

**FACTORS INFLUENCING CHOICE OF PHYSICS IN PUBLIC SECODNARY
SCHOOLS IN MAARA DISTRICT, THARAKA NITHI COUNTY**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The importance of physics as a basis for technology is obvious although the number of students taking physics as their choice in secondary school is declining. This study sought to determine the factors influencing the choice of physics in public secondary schools in Maara District. The study was guided by the following objectives: To determine the student factors that influence enrolment in Physics, to establish the influence of Physics teachers in the students choice of physics and to investigate the effect of the school environment on students choice of Physics. The findings of the study may be useful to policy makers in the education sector to help put policies in place which may increase the number of students who choose Physics in Maara District. To guide the study, literature on students factors, teacher influences and school environment as factors that influence choice of Physics were reviewed. The study adopted descriptive survey design to collect data on factors that influence the choice of physics in public secondary schools in Maara District. From a target population of 12,548 Students and 52 physics teachers, using stratified sampling, 4 schools were selected in three strata that is mixed schools, Boys schools and Girls schools. The sampled schools represented 30% of the target public secondary schools. In each sampled school, one Physics teacher was involved in the study which represented 23% of the target population. Further, in each sampled school only 40 form three and 40 form four students were involved in the study which represented 7.6% of the target student population. A total of 892 respondents gave information for the study, out of 72 giving a response rate of 92%. Data was collected using questionnaires for the Physics teachers and form three and four students in the sampled schools. The findings were summarized and reported in percentages, means and frequencies using distribution tables and pie charts. The study found that students were influenced in their choice of Physics through their career goals, their poor attitude towards Physics, their perception of Physics as difficult, poor study habits, poor previous performance, unsuitable pace of content delivery and poor methods of teachings and the availability of laboratory equipment. The study concluded that students, teachers and school environment characteristics influenced the choice of Physics. The study recommended that students should be encouraged and given opportunities to develop positive attitude towards Physics. Further the study recommended that the teachers should cultivate a good relationship with students to improve their attitude. Schools should ensure that their environment is favorable for Physics by establishing laboratories which are well equipped with learning materials for practical lessons. For further research the study recommended that another study be

done to evaluate the influence of parents in the choice of Physics which was not a concern of this study.