THE CAUSES OF POOR PERFOMANCE IN PHYSICS IN DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIERA EDUCATIONAL ZONE IN THARAKA NITHI COUNTY

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PGDE/2013/46273

A project submitted to the department of education in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of post graduate diploma in education of Mount Kenya University

MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER, 2014

ABSTRACT

The performance of physics in secondary schools has always been below average. This study sought to investigate the factors that have contributed to this and establish strategies that can be adopted to ensure there is an improvement especially in Kiera Zone of Tharaka Nithi County.

The study sought to provide answers to the following questions: what causes poor performance in KCSE physics examination, what are the effects of teacher qualification and instructional approaches on the national examination in physics, what is the effect of learners' attitude on their performance, and how the availability of resources affects student's performance. Descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study. The study also employed the motivation theory of Abraham Maslow (1943). The target population comprised of 70 form four secondary school candidates 6 physics teachers and four head teachers. The data was collected using two questionnaires one for students and one for the physics teachers. An interview guide was used to collect information from the principles. The factors that led to poor performance included under staffing, lack of motivation, inadequate teaching and learning materials and negative attitude towards physics among the students. Improving on these factors is essential so as to improve the performance of physics.

It is anticipated that the findings of this study will give both the curriculum developers and implementers an insight into emerging issues on performance and influence the ministry of education as well as the county governments on policy formulation. The students are also expected to benefit from the study findings. This because improved physics performance will give them opportunities to undertake science related courses.