

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE SELECTION OF OPTIONAL SUBJECTS
AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN
NYERI COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF EDUCATION DEGREE IN
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY OF MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

NOVEMBER 2014

ABSTRACT

The Kenyan vision 2030 is aimed at transforming Kenya into an industrialized middle income nation. Science and technology development is an important aspect to consider in the bid to achieve the vision 2030. It is therefore important to increase the number of students who choose or enrolling to the optional Science, Technology and Mathematics related subjects among secondary school students and also improve their performance. In addition to low enrollment, the average performance on optional science and technology subject is far below the average of most other subjects. This is compounded by issues of low interest and poor motivation to study the subject. Lack of parental involvement is the biggest problem facing public schools in Kenya. The main objective was to establish the level of parental involvement in selection of optional (Science, Technology and Mathematics related subjects among secondary school students in Nyeri County. The study adopted mixed research methodology. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in this study. The target population comprised of secondary schools students, parents and teachers from Nyeri County, Kenya. The population was divided according to the educational unit/zones (strata) then the researcher selected 2 secondary schools in the 7 educational unit/zones. Then simple random sample of 2 schools was selected from each stratum. From each school the researcher randomly selected 5 teachers and 5 students. The researcher used snow ball method to select 10 parents per educational unit/zones. Thus the sample size was 210 respondents. The study employed questionnaires to collect data. The researcher used quantitative data analysis techniques for this study. Quantitative data was analysed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study established that variables such as parental perception, parental attitudes, parental knowledge and awareness and parental aspiration influence the selection of optional Science, Technology and Mathematics related subjects by secondary school students. The study concludes that parental perception, parents' attitudes, parental aspiration, parental knowledge and awareness influenced the level of parental involvement in selection of optional Science; Technology and Mathematics related subjects by students. The study further concludes that there was low level of parental involvement in selection of optional Science; Technology and Mathematics related subjects by students which greatly varied with parental perception, attitudes, knowledge and awareness and aspiration. The study recommends that parental perception, attitudes, aspiration, knowledge and awareness be enhanced through training sessions. Furthermore school management develop with parental involvement plans that could enhance teachers' ability to work with parents as well as increase parental involvement in their children selection of option Science; Technology and Mathematics related subjects.