

Factors Related to Secondary School Students' Choice of Agriculture Subject in Uriri Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract:

In Kenya, subjects that students choose have a lot of influence on their careers. The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Kenya requires that secondary school students register for a minimum of seven and a maximum of nine subjects when they join form three. These subjects are grouped into various categories including; Sciences, Languages, Humanities, Technicals and Foreign languages. Agriculture is grouped among the many Technical subjects, which students only select one, despite its prospects in several careers like veterinary medicine, zoology, forestry and teaching among others. This situation of subject choice is the same in Uriri Sub-County where several technical subjects are offered in secondary schools. In the recent past, the number of students taking Agriculture has recorded an increase. Due to the key importance of Agriculture in the economy, there is need to maintain this upward trend. This study sought to find out the influence of involvement in peer group activities and students' interest on the choice to study Agriculture among secondary school students in Uriri Sub-County. The study employed ex-post facto research design. The target population in the study was 262 form three students who had opted for Agriculture. 152 Agriculture students were drawn by proportionate stratified random sampling. A questionnaire with closed ended items was used to collect data. Data collection was preceded by a pilot test whose analysis resulted in a reliability coefficient of 0.78 indicating that the instrument was reliable. Data was analysed using SPSS package version 22 and presented using frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics (chi-square) was used test hypotheses at $\alpha=0.05$. Involvement in peer group activities was found to be high but did not statistically influence the choice of Agriculture while students' interest in Agriculture was high and statistically influenced the decision to study Agriculture.

Keywords: Agriculture subject, Subject choice, Peer group activities, Students' interest.

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