

# **Parental Choice and Learner Achievement in Primary Education in Rachuonyo Sub County, Kenya: Focusing on Quality of Education**

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## **Abstract**

Kenyan government launched Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 to make schooling affordable to all parents; but less attention has been paid to the quality assurance and equity of the education system. Studies have indicated that the FPE policy sacrificed the quality of education and this led to parents avoiding FPE offered in primary schools and take their children to private schools which are considered costly. This study adopted descriptive survey design to as the research design. Rational comprehensive model theory was used which aims at discussing personal factors influencing parental choice for primary education schools in Rachuonyo Sub-County, Homabay County, Kenya. The target population for this study was 5269 parents and 198 head teachers out of which 240 respondents were sampled through stratified random sampling. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used as the main data collection tools. Validity and reliability was ascertained by the internal consistency and piloting. The quantitative data was analyzed using data analysis matrix while the qualitative data was analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings showed that the parents had great interest on healthy environments; school safety, social atmosphere and convenience are greatly considered by parents when making decision on schools for children. The findings of the study are that learning environment, school safety, social atmosphere and convenience all influence parental choice for primary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. Learning environment scores a mean of 3.1397; school safety, 3.4525; social atmosphere, 3.0782; and convenience 3.1285.

**Keywords:** parental choice; learning environment; school safety; school social atmosphere; convenience; primary education; learners' achievements

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