

Influence of Attitudinal Factors and Student Gender on Performance of Physics in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Selected Public Secondary Schools, Laikipia County, Kenya

Ngari Elizabeth W.

Abstract

The study sought to analyze influence of attitudinal factors and student gender on performance of physics, in Kenya certificate of secondary education in selected public secondary schools, Laikipia County, Kenya. The study objectives were to analyze the influence of student's attitude towards Physics and performance of Physics in KCSE in Laikipia County, to find out the influence of student gender on the performance of Physics in KCSE in Laikipia County and to establish the influence of teacher's attitude towards Physics and performance of Physics in KCSE in Laikipia County. The study adopted ex post facto research design. The study targeted the public secondary school in Laikipia County. There are 67 secondary schools in Laikipia County. The target population purposely targeted down the mixed public secondary schools that have both girls and boys. Out of the 67 public secondary schools, there are only 57 mixed public secondary schools. The study also targeted the immediate KCSE graduates (2013, 2014 and 2015) who had done Physics as a selected subject in their KCSE. Each year, there were approximately 513 students who had graduated having done Physics in KCSE. The sample size was 57 schools (each school was represented and questionnaire answered by the form four Physics teacher) and 62 former candidates who did their Physics paper in KCSE (whose data was collected using interview schedule). The data was analyzed with the aid of SPSS and presented using tables and figures. The response rate was therefore 42 out of 57 public mixed secondary schools in Laikipia County which is 73% and 56 out of 62 former students' which 90% of the student sampled. The analysis found that 38% of the student's had positive attitude towards Physics while 62% had a negative attitude towards Physics. However, the study found that the attitude does not stay the same; it changes in the course of time. The study found that 70% of the respondents rejected that there could be influence of gender on the performance of physics while 29% agree there is an influence of gender on the Physics performance. The study found that attitude builds by student's influence their learning abilities in a particular subject. Further the position and negative attitudes of student's themselves have been suggested as a contributory factor to misconceptions. The analysis found that 90% of the respondent believed that influence of teacher's attitude on the performance of Physics subject exist. The analysis further found from 10% of the respondents that teacher's attitude affects performance of Physics subject. A positive attitude from the teacher affects the student's motivation, attitude towards school and school work, the student's self confidence and as a result personality environment. The study concluded that there is great need to enhance student motivation and improve their attitudes. The analyses of our study also conclude that there is a significant influence of attitudes toward Physics between male and female students. The results of this study concluded that teacher's characteristics involving general behaviors, knowledge, planning, and organization, teaching methods, personal relations and enthusiasm are important in the formation of student's' attitudes toward Physics. The study recommends that teachers should take first step towards improving student attitude towards

Physics, that there should be school forums to encourage student's in understanding important of Physics, that both gender should be encouraged and given equal opportunities to doing Physics and that teachers should design their training methodology in a way to encourage high attitude toward Physics.

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