Evaluation Approach on the Implementation of Secondary School Curriculum in Kenya."**

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DEDICATION

To my family, dad Ezekiel Tundo, Mum Selina Tundo, and beloved husband King Clement Momanyi Moturi

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ABSTRACT

Examinations have been widely used as a tool for curriculum evaluation not only in Kenya but across the globe. Examinations are used for promotion of learners, promotion of teachers and placement of learners in colleges and universities. Use of examinations as an indicator of performance and promotion leads to competition among schools. Stiff competition has led to unorthodox means of passing examinations such as cheating. The purpose of the study was to establish effects of examinations on curriculum implementation in secondary schools and come up with alternative approaches to curriculum implementation. Descriptive survey research design and inferential statistics were applied. Sampling was done by use of Saturated, Stratified, and simple random sampling. The study was conducted in Kakamega County. Study population include principals, students, and teachers from 408 public secondary schools and Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) from Kakamega County. Total sample of the study was 2053 which include: 40 principal,1800 students, 200 teachers and 13 QASOs. Data collection involved administration of questionnaires to QASOs, students, teachers, and interview guide for principals. A researcher developed questionnaire instruments for teachers, students and QASOs with reliability index of 0.71 based on Cronbach alpha reliability method. Analysis of variance was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was coded into sub- themes. The analyzed data was organized in tables and figures. The main findings of the study were as follows; Most schools administered more than two examinations per term, frequent examinations led to selective teaching as teachers only taught examined subjects and topics that were frequently set in KCSE. Besides students especially candidates did not participate in co- curricular activities as they spent most of the preparing for examinations. Teacher centered pedagogy was the main method of instructions during teaching and learning. School examination policy did not adhere to MOE policy. The following are recommendations of the study: There should be review of the government examination policy to ensure adherence by all secondary school. There should be a comprehensive assessment system which ensures diagnostic, formative, and summative evaluation as well as integration of formal and informal curriculum in evaluation. Attitude of early syllabus coverage is unprofessional; therefore, curriculum content should be implemented within the defined time frame by KICD so that students can learn, and curriculum objectives to be realized.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BECF: Basic Education Curriculum Framework

CBA: Competency Based Assessment

CBC: Competency Based Curriculum

CDE: County Director of Education

DOS: Director of Studies

ECDE: Early Childhood Development Education

GOK: Government of Kenya

IQ: Intelligence Quotient.

JSCE: Junior Secondary Certificate of Education,

JSS: Junior Secondary School

KCPE: Kenya Certificate of Primary Education

KCSE: Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

KIE: Kenya Institute of Education

KICD: Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

KNEC: Kenya National Examination Council

KSSHA: Kenya Secondary School Heads Association

MMUST: Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

NACOSTI: National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation

NPE: National Policy on Education

PERI: Primary Education Review Implementation

SCDE: Sub County Director of Education

SCQASO: Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer

SPSS : Statistical Package for Social Sciences

SCDE: Sub- County Director of Education

SSA: Sub-Saharan Africa

SBA: School Based Assessment

UCE: Uganda Certificate of Education

QASO: Quality Assurance and Standards officers

MOE: Ministry of Education

TSC: Teachers Service Commission

USA: United States of America

UNESCO: United Nations, Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UPE: Universal Primary Education

NCCA: National Council of Curriculum Assessment

PISA: Program for International Students Assessment

TIMMS: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

ILO: Intended Learning Outcomes

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Education is a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires knowledge, experiences, skills, and sound attitude. Education makes an individual civilized, refined, cultured, and educated. The purpose of education is to cultivate a well-rounded individual who is both self-sufficient and beneficial to their community. Community development is facilitated by education, as it empowers individuals with knowledge and awareness, enabling them to actively engage in the process of societal development. The acquisition of reading skills is essential for individuals to make informed decisions that contribute to a more sustainable way of life (Biggs, 2003). Otieno (2002) defines Education for Sustainability as a process of lifelong learning that results in an informed and engaged citizenry equipped with the creative problem-solving skills, scientific and social literacy, and commitment to engage in responsible individual and cooperative actions. Educational aims, goals and objectives are achieved through implementation of a given curriculum.

Curriculum as viewed by Alebiosu (2005) is an instrument that dictates the affairs of every educational system. It is the vehicle through which knowledge and other learning activities are disseminated. Curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses, and subjects. The process involves helping the learner acquire knowledge or experience. It is important to note that curriculum implementation cannot take place without the learner. The learner is therefore the central figure in the curriculum implementation process. Implementation takes place

as the learner acquires the planned or intended experiences, knowledge, skills, ideas, and attitudes that are aimed at enabling the same learner to function effectively in a society. Putting the curriculum into operation requires an implementing agent (Mkpa & Izuagba, 2009). Obilo (2010) identifies the teacher as the agent in the curriculum implementation process. She argues that implementation is the way the teacher selects and mixes the various aspects of knowledge contained in a curriculum document or syllabus. Implementation takes place when the teacher-constructed syllabus, the teacher's personality, the teaching materials, and the teaching environment interact with the learner. Curriculum implementation therefore refers to how the planned or officially designed course of study is translated by the teacher into syllabuses, schemes of work and lessons to be delivered to students.

Many countries across the globe use examination as a tool for measuring the quality of education provided (Mkpa & Izuagba, 2009). Examination is a formal assessment conducted to evaluate the knowledge and skills of a person in a particular subject. Apart from the subject knowledge, it also assesses the student's aptitude, learning, physical fitness, and other necessary skills. Exams are conducted to measure all these qualities of a student based on the answers submitted by them (Obilo, 2010). The main purpose of exams is to identify the personality, memory, and revision skills of students. It also motivates the students to improve their learning and knowledge. Types of exams include oral examinations, essay examinations, open-book examinations, case study examinations, take-home examinations, short answer examinations, and practical examinations (Obilo, 2010).

The World Bank Group (2018) claims that the first examinations were instituted in China more than 2000 years ago to choose the most capable persons for civil service positions. Subsequently, when educators started administering tests and evaluations to their own students, the concept of external examinations rapidly gained popularity across Europe. The integration of examinations into Jesuit educational institutions took place during the 16th century. The implementation of examination system for the sake of selection occurred in France during the mid-18th century after the French Revolution. During the mid-19th century, both Britain and India implemented competitive examinations as a means of selecting a larger number of government employees necessary to support the growth of their respective empires (World Bank Group, 2018).

The establishment of competitive tests for the selection of government officials in the United States occurred in 1883 through legislative action. However, these examinations were subsequently discontinued due to a decision made by Congress, deeming them unsuitable for the intended purpose. The Baccalaureate, which signifies the culmination of secondary school, was instituted in Napoleonic France in 1808 with the purpose of granting admission to esteemed institutions of higher education and professional pursuits (Heywood et al., 2009). The inaugural matriculation test of London University took place in 1838 within the United Kingdom. The inaugural examination was administered by the New York Board of Regents in 1865. The practice of implementing public examination systems in schools, which originated in Europe, underwent significant expansion during the 19th century within colonial territories. During the 20th century, the United States underwent a transformation in its examination system, adopting a distinct approach centered around psychometrics and the utilization of multiple-choice testing (World

Bank, 2018).Today examinations are a crucial component of every educational system across the globe Different types of examinations are conducted by various countries based on the needs of their educational system. Examinations serve as a widely employed metric of academic achievement within educational systems, facilitating the progression of learners to subsequent levels of education. The grading system is established based on examination results, which are used to periodically classify all pupils (Nicholas & Berliner, 2007).

Examinations are conducted on a global scale to assess educational programs and gauge the academic advancement and accomplishments of learners. The aim of education has been reduced to the mere achievement of academic success and gaining admission into esteemed institutions of higher education, as perceived by several students and parents (Johnson,2004). The ongoing issue around evaluation stems from the fact that the assessment of curriculum value relies heavily on the feedback derived from students' examination scores (Nicholas & Berliner, 2007).

Examination in England is conducted at several stages along the students' academic journey. The commencement of examinations is observed in the initial stages of elementary education, extending through primary and secondary schools, and continuing into higher educational institutions (Brown, 2011). The original iterations of the assessments were intentionally crafted to provide a comprehensive assessment of students' learning and reduce reliance on traditional paper-and-pencil standardized tests. However, it was observed that the administration of examinations consumed a significant amount of time and resulted in a lack of supervision for several pupils, as teachers had to

assess students individually. In accordance with its established practice, England has persisted in the administration of tests as a means of assessing students' progression to subsequent educational levels (Dekker, *et al.,* 2005).

Examination system in Finland is primarily focused on enhancing instructional practices, with a significant emphasis on utilizing examination data to enhance both instruction and learning outcomes (Madaus *et al.,* 2001). Examination is conducted in three domains: within the classroom setting, as a thorough evaluation of student progress upon completion of basic education, and as part of the matriculation examination, which serves as a criterion for entrance to higher education institutions. The 2004 National Curriculum offers guidelines for assessing pupils in the early grades and throughout their foundational education. The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education in 2004 classifies classroom assessment into two distinct types, namely ongoing assessment, and summative evaluation. Both entities are required by national regulations to conform to national standards, yet they fulfill distinct objectives. The annual evaluation, which encompasses a range of student assignments, offers students feedback on their learning progress and recommendations for enhancement (Kupiainen *et al.,* 2005). In contrast to other nations, Finland's assessment methods yield a reduced number of formal evaluations and alleviate the burden on teachers to solely focus on preparing pupils for a limited scope of examinations (Rotberg, 2004).

Japan has a rigorously competitive examination system that lacks mechanisms for holding instructors accountable for the academic performance of their students. In the context of public education, it is worth noting that students at the primary and lower

secondary levels are not subjected to high-stakes assessments, nor are they allocated to educational institutions based on their academic performance (Kupiainen *et al.,* 2009). The burden of academic evaluation commences throughout the lower secondary school years, as the outcomes of these assessments dictate the higher secondary school that children will be admitted to (Tomilson, 2005). Japanese students face no difficulties when it comes to securing admission into institutes of higher education. Nevertheless, the struggle for admission into esteemed colleges continues to be intense because alumni from these institutions often have prominent positions in government and many sectors. A significant educational reform in Japan involved enhancing the adaptability of the learning environment through the cultivation of students' talents. One aspect of this reform involved the reduction of the school week from six days to five days, with the intention of providing kids with additional opportunities to engage in environmental exploration and community-based activities (Johnson, 2004).

For centuries, the Chinese population has regarded the examination system, which originated under the Shui dynasty in 603 CE, as the primary means of upward social mobility. Like Japan, China is also undergoing a transition aimed at diminishing its dependence on rote learning, instead prioritizing the acquisition of skills and competencies throughout various levels of education (UNESCO, 2002). China made the decision to alter its university entrance examinations, which are known for their high level of competition, with the aim of incorporating a broader spectrum of knowledge integration into classroom practice. Nevertheless, the education changes implemented in China were not devoid of controversy. Some individuals in China expressed concerns that reducing the emphasis on memorization could potentially disadvantage children from

poor backgrounds. This is because pupils would be assessed on abilities that may not have been adequately taught in their schools (Schmitz, 2011).

Examinations in Pakistan hold significant importance due to its role in facilitating students' progression to higher grades and eventual entry into diverse professional fields. Individuals who successfully complete examinations are often praised and esteemed, whilst those who do not meet the required standards are often subjected to criticism and enduring social disapproval. In Pakistan, the primary objective of education is often perceived as the successful completion of examinations. Consequently, the educational curriculum in schools is primarily designed to emphasize the rote memorizing of concepts, rather than the acquisition of practical knowledge and skills that are applicable in real-world contexts. (UNESCO, 2002) Educational system is Pakistan is plagued by various forms of misconduct, such as the unauthorized disclosure of examination papers, impersonation, provision of external assistance, the illicit introduction of unauthorized materials into examination rooms, collusion, intimidation, the existence of fraudulent examination centers, the substitution of scripts, and irregularities committed by supervisory personnel through the allocation of additional time to certain students (Shamaa, 2011).

The utilization of national examinations at primary and secondary school level continues to hold significant importance in educational reform, particularly in developing countries, particularly those situated in Africa. For instance, the evaluation process in South African educational institutions has been primarily influenced by the administration of the Junior Certificate Examinations, an annual nationwide assessment (Schmitz, 2011). A Junior

Certificate test has substantial significance for South African pupils in terms of their future employment options after completing their education. In Nigeria, it is customary for students to undergo nine years of continuous schooling before sitting for the Junior Secondary Certificate Examination (JSCE), which is a standardized national assessment (Ezeudu, 2005). The national examination has a crucial role in shaping a child's future academic trajectory. The standardized tests are often regarded as national examinations, and it is apparent that they may inadvertently affect implementation of curriculum in terms of instructional methods, curriculum scope, stress levels, and instructor satisfaction (Osu, *et al.,* 2004).

Examination in South Africa is conducted at the academic levels of Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12. The Senior Certificate Examinations (SCE) have historically held a dominant position in the examination system of South African schools. The assessments are national examinations that are conducted upon the completion of secondary education (Grade 12). It is worth noting that these examinations are taken by a substantial number of students, with an annual candidature of almost half a million students. The primary objective of systemic evaluation is to gauge the efficiency of the education system through the comprehensive assessment of its various components across different grade levels. Thus, the assessment evaluates the degree to which the education system attains the intended social, economic, and transformative goals (Ministry of Education, 2013).

Academic progress of learners in Zambia is measured by their performance in examinations, two significant high-stakes public examinations are conducted at the end of each academic year, one for students in the ninth grade and another for students in the

twelfth grade. The successful completion of these examinations is a necessary requirement for learners to advance to the succeeding levels of study. Learners' performance at the ninth-grade level examination enables them to progress to senior secondary education, whilst the completion of examinations at the twelfth grade level qualifies learners for admission to university or other institutions of higher education (Crooks, 2004). for employment opportunities (Crooks, 2004).

In Rwanda, it is customary for students at the nursery, primary, and secondary school levels to undertake internal examinations at the conclusion of each of the three terms within the academic year. The purpose of these assessments is to ascertain the advancement of students from one academic level to the subsequent level. In elementary educational institutions, students undergo term tests that are internally administered by their teachers. The cumulative score achieved at the conclusion of the academic year determines whether students are eligible to progress to the subsequent grade upon successful completion or necessitates the repetition of the current grade in the event of academic failure. The minimum threshold for learners to achieve a passing grade is set at 50% (Earl, 2012). In secondary educational institutions, educators evaluate students' progress using a combination of ongoing assessment methods and final evaluations conducted at the conclusion of each academic term. The cumulative scores achieved in each topic of the curriculum at the conclusion of the academic year determine whether a student will advance to the subsequent grade, be required to repeat the current grade, or be permitted to withdraw from the educational institution, as per the established guidelines outlined by the Ministry of Education (UNESCO, 2003).

The Ugandan education system places significant importance on national examinations as a means of assessing the attainment of educational objectives at a national level. The secondary school curriculum offers a total of eighteen subjects, with a range of ten to eight subjects being examined. Among these, seven subjects are mandatory and three are elective. Grading of candidates in the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) examinations is determined by the marks obtained in their top eight topics. Among these subjects, mathematics and English hold particular significance since applicants are expected to excel in these areas (Leyendecker, 2005). Candidates who lack the aptitude or inclination for non-examined subjects, which do not contribute to the grading process, face a disadvantage. Hence, the allocation and evaluation of subjects lack democratic processes. The current system has a bias towards individuals who possess the necessary qualifications and skills for professional, office-based occupations, while neglecting to incorporate individuals who possess aptitudes, hobbies, or talents in the realm of vocational labor. In the process of evaluating students, the assessment of their academic progress is primarily based on their performance in UCE examinations, as opposed to considering the outcomes of continuous assessments such as daily class exercises, weekly and monthly tests, and mid-term or mock examinations (UNESCO, 2003).

Examination results are used in Uganda to determine a student's level of academic performance. Graduates can be classified into two distinct categories: those who have achieved success and those who have experienced failure. The issue at hand has resulted in the phenomenon of wastage, wherein a significant portion of individuals who do not achieve satisfactory results in national examinations are compelled to either repeat a grade or discontinue their education altogether. Consequently, this situation diminishes

their prospects of gaining admission into institutions of higher education, undermines their employment prospects, and curtails their active involvement in national progress (Govender, 2004).

The examination system in Tanzania necessitates teachers to prioritize teaching methods that align with test requirements. This places significant pressure on teachers to not only cover the syllabus comprehensively, but also to adequately prepare students for the diverse range of assessments they will encounter. The predominant approach employed by many educators is not focused on fostering deep comprehension among students, but rather on promoting rote memory to achieve success in examinations. The introduction of Big Results Now (BRN) places emphasis on the classification of schools based on their performance, hence creating a sense of urgency for instructors to provide comprehensive coverage of curriculum. The focus lies not on the acquisition of competencies in the subjects of interest, but rather on the strategies employed to successfully navigate examinations. Moreover, the presence of competition among schools in Tanzania necessitates teachers to administer regular assessments to attain high-quality ratings in students' final examinations. This practice has an impact on the attainment of educational objectives and competences as outlined in the curriculum (Haki Elimu, 2012).

The overarching objectives of Education in Kenya encompass the cultivation of nationalism and patriotism, the advancement of national unity, the facilitation of social, economic, technological, and industrial requirements for the nation's progress and personal growth, as well as the promotion of reverence for the development of Kenya's many and abundant cultures, as outlined in Vision 2030. While the objectives of

education aim to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge, abilities, and attitudes, the achievement of these objectives is contingent upon individuals actively endeavoring to acquire these same goals (Pykett, 2010).

In Kenya, during the colonial period, public examinations were organized by the colonial government for the benefit of their government. The Kenya African Secondary examinations were first taken in form four in 1940 (Sifuna and Otiende, 2009). In the years after independence, Kenyan government recognized the necessity of implementing a standardized examination system for the purpose of student selection. The establishment of the East African Examinations Council (EAEC) took place in 1967 (Shiundu & Omulando in 1992). Following the dissolution of the East African community, the Kenyan government took the initiative to form the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC). This entity, operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, was tasked with the responsibility of overseeing national examinations within the country. According to Section 10. (1) of the KNEC Act 2017, the Council is responsible for various functions. These functions encompass establishing and upholding examination standards, administering public academic, technical, and other national examinations at both primary and higher education levels within Kenya. Additionally, the Council is entrusted with the authority to confer certificates or diplomas upon successful candidates in these examinations (GOK, 2007). Hence, the management of examinations at the primary, secondary, and technical levels fall within the purview of the Kenya National Examinations Council.

Examinations in Kenya have been a subject of enduring interest among stakeholders across several tiers of the education system. According to Haertel (2013), educational assessments have become a crucial instrument for informing daily decision-making in the classroom. These assessments serve various purposes, such as communicating learning objectives, evaluating progress towards those objectives, selecting, and promoting students, identifying effective teaching methods, and monitoring and assessing the overall effectiveness of the educational system (KNEC Act 2014).

In basic educational institutions in Kenya, there are two main types of examinations: the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) and the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). The KCPE is administered upon completion of primary education, while the KCSE is conducted at the conclusion of secondary school. In addition to national assessments, pupils are also required to complete teacher-made examinations within the school setting. The imperative for educational institutions to get high-quality grades in national tests has led to the implementation of joint examinations, which involve the collaboration of schools within a county or region, effectively supplanting the traditional mock examinations. The candidates primarily engage in the composition of these tests as a means of equipping themselves for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). This is now the norm, with many secondary schools switching to collaboration in evaluation (Kasembeli & Gathara, 2014).

Despite the implementation of curriculum reforms that prioritize inquiry-based learning, several African countries continue to uphold high-stakes secondary school exit tests. The assessments provided do not effectively evaluate the aptitude for applying, analyzing, and

synthesizing information. Furthermore, they rarely gauge the knowledge and abilities that students require for their post-schooling everyday lives (Bainton & Barret, 2016).

According to International Institute of Planning (2003) the main goal of education is to create law-abiding, morally upright individuals who uphold human rights. Nevertheless, the primary objective of education for most Kenyan students is to successfully complete the national test, as this serves as a gateway to accessing further education and securing employment prospects (Kasembeli & Gathara, 2014). The assessment of academic performance at educational institutions is typically based on the attainment of high grades in national examinations. The examination has a crucial role in shaping individuals' prospects. Successful performance in the examination guarantees admission into national secondary schools and opens doors to pursue esteemed academic programs at the university level. Conversely, individuals who do not achieve satisfactory results may experience feelings of inadequacy and diminished self-worth (Republic of Kenya, 2001). Due to this rationale, educators and parents are willing to employ any available means to ensure the achievement of high academic performance, subjecting both teachers and students to significant pressure to obtain exemplary grades. (Peacocks, 2011).

Over emphasis on examination outcomes affects efficiency of learner evaluation, as schools place excessive burdens on students through frequent continuous assessment, additional tutoring, remedial instruction, and a heavy workload of assignments (Chinyani, 2013). Besides, students are exposed to a variety of mock examinations from counties and sub-counties that have demonstrated exceptional performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Examination planning and administration

take up more time than practical training, thus there is less emphasis on these areas and no chance for students to improve their technical proficiency or problem-solving abilities (Buhere, 2010).

Despite enduring concerns and ongoing efforts to change the education system, examinations continue to serve as the predominant means of evaluating students in primary, secondary, and tertiary educational institutions in Kenya. National examinations continue to serve as the primary means of assessing and ensuring the quality of secondary education. It is against this background that the present study was conducted to establish the effects of examinations as a dominant evaluation approach on curriculum implementation.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The primary objective of education in Kenya is to provide individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that empower them to actively contribute to the advancement of social and economic development (Pykett, 2010). The provision of quality education equips learners with the necessary skills to effectively contribute to the labor market and maintain productivity. Regrettably, the education system in Kenya is predominantly influenced by examinations, which have become the primary means of evaluating students and even shaping the curriculum (Mercurio, 2008). Overemphasis on examinations has resulted in narrowing of the curriculum, with the primary focus being the achievement of high grades in national examinations, which serve as the primary determinant for placement and job opportunities. Education stakeholders measure the success of the school by the level of learner's academic achievement in national

examinations. Institutions of higher learning tend to recognize and reward students who demonstrate exceptional academic performance, often leading to the attainment of prestigious employment. Conversely, students who do not meet the expected standards of academic achievement face negative consequences or disapproval. In Kenya, instances of suicide related to students' performance in the national examination have been reported. These tragic incidents occur when students fail to get their desired grades and resort to taking their own lives (Peacocks, 2011).

The academic proficiency of students who successfully complete national examinations may not necessarily reflect their true academic abilities, as their success may be attributed to rigorous and unethical practices, such as excessive drilling and dishonest tactics like cheating. Several students who enroll in Kenyan Universities to study medicine and applied sciences leave their studies before their second year because they cannot keep up with the demands of the courses, despite their quality grades KCSE examinations (Peacocks, 2011).

One of the contributing factors to the substandard quality of education in Kenya is over-emphasis on examinations. Mwanzia and Miano (2007) argued that schools disregard aspects of the curriculum that are core but not examined within the curriculum. Educators adopt a selective approach in addressing the curriculum content, focusing mainly on subjects and topics that are commonly examined in national examinations, while disregarding non-examined subjects and topics. Peacocks (2011) established that co-curricular activities like games, theater, and music are ignored to allow more time for students to study examined subjects. If these concerns are not resolved, they are likely to

have a negative impact on curriculum implementation. The present study examined the effects of examinations as a dominant evaluation practice on curriculum implementation in public secondary schools.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish effects of examinations as a dominant evaluation approach on curriculum implementation and come up with alternative approaches to evaluation.

1.4 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

i. To establish the frequency of examinations in secondary schools.
ii. To find out the effects of frequency of examinations on Syllabus coverage.
iii. To establish effects of frequency of examinations on choice of pedagogical approaches.
iv. To establish the relationship MOE policy and school policy on examinations.
v. To suggest alternative approaches to curriculum evaluation.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

i. What is the frequency at which examinations are administered in schools?
ii. How does frequency of examinations affect Syllabus coverage?
iii. What are the effects of frequency of examinations on choice of pedagogical approaches?
iv. What are alternative approaches to curriculum evaluation?

1.6 Hypothesis

$H0_1$: There is no statistically significant relationship between school examination policy and Ministry of Education (MOE) Policy on examinations.

1.7 Justification for the Study

Examination plays a crucial role in the academic advancement of students because it is used to evaluate their academic achievements. The Kenyan education system has been subject to criticism by numerous researchers due to its excessive emphasis on examinations, which is perceived to be at the expense of practical knowledge and skills. Despite the government's restriction on mock examinations, other forms of assessments such as mock and joint examinations are still being conducted (Circular Ref.No. MOE/GEN/G1/11/4, 18th August,2008). While there have been previous studies examining the impact of examinations on curriculum implementation, limited research has been conducted on the effects of examinations as a dominant approach to curriculum evaluation. Specifically, there is a lack of investigation into the frequency of examinations, examination policies, and the pedagogical skills associated with this approach. The present study aims to address this gap in the literature. This study advocates for the need to conduct empirical research to determine the degree to which these variables impact the implementation of curricula in secondary schools.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The implications of the findings from this study, if implemented, would have multifaceted utility. The implementation of a learner-centered strategy would result in a significant movement away from examination-oriented methods of teaching and learning, leading to a paradigmatic change. This study suggests that teachers and curriculum

developers can use other modes of assessment. The holistic application of the curriculum and the acquisition of appropriate skills and knowledge by learners will be ensured. Through the identification and analysis of disparities between examination policies schools and MOE policy, a cohesive and effective examination policy that promotes consistency in the evaluation process will be established. The study's findings would provide valuable insights for curriculum developers, empowering them to make well-informed judgments during the curriculum review process.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in Kakamega County. The study population include QASOs, principals, teachers, and students. The study focused on effects examinations as a dominant evaluation practice on curriculum implementation, while acknowledging that several factors, including physical facilities, human staff, and political and social considerations, can also affect the implementation process. The educational landscape in Kenya encompasses both public and private secondary schools. However, the study focused on public schools as they are many in numbers and are divided in different categories which made it easier to select population sample. Besides, public schools typically have a shared curriculum and academic calendar, along with teachers who possess similar qualifications. Examinations in Kenya are conducted at different levels; Early Child Development Education (ECDE), primary, secondary, tertiary, and higher education. The focus of the study was limited to the secondary school level which is the culmination of basic education. It is at this level that a significant proportion of Kenyan individuals complete their education within the education system.

Descriptive survey design was employed, which incorporated both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Additionally, inferential statistics were utilized to analyze quantitative data. Questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data. Analysis of data was done by use of descriptive and inferential statistics and one-way ANOVA was used to determine the relationship between school examination policy and MOE policy.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

Accessing some principals to obtain the necessary information via face-to-face interview was quite difficult. To deal with this problem, phone interviews were set up through video calls and zoom meetings to allow them to participate at their convenient time. Some students were unable to respond to questioners during school hours due to the constraints imposed by the school schedule. Some institutions were visited on weekends to avoid interference with school academic programs.

Due to the sensitivity of the examination, several principals were hesitant to take part in the interview. Nevertheless, the participants were provided with a guarantee of confidentiality and were informed about the intended utilization of the collected data. Certain educators were uncooperative in completing the questionnaires. The researcher enlisted the aid of study assistants, primarily consisting of teachers who possessed the ability to persuade their colleagues into participating in the completion of the surveys. A study of this nature in the social sciences is likely to confront sampling and instrument limitations, as the study cannot cover the entire population and the instruments cannot elicit all the necessary data.

1.11 Basic Assumptions of the Study

Teachers were aware of MOE examination policy in secondary schools.

Teachers and education stakeholders understand role of examinations in curriculum implementation.

All schools have internal examination policy guidelines

Schools maintain accurate and updated records of examinations done for reference purpose.

1.12 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework comprises a collection of interconnected concepts, definitions, and propositions that serve to elucidate phenomena or establish connections among them. A research paradigm refers to a conceptual framework that serves as a guide for doing research, aiding in the organization and delineation of the fundamental concepts under investigation. The statement posits that a research framework can be perceived as a navigational tool, offering a systematic approach to steer the research process and facilitate researchers in comprehending their discoveries (Chang, 2007).

Theoretical framework serves as the conceptual underpinning for the broader context of a research endeavor and serves as the basis upon which a study is constructed. This framework serves the purpose of establishing a solid foundation for the research topic being investigated by including relevant theoretical foundations and providing a structure for data analysis and interpretation. The primary purpose of employing theory in conventional theoretical research is to comprehend, elucidate, and forecast events

(Chang, 2007). The study was anchored on two theories namely Constructive Alignment theory and Gadners theory of Multiple Intelligences.

Constructive Alignment Theory

Biggs' (2002) Constructive Alignment Theory served as the foundation for this study. Constructive Alignment is an educational paradigm that integrates constructivism, which posits that learners actively construct meaning through engagement in learning activities and the knowledge they acquire. Alignment is a fundamental principle in curriculum design that places significant emphasis on the process of clearly defining and effectively attaining desired learning outcomes. The objective of Constructive Alignment is to facilitate learners in acquiring significant knowledge through a meticulously crafted, logically structured, and harmonized course. Courses exhibit congruence and coherence when there is a seamless alignment between the desired learning outcomes, the instructional methods employed, and the assessments used to evaluate student learning.

The theory of Constructive Alignment encompasses a deliberate process of establishing the desired learning objectives and determining the appropriate methods for students to exhibit their attainment of these intended learning outcomes. The task involves the development of instructional strategies that effectively engage students in the process of obtaining desired learning outcomes. Additionally, it entails the creation of assessments that enable students to showcase their mastery of the learning outcomes, while also providing instructors with the means to evaluate the extent to which these objectives have been accomplish

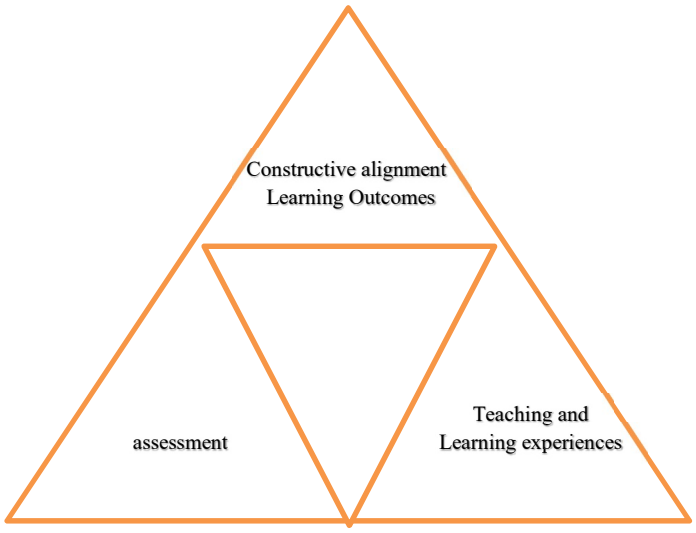

Figure 1. 1Constructive Alignment Theory Model (Biggs, J. 2003)

The concept of constructive alignment posits that learners actively construct their own knowledge through engaging in meaningful and valuable learning activities. In this framework, the teacher's responsibility lies in establishing a conducive learning environment that facilitates the implementation of learning activities that align with the intended learning outcomes. This setting provides learners with the chance to acquire and apply knowledge and skills in innovative and genuine ways. The acquisition of conceptual knowledge enables pupils to develop a novel perspective on the world and engage in appropriate behaviors within the context of that domain. Upon completion of their academic studies, it is expected that all students, regardless of their chosen field of expertise, can contribute positively to society through the practical application of the skills and knowledge they have acquired. The prioritization of tests over actual student learning is a prevalent concern within the Kenyan education system. This theory holds significance within the context of this study as it addresses the necessity of cultivating an educational system that conveys pertinent knowledge and skills capable of effectively

addressing societal challenges. This study aims to realign the teaching and learning process, as proposed by Biggs, to integrate assessment as a fundamental component of learning, rather than as the sole driver and influencer of learning outcomes.

Multiple Intelligence Theory

Gardner's multiple intelligences theory can be used for curriculum development, planning instruction, selection of course activities, and related assessment strategies. Gardner points out that everyone has strengths and weaknesses in various intelligences, which is why educators should decide how best to present course material given the subject-matter and individual class of students. Indeed, learning is enhanced when instruction includes a range of meaningful and appropriate methods, activities, and assessments (Gardner, 2013). He challenged the traditional belief that intelligence is nothing but a single, measurable entity. What he proposed was that there are multiple intelligences that are codependent and that everyone possesses varying degrees of each type of intelligence. Gardner argues that intelligent quotient tests only measure linguistic and logical-mathematical abilities which is not an intelligent fair manner. While traditional paper-and-pen examinations favor linguistic and logical skills, there is a need for intelligence-fair measures that value the distinct modalities of thinking and learning that uniquely define each intelligence (Gardner, Howard, 2016). Everyone learns differently, which calls for diverse experiences and assessments. Multiple intelligences can help instructors pluralize their instruction and methods of assessment and enrich student learning (Strauss, 2013).

Traditionally, intelligence is measured with an IQ test or other metrics of academic achievement. These are informative but don't cover the whole extent of one's cognitive

abilities. The theory of multiple intelligences suggests that it should be used as an assessment to understand someone's strong suits and areas for improvement. This means one can use a multiple-intelligence assessment tool that includes a series of questions or tasks to identify the types of intelligence that learners possess (Allen,2013).

Multiple intelligences theory is important in this study because it helps to recognize the fact that learners may have different learning aptitudes and preferences. A person with an artistic bent of mind may not really learn, behave, articulate, or crack assessments in the same way a person with a logical mindset. Therefore, it is important to find a way to customize learning and assessment to the learner's aptitude (Gardner, 2013). This means curriculum goals and objectives are achieved learners learn in the way they like and are subjected on assessment tests of different types of intelligences. This implies that teachers should adopt different teaching and learning methods with varied of experiences for effective curriculum implementation.

1.13 Conceptual Framework

When conducting research, a conceptual framework is employed to elucidate the important concepts or variables and the connections between them that require examination. A conceptual framework conventionally entails the construction of a graphical representation that illustrates the linkage and interdependence among several variables.

This framework facilitates the researcher in deriving logical inferences from the accessible data and examines the causal connections that exist among various variables.

The conceptual framework elucidates the underlying objective of the project and the specific inquiry it aims to address (Gardener & Horward, 2006).

The three fundamental components of education are curriculum objectives, instruction, and assessment. According to Chen (2005), these are referred to as the "three pillars of the classroom stool," where each pillar must possess equal strength for the stool to maintain its stability effectively. This assertion is corroborated by Chen (2005), who assert that the essence of learning extends beyond mere test performance. Instead, it encompasses the alignment of objectives, learning experiences, and assessments to effectively yield the desired outcomes. Moreover, the idea aligns with Alexander (2005) conceptualization of education as a multifaceted process involving the identification of three distinct parts. The components encompassed within this framework are educational objectives, learning experiences, and the evaluation of accomplishments. According to Alexander (2005), there exists a reciprocal relationship between curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, where each element has an impact on the others within the context of daily classroom interactions. The presence of an examination as an independent variable within the study has the potential to significantly influence the execution of the curriculum, particularly if it is not administered in accordance with established regulations and procedures. The conceptual model depicted in Figure 1.2 elucidates the interrelationship between the dependent and independent variables within the scope of the investigation.

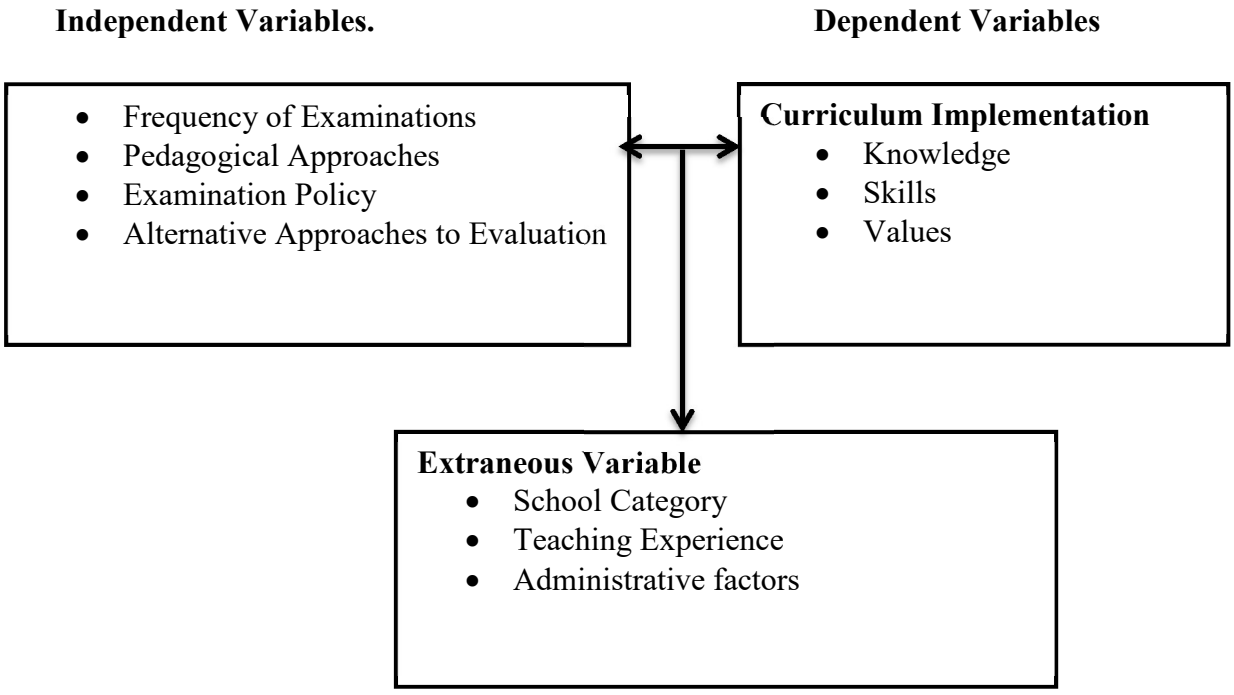

Figure 1. 2 :Conceptual Framework

According to the framework, independent variables refer to the variables that directly influence the implementation of the curriculum. These variables encompass frequent examinations, educational approaches, examination policy, and various approaches to evaluation. The research conducted was to determine the degree to which these variables impact the dependent variable, specifically the execution of the curriculum. The study incorporates indicators of curricular implementation, namely knowledge, skills, and attitude. The effectiveness of curriculum implementation is assessed by the extent to which learners have acquired pertinent knowledge, abilities, and attitudes. The potential influence of extraneous variables, such as teaching experience, was mitigated by employing a selection process that included all head of departments, irrespective of their teaching experience. The study incorporated all classifications of educational institutions within the selected sample for analysis. The educational institutions encompassed in this

category consist of National, Extra-County, County, and Sub-County schools. The school typology was controlled for the variable of gender, ensuring its constancy.

1.14 Operational Definition of Terms

Curriculum: This term encompasses any schedule of events that occur within or outside of a classroom. The program is structured according to subject areas and the material to be covered in each time frame. The extent of the secondary school curriculum varies among institutions, contingent upon the capacity of each school. The schools following the 8.4.4 curriculum typically provide a minimum of eleven disciplines. It is anticipated that each secondary school will provide four mandatory subjects from the curriculum. The subjects encompassed in the curriculum are English, Kiswahili, Mathematics, and Physical Education (PE).

Curriculum Implementation: refers to the process of utilizing a developed curriculum in practice. This study aimed to assess the efficacy of curriculum implementation by evaluating the acquisition of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes by learners during the learning process.

Education System: It is a collection of policies, norms, practices, and fundamentals that govern formal education. The education system under investigation in this study was the 8-4-4 system.

Evaluation: The process of gathering information with the intention of making evaluative judgments about the merit of a program. Within the realm of education, formal evaluation refers to the systematic application of inquiry and judgment procedures to

assess the quality, efficacy, or value of a program, product, project, process, objective, or curriculum.

Examination: The assessment technique employed in educational institutions to evaluate the academic accomplishments of students, as demonstrated through their performance on standardized tests. The research primarily concentrated on evaluating the assessment items administered by teachers within the educational institution, as well as the assessment items provided by external entities like the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC).

Effects: Refers to negative consequences of examinations of curriculum

Dominant: Refers to consistence use of examinations as the only tool for evaluation.

School Category; Refers to four different level of schools namely: National, Extra-County, County and Sub- County schools.

Back-wash effect refers to the implementation of the curriculum selectively by providing priority to the topics and subjects being examined. The prevailing pedagogical approach prioritizes examination success over the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge, neglecting to assess whether learners have truly achieved the necessary competencies. The term is used to refer to the negative effect of frequent administration of examinations on curriculum implementation.

Syllabus According to Burden and Byrd (2013), syllabus encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values pertaining to a particular subject, as well as the utilization of resources and methodologies that facilitate the process of learning. Syllabus

is used in this context to mean the breadth and depth of subject matter that students should be able to cover as specified in the curriculum.

Secondary School: It is the third level of Kenya's educational system, which runs from form one to form four. Students transit to secondary school upon completion of their primary education. Secondary schools in Kenya serve as the final stage of primary education, preparing students for higher levels of education or postsecondary institutions.

Summative Evaluation: Examinations administered to students at the conclusion of a unit or course. They are intended to evaluate the academic achievement of the students at the conclusion of the course. The objective is grading, certification, and advancement to the next level of learning. In the study summative evaluation is used to refer to examinations administered end of term, end of year and end of cycle for example KCPE and KCSE.

Formative Evaluation: Refers to gradual assessment of learner's academic progress by use of classroom assignments, continuous assessment tests and monthly examinations. The term is used in this study to refer to quizzes, tests and assignments given to learners during instructional time or during learning process.

1.15 Chapter Summary

Chapter one covered the following areas: background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions and hypothesis, conceptual and theoretical framework, justification, significance, limitation, the scope of the study and the operational definitions used in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter delved in review of the relevant literature pertaining to historical and contemporary developments in examination techniques. Both theoretical and empirical literature were reviewed, and existing gaps identified. The literature was examined with respect to the following objectives: the frequency of examinations, effects of frequency of examinations on content coverage, the influence of examinations on the choice of pedagogical approaches, compliance school examination policy, and alternative approaches to curriculum evaluation.

2.2 Role of Examinations in Curriculum

An examination refers to a structured and official evaluation process aimed at assessing an individual's understanding and proficiency in a specific field of study. In addition to evaluating a student's topic knowledge, academic assessments also consider their aptitude, learning abilities, physical health, and other essential qualities (UNESCO,2003). Examinations are administered to assess many attributes of a student, as determined by the responses they provide. The primary objective of examinations is to assess students' personality traits, memory capabilities, and aptitude for reviewing course material. Additionally, it serves as a source of motivation for students to enhance their study and expand their knowledge (Marubu, 2015).

Assessment can either be summative or formative where summative assessments refer to examination given to learners at the end of term, end of year or a cycle. Summative

assessments are used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period typically at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, program, or school year (Stiggins, 2008). Formative assessment refers to frequent, interactive assessments of student progress and understanding to identify learning needs and adjust teaching appropriately (Clark *et al.*, 2003). It typically involves qualitative feedback rather than scores for both student and teacher that focus on the details of content and performance. Teachers using formative assessment approaches and techniques are better prepared to meet diverse students' needs through differentiation and adaptation of teaching to raise levels of student achievement and to achieve a greater equity of student outcomes (Alexander, 2005). Through formative assessments, teachers monitor student progress, provide students feedback, and adjust instructional approaches toward improved teaching and learning, (Earl, 2012). According to scholarly research, Ancient China is often regarded as the first country to introduce the practice of examinations. The practice of imperial examinations involved the selection of individuals for government positions and other government-affiliated roles through a comprehensive national assessment. However, it was under the Sui Dynasty in the year 605 AD that the establishment of examinations took place for the first time. Subsequently, in the year 1905, the Chinese government implemented the abolition of the appointment system that relied on examinations (Schmitz, 2011). Following China, England implemented the examination system in 1906 to determine the eligibility of candidates for serving in the public service of Her Majesty. Subsequently, the identical notion of evaluation was also embraced within the realm of academia.

Examinations have gained popularity as an assessment tool among educators due to its ability to effectively evaluate students' knowledge and skills (UNESCO, 2003).

In contemporary times, diverse nations administer a range of examinations in accordance with the requirements of their respective educational systems. However, the essential concept of tests in academia was initially presented by Henry Fischel (World Bank Group,2018). According to Han Schmitz, (2011), he is credited as the originator of examinations. In the present era, examinations hold a significant position within the realm of education. The aforementioned factors serve as the exclusive means by which one can assess an individual's aptitude for diverse undertakings. The entities are an integral component of the educational enterprise and should be regarded within the context of educational principles (Schrank, 2016). According to Davis, (2011), examinations have emerged as the primary source of motivation for both students and educators. Educators assess students using a range of modalities and techniques, including written examinations, project-based assessments, oral presentations, and other activities that allow learners to demonstrate their abilities.

Examinations hold significant importance as they serve as a highly effective means of assessing pupils' knowledge. They assist in delivering crucial information to educators regarding the need to modify their instructional approaches. Despite causing stress for certain individuals, examinations remain an integral component of the educational experience (Musoleno, 2010).

Examinations in Africa fulfill multiple purposes that align with the prevailing social and educational environments in which they are implemented. They exercise authority over

the several components of the educational system and ensure uniform adherence to standardized educational criteria throughout all schools (Musoleno, 2010). Besides, examinations are to determine the admission of students in educational systems that follow a pyramidal structure. The formal validation of academic accomplishments is significant for certain students as it facilitates their entry into work or training opportunities. However, the value of lower-level credentials in the labor market is diminishing due to their increasing prevalence among individual (Omolewa, 2003).

At the foundational level of education in Kenya, there exist two distinct forms of examinations which encompasses both external and internal assessments. External examinations are administered by an external entity, typically with the backing of Sub-County or County educational authorities. These assessments are undertaken by numerous students across various grade levels and serve the purpose of evaluating students for promotion to the next level. Furthermore, they are widely recognized as having a significant impact on students' prospects in terms of education and career opportunities (Mary *et al.,* 2012). Thus, external examinations are used as a benchmark for good performance in schools as well as promotion of learners from one level of education to another. Grades achieved in external examinations especially KCSE determines the career choices of learners. In this case, the quality of education provided, and the depth of content covered at secondary school level may not count, it is the end that justifies the means.

External examinations serve as a means of certifying the degree of achievement attained by individual students, while also offering educational and occupational incentives to

those who demonstrate exceptional performance. This implies that examination results are used as indicators of learning outcomes. An illustration of a public examination. can be observed in the context of the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), which entails the administration of a standardized examination to students in the eighth grade, with the purpose of determining their eligibility for admission into secondary schools (Marubu, 2015). Students engage in intense competition to secure admission to the most prestigious public academic high schools, which is determined by their performance on a standardized examination Those students who obtain lower scores in the test are enrolled in Sub County secondary schools, which exhibit comparatively lower academic performance when compared to other types of secondary schools (Mary et al., 2012).This shows that examinations exhibit competitions which lead to discrimination of learners according to their intellectual abilities.

The Kenya Certificate of Secondary School Education (KCSE) is administered to students in their fourth year of secondary school. This examination is characterized by intense competition among students eying for a limited number of positions in public universities. Those who fail to get the high grades opt for costly alternative degree programs or enroll in private universities and colleges (Mercurio, 2008).

A good evaluation system should measure all kinds of knowledge and skills, compare results to outside standards, and show different levels of success. Secondary education has traditionally been heavily influenced by the demands of external examinations, leading to a focus on teaching topics that are frequently tested in national examinations (Woessmann (2018). According to Mercurio (2008), the primary factor contributing to

the diminished focus on comprehensive learning and an increased emphasis on examinations, particularly at the secondary school level, is the prevailing objective of achieving quality grades in examinations, which serves as a gateway to pursuing higher education opportunities. The phenomena can be attributed to the funnel-shaped configuration of the educational system in Kenya which does not contribute to the achievement of curriculum goals and objectives.

2.3 Frequency of Examinations

Shirvani (2009) defines frequent testing as the administration of tests on multiple occasions within a term or semester, with varying frequencies ranging from weekly to daily. According to Leyendecker (2005), the concept of frequent testing entails the practice of assessing pupils on a weekly basis, except for the final examination. Therefore, the concept of frequency refers to the rate at which examinations are administered, often throughout a given academic term or semester, including the final examination at the end of the term or year. In this study, the term frequency of examination is employed to denote the number of times students are assessed through examinations within the duration of a term and a year.

The issue of frequency has been and continues to be a prominent subject of discussion in the field of education on a global scale. Multiple potential justifications have been proposed by researchers on the advantageous impact of regular testing on the process of education and knowledge acquisition. Woessmann (2016) posits that the implementation of regular tests serves as a motivating factor for students, compelling them to exert

greater effort and dedication in their academic pursuits, driven by the desire to get favorable grades. According to Adeyemo, (2005), regular testing provides students with valuable feedback on their performance, allowing them to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This feedback enables students to dedicate more time and effort to addressing their areas of weakness, hence facilitating their progress in removing these weaknesses.

Despite complaints and ongoing efforts to change the education system, examinations continue to have a major position secondary schools across the world (Leyendecker, (2005). In North American regions, national examinations continue to serve as the primary means of ensuring accountability within secondary education systems. The impact of examination systems on teachers and students is characterized by a significant "backwash" effect, influencing both the content taught by teachers and the knowledge acquired by students (Diamond,2007). According to Taylor and Nolen (2008), examinations are appropriate tools for supporting and assessing learning when objectives, instruction, and feedback are explicitly aligned. This means there must be proper link between curriculum components for effective curriculum implementation and achievement of the set goals and objectives.

(Copp, 2016) contends that if examinations excessively prioritize linguistic form over practical application in a language, learners may fail to recognize the dynamic nature of the language being studied. This language is a vibrant entity that individuals engage with through activities such as reading, writing, playing games, watching movies, and interpersonal communication. In the same vein, if examinations solely serve as a means

of learning, individuals who are acquiring a new language may experience a loss of concentration as they prioritize achieving higher scores above the actual process of language acquisition.

In China, it is customary for students to undergo a series of examinations when commencing their education.The demand for secondary education is increasing due to the significant growth in primary education enrolment, as well as improvements in retention and transition rates. In response to this issue, governments in the region employ tests as a tool to regulate access to education, gauge learning achievements, and ensure quality standards (Qi, 2007).

National Curriculum in Britain has undergone a substantial reduction in the scope of subjects to be taught, resulting in a reinforcement of a pedagogical approach centered around repetitive practice and rote memorization. The task of evading this phenomenon becomes exceedingly challenging due to the prevailing emphasis on examination outcomes and the consequential need for classroom educators to assume responsibility for their pupils' performance on assessments (UNESCO,2002). Prioritization of examinations may be driven by nations' endeavors to alter their educational systems to meet global benchmarks and thus enhance their rankings in international assessments (Burns, 2015). Although international league tables are not inherently problematic, they exert influence on policymakers, leading them to overemphasize the outcomes of these assessments.Consequently, policymakers justify allocating significant resources to education, schools, and innovation centers, as well as attracting foreign investment to bolster their economies. Besides, educational policies frequently establish criteria for

school systems to evaluate and measure their performance in relation to educational systems in other nations (Peterson, 2007). Thus, countries across the globe lay emphasis on examinations due to competitions from other nations.

China possesses a higher number of examinations compared to any other country. Wong further highlights that the prevalent examination-focused educational system not only imposes excessive pressure on students but also hampers their capacity to employ personalized learning techniques that are most conducive to their individual learning styles. Qi, (2004) argues that examination centered learning puts students under a great deal of stress since examinations are seen as a means of demonstrating a student's value. From a broader perspective, examinations serve as a mechanism that regulates students' actions. Therefore, it occasionally presents itself as a suppressive entity that affects both one's scholarly pursuits and social interactions. The education system, which places examination at its central focus, diminishes the fundamental objective of education, namely the cultivation of critical thinking skills. This practice may affect realization of curriculum goals and objectives.

In Philippine, both primary and high school students face a plethora of examinations, often staying up late and skipping sleep to achieve their desired marks. This frequent testing of learner’s results in feelings of discouragement and diminished self-worth, leading certain students to perceive themselves as intellectually inferior to their peers and potentially lose motivation in their academic pursuits (Peterson, 2007).

The Asia-Pacific area has witnessed a rise in the prevalence of testing, with numerous countries making concerted efforts to enhance student learning outcomes. Over emphasis

on academic accomplishment has become a fundamental aspect of their education programs, serving as an indicator of their education system's effectiveness (Ramirez, 2018). There is a wide range of tests and examinations in Asian Pacific in the region, encompassing both low-stakes and high-stakes formats. National, regional, and worldwide evaluations that gauge overall performance are examples of low-stakes examinations; these examinations have little or no bearing on a student's capacity to advance in the educational system High-stakes assessments have significant implications on learners as they navigate transitions, pursue graduation, seek admission to higher education institutions, strive for enrollment in prestigious schools, and endeavor to secure access to improved employment opportunities (Smith 2014). The rationale behind the implementation of these assessments can be justified as endeavors to improve the quality of education. However, emphasis on high stakes examinations and quality scores may have the unintended consequence of neglecting other essential elements of learning that are not frequently examined (Kennedy, 2016).

High-stakes examinations prioritize information retention and accumulation over other learning objectives. This phenomenon has sparked global discussions on the precise metrics being assessed and the extent to which examination programs prioritize the development of skills and competencies that foster the ability of learners to make meaningful contributions to communities characterized by peace and well-being (smith and Karpicke (2014). This reveals that when schools assess students' intellectual growth rather than their overall well-being, the latter will always be given priority, and this defeats the purpose of learning which is to acquire knowledge and skills for application in day-to-day life.

When significant consequences are associated with an assessment, educators and educational institutions are compelled to modify their instructional practices to achieve the most favorable outcomes in the subject matter being evaluated. Testing can be perceived as a catalyst for change, influencing both the content and methods of instruction, as well as the acquisition and application of knowledge (Madaus and Clarke, 2001). Many nations are currently shifting their educational strategies to incorporate the instruction and evaluation of transversal skills and competencies. However, this endeavor is fraught with difficulties, mostly stemming from the complexities of defining, implementing, and measuring these skills (UNESCO, 2003). Consequently, a significant number of instructors and educators persist in prioritizing the academic aspects of learning, which are more prone to being evaluated in national examinations (Kilickaya).

Examinations hold a key position in secondary education within the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region. Students are required to complete tests at various intervals throughout their academic journey. These assessments often occur at the at the end of a specific topic, the end of a term, the culmination of a year, and ultimately, the final national examinations that mark the completion of junior secondary and senior secondary school (Bainton and Barret, 2016). The assessment of educational achievements in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is conducted through the utilization of examination outcomes. The credit of students, teachers, and schools is derived on their performance in examinations. The excessive focus placed on examinations compels educators to employ pedagogical methods that prioritize the memorization and regurgitation of information and definitions, resulting in a reliance on rote-learning techniques. The test results of junior secondary pupils in certain countries indicate that while children tend to perform adequately in examinations

that assess lower cognitive abilities, they have difficulties in achieving satisfactory outcomes in examinations that assess higher cognitive abilities. (Govender, 2004). This shows that learners are frequently subjected to examinations that measure low cognitive abilities. Quality examination items should balance between lower and higher cognitive abilities as per the curriculum objectives.

Stiggins, (2008) asserts that there is a notable interest among education stakeholders in Kenya to enhance the quality of education provided by the school system. These stakeholders include: County Governments, Faith Based Organizations (FBO), members of parliament, and individuals interested in academic pursuits of the learners. Certain individuals have had a role in promoting the advancement and administration of both internal and external tests to enhance academic achievement within their respective regions. Makokha, (2009) argues that frequent administration of examinations to students within little time intervals diminishes its significance and weakens society's endeavor to deliver education that is both high in quality and pertinent to the needs of its children. He confirmed that frequent testing by instructors in their courses means more effort that may not be represented in the learning process, In addition, frequent assessment utilizes instructional time that could otherwise be dedicated to teaching rather than evaluating.

Marshall, (2007) established that students tend to leave less time to study when presented with a greater number of examinations. Likewise, some stakeholders believe that imposition of numerous examinations upon pupils is not conducive for effective educational practices, as it disrupts the learning process (Nicholas & Berliner, 2007).

This means frequent administration of examinations may have washback effect on the intended curriculum goals and objectives.

Furthermore, regular testing force teachers to prioritize test preparation and instruction, limiting the dissemination of knowledge to only the content necessary for achieving favorable examination outcomes (Marcell, 2008). This can result in a school environment that is not conducive to promoting independent learning among students. The International Bureau of Education defines learning as a dynamic process that involves the integration of personal and environmental experiences and influences, with the aim of acquiring, enhancing, or altering one's knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, behavior, and worldviews (UNESCO, 2002). Such cannot be achieved in education system where examinations are given priority at the expense of teaching and learning which leads to achievement of national goals of education as envisaged in the curriculum.

Assessment of student learning is an integral part of the school day and occupies a substantial quantity of classroom time as a significant portion of a teacher's daily schedule is dedicated to matters examinations (Maheta, 2016). According to Mwabeza (2010), frequency of examinations may impede students' ability to engage in comprehensive knowledge acquisition and grasp the interconnections among various concepts encompassed within each subject. When students fail to acquire relevant knowledge and skills during learning they become less productive in the field of work, and this affects economic growth which is part of curriculum goals and objectives.

Pressure for quality grade in national examinations has led to establishment of collaborative assessments that encompass educational institutions at the sub-county,

county, and regional tiers. Educational institutions have also resorted to procuring examinations from vendors, some of whom lack the requisite training and practical experience as teachers (Kigotho, 2004). Curriculum implementation process includes assessment of learners which should be done by experts who understands curriculum goals and how they should be achieved through relevant instructional practices. Examinations procured from vendors my not measure to the standards and requirements of the curriculum.

The timely and appropriate administration of examinations plays a significant role in evaluating learners' proficiency, development, and accomplishments. However, the misuse of evaluation occurs when examinations encroach upon the crucial realm of instruction, by taking a central position in learning process (Jacob, 2001). The regular administration of examinations can effectively fulfill its intended purpose through a thoughtful selection of the content being examined and the methods employed for assessment. Nevertheless, if the assessments fail to evaluate the appropriate skills and types of knowledge in an effective manner, they may inadvertently promote the memorization of examined content(Jones, 2003). Consequently, students may perceive these assessments solely to achieve quality grade, thereby hindering meaningful learning that aligns with the intended curriculum goals and objectives (Ramsey, 2006). Good education system should align assessment with educational outcomes.

Within the realm of education, the central focus is around the concept of examinations, which holds significant importance and prominence. As one may ask, is it important to have regular examinations at educational institutions? What is the underlying rationale

for the frequency of examinations at educational institutions? Should teachers prioritize teaching to the test? Do tests provide an accurate measure of intelligence, or do they primarily assess a student's ability to recollect information in an examination environment? Can the achievement of curriculum goals be realized by administering frequent assessments to learners? The issue of frequent examination is a matter of concern not only in Kenya but also in other nations, as evidenced by relevant literature. The present studies focus on dominance use of examinations and its effect on curriculum implementation in secondary schools.

2.4 Effect of Frequency Examinations on Syllabus Coverage

Numerous research has been undertaken to ascertain the effects of examinations on curriculum development. Recent research suggests that high-stakes examinations have the potential to diminish the quality and quantity of curriculum, leading to a heightened focus on a narrower range of subjects within schools (Oundo, 20144). According to Marubu, (2015) examinations limit the scope of abilities and competences that students can acquire.

Narrowing of curriculum can manifest in ways such as the reduction of content, prioritizing specific topics over others and displacing certain values embedded in the curriculum, limiting materials and methods that reinforce and facilitate testing skills and knowledge assessed in examinations (Berliner, 2011). When schools narrow the curriculum to examined subjects and content, certain skills and knowledge embedded in non-examined may not be acquired by the learners. This may in turn affect holistic

development of learners in terms of achievement of cognitive, psycho motor and affective domains.

A study by Jonnes & Egley, (2004) revealed that when teachers are driven by the pressure to enhance student performance, they allocate a significant amount of instructional time to activities related to examinations. Consequently, this leads to a reduction in the time allocated to subjects or topics that are not assessed, as well as a shift towards instructional methods that emphasize on recall and recitation of facts taught.

According to Sprake (2008), physical education (PE) is seen as a peripheral subject in British schools, and many secondary schools purposefully cut PE time to create room for subjects that are prioritized more highly. McMurrer, (2007) conducted a study wherein he observed a 43% rise in the amount of time allocated for examined subjects such as English and Mathematics. Conversely, there was a 32% decrease in the amount of time allocated for non-tested subjects, including social studies, arts, physical education, and even recess. The study further revealed that teachers in the fourth-grade cohort allocated around 63% of their teaching time to subject areas that were examined, namely reading, writing, and mathematics. According to Jones *et al.,* (2012), educators in North Carolina observed that non-tested curricular domains were given less emphasis. This reveals that examined subjects were given priority in teaching and learning.

Research conducted by Herman and Golan (n.d.) revealed that teachers modify the order in which they teach their curriculum to prioritize the subject that is more likely to be tested in the state examination. Research indicates a substantial correlation between state examinations and a heightened focus on tested subjects, cause detrimental effect on non-

tested subjects. However, the influence of the examination on instructional methods varies depending on the specific format of the state examination (Machant,2005). There is an increased focus on the development of higher-order cognitive abilities in instructional practices, particularly in instances where state examinations necessitate written answers (Stecher *et al.,* 2004). A study conducted by Kenneth (2005) majority of teachers in both nations believed that examinations had an impact on their instruction, but they spoke of more negative than positive consequences. A greater proportion of Irish teachers, as compared to Turkish teachers, expressed the need to adhere to examination-oriented teaching methods and solely focus on examination-related content.

A study by Chinyani, *et al.,* (2013), revealed that while the secondary school curriculum in Zimbabwe consisted of a combination of practical and academic subjects, there was a noticeable inclination towards academic subjects in the selection process, despite the presence of ample material and human resources. Furthermore, disciplines that were not included in the examination curriculum, such as Guidance and Counselling and HIV/AIDS education, were not given sufficient emphasis, despite their significant contributions to an individual's social and emotional well-being. In addition, educators with prior experience instructing examination-oriented courses analyzed the examination structure to discern the specific subject matter that will be assessed in an upcoming examination. Consequently, they prioritized the instruction of those specific areas, neglecting the entire syllabus content (Madaus, 2001).

Mavhunga (2008) noted that courses that were subject to examination were typically scheduled for the morning sessions, when students were more alert and enthusiastic, whereas non-examinable subjects were allocated to the afternoon slots. In addition,

Kenneth, (2005) emphasized that in the context of test preparation, educators utilized the time originally designated for non-examined subjects to review the material pertaining to the subjects that were to be examined. When teachers sacrifice non examined subjects and pay attention to examined subjects, learners' acquisition of relevant skills is not fully realized, and this affects holistic development of the learners. Every aspect of the curriculum has a role to play in realization of educational goals hence selective teaching as practiced by teachers negatively affects curriculum implementation.

According to Rehmani (2003), it is widely accepted that the practice of teaching to the examination is prevalent in numerous educational institutions in Pakistan. A study conducted in Karachi examined a sample of 16 children ranging from grades 6 to 10, representing four distinct schools. The findings indicated that teachers predominantly emphasized rote learning because of their focus on test-oriented instruction. Salokun (2005), revealed that although the Nigerian government promoted the growth and inclusion of physical education (PE) in the curriculum as early as 1960, most educational institutions held a negative perception of the subject due to its perceived focus on subjects that were examined.

Airasian and Abrams, (2003) noted that effective classroom assessments exhibit certain characteristics such as evaluating learners on the content they have been taught, utilizing assessment questions that align with the stated curriculum objectives, and employing clear, unambiguous, and appropriate assessment questions and scoring procedures. To ensure efficient implementation of classroom assessment, it is imperative that educators

possess a comprehensive understanding of their respective subject matter, necessary skills related to assessment, and have access to teaching resources of exceptional quality

According to Khalid (2007). examination pressure leads teachers to prioritize the teaching of diverse abilities towards the end of the curriculum, rather than integrating them throughout different sections. As per Khalid's assertion, the consequence of this situation is that educators may develop the perception that they may address mathematical thinking and problem-solving skills as a final step, after covering all other courses, rather than integrating these skills across the entire curriculum. Therefore, it is imperative for the student to acquire the ability to engage in mathematical thinking within the field of mathematics, rather than solely focusing on computational tasks. This will enable the development of a robust and enduring understanding of mathematical concepts, which will prove beneficial in subsequent endeavors. A study by the task force on student discipline and discontent in secondary schools (GOK 2001) established that the existing curriculum is not aligned with the educational policy, aims, and philosophy. Teachers are typically more examination-focused when implementing the curriculum.

Kirimi (2016) established that national examination grades are the keystone by which Kenyan educators, principals, parents, and legislators assess students' level of academic achievement. The authors of the paper titled "Motivational Factors of National Examination Ranking" highlighted that educators primarily prioritize students' performance in examinations, sometimes neglecting the development of broader knowledge and comprehension. Limangura *et al* 2018) maintains the educators strive to

facilitate students' achievement in examinations, prioritizing content that is evaluated, while perhaps neglecting aspects of instruction that are not formally reviewed

According to Gardner, it is essential for teachers to consider the unique abilities and potential of each learner. The speaker placed emphasis on the importance of assessment that encompasses the entirety of student learning, rather than solely focusing on the rote memory of acquired knowledge. Gardner's assessment, which encompasses inclusivity, is characterized by its meaningfulness and comprehensive measurement of the curriculum Butler (2007). Evaluation methods used by schools evaluate pupils' memory abilities exclusively; they do not evaluate their affective psychomotor domains (Shamaa, 2012).

Moreover, when instructors focus shifts from self-regulated learning to examination scores, students tend to place excessive effort on examinations which affects their learning as well as content mastery of the subject matter (Peter, 2005). Effective education system cording to Biggs theory, should possess certain characteristics such as aligning examination with the curriculum, establishing achievement in relation to an external benchmark, assessing a comprehensive range of skills and knowledge, and indicating various levels of accomplishment(Biggs, 2003). Besides, MacLellan (2001), maintains that it is essential for teachers to possess specialized assessment skills to effectively utilize and create suitable assessment tools, utilize assessment outcomes to make informed decisions regarding individual learners to enhance their learning, and communicate information to parents and other teachers.

The education system in Kenya has historically been characterized by emphasis on examinations, resulting in teachers prioritizing the examined components of the

curriculum (Mercurio, 2008).After independence, Ominde Commission recommended that Kiswahili should be made a mandatory in primary schools (Shiundu & Omulando,1992). Due to the lack of investigation on the subject matter, most educational institutions did not incorporate it into their curriculum as compulsory subject. Failure by institutions in implementing such policies can affect curriculum implementation in terms of subject content.

Wayne *et al*., (2009) asserts that the implementation of examination-centered instruction and high-stakes testing leads to a reduction in the breadth of curricular content. Narrowing of curriculum content occurs as topic selection is primarily driven by alignment with the test format and requirements. Essential subjects are defined as those that undergo assessment, while subjects deemed inconsequential are disregarded (Lane, 2001). Rather than adhering to the curriculum and ensuring that instruction and assessment are aligned with it, teachers often begin with the examination and adjust the content and instruction accordingly.

Education encompasses not just the achievement of high scores in examinations, but also the acquisition of practical skills that are crucial for promoting sustainability (Ornestein and Hunkins, 2013). It is imperative for stakeholders to recognize the significance of students acquiring comprehensive topic knowledge in areas beyond what is strictly necessary for examination purposes. This study seeks to establish effects of high frequent examinations on curriculum implementation.

The Kenya government educational policy mandates inclusion of Physical Education as a core subject in elementary and secondary schools, alongside Mathematics, English, and

Kiswahili. (KICD, 2002). However, many schools do not plot PE lessons on the timetable, particularly in the third and fourth forms (Jorge *et al*., (2021). Physical Education (PE) is commonly perceived as an educational activity that lacks productivity, a perspective that is held by certain educators (Marshall and Hardman, 2000). Adeyemo (2010) posits that achieving comprehensive development in individuals necessitates a harmonious cultivation of both academic and non-academic dimensions within the contexts of formal, non-formal, and informal education. In contemporary culture, characterized by individuals experiencing periods of excessive anxiety and stress that might potentially result in depression, the importance of co-curricular activities is heightened.

Co-curricular activities are becoming increasingly prominent as an integral component of the global education system. The objective of co-curricular activities is to give students a chance to enhance their cognitive and physical capabilities, while fostering positive behaviors and acquiring skills that may be utilized throughout their lives (Sprake, 2008,). Studies conducted in the United States identified a positive correlation between engagement in co-curricular activities and academic achievement (Adeymo, 2010). A study by (Marsh, 2002) established that engagement in co-curricular activities has a significant role in cultivating a sense of belonging and dedication to the school, ultimately leading to positive academic achievements. Similarly, Kariyana, *at al.,* (2012), found out that engagement in co-curricular activities yield various advantages, such as developing learners' talents and fostering academic achievement.

According to Morgan and Hansen (2008), there exist hurdles inside educational institutions that impede teachers from effectively facilitating co-curricular activities.

These barriers can be categorized as institutional and teacher-related, as they stem from the behaviors exhibited by teachers. Institutional impediments encompass a range of challenges, such as financial and budgetary limitations, limited availability of resources, time limits resulting from academic workload, inadequate provision of professional development opportunities, the overcrowded curriculum, and insufficient physical infrastructure (Salokun, 2005). The interplay of these factors have a pivotal part in the inadequate execution of co-curricular activities in most educational establishments worldwide. Lorraine (2000) discovered that the arrangement of co-curricular activities in schools was a significantly overlooked aspect of formal education in most educational institutions.

In the Kenyan context, student engagement in co-curricular activities is regarded as a fundamental entitlement rather than a mere privilege. Co-curricular activities programs are acknowledged as a significant component of the educational process and are granted equivalent standing to other elements of the curriculum (UNESCO, 2000). Nevertheless, despite the clear directive from the Ministry of Education via the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) that schools to offer co-curricular activities as part of non-formal curriculum (Republic of Kenya, 2011), the directive has been violated in most learning institutions.

The current educational system has been criticized for excessive focus on examinations to the point where additional tutoring is required, so infringing on the time designated for co-curricular activities (Morgan, 2009). The study by Ndunguri, (2001) found out that there is favorable correlation between students' participation in co-curricular activities and their academic achievement. This finding demonstrates that engagement in co-

curricular activities has a beneficial impact on students' academic performance. According to the findings of Kisango, (2012) study on factors influencing student participation in extracurricular activities in public secondary schools, teachers play no significant role in the development of students' participation in extracurricular activities. While Kisongo's examined the elements that influence student participation in co-curricular activities, the present study focused on effects of examinations on curriculum implementation.

Marubu, *at al.,* (2004) established that candidates and teachers alike were under pressure to perform well in examinations that they rarely had time to think or spare time for co-curricular activities. (Ogang'a, 2010) discovered that school administrators employ various strategies to discourage co- curricular activities, including limited financial resources allocated for trips, insufficient funds for purchasing equipment and facilities, and discouraging senior students and low achievers from participating in such activities, among other measures. Occasionally, there have been instances of disagreement between the school administrators and physical education instructors about matters pertaining to athletic activities.

Related literature on examinations in various countries have highlighted various shortcomings in the examination systems which affect the quality of education. For instance, subjectivity, poor content coverage, use of single textbooks for examination preparation, administrative shortcomings, malpractices, and rote memorization are listed as major shortfalls of the examination system (Chan, *et al*., 2006). This hinders teaching and learning as it narrows the teaching of content to a few topics which are suspected to be examined. The learners on the other hand will be forced to memorize the few topics at

their disposal. This limits the acquisition of knowledge and skills which cannot be measured by paper and pencil tests. This study examined the effect of frequency of examination in secondary school curriculum.

2.5 Effects of Frequency of Examinations on Choice of Pedagogical Approaches

Teaching methods in education refer to the instructional strategies that teachers employ to aid students in learning the subject matter (Nasibi, 2003). According to Burden and Byrd (2013), students utilize this approach to comprehend and assimilate the fundamental information, principles, overarching ideas, and proficiencies associated with a particular discipline. Kiruhi, *et al.,* (2009) refer to teaching methods as strategies employed by educators to structure educational encounters to facilitate the acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes by learners. There are a diverse range of methods, approaches, and strategies employed in the realm of teaching and learning. Examples include the constructive approach, inductive method, deductive method, and co-operative learning.

Educational media enhances the learning experience by fostering engagement and interest through the utilization of tangible objects, hence making the process pleasurable and captivating for learners. Educational institutions would need to adapt their pedagogical approaches to effectively navigate the evolving educational environment (Burden and Byrd, (2013).

As the educational landscape expands beyond traditional classroom settings and extends into domestic environments and virtual communities, students are accorded the opportunity to connect their learning experiences with real-world contexts, thereby

fostering greater autonomy and self-directedness. This demonstrates the importance of educators incorporating a variety of educational resources to enhance the enjoyment and fulfillment of learning. According to Isola, (2010) such an objective can only be accomplished when teachers prioritize the attainment of curriculum objectives over the pressures of examinations.

Mehta (2019) contends that there is no universally applicable method of delivering content in a classroom setting. However, when teachers prioritize the examination performance of their students, they often overlook the individual nature and abilities of their students. For instance, Pallavi *et al.,* (2016) argues that teaching approaches such as dramatization can provide a sense of reality and concreteness, particularly benefiting students who may be performing at lower levels. This is contrary to Gardeners theory of intelligences which maintains that learners have multiple intelligences which must be developed through different learning approaches and experiences (Gardener and Horward, 2006).

The significance of the global context in classroom pedagogy, as perceived by educators, is constantly regarded as a vital factor in enhancing learning outcomes. It is imperative to consider this aspect in any educational reform aimed at increasing the quality of education (UNESCO, 2005). (Madaus, 2001) revealed that assessments did not yield beneficial outcomes in terms of teaching and learning as educators utilized previous examination papers as a pedagogical tool to prepare pupils for successful completion of their assessments. In United States, the government encourages teachers to transition from traditional teaching approaches to best practices that foster the comprehensive

development of learners. Conventional techniques and approaches to education are insufficient in addressing the contemporary need for fostering well-rounded learners who can effectively adapt to the evolving demands of society (Ornstein, 2013). According to national data, there has been a historical trend in American schools where the emphasis on high-stakes test-oriented accountability has led to a decrease in the utilization of instructional approaches that prioritize the development of complex thinking and problem-solving skills (Haney, 2000). This indicates that examinations determine pedagogical approaches employed by teachers during teaching and learning. This practice encourages rote learning as learners struggle to memorize content for the sake of examinations.

In the past twenty years, numerous industrialized and developing nations have undertaken significant curriculum and pedagogical transformations to fulfill the objective of Education for All (EFA), frequently with the assistance of external donors. The influence exerted by development partners may have served as a catalyst for governments to implement reforms aimed at promoting learner-centered, active, and competency-based education. The concepts mentioned have garnered positive reception at the community level as a strategy to attain educational, economic, social, and political objectives (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008).

There is a growing interest among academics and educators in Kenya to develop teaching and learning methods that incorporate the ideas of 21st century pedagogies. This is in acknowledgment of the importance of social construction of knowledge, real-life

experiences, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication (Hall, 2014). Students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds require and are entitled to an educational environment that is both motivating and helpful. This includes access to interesting instructional materials and opportunities to study in settings that foster cooperation with classmates, teachers, and the broader community (Kafwa, 2013). According to Karimi (2013), individuals classified as 21st century students possess the ability to effectively comprehend, generate, integrate, and assess knowledge derived from a broad range of disciplines and origins, all the while demonstrating an appreciation for and acknowledgement of diverse cultural perspectives.

Multiple studies have demonstrated that the presence of examinations influences educators to prioritize teaching content that aligns closely with the test format and content (Madaus and Clarke, 2001; Sullivan, 2006). Furthermore, the prioritization of test taking abilities and content above other curricula (White, Sturtevant and Dunlap, 2003) has led to an increase in the amount of time teachers dedicate to test preparation, mostly through the utilization of practice tests (Diamond, 2007). In situations where assessments carry significant weight, the content covered in former examination papers often determines the curriculum's focus and exclusion. Educators diligently provide their pupils with the necessary knowledge and skills, leading to the observation that previous examination papers often serve as a reliable indicator of the present subject matter (Madaus and Clarke, 2001).

Selection of instructional approach is influenced by educators' attitudes and preferences with regards to achieving high performance in standardized national assessments

(Watson, 2003). Dufresne (2010) observed that the utilization of suitable methodologies enhances the efficacy of the learning experience, whereas the implementation of unsuitable methodologies hinders the learning process. This shows that teachers should apply teaching methods that would realize effective curriculum implementation and acquisition of curriculum goals and

According to Rehmani, (2003) students place greater value on preparation tactics than subject matter in the country's summative and mono-skill based examinations. Rehmani further emphasized that educators and students operate within a demanding environment, wherein teachers often resort to predominantly employing the lecture approach for instruction and learning. Students tend to adopt a superficial approach to learning due to the expectation that they must memorize the information presented in their assigned textbooks.

A study conducted by Kamoru and Isioma (2007) shows that students who are instructed using the guided scoring system have superior academic performance compared to those who are taught using conventional methods. Selection of appropriate methodology is contingent upon various aspects, including the characteristics of the learner, the subject matter being taught, the resources at hand, and the instructor's perspective (Githau *at el.,* 2009). Several instructional methods can be employed in educational settings, such as lecture/teacher-centered approaches, discussions, presentations, role play, demonstrations, storytelling, and dramatization. There is no universally applicable procedure (Mehta, 2016). Nevertheless, when educators prioritize the academic achievements of their students, they may overlook the individual characteristics and

capabilities of their students. This is problematic because certain teaching methods, such as using dramatization, have been shown to enhance the understanding and engagement of underperforming students (Pallavi *et al.,* 2016).

The findings of Watanabe (2000) however revealed that educators made efforts to foster innovation in their examination preparation courses by employing a diverse range of self-created instructional resources. The research findings suggest that educators employ examination resources to varying extents when preparing students for assessments. Utilization of exam materials is influenced by the passage of time, as the proximity of the examination prompts an increased reliance on former exams and commercially available exam-related books. According to Chang (2010), excessive focus on examination performance might lead to pedagogical approaches that prioritize test preparation, potentially resulting in negative consequences for both the intended curriculum and student outcomes. This phenomenon occurs when educators transition their objectives from facilitating students' acquisition of a comprehensive comprehension of the subject matter to prioritizing the regurgitation of the instructed material to get elevated scores and consequently favorable academic evaluations.

Codruta *et al., (2011)* maintain that instructional strategies should place a strong emphasis on the requirement for students to research, solve problems, ask questions, experiment, explore, and discover as well as complete projects and assignments. The pedagogical approach that prioritizes examinations promotes the practice of repetitive and memorization-based learning, which may not be deemed very pertinent or equitable

for students. According to Karimi (2013), students perceive a sense of worth when their educational experiences and curriculum acknowledge the diverse backgrounds of the learners and their future aspirations. In the context of examination-based teaching, the primary responsibility of the teacher is to disseminate knowledge, with learners assuming a passive role by attentively listening and recording information. In contrast, the discovery teaching strategy involves the teacher assuming the position of a facilitator, guiding learners' activities and facilitating the process of learning. The primary emphasis of this approach lies in fostering discourse and resolving challenges within the context of knowledge acquisition (Kiruhi, et al., 2009). Burden and Byrd (2013) argue for the implementation of diverse instructional approaches that consider the characteristics of students and the resources at hand.

Karimi (2013) argues that teaching practices should prioritize the cultivation of learners' abilities to inquire, experiment, explore, discover, and problem-solve. The pedagogical approach that prioritizes examinations promotes the practice of repetitive and memorization-based learning, which may be deemed inadequate and inequitable for students. Students get a sense of worth and appreciation when their educational experience acknowledges and incorporates the diverse backgrounds and aspirations of the learners.

Teaching methods employed in Kenya are impacted by the pressure placed on teachers to meet performance expectations. Regrettably, the evaluation of instructors' effectiveness is predicated on students' examination scores, so exerting an influence on their instructional methodologies. These pedagogical methodologies transform students into active learners

consistently over the duration of their four-year academic journey (Buhere, 2007). Teacher-centered methods result in rote learning and cramming, where students only participate in the learning process when asked questions, and teachers fully participate in class activities through explanations and discussions (Tella *et al.,* 2010). In the context of Kenya, there appears to be a lack of initiative among instructors to enhance their educational approaches, which can be attributed to the influence of national test outcomes. According to Adeyeni (2008), educators adopt conventional instructional approaches with the intention of facilitating successful performance in tests. This means selection of pedagogical approaches is influenced by examinations. This practice may lead to rote learning where learners cram concepts for the sake of passing examinations.

Buhere (2019), argues that students in schools belong to three groups based on their aptitudes, interests, and learning styles: quick, average, and slow learners. A subset of the youngsters may exhibit challenges in their learning or behavioral patterns, hence presenting varying learning modalities. All children falling under these specified categories possess the inherent right to get an education. Teachers should, therefore, adapt their teaching approaches based on the specific subject, topic, and concept being taught. Additionally, teachers should take into consideration the diverse needs and characteristics of the learners they are instructing (Daily Nation on April 2, 2019). This suggests that educators do not employ diverse instructional approaches to accommodate the varying needs and abilities of their students.

Meheta (2016), asserts that utilization of instructional strategies such as the debate cum narration method offers students the advantage of dual benefits. The platform offers ample opportunities for students to engage in the process of selecting themes or presenting ideas related to problems, assessing these ideas through the interchange of thoughts, and making decisions with appropriate supporting materials. According to Kubow and Fossum (2007), the practice of teaching to the examinations has implications not just for the structuring of information, but also the way subject knowledge, principles, and concepts are conveyed. Educators relinquish their most effective instructional practices to adhere to standard-based education, for which they are held responsible. This suggests that the instructional methods employed by educators can either effectively convey the desired subject matter or tend to prioritize teaching that places greater focus on tests.

Makatiani (2017), established that examination-oriented approaches fail to adequately address the acquisition of practical skills, values, and attitudes among learners. The techniques primarily focus on the achievement of learners in national examinations. Students are subjected to a state of bondage because of their dependence on educators who impart knowledge through teacher-centered instructional methods.

The literature reviewed in numerous studies has consistently highlighted concerns regarding the impact of examination-oriented teaching on various aspects of students' academic performance, the quality of education, the achievement of curriculum goals,

and the academic aspirations of learners. The present study, however, undertook a critical analysis of the effects of high frequency of examinations on curriculum implementation.

2.6 Examination Policy in Schools

The process of examination plays a crucial role in assessing students' achievement of predetermined objectives and evaluating the efficacy of educational curricula. To ensure that examinations yield useful and reliable data for the purpose of decision-making, it is imperative that they are meticulously designed and organized. A meticulously planned, executed, and evaluated evaluation serves as an optimal instrument for arriving at an informed determination regarding the efficacy of the program. Numerous debates have emerged concerning the perspectives of educators on test techniques. According to Timothy (2018), there is a prevailing endorsement from policymakers and the public for the implementation of high stakes testing to evaluate student and school performance, despite significant concerns expressed by the educational classroom assessment community. According to Stiggins (2014), teachers often exhibit a tendency to employ assessment methods that were utilized throughout their own educational experiences, thereby perpetuating their familiarity with established assessment practices rather than acquiring and implementing contemporary, pertinent, and high-quality assessment methods inside their classrooms. This method has resulted in the erroneous assessment of learners' achievements and inadequate provision of feedback.

The primary aim of education in Finland is to provide equitable access to education for all individuals.The system has a high degree of permeability, meaning that there are no barriers impeding upward mobility in the pursuit of advanced degrees of education. The

primary emphasis in the field of education is placed on the acquisition of knowledge and skills, prioritizing the process of learning over the practice of assessment (Madaus *et al*.,). In Finland, there is an absence of national tests for students in the foundational stages of school. In contrast, the responsibility for assessment in their topics lies with teachers, who are tasked with evaluating student performance according to the objectives outlined in the curriculum. The sole national examination is administered upon the culmination of general upper secondary education. Admission to institutions of higher education is contingent upon the outcomes of the matriculation examination and entrance examinations, as stated by the Finnish National Board of Education in 2010.

Canadian educational institutions possess the autonomy to develop their own policies pertaining to the assessment of students. Provincial and territorial regulatory frameworks establish specific foundational criteria, whereas the Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada articulates a comprehensive set of principles and accompanying standards that exemplify equitable assessment practices. In Canada, students undergo provincial or territorial standardized summative tests at significant milestones in their educational journey, particularly upon completion of secondary education (Council of Ministers of Education in Canada, 2008).

In Turkey, the administration of examinations occurs mostly at the culmination of basic education, albeit exerting a significant influence on the educational curriculum well in advance of this period. The assessments serve as the basis for admittance into the esteemed Anatolian and science high schools, which extend acceptance to roughly 25%

of the examinees (UNESCO, 2002). To get admission to a university, prospective students are required to undergo a countrywide examination upon completion of their high school education. However, due to a disparity between the number of applicants and the limited number of available slots, the acceptance rates for university admissions tend to be quite low. Turkish students suffer the most from exam anxiety because of these circumstances (Simsek and Yildirim, 2004).

The Seychelles National Assessment Policy promotes the implementation of a written national attainment test for all students upon completion of the primary cycle, as well as a written selection examination upon entry into secondary education. Both assessments aim to evaluate a range of cognitive abilities, specifically knowledge, comprehension, and application (Marie, 2020).

In Botswana, educators predominantly evaluate students' academic performance through employing teacher-created assessments or classroom-based evaluations. Teachers create classroom assessments by taking into consideration the subjects or material that has been taught (Omolewa, 2003). In the country of Botswana, regular assessments are administered throughout the year, typically monthly. These tests serve as formative evaluations, allowing educators to evaluate the development of students' learning and adequately prepare them for the national standardized examination. Standardized tests are only administered to pupils upon their graduation from elementary, junior, and senior secondary school (McMillan, 2001).

Although the curriculum requirement, there exists an assertion that the attention, significance, regularity, and stress placed on ongoing evaluations administered by educators inside educational institutions exhibit notable disparities. Consequently, criticism arises over the disparity between the emphasis placed on academic components and practical components in certain educational institutions. In addition, it has been observed that certain educational institutions do summative assessments on a semesterly basis, while others opt for a weekly or monthly frequency (Makwinya, 2015).

In Tanzania, the National Examination Council for Tanzania (NECTA) implemented continuous assessment programs throughout the late 1970s. These programs were designed to systematically evaluate the academic development of students throughout their educational journey, spanning from lower classes to higher classes (Bainton, 2016). According to Ezeudu (2005), the implementation of continuous assessment in Nigeria was observed in the field of geography. In a study involving 30 geography instructors, it was found that 28 percent of them utilized oral tests, while all of them employed written tests. Additionally, 97 percent of the teachers incorporated assignments into their assessment methods, and 100 percent relied on examinations as a means of evaluating student performance.

According to Mwangi & Ouko (2004), there has been a greater focus placed on national examinations compared to internal examinations. A significant critique highlighted in the Master Plan on Education and Training (1997-2010) pertained to the dominance of the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in the curriculum implementation process. Educational institutions prioritize the KCSE tests by employing

various strategies aimed at enhancing the overall performance outcomes (Republic of Kenya, 2001). Chepkirui (2017), believes that evaluation of a school's quality extends beyond its policies, practices, and programs, and encompasses its performance in relation to other schools that share similar compositions and socio-economic contexts.

The heightened focus on performance and the achievement of high-quality grades in national examinations has resulted in the implementation of Sub-County and County tests whose aim is to enhance students' performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) assessments. This approach has led to the emergence of a distinct set of assessments commonly referred to as joint evaluation tests, which facilitate the collaboration of schools from various categories. The administration of these tests was delegated to personnel designated by the district academic committee. The adoption of collaborative assessment practices is increasingly prevalent among secondary schools in Kenya (Onuku,2006). The examinations, however, exhibit inherent biases, unfairness, substandard quality, and even instances where certain pupils possess prior awareness to the content. In certain educational institutions, students exhibit a reluctance to participate in examinations, while in other cases, they engage in strikes that result in the destruction of property and loss of life (Mwangi, 2006). The matter elicited diverse perspectives, including the recommendation to eliminate mock tests as stated in a parliamentary committee report of 2008.

Related literature as discussed in this study shows evidence of examination policy that lays emphasis on summative evaluation marked with sets of examinations administered

in secondary schools. Examination policy in Kenya is formulated by the Ministry of Education (MOE) for various levels of schools, including primary, secondary, and middle level postsecondary institutions. Universities possess autonomy, which is derived from their own university councils, governing bodies, and legal instruments. Educational institutions at the secondary and intermediate levels are subject to review by a single governing organization, the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC), which is authorized by the Ministry of Education (MOE) to establish and conduct summative assessments in all officially recognized public and private schools (Ministry of Education, 2012).

The Ministry of Education (MOE) prescribes two types of evaluation: formative and summative assessment. The utilization of formative assessment is strongly advocated to evaluate the degree to which educators and students are attaining their goals. The Ministry of Education has implemented a prohibition on mock and joint examinations to alleviate the excessive number of assessments that have become burdensome for both students and parents. School internal assessments encompass a variety of evaluative measures, such as teacher-created tests, quizzes, and continuous assessment tests, which generate valuable data for instructors' utilization (Oundo, 2014) Teachers should therefore ensure that quality education is maintained by conducting formative assessments.

Summative assessment on the other hand, encompasses the administration of national examinations to students in their fourth year of secondary education. These examinations

are conducted by a central examining organization known as the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). The government refers to the grades attained by students in national examinations, which are used to determine their placement in post-secondary training institutions and universities. According to the educational policy in the Republic of Kenya (2019), individuals who achieve a mean grade ranging from A plain to C+ are deemed eligible for admission into universities, whereas those who obtain a grade of C or D plain are directed towards enrollment in tertiary colleges (Republic of Kenya, 2018). This shows that placement of learners in higher institutions of learning is based on what they achieve in KCSE examinations.

Examination policies in schools spells out three closed book assessments administered by the teachers in each term. This type of evaluation means that in each term, a student sits three different examinations for each enrolled subject. One examination per subject every month. Assuming that the subject is Mathematics, a student is required to write three mathematics examinations in term one. Other sets of three in the second term, the same applies to the final term. By the end of each school calendar year, the student would have been examined nine times in Mathematics alone, (Mackatian et al 2017). This indicates that learners are subjected to many tests and examinations which may consume time allocated for teaching and learning.

The existing summative assessment conducted at the end of the primary and secondary educational stages fails to sufficiently assess the capabilities of learners, while school-based assessments lack standardization (Oundo, 2014). Onuka (2006) argues that it is

imperative to utilize a diverse range of assessment tools to accurately gauge the development of student learning. Furthermore, Lewin (2009) observed that numerous countries have made efforts to enhance the quality of tests by implementing ongoing assessment measures. Related studies shows that education policies lays emphasis on summative evaluation at the expense of formative evaluation. Learners are subjected to many sets of examinations for the purpose of improving performance in external and national examinations. The purpose of this study as to establish effects of frequent examinations on curriculum implementation.

2.7 Alternative Approaches to Curriculum Evaluation

Examinations have consistently garnered significant attention from stakeholders across many levels of the school system. Examinations have multiple purposes within the educational context. They are employed to effectively express learning objectives and assess the extent to which these objectives have been achieved. Additionally, examinations are utilized to make informed decisions regarding student placement, promotion, and selection. They also play a crucial role in identifying both exemplary practices and areas that require improvement. Furthermore, examinations are vital in monitoring and evaluating the overall performance of the educational system (Haertel, 2013).

The conventional notion of evaluation, which mostly relies on tests and examinations, has encountered growing opposition as alternative and innovative modes of assessment gain prominence. The various kinds of alternative evaluation encompass poster presentations, portfolios, and peer-assessed group projects (Newall *et al.,* 2005). Employing a diverse

range of evaluation procedures enhances fairness in evaluating pupils. Several processes contribute to enhancing the probability of students exhibiting their optimal performance in certain assessment tests. Students highly appreciate the utilization of diverse assessment methodologies employed by numerous educational institutions (Race, 2005). Utilization of alternative assessment methods reduces reliance on conventional formal examinations, which may not align with the preferred learning styles of several students (Robson, 2003).

Traditional tests frequently exhibit deficiency in terms of authenticity, multidimensionality, and the capacity for real-world application. The conventional kind of assessment merely provides educators with a snapshot of a student's performance on a specific day, rather than offering a comprehensive evaluation of their overall performance. This further constrains the capacity of teachers to assess student participation and preferences in learning styles. In contrast, students are primarily identified based on their academic performance, namely their scores, which are thereafter used as a basis for comparison among their fellow students (Simsek, 2004). Moreover, it is worth noting that traditional assessment methods tend to place the entire burden of duty on the teacher, so limiting students' ability to take ownership of their own academic success (Nasab, 2015).Traditional assessment methods not only limit the comprehensive information that teachers can gather, but also have potential drawbacks for students, such as inducing test anxiety and hindering their ability to effectively articulate their knowledge due to pre-test apprehension, which may result in ineffective studying strategies (Lyon, 2015).

Criticisms have been raised against examinations, including concerns regarding the extent to which examination questions effectively align with the established learning objectives (Oxford Centre for Staff Learning Development, 2002). Besides, people have raised concerns that examinations lead to psychological stress experienced by most students. The impact of examination stress on the academic performance of students has been widely recognized (Timmins & Kaliszer, 2002). According to Shumway and Harden (2003), student may have prepared for examinations well, but due to examination anxiety, the students end up failing. The purpose of an examination is not solely to assess one's knowledge or educational aptitude, but rather to evaluate the individual's ability to effectively apply knowledge and skills acquired in the learning process. This can only be realized when the learners are exposed to variety of learning experiences.

Various stakeholders within the educational community, including policymakers, educators, students, parents, and administrators, hold divergent perspectives on the application of evaluation systems. There exists a divergence of opinions on the efficacy of standard assessment methods versus alternative assessment instruments. Alternative assessment refers to a category of evaluation methods that are not formal exams or examinations and are designed to accomplish objectives that are typically not addressed or discouraged by traditional forms of assessment (Straberg, 2010). Stiggins, (2005) propose the utilization of authentic assessment tasks, conducted in both real-world and virtual contexts, to evaluate higher-order cognitive abilities. This approach has the potential to stimulate students' engagement and enthusiasm towards the learning process.

Research conducted in multiple countries, including Australia, has demonstrated that portfolio assessment serves as a viable alternative to traditional assessment models such as outcome-based education and paper-based assessments. Portfolio assessment, also known as authentic assessment, is a more effective method for evaluating student learning compared to the mastery learning interpretation associated with outcome-based education and the perceived inadequacy of paper-based assessments (UNESCO, 2004). According to Brady (2001), the utilization of alternative assessment methods, such as portfolios, autonomous projects, and journals, enables learners to demonstrate their understanding through diverse intelligences, hence fostering a more realistic assessment experience.

In Finnish educational institutions, the purpose of assessment extends beyond the mere categorization and ordering of students, instead serving as a valuable instrument for fostering learning and facilitating growth (Kupiainen et al., 2009). The Finnish education system focuses significant importance on formative assessment, which is often referred to as assessment for learning. In Finland, educators employ diverse strategies to collect data on students' growth and comprehension during their educational journey. The approaches encompassed in this framework consist of observation, self-assessment, peer evaluation, and feedback-driven dialogues. The primary emphasis is placed on assisting students in recognizing their strengths, weaknesses, and areas requiring enhancement, rather than exclusively on the allocation of grades (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004).

While grading is an essential component of any educational system, it should not be employed for the purpose of ranking pupils, as this fosters a competitive environment that

can have a demoralizing effect on certain individuals, particularly those with lower intellectual aptitude. Effective evaluation processes should prioritize fostering cooperation over promoting competitiveness (Hamilton, *at al*., 2002).

In many nations, there exists a prevalent practice of evaluation that places significant emphasis on standardized examinations and the subsequent categorization of students according to their academic achievements (Kellegham, 2004). Nevertheless, Finnish educational institutions provide a distinctive viewpoint on evaluation and grading that diverges from the conventional paradigm. The Finnish education system prioritizes holistic development and individual progress, placing less emphasis on grades and instead prioritizing the total learning experience. Rather than being passive recipients of grades, students are encouraged to actively participate in their own educational process. The individuals actively engage in the process of establishing educational objectives, engaging in self-reflection regarding their advancement, and assuming responsibility for their own learning (MOE, Finland 2009).

Use of continuous assessment tests in Nigerian at all levels of schooling is seen as a highly significant and crucial advancement within the Nigerian educational system. The adoption of continuous evaluation as an educational program extends beyond Nigeria to other African nations such as Zambia, Ghana, and Liberia. The National Policy on Education (NPE) acknowledges that the prevailing approach in many educational institutions, which relies solely on a single final examination and one brief assessment, is no longer sustainable (Salokun, 2005). The approach of employing a single standardized examination that give candidates only a single opportunity to showcase their skills was

deemed inequitable. The occurrence of illness during examinations and the presence of test-related phobias poses significant obstacles to students' capacity to demonstrate their full potential in assessments. Single examination may not comprehensively assess all the components of the curriculum that learners have been exposed to throughout the course of a term or year (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

For the last five decades, the educational system in Malaysia has placed a significant emphasis on tests, resulting in a diminished cultivation of talent, skill, and innovation in critical domains among students (Rohaya et al., 2014). The implementation of the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025) has resulted in significant modifications to the educational landscape, particularly in the realm of pedagogy. These changes have placed a greater emphasis on cultivating higher-order cognitive skills and adopting more comprehensive approaches to student evaluation. One factor that is considered in the design is the type of evaluation to be employed in educational institutions. One example of an assessment method is the School Based Assessment (SBA), which places emphasis on evaluation for learning (Ministry of Education, 2011).

The Primary Education study and Implementation (PERI) Committee in Singapore recently conducted a comprehensive nationwide study, wherein they put out a series of recommendations pertaining to alternate assessment methodologies that might effectively facilitate the process of learning. The PERI report put forth suggestions for alternative assessment methods, including journal writing, peer observation, and practical and investigative tasks. These methods aim to offer a more comprehensive feedback system for students, teachers, and parents. The goal is to enhance student engagement and

confidence by involving them actively in assessment and learning activities. Furthermore, the PERI report also proposed the use of continuous assessment tests as an alternate approach to mitigate the stress associated with examinations and highlight the significance and benefits of evaluation for learning (Klenowski, 2009).

According to Podder (2020), there exist four primary alternative evaluation strategies. These strategies include self-evaluation, peer evaluation, student portfolios, and performance assessment. Self-evaluation involves the practice of maintaining records pertaining to one's own practices, progress, and achievements. Peer evaluation, on the other hand, entails the keeping of classmates' records regarding their practices, progress, and contributions in the completion of a task. Student portfolios involve the preservation of students' written works, drawings, paintings, certificates, and letters of appreciation for performances in a designated file or folder within the classroom. Lastly, performance assessment encompasses situations where students present individual, pair, or group work, and receive questions or feedback from the teacher and other students in the class. Suleiman et al. (2019), posits that teachers can develop additional strategies that are tailored to the specific subjects they are teaching, as well as the contextual factors and requirements involved.

According to Stears & Gopal (2010), South African students have acquired a variety of abilities through alternative evaluation approaches, in addition to the conventional assessment of knowledge. However, when alternative assessment methodologies were utilized, their performances showed improvement. This indicates that implementation of alternative assessment methods can effectively facilitate active learning, enhance

students' self-confidence, and foster the development of critical and creative thinking abilities.

A study by Barbarics (2019), established that primary objective of Hungarian educators in employing alternative assessment strategies is to alleviate students from the anxiety-inducing traditional testing methods. Additionally, these strategies aim to actively involve students in diverse activities and subsequently offer constructive feedback, thereby enhancing the overall quality of teaching and learning. According to Barbarics , alternative assessment methodologies have been found to not only alleviate students' stress, but also foster the development of their creativity, communication skills, self-regulation, real-life problem-solving abilities, ICT-use skills, knowledgebase, and collaboration attitudes. This indicates that employing several alternative assessment methods can effectively represent the true extent of students acquire knowledge and skills.

According to Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI), there are eight distinct intelligences that individuals must possess to effectively navigate and contribute to society. The following intelligences are recognized: linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and naturalistic intelligence. According to the theory of Multiple Intelligence, it is said that there is no universally optimal teaching and assessment technique that caters to the needs of every learner. Consequently, it is recommended that a diverse range of assessment and teaching strategies be employed to accommodate the varying learning styles and capacities of learners (Gardner, 2006).

Bloom created a taxonomy of educational objectives as a framework for educators to systematically evaluate learners by considering different levels of questioning. The levels encompass knowledge, comprehension, application, synthesis, analysis, and assessment. Bloom suggested a transition away from evaluation methodologies that solely necessitate learners' ability to recollect information. When students are subjected to repetitive memorization of information in preparation for national examinations, their cognitive concentration tends to be limited to the lower cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy (Clark, 2004). Emphasis on lower cognitive domains can have detrimental effects on their creative thinking, imaginative capacities, and critical thinking abilities. Hence, a comprehensive assessment should incorporate all cognitive domains delineated in Bloom's Taxonomy.

Simsek, (2004) argues that assessment process that proves to be most efficacious is one that fosters and acknowledges excellent pedagogical approaches rooted in the attainment of student learning objectives. The optimal approach to evaluating student learning empowers students to recognize their own areas of proficiency and areas for improvement, as well as to ascertain the specific knowledge and resources required to address any gaps or misconceptions in their learning process. According to (Denicia, 2020) when the process of evaluation is effectively utilized, students acquire the knowledge that they can engage in self-assessment and making ongoing improvements to their performance over the course of their lifetimes.

Kenyan government introduced the Basic Education Curriculum Framework in January 2017, which was further reinforced by the issuance of sessional paper no.1 of 2019 and

other actions. The decision to modify the educational curriculum in Kenya was based on several key reports, namely the Ministry of Education's 2019 report on summative evaluation, the 2012 task force report on aligning the education sector with the constitution of Kenya, and the Ministry of Education's 2016 report on the national needs analysis (MOE, 2017)

The implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya, initiated by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2017, introduced a new approach to assessment called Competency Based Assessment (CBA). The administration of this examination in the classroom aims to evaluate the academic proficiency of individual students or groups, monitor their academic progress, identify potential learning difficulties, and enhance student accomplishment. Educators consistently assess the academic progress of students to ascertain their level of comprehension and engagement with the curriculum. This evaluation process serves the purpose of identifying pupils who may not be adequately benefiting from the standard instructional program, therefore enabling the development of more targeted and effective educational interventions for these individuals. While standardized commercial achievement examinations assess a wide range of curricular topics, Competency-Based Education (CBE) focuses on evaluating specific skills that are currently being taught in the classroom, typically focusing on fundamental abilities (Thomas, 2005).

Despite the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya, the nation continues to face challenges in the development and implementation of assessment criteria and competencies. The optimal approach for their development within each

learning domain remains uncertain. There has been a decrease in student engagement in classroom activities, as well as a lack of adherence to assessment criteria. In addition, it has been observed that educators have not yet fully transitioned to the new mode of evaluation (Momanyi and Rop, 2019).

In contrast to conventional testing methods that overlook the impact of exams on both learners and curriculum implementation, alternative assessment strategies consider the diverse learning styles and abilities of students when evaluating and interpreting their performances. This approach aims to ensure fairness and equity in making important decisions based on assessment outcomes (Shohamy, 2001). Various forms of alternative assessment assist educators in fulfilling the objectives of assessment, establishing benchmarks for both students and them, motivating students to meet those benchmarks, offering feedback and measuring progress, and communicating this evidence of learning to parents, students, and other relevant parties (Mahmoodd, 2013).

While examinations hold significance in the process of evaluation, they should not be solely relied upon as a measure of a learner's ability in acquiring knowledge and skills. Utilizing a conventional evaluation tool that solely requires students to provide factual recall is a more convenient option for teachers in terms of preparation. However, such an approach is less conducive to the development of critical thinking skills, the application of deeper knowledge and understanding, and does not seem to effectively facilitate the acquisition and retention of information to the same extent as higher-order assessment methods (Jensen, *at al* 2014).

To achieve comprehensive implementation of the curriculum in Kenya, it is imperative that the evaluation process encompasses all dimensions of the learner's life, including knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which are crucial for the learner's successful reintegration into society. To facilitate the acquisition of pertinent skills and knowledge by learners, it is imperative for educators to demonstrate creativity through the utilization of diverse methods, approaches, and tactics that effectively engage and stimulate the attention of students (Volante, 2020).

2.8 Synthesis of Literature and Knowledge Gap in Literature

The research findings by different authors point to the fact that examinations have a wash-back effect on the curriculum. Teachers cannot engage all the methods of instruction in class and the selection of the content is determined by examinations. The studies have also revealed that national examinations have an influential impact on teachers teaching in the aspect of activity, time arrangement, teaching materials, teaching content, methods, and strategies. However, much as wash back effects of frequency of examination on curriculum implementation in secondary school as pointed out by various literature, the recent empirical studies of shows that the number of studies remains relatively small. Besides, they have been carried out in a restricted number of learning contexts.

A study conducted by Nenty *et al*., (2007), focused on impact of examinations on the provision of quality education in elementary schools. Makatiani (2017) explored the influence of examination-oriented approaches on the quality of education in primary schools. Nguyo *et al.,* (2017), examined the impact of examinations on the holistic

development of students in secondary schools within Nyeri County. Related study conducted by Boit, Njoki, and Koskey (2012) aimed at examining the impact of examinations on the implementation of the curriculum focusing on the relationship between examinations and curriculum aims. A study by Mary Kemboi examined the influence of examinations on curriculum implementation in secondary schools. However, this study focused on relationship between examinations and curriculum goals, and adherence to KIE curriculum.

The present research focuses on effects of examinations on curriculum implementation with reference to frequency of examinations, effects of frequency of examinations on syllabus coverage, effects of frequency of examination on choice of pedagogical approaches and most important alternative ways of evaluation that can be adopted besides examinations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the procedures and methodologies employed in the study. This section comprises nine sub-sections, namely: research design, study location, study population, sampling procedure and sample size, research instruments, quality measures encompassing instrument validity and reliability, pilot study, data collection procedures, data analysis procedure, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

A research design encompasses the comprehensive approach employed to efficiently integrate many components of a study in a coherent and logical manner, with the goal of effectively addressing the research problem at hand (Nicholas & Berliner, 2007). A research design encompasses the systematic plan for gathering, assessing, and interpreting data (Borg & gall, 2006). The research utilized a descriptive survey research design, a scientific approach that entails the observation and description of a subject's behavior in its natural setting without any intentional manipulation. This study methodology focuses on contemporary phenomena, encompassing several aspects such as situations, behaviors, attitudes, processes, and interactions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Dr. Y.P. Aggrwal (2008) asserts that descriptive research is primarily concerned with the collection of data pertaining to existing conditions or circumstances, with the intention of providing a detailed depiction and subsequent analysis. The field of descriptive design focuses on examining the features of both individuals and the entire sample population.

3.3 Location of Study

The study was conducted in Kakamega County. The county shares its borders with Vihiga County to the south, Siaya County to the west, Bungoma County to the north, and Nandi County to the east. The geographical expanse of the county is recorded to be 3050.3 square kilometers, as reported in the Kakamega County Development Plan of 2013. The elevation of the county ranges from 1,240 meters to 2,000 meters above sea level. Kakamega county is the second most populous county in Kenya, following Nairobi, and has an estimated population of 1,660,651 according to the Kenya Census conducted in 2009. The region also possesses a significant characteristic, namely the presence of Kakamega forest. This forest serves as a catalyst for consistent rainfall throughout the year, so creating a favorable environment for agricultural pursuits and serving as a notable tourist destination.

Out of the 47 Counties in Kenya, Kakamega was chosen as an area of study because had the required population for the study which consisted of the different categories of schools found in Kenya. This implied that the results of the study could be generalized to the rest of Kenya. Secondary school in Western Kenya are known for partnership examinations where school come together to assess their students jointly with the aim of improving their grades in KCSE (Kasembeli, 2014). The available resources in terms of time, finance and human resources were inadequate for wider geographical coverage and could only facilitate the research one County which was Kakamega.

3.4 Target Population

The population refers to the complete collection of cases that satisfy a specified set of characteristics (Nicholas & Berliner, 2007). The study population consisted of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASO), Principals, teachers, and students from public secondary schools in Kakamega County. As a result of an extended duration of schooling, fourth-year students have been exposed to a diverse range of examinations. Consequently, their accumulated experiences can contribute to the establishment of empirical evidence about the impact of examinations on curriculum implementation. The active participation of department heads in the execution of program activities significantly influences the direction and outcomes of the program. Additionally, they held the position of co-administrators inside the educational institution and were integral members of the teaching faculty. It is important to note that their perspectives were reflective of the collective viewpoints held by other educators. Principals were perceived as a reliable source of relevant information due to their presumed higher levels of experience and familiarity with the curriculum compared to most teachers. Principals play the role of curriculum supervisors; they are responsible for overseeing school programming and the formulation of examination policies. The role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers involves the oversight of the quality of education given, encompassing the evaluation of examination quality and the adherence of schools to standards set forth by the Ministry of Education.

3.5 Sampling and Sample Size

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

The researchers employed both stratified and simple random sampling techniques to determine the sample size. The utilization of stratified sampling facilitated the inclusion of all categories of schools into the sample, so ensuring representation across the various school types. Additionally, the implementation of simple random selection guaranteed that all children had an equal opportunity to be selected for inclusion in the sample, without any inherent bias. The study involved the selection of principals and academic Heads of Departments (HODs) from the sampled schools to participate. The academic divisions encompass several fields of study, such as Languages, Sciences, Humanities, and Applied and Technical disciplines. Saturated sampling was used to select QASOs, as their total count was limited to 13, hence ruling out application of alternative scientific methodologies.

The research used proportionate stratified sampling to select 40 schools, taking into consideration their typology. The categories encompassed in this classification are National, Extra County, County, and Sub-County. Representative sample of schools were selected from each stratum, except for the national category. In the national category, all schools were included in the study because the County had only two national schools. Mugenda and Mugenda (2004), proposes that a sample size ranging from 10% to 30% of the population can effectively serve as a representative sample. Simple random sampling was used to select one four 4 streams from each school. According to the Ministry of Education (MOE) a stream consists of 45 students. However, some school had less than 45 students per stream while others had more than 45 students per stream. The process

was conducted using a balloting procedure, whereby tickets were designated with labels denoting either "Yes" or "No." Class prefects were then instructed to select tickets at random. Questionnaires were used as the primary data collection method for this study due to their cost-effectiveness, particularly when dealing with large and geographically diverse populations.

Interview guide comprising a set of questions developed by the research was used to collect data from the principals. Utilization of an interview guide was most effective as it provided opportunity for probing, hence resulting in a greater number of responses. Acquisition of primary data ensured significant level of integrity and reliability.

3.5.2 Sample Size

The study utilized a sample size of 2053 participants, who consisted of 1800 students, 200 academic Heads of Departments (HODs) representing teachers, 40 principals, and 13 Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs). The study included a sample of 40 schools, which consisted of 2 national schools, 2 Extra County schools, 3 county schools, and 33 Sub County schools. Each school selected a total of five academic Heads of Departments (HODs) from the following departments: Sciences, Languages, Humanities, Technical, Applied, and Mathematics. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select the HODs and principals from each sampled school. Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) from the 13 sub-counties within Kakamega County. Saturated sampling was used to sample QASOs. Given that they were only 13 in total, all of them were included in the sample.

Table 3. 1:Sampling Frame

Type of School	No. of Schools	Sample schools	Total students population	Sample size Students	Sample size principals	Sample size of HODs
National	2	2	720	90	2	10
Extra/C	23	2	4140	90	2	10
County	26	3	3240	135	3	15
Sub/C	351	33	21420	1485	33	165
Total	**402**	**40**	**29521**	**1800**	**40**	**200**

3.6 Research Instruments

The data collection process involved the utilization of two research instruments, namely questionnaires and interview schedules. The tools were selected based on the sample size, amount of time available for data collection and the type of data to be collected. The overall goal of the study as to gather information on frequency of examinations and how the frequency affects curriculum implementation. This kind of information can easily be obtained from students and teachers by questionnaires. According to (Nicholas & Berliner, 2007), a questionnaire is a tool used to collect self-report data from participants by asking questions in a pen and paper format.

Questionnaires were preferred for this group of respondents because they formed a large group of the sampled population. Above all questionnaires are advantageous because they can collect objective, consistent data and can give respondents time to consult files and are a uniform measure, thus they can collect data in a systematic and ordered fashion (White, 2000). The researcher developed the questionnaires, which were then be checked by experts in the research field. Each questionnaire had introductory remarks to introduce the study and to give an assurance to the respondents that the information collected would

be held with utmost confidentiality. Interview guide was preferred because it provided the researcher with opportunity to delve deep into the thoughts, experiences, and perspectives of the respondents. Open ended questions developed for the interview allowed collection of in-depth information which was used to draw the findings and conclusion of the study subject.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

This study included self-developed structured and unstructured questionnaires to collect data from three distinct groups of participants. Respondents consist of teachers, students, and Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs). The structured questionnaires utilized in the study consisted of predetermined closed-ended items and a rating scale, which provided respondents with pre-established response alternatives. The questionnaire employed a non-standardized format, consisting of questions that allowed for open-ended responses. The QASOs and teacher's questionnaires encompassed a combination of organized and unstructured questions, whereas the students' questionnaires primarily consisted of structured inquiries. Structured questionnaires were utilized to get quantitative data, whereas unstructured questions were employed to acquire qualitative data. Structured questionnaires are designed to elicit direct and specific responses using close-ended questions. When effectively constructed, these surveys have the capacity to gather substantial quantities of significant data. This data, in turn, provides profound insights into the perspectives and thoughts of the numerous individuals who participate in the questionnaire.

Closed-ended items are considered appropriate due to their ability to restrict the range of possible responses, hence facilitating the collection of pertinent information. Additionally, closed-ended items are advantageous for analysis purposes, since they are readily available in a usable format, making the data analysis process more efficient. They exhibit cost and time efficiency. The available responses are restricted, and participants are obligated to provide answers based on the predetermined options chosen by the researchers.

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), utilization of structured inquiries may lead respondents to succumb to the inclination of evading deep contemplation and opting for the most effortless option, so limiting their options for self-expression. To address these issues, the study included a combination of structured items and open-ended items, thereby allowing respondents time to express themselves. An unstructured questionnaire consists of open-ended questions, where respondents are not provided with prepared answers and are therefore able to freely express their own responses.

A cover letter was included in the questionnaire to provide essential details regarding their name, the purpose of the research, and the significance of the respondents' involvement. Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) asserts that the inclusion of a covering letter is an essential component of the questionnaire. Every questionnaire included introductory statements that served to establish the study and provide reassurance to respondents regarding the strict confidentiality of the obtained information.

3.6.2 Student- Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire addressed aspects related to the research objectives such as frequency of examinations, effects of examinations on syllabus coverage and choice of pedagogy and school testing policy. It comprised five sections. Section A collected demographic data about the students which elicited response on school category. Section B had 7 ordinal items which gathered information about the student's view on frequency of examinations. Section C had 13 items on effects of examinations on syllabus coverage. Section D comprised of 10 ordinal questions on effects of examinations on choice of pedagogical approaches, Section E comprised of 4 ordinal items which elicited responses on school adherence to examination policy. Section F had 3 ordinal questions which elicited responses on alternative approaches to curriculum evaluation. Students Questionnaire SQ consisted of 36 items all of which were closed ended.

3.6.3 Teacher- Questionnaire

Teachers' questionnaire was divided into five main sections with 34 closed ended questions and 2 structured questions: Section A, demographic information on school typology, section B had 5 ordinal items which gathered information on frequency of examinations; section C, comprised of 9 ordinal items which collected information on effects of examination on syllabus coverage, section D; comprised of 9 ordinal items on effects of examinations on choice pedagogical approaches, section E, comprised of 3 structured questions and 1 unstructured question on alternative approaches to evaluation.

3.6.4 Quality Assurance and Standards Officers- Questionnaire

Self-developed structured and unstructured questionnaires were designed to collect data from the QASOs. The structured questionnaires consisted of predetermined closed-ended items and a rating scale, which provided respondents with pre-established response alternatives. The questionnaire employed a non-standardized format, consisting of questions that allowed for open-ended responses. Structured questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data, whereas unstructured questions were employed to collect qualitative data. The study employed a 5-point Likert scale to collect responses for closed-ended questions. The scale included the following response options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UN), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The questionnaire was divided into four sections: section A: Effects of examinations on syllabus coverage, section B: Effects of examinations on pedagogical approaches section C: schools' adherence to examination policy, section E, alternative approaches to curriculum evaluation. Section A consisted of unstructured questions, section B and C consisted of structured questions, section D: unstructured questions.

3.7 Interview Guide for School Principals

Interview guide was developed by the researcher for the purpose of collecting qualitative data from the principals. Questions were formulated in relation to research objectives. The interview guide consisted of unstructured questions meant to elicit more responses from the respondents. The interview guide was categorized into five sections. Section A collected demographic information on school type and the principal's experience. Section B gathered information on frequency of examinations. Section C. gathered information on effects of frequent examinations on syllabus coverage. Section D collected

information on examination policy and section E gathered data on alternative methods of evaluation.

3.8 Quality Control

3.8.1 Pilot Study

Kothari (2011) suggests that doing a pilot study can be beneficial to test the research design on a limited scale prior to its implementation in the field. This is referred to as a pilot survey or pretest, which is conducted to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the practical challenges that the researcher may encounter during the data collection process.

To assess the efficacy of research instruments, a pilot study was conducted in four public schools in Kakamega County. The schools were picked at random from four different categories: National, Extra-County, County, and Sub-County. The pilot study consisted of a total of 180 students, 20 Heads of Departments (HODs) and 4 principals. The pilot study utilized a sample size of 204 participants.

A total of 180 questionnaires were distributed to students with the assistance of teachers. Out of 180 distributed in the field, 140 questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 78%. Questionnaires return rate for HODs was 15 (75%). The interview process involved the participation of all four principals from the selected schools, with some principals being interviewed in person and others being interviewed on phone.

Upon examination of the completed surveys, it was established that some questions exhibited vagueness, ambiguity, and grammatical problems. The rectification of grammatical faults was facilitated via the assistance of language experts. Several questions were found to be incongruent with the stated research aims. The interview

guide underwent modifications to enhance clarity by reorganizing certain questions. The pilot research played a crucial role in assessing the correctness, clarity, and ambiguity of the items. These products underwent modifications to enhance the quality of the research instruments.

3.8.2 Validity of Research Instruments

The present study employed content validity to assess the extent to which the test items accurately represent the material that the test intends to measure (Kothari, 2011). According to Kothari (2011), the conventional approach for evaluating content validity involves the utilization of a professional or expert who possesses expertise in a specific domain. The present study involved the validation of the instrument, specifically a questionnaire, to ensure that its content and format were congruent with the variables under investigation. In this instance, the questionnaires underwent content and face validation with the assistance of supervisors. The instrument underwent revisions based on feedback received from specialists prior to its implementation in the field.

3.8.3 Reliability of Research Instruments

The concept of instrument reliability pertains to the consistency of findings when the same instrument is employed on multiple occasions or delivered to diverse people within a given group. Reliability refers to the degree to which a measuring device demonstrates repeatability and consistency, as stated by Kothari (2011). One often employed method for assessing the stability of a measure is the test-retest method. This approach entails administering a test or measure to a sample of participants on one occasion, and

subsequently re-administering the same test or measure to the same sample on a separate occasion Kothari (2011).

Table 3. 2:Reliability Table for Overall Questionnaire

Scale	No. of Items	A	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Overall Questionnaire	28	0.70	0.56	0.64

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's α were calculated using a 95% confidence interval.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the Overall Questionnaire scale was calculated. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was evaluated based on the standards proposed by George and Eshiwani (1993), where >.9 is outstanding, >.8 is good, >.7 is acceptable, >.6 is dubious, >.5 is poor, and .5 is unacceptable. The Cronbach's Alpha value for this investigation was 0.70, indicating the acceptable internal consistency of the items being measured.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

An approval of the research proposal by the Board of Postgraduate Studies- MMUST was sought. National Commission on Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) approval was sought to conduct the research in the field. The obtained permit was then used to acquire approval from the County Director of Education (CDE) and Sub- County Directors of Education (SCDE) to collect data from the selected schools. Pre- visits were done to selected schools to seek permission from the school administrators. With the support of research assistants most of whom were teachers from the selected schools, the

questionnaires were distributed to schools, filled with the guidance of teachers, and collected the same day.

QASO-Questionnaires were distributed to all QASOs in each Sub- County by the researcher and collected upon completion. The researcher booked appointment with principals for interview schedules. There was face to face interview by some principals and video calls for those who were not accessed physically. Data collection was done within the stipulated time.

3.10 Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data. Before data analysis, coding was done according to the type of data where quantitative data was coded using numbers. while qualitative data was organized into a narrative format and analyzed in themes. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine if there were statistically significant mean differences between the school examination policy and the MOE policy. Based on the objectives of the study, descriptive statistics or frequency, percentages, mean values, and standard deviation were used to describe and summarize the opinions of respondents. Version 20 of (SPSS) aided in data analysis. The hypothesis was examined with a 5% significance level.

3.10.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained through interviews and open-ended questions was subjected to analysis by categorizing the data into thematic domains for the purpose of study. This is a research instrument employed to ascertain the existence of specific words or concepts inside textual materials or collections of texts. The transcriptions of all interview

responses were completed. The data was further classified based on the objectives, followed by a comparison of responses among various participants to identify commonalities and trends within distinct groups and people. Finally, the findings were condensed into narrative reports for data summarization. The transcriptions underwent a coding process wherein they were organized into distinct categories based on various themes. These categories were designed to highlight specific word patterns that were deemed relevant to the research topics.

3.10.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was conducted in accordance with the research questions that were formulated for the study. Quantitative data was subjected to statistical processes for analysis. The questionnaire responses were systematically arranged, grouped into categories, quantified, and afterwards subjected to statistical analysis. The data was subsequently condensed into frequencies and percentages, and afterwards displayed using frequency tables and graphical representations.

3.11 Ethical Issues

Ethics in the management of educational research encompass a set of principles, norms, and guidelines that scholars engaged in educational research are obligated to adhere to. These ethical standards serve the purpose of mitigating potential issues in the research process and ensuring that the resulting findings can effectively address the educational needs and challenges of society (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The ethical issues of concern in this study were: privacy and confidentiality of the respondents, anonymity, plagiarism, and reciprocity. This study paid attention to ethical considerations that would

mean to protect those who were involved in the research, some of whom would not be able to represent themselves if their views were misrepresented. Thus, when administering tests, questionnaires, interviews and doing document analysis for this research and all throughout this research project, it was considered imperative that ethical issues were taken into consideration and followed.

Permission was sought from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). Written permission to collect data in schools was obtained from MOE at the County and Sub- County levels. A letter was written to the principals of the sampled schools to seek permission to conduct the study in their institutions. A covering letter from the University was used as a means of identification as a student in the University.

To uphold the principles of confidentiality and privacy, research assistants were inducted on ethical issues while in the field. The participants in the study were anonymous and were requested to participate willingly. They were informed not to disclose their identity by writing their names on the questionnaires. This was done to ensure honesty and transparency. The acquired information was to be under the custody and responsibility of the researcher and would only be used for the intended purpose. The information would be safeguarded through use of password-protected files, encryption protocols for transmitting data over the internet, as well as physical security measures such as closed doors and drawers. The dissemination of the results would be presented in a broad manner to protect the confidentiality of individual data from public exposure (Fulcher, & Davidson, 2007).

To uphold academic integrity and avoid plagiarism, the researcher acknowledged and referenced all external sources, including theoretical and empirical literature, from which ideas, data, and material were derived. The inclusion of a comprehensive list of references serves as a means of appreciating the contributions made by numerous writers and sources that were cited in the study. The inclusion of a comprehensive list of references would facilitate the ability of other researchers to verify or access the sources mentioned, according to their individual requirements. All citations were prepared in accordance with the established APA format.

Reciprocity the research findings will be disseminated to the public through various channels, including public resource centers, libraries, and academic publications, academic conferences and workshops will be organized to provide platform for sharing the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results, the analysis, discussion, and interpretation of data gathered from the answers to the questionnaires distributed in the field as well as respondents' responses from the interview guide. The data collected was presented in a tabular form in accordance with the specific objectives, research questions and hypothesis.

4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate

The research study sampled 1800 students, 200 teachers, 40 principals and 13 QASOs. Among the total of 2053 individuals who were specifically targeted for participation, a significant proportion of 1737 individuals actively engaged in the survey, resulting in a response rate of 85%. The significant response rate can be attributed to the prompt administration and collection of questionnaires on the same day, facilitated by the assistance of research personnel. Saunders et al. (2007) posit that a response rate of 50% can be considered as satisfactory, while a response rate of 60% is deemed as favorable, and a response rate above 70% is regarded as highly commendable. Therefore, the response rate seen in this study was highly satisfactory.

Table 4. 1: Questionnaire Return Rate

Respondents	Expected	Returned	%
Students	1800	1515	84%
Teachers	200	180	91%
QASOs	13	10	77%
Total	**2000**	**1697**	**85%**

From the interview, the study targeted 40 principals from 40 selected schools. However, a total of 32 (80%) participated in the study which was adequate to provide reliable information.

4.3 Frequency of Examination in Secondary Schools

Questionnaires were administered to QASOs, teachers and students. Data on frequency of examinations was gathered and presented in the tables as follows.

Table 4. 2 Teachers Response on Frequency of Examinations

Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	M	Std Dev
Students do one examination per term.	43(24%)	4(2%)	7(4%)	119(66%)	7(4%)	2.47	1.297
Students do 2 examinations per term	47(26%)	92(51%)	14(8%)	4(7%)	14(8%)	2.96	1.052
Students sit for more than 2 examinations per term	50(28%)	104(58%)	14(8%)	11(6%)	2(1%)	2.51	1.288
Students do joint examinations with selected schools	52(29%)	65(36%)	7(4%)	31(17%)	25(14%)	2.85	1.071
Students sit for Sub-County, County & Religious based examinations	76(42%)	92(51%)	4(2%)	5(3%)	4(2%)	2.88	1.074
Composite mean and Std						**2.589**	**1.0329**

Table 4. 3 Students' Response on Frequency of Examinations

Potential Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Students sit examinations once per term.	212(14%)	136(9%)	121(8%)	848(32%)	561(37%)	3.07	1.097
Students sit for examinations more than once per term	879(58%)	545(36%)	15(1%)	30(2%)	(3%)	3.17	1.025
Students sit for joint examinations with selected schools	424(28%)	333(22%)	90(6%)	33(22%)	348(23%)	3.03	1.053
Composite mean and Std						**2.99**	**0.97**

The data presented in tables 4.2 and 4.3 indicate that a significant proportion of teachers (126, or 71%) and students (1409, or 69%) expressed disagreement with the practice of conducting only one examination every academic term in schools. The statistical data indicates that a significant proportion of the participants reported taking more than two examinations per academic term. The average score of the instructors, which was 2.47 with a standard deviation of 1.297, was found to be lower than the composite mean of 2.589. This suggests that the teachers' scores had a negative impact on the overall composite mean. The standard deviation of the items in table 4.2 exceeded the composite standard deviation of 1.0329, suggesting a greater dispersion of responses for the items compared to the variable. A similar observation was noted in Table 4.3 regarding the responses of the students. This supports the perspectives expressed by most principals during interviews, who indicated that examinations were conducted on a weekly, monthly, and biweekly basis. A significant majority of principals, namely 78%,

acknowledged their involvement in collaborative assessments that facilitated the convergence of schools from diverse categories and geographies. The trend reveals that most schools subjected the students many types of examinations whose purpose was to prepare them for national examinations. When schools spent most of the time administering examinations, curriculum implementation process may not be effective in the sense that other aspects of the curriculum are ignored. Curriculum implementation entails learning outcomes which should be achieved through learning instruction and experiences. When examinations takes prominence of others, curriculum goals and objectives cannot be achieved. This assertion is corroborated by Ahmed (2018), who conducted a study demonstrating that candidates for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) and Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) undergo a sequence of examinations administered by institutions or schools with a reputation for achieving high average results in KCSE examinations.

Furthermore, Mwabeza (2010) established that the administration of frequent examinations was a prevalent approach, particularly in a candidate classes. Besides, Koech (2008) recognized the fear of mock tests as the underlying factor contributing to student unrest in secondary schools within the Kenyan educational system. Additionally, Makokha (2009) conducted a study that revealed that educational institutions tend to impose a heavy workload on students through the implementation of numerous continuous assessments and examinations. Similarly, a study conducted by Melisa (2014) demonstrated that as students experienced more frequent examinations, their emotional responses, including worry and stress, increased.

According to the findings of the Task Force on Students Discipline and Unrest in Secondary Schools in Kenya, it was determined that the frequent administration of examinations emerged as a significant factor contributing to instances of student unrest inside educational institutions (GOK, 2001). Furthermore, Kasembeli (2014) study findings revealed that the prevalence of strikes in secondary schools, particularly during the second term, can be attributed to the excessive number of examinations that candidates are required to undertake.

In a study conducted by Otundo (2004), the causes of unrest, particularly during the second term, were examined. The research identified joint examinations across schools as a significant factor contributing to the incidence of secondary school burnings. The candidates underwent a comprehensive testing process to adequately prepare them for the national tests. The prohibition on joint examinations by the cabinet secretary of the Ministry of Education (MOE) was implemented in response to several reports and findings concerning the underlying reasons of discontent in schools (Daily Nation, July 15th, 2023). Despite the prohibition imposed by governmental authorities on the administration of joint examinations, educational institutions have persisted in engaging in this activity, hence resulting in a notable escalation in the overall number of examinations conducted within schools. This observation suggests that the regular administration of examinations continues to be a prevalent and widespread practice throughout the nation.

The conclusions presented in this study are substantiated by the relevant empirical and theoretical literature. According to Leyendeker et al. (2008), secondary schools in Sub-

Saharan Africa continue to prioritize national high-stakes assessments, despite enduring criticism and attempts to transition from an examination-focused curriculum to one that emphasizes goals and objectives. The practice of administering tests and examinations at regular intervals is prevalent in Egypt, particularly among students in grade 3 and higher. The academic calendar is structured into two distinct semesters, wherein comprehensive assessments are administered at the conclusion of each semester to evaluate student performance across many subjects and grade levels. (Prodromou, L. 2006).

Furthermore, Shrank (2016) provides support for the aforementioned findings by asserting that the implementation of frequent testing in educational institutions imposes an additional burden on both educators and students, without yielding any discernible improvement in students' academic performance. Furthermore, Gullickson (1984) conducted a study which revealed that teachers allocate a significant amount of their daily schedule to activities related to examinations, including test preparation and assessment scoring.

According to Peterson (2002), it is posited that individuals cannot be likened to machines. Like the notion that one cannot increase the weight of a pig by just measuring it, the frequent administration of examinations does not lead to enhanced performance among learners. The central position of examinations in the curriculum implementation process should be reconsidered, as it is important to establish alignment between intended learning outcomes, learning activities, teaching, and learning instructions, and assessment and teaching instructions, as outlined in Biggs' constructive theory (Biggs, J., 2003). The alignment of curriculum objectives, instruction, and assessment is1 crucial for the

successful attainment of curriculum goals. These three components, namely curriculum objectives, instruction, and assessment, are the essential pillars of the curriculum.

The educational system that places a strong emphasis on examinations restricts learners from fully internalizing and using the knowledge and skills acquired through learning. Prioritization of examinations by instructors can result in a missed chance for collaborative engagement between learners and teachers on innovative classroom initiatives. Moreover, the enhancement of content mastery can solely be achieved in subjects that undergo frequent examination (Kasembeli, 2014). When examinations are prioritized, it is undeniable that less emphasis is placed on the content of the curriculum.

Table 4. 4 Mean and Standard Deviation for frequency of examination by School Category

School Category	N	*M*	*SD*
National	98	25.96	3.84
Extra- County	325	27.86	3.83
County	267	30.14	3.76
Sub- County	825	27.67	34.38

Statistics on table 4.4 reveal that the mean of frequency of examinations for Extra-County was $M = 27.86$ with $SD = 3.83$ which was significantly lower than for County ($M = 30.14$, $SD = 3.76$), $p <. 001$. The difference is because students in Extra County schools have a higher entry behavior than that of their counterparts in County schools, whose teachers believe that frequent testing would enhance their academic performance. The mean of frequent examination for Extra- County was M = 27.86 with SD = 3.83 which was significantly higher than for National (M = 25.96, SD = 3.84), p = .029. The

disparity may be attributable to the fact that students who enroll in national schools have high test scores, indicating that their entry behavior is relatively superior to those who enroll in extra-county schools. This demonstrates that they are intelligent, self-motivated, and capable of excelling without extensive evaluation.

The mean for County M = 30.14 with SD = 3.76 was significantly higher than the mean for Sub-County M = 27.67 with SD = 4.38) (p .001). The variation is attributable to the examination policy that governs the examination practices of the two types of schools. This could also be attributed to the availability of examination administration resources in schools.

4.4 Effects of Examinations on Syllabus Coverage

The second objective sought to establish the effects of frequent examinations on curriculum implementation in secondary schools. The findings are presented in tables 4.5.

Table 4.5 Teachers Response on Effects of Examinations on Syllabus Coverage

Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Many examinations affect curriculum implementation.	54 (30%)	88 (49%)	5 (3%)	23 (13%)	7 (4%)	2.46	0.949
Examined subjects are prioritized during teaching.	56 (31%)	25 (41%)	18 (10%)	16 (9%)	14 (8%)	2.77	0.877
Teachers emphasize on frequently examinable topics.	38 (21%)	86 (48%)	20 (11%)	23 (13%)	13 (7%)	3.06	0.907
Teachers cover the syllabus early to prepare students for K.C.S.E.	36 (20%)	106 (59%)	9 (5%)	16 (9%)	13 (7%)	2.95	1.01
Examinations only measure learners' intellectual ability.	72 (40%)	61 (34%)	13 (7%)	16 (9%)	13 (7%)	3.13	1.04
Teachers refer to KICD curriculum when preparing lessons	11 (6%)	90 (50%)	23 (13%)	43 (24%)	18 (10%)	3.32	1.066
Composite mean and Standard Deviation						**2.99**	**0.96**

The data presented in tables 4.5 indicate that a significant amount of time is dedicated to examinations, resulting in a disproportionate allocation of time for syllabus coverage. Besides, teachers cover syllabus earlier than expected and the reason behind this practice is to create more time for revision in preparation for national examinations. The assertions are corroborated by Mercurio (2008), whose study established that teachers, driven by the demand for high results in national exams, repetitively cover topics that are frequently tested, with the aim of facilitating students' rote memorization of the material. The results were consistent with the findings of Cruz (2007), which revealed that teachers allocate a greater amount of instructional time to topics that are frequently assessed, while neglecting those that are not frequently assessed. Effective curriculum implementation call for full coverage of all the topics in the curriculum.

From the findings it was revealed that priority was given examined topics and subjects during teaching and learning process. This implies that teachers in secondary schools do not follow the content as per the curriculum instead they are guided by examination pressure demands for quality grades from the stakeholders. This explains why most teachers do not refer to Kenya Institute of Curriculum KICD syllabus when preparing for lessons. The syllabus is important since it ensures uniformity in the implementation of the curriculum. However, the preference of teachers in the use of KNEC syllabus shows some influence of examinations on the teaching in schools. The teachers would like to sensitize the learners on the requirements of examinations for them to pass the examinations.

Similarly, responses from QASO (60%) reported that teachers refrain from teaching some topics due to their exclusion from national examinations. QASOs further revealed that non examined subjects such as Physical Education and Life Skills were omitted from the master timetable in some schools. This implies that disciplines that are deemed irrelevant in terms of national examinations are often overlooked, despite their potential to contribute to students' academic growth. Rather than adhering to the prescribed curriculum and aligning assessments accordingly, teachers prioritized tests to the detriment of syllabus coverage.

The findings were supported by Iribe, (2015) whose study revealed that learners performed poorly in Business studies because schools lacked KNEC syllabus for reference. This implies that teachers were more interested in KNEC syllabus than KICD. Use of KNEC syllabus by teachers disadvantage to the students as they are do not acquire

knowledge as per the recommended syllabus. Furthermore, failure to use KICD syllabus brings out a mismatch between what is taught and the goals and objectives of the curriculum. Alexander (2005) established that there was prevalent tendency among teachers to allocate a significant amount of time towards the administration of tests in anticipation of national examinations, often at the detriment of effectively implementing the curriculum. The study findings were consistent with Johnson, (2008) whose study revealed that when specific components of the curriculum are not effectively executed, learners are deprived of essential knowledge, abilities, and values that are crucial for their daily lives. Effective curriculum implementation can only be realized when teaching and learning process is fidelity to curriculum goals and objectives. (Buchanan, 2007) contends that while examinations are important tool for evaluation, education managers must strike a balance between the constant need to administer examinations for accountability and ensuring the productive use of school time by teachers and learners.

According to Chinyani (2013), great education does not solely involve submitting learners to a series of examinations and restricting the curriculum to specific subjects, rather, students necessitate a breadth of knowledge in several topic domains, not solely for the goal of examination, but rather for the sake of intellectual enrichment. Moreover, the investigation conducted by the task force on student unrest in Kenyan secondary schools revealed that educators in secondary school institutions primarily focused on examinations, neglecting the crucial aspect of nurturing a well-rounded individual (Republic of Kenya, 2011)

High-stakes examinations have the effect of restricting the breadth of the curriculum resulting in a phenomenon known as the backwash effect, wherein teachers prioritize test preparation and drilling activities at the expense of other components of the curriculum (Khalid, 2007). Thus, any education system should be cautious not to lose the actual goal of the course, to acquire skills and competencies. With the emphasis on examinations, it is possible to fail to deliver these skills which will affect the later years of education. Melisa (2014) maintains that examinations serve the purpose of gathering information, and their value is contingent upon the quality of the information acquired and should not be prioritized in the educational setting, especially if it hinders the attainment of meaningful learning experiences.

Furthermore, Kananu (2011), whose study established that emphasis on examinations restrict learners from engaging in meaningful learning and limits the breadth of their educational encounters. In addition, Kananu (2011) established that selective teaching of content restricts students' exposure to non-tested curricula. This explains why teachers do not emphasize on subject like Physical Education, yet it is a one of the compulsory subjects in the curriculum. This phenomenon can potentially obscure the true purpose and significance of examinations.

A study by Boit, Njoki, and Koskey (2012) show that examinations contribute to a phenomenon known as selective teaching, wherein educators prioritize the instruction of topics that are likely to be assessed, while neglecting or only partially covering other subject matter. It is imperative for educators to acknowledge that certain elements of education, although not assessed, hold significant value in equipping learners for real-

world experiences beyond the confines of textbooks. Similarly, Otieno, (2010), who observed that high-stakes examinations impact the choices made by teachers about the content they teach, leading them to prioritize certain aspects of a subject rather than providing comprehensive coverage of the curriculum. The prevalence of aimless young jobless youth in public spaces can be attributed to inadequacy of the educational system in equipping them with the necessary skills for personal growth and long-term sustainability (Masinde, 2012).

Collins (2014) asserts that the incorporation of Bloom's Taxonomy is a crucial aspect in fostering elevated cognitive processes in educational settings. By employing this framework, educators can indirectly enhance the efficacy of their lesson plans, hence facilitating the development of students' ability to engage in innovative and critical thinking. The findings from the study show that teachers taught intellectual skill of Blooms taxonomy and neglected other skills of affective and psychomotor domains. Selection of skills taught was influenced by examinations and not curriculum content. if an examination focuses solely on the acquisition of one part of Bloom's Taxonomy, it hinders the holistic development of learners as they lack skills and abilities to address practical challenges within the society. Education is acquired through the systematic cultivation of physical faculties, and the judicious utilization of these faculties facilitates expedited intellectual development (Thomas and Thorne, 2016).

The findings of this study and other related findings reveals that frequent examinations negatively affect curriculum in the following ways: reduced time available for delivering the curriculum; selective teaching of subjects and topics where examined subjects are

given priority and frequently examined topics are selected for teaching increased emphasis on the easily-measured aspects of learning at the expense of the more qualitative and social aspects of learning and increased control over the curriculum by the demands of the examination.

Table 4.6 Students Response on Effects of Examination on Syllabus Coverage

Potential Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Syllabus is covered early to allow for revision.	545 (36%)	500 (33%)	76 (5%)	212 (14%)	181 (12%)	2.53	0.88
Teachers emphasize on examination skills.	545 (36%)	651 (43%)	91 (6%)	106 (7%)	121 (8%)	2.60	1.066
Forms 4's are exempted from co-curricular.	651 (43%)	394 (26%)	76 (5%)	212 (14%)	197 (13%)	2.64	1.023
P.E lessons are used to teach other subjects.	561 (37%)	394 (26%)	91 (6%)	181 (12%)	288 (19%)	3.24	1.13
Teachers engage students in most practical activities.	561 (37%)	424 (28%)	76 (5%)	197 (13%)	258 (17%)	2.80	0.962
K.C.S.E past papers are commonly used for revision.	470 (31%)	500 (33%)	106 (7%)	212 (14%)	227 (15%)	2.47	0.88
Composite mean and Std						**2.727**	**1.011**

Statistics shown in Table 4.6 reveal that teachers cover the syllabus earlier than the recommended time. This may be attributed to need to create time for revision in preparation for national examinations. Besides, majority of students reported that teachers taught the examination skills and ignored Life Skills education which was part of the curriculum content. This shows that most of the teachers preferred the students to achieve skills to pass examinations compared to other skill which is contrary to the intended goals of education. An example of these goals is to provide the learners with the necessary skills and attitudes for national development. These skills include critical thinking, disaster preparedness, decision making and others. This implies that the

teachers might focus on skills to pass examinations at the expense of other equally important skills (Marubu, 2015). Miller (2007) argues that effective evaluation system should encompass a comprehensive assessment of the complete spectrum of knowledge and skills emphasized in the curriculum.

The statistical data presented in tables 4.6 reveal that teachers proactively completed the syllabus ahead of schedule to adequately equip candidates for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination. Besides, responses from the principals revealed that majority of them 30 (94%) had a policy of finishing the syllabus by the end of term two. The reason behind this practice as to create adequate time for revision in preparation for national examinations was taught in advance to enable teachers to adequately prepare candidates for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) through revision programs. This was contrary to the secondary curriculum which outlines specific content objectives and the designated time frame for their completion. Certain topics outlined in the syllabus necessitate a greater allocation of time owing to the expansive nature and intricate intricacy of the subject matter. The phenomenon of rushing in syllabus coverage can be understood as a situation when learners are not afforded the time to fully comprehend and assimilate intricate subjects. In addition, it is important to acknowledge that learners possess varying levels of intellectual capacity, and as a result, certain individuals may require additional time to grasp complex topics.

These findings corroborate with Buhere K, in his article in People's Daily: Monday, February 2020, which stated that school principals celebrate the completion of the syllabus earlier than prescribed. Covering the syllabus in a shorter period than is

recommend raises questions about the quality of management and delivery of the curriculum. The Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) has designed curriculum to be covered in a period of eight years and four years for the primary and secondary education respectively (KICD 2017). Adherence to instructional time provides room for students to study the content taught or ahead of the class singly or in groups. This ensures students strengthen their understanding of the content as they go along. However, this is not the case in most secondary schools where early syllabus coverage is part of the school policy. Buhere maintains that completion of the syllabus earlier than the period prescribed is faulty management and delivery of the curriculum. This is because students cannot, therefore, grasp the depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and attitudes in the subject. Besides it leaves out many students who cannot keep pace with the unconventional pace at which the syllabus is being covered.

Section 84 of the Basic Education Regulations, 2015, prescribes official instructional time as between 8.00am to 3.30pm from Monday to Friday (Education Act, 2013). However, some school administrators do not think much of the wisdom behind the period the ministry designates the syllabus to be completed. Syllabus coverage is not the reason schools exists rather; schools exist for learning; they exist for students. Rush in syllabus coverage indicates that teachers do not consider individuals learner's potential and ability to learn.

While addressing members during the conference, CEMASTEA director Mr. Njoroge warned against rush over syllabus coverage maintaining that hasty syllabus coverage did

not allow students to understand the concepts in a subject which is the goal of effective teaching and learning. Teachers should ensure students understand the concepts taught and focus of the teachers should be how well students have understood what has been taught.

Njoroge advised the school management to abide by the time frame the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) provides for syllabus coverage and completion. He advised deliver the curriculum using strategies that encouraged the development of critical thinking and other high order thinking skills quality education requires. According to Njoroge students can understand subjects such as mathematics and science if properly taught, adding the delivery of mathematics and science syllabus in the classroom is the greatest problem facing mathematics and science education in Africa. "Maths and Science subjects are not hard. He said CEMASTEA was addressing the challenge by providing training programs to Mathematics and Science Teachers, so they improve their pedagogical skills to teach the subjects. Njoroge said school administrations should also avoid administering far too many assessments or tests to learners. (Kenya News Agency,7TH, May 2019)

A study by Alexandria (2018), revealed that early syllabus coverage impacts students with slower learning abilities. This is particularly evident in practical topics that necessitate additional time for comprehending concepts. Alexandria posits that learners exhibit varying levels of intellectual capacity, and as a result, they should be approached differently in the context of teaching and learning. This shows that early coverage syllabus indicates a lack of concern on the part of teachers or the institution regarding the

extent to which students understand content being taught.To ensure effective teaching and realization of curriculum goals, teachers should focus on all students studying in the class instead of syllabus.

Nevertheless, the initial coverage of the syllabus gives rise to questions regarding the caliber of the subject being instructed. According to Peacocks (2011), learners are not given sufficient time to assimilate and apply the theoretical knowledge and skills they acquired. This was due to teachers prioritizing the completion of the curriculum within a limited timeframe, leaving little room for thorough comprehension and practical application.

Statistics from the findings in table 4.6 show that form four candidates were denied time to engage in co-curricular activities. Similarly, responses from the principal revealed that most school limited chances for the candidates participate in sports, music, and drama. They attributed this to the fact that form forms had short time in school which should be invested in academic programs. Moreover, majority of students revealed they did not actively engage in Physical Education. According to the principals, time allocated for Physical Education was used for syllabus coverage in examined subjects. This shows nonadherence to curriculum demands where Physical Education is regarded as a fundamental subject which should be done by all learners.

This finding aligns with the results of the QASOs, where a significant majority (80%) of respondents reported that Physical Education and Life Skills were not being taught by qualified teachers. Most principals, specifically 84%, indicated that non-examined topics were not being taught according to the scheduled timeline. This reveals that educators

perceive Physical Education as a discipline lacking in significance for the cognitive growth of students, which is why it is substituted with disciplines that are assessed through examinations. This is supported by Marshall and Hardman (2000), who established that a significant number of educators perceive Physical Education as an educational endeavor that lacks productivity.

Similarly, Abisaki, Mutsotso, and Poipoi (2013), found out that schools tend to discourage the involvement of senior students and low achievers in co-curricular activities due to the perception that such activities are unproductive. Furthermore, a study by Buhere (2010) revealed that professors prioritize academic pursuits above co-curricular activities to allow students to time to study, focusing specifically on content that is evaluated. This indicates that schools give preference to examinations at the expense of holistic implementation of curriculum content. A study by Marubu (2015) found that candidates and teachers alike are under excessive pressure to perform well in national examinations, to the point where it is difficult to find time for co-curricular activities.

Furthermore, Airasian and Abrams (2003) established that majority of educators tend to prioritize the establishment of cognitive-based objectives and place greater emphasis on intellectual activities throughout the assessment process. This approach often neglects the inclusion of psychomotor activities, which are essential for fostering learners' holistic development. Nguyo, at el., (2017) established that assessments solely based on examinations overlook affective and psychomotor domains, both of which are crucial for the development of a well-rounded individual who possess a sense of responsibility

within society. Furthermore, Masinde (2012) argues that to account for students' varying abilities, a quality examination should include all three Bloom's Taxonomy's domains.

According to Burden and Byrd (2010), it is advocated that instructional objectives should be formulated for each of the three domains of learning, and that each objective should be assessed using diverse types of assessment tools. A good evaluation should prioritize the acquisition of precise and reliable data pertaining to several aspects of an individual's development, including personal and social adjustment, physical growth, spiritual growth, work habits, hobbies and attitudes, specific aptitudes, creative capacity, as well as their home and community backgrounds.

Besides, acquisition of multitasking skills among students can be facilitated through participation in co-curricular activities, as these activities provide opportunities for students to engage in multitasking both within and beyond the classroom environment (Kibet 2016).The achievement of national educational objectives is contingent upon the comprehensive coverage of all components of the curriculum during the implementation phase (UNICEF, 2005). This observation indicates that active engagement in co-curricular activities has a positive impact on students' intellectual capabilities, a facet that is often overlooked by many secondary schools.

Based on the discussion in this chapter it has been noticed that frequent examinations to some extent affects the attainment of objectives stipulated in the curriculum. Teachers prioritize examined subjects, employ selective teaching methods centered around exam topics, utilize past examination papers, and heavily emphasize objective-type questions and frequently tested content. Consequently, it can be inferred that examinations exert

significant control over the curriculum. The lack of curricular enrichment was apparent, and the emphasis on examinations had a negative impact on the comprehensive implementation of the curriculum. Good testing policy should reflect what is taught but should not affect curriculum negatively. If assessment is well structured and well planned, it will make teaching meaningful in that teachers will teach the content according to the curriculum without being dictated by examination demands. Examinations should just be a means to an end and not an end.

4.5 Effects Examination on Choice of Pedagogical Approaches

There cannot be effective implementation of curriculum without efficient teaching practices. For this purpose, the third objective, sought to establish the influence of examinations on pedagogical approaches used by teachers in learning. The findings are presented as follows:

Table 4.7 Teachers Response on Choice of Pedagogical Approaches

Potential Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Teachers dictate notes to students	40(22%)	121(67%)	4(2%)	11(6%)	5(3%)	3.06	0.907
Teachers use demonstrations and presentation	16(9%)	23(13%)	5(3%)	74(41%)	70(39%)	2.98	0.842
Practical activities	27(15%)	11(6%)	7(4%)	58(32%)	76(42%)	3.13	1.04
Lecture method	18(10%)	61(34%)	54(30%)	36(20%)	11(6%)	3.32	1.066
Use of past examination papers during teaching	22(12%)	97(54%)	4(2%)	36(20%)	25(14%)	3.01	0.918
Composite mean and Std						**2.99**	**0.96**

The findings presented in Table 4.7 indicate that most teachers do not employ learner-centered pedagogical approaches, such as collaborative group work, peer instruction,

demonstrations, presentations, project-based learning, and hands-on activities, within the instructional context. Instead, teachers relay on traditional method of teaching such as dictation, lecture, and question answer as the main instructional method. In addition, esponses from QASOs 9 (90%) revealed that teachers relied on lecture method as they dictated notes form textbooks and pamphlets, used past paper question during revision, and in some cases gave learners notes to copy for themselves. More engaging pedagogical approaches such as practical activities, project work, oral presentations, demonstrations were used at very minimal level as revealed from the findings. When teachers teach topics inform of questions and answer using past papers it means what is stipulated in the syllabus is partially taught. The findings were supported by Manishankar, (2015) whose study established that increased pressure to perform well in national examinations has forced teachers teach to enable the students to pass examinations by cramming to remember things that are not likely to help them much and which will be forgotten shortly after examinations.

Besides, (Ngware, 2014) observed that teaching styles use by teachers are designed to help students pass examinations but not for preparing the students to acquire the ability to take responsibility to make informed, intelligent choices and decisions, develop effective habits, and learn how to learn and how to learn for life. The teaching styles do not follow Gardener's theory), where there should be project-oriented teaching, the use of portfolios both in learning and assessment, and a focus on different learning styles where interactions between teachers and students are encouraged (Gardner, 2016). The findings were further reinforced by the views from Darling-Hammond (2010),whose study established that providing students with multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge and

skills increases engagement and learning and provides teachers with a more accurate understanding of students' knowledge and skills. Tomlinson's (2014), maintain that instruction should be informed as much as possible by detailed knowledge about students' specific strengths, needs, and areas of growth. This can only be achieved when teachers apply different instructional methods.

Omari, (2011) revealed that examination has great backwash effect on teaching as reflected in extended drilling using past papers and students spending nights cramming with their feet in backsets of water. Berliner, (2011), established that examination pressure compels teachers to adopt a teacher-centered pedagogical approach that promotes rote learning. Students are accustomed to cram and memorize some information that will be required in examination. Von der Embse *et al.,* (2017) contend that when examination carry significant consequences, the content of past examination papers tend to dictate the curriculum, determining which topics are prioritized for instruction and which are not. Educators employ detrimental instructional methodologies, such as test-focused teaching, which involves utilizing previous examination papers, particularly when their career advancement is contingent upon students' performance in assessments. The excessive dependence on past examination papers promotes a pedagogical approach that emphasizes repetitive practice and rote memorizing of information in preparation for assessments. As a result, students graduate from school without acquiring essential life skills that are necessary for their long-term sustenance.

According to Verma, (2009) when the teaching strategy employed in class encourages rote learning and memorization of facts it discourages the development of critical

thinking, a vital element in the study of history subject. On the other hand, when teacher dictate notes in point form students in the long run are encouraged to memorize the content. Further, the study found that learners were never engaged in research and presentations. This was contrary to (Pallavi et al., 2016) who reiterated that though projects and research have their own disadvantages like being expensive and disrupting schoolwork; they enhance the pupil's co-operation in planning and execution, they enjoy immiscible satisfaction and pleasure which are pivotal aspects in the subject discourse.

Furthermore, Boit et al. (2012) established that instructional methods that prioritize teacher's role in the classroom result in students assuming the role of passive recipients of knowledge, engaging in continuous learning activities for the duration of their four-year education. Students typically commence their daily activities at daybreak and engage in educational sessions until 9 pm, lacking the necessary breaks that are intended to enhance the learning experience, such as field trips, educational movies, guest lectures, and similar activities. Use of traditional methods of teaching as depicted from the study does not promote effective learning as learners are not given opportunity to engage in various learning experiences which lead to acquisition of competences. The purpose of education is for learners to acquire relevant knowledge, skills, and competences for application in real life situation. Traditional methods of teaching do not help learners realize the competences but prepares them to pass examinations which is a short-term outcome that does not align with curriculum goals.

Table 4.8 Student's Response on Choice of Pedagogical Approaches

Potential Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Teachers encourage group discussion	121(8%)	106(7%)	61(4%)	818(54%)	409(27%)	3.01	1.48
Teachers dictate notes	227(15%)	1015(67%)	30(2%)	152(10%)	91(6%)	2.47	0.88
Teachers use variety of resources	61(4%)	378(25%)	152(10%)	833(55%)	91(6%)	2.53	0.88
Teachers engage students in practical's	333(22%)	182(12%)	91(6%)	727(48%)	182(12%)	2.66	0.869
Peer teaching is used	76(5%)	152(10%)	61(4%)	909(60%)	258(21%)	2.60	1.066
Teachers use teaching aids	303(20%)	121(8%)	152(10%)	485(32%)	422(30%)	2.64	1.023
Composite mean and Std						**2.727**	**1.011**

The findings in table 4.8, reveals that most teachers did not embrace group discussion and peer teaching as instructional methods, yet learners learn better through social interaction. According to Vygotskys social development theory, group discussion is the most instructional method teachers should use as it enables learning to interact as they share ideas. Similary, (Miller,2011) maintain that social interaction plays a vital role in facilitating cognitive development. This is because information is built through social processes, and learning is fostered through meaningful conversations between educators and learners. As said by (Jacobs, 2008), the process of social interaction facilitates a transition from conventional teaching methods to a student-centered approach to learning, wherein students actively engage in educating one another. As per constructivist theory, social engagement and conversation are the best ways for students to learn because they provide them the chance to compare their own understandings with those of others.

Besides social interaction builds confidence among learners and promotes competences of (John, 2016).

The selection of instructional delivery and materials is predominantly determined by teachers' focus on examination preparations, sometimes neglecting learner-centered approaches such as project-based learning and collaborative group work (Blazer, 2011). Utilization of critical thinking, cooperation, and differentiation of instruction and curriculum is lacks in the classroom when educators focus on educating students to achieve proficiency in high-stakes assessments (Pavia (2012). When learners fail to engage in interactive activities during learning, they do not acquire collaborative and communication skills which are achieved through interactive session. This shows that traditional approaches applied by teachers limits learners from acquisition of relevant competencies thus affecting achievement of intended curriculum goals and objectives

Statistics in table 4.8 shows that teachers do not use varied of resources in teaching and learning. Supporting materials such as teaching aids were not used as revealed by the students. Similarly, responses from the QASOs revealed that most teachers used textbooks and pamphlets as their main reference materials during. Other resources such as electric media and audio-visual were rarely used as reported by the QASOs. This indicates that teachers relay on past papers and textbooks as their refence materials which limits learners' ability to explore knowledge and skills using other instructional media. Instructional materials play a crucial role in the process of teaching and learning as they enhance the efficiency of teachers and the efficacy of lesson creation (Ajoke 2017). Besides, utilization of teaching and learning materials play a crucial role in enhancing the

comprehension of abstract concepts by aiding in the conceptualization of ideas and stimulating the creativity of learners (Dufresne, 2010) Teaching aids are indispensable to the effective teaching and learning activities and successful instructional delivery in schools. Hence, instructional materials are necessary to enable students acquire better knowledge and skills (Esu, et al., (2004)

Overreliance on a single resource mainly textbooks is a major factor leading towards rote memorization. In each subject a single government textbook is the only source of teaching and learning in most schools (Afzaal & Christie, 2005). This narrows the ability of students to research information from various books and makes them only rely on being given information directly from a given book which in turn limits their ability to explore knowledge from other resource materials.

Burden and Byrd (2013) argue in favor of employing a diverse range of instructional strategies that account for the characteristics of students and the resources at hand. According to Buhere (2019) educational institutions consist of students who possess varying abilities, interests, and orientations, including those who are classified as high-achieving, average, and low-achieving learners. It is there the responsibility of teachers to adapt their instructional approaches for each subject, topic, and concept, taking into consideration the diverse characteristics and needs observed among the learners

Instructional resources play a crucial role as effective instruments for both teaching and learning. The author emphasizes the importance of teachers seeking additional instructional materials to complement textbooks, with the aim of expanding and

stimulating students' interests in the subject matter (Kochhar, 2012). To cultivate global competence, it is imperative to provide conducive classroom environments that afford students the autonomy to express their viewpoints in a respectful manner to both their educators and peers. Additionally, students should be granted the agency to choose the media they engage with, the tools they employ, and the manner, timing, and location in which they utilize them (Snehi, 2011). To foster a discourse among students, the instructor employs several pedagogical tools such as a written text, a video clip designed to provoke thought, and supplementary visual aids. In instances where pedagogy prioritizes examination-oriented instruction, educators tend to underutilize educational media to elucidate complex concepts in a straightforward and comprehensible manner for students.

The findings form table 4.8 shows that most of the students 920 (60%) disagreed with the statement that teachers engaged them in practical lessons and experiments This implies that the teachers use of practical activities in teaching and learning were limited. In a bid to finish the syllabus in time and do some revision, most teachers fail to engage learners in hands on activities such as practical lessons and experiments. This practice results to learners' inability to apply knowledge, concepts and principles into real life experiences thus jeopardizing the realization of curriculum goals and objectives. The findings were supported by Tilling, (2018) who found out that teachers globally have challenges using authentic tasks in schools and that managers are more concerned with teachers' content and put little effort into understanding how they teach it. Similarly, Osborne (2015) found that some teachers did not facilitate hands- on activities even while

teaching practical oriented lessons. This shows that they were more of theoretical concepts than equipping learning with practical skills as per the curriculum requirements.

Abrahams (2011) argues that while practical is about doing things with objects, describing, and explaining what learners observe and making sense of it. Some teachers have not used practical work to enhance learners' object handling and develop learners' ideas. Many teachers use practical work as a cookbook where learners follow instructions with no understanding. It is no wonder this teaching style is imbalanced as teachers concentrate on theoretical aspects of the curriculum ignoring practical areas (Cullinane *et al.,* 2019). Selective teaching of curriculum content leads to wash back effect on curriculum implementation hence affecting realization of curriculum goals and objectives.

Teacher instructional practices are influenced by high-stakes assessments, which conflict with the most effective pedagogical approaches. Educators tend to adapt their instructional approaches to align with assessment requirements, primarily due to the influence of high-stakes examinations (Suander, 2017). According to Guerra & Wubbena (2017), teachers employ a teacher-centered approach primarily to fulfill examination requirements rather than to address the broader curriculum aims and objectives. The frequency of examinations restricts the emphasis of instructional practices to activities that are geared towards test preparation, thus resulting in a limitation of instruction (Santiago, 2009). Similarly, Boit, Njoki, and Changach (2012) found that lecture method predominantly employed by teachers hinder utilization of alternative instructional

approaches aimed at capturing students' attention in the classroom, as well as incorporating life skills into their teaching.

Moreover, according to Chang's (2010) research, the presence of high stakes on tests leads teachers to align their instructional approaches with the test, resulting in unintended consequences on the planned curriculum. Furthermore, Rehman (2003) found that excessive emphasis on examinations in teaching and learning often results in teachers resorting to conventional instructional methods, which in turn promotes a superficial approach to learning. This approach fails to facilitate a deep understanding of the topics being taught among learners. Utilization of repetitive drilling and rote memory techniques hamper critical thinking abilities, impeding learners' capacity to comprehend and synthesize the knowledge they have acquired. In addition, Tella *et al*., (2010) have asserts that instructional approaches that prioritize the teacher's role are deemed unsuitable due to their tendency to promote rote learning. According to Au (2007), it was also found that frequent examinations tend to promote the adoption of a teacher-centered teaching strategy.

A study conducted by Klein *et al*. (2006), revealed that regular assessments had an impact on the instructional methods employed by teachers, leading to a shift towards a more test-focused approach to teaching. Rather than prioritizing the enhancement of education quality, high stakes testing compelled educators to concentrate on elements that would enable pupils to excel in national examinations. Zgraggen, (2009) established those national examinations exerts a significant influence on the process of learning and teaching, resulting in students adopting a passive approach to learning and primarily

focusing on memorization of information. There is need for teachers to engage learners in experiences that will enable them acquire relevant knowledge and skills.

While the objectives of education are focused on equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes, the achievement of educational goals is contingent upon the proactive efforts of teachers to effectively transmit the requisite knowledge and abilities. In this context, it is imperative for pedagogy to offer avenues for the comprehensive cultivation of individual skills and capabilities through a holistic approach to learning, thereby enabling learners to effectively adapt to the dynamic and evolving environment (Pykett, 2010). Wenglinsky (2001) also emphasised three additional classroom practices that should be adopted by teachers for effective content delivery: individualization, collaboration, and authentic assessment. Individualization means that teachers instruct each student by drawing upon the knowledge and experience that student already possesses. Collaborative learning means that teachers allow students to work together in groups. Finally, authentic assessment means that assessment occurs as an artefact of learning activities.

The findings revealed that the frequent examination practices exert negative influence on the curriculum implementation about choose of classroom instruction by teachers. Their choice of teaching methodology is influenced by the thought that the students must take examination of which the result is very important for all the stake holders. Hence, they pay least attention on creativity in the classroom. The students' communicative competence is negatively affected as they are not exposed to peer teaching, demonstration's, role play and group discussions which helps learners to develop

communication skills. The classroom activities have the underneath purpose of preparation for examination and not learning to acquire relevant knowledge and skills.

4.6 Relationship between School Examination Policy and MOE Examination Policy

The fourth objective established relationship between school examination policy and MOE policy and how they affect curriculum implementation.

Table 4.9 Teachers Response on School Examination Policy

Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
The school has internal examination policy.	36(20%)	94(52%)	11(6%)	22(12%)	18(10%)	3.40	1.164
Teachers strictly adhere to exam policy.	52(29%)	24(13%)	4(2%)	92(51%)	9(5%)	3.32	1.293
School examination policy adhere to MOE policy.	9(1%)	47(26%)	33(18%)	3(18%)	67(37%)	3.47	1.240
School policy include formative & summative	50(28%)	55(30%)	7(4%)	33(18%)	37(20%)	3.37	1.089
School policy allows more time for teaching and learning	43(24%)	21(12%)	5(3%)	54(30%)	56(31%)	3.45	1.257
Composite mean and Std						**3.23**	**1.832**

Table 4. 10 Students Response on Examination Policy.

Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Our school has examination policy.	818(54%)	561(37%)	45(3%)	30(2%)	61(4%)	3.01	1.48
Students sit for continuous and end of term exams	212(14%)	318(21%)	106(7%)	818(54%)	91(6%)	2.47	0.88
Students sit for written examinations only.	530(35%)	303(20%)	303(20%)	333(22%)	76(5%)	2.53	0.88
School examination policy is learner friendly.	197(13%)	151(10%)	76(5%)	439(29%)	333(22%)	2.66	0.869
Composite mean and Std						**2.729**	**1.019**

Tables 4.9 and 4.10, provide evidence indicating that a significant majority of the participants, specifically 1379 students (91%) and 130 teachers (72%), demonstrated awareness about the presence of internal examination policies within educational institutions. This awareness can be interpreted as an indication of adherence to the order issued by the Ministry of Education (MOE) to establish internal examination policies. This finding was supported by most principals, with 31 out of 32 respondents (98%) indicating that they have implemented examination policies within their respective schools.

The composite mean was negatively impacted by these opinions, as the means of the items on teachers and students' responses were higher than the composite mean of 3.23 and 2.729, respectively. In addition, the standard deviations of these means exceeded the composite standard deviation, indicating that these views were prevalent among the respondents. Nevertheless, there was variation in the number of examinations conducted among different schools. According to the statistical data, it was found that 9 schools, accounting for 28% of the total, implemented a system that included both continuous assessment tests and end-of-term examinations. On the other hand, 21 schools, representing 66% of the sample, conducted examinations at the conclusion of each month. The observed disparities can be ascribed to various reasons, including the financial capacity of the educational institution to administer assessments, the level of expertise and proficiency of teachers in evaluating student performance, the academic aptitude of the learners and the prevailing examination culture within the school. The findings indicates that educational institutions exhibit a preference for high stakes examinations over continuous assessment tests. This indicates that educational

institutions place a significant emphasis on high-stakes assessments that are conducted on a monthly and termly basis. Limited emphasis was placed on the utilization of continuous assessment examinations, which evaluates learners' aptitude in comprehending and applying newly acquired knowledge within a condensed timeframe.

Peacocks (2011), contends that students with lower abilities to comprehend content are disadvantaged when high-stakes examinations are prioritized. This is because they are unable to fully grasp a multitude of concepts within a given timeframe. Students that exhibit such behaviors often experience subpar academic performance, leading to societal perceptions of them as unsuccessful individuals.

According to Afflerbach (2008), students demonstrate a heightened awareness of learning objectives and their advancement towards attaining them through the implementation of ongoing assessment. Continuous assessment offers a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of students' knowledge compared to the limited insights provided by high-stakes tests. Afflerbach argues that tests, which are typically administered within a short timeframe, are only able to provide a limited representation of students' knowledge acquisition and practical application abilities. This shows that learners should be exposed to continuous assessment tests so to acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to become relevant in the job market.

Study by World Bank, (2018) revealed that most high-stakes assessments fail to assess the whole spectrum of tasks that students have acquired proficiency in, such as their capacity to collect information from various sources, critically evaluate it, synthesize the findings, and construct a persuasive argument. The excessive dependence on summative

evaluation has a detrimental impact on the credibility of the evaluation system. Prioritization of high-stakes examinations leads to a reduction in the breadth of examination content, as certain topics that are not frequently tested are overlooked by educators (UNESCO, 2017). Moreover, it has been observed that knowledge acquired over a limited timeframe tends to have poor retention and limited applicability in subsequent contexts (Islam, 2016).

Principles of curriculum design, clearly stipulates that evaluation should conducted as an ongoing process to enable the teacher to evaluate the individual needs of each student, make informed decisions regarding suitable resources and learning experiences, devise appropriate learning strategies, assess the academic performance of each student, and deliver constructive feedback to facilitate their progress comprehensively and effectively. By means of ongoing evaluation, the instructor consistently and systematically delivers the pedagogical encounter that is most appropriate for addressing the educational requirements, interests, preparedness, and aptitude of every learner (World Bank, 2018).

The act of diversifying assessments has several advantages, including the provision of ample possibilities for students to demonstrate their comprehensive knowledge and skills within the subject matter. In addition, it serves to expand their learning experiences and equips them with the necessary preparation for their future professional endeavors. The only reliance on assessments that measure students' ability to recall specific details and facts is insufficient for attaining the goals and objectives of both the course and the broader educational program (Kerr, et al., 2006). Given the significant influence of examinations on students' future career trajectories, it is imperative to incorporate ongoing assessments throughout the duration of a course. If the examination is scheduled

just at the conclusion of the course, it is likely that a significant number of students will defer their studying efforts until the last period.

Continuous assessment can be achieved by implementing mandatory tasks that necessitate ongoing engagement with course materials. These tasks may include assignments, collaborative conversations among different groups, case studies, problem-based learning activities, or comprehensive study questions that encompass various aspects of the course subject. Engaging in such activities is crucial for students as it enables them to assess their comprehension and identify any areas of information deficiency (Mpapalika K. 2013).

According to the National Policy on Education (2004), continuous assessment is regarded as the most legitimate and reliable approach to assessment, as it has been shown to enhance instructional methods. This indicates that inclusion of continual assessment of individual learners' development in final examination results should be considered to liberalize educational assessment and evaluation.

Table 4.11 QASO Response on School Adherence to MOE Examination Policy

Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
MOE has examination policy for secondary schools	30%	32%	10%	18%	10%	2.77	0.85
Schools have internal examination policy	19%	40%	0%	11%	30%	2.53	0.88
Schools' examination policy is in line with MOE policy	36%	34%	5%	20%	5%	2.64	0.89
School examination policy is friendly to the learners	25%	5%	0%	56%	14%	2.35	0.88
School examination policy consisted of written exams	27%	20%	3%	42%	10%	2.64	1.06
There is a need to reinforce MOE examination policy	33%	27%	0%	26%	14%	2.14	113

Responses from the QASOs revealed that MOE had testing policy for secondary schools, which should be adhered to by all schools. Unfortunately, statistics shows that the set policy was not adhered to by most schools as school's policies were not in line with MOE policy. Similarly, responses from the principals revealed that schools had internal examination policy which were not align with MOE policy. Majority of QASOs admitted that there was need to reinforce MOE examination policy in schools. This shows that there was noncompliance which might be caused by lack of close supervision by the field officers.

From the principals' responses, it was revealed that internal examination policies deferred from one school to another. Some schools had a policy of 3 examinations per term, some had 2 examinations and continuous assessment tests (CAT), some administered examinations fortnightly especially in a candidate class. The practice of examinations was not consistent with the Ministry of Education's (MOE) examination policy, which stipulates two continuous assessment tests and one end term examination. Non-adherence to MOE examination policy shows the possibility of schools engaging in unlawful examination practices which may negatively impact on curriculum implementation.

Analysis of the results as shown in table 4.11 reveals that there was high utilization of written examinations as the school policies emphasized on written examinations. This implies that other assessment tools such as oral and aural presentations were not utilized thus limiting learners' exposure to various assessment tools. This finding was corroborated by most principals, with 27 out of 32 respondents (84%) indicating that written tests were common assessment tools in schools. Pinto, (2012) argues that

overreliance on written examinations tend to prioritize memorization over critical thinking. Emphasis on written examinations might hinder the development of problem-solving abilities, as learners may have limited opportunities for hands-on, experiential learning. In addition, it is worth noting that written examinations instill a sense of competition among students, so potentially causing frustration among those with lower learning abilities. This explains why cases of suicide among candidates have been reported in Kenya especially after the release of national examinations (The Starndard, April 23, 2014).

While examinations have traditionally been utilized for student selection, placement, and advancement, it is imperative to integrate alternative evaluation methods, such as personal interviews, student portfolios, work experience, and contributions to community projects. This inclusive approach ensures that the assessment process accommodates the diverse abilities of all learners (Marshall 2007). Examination policy should encompass a diverse range of assessment instruments to accurately evaluate students' learning outcomes. The lack of strict implementation of examination policies allows teachers to have flexibility in administering exams, which can result in a disregard for the established timetable for teaching and learning (Onuka,2006). Similarly, a lack of commitment to policy standards can lead to inadequate covering of the syllabus, as teachers allocate more time towards the administration and grading of examinations. Consequently, this phenomenon has a reverberating impact on the execution of educational curricula {Mwangi, *at al*., 2013).

4.6.1 Relationship Between School Examination Policy and MOE Policy

Table 4.12 Model Summary on Relationship Between School Examination Policy and MOE

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1 School Examination Policy	.618[a]	.377	.379	1.481
2 MOE Examination Policy	.114	.243	110	.569

a. Predictors: (Constant), Examinations Policy

b. Dependent Variable: Curriculum implementation

To establish whether there is a relationship between schools' examination policy and MOE Examination policy, a simple linear regression test was done.The study tested null hypothesis H_{01}: which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

There is no statistically significant effect between examination policy in schools and curriculum implementation.

Table 4.13 ANOVA on School Examinations Policy and MOE Examination Policy

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 School Exams Policy	Regression	163.245	1	163.245	82.926	.000[b]
	Residual	214.922	171	2.193		
	Total	378.168	172			
2 MOE Exams Policy	Regression	1.520	1	1.520	1.699	.031[b]
	Residual	115.832	212	.324		
	Total	117.353	213			

a. Dependent Variable: Curriculum implementation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Examination Policy

Table 4.13 compares the means of both the school examination policy and the Ministry of education examination policy. The ANOVA test was meant to compare the means of the two groups of data obtained from the schools and MOE. The result of the ANOVA shows that the MOE examination policy has more significant effect (.031) compared to school's examination policy which has a significant level of .000 both the significant levels are above .00 indicating that both policies have impact on curriculum implementation.

Table 4.14 Adherence to MOE Examination Policy

		Unstandardized Coefficients		**Standardized Coefficients**		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1 School	(Constant)	.490	.540		.907	.366
	Examinations Policy	1.843	.179	.618	10.292	.000
2 MOE	(Constant)	3.204	.129		24.854	.000
	Examinations Policy	-.101	.047	-.114	-2.168	.031

a. Dependent Variable: Curriculum Implementation

Research results shown in table 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14, a linear regression model was fitted to explain the relationship between school examination policy and MOE policy. The overall model for schools explains a 37.7% variation on curriculum implementation that was significantly useful in explaining curriculum implementation, F (1, 212) = 82.926, p < .05. with unit increase in policies in schools, curriculum implementation increases by 1.843, which was a significant change, t (212) = 10.292, p < .05. Therefore at 5% level of significance the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there is a statistically significant effect of examination policies on curriculum implementation. Data from MOE was fitted to explain usefulness of MOE examination policies on curriculum implementation. All the assumptions of regression analysis were met. The overall model

explains 24.3% variation, and it is significantly useful in explaining curriculum implementation, F (1, 10) = 1.699, p < .05. With one-unit increase in policies at the MOE, curriculum implementation decreases by .101, which was found to be a significant change, t (10) = -2.168, p < .05. Therefore at 5% the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that MOE policies on examinations affect curriculum implementation. Government and school policies on examination can have negative impact on learning if not properly implemented. Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) were analyzed on the examination policy adherence score (IFE_SCORE), content coverage and pedagogical skills score (ED_SCORE). The results of the analysis were documented in the table below.

Table 4.15 Variance Inflation Factors

Variable	VIF
examination policy adherence score (IFE_SCORE)	36.80
content coverage and pedagogical skills score (ED_SCORE)	26.84
IFE_SCORE: ED_SCORE	83.45

Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs) were calculated to detect the presence of multicollinearity between predictors. High VIFs indicate increased effects of multicollinearity in the model. VIFs greater than 5 are cause for concern, whereas VIFs of 10 should be considered the maximum upper limit (Menard, 2009). The following predictors had VIFs greater than 10: examination policy adherence score (IFE_SCORE), syllabus coverage and pedagogical skills score (ED_SCORE), and IFE_SCORE: ED_SCORE.

A linear regression was then carried out on IFE_SCORE and ED_SCORE and the results documented on the table below.

Table 4.16 Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	*B*	*SE*	95% CI	B	*T*	*P*
(Intercept)	15.23	4.44	[6.52, 23.94]	0.00	3.43	< .001
examination policy adherence score	0.19	0.11	[-0.03, 0.41]	0.33	1.69	.091
syllabus coverage and pedagogical skills score	0.13	0.12	[-0.10, 0.37]	0.19	1.11	.266
IFE_SCORE: ED_SCORE	0.00	0.00	[-0.01, 0.01]	0.01	0.04	.965

Note. Results: F (3,775) = 63.52, p < .001, R^2 = 0.20

Unstandardized Regression Equation: frequency testing= 15.23 + 0.19* examination policy adherence score 0.13*content coverage and pedagogical skills + 0.00*IFE_SCORE:

The results of the linear regression model were significant, F (3,775) = 63.52, p < .001, R^2 = 0.20, indicating that approximately 20% of the variance in frequent of examination is explainable by examination policy adherence, syllabus coverage and pedagogical skills. Examination policy adherence score did not significantly predict frequency testing, B = 0.19, t (775) = 1.69, p = .091. a one-unit increase in examination policy adherence does not have a significant effect on frequency of testing. Syllabus coverage and pedagogical skills does not significantly predict frequency of testing, B = 0.13, t (775) = 1.11, p = .266. One-unit increase in syllabus coverage and pedagogical skills does not have a significant effect on frequency of testing. The interaction between examination policy adherence and syllabus coverage and pedagogical skills does not have a significant effect on frequency of testing, B = 0.00, t (775) = 0.04, p = .965. One-unit increase in

examination policy adherence does not significantly affect the relationship between frequency of testing, syllabus coverage and pedagogical skills.

4.7 Alternative Approaches to Evaluation in Secondary Schools

The fifth objective sought to find out whether examinations should be maintained, or other alternative evaluation could be adopted. The findings are presented in tables 4.17 and 4.18.

Table 4.17 Teachers Responses on Alternatives to Evaluation

Potential Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Examinations should be used for evaluation	25(14%)	36(20%)	5(3%)	59(33%)	50(28%)	3.47	1.240
Schools should adopt alternatives approaches of evaluation	79(44 %)	41(23%)	11(6)%	22(12%)	27(15%)	3.37	1.089
Examinations should be used alongside other alternatives.	40(22%)	121(67%)	4(2%)	11(6%)	5(3%)	3.45	1.257
Composite mean and Std						**3.21**	**1.129**

Table 4. 8 Student's Response on Alternative Approaches to Evaluation

Potential Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Examinations should be used as the only method of evaluation.	121(8%)	106(7%)	61(4%)	818(54%)	409(27%)	3.48	1.231
Other forms of evaluation should be used besides examinations	909(60%)	182(12%)	91(6%)	242(16%)	182(12%)	3.40	1.164
Examinations should be completely abolished.	1091(72%)	197(13%)	45(3%)	136(9%)	45(3%)	3.32	1.293
Composite mean and Std						**3.22**	**1.186**

Data from table 4.17 and 4.18 shows that a significant number of teachers 109 (61%) and majority of students 1227 (81%) maintained that examinations should not be used

as the only tool for evaluation. This corroborates with principals 26 (81%) and QASOs (70%) who were against the use of examinations as the only tool for evaluation in secondary schools. They suggested that other alternative methods should be used besides examinations. A few number teachers 61 (34%) were of the idea that examinations should be maintained for evaluation in secondary schools. This implies that examinations are still important and should be considered in evaluation despite criticisms from the stakeholders.

These findings are supported by Belkacem (2016), who argues that school examinations have been around for more than a century, people have taken them for years, they have passed through long hours of sleepless nights of preparation and memorizing but some have ended up failing. This explains why there are many young people who have gone through education system, but they have nothing to do just because they failed examinations. Belkacem maintains that examinations do not depend on someone's preparation only, they are also dependent on their physical, mental wellness, and their social situation. A student cannot be given a second chance when he/ she developed a diarrhea during exam, such a factor would decide whether you are among best or worst students no matter how intelligent you are, and how much you prepared for the exam. This makes the whole system unfair to the learners especially when examination taken within a span of two hours determines the future of the learner.

(Shumway& Harden,2003) discovered that examinations are stressful and can cause emotional and psychological torture on the learner who might end up in a mental situation. This explains why cases of suicide among form four candidates have been

common especially after the release of KCSE. A study by Onyango, (2012) established that seven students committed suicide for not obtaining their desired mean grades in 2012 KCPE and KCSE examinations. Besides, (Essel,G &Owusu, 2017) asserts that whenever students fail to achieve the target grade, they resort to different ways to overcome academic burden placed on them and one of the ways is suicidal tendency. Similarly, Johnson, (2004) found out that examination brings a feeling of shiver into the minds of the students and for most of them, the meanings of examinations are sleepless nights, monotonous activity, and mental pressure. While some believe that traditional assessment methods are more effective, others think that alternative assessment tools are superior (Dikli, 2003).

To establish whether examinations should be abolished in education system examinations or not, majority of students 1288 (81%) believed examination should be abolished completely, and other forms of evaluation be adopted. This indicates that students were tired of examinations and the immediate solution is for evaluators to explore other approaches that can be learner friendly. These findings are supported by Rovai, A. P. (2000) who argues that although some students do enjoy taking examinations many do not because they rarely talk about examinations when asked the most important things they did in schools. Students talk about activities, projects, missions, creative products, and research studies because they derive a lot of fun and joy when they demonstrate and apply what they have learnt.

Consistent to these findings, Rotherham, (2006) believes that there must be better approaches to evaluation than our present methods of examinations. Similarly, Volante

(2007), discovered that the most timely and relevant type of evaluation is integrating arrange of curriculum-embedded assessment measures for accountability purposes, focusing attention on improving reliability and validity of classroom examinations. In addition, Swope & Miner (2000) argues that the goal of assessment should be to help students learn and provide them with quality education but not to constantly compare schools and children as it is the present case of examination practices. They equally believe that examinations will never answer the questions of what children need to learn to be leaders and informed citizens in a multicultural, ever-changing world.

Ramsey (2006) advocates for adequate opportunities for a balance between classroom and large-scale assessment which calls for other forms of curriculum evaluation besides examinations. Even though standards-based reforms and external testing are commonly used, it should be noted that the importance of assessment of learning, assessment for learning and assessment as learning, is not based on mere grades. Failure to balance assessment methods lead to predictable negative consequences to students, teachers, and the curriculum in general. Volante, (2007) believes that students can learn so much from each other if given time to interact and share ideas. However, when teachers teach for the sake of examinations, time is taken from collaborative work, and this limits students' learning. Rotherham, (2006) agrees that there must be better approaches to evaluation than our present methods of examinations. Volante (2007), discovered that the most timely and relevant type of evaluation is integrating arrange of curriculum-embedded assessment measures for accountability purposes, focusing attention on improving reliability and validity of classroom examinations. Swope & Miner (2000) argues that the goal of assessment should be to help students learn and to provide them with quality

education but not to constantly compare schools and children in terms of academic performance. They equally believe that examinations will never answer the questions of what children need to learn to be leaders and informed citizens in a multicultural, ever-changing world.

Moreover, Stralberg, (2010) argues that examination-based evaluation is inadequate as it does not effectively assess students for a full range of educational goals and instructional objectives such as students' conceptual understanding, higher-order thinking, and creativity, problem-solving ability, and communication skills. Hence, evaluation should be based on multiple techniques that provoke the current national and global needs. It should be more harmonized and seen as a continuous and ongoing process that involves examining and observing learner's behaviors, listening to their ideas, and developing questions to promote conceptual understanding. This aspect is based on constructivism which is a key learning theory underpinning contemporary thinking on how people learn (Biggs, J. 2003).

The study findings is in agreement with Burns (2015) who maintain that examinations should be abolished because the current educational systems value grades more than actual learning and this has made students to try any means including cheating which defeats the purpose of measuring students' academic ability through examinations. To this end, the findings have clearly revealed that many people especially students do not like the practice of examinations as a tool for evaluation. This explains why the respondents felt there is need for other alternative approaches for evaluation should be explored.

Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASO) suggested that besides paper pencil examination, other forms of assessment could be explored. The forms of assessment heighted by QASOs include Continuous Assessment Test should be emphasized as it helps learners to remember what has been taught in a short while. Besides, they suggested use of diversity assessments such as projects, homework, extended activities, oral presentations, and role plays. This was found to be compatible with White, (2003) who suggested different forms of assessment depending on students' area of interest which can be used to replace examinations that are done within two hours to determine the fate of the learners. In this case the grade will show the actual intelligence of the student instead of the memorization of facts by the students. Besides, Komaru, *et al*, (2007) recommended that results from formal continuous assessment should count in the final examination either fully or part of it. When parts of the course content are examined continuously, it is important to include some main issues from these parts in the final examination so that students get the holistic view of his or her ability. Furthermore, research by John & Helen, (2007) shows that shorter, more frequent, and varied assessments are a better way for students to solidify concepts and skills. On the other hand, high-stakes, cumulative examinations can cause undue stress and are not as effective at measuring deeper learning. This indicates that continuous assessment can be the most effective way of evaluating students' performance.

Shamaa, (2012),suggests that continuous assessment can be done by including compulsory activities that require studying throughout the course; for example, assignments, cross-group discussions, and problem-based learning activities, or

study questions covering a wide range of the course contents. Such activities are vital to help students check on their understanding and to identify their knowledge gaps. According to (Stralberg, 2010) take home assignment can be a good way to test students understanding and ability to apply knowledge, select and synthesize relevant information. Reports delivered can be compared to prove whether they have been produced individually.

Furthermore, QASOs recommended use of school-based assessment as alternative was of evaluation. They recommended that results from school-based assessment should form part of the overall learner's achievement at various levels of learning. This means teachers made tests should be considered in the overall academic performance of the learner. This helps teachers to improve teaching and learning by adopting best instructional practices which will help learners to achieve the set objectives. Effective school-based assessment, according to Brown, (2004), enables a school to frequently change its evaluation modalities. A school can more quickly reach its objective when teachers use activities in the classroom, like daily observations, periodic quizzes, and standardized tests. The school-based assessment also observed as a crucial component of both teaching and learning, and its worth as an indicator of high-quality teaching and learning is widely acknowledged. Assessment not only helps to identify a student's need for remediation, but also helps to raise the quality of instruction

In the context of competency-based curriculum implementation, well-designed assessment systems can yield important insights into student learning. We can learn what the pupils learnt from books, how well they learned it, and where they had difficulties. In addition, a well-designed assessment enables the teacher to provide

students with rapid feedback that is constructive, and it encourages the teaching and learning program's ongoing review and modification (Nusche, 2011). According to Tylor, (2008) efficient school-based assessments give insight into what students know, what they can do, what they still need to learn, and where the school may make improvements. Prior learning assessments, summative assessments, and formative assessments are the three categories of assessments that should be followed by the school to perform effective assessments which will lead to realization of curriculum goals and objectives.

From the QASOs responses, it was suggested that teachers should consider assessing learners in areas such as oral presentations, observation of activities done by learners, co-curricular activities by assessing their talents and grading them. Besides, majority of the teachers recommended assessment of learners in co-curricular activities and other areas of their interest beside written examinations.

Teachers recommended use of portfolio assessment where one can determine learners' performance by assessing all that he/she has learned throughout the term or year. Robinson, (2003) maintains that other forms of assessment as this would decrease dependency on traditional forms of assessment which does not suit learning styles of many students. Gardner, (2016) asserts that examinations are a tool for acquisition of knowledge and can never define someone's intelligence, thus examinations should be cancelled and replaced by less stressful and more fruitful forms of assessment. He suggests course work should be used to determine how much knowledge a student has about the subject instead of exams which only show how well the student can memorize.

Information gathered from the principals through interview schedule revealed that majority of them suggested the following alternative ways of evaluating students in secondary schools: Use of both oral and written examinations. From the interview sessions, some principals argued that some learners express themselves well when asked verbal questions while others are good in written questions, therefore it is important for assessment tools to take care of all learners. The findings were in line with Heigh, (2007) who established that oral examination is useful to test the students' knowledge and understanding of a topic, as well as their ability for application, analysis, integration, and synthesis. The direct feedback in oral examination provides opportunities for students to learn from the examination, and for the teacher to realize what problems students are facing in grasping the topic. It good training for students to express themselves orally, without extended time to think about the answer.

The study findings corroborate with Jay McTighe, (2020) whose study revealed that using a variety of assessments in a unit allows a more comprehensive and accurate representation of a student's learning. These may include quizzes to check for understanding, including short answer questions where students show their work, along with performance-based assessments such as research papers, lab reports, oral presentations, learning logs, and student interviews and conferences. From the findings it can be deduced that continuous assessment can serve as alternative approach to evaluation as it enables learners to master the concepts taught and they can easily apply the knowledge in real life situations. This implies that curriculum implementation can be more effective when formative assessment is considered more than summative assessment.

Besides written and oral questions principals suggested that learners should be assessed in their subjects of choice and not in all subjects offered in the curriculum. They argued that education system compels learners to do subjects contrary to their interests. Beside they also suggested that learners should be assessed in co-curricular activities such as Music, Athletics, Drama and Music. They reported that some learners are well gifted in co-curricular activities, but they were not assisted to nature those talents once they complete secondary school level of education. In support of the findings Rashid, et. al (2011) affirms that co-curricular activities are important aspects of the curriculum as they prepare and mold students to be holistic. Kariyan, at al (2012) argues that co-curricular activities are no longer extra but they are integral part of the curriculum and should therefore be assessed like other areas of the curriculum. Emphasis on use of written examination to gauge learners' performance has affected learners with special talents in co- curricular activities. It is therefore important for curriculum developers to consider assessment of learners in co- curricular activities for effective curriculum implementation and realization of curriculum goals.

Principals recommended that learners who are good in co-curricular activities should be allowed to venture into the game and perfect their skills, while learners who are good in academics should be allowed to develop their cognitive skills. This shows that learners have different abilities, and they should be allowed to specialize in their areas of interest. These results were found to be compatible with Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences who's this study was founded. The theory maintains that each learners have different intelligences and therefore teachers should help

them to develop their abilities by exposing them to the areas they excel most (Gardner, 2006).

As depicted from the principal's and teachers' suggestions, there is need for curriculum developers, KNEC and MOE, to consider other approaches to evaluation such as individualized assessment where learners are assessed against their own ability without comparing them with others. According to the principals each learner is gifted differently and should be allowed to engage in activities that will enable him/her to excel as an individual and not a group. This concur with Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences which claims that human beings have different ways of learning each being independent. According to Gardner, there is no single intelligence that can be measured by one IQ test, but multiple intelligences. Therefore, evaluation should be tailored towards individuals' strength in their multiple intelligences (Gardner,H. (2013).

Examinations have been widely used for certification, selection and placement of students, promotion of teachers, teacher, and student accountability. Examination therefore serves various functions in education system which cannot be underestimated (Peter,2010). However, effective curriculum implementation calls for a paradigm shift from examination-based assessment to learner based alternative approaches to evaluation. The evaluation process should comprehensively analyze all skills, taking into consideration the relative time allocation for each skill. Balance is also crucial in ensuring that the different cognitive skills are given equal or appropriate emphasis (Denicia, 2020). A test that focuses only on either higher or lower cognitive skills will exhibit an imbalance. Therefore, it is imperative to maintain equilibrium across

the many cognitive levels of skills, including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. It is imperative to maintain a balance between theoretical and practical skills in academic topics, as these subjects inherently encompass both theoretical and practical dimensions (Wiggins, 2005).

As the case in Finland where there are no mandated standardized tests, apart from one examination at the end of students' senior year in high school. There are no rankings, no comparisons or competition between students, schools, or regions and yet, Finland's schools are for years now, the most successful in the entire world (Saucier, 2020). Curriculum developers should therefore benchmark with countries with better evaluation systems like Finland so to come up with evaluation practices that would have positive effect on curriculum implementation process.

Although the new system of education in Kenya, Competency Based Curriculum has come with new ways of assessment, the present curriculum model Competency Based Assessment (CBA) has been faced with several challenges since its inception in 2017. These challenges ranging inadequate assessment resources, inadequate assessment personnel and lack of clear assessment policies coupled with challenges of validity and reliability of scores uploaded on the CBA- KNEC portal (Kubai, E 2023). These challenges are clear indicators that the new system of education in Kenya still needs reforms especially matters assessment.

Use a variety of assessment methods, if possible, within each course, but at least within the education program should be the way forward for evaluation. Assessment

should be diversified to give students opportunities to display their full knowledge and skills in the area(s) studied, to extend their learning and prepare them for their professional careers. Learners should be given authentic tasks where they should be tested against a set criterion and not norm referenced tests where learners' ability is measured against set standards which encourages competition. Learning becomes enjoyed when learners engage in learning experiences related to real life situations. This means assessment methods should be more realistic, practical, and authentic to enable learners achieve the set objectives and this will lead to achievement of curriculum goals and objectives.

4.7 Summary of the Study

This chapter presented and discussed the findings based on the objectives. The study sought to establish use of examinations as a dominant evaluation practice and its effect on curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Kenya. The objectives were as follows; Establish the frequency of examinations in schools, find out the effects of frequency of examinations on syllabus coverage, establish effects of frequency of examinations on choice of pedagogical approaches, establish relationship between school examination policy and MOE policy, suggest alternative approaches to evaluation in schools. The findings indicate that examinations were administered most frequently as students were exposed to more than two examinations per time besides internal tests and quizzes. Frequent testing was meant to improve their grades in KCSE examinations which determined their placement in universities and tertiary institutions (Kasembeli, 2014)

Responses from learners and teachers clearly indicate that teachers did not cover the whole syllabus during the academic year. Some contents in the syllabus were often skipped and concentration was on topics which often appeared in the examination papers. Besides, candidates were exempted from co- curricular activities and Physical Education lessons were used for syllabus coverage in examined subjects. The responses from all the respondents indicate that there is evidence that examinations had influence on the depth of teaching and teachers prefer examination related materials instead of covering the whole syllabus.

From the study there is evidence that examination affects other aspects of the educational process; particularly teaching methods, and resources used. Students rely on teachers wholly to provide knowledge because learning is basically teacher centered. Unfortunately, the learners are drilled through past examination papers and assessment tests for them to reproduce the acquired knowledge during national examinations. This means that the major task of the teacher is to enable learners acquire a good grade at the expense of imparting desired knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes as per the curriculum demands.

The findings of the study revealed was no significant relationship between school examination policy and MOE as depicted from the study findings. School had developed their testing policy which emphasized on summary evaluation at the expense of formative which connects the learning objectives with real world problems. Respondents in this study expressed lack of dissatisfaction on use of examination as the main tool of evaluation and suggested other alternative ways of evaluation which include but not

limited to: emphasis on formative evaluation, use of projects and portfolio's, assessment of learners in both formal and non-formal dimensions of learning, use of criterion referenced tests and not norm referenced which encourages competition among learners.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the data analyzed in the previous chapter

5.2 Summary of the Study

The focus of this study was to establish the effect of examinations as a dominant evaluation approach on the implementation of secondary curriculum in Kenya. The background of this study was done by studying the related literature on the present examination situation globally, internationally, and nationally with reference to Kenyan situation. The background of the research problem reveals the present position of examinations in Kenya, stakeholders' perception on examinations, issues surrounding examinations and the gap.

The literature study was done in chapter two on the research already conducted on issues related to examination practices. The study explored both theoretical and empirical literature based on research objectives. The knowledge gap to be filled through the present study was identified. The theory that supports the topic of discussion was identified and the theoretical framework showing the relationship between dependent and independent variables was developed. The specific objectives of the study were: To determine the frequent of examinations. establish effects of examination on curriculum implementation; establish the effects of examinations on pedagogy; to establish schools adherence to MOE policy on examinations; to identify alternatives approaches of

evaluation in secondary schools. Research methodology entailed the following aspects: description of the study area, research design, location of the study, target population, sampling procedure, sample size, sampling procedures, research instruments, pilot study, validity and reliability of research instruments, data analysis procedure, ethical considerations. The study employed descriptive survey research design and inferential statistics Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Qualitative data organized and presented in themes and discussed based on the objectives of the study. Questionnaires and interview guide were used to collect data from the respondents.

The findings of this study revealed that examinations were done more than two times in a term meaning that examinations were done frequently especially among the candidates. This practice was against MOE policy which stipulated one examination at the end of term and continuous assessment tests.

The main findings of the study indicated that examinations had influence on the effectiveness of teaching by selecting teaching methodologies that can help learners pass the examinations. Effectiveness in teaching was also affected by skipping some content in the syllabus which was not examinable. National examinations affect curriculum implementation in schools' teachers concentrate on topics which they believe would appear in the examinations.

The study established that the examinations had influence on teacher's selection of classroom activities. Teachers centered their classroom activities on examination

preparation, which means that extracurricular activities are regarded as not very important. Classroom activities revolve around examination preparation.

The study established that learners were drilled in factual information about examinations and as a result most learners came out of school system with no life skills that could sustain them in life. This means that learners lacked belief in their individuality and hard work to succeed in life. The school system is predominantly imparting only factual knowledge. Students only memorize facts from textbooks and are assessed how much of the knowledge they have memorized and produced. There was dissatisfaction on use of examinations as a dominant tool for curriculum evaluation. Suggestions were made on alternative approaches to curriculum implementation.

5.3 Summary of the Findings

5.3.1 Frequency of Examinations in Schools

The findings revealed that examinations were administered frequently in secondary schools. Principals reported that examinations were done weekly, fortnightly, and monthly with the purpose of improving content mastery among students. Besides internal examinations, most schools participated in joint evaluation tests with other schools.

5.3.2 Effects of Frequency of Examinations on Syllabus Coverage

Statistics reveal that frequent examination affect curriculum implementation in the following ways: Teachers do selective teaching by concentrating on examined subjects and topics that are frequently tested in KCSE. They analyze a series of examination past purpose to check the frequency at which questions have been set. The intention of such practice is to make valid predictions so to prepare candidates adequately through

revision. Practice of examinations significantly reduce quality instructional time as most of the time allocated for curriculum implementation is used for administering examinations. The result of the study shows that learners memorize facts for the sake of examination. This culture of memorization lead to rote learning as students are not given adequate time to study, analyze, interpret, and understand concepts for application in real life situation. The study also established that learners were drilled on examination techniques and as a result most of them come out of school without acquisition of knowledge and skills relevant for day-to-day life. In this case examinations determine what should be taught as well as learning experiences for the learners.

Students were denied time for co- curricular activities so to invest more time in class work. Teachers gave preference to KNEC syllabus whose objectives were limited to examination questions and not curriculum objectives.

5.3.3 Effects of Frequency of Examinations on Pedagogical Approaches

The findings revealed that teacher's ability to choose instructional strategy was limited by pressure for quality grades in national examinations. The teaching styles emphasized on need to make the students pass KCSE examinations, rather than help learners master curriculum content. Therefore, Gardener's theory that encourages project-oriented teaching; the use of portfolios both in learning and assessment, and focusing on different learning styles where interactions between teachers and students are encouraged are not practiced by teachers.

Frequency of examinations compelled teachers to engage in test preparation sort of instruction which focused on topics that were frequently examined in national

examination. This practice encouraged rote learning as learners memorized concepts for the purpose of examinations. This situation had implication on quality teaching and learning thus affecting curriculum implementation in secondary schools. Frequency of examinations not only narrow instruction but also kills creativity and innovation skills among students which would not happen if a broad range of instructional strategies was to be used in the classroom.

Since the teachers center their classroom activities on examination preparation, it means that co- curricular activities are regarded as not very important. Outside the classroom activities can be used to facilitate Education for Sustainable Development. Providing learners with high quality learning activities in relevant situations beyond the walls of the classroom is vital for helping learners appreciate their firsthand experiences from a variety of different perspectives. When learners do not take part in extracurricular activities, it means that they are not active players in the learning process and there is no environment created in which there are opportunities for learners to join in doing tasks. Active learning may be either self-directed or group-directed and is a process consistent with the social constructivist approach in higher learning (Miller, 2011).

5.3.4 Relationship between MOE Examination Policy and the School Policy

The findings revealed that most schools had examination policy that guided evaluation. Some policies stipulated two examinations per term while other policies called for three examinations per term. In some cases, schools offered both examinations and continuous assessment tests. There was no uniformity in the number of examinations offered in schools as each school had independent policy. Schools emphasized on high stakes

examinations at the expense of continuous assessment tests. The result of the study revealed that schools did not adhere to MOE policy on examinations. School examination policy focused on written examinations with minimal provision for oral examinations, project work, practical and experiments.

5.3.5 Alternative Approaches to Evaluation

From the findings, stakeholders showed dissatisfaction with examinations as the only method of evaluating learners progress in secondary schools. They were for the idea that other alternatives for evaluation be exploited. They suggested that course work should be used to determine how much knowledge a student has about the subject instead of examinations which shows how well the student can memorize the concepts. Some suggested use of individualized evaluation where each learner is evaluated depending on his interests and ability. Individualized evaluation is good as it discourages competition among students of different intellectual abilities. Further suggestions were made to have co-curricular activities evaluated to cater for learners with different talents.

This indicates that there is need for better evaluation strategies that would address the needs of the learners by equipping them with relevant knowledge and skills.

5.4 Conclusion

From the findings and discussions, it was concluded that schools administered examinations to learners frequently. Students did examinations weekly, fortnightly, and monthly. Teachers spent quality time on setting, administering, and marking of examinations at the expense teaching and learning. The purpose of frequent

examinations is to improve students' performance in national examinations. Frequent administration of examination affects curriculum implementation as teachers convert time allocated for teaching and learning into tests and examinations.

Frequent examinations narrowed curriculum content as teachers concentrated on topics that appeared frequently in national examinations thus ignoring other aspects of the curriculum. Learners are drilled on examinations skills through use of past examination papers. Less emphasis was put on acquisition of knowledge and skills, as a result learners came out of school with no life skills for survival. Use of examination past papers for revision restricted teachers from focusing on curriculum objectives instead they preferred KNEC objectives that were frequently tested. Frequent examinations led selective teaching of curriculum content by the teachers. For instance, predicted topics were taught while the rest were either taught partially or completely left out. The unexamined subjects like Physical Education were not taught instead time allocated for them was used to cover content in examined subjects. Learners especially candidates were exempted from co-curricular activities so to invest more time for preparation of examination.

Examination oriented teaching narrows acquisition of knowledge in term of objective domains as revealed in this study since paper- pencil examinations measure cognitive domains to a great extent. Aspects of affective and psychomotor domains are left uncovered because they are less likely to appear in national examinations. All these happen because teachers teach to prepare students to pass national examinations and not to achieve and master curriculum content.

From the findings, it was evidenced that choice of pedagogy was determined by examinations. Teachers imparted knowledge through conventional approaches which resulted to rote learning. Teacher centered methods were used which did not enhance learners' understanding of the concepts taught. This approach only allows learners to memorize concepts and reproduce them during examinations. Conventional approach applied denied learners' room for acquisition of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, the approach did not provide holistic approach to educational experiences.

The findings showed that schools had developed examination policy which guided evaluation practices. It was however revealed that there was no uniformity as schools differed in the numbers of examinations administered per term. Most schools administered two examinations and one continuous assessment test while others administered three examinations without continuous assessment test. Schools did not adhere to MOE policy on examinations. This indicates that schools formulated their own policies had negative effect on curriculum implementation as revealed from the study.

The findings of this study indicated that frequent examinations had influence on the curriculum implementation. Teachers often skipped some topics and contents in the syllabus which did not appear in the examination. Teachers preferred teaching examination related materials instead of following the syllabus. It was established that examinations had influence on the teachers‟ selection of pedagogy. To prevent loss time for learning and teaching, time for co-curricular activities was reduced. Learners were drilled in information about examinations, and this resulted in learners leaving the school

system with no life skills to sustain them. All these practices have negative influence on curriculum implementation.

5.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations arose from the research findings, discussions and conclusions drawn in this study.

i. There should be reinforcement on the government examination policy to ensure adherence by all secondary schools. This should be done by the Ministry of Education through field officers by making regular visits in schools and advising them on policy matters.

ii. There should be a comprehensive assessment system which ensures diagnostic, formative, and summative evaluation as well as integration of formal and informal curriculum in evaluation.

iii. There must be an emphasis on authentic assessment to be used by teachers apart from paper-and-pencil tests. Authentic assessment such as portfolio, projects, exhibitions, case studies, practical, etc. assess real life learning. If this form of assessment is used teachers will not be teaching for the sake of students attempting examinations or tests given rather will be teaching for the sake of competence attainment.

iv. National examinations should be constructed in such a way that students will be required to demonstrate a wider knowledge. This will call for teachers to teach the entire content of the curriculum with clarifications and vivid examples. This

is because if questions are asked calling for just recalling knowledge; teachers tend to teach students by rote learning and memorizations of facts.

v. Attitude of early syllabus coverage is unprofessional; therefore, curriculum content should be implemented within the defined time frame by KICD so that students can learn, and curriculum objectives to be realized.

vi. Learners should be assessed depending on their ability to avoid comparison which brings unfair competition

vii. Curriculum evaluators should embrace criterion referenced assessment where the learner is assessed according to the set criteria and not norm referenced assessment which encourages competition among learners and schools.

viii. Curriculum developers should come up with a viable evaluation model for Competency Based Curriculum. The model should consider hands on activities such as project work where learners are given tasks to undertake within a specified period as the teachers assess the progress of the project till the end.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

In view of the findings of this study which looked at the effects of frequent examinations on curriculum implementation in secondary it is therefore necessary to suggest the following as areas for further research:

i. Further research is needed to explore techniques for assessing students' performance in non-examined subjects in the curriculum.

ii. Establish stakeholders' perception and attitude towards practice of examinations in schools.

iii. Strategies that should be used to determine the choice of pedagogical skills for curriculum implementation.

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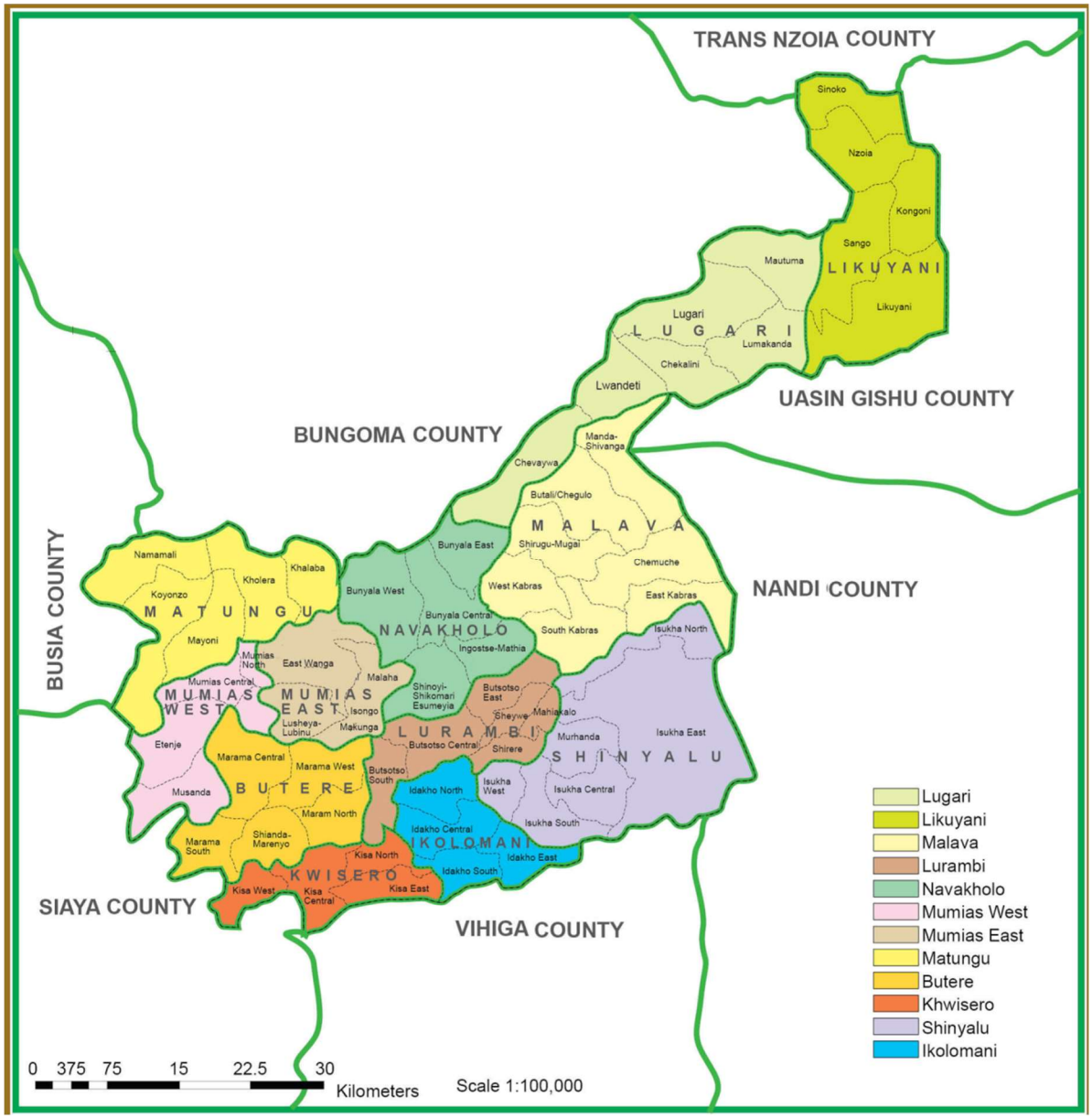
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Map of Kakamega Indicating the Study Area



Appendix B: Letter of Introduction

Masinde Muliro University of Science and TechnologyP.O. Box 190

Kakamega

2nd March 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I am student at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology currently pursuing doctoral studies in Curriculum and Instruction.

Your school has been selected from the schools in Kakamega County for the purpose of data collection. Am carrying out academic research on tests and examinations as dominant approach to curriculum evaluation and their influence on curriculum implementation in secondary schools.

I am therefore request your permission to allow me collect the data required .I promise that all the information collected from your school will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks in Advance.

Yours Faithfully,

Knight Tundo

Appendix C: Questionnaire for Teachers

This questionnaire seeks to gather information on tests and examinations as dominant approach to evaluation and their influence on curriculum implementation. You are one of the respondents identified to voluntarily give your views concerning the topic of study. All information given will be treated with confidentiality and you will remain anonymous throughout the study.

SECTION A: Demographical Details

This section requires some background information. Kindly tick in the appropriate box.

Gender M F

School Category

National	Extra- County	County	Sub- County

SECTION B: Frequency of Examinations

Key.**ST**---Strongly Agree, **A**----Agree, **U**----Undecided **SD**---Strongly Disagree, **D**—Disagree

Students do 1 examination per term.	SA	A	U	SD	D
Students do 2 examinations per term	SA	A	U	SD	D
Students do more than 2 examinations per term	SA	A	U	SD	D
Students do joint examinations with selected schools	SA	A	U	SD	D
Students sit for Sub- County, County & Religious based examinations	SA	A	U	SD	D

SECTION C: Information on Effect of Examinations on Curriculum Implementation

Many examinations affect curriculum implementation.	SA	A	U	SD	D
Examined subjects are prioritized during teaching.	SA	A	U	SD	D

Teachers emphasize on frequently examinable topics.	SA	A	U	SD	D
Teachers use K.C.S.E past paper during revision.	SA	A	U	SD	D
Teachers cover the syllabus early to prepare students for national examination.	SA	A	U	SD	D
Examinations only measure learners' intellectual ability.	SA	A	U	SD	D
Teachers refer to KICD curriculum when preparing lessons	SA	A	U	SD	D
Some examinations are externally set	SA	A	U	SD	D
Teachers cover syllabus early to prepare students for examinations	SA	A	U	SD	D

Section D: Effects of Examinations Policy on Choice of Pedagogical Approaches
Which of the following methods do teachers commonly use while teaching (Tick the appropriate answers)

Statement	**Response**
Group Discussion	
Practical Activities	
Dictation of notes to students	
Role Play	
Explanations	
Project Activities	
Presentations	
Questioning method	
Demonstrations	

Section E: Alternative Approaches to Evaluation

1. Examinations should be used for curriculum evaluation	SA	A	U	SD	D
2. Schools should adopt other alternatives of evaluation	SA	A	U	SD	D
3. Examinations should be used, alongside other alternatives	SA	A	U	SD	D

4. Identify other alternative approaches to evaluation besides examinations.

Appendix D: Students Questionnaire

This questionnaire seeks to gather information influence tests and examinations on curriculum implementation. You are one of the respondents identified to voluntarily give your views concerning the topic of study. All information given will be treated with confidentiality and you will remain anonymous throughout the study.

SECTION A: Students demographic details

Instructions; Respond to all questions. Do not write your name on this questionnaire.

Kindly put a tick (√) in the appropriate box.

Section A: School Category

National	Extra- County	County	Sub- County

Section B: Frequency of Examinations in School

Read the following statements and put a tick √ against your response in the alternatives provided. Key.ST--Strongly Agree, A--Agree, U--Undecided SD--Strongly Disagree, D—Disagree

Students sit for one examination per term	SA	A	U	SD	D
Students sit for more than one examination per term.	SA	A	U	SD	D
Students sit for joint examinations with selected schools	SA	A	U	SD	D

Section C: Effects of Examinations on Curriculum Implementation

Examinations consume time for curriculum implementation	SA	A	UD	SD	D
Teachers concentrate on examined subjects	SA	A	UD	SD	D
Syllabus is covered early to allow for revision	SA	A	UD	SD	D
Teachers concentrate on topics frequently examined in KCSE	SA	A	UD	SD	D
Teachers teach examination techniques	SA	A	UD	SD	D
Form 4 students are exempted from co-curricular activities	SA	A	UD	SD	D
Teachers use PE lessons to teach other subjects	SA	A	UD	SD	D
Teachers teach Life Skills Education	SA	A	UD	SD	D
Teachers use examination past papers for revision	SA	A	UD	SD	D

Section D: Information on Effects of Examinations on Pedagogical Approaches

Potential Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD
Teachers encourage group discussion					
Teachers dictate notes for students to write					
Teachers use variety of learning resources					
Teachers use only one reference book					
Teachers ask questions					
Teachers use peer teaching					
Teachers ask students to do demonstrations in class					
Teachers engage students in projects activities					
Practicals and experiments are conducted frequently					

Section E: Information on Examination Policy.

Our school has examination policy	SA	A	U	SD	D
The policy entails continuous assessment tests and examinations	SA	A	U	SD	D
The policy consists of examinations only	SA	A	U	SD	D
Students sit for written examinations only	SA	A	U	SD	D
Examination policy is friendly to the learners	SA	A	U	SD	D
Examination policy in our school should be changed	SA	A	U	SD	D

Section F: Alternative Approaches to Evaluation

1. Examinations should be used as the only method of curriculum evaluation	SA D	A	U	SD
2. Other forms of evaluation should be used besides examinations	SA D	A	U	SD
3. Examinations should be completely abolished in schools	SA D	A	U	SD

Appendix E: Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASO) Questionnaire
Section A: Effects of Examination on Curriculum Implementation

1. Do teachers teach all subjects as per the curriculum?
2. Which subjects are not taught?

   ---
3. Why do you think the teachers avoid teaching the subjects, yet they are included in the curriculum?

   ---
4. How does lack of knowledge in these subjects affect learners' holistic development?

   ---
5. Do teachers teach all topics in the subject areas as per the curriculum?
6. What makes teachers teach topics selectively?

   ---
7. What is the effect of selective teaching of subjects and topics on curriculum implementation.
8. Do teachers derive their lesson objectives from the curriculum?
9. What other sources do you think teachers derive lesson objectives?
10. Do teachers factor the three domains of Blooms Taxonomy in the examination items?
11. Which domains are not examined and why?

Section B: Effects of Examinations on Choice of Pedagogical Approaches
Which of the following methods do you commonly use while teaching (Tick the appropriate answers)

Statement	**Response**
Group Discussion	
Practical Activities	
Dictation of notes to students	
Role Play	
Explanations	
Project Activities	
Presentations	
Questioning method	
Demonstrations	

Section C: Schools Adherence to MOE Policy on Examinations

	Potential Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	MOE have developed examination policy for secondary schools					
2	Schools have internal examination policy					
3	Schools' examination policy is in line with MOE policy					
4	School examination policy is friendly to the learners					
5	School examination policy is adhered to all levels					
6	School examination policy comprises of both written and oral examinations					
7	School examination policy gives time for effective curriculum content					
8	School examination policy comprises of both formal and non-formal aspects of curriculum					
9	There is a need to change examination policy in most secondary schools					

Section D: Information on Alternative Approaches to Evaluation

1. As MOE field officer, are you comfortable with use of examinations as a main tool for curriculum evaluation?
2. What are the possible alternative ways of evaluation in secondary schools?

Appendix F: Interview Schedule for Principals
Section A. Demographic Information

1. How long have you served as a principal?
2. What is the status of your school e.g. National, Extra- County, County, Sub-County

Section B. Frequency of Examinations in School in Secondary Schools

1. How many examinations do students sit for a term?
2. Why do you think is the reason for the number of examinations mentioned in Q1
3. How are they administered e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, or termly?
4. Does your school participate in joint examinations with other schools.
5. Why do you think it is important for students to sit for joint examinations?

Section C. Influence of Examinations on Curriculum Implementation.

1. Do examinations affect syllabus coverage in subject areas?
2. At what time are examinations administered.
3. Do students have time to apply what they have learnt in school
4. Do teachers teach non examinable subjects as per the timetable?
5. Why do you think non examined subjects are not taught?
6. Are there topics that are given preference by teachers?
7. Why do you think teachers prefer teaching some topics in their subject areas.
8. Which of the following materials do your teachers use to prepare lesson content

KNEC Guides

Textbooks

KCSE revision materials/ pamphlets

KICD syllabus

Guidebooks

9. Do you encourage early syllabus coverage in your school?

10. What is the rationale for early syllabus coverage?

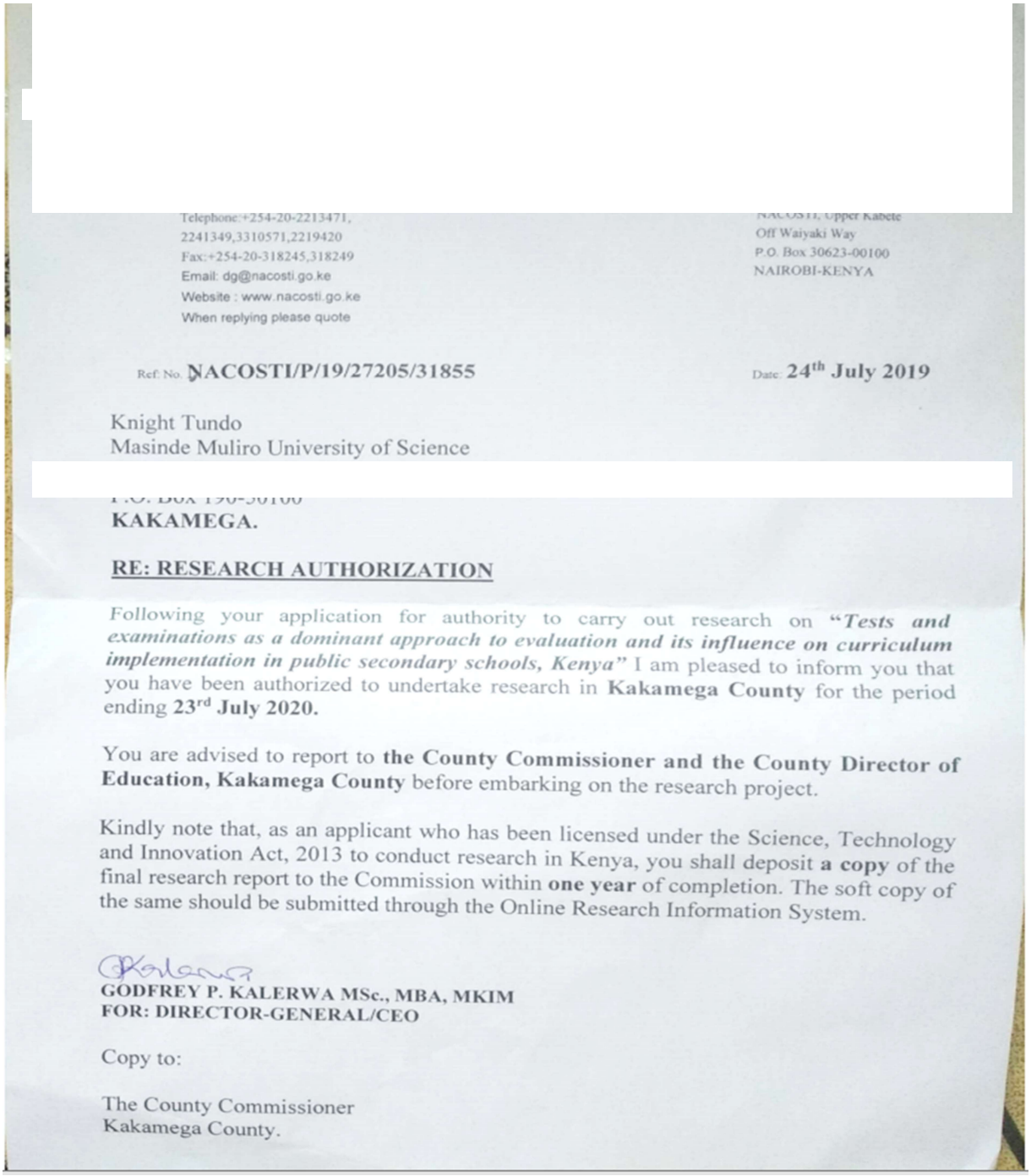
Section D. Information on Internal Examination Policy

1. Do you have a testing policy in your school?
2. What does the policy entail?
3. Do the teachers follow the school examination policy?
4. If the answer I question 4 is No, give reason why?
5. Does the school examination policy comply with MOE policy?
6. What type of examinations are done in your school e.g. continuous assessment tests, high stake examinations, oral exams, assignments, project work etc.

Section E. Information on Alternative Approaches to Evaluation

1. What is the student's perception on use of examinations as a main evaluation tool?
2. Are there any other ways of assessing students learning apart from use of examinations?
3. What are the possible alternative ways of evaluation?

APPENDIX G : Research Authorization Letter from NACOSTI



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2241349,3310571,2219420
Fax:+254-20-318245,318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website : www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No. **NACOSTI/P/19/27205/31855**

Date: **24th July 2019**

Knight Tundo
Masinde Muliro University of Science

P.O. Box 190-50100
KAKAMEGA.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on ***"Tests and examinations as a dominant approach to evaluation and its influence on curriculum implementation in public secondary schools, Kenya"*** I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kakamega County** for the period ending **23rd July 2020.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kakamega County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kakamega County.