# Factors influencing the choice of Geography as an examinable subject in (K.C.S.E) level in Meru central district in Kenya.

# By

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A research project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for award of a Master of Education Degree of the University of Nairobi

# **Declaration**

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award in any
other university.
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# **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to my lovely children Gakii and Mutwiri through you I draw my strength and passion for my work. You are a source of pillar in my life.

May GOD shower HIS abundant blessings upon them.

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### ABBREVATION AND ACRONYMS

CRE Christian Religious Education

KCSE Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

KICD Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

KIE Kenya Institute of Education

KNEC Kenya National Examination Council

#### **ABSTRACT**

Since geography aims at enabling the learner to have knowledge about the natural and human environment and sustainable development, adequate preparation of students in the subject is essential.

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors influencing the choice of Geography as an examinable subject in (K.C.S.E). The study was conducted in Abothuguchi West division of Meru Central district. The study adopted survey design the target population consisted of form three students, Geography teachers and the head teachers of forty eight secondary students in Abothuguchi West division of Meru Central district. A sample of eighteen secondary schools was selected from the population using proportionate random sampling in the zone. The study proportionately sampled 352 students, 18 geography teachers and 12 head teachers from the sampled schools. The total number of respondents for the study was 382 Detailed questionnaires' were used to gather data from students and teachers while interview schedules were used on head teachers'. The main findings of the study are as follows:

Resource availability does influence enrolment in Geography subject greatly. Better equipped schools were found to have enrolled more students in Geography than those poorly equipped. Availability of enough teaching personnel in schools is a key factor to enrolment in geography as well.

Based on these findings of the study, the study makes various recommendations to improve on the enrolment of students in geography. First there is need to improve the library facilities specifically, schools need to be equipped with adequate books and reference with currents content. The study further recommends change of methodology in teaching; the syllabus should be made practical. Field work and field

visit should be undertaken to enable the students sees the practicability of the theory. Since incentives give people the impetus to work hard, head teachers should encourage students of geography to work by putting targets and rewards for the best performance.

#### **CHAPTER ONE**

#### INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents the background, statement of the problem, purpose, objectives, research questions and the significance of the study. It also dealt with the study's assumptions, limitations delimitations, and conceptual framework as well the operational terms used in the study.

#### 1.0 Background to the study

Geography by its very nature is the subjects that can help students unravel some of the mysteries that surround them and the environment in which they live. Geography like most disciplines draws it's origin from Philosophy. It main focus is the earth and it occupies a distinctive place in the world of learning. It offers an integrated study of the relationship between human societies and the physical components of the earth.

In order to meet national goals of education the Republic of Kenya (1964) reported that Geography syllabus should proceed from a study of the immediate environment of the schools to country thereafter to Africa and the rest of the World. Owen and Ryan (2001) observe that a breadth of subject of matter in which the traditions division is between Human and physical matter characteristics the discipline.

Graces and last (1974) affirms that the study of Geography enables the mind to appreciate relationship between human activities and man's physical environment. This is further enhanced by the fact that the knowledge acquired may be applied to everyday life.

Ogendo (1982) stresses the importance of Geography in the school curriculum is to provide a Geographical preparation toward solving practical national problems in a view of national building.

According to the report of the Presidential working party on the second university in Kenya (Government of Kenya 1981) one of the main aims of 8-4-4 system of education is to produce graduates who are well informed on issues about the environment and suitable environment.

In the 8-4-4 education system, Geography is taught as a core subject in form one and two but becomes an elective subject in form three and four. Even if it was compulsory at the inception of the 8.4.4 system of education, the report of the presidential working party on education and manpower training for the next decade and beyond Kamunge Report (Government of Kenya 1988) noted with concern that secondary school curriculum's aims and objectives were not fully achieved because the secondary school curriculum was overloaded. This report recommended a number of changes to the curriculum. Some of the changes were put into force during the first review of the 8.4.4 curriculum in 1992.

The commissions of ensuring into the education system of Kenya known as the Koech Report (Government of Kenya, 1999) came up with quite a number of recommendations aimed at addressing the challenges that were faced by the 8.4.4 curriculum. These included the following: the curriculum for secondary form one and two be based on a wide range eleven subjects with abroad based general education. This curriculum comprises thirteen subjects with ten compulsory and three subjects selected from fifteen elective subjects. The curriculum for secondary form three and four was made more flexible to allow students start specialization through their subjects of choice. The curriculum at this level include a minimum of seven subject

selected from a four groups with three core subjects in group one at least two subjects from group two at least one subject from group three and any other subject from any of the three groups. Geography is in group three subjects (Humanities and social sciences) from which a student is expected to select at least any one subject from a group of nine subjects.

The researcher wanted to investigate the factors influencing the choice of Geography as an examinable subject in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

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#### 1.1 Statement of the problem

The importance of Geography to students and the country's social economic development is crucial to the realization of vision 2030. Therefore the choice of Geography as examinable subject stands out because of its role to the development of a nation. The decline in enrolment of students in Geography in secondary schools is of great concern among teachers, parents and education stakeholders. There is shortage of comprehensive and confirmation studies on the factors that influence the choice of Geography as an examination subject in secondary school. There is therefore need to asses' key factors that influence the student's enrolments in secondary school. Factors such as availability of teaching and learning resources teachers, availability of teaching personnel and students perceived career choice on enrolments of students in Geography subject were investigated in the study.

#### 1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors influencing the choice of Geography as an examinable subject in secondary school of Meru Central district.

#### 1.3 Objectives of the study

In achieving the purpose of the study, the following objectives were addressed.

- > To establish the relationship between availability of and use of learning teaching resources and the student choice of Geography as examinable subject.
- ➤ To determine the relationship between teachers level of education and choice of Geography subject by the students as an examinable subject.
- To establish whether there is a relationship between students' perceived future career opportunities and their choice of Geography as an examinable subject.

#### 1.4 Research questions

- ➤ What is the relationship between the availability and use of learning teaching resources and choice of Geography as examinable subject?
- ➤ Is there any relationship between teacher's level of education and choice of Geography as an examinable subject by the students?
- ➤ What is relationship between students' perceived future career opportunities and their choice of Geography as a examinable subject?

#### 1.5 Justification of the study

Geography curriculum was introduced to enable student's acquire sensitivity and consciousness towards the environment and provide relevant knowledge of concepts and principles required in any sort of work so as to participate more actively in developing the economy.

According to Owen and Ryan (2001) Geography aims at producing functionally literature graduate (manpower) who can participate in national planning and research especially in resources development and management, urban renewal and research on issues of policy. Renner (1997) affirmed that degeneration of land, fresh water and marine resources will become more pronounced with the onset of global climate change while environmentally induced conflicts are likely to intensity if there will be shortage or absence of skilled personnel to handle matters of natural resources management and conservation.

However, the attainment of these objectives is hampered by factors that affect student's enrolment in Geography, a core subject in matters that deal with the environment. This study sought to provide empirical data on how selected factors related to the teacher, the learner and the school environment affects enrolment of boys and girls in geography in secondary school in Meru central district. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) and Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) may benefit from the study as additional data may be available for designing Geography curriculum and evaluation decisions. The Ministry of Education may benefit with regard to training and distribution of Geography teachers as well as in the procurement of learning teaching resources based on the findings of this study.

The state of the Kenya Secondary School in terms of facilities and resources for teaching of geography will be assessed and possible solutions identified.

Besides this subject, teachers will be in a position to adjust their instructional methods with the aim of arousing interest in Geography among students.

The results of the study will also influence scholarly research, theory and practice leading to an educational intervention on the factors influencing selection of Geography by students in public secondary schools.

#### 1.6 Limitations of the study

Many of the respondents feared to respond truthfully to the questions posed in the questionnaire due to what there perceived as a sensitive area. The researcher assured them of strict confidentially of the same.

#### 1.7 Delimitations of the study

The study delimited itself to public secondary schools in Meru Central, District and excludes one sex public secondary school.

The study also targeted head teachers, Geography teachers because these are the ones charged with the responsibility of teaching and directly dealing with students. It also targeted form three who are directly involved in learning process. It is in form three when students are exposed to the exercise of choosing subjects that will determine their career.

#### 1.8 Assumptions of the study

This study was carried out in selected public secondary schools in Meru Central District and the following assumptions were made;

- ➤ All respondents co-operated and provided reliable response.
- ➤ All secondary schools that participated in study were using a uniform syllabus.
- ➤ All the respondents were having the information that the researcher sought.

#### 1.9 Operational definitions of terms

The following terms were used in the study.

**Administration:** Refers to the process of developing and maintaining organizational procedures for the achievement of the organizational goals.

**Enrolment:** Refers to the numbers of students who opt to take Geography in KCSE.

**Geography education:** Refers to the teaching of Geography with a pre-determined curriculum which is systematically organized mainly through classroom instruction over a specified period of time.

**Teacher's attitude towards teaching:** Refers to the readiness and tendency of a teacher to act or react in a certain manner towards his/her job.

**Teaching and learning resources:** Refers to textbooks magazines journals newspapers and audio visual resources for effective teaching in geography in schools.

#### **CHAPTER TWO**

#### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

A number of studies have been carried out to determined major factors that affect performance of students in various subjects. The literature reviewed revealed that very few studies have been carried out to determine factors affecting the choice of subject by students in any one of the elective subjects Geography not withstanding in the 8.4.4 secondary education in curriculum.

This chapter addressed among others areas; the status of Geography education in Kenya, the effect of teaching and learning resources to teaching and the choice of subject, the effect of teacher level of education and the choice of subject by the students and students altitudes towards Geography as a subject and they choice.

#### 2.1 Overview of Geography education in Kenya

With the introduction of 8.4.4 curriculum in Secondary schools in 1986 Geography was among the compulsory subjects offered. The republic of Kenya (1988) noted that the aims and goals of secondary school curriculum could not be adequately attained because the curriculum was criticized as being overloaded I terms of content and the number of subjects studied and examined. Therefore this led to review of curriculum in 1992 reducing the number of subjects that a candidate sits for in K.C.S.E from ten to eight. Among other subjects Geography was made an elective subject .currently Geography is an elective subject among the group 111 subjects alongside History and Government and Religious Education. According to the ministry of Education the candidature for Geography has been declining over the years.

#### 2.2 Teaching – learning resources and student choice of subject

Munguti (1984) noted that most schools had many difficulties in so far as teaching and learning resources are concerned. He observed that textbooks support (reference) books teaching aids and stationery are very important and lack of these adversely affect the teaching of Mathematics. Munguti further maintained that unavailability of funds causes the shortage of teaching resources not only in Mathematics but also in other subjects like Geography.

Bishop (1985) noted that materials resources are important for curriculum implementation and attainment of syllabus objectives, because they have their unique role that they play towards this effort. Thundhlana (1998) contends that a variety of materials and approaches in teaching are necessary to enable the education system to produce graduates, who are intellectually alert, able to explore and benefit from what their environment offer them. For effective teaching and learning to take place in geography, teaching and learning resources are necessary.

Generally lack of learning and teaching resources adversely affect the enrollment of students Twoli (1986) agreed that students in a number of countries in Africa had found in strong relationships because resources and achievement Kathuri (1990) observed that good as they may be teaching resources may not be significant in totality, but very critical in some situations or some subjects. The Republics of Kenya (KIE 1990) cited lack of materials shortage of teachers and finance as some of the problems facing the 8.4.4 curriculum implementation.

Indeed, the availability to learning teaching resources enhances the instructional process of the subject.

In view of these reviews it is evident there is the relationship between the availability and use of resources on the performance and enrolment of students in Geography.

with this relationship being established it is hoped that will help school administrators and teachers in ensuring the resources needed for effective learning and teaching Geography are available.

# 2.3 The effects of teacher's level of education on the choice of Geography as an examinable subject by students

Bishop (1985)states that human resources are important in curriculum implementation and attainment of the syllabus objectives.

Ayot (1988) asserts that for proper implementation of a curriculum innovation there must be availability of adequate trained man power in the area. But he noted that many schools suffer an acute shortage of teaching personnel. This is concurred by Mbiti (1981) who contends that certain subjects in the schools are not taught as they lack manpower. According to Boardman (1985) two very different teachers may cause the same syllabus to appear very differently in the eyes of the children who are learning.

Husen et al (1978) points out that teacher's altitude towards teaching would affect teaching styles in such a way as to bring out a difference in students outcome.

Mwangi (1986) found out those teachers negative attitude are being reflected on students poor performance. Twoli (1986) agreed that teacher's behavior and altitude are important variable which account for students achievements.

Mbiti (1991) contents that a large number of teachers went into teaching profession only because they could not find a job of their choice and that the profession often attracts candidates who are not keenly interested in the profession.

There is scare evidence on the relationship between teachers altitude towards the job and students enrolments in Geography. It is therefore of value to determine the relationship which will be aimed at designing ways of changing the altitude appropriately so that student's enrolment in Geography can be improved.

#### 2.4. Students attitudes towards Geography as a subject of choice

Nkosan (1998) points out that if teachers feel that the subjects is not important to the extent that they do not emphasize teaching it students may not be blamed for having the same attitude.

Agwata (1996) in his study in secondary schools noted that students dropped Economics because to them the subject was too difficult and abstract for their level. It is often true that student's attitude towards a subject which affects the overall outcome in national Examinations. The negative attitude towards Geography may originate from the fact that much of its content includes concepts and diagrams that are to abstract for learners to easily comprehend. The use of appropriate local examples by teachers to help foster an understanding and arouse interest in the subject is limited. There is need to determine the effect of student's attitude towards Geography enrolment.

#### 2.5. Conceptual framework

Action or reaction of people to a particular concept idea or phenomenon is based on how they perceive it or how it comes to them. Orodho (2004) observes that human behavior can be regarded as a result of arousal or internal tension that serves as an energy or spring board for action. Motivation being a force to perform quite often has a degree of intensity and direction. The Expectancy Theory postulates that the force that leads to a performance of an action (E-P Expectancy) and whether the outcome will lead to another outcome (E-P Expectancy) holds a high value to an individual.

Figure 1.1 of the vroom's Expectancy Theory shows a Geography teacher influencing students' enrolment in Geography.

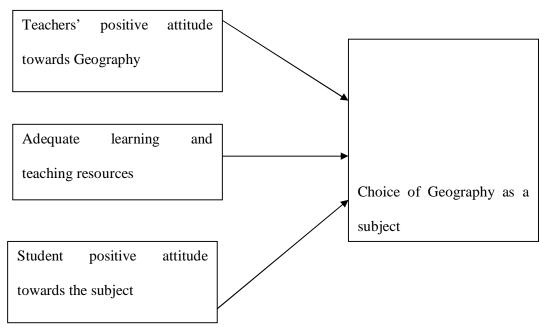


Figure 1: Motivating factors influencing students' enrolments in Geography.

#### 2.6 Summary of literature review

The reviewed literature tried to show the status of Geography in the secondary school curriculum and the possible gaps existing therein which may have a negative effects in the attainment of the subject objectives.

The review revealed that they was need to determine the effects of teachers' qualifications on students' enrolments in Geography as an elective subjects. The review also high lightened the need to determine how well staffed the Kenya secondary schools are especially in Geography as a subject and what its effect on enrolment.

Research has been carried out on learning and teaching of subjects in Kenya. However no research had been carried out on the students' choice of geography as an examinable subject in Meru central district. This study therefore endeavored to fill gaps left by such studies.

#### **CHAPTER THREE**

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter seeks to discuss the research design, location of study, target population, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, data collection and data analysis procedure.

#### 3.1 Research design

The design that was used in this study was be ex-post facto design. Expost facto research design refers to those studies which investigate possible cause and effects relationship by observing an existing condition of state of affairs and searching back in time for plausible causal factors.

This design was chosen because the researcher was studying the events and circumstances which have already had occurred and they exist in schools. The design also does not allow the manipulation of independent variables (choice of Geography) and dependent variables (enrolment disparities). No treatment was be administered to the students in order to change their choices moreover, the choice of optional subject had already occurred. An ex-post fact design deal with variables that have already accrued and hence they cannot be deliberating arranged and manipulated through the intervention of the researcher.

#### 3.2 Research location

The research was carried out in Abothuguchi West division of Meru Central District.

The division is among the two divisions that make up Meru central district. It is endowed with a conducive climate that allows tea, coffee, dairy and horticultural

farming. The choice of the division was due to the fact that even though it is located in one of the high economic potential area the academic standards have not being good and also the choice of Geography has a subject of choice in examination as being on decline over the years.

#### 3.3 Target population

Target population according to Brinker (1988) is a large population from which a sample is selected. This study targeted Geography and non-Geography students in form three, Geography teachers and head teachers.

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#### 3.4 Sample and sampling procedure

Sampling is the method of selecting subjects in a way that the individual selected represents the large group from which they are selected. According to data from Meru central district there are 48 secondary schools in Meru central district, Abothuguchi west division has 21 schools.

According to Mwangi (1998) sampling is an important consideration in any study in which there is concern about a sample that provides an adequate representation of the population. Multiple sampling methods were used. Cluster sampling was used to divide the division into 6 educational zones. Two schools were randomly selected from each zone. Purposive sampling was adopted to sample head teachers and the Form three students. Stratified sample is the one which the researcher first stratifies or clusters the population according to some predetermined criteria and the sample separated from each stratum. The purpose was to ensure that enough cases of each stratum fall into the sample to make analysis possible. Stratified sampling was used to pick equal number of male and females as well as boys and girls. Proportional

allocation was done for every school to get a sample number that was proportional to its staff and student size. In total 352 Students 18 Geography teachers and 12 Head teachers were sampled to participate in the study.

#### 3.5 Research instruments

In the population of the study there were 3 groups of respondents. The study primarily used two instruments to collect data. Borg and Gall (1983) postulated that these assist in meeting the objectives of the study more accurately and convincingly. The instruments were questionnaires and an interview schedules. The questionnaires were in two sets for Geography teachers and students. The interview schedule was for the head teachers. These instruments were developed in such away that they contained items that helped in achieving the objectives of the study.

#### 3.5.1 Validity of the instruments

The term validity indicates the degree to which an instrument measures the construct under investigation Burg and (gall 1989). There are 3 types of validity test; content, criterion – related and constructs validity. This study used content validity because it measures the degree to which the sample of test items represent the content that are designed to measure.

The underlined assumption of content validity is that every variable has a content population of an infinite number of items and that highly valid instruments constitute a representative sample of these items

#### 3.5.2 Reliability of the instruments

Reliability of the research instrument is its level of internal consistency or stability over times (Borg and Gall 1989). To establish the reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was done. Items that were left blank or answered in ways the researcher could not predict were modified and clear instructions given to respondents so as to avoid misrepresentation. Reliability of the instruments' was also determined by establishing whether there were ambiguities in any of the items and whether the instrument would elicit the type of data anticipated and also whether the data would be meaningfully analyzed in relation to the research question. Each category of the instruments was scored by giving a mark for relevant response and a zero (no mark) for irrelevant or blank responses. Each category of the instruments was subdivided into two equal halves taking the odd numbered items against the even numbered items. Orodho (2005) postulated that the scores of the halves be correlated using Persons formulas shown below

$$\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y/N)$$

$$R = \sqrt{(N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2/N)(\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2(N))}$$

Where r is the Pearsons coefficient of correlation index is the number of respondents ,X is even numbered items responded to as expected ,and Y is the odd numbered items responded to as expected. In order to obtain the coefficient of the total test, Spearmans Brown Prophecy formula (Gay,1976)below was used

The reliability coefficients of questionnaires for students, teachers and interview schedules for head teachers were 0.79, 0.82 and 0.76.these correlations coefficients were above 0.75 for each category of instruments which was considered high enough to judge their reliability as per Orodho (2005)

#### 3.6 Data collection procedure

Before starting to conduct the research the researcher sought permission from the National Council of Science and Technology to visit the sampled schools to administer the questionnaire to the respondents. The researcher also sought permission from the head teachers of the target schools to administer the questionnaire to the respondents

The questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher to the respondents to ensure full and prompt responses. Information collected was treated with confidentiality. Interviews were conducted at the agreed time and venue with researcher.

#### 3.7 Data analysis techniques

The gathered data from the research was validated, edited and coded. The questionnaires were scrutinized for any inadequate or out rightly irrelevant responses. In coding the information, the researcher prepared a code book as a reference to facilitate entry into data entry sheets. Statistical Package for Social Sciences(SPSS) was used to analyze the data. The questionnaires and the interview guides were analyzed using descriptive statistics

The data were organized and presented in tabular forms. Qualitative analyze entailed drawing inferences from the data. The content analysis was used to analyze the contents of the instruments that could not be quantifiable.

#### **CHAPTER FOUR**

#### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter includes the finding of the data analysis of the study together with their interpretation. The data was processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). All the themes discussing the same research questions were presented and analyzed together.

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#### 4.1 Questionnaire response rate

Completion rate is the proportion of the sample that participated as intended in all the research procedures. Out of 18 teachers sampled all of them 100% filled in and returned the questionnaire. Out of 352 student sampled100% filled in and returned the questionnaire. All the12 head teachers' interviewed participated fully in the research. The rate of return was influenced by the length of the questionnaire and the mood of the students.

#### 4.2 Demographic information of the respondents

This section discusses the demographic information of the respondents namely:-

The head teachers, Geography teachers and the form three students.

#### 4.2.1 Demographic information of the head teachers

The head teachers were asked to indicate their age brackets. Their responses are presented in Table 4.1 below

Table 4.1 Demographic information of the head teachers

Age in years	f	%
30 – 40	2	16
41 – 45	3	26
46 - 50	5	42
Above 51	2	16
Total	12	100

The finding indicate that most of the head teachers were aged between 46-50(42%),26% aged between 41-45,16% aged between 30-40 and 16% aged above 50 years.

This implied that most of the head teachers had enough experience in their place of work and in their career and therefore were able to give reliable responses to the questions. They were further requested to indicate their level of education. Their responses are presented in Table 4.2

**Table 4.2 Teachers level of education** 

Level of education	F	%	
Diploma in education	1	8	
Bachelor of education	8	67	
Master in education	3	25	

The finding showed that most of the head teacher had attained Bachelors of Education which was represented by 66% 8% Diploma while 25% had Masters Education. The findings show that all the head teachers were qualified as secondary school teachers.

The head teachers were further requested to indicate the duration that had served as head teachers. Their responses are represented in Table 4.3

Table 4.3 Duration of being a head teacher

Duration of being a head teacher	f	%
Below 3 years	3	25
4 – 6years	4	33
7 – 9 years	3	25
Above 10 years	2	17
Total	12	100

The findings show that most of the respondents had been head teachers for over 4 years. The finding indicates that the head teachers were better placed to give relevant and reliable responses on the research questions about teaching of Geography.

#### 4.2.2 Demographic information of the geography teachers

Teachers of geography were asked to indicate their age bracket. The findings are In Table 4.4

Table 4.4 Age distribution of teachers

Year	F	%
Between 20 – 30	3	17
Between 31 – 39	8	44
Between 41 – 50	4	22
Above 51 years	3	17
Total	18	100

Data on the age of teachers revealed that 44% of the teachers were between 31-39 years of age and 17% were over 51 years. The rest were between 20-30 years and 41-50 years respectively. This implies that most the teachers were senior teachers who had enough experience. These findings indicate that all of them were better placed to give relevant and reliable responses about teaching of Geography.

The teachers were also asked to indicate their highest level of education. Their responses are in Table 4.5

Table 4.5 Level of education of the teachers

Level of education	F	%
Diploma	2	11
Bachelors	15	83
Masters	1	5
Total	18	100

The findings on the highest level of education indicate that a majority of the teachers had attained Bachelors of Education which is the required level of education to teach in a secondary school.

The teachers were further asked to indicate whether they had been Geography examiners with the KNEC. The findings indicate that most of the teacher's interviewed 89% had never been examiners of geography while 11% of the teachers indicated that they had been examiners, further they were asked to state the duration that they had been examiners. Table 4.6 shows the findings

Table 4.6 Duration of being an examiner

Duration of being an examiner	F	%
1-3 years	1	50
Over 4 years	1	50
Total	2	100

Findings on the duration that teachers had been examiners with the Kenya National Examination Council indicated that only 2 teachers had an experience of being an examiner at a national level. This implies that most teachers had no adequate experience on marking national exam to arouse students' interest in Geography

#### 4.2.3 Demographic information of the students

The students were asked to indicate their gender. The finding are presented in Table 4.7

**Table 4.7 Gender of the students** 

Boys'	%	girls	%
260	74	92	26

The findings revealed that geography was more attractive to male than female with boys at 74% while girls were rated at 26%.

#### 4.3 Factors influencing selection of geography by students

The study sought to determine factors influencing the selection of Geography as an examinable subject (KCSE). The factors under study were availability and use of learning teaching resources, teachers teaching experience, availability of Geography teaching personnel, students perceived future career opportunities, students altitude

towards Geography and teachers attitude towards geography. This section discusses these factors and how they influence selection of Geography.

The students were asked to indicate whether geography was offered in their schools. The findings are presented in Table 4.8.

Table: 4.8 Students responses on whether Geography was offered in their schools

Responses	ponses F	
Yes	312	89
No	40	11
Total	352	40

Data on students responses on whether Geography was offered in their schools revealed that 89% of students indicated that Geography was offered in their schools against 11% who said it was not taught. The finding that geography is not taught in school is not entirely true as captured during interview with the head teachers who reported that although it's not taught in form three its taught in forms one and form two where its compulsory to all the students. The head teacher interviewed indicated that Geography was offered in their school which reinforces the findings of the majority of students that Geography is offered in their school.

Student not taking geography were asked to indicate the other subjects that they took.

The results are tabulated in Table 4.9

Table 4.9 Optional subjects taken by students not taking geography

Other optional subject

	F	%
CRE	154	62
History	94	38
Total	248	100

The findings show that majority of the students respondents who did not take Geography took CRE (62%) followed by History (38%).

The students were further asked to indicate reasons for not taking Geography. Their responses are presented in Table 4.10

Table 4.10 Reason for not taking Geography	F	%
Geography is a difficult subject	48	18
There is no teacher to teach Geography	2	8
The school does not offer Geography	16	6
The language used in Geography is difficult	57	22
There are no career opportunities in Geography	33	12
There are no adequate text books for Geography	23	9
There are other options like History and Religious Education	55	20
Its not interesting	14	5
Total	248	100

The findings revealed varied responses given by the respondents for example majority of the respondents 22% indicated that the language used in Geography was difficult.18% of the students indicated that Geography is difficult compared to other optional subjects like History and Christian Religious Education. Other reasons given were 8% indicated there was no teacher to teach Geography,20% said there were other options like History and C.R. E,12% Said there are no career opportunities in Geography.6% indicated the school does not offer Gegraphy,9% said there are no adequate text books for Geography while 5% indicated Geography is not interesting. Interview with the head teacher reviewed that the students do not take Geography in form three because most students do not show interest in the subject. In addition many students view geography as a science subject given the fact that it is a required combination for most of the science courses

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# 4.3.1 Relations between availability and use of learning resources and enrolment in Geography.

In order to establish the relationship between availability and use of learning teaching resources and students enrolment in Geography the student's respondents were asked to indicate whether they personally had text books in Geography. The responses are tabulated in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Availability of Geography text books

Response	f	%
Yes	235	68
No	117	33
Total	352	100

The Finding revealed that majority of the respondents 235 (68%) had textbooks while 117(33%) had no text books. This implies that to some extent availability of text books was not significant I influencing enrolment in Geography.

They were further asked to indicate how often they read the book. Data is presented in Table 4.12

Table 4.12 Frequency of students reading Geography text books

Response	F	%
Very often	98	28
Often	198	56
Hardly	56	16
Total	352	100

Data showed that majority of the students 198(56%) Often read text books 98 (28%) read the books very often While 56(16%) hardly read at all. This shows that majority of the students were book wormers and read Geography text books.

#### 4.3.2 Adequacy of Geography textbooks

The head teachers were asked to rate the availability of Geography reference books in their schools. Their responses showed varied ratings. The findings are presented in Table 4.13

Table 4.13 Adequacy of Geography reference books

Rating	F	%
Inadequate	6	33
Adequate	10	56
Below average	2	11
Total	18	100

Data revealed that 6(33%) had inadequate Geography books, 10(56%) had adequate books while 2(11%) were rated below average.

Asked to indicate other resources that were available in the school, the teachers revealed that apart from the text books they used other teaching materials such as globes, wall maps, pictures, objects and sample objects.

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# 4.4.0 Influence of availability of Geography teaching personnel and students enrolment.

To establish the relationship between availability of teaching personnel in the schools and enrolment the students were asked to rate the teaching of Geography in their schools. Table 4.14 presents the findings

**Table 4.14 Rating the teaching of Geography** 

Rating	F	%
Excellent	74	21
Very good	83	24
Good	118	33
Poor	43	12
Very poor	34	10
Total	352	100

The finding indicate that most of the respondents 118 (33%) rated teaching of Geography as good 74(21%) rated the teaching as excellent 43(12%) rated it as poor while 34(10%) rate it as very poor. This implied that on average up to 275(78%) of the students respondents considered the teaching of Geography as good.

# 4.4.1 Relationship between students' attitude towards Geography and their enrolment in the subject.

To determine the attitude of the students towards Geography, they were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with some listed statements about Geography as a subject using a likert scale of 1 to 5 where I represented strongly disagreed,2 agree,3 not sure,4 disagree and 5 represented strongly agree. The findings are presented in Table 4.15

Table 4.15 Attitude of student towards Geography as a subject

Statements	N Min Max mean SD
i) Geography lessons are very interesting	352 1.00 5.00 4.33 1.14
ii) There are so many career opportunity	352 1.00 5.00 4.15 1.02
Geography	
iii) The Geography teacher motivates the students	352 1.00 5.00 3.72 1.44
a lot in hi/her teaching	
iv) Geography concepts, terms and definition can	352 1.00 5.00 3.76 1.25
easily be understood	
v) There are relevant local examples in Geography	352 1.00 5.00 3.64 1.34

The finding revealed that respondents agreed that Geography as a subject was interesting to learn. This item had a mean score of 4.33. The respondents also agreed that there are many career opportunity in Geography had a mean score of 4.15

The other statements that stated Geography concepts, terms and definition can easily be understood had a mean score of 3.76 while the statement on the relevant local examples in Geography had a mean of 3.64 while statements on the relevant of local examples in Geography had a mean of 3.64. This shows that the respondents were not sure whether geography concepts terms and definitions can easily be understood whether there are relevant local examples in Geography and whether the diagrams and pictures illustrating the topic in Geography are easily understood. For all the responses the minimum rating was I while the maximum rating was 5. The standards

deviation indicates that the dispersion of responses was low with the highest deviation being 1.44.

# 4.4.2 Relationship between teachers attitude towards Geography and enrolment in the subject

The finding indicate that according to majority of the teachers 14(78%) performance of geography compared to other subjects was satisfactory,3(16%) poor and 1(6%) Very poor. This may be attributed to the inadequacy of Geography textbooks and reference materials in the school as reported by the head teachers during interviews.

The Table 4.16 below shows the findings

**Table 4.16 Rating performance of Geography** 

Rating	F	%
Satisfactory	14	78
Poor	3	16
Very poor	1	6
Total	18	100

The teachers were asked to respond to a 5 point likert type items which sought to establish the teachers attitude towards Geography. The data is presented in Table 4.17

Table 4.17 Teacher attitude in Geography and students enrolment in Geography

Statement	N	Min	Max	Mean	SA
i) The language is simple and interesting and to the level of the students	18	1.00	5.00	3.14	1.46
ii) Attention has been given to the existing KIE syllabus and content is up to	18	2.00	5.00	4.28	1.11
date					
iii) Topics of interest to students have been carefully developed and structured	18	1.00	5.00	2.86	1.57
iv) Geography contains exercises for evaluation that one adequate to meet	18	2.00	5.00	3.71	1.25
students abilities at this level					
v) Topics have been sequenced in order of difficult	18	1.00	5.00	3.57	1.51
vi) Illustrations (diagrams, pictures, charts and graphs) are adequate and	18	1.00	5.00	3.14	1.77
appropriate in teaching and learning of Geography at this level					
vii) Geography concepts are not difficult to students at this level	18	2.00	4.00	2.86	0.90
viii) Topics have been logically presented and facts and concepts have been	18	2.00	5.00	3.71	0.96
supported by relevant example					
ix) Content organized will attain the set objects of the course	18	2.00	5.00	3.71	0.95

The finding in the table 4.17 above showed that respondents agreed that attention has been given to the existing syllabus by authors and content is up to date. This statement had a mean score of 4.28. The respondents were not sure about the following statements; that topics have been logically presented and facts and concepts have been supported by relevant example. That content organized will attain the set objectives of the course that Geography contains exercise for evaluation that are adequate to meet students abilities at this level that topics have seen sequenced in order of level of difficult that content is consistent with the students needs, interest and previous background that illustration pictures charts and graph are adequate and appropriate in learning and teaching of Geography at this level and that the language is simple

interesting and to the level of students. The respondents disagree that topic of interest to students have been carefully developed and structured.

#### 4.4.3 Teachers attitude towards teaching of Geography

The respondents were further asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the statements about the teaching of Geography. The likert scale where 1 represented strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 not sure, 4 agree and 5 represented strongly agree was used. The means represents the average of all the means allocated by the entire respondent

.The findings indicate that the respondents agree that it is interesting to teach geography that it is interesting to be a teacher that teaching is a career that develops thinking ability and is quite stimulating and that teaching gives teachers a feeling of pride in having their job well done. These statements had a mean score is 4

The respondents are however not sure about whether teaching is the most rewarding experience. The respondents also don't agree that secondary son geography is quite divorced to reality. The respondents strongly disagree that teaching geography does not lead to a satisfying career. The results are presented in the Table 4.18.

Table 4.18 Teachers' responses on teaching Geography

i) Teaching is the most rewarding experience.	18	2.00	5.00	3.43	1.41
ii) Teaching is a career that develops thinking ability	18	2.00	5.00	4.00	1.15
and is quite stimulating.					
iii) One does not feel a sense of pride as a result of	18	1.00	5.00	2.00	1.41
being a teacher.					
iv) It is interesting to teach Geography.	18	2.00	5.00	4.00	1.41
v) Teaching Geography does not lead to a satisfying	18	1.00	2.00	1.43	0.53
career.					
vi) Secondary school Geography is quite divorced to	18	1.00	4.00	2.42	1.41
reality.					
vii) Teaching gives teachers a feeling of pride in	18	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.15
having their job well done.					

The finding concurs with what was found out during interviews. The head teachers reported that Geography indicates is a good subject and a base career for a majority of the course and there was need for teachers to improve on their methodology this would ensure all students are motivated to take up the subject

#### **CHAPTER FIVE**

#### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the study and answers' the research questions. It further makes recommendations on issues pertaining to enrolment in Geography. In addition, it recommends on areas that should be considered for further research.

#### **5.1 Summary of the study**

The purpose of the study was to establish the effects of such factors such teacher's characteristics, availability of teaching/learning resources, availability of teaching personnel and the attitude of head teachers' attitude towards Geography students enrolment in the discipline. The study was carried out in Abothoguchi East in Meru central district and targeted form three students, Geography teachers and head teachers in 48 public secondary schools in the division. The researcher sampled 18 public secondary by proportionate sampling from the two zones in the district .The sample size was three hundred fifty two (352) students eighteen (18) Geography teachers and twelve (12) head teachers. The researcher used questionnaires to get information from the students and teachers and an interview schedule to source information from the head teachers.

.The study revealed that enrolment in Geography in geography in the division was low. There was higher enrolment in schools with professionally trained and qualified teachers compared to those with untrained teachers. However notable was the issue of understaffing inmost schools and absence of Geography teachers. This was manifested by total absence of professionally trained teachers in some schools while others had only one or two against a high student population. The understaffing was

found to overload the few available teachers and in effect impacted negatively on enrolment.

Majority of the schools were found to be poorly equipped in teaching/learning resources. This means that most students do not have access to any other reading or reference materials outside the teacher's notes.

#### 5.2 Summary of major finding

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors that influence the selection of geography as an examinable subject in national exams (KCSE) in Meru central District.

Most Students did not take geography since the subject was not in line with their career choose and it was also considered as difficult which may be due to the various content of the syllabus that focused on the scientific aspects of the landscape while others did not take it since the subject was not interesting.

Teaching resources and students enrolments in geography revealed that most schools had no enough text books for geography compared with history and CRE it was also revealed that geography books and reference books were not adequate. It was also revealed that must schools did not have more than one teacher for geography. Teaching of geography was rated good in must schools hence students considered the teaching of geography as being positive.

Finding on the relationship between students attitude towards geography as a subject revealed it was interesting to learn and that it lead to a satisfying future. It was also revealed that the performance of geography compared to other subjects was poor. Others rated it as being performed poorly compared to other humanities hence most schools experience under performance of geography as a subject

#### **5.3 Conclusions**

Based on the objectives and findings of the study, it was concluded that mostly male students take Geography as a subject. For those who do not take geography, the reason for not taking is more of incompatibility with the career path and subject grouping rather than the fear that geography is difficult subject. Regarding Geography as a subject, it can be concluded it is interesting to learn Geography as a subject. It is interesting to learn geography because it leads to a more satisfying future.

It was also concluded that attention has been given to the existing syllabus by authors and that the topics have been logically presented and facts and concepts have been supported by teaching models.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Regarding the findings of the study, the study makes various recommendations to improve on the enrolment of geography. First there is need to improve the library facilities specifically, schools need to be equipped with adequate books and reference with currents content. The study further recommends change of methodology in teaching hence the syllabus should be made practical and relevant to students needs.

Field work and field visit should be undertaken to enable the students see the practicability of the theory.

Since incentives give people the impetus to work hard, head teachers should encourage students of Geography to work hard by putting targets and rewards for the best performance.

#### 5.6 Recommendations for further research

There is need for more in-depth studies to be undertaken so as to strengthen the findings of this study. Therefore the following areas are recommended for further research.

- ➤ There is need to carry out research to find out the specific areas/topics in the Geography studies which are difficult or challenging (or both) to students and teachers.
- There is need to investigate and explain the reasons for gender disparity in enrolment in Geography in secondary school.
- A similar study should be carried out in other districts to establish whether the findings apply to other areas to enable generalization of the results of the study

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### **Appendix 1 Questions to the students**

Dear respondents
Please feel free to answer the questions as honestly as possible. All responses will be
treated confidentially and will not be used for any other purpose other than research.
Please respond by putting ( ) or writing in the spaces provided.
Questionnaire for form 3 students
Section A
Instructions:
a. Kindly answer the question by ( appropriately in the spaces provided
b. Do not write your name anywhere in this paper
The information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality.
1. Name of the school
2. Sex (i) male ( ) (ii) female ( )
3. (a) Is Geography taught in your school? Yes ( ) no ( )
(b) Is Geography a compulsory subject in your school? Yes ( ) No ( )
(c) If NO, which optional subject do you take?
(i) Religious education ( ) (ii) History ( ) (iii) any other
(specify)
4. If you do not take Geography, which of the following reason best explain why you
do not take the subject? Tick as many may apply
1. Geography is a difficult subject ( )

2. There is no teacher to teach Geography (	)				
3. The school does not offer Geography (	)				
4. The language used in Geography is difficult ( )					
5. There are no career opportunities in Geo	graphy (	)			
6. There are no adequate text books for Geography ( )					
7. There are other options like History and	Religiou	s Educat	tion ( )		
8. Any other (specify)					
Section B					
5. Please indicate how you feel about g	eography	by tic	king (	( ) <b>u</b> ı	nder the
appropriate column to show your extent of	of agreer	nent usi	ng words	s"Strongl	y Agree
(SA), Agree (A), Not sure (NS), Disagree (	D), and S	Strongly	Disagree	(SD)"	
ALL ANSWERS ARE CORRECT					
	SA	A	NS	D	SD
i) Geography lessons are very interesting					
ii) There are so many career opportunity					
Geography					
iii) The Geography teacher motivates the					
students a lot in hi/her teaching					
iv) Geography concepts, terms and					
definition can easily be understood					
v) There are relevant local examples in					
Geography					

5. Do you have a text book for Geography? Yes ( ) No ( )

6. If yes, how do you read the textbook?
(i) Very often ( ) (ii) often ( ) (iii) hardly ( ) (iv) Not at all ( )
7. In relation to other Humanities how would you rate the teaching of Geography in
<ul><li>your school?</li><li>i) very good ( ) ii) good ( ) iii) satisfactory ( ) iv) poor ( ) v) very poor ( )</li></ul>
THANK YOU

**Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Teachers of Geography** 

#### Dear respondents

Please feel free to answer the questions as honestly as possible. All responses will be treated confidentially and will not be used for any other purpose other than research.

Please respond by putting ( ) or writing in the spaces provide.

# Section A 1. Category of school i) national ( ) county ( ) 2. Does your school offer Geography as a compulsory subject? Yes ( ) No ( ) 3. If No which of the reasons best why Geography is not offered i) The subject content is too wide to be covered ( ) ii) The K.C.S.E Geography exams is very difficult compared to other humanities ( ) iii) Students are not interested in Geography ( ) iv) The subject is too difficult ( ) V) Its a school policy ( ) vi) Lack of enough textbooks for Geography ( ) vii) Any other (please specify)..... 4. Does your school have a library? I) Yes ( ) ii) No ( ) 5. If yes, how could you rate the adequacy of? a) Geography textbooks in the library? i) very adequate ( ) ii) Average ( ) iii) Do not have ( ) b) Geography reference books? i) very adequate ( ) ii) Average ( ) iii) Do not have ( )

6) Which other teaching /learning resources are available in your school?

Please specify
7. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the content and
language in Geography? (Put in a tick ( ) in the most appropriate space to indicate
your judgment) "Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), not sure (NS), Disagree (D),
Strongly Disagree (SD)"

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
i) The language is simple and interesting and to the level of the					
students					
ii) Attention has been given to the existing KIE syllabus and content					
is up to date					
iii) Topics of interest to students have been carefully developed and					
structured					
iv) Geography contains exercises for evaluation that one adequate to					
meet students abilities at this level					
v) Topics have been sequenced in order of difficult					
vi) Illustrations(diagrams, pictures, charts and graphs)are adequate					
and appropriate in teaching and learning of Geography at this level					
vii) Geography concepts are not difficult to students at this level					
viii) Topics have been logically presented and facts and concepts					
have been supported by relevant example					
ix) Content organized will attain the set objects of the course					

Section B

1. How long have	you taught Geogr	aphy?		
i) below 3 years (	) ii) 4-6 years (	) iii)7-10years(	) iv)over 10 years(	)

2. Are you an examiner of Geography with KNEC?
Yes ( ) No ( )
3. In relation to History and Religious education, how would you rate enrolment of
Geography in K.C.S.E?
i) very good ( ) ii) good ( ) iii) satisfactory ( )iv) poor ( ) v)very poor ( )
4) Which of the following best indicates your highest level of education and
professional training?
i) Untrained 'O' level ( ) ii) Diploma in Education ( ) iii) graduate teacher ( )
iv) Masters level ( ) v) others (please specify)
5) What is your age?
i) below 20 years ( ) ii) between 20-30 years ( ) iii) between 31-40 years( )
iv) Over 40 years ( )

6. Please indicate how you feel about teaching Geography by ticking ( ) under an appropriate column to show your extent of agreement.

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
i) Teaching is the most rewarding experience.					
ii) Teaching is a career that develops thinking ability and is					
quite stimulating.					
iii) One does not feel a sense of pride as a result of being a					
teacher.					
iv) It is interesting to teach Geography.					
v) Teaching Geography does not lead to a satisfying career.					
vi) Secondary school Geography is quite divorced to					
reality.					
vii) Teaching gives teachers a feeling of pride in having					
their job well done.					

### THANK YOU.

## Appendix 3: Interview schedule for Head teacher

### Dear respondents

Please feel free to answer the questions as honestly as possible. All responses will be
treated confidentially and will not be used for any other purpose other than research
Please respond by putting ( ) or writing in the spaces provided
1. Name of the school
2. What is the category of the school? National ( ) county ( )
3. How many streams are there in your school?
4. Do you offer Geography in FIII Yes ( ) No ( )
5. If yes briefly comment on the trends of enrolment of the subject in your school.
6. How many teachers of Geography are there in your school?
7. How could you rate the enrolment of students in Geography in relation to
humanities?
i) Excellent ( ) ii good ( ) iii Average ( ) iv Poor ( ) v Very poor ( )

### THANK YOU