

Factors Influencing Students' Choice of Christian Religious Education in Public Secondary Schools in Matungulu Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya

*Stephen M. Mueke MED candidate – South Eastern Kenya University

Dr. Selpher K. Cheloti- South Eastern Kenya University - Email scheloti@seku.ac.ke &

Dr. Redempta Maithya- South Eastern Kenya University – email rmaithya@seku.ac.ke

*Email of corresponding Author: stevemueke@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Curriculum flexibility is one of the important ingredients of curriculum development. This aspect allows students to make choices as to the subjects that they have to undertake after being exposed to the content of most subjects offered in the curriculum at lower levels. Christian Religious Education (CRE) is one of those optional subjects that students choose among other subjects in the humanities cluster as the students advance to senior secondary level. This journal is an extract of a study conducted between 2014 to 2019 on factors influencing students' choice of Christian Religious Education as a subject in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya. The study was guided by the following objectives: Establish the influence of students' career aspirations on their choice of CRE, and to determine the influence of the students' previous performance in National Examinations on the choice of CRE. The study used descriptive research design and collected data from a sample of 432 respondents who were chosen from a total of 1202 respondents. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 22. The findings of the study revealed that students career aspirations $t(277) = 8.2$; $p \leq .05$ $\beta = .625$), and previous performance in CRE $t(279) = 4.697$; $p \leq .05$; $\beta = .212$) had a statistically significant influence on the choice of CRE as a subject. The study recommended that; teachers and parents should inspire children at an early age on the choice of career so that they are aware of what subjects to choose as they grow in the education system leading them to the desired careers. Similarly, Principals should always display national examination results on notice boards for the other students to see and get motivated to choose best performed subjects. The study findings are important to ministry of education to inform subject policy guidelines, teachers, parents and students as it offers insights on the factors that influence subject choice at secondary school level.

Key words; *career aspirations; National Examinations; previous performance; Christian Religious Education; public secondary schools.*

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Education is essential in the development of the members of a society. An education curriculum therefore contains content to impart knowledge and skills to the learners for attaining education goals of a given country. In Kenya's secondary education system, students at lower secondary are exposed to curriculum content that spans across 12 subject areas. After the lower secondary stage, the students are then supposed to choose subjects based on given clusters which have a bearing on the future careers of individuals. Kombo (2006) asserts that students acquire the desired beliefs, values and practices of the society that enable them to live peacefully and in harmony with other members of the society through learning Religious Education. Munyari (2013) observed that in many secondary schools across the world it is mandatory for students to choose subjects from a given list of optional subjects out of which Religious Education is among. He further argues that for a student to choose a certain optional subject they must have a particular reason for the choice, which could be personal, parental or institutional. Gabtree (2007) observed that Religious Education (RE) is a statutory subject in the United Kingdom (UK) that all schools must teach for moral development of the entire society. He further argues that Religious Education (RE) has been retained in the British curriculum because it is perceived to make an important contribution towards the wellbeing of the society socially, morally, spiritually and culturally. This implies that for individuals to grow morally, spiritually and culturally, Religious knowledge should be imparted as part of the school curriculum.

In a study on Understanding and Attitudes towards Moral and Civic Education among Primary School teachers in Hong Kong Yee (2009) observed that Moral and Civic Education (MCE) has been made a compulsory subject in the country because it is perceived to inculcate good morals to the learners and help them to eradicate social evils in the society. This could mean that inclusion of Religious and moral Education in the school curriculum would help to impart moral values to the learners. This also implies that the learning of Religious Education (RE) and Christian Religious Education (CRE) is important in inculcating moral values in individuals in the society.

Golnal (2004) in a study in Iran on Religious Education and Identity in Iranian schools found that Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in the transmission of moral values to the youth. This study showed that most students in Iran take RE because they perceive it as being

easy to pass. However, the study further showed that such students are found to be disciplined and do not engage in immoral sexual relations. Another study carried out by the United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF, 2004) found that young people who learn and follow the teachings of their religion are less likely to engage in immoral sexual relations than those who do not.

Bansikiza (2001) in a study on Restoration of Moral Formation in Africa found that the negligence of moral development has greatly affected the African continent in terms of morality. Bansikiza further stated that, for morally formed members of any given society to be produced, value development should focus on core values such as honesty, justice, responsibility, chastity, hard work and respect for self and others. On the same note Lawal (2010) in a study on factors affecting academic achievement of students in Ethiopia found that Religious Education (RE) has been perceived as one of the means to restore moral and social order in the society. This means that it is the learning of CRE that will help in inculcating good morals on students and the entire society.

Discipline should be instilled to members of a society through learning Religious Education (RE) in order for the society to be morally upright. Mwakachu (2010) observed that discipline in Nigeria began to vanish in schools, most families and the society as a whole when religious bodies were no longer managing schools. Mwakachu further pointed out that Religious Education (RE) had helped to instill discipline in the society in Nigeria. On the same note, Dinama (2012) in his article on Introducing Moral Education in Botswana Senior Secondary Schools asserts that moral education in the Botswana education system was first introduced as a subject in 1999 in junior secondary schools and in 2010 in senior secondary schools since it was perceived as the source of morality. This gives an implication that inculcation of good moral values in individuals is of great importance in the society and can be achieved by teaching Religious Education (RE) in public schools. Based on the existing literature it is evident that the teaching of RE is important in managing discipline and improving students' morality. It is therefore expected that after interacting with CRE content, students will be disciplined and realize good morals in them in order to stamp out social evils.

Kasomo (2011) advocates that the teaching and learning of Christian Religious Education (CRE) in Kenya has come a long way. Kasomo further observes that CRE was used by missionaries as a means to win converts and so it became a dominant subject during independent Kenyan school syllabus. Chemutai (2015) in her article on the Relationship between Students' Attitude and Performance in C.R.E in Secondary School Examinations observed that the local people were taught how to read and write using the Bible as the main reference book in the mission schools. She further argued that schools were used as the main centers for winning converts as the teaching of the Bible was emphasized and that Religious Education (RE) was more important than anything else in these schools. This implies that learning of CRE acts as a person's moral guide.

The teaching and learning of Religious Education (RE) including Christian Religious Education (CRE) within the school curriculum are founded upon the need for value education (Mwaka, 2011). This is a form of education that stresses on the acquisition of living values by learners with the functions of Religious Education being moral guidance. Mwaka (2011) further showed that the learning of CRE provides a major source of public order which indicates what is right or wrong in human behaviour. According Chesaro, (2003), in his study on the role of CRE in moral development of secondary school students in Nakuru District there is no society that can exist without morals and discipline for its welfare and that of the individual. He further argues that it is morals which build relationships between people and the world around them.

According to the Koech Commission's report of 1999 the teaching of CRE contributes to the inculcation of religious, social and ethical values among the youth. The report further states that the teaching of CRE is aimed at equipping the youth with the necessary tools for dealing with anti – social activities. One of the objectives in the revised curriculum of 2008 in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2008) is that learners who interact with the CRE content are expected to use the acquired social, spiritual and moral insights to think critically and make appropriate moral decisions in a rapidly changing society. To achieve this objective the syllabus has provided for the teaching and learning of critical thinking, social justice and morality for instilling the right attitude necessary for the training in social obligations and responsibilities among the youth. The 2008 revised curriculum further shows that the learners are expected to contribute positively to the transformation of self and the society as a whole after interacting with the CRE content in class.

Violence among students is a common occurrence in Kenyan secondary schools. This is evidenced by the fact that drug and substance abuse, sodomy, lesbianism, homosexuality and rape have all found their way into the learning institutions. Burning of dormitories leading to maiming and death of some students is also a common phenomenon in Kenyan secondary schools (Jebungei, 2013). These vices are taking place in schools where CRE is being taught showing that the learning of CRE may not have been given the attention it deserves. This means that secondary schools in Kenya are gradually losing the moral standards and principles despite the fact that CRE is perceived as an important subject in shaping the character of the learners hence the need for the current study. Despite this, students who have chosen CRE do not seem to put to practice the moral skills acquired in the subject hence calling for the critical need for this study. The findings further show that students' indiscipline is still rampant in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub - County. This study was therefore set out to establish factors influencing students' choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County.

Staff, Harris, Sabates, and Briddell (2010) in a study on uncertainty in early occupational aspirations found that students' aspirations influence their future career. This implies that high aspirations motivate students to study hard and try to achieve their goals. Ashby and Schoon (2010) on the same note argue that it is an occupation that influences students to choose a particular subject. This could mean that some students choose CRE to gain entry into certain occupations. According to Whiteley (2010) the policies that schools adapt to guide subject choice dictates the subject that a student is likely to pursue. While agreeing with whiteley (2010) Munyari (2013) argues that some school policies have made some optional subjects compulsory by blocking subjects in the block timetable to be taught at the same time. This is the case in Matungulu Sub –County where CRE though an optional humanity subject has been made compulsory in some public secondary schools. This has been affected by some school policies where History and Geography have been blocked in the block time table to be taught at the same time. Rose and Baird (2013) argue that university and career requirements are important considerations for many students. They further assert that the more a student enjoys a certain subject the more it may be an important consideration when making their subject choice. Similarly Kochung (2011) asserts that students' career choices are influenced by individual variants such as gender, personal interests, learning experiences, environmental factors and

personal contacts. Kochung further states that a high number of students choose their subjects based on job availability. This implies that it is necessary to establish whether students' career aspirations have influenced the choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County rather than the benefits that come with the study of the subject.

Performance trends in subjects may also influence the students to choose the subject. Mwangi and Nyagah (2013) in their study on Determinants of Academic Performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Public Secondary Schools in Kiambu County found that the performance of a particular student in the National Examinations determined their future. Due to the concern of the countries around the globe about their citizen's future, education has become a major Centre of investment. According to Chemutai (2015) there is a general believe that C.R.E. is an easy subject which can be passed with minimal effort. She further observed that low performing students consider C.R.E to be easy but do not perform well in the subject as it has been purported. Kimosop (2008) asserted that CRE is a booster subject pursued by average students academically so as to boost their grades. This could mean that the attitude of both teachers and learners compromises the benefits that students could draw from the subject. This study sought to find out whether students in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub –County may have chosen CRE based on the past performance to use it as a booster subject for their grades.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

- i. To establish the influence of students' career aspirations on their choice of CRE.
- ii. To determine the influence of the students' previous performance in National Examinations on the choice of CRE.

RESEARCH NULL HYPOTHESES

- i. **H₀₁** There is no statistically significant relationship between career aspirations and students' choice of CRE.
- ii. **H₀₂** There is no statistically significant relationship between students' previous performance in National Examinations and students' choice of CRE.

STATEMENT OF THE STUDY PROBLEM

In Kenya CRE is a compulsory subject in Form One and Two and most students take it up to Form Four (Republic of Kenya, 2008). The role of CRE is to mould behavior and make a person more stable psychologically so as to be able to fit in the society. The learning of CRE is intended to make a person relate well with other people, tolerate others and cope with emerging issues of life.; as well as develop good morals and cater for spiritual growth of learners for positive change. Despite this, records at Matungulu Sub – County Education Office show that cases of secondary students’ unrests as well as engaging in other indiscipline cases such drugs and substance abuse and bullying of fellow students are on the increase. (Matungulu Education office, 2018). This scenario pauses the question as to whether the learning of CRE has helped the learners by inculcating good morals as it should be the case.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study could be used by the Ministry of Education, educational policy makers and planners and curriculum implementers towards making necessary adjustments and decisions to improve on the strategies to enhance adequate participation of students in CRE as they do in other subjects. The findings of the study could also be used by teachers to encourage students to consider CRE as an important subject that could help them to mould their behaviour. Principals being the heads of the learning institutions in secondary schools may use the findings of this study to sensitize students to use the acquired social, spiritual and moral insights to make appropriate moral decisions and to develop a sense of self-respect and respect for others. The findings of the study may be used by the Career masters and teachers to assist the students to pursue CRE as a subject of specialization among others. The findings of this study could also inspire other scholars to conduct more research in this field to fill gaps exposed by the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students’ Career Aspirations and Choice of Christian Religious Education

According to Rojeweski (2005) career aspirations are an individual’s ambitions to a particular occupation. This implies that career prospects will determine which subjects a particular student will choose. Students’ aspirations can therefore influence their future career whereby high aspirations motivate students to study hard and try to achieve their goals (Staff et al (2010). While agreeing with Staff et al (2010) Ashby and Schoon (2010) argued that it is an occupation

that influences students to choose a particular subject. Hewitt (2010) in his article on factors influencing career choice asserted that choosing a career can either be intrinsic or extrinsic or both. This means that most people are influenced by careers that their educational choices have opened for them. Some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make to them while others choose the careers that give high income. According to Greenan (2007) the students who choose vocationally oriented subjects in USA tend to do it, having been fully exposed to the implications of their choices and having acquired a substantially better understanding of general educational skills in their future occupations.

A choice in Agriculture as a learning subject at a high school level in the USA is motivated by three main categories of learning experiences: Classroom instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE), and learning by doing through youth agricultural activities such as the Young Farmers Association (YFA) and the Future Farmers of America Organization (FFA) as argued by (Phipps, Osborne, Dryler, Ball, Lloyd, Edward, 2008 and Konyango, 2010). This has led to increased number of students pursuing the course.

In Malaysia, vocational agricultural education has produced educated, skilled and motivated workforce in the agricultural industry. This means that technical and vocational education is considered as an important measure for development of workforce (Syeda, 2011). Palmer (2005) also notes the reduction in the numbers and calibre of students seeking admissions into engineering education in Australia. This means that students aspiring to be engineers in Australia are not as many as they are in the other fields. The mentioned scholars do not assess how students' career aspirations influence the choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County which this study sought to establish.

In their study of socio-demographic factors that anchor career choice among psychology students in South Africa, Mudhovozi and Chireshe (2012) found that the participants are mainly influenced by parents, teachers and friends to choose psychology as a career. This implies that parents play a significant role in the occupational aspirations and career goal development of their children. It also means that without parental approval or support, students and young adults are often reluctant to pursue or even explore diverse career possibilities. Stebleton (2007) in a

study on career choice in Ethiopia found that students believe that there are external factors which influence their career choices such as gender, personal interests and availability of jobs.

Kochung (2011) in a study on Factors Influencing Students Career Choices among Secondary School students in Kisumu Municipality, found that students' career choices are influenced by individual variants such as gender, personal interests, learning experiences, environmental factors and personal contacts. The study further found that a high number of students choose their subjects based on job availability. This study was done in Kisumu municipality in Kenya and other parts of the world but the current study sought to establish the influence of students' career aspirations and subject choice in Matungulu Sub – County, Machakos County.

Students' Previous Performance in National Examinations and Choice of CRE Subject

Mwangi and Nyagah (2013) observed that a particular student's performance in the National Examinations determined their future. Due to the concern of the countries around the globe about their citizen's future, education has become a major Centre of investment. Achola (2001) however, observed that the learners may work hard to pass well in CRE simply to boost their overall performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) but fail to study it reflectively in order to internalize it so that it can influence their moral behavior.

Chemutai (2015) observed that there is a general believe that C.R.E. is an easy subject which can be passed with minimal effort. This belief has made the enrolment of students choosing CRE in Form Three in public secondary schools in Matungulu sub – County to increase but realizing low mean scores. She further observed that if a learner is performing well in a given subject, they require a positive reinforcement so that their performance and attitude towards the subject is maintained. She also observed that low performing students consider C.R.E to be easy but do not perform well in the subject as shown in the following Table 1.

Table 1. Sub- County KCSE CRE performance

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Enrollment	1405	1551	1783	1887	2160
Mean Score	5.957	4.419	5.692	3.864	3.603

Table 1 above indicates clearly that there has been unstable and low performance in CRE for the last five years. It is observed that between 2014 and 2015, 2017 and 2018 CRE performance did not reflect improvement but a drop instead. This study wished to determine the influence of the students' previous performance in National Examinations on the choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub - County. Thus, efforts were made to determine what was responsible for the choice of CRE since in Matungulu Sub-county KCSE CRE performance results from 2014 to 2018 showed a trend of performance decline (Matungulu Sub-County Education office, 2019). According to Matungulu Sub-County Education office (2019) the 2018 CRE performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County had registered the worst results ever of a mean score of 3.608 reflecting a big mean score drop as shown in Table 1.

The high enrollment and drop in mean score raised the question as to whether there was any relationship between the choice of CRE and previous performance of the subject. Whiteley (2010) asserted that the policies that schools adapt to guide subject choice dictated the subject that a student is likely to pursue. Despite arguments that CRE should be studied as a booster subject and that it is easy to pass this study tried to establish the influence of previous performance of CRE in the national examinations on CRE choice by students in public secondary schools in Matungulu sub – county, Machakos County.

METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive research design and collected data from a sample of 432 respondents who were chosen from a total of 1202 respondents. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data from school principals, CRE teachers and Form Three students. Instrument reliability was ascertained using test-re-test method and piloting while validity was ascertained using expert judgement. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 22.

Analysis and results

Influence of Students' Career Aspirations on their Choice of CRE in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought to establish how students' career aspirations had influenced their choice of CRE. The results were as shown in the following Tables.

Accessibility of Career advice

Students were asked if in their KCSE subject choice, they received any career advice. The responses were as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Receiving of career advice on KCSE Subject Choice

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	222	79.3
No	58	20.7
Total	280	100.0

Table 2 shows that majority (79.3 percent) of the students had received career advice on their KCSE subject choice while 20.7 percent had not received career advice on their KCSE subject choice.

In addition, the students who said that they had received career advice on their KCSE subject choices were further asked to state the person who gave them the advice. The results are as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: students' adviser on Choice of subject

N=222	Frequency	Percent
Career Teacher	125	56.3
Fellow Student	21	9.5
Parent	76	34.2
Total	222	100.0

The results in Table 3 show that among the students who said that they had received career advice on their KCSE subject choice, 56.3 percent said they received the career advice from the career teacher, 34.2 percent said they received advice from their parents while 9.5 percent of the students received advice on subject choice from their fellow students. This finding signifies the role that the subject teacher plays in influencing students' choice of subjects in schools and by extension the careers they choose.

An open ended question was addressed to the students to state any other person who fronted the advice to them and some were of the opinion that the advice they received in their KCSE subject

choice was fronted by the pastor (77%), mentor (24%), grandparent (14%) and counselors (10%). This indicates that other people also play a role in subject choice.

Influence of career aspirations on choice of CRE in Public Secondary Schools

The students’ views were sought in establishment of the influence of career aspirations on choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub - County. The responses gathered were analyzed in percentage and mean indices generated for the various indicator areas that were designed to measure career aspirations related areas. Using a five point likert scale a numeral of 5 represented Strongly agree; 4 represented Agree; 3 represented Neutral; 2 represented Disagree; and 1 represented Strongly disagree. Table 4 shows the results descriptively using percentages and mean indices.

Table 4: Responses of students on career aspirations and choice of CRE

N=280 Statement	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Mean
My future career requires the choice of CRE as a subject	36.8	28.2	13.9	14.3	6.8	3.74
People who have done CRE are trusted in their respective careers	16.1	26.4	16.8	28.2	12.5	3.05
CRE enables one to uphold ethical values which are required in the work place	47.1	36.1	7.1	8.6	1.1	4.20
CRE enables one to have good moral conduct	52.5	37.5	5.4	3.6	1.1	4.37
CRE teaches principles which are necessary for career growth	30.4	42.9	10	8.9	7.9	3.78

From Table 4, it can be noticed that 36.8 percent of the students strongly agreed that their future career requires the choice of CRE as a subject while 28.2 percent of them agreed. Based on the mean index of 3.74, it is therefore easier to deduce that most of the students felt that their future career requires the choice of CRE as a subject. With regard to whether people who have done CRE are trusted in their respective careers, about 28 percent of the students disagreed on the statement; about 26 percent agreed that people who have done CRE are trusted in their respective careers, 16.1 percent strongly agreed, 12.5 percent strongly disagreed while 16.8 percent were

neutral. In general, there was some level of neutrality established from the respondents with regard to whether people who have done CRE can be trusted which was indicated by a mean of 3.05.

The students were further asked to indicate their level at which they agree or disagree as to whether CRE enables one to uphold ethical values which are required in the work place. The findings show that most students agreed to the statement. This was indicated by a mean of 4.20. In particular, 47.1 percent of the students strongly agreed that CRE enables one to uphold ethical values which are required in the work place while 36.1 percent agreed. Majority (52.5%) of the Form Three students strongly agreed that CRE enables one to have good moral conduct while about 38 percent agreed. About 6 percent of them were neutral while 3.6 percent disagreed with the statement. Overall, the extent to which CRE enables one to have good moral conduct was very strong. This was indicated by a mean of 4.37. On the statement that CRE teaches principles which are necessary for career growth, about 43 percent of the Form Three students agreed to the statement. 30 percent strongly agreed while 10 percent were neutral. Overall, most of the students expressed some agreement that the subject of CRE teaches principles that are necessary for career growth.

Finally, in order to establish the influence of students' career aspirations on their choice of CRE in public secondary schools within the study location, a regression analysis was conducted to determine whether career aspirations influenced choice of CRE in public secondary schools as depicted in Tables 5, 6, and 7.

Table 5: career aspirations and choice of CRE- Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.442a	0.195	0.192	4.175

a Predictors: (Constant), Career Aspirations

Regression results in Table 5 indicate that the relationship between career aspirations and choice of CRE as a subject was positive but moderate ($R = .442$). Further, an R square of 0.195 indicates that 19.5% of the variation in the choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub - County could be explained by the career aspiration factors in the linear model.

To test whether this model was significant in enabling predictions, the overall model significance was established and analyzed in the ANOVA table presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: ANOVA on Career Aspiratiions and choice of CRE

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1171.41	1	1171.41	67.213	.000b
	Residual	4827.63	277	17.428		
	Total	5999.039	278			

a Dependent Variable: Choice of CRE by Students

b Predictors: (Constant), Career Aspirations

The results in Table 6 show that the model identified in Table 5 were indeed significant at alpha level of .05 ($F_{(1,277)} = 67.213 ; P \leq .05$). This implies that career aspirations could significantly predict the choice of subject such as CRE in secondary schools in Matungulu Sub - County. Further, an analysis of the regression coefficients in Table 7 was conducted to establish the relative strength of prediction of the independent variable upon the dependent variable.

Table 7: Coefficients of the independent variable

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.853	1.481		7.329	.000
	Career Aspirations	0.625	0.076	0.442	8.198	.000

a Dependent Variable: Choice of CRE by Form Three Students

Table 7 shows the regression coefficients of the independent variable that is, career aspirations, based on standardized and unstandardized coefficients (beta). It can be revealed from the analysis that career aspirations had a significant predictive power on the choice of CRE as a subject of study by students; $t(277) = 8.2; p \leq .05 \beta = .625$. This implies that for every unit increase in the career aspiration of students, the choice of CRE as a subject could increase by .625 points. This therefore means that the choice of CRE as a subject in schools is heavily dependent on the future career of a student hence the null hypothesis H_{01} which states that there

is no statistically relationship between career aspirations and students’ choice of CRE was rejected.

On the same parameter, teachers’ views were sought to establish the factors that influenced students’ choice of CRE. The results are analyzed in Table 8.

Table 8: Teachers View on why student Choose CRE

N=280 Statement	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Mean
The school administration compels them	59.7	27.8	0	6.9	5.6	4.29
Teachers compel the students to choose CRE	9.7	50	9.7	15.3	15.3	3.24
CRE is an easy to perform subject	6.9	26.4	4.2	55.6	6.9	2.71
Parents and guardians compel students to choose the subject	27.8	48.6	1.4	9.7	12.5	3.69
CRE is among the subject that are best performed in this school	15.3	37.5	1.4	41.7	4.2	3.18
CRE enables students get good careers	8.3	63.9	18.1	9.7	0	3.71
The school has a lot of Learning materials for CRE	9.7	69.4	4.2	13.9	2.8	3.69
The school policies which favour selection of the subject	25	66.7	0	4.2	4.2	4.04
The methodology employed by the teacher in teaching the subject is heuristic(learner centred)	50	45.8	1.4	0	2.8	4.40

Results from Table 8 show that the school administration compels the students to choose CRE at a mean of 4.29 as responded to by the majority showing 88 percent of the sampled respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. Similarly, it was noticed that the teachers compelled the students to choose CRE as shown by a mean of 3.24. This was supported by nearly 60 percent of the combined respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed. The CRE teachers disagreed that CRE is an easy to perform subject which was given by a mean of 2.71. This was affirmed by 55.6 percent and about 7 percent who disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. As to whether parents and guardians compel students to choose the subject, the findings showed indeed that parents and guardians compelled students to choose the subject

as indicated by a mean of 3.69. This was supported by 76.4 percent of the combined respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement. A mean of 3.18 indicated that a slight majority of the CRE teachers were of the view that CRE is among the subjects that are best performed in the school. This was affirmed by about 53 percent of the aggregate of the respondents who agreed and strongly agreed. A mean of 3.71 showed that the CRE teachers were also of the view that CRE enables students get good careers. This was supported by about 64 percent of the respondents who agreed to the statement. Additionally, a mean of 3.69 indicated that the CRE teachers were of the opinion that the school had a lot of learning materials for CRE. This was supported by 69.4 percent of the respondents who agreed to the statement. Moreover, a mean of 4.04 indicated that they were of the view that the school policies which favour selection of the subject made the students choose CRE. This was backed by nearly 67 percent of the respondents who agreed to the statement. Finally, it was observed that the reason why students chose CRE was because the methodology employed by the teacher in teaching the subject is heuristic (learner centered). This was indicated by a mean of 4.40 which was supported by 50 percent and about 49 percent of the respondents who strongly agreed and agreed to the statement.

Influence of Students Previous Performance in KCSE on Choice of CRE

The study also sought to determine the influence of the students’ previous performance in National Examinations on the choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County. In this regard, indicators of students’ previous performance were formulated and measured on a five point scale. Results in view of this objective from students who were the main respondents are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Previous Performance and Choice of CRE

N=280 Statement	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Mean
I always perform well in CRE	32.1	31.1	13.6	18.6	4.6	3.68
CRE performance in our school has always been the best	20	28.2	17.9	27.1	6.8	3.28
My CRE performance in form one was above average	33.9	46.1	10	6.8	3.2	4.01

My CRE performance in form two was above average	32.1	43.2	10.7	9.3	4.6	3.89
CRE has always enabled me boost my grade	38.2	28.6	10	15	8.2	3.74
Good CRE performance in our school influences me to choose CRE	16.8	19.3	8.9	36.4	18.6	2.79
Previous performance of CRE in KCSE national examinations has influenced me to choose CRE.	15	10	12.9	37.1	25	2.53

It is clearly noticeable from Table 9 that most of the students always performed well in CRE. This was indicated by a mean of 3.68. Specifically, 32.1 percent of the students strongly agreed with the statement that the students always performed well in CRE and 31.1 percent agreed. Similarly, a mean of 3.28 indicated that CRE performance in schools has always been the best. This view was supported by 28.2 percent who agreed and 20 percent who strongly agreed. The same question on performance was also asked to the teachers. From the teachers’ analysis shown in teachers’ response Table 9, it is clearly shown that CRE is not an easy to perform subject. This implies that teachers disagreed with the students’ view that they always perform well in CRE. The teachers’ response shows that 62.5 percent of the CRE teachers disagreed with the view that CRE is an easy to perform subject, 33.3 percent agreed and 4.2 percent were neutral. However, majority of CRE teachers (76.4) percent agreed with the students that CRE is among the subjects that are best performed in schools in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub – County. These analyses are shown in teachers’ response Table 8. Similarly, principals were interviewed and their comments sought on the influence of the previous performance of CRE in KCSE on the choice of CRE and whether CRE is an easy to perform subject. The principals commented that while the enrolment of students choosing CRE increased, performance of CRE in KCSE continued to decline. However, in cases where principals commented of good results in the performance of CRE as a subject it was their view that most students could opt to choose CRE because of good performance in KCSE. This therefore implied that the principals agreed with the teachers that CRE is not an easy to perform subject though it is among the best performed subjects in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub – County. Additionally, students’ CRE performance in Form One was above average as supported by 46.1 percent who agreed and about 34 percent who strongly agreed being indicated by a mean of 4.01. Moreover, students CRE

performance in Form Two was above average as was indicated by a mean of 3.89. This was supported by 43.2 percent of the students who agreed to the statement and 32.1 percent who strongly agreed. A mean of 3.74 indicated that Majority of the students also held the view that CRE has always enabled them to boost their grade. This was supported by nearly 67 percent of the combined respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed. On whether good CRE performance in the school influenced the students to choose CRE, majority of the respondents were almost indifferent which was indicated by a mean of 2.79. This was supported by 55 percent of the combined respondents who either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. Similarly, it was noticed that previous performance of CRE in KCSE National Examinations did not influence the students to choose CRE as was indicated by a mean of 2.53. This was supported by 62.1 percent of the respondents who either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that previous performance of CRE in KCSE National Examinations has influenced me to choose CRE.

From the descriptive analysis of this objective, it can be inferred that previous performance influenced students' choice of CRE. However, in order to find out if the influence of previous performance was significant, regression analysis was conducted and the results are presented and discussed respectively in Tables 10, 11 and 12.

Table 10: Model Summary on the previous performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.271a	0.074	0.07	4.477

a Predictors: (Constant), Previous Performance

Regression results in the model summary Table 10 indicate the goodness of fit for the regression between students' CRE choice and previous performance was satisfactory in the linear regression since the regression coefficient was different from zero ($R=.271$). This coefficient implies that the relationship between previous performance and choice of CRE as a subject was positive but weak. An R square of 0.074 indicates that 7.4% of the variances in students' choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub - County can be explained by the previous

performance in the linear model. In order to establish if the model in Table 4.27 was a good predictor, an ANOVA table was generated and analyzed as shown in Table 11.

Table 11: ANOVA on previous performance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	442.161	1	442.161	22.063	.000b
	Residual	5571.425	278	20.041		
	Total	6013.586	279			

a Dependent Variable: Choice of CRE by Form Three Students

b Predictors: (Constant), Previous Performance

Table 11 shows that the overall prediction model was statistically significant; $F(1,278) = 22.06$; $P \leq .05$. This implies that previous performance could statistically and significantly influence the choice of CRE as a subject in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub - County.

In order to check the contribution of the independent variable in terms of predicting the outcome variable, analysis was done using the unstandardized coefficients. Table 12 shows the regression coefficients of the independent variable which is previous performance.

Table 12: Regression Coefficient –Previous performance on choice of CRE

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	17.735	1.112		15.942	.000
	previous Performance	0.212	0.045	0.271	4.697	.000

a Dependent Variable: Choice of CRE by Students

Table 12 displays the regression coefficients of the independent variable which is previous performance. The results reveal that previous performance is statistically significant in explaining students CRE choice in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County; $t(279) = 4.697$; $p \leq .05$; $\beta = .212$). The unstandardized beta coefficient of .212 means that for each unit increase in previous performance, the choice of CRE by the student increases by .212 units which is significant as per the model. This therefore implies that students score in a previous

examination is an integral determinant on the choice of subjects by the students meaning that the hypothesis H₀₂ which stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between students' previous performance in National Examinations and students' choice of CRE was therefore rejected.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Influence of Career aspirations on students' choice of CRE

This study found that career aspirations had a significant influence on students' choice of CRE at the 5 percent level of significance ($P < 0.05$, $F = 67.213$). This therefore implied that career aspirations influenced students' choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County. As was established from the descriptive analysis of the results, many students were of the opinion that their future career required the choice of CRE as a subject as people who have done CRE are trusted in their respective careers since CRE enables one to uphold ethical values which are required in the work place. Similarly, the view by majority was that CRE enables one to have good moral conduct and that it teaches principles which are necessary for career growth as shown in Table 4. This implied that most of the students were inspired by their career choices to make CRE a subject of choice in their education. Students' aspirations can influence their future career whereby high aspirations motivate students to study hard and try to achieve their goals (Staff, Harris, Sabates, and Briddell, 2010). This study agrees with Staff et al (2010) and Ashby and Schoon (2010) who argue that it is an occupation that influences students to choose a particular subject. Hewitt (2010) in his article on factors influencing career choice observed that career choice can either be intrinsic or extrinsic or both where intrinsic comes from within and extrinsic from an outward appeal. This sentiment is shared by the findings of this study which show that extrinsic factors such as parents, teachers and siblings influence students' career choice. The findings further agreed with self – determination theory of Deci and Ray (2002) which this study is anchored which states that individuals can be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to carry out a task so long as there is a motivation or reward expected. This means that most people are influenced by careers that their educational choices have opened for them while some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them while others choose the careers that give high income.

Influence of previous performance on students' choice of CRE

Finally, this study revealed at 5 percent level of significance, that there was a statistically significant influence of previous performance on students' choice of CRE ($P < 0.05$, $F = 22.063$). This therefore means that previous performance influenced students' choice of CRE in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub-County. From the descriptive analysis it was clear that when students always performed well in CRE or when CRE performance in school was best, they tended to make it a subject of choice as shown in Table 9. Mwangi and Nyagah (2013) observed that a particular student's performance in the National Examinations determines their future. Due to the concern of the countries around the globe about their citizen's future, education has become a major Centre of investment. Achola (2001) however, observed that the learners may work hard to pass well in CRE simply to boost their overall performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) but fail to read it reflectively in order to internalize it so that it can influence their moral behavior. Chemutai (2015) observed that there is a general believe that C.R.E. is an easy subject which can be passed with minimal effort. She further observed that if a learner is performing well in a given subject, they require a positive reinforcement so that their performance and attitude towards the subject is maintained.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the current study makes the following recommendations.

1. On career aspirations, teachers and parents should inspire children at an early age on the choice of career so that they are aware of what subjects to choose as they grow in the education system.
2. Principals should always display national results on notice boards for the other students to see and get motivated to choose best performed subjects.

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