

**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CHOICE BETWEEN PHYSICS AND OTHER
SCIENCE SUBJECTS AMONG GIRLS AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IN
MURANG'A NORTH DISTRICT**



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ABSTRACT

As students move from form two to form three, they are allowed to choose the combination of subjects they would wish to study for their final examination.

Unfortunately, physics is considered to be the least chosen subject among the science subjects by girls. For instance, records available indicate that in 2009, only 4.7 % of girls who sat for KCSE in Murang'a North choose to study physics as compared to 15.5% and 16.8 % of girls who choose to study either chemistry or biology respectively. What factors are therefore responsible for this low enrollment in physics by girls?

Objectives of the study were to determine learners' attitudes towards physics subject, home - based factors, school-based factors, socio-cultural factors and students' characteristics that influence girls' choice of physics and other sciences as well as measures to be taken to enhance enrollment of girls in physics. The study adopted survey research design with an exploratory approach. The target population was 809 form three students, 48 science teachers and 12 principals from the schools. The sample size was 160 forms three students, 16 teachers and 8 principals selected from 10 schools using stratified random sampling. Teachers' questionnaires, students' questionnaires and principals' oral interview guides developed by the researcher were used to gather information. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Qualitative data was subjected to content analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, tables and percentages. The results of findings are: that home-based factors greatly influence girls' decisions to choose or not to choose physics at form three, teachers' experience plays minimal role,, socio-cultural factors and students' characteristics all influence girls' choice or rejection of physics. Recommendations are that: Schools should have active and functional departments of guidance and counseling in order to give informed decisions to students about choice of subjects,. All stakeholders should be involved in popularizing physics as a subject for study by girls, More female teachers should be trained and posted to schools so as to act as role models and Physics should be made compulsory to all students.