

**AN ASSESSMENT OF CAREER GUIDANCE IN ASSISTING
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS DETERMINE ELECTIVE
SUBJECTS: A CASE OF GITHUNGURI DISTRICT, KIAMBU COUNTY**

NJOROGE EDITH NDUHI

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to study the role of career guidance in assisting secondary school students determine elective subjects, a case of Githunguri District of Kiambu County, Kenya. The study concentrated on the factors which students consider while choosing elective subjects at the end of their second year in secondary school, and whether the career guidance offered in their institutions had an impact while they were choosing the subjects. The narrowing of the subjects studied is a requirement by the Kenya national Examinations Council (KNEC), in which the students are required to take a maximum of nine subjects and a minimum of seven from a list of eleven that they take during their first two years in secondary school. The choosing of subjects by students was the main area of research because as things stand today, the career guidance offered in most institutions lacks the necessary guidelines in modeling students, so that they can make the right decisions based on abilities and interests. Many cases have been sighted where students have been forced to study some subjects in form three that they have no interest or ability to study, hence leading to increase in failure rate in KCSE results. This study expected to come up with clear criteria that can be used by teachers in guiding the students to choose the right subjects to study at the beginning of their third year of study. As was noted in 2007 (KCSE) result analysis of Kiambu County, most students do not prefer taking physics and Christian Religious Education despite the adequate facilities available for such subjects. This research was therefore going to determine how career guidance is conducted in the schools, determine the role of career guidance in assisting students make choice on elective subjects and also to investigate whether students understand the relationship between subject choices and career expectations. The study covered Githunguri District of Kiambu County which has more than a quarter of schools found in the County and therefore, provides a suitable population for the study. The instruments used in data collection included questionnaires for both teachers and students and an interview schedule for teachers. The questionnaires were presented to both teachers and students of the sampled schools. The administration of the interview schedule was through face-to-face interview by the researcher. The study used descriptive research design, surveying method was used as it is the most widely used design in the Educational research. The data from this study was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) that utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods. There was use of pie charts, percentages, graphs, frequency tables, means and modes to present the data. The study revealed that fifty percent of career masters had been appointed by Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in Githunguri district, seventy four percent of schools interviewed still forced students to take particular subjects, eighty-eight point three per cent of student respondents were aware of the existence of career guidance service in their schools and seventy-four point three of students respondents had elective subjects imposed on them due to school policy. From these findings, though many student respondents were aware of career services in the schools, however, the school policy in some schools did not allow the students to choose freely. Such a policy should be discouraged as it does not assist students in any way. Career masters should not combine career guidance with other roles like teaching.