

**ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION ON TEACHERS' COMMITMENT TO TEACHING:
A CASE OF PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NAKURU MUNICIPALITY, KENYA**

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**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of Master of Education
in Educational Planning, Management and Administration of
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

NOVEMBER, 2012

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the role of higher education on teachers' commitment to teaching in public primary schools in Nakuru Municipality, Nakuru County. The study evaluated the relationship between teachers' professional training; personal development and educational level and their commitment to teaching. The study adopted the descriptive survey method where through multi-stage sampling methods, the study population was selected. The target population for the study comprised all TSC teachers from all public primary schools in Nakuru Municipality, totaling to 1,109. The study utilized a sample size of 250 teachers from 25 public primary schools. Stratified simple random sampling was used to select the 25, schools to include 5 schools from each of the 5 Educational zones in the study area. Proportionate, simple random sampling procedures were used to determine the number of teachers drawn from each of the participating schools. The main data collection instrument for the study was the teacher's structured questionnaire items. Data collected were processed, organized and analyzed with the aid of the computer program, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The objectives of the study were analyzed quantitatively and the results presented in percentages and frequency distribution tables, while the research questions were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at $\alpha=0.05$. The study established that there was a significant, weak negative relationship between teachers' level of education and Commitment to Teaching ($r = -0.248$, $n=237$, $\rho < .01$). There was also a significant, strong and negative relationship between professional training and commitment to teaching ($r = -0.658$, $n=237$, $\rho < .01$) and a significant, strong, positive relationship between personal development and commitment to teaching ($r = 0.552$, $n=237$, $\rho < .01$). Higher education negatively influences the teachers' commitment to teaching. Further education raises the teachers' expectations which if not met lowers their commitment to classroom instruction. On the other hand, higher education increases teachers' knowledge base and opens them to other careers, which affects their motivation to continue with the teaching profession. This in turn makes them unsettled in teaching thus affecting their commitment to classroom instruction. Therefore, the study recommended that the government should provide more challenging tasks like giving leadership positions, make better terms and conditions in form of remuneration and other incentives and create more openings for job opportunities in education sector to absorb teachers who pursued higher learning. That would motivate them to be more committed to the teaching profession.