

**INFLUENCE OF SELECTED SOCIAL FACTORS ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDE  
TOWARDS CHEMISTRY IN NYAMAIYA DIVISION, NYAMIRA COUNTY, KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

Chemistry has been identified as one of the important subjects needed for the sustenance and transformation of the national economy, and hence should be accorded adequate attention. Advancement in science and technology has created a greater demand for more people to study chemistry and this is particularly important in the realisation of Kenya's vision to become industrialised. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to investigate the effects of selected social factors influencing the students' attitude towards Chemistry at the secondary school level of education, and propose recommendations to remedy the situation. Guided by specific research objectives, the study targeted the effects of the teacher's characteristics, parental influence, student's career interest and peer influence on the students' attitude towards Chemistry in Nyamaiya Division, Nyamira County, Kenya. The study adopted an *ex-post facto* research design and the target population was all secondary school students in Nyamaiya Division. The sample size was determined from Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size from a given population, where the target population of 2890 students gave a sample size of 341 students. Simple random sampling was used to select 341 respondents from the secondary school students in Nyamaiya Division. Student questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics involved the use of percentages and means. The main inferential technique used was the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The hypotheses were tested at  $\alpha = 0.05$  significance level. Quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. The study revealed that the students' attitude towards Chemistry was significantly influenced by the teacher's characteristics and parental influence. The Ministry of Education should therefore develop in-service programmes and refresher courses for teachers that emphasize the need to adopt creative and motivating methods of teaching and the importance of being available to the students. There is also need for the Ministry of Education to create forums for parental education on the importance of providing an enabling home environment to the students so as to boost students' attitudes towards chemistry.