

**Parental Factors Influencing Career Choice among High School Students in
Nairobi County**

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Declaration

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for an award of a degree or diploma in any university.

Signed _____ Date _____

Mutinda Alphonse Mwaa

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Sign _____ Date _____

Mr Stanley Okinyi

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Dedication

This research project is dedicated to my family for their support and encouragement during the entire period I was pursuing the Post Graduate Diploma in Education programme.

Acknowledgement

I would like to register my appreciation, to my supervisor, Stanley Okinyi who has tirelessly read through my proposal and offered useful advice throughout the compilation of this proposal.

My thanks also go to all my lecturers during the coursework. Their input gave me the theoretical foundation to undertake this study.

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My sincere gratitude goes to the almighty God who gave me the help, ability, strength, wisdom and all that it required to complete this project.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent by which parental factors influence career choice among form four students in Nairobi County. The study also sought to establish the relationship and significance of these parental factors and the student's career choice. The population of the study was all the 27,614 form four students who had enrolled for the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) examinations for the year 2016. A total of 400 students were sampled for the study out of which 383 responded giving a response rate of 95.75%. The survey used purposive sampling technique to sample 10 schools from Nairobi County to carry out the survey while simple random sampling technique was used to sample the students.

Questionnaires were used as the instruments for data collection. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the data. The results were presented in the form of tables and graphs.

Results from the study showed that parental factors influence the career choice of students in Nairobi County. These factors included parental highest education level, parents' occupation, parental values and expectations, and parent-child relationships. However, it was established that 92.4% of the parents of Nairobi County students were middle class economic income and above. As such the socio-economic status of the family was found not to influence the career choice of the students.

The study recommended that teachers, parents, and career guidance counsellors should take into cognizance the influence of parental factors as they guide students through the process of career selection. This will enable the students to make sound career choices depending on their educational achievement and career aspirations.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In Kenya, the education process follows the 8-4-4 system of education where a student spends eight years in primary school, four years at secondary school and a minimum of four years at university. At the primary school level, a general curriculum is offered with no options. However at the secondary school level, a student may choose to pursue either science based subjects or art based subjects. This is the first instance when a student is faced with the task of choosing a future career path. This choice is further affirmed through the performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Admission into various university degrees is dependent on the students' performance in the KCSE examinations. Those who perform exceptionally well proceed to pursue professional courses like engineering, medicine, law architecture, finance, accounts etc. On the other hand those who do not perform well are enrolled in non-professional general degree courses. From the foregoing, it may be concluded that a Kenyan student's future career is predetermined by the choice of subjects done at secondary school level and the level of achievement at KCSE. To some extent this is true and as a result, many students in Kenya end up in occupations that they had not aspired for in the first place. Since the admission into university courses is based on their performance, their interests are never considered and most students end up pursuing careers they just got into by chance.

Exploration of career choices should therefore be an important exercise for high school students. A thoughtfully constructed career choice process will provide a meaningful, productive, and satisfying career. A career choice process or outline might provide better answers than making life decisions based upon unexplored procedures (Kisilu et al. 2012).

Career choice and selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining their future plans and this decision will impact them throughout their lives (Borchert, 2002). In his research paper, Borchert, (2002), observed that several factors influenced career choices of high school students and identifying these factors would give parents, educators, and industry an idea as to where students place most of their trust in the career selection process. These factors include the students' immediate environment, opportunities available to the student and finally his/her personality. He further observed that every student carries the unique history of their past and this determines how they view the world. This history is created, in part by the student's

environment, personality, and opportunity and it determines how students make career choices. Consequently, how a student perceives his/her environment, personality, and opportunity will also determine the career choices that the student makes. Splaver (2011) observes that students never perceive their environment, personality, and opportunity in the same way and this explains the different career choices they make.

Environmental factors

The environment in which a student is brought up may greatly influence the career that one chooses. The student's support system made up of parents, relatives, siblings, peers, teachers, and counsellors may be the most important environmental factor. There are many examples of public figures in Kenya whose children have taken up careers of their parents. Lawyers, Doctors, Teachers, Accountants and Engineers, are some of the occupations which may run down in families as children take up careers of their parents. For example, students who have lived in a hospital environment may choose a career dealing with medicine. On the other hand they may hate the hospital environment and consequently don't choose a career that has anything to do with a hospital. Those who live near Airports may choose a career in piloting due to the fascination they get whenever they see airplanes overflying their homes.

In some cases the career chosen is as a result of significant impact or impression made in the student's life, leading to a definite career choice. Parents' educational background may influence student views on whether or not to continue their education. Someone they saw on television may have influenced the student, or parents may have demanded that they assume a family business. These are various environmental factors that would lead a student to a chosen career.

Personality factors

How students have seen themselves in a role in which personality is a determining factor may influence a chosen career. Some careers demand that you have the personality to match the qualities of the occupation. For example, sales people have to be outgoing. Splaver,(1977), notes that personality plays an important role in the choice of the right career. A student's personality must be a self-motivated type, as to investigate career possibilities from early on in their lives, and not the procrastinating type that waits until they are compelled to decide.

Students must take seriously the role grades play in limiting opportunities in the future. Splavergoes on to say, “It is important for one to have a good understanding of his personality, if you are to make intelligent career plans” (Splaver, 1977).

Opportunity factors

Opportunity is the third factor that has shaped career choices for students. Opportunity may influence how students have perceived their future in terms of the reasonable probability of a future in particular career fields. The issue of poverty has played an important role in determining the opportunities available to all.

The income level of high school families may determine what career a student chooses during a specific time in the student’s life; choices that will determine a large part of that student’s future. Some students will have to budget education according to their personal income. Individuals living in poverty must be assisted through special training programs to overcome educational and social handicaps so that minimum job standards can be met. Students in many cases will need the proper mentoring opportunities as provided by support groups in order to succeed. These support groups can be another opportunity that if properly implemented, can help a student in the career choice process. The support system must be in place and readily available for the student to utilize. The creation of support groups such school guidance and counseling departments will have to be in place to sustain the student through times of financial, emotional, and educational need.

The Effect of Parental Factors on an Adolescent's Choice of Career

A close scrutiny of the three factors above shows that they are all related to parental factors. As the child grows up, the immediate environment comprises of the nuclear family and the extended family comprising of uncles, aunts, cousins, and grand parents. Accordingly, these people will be expected to have a significant effect on the student’s choice of career.

The family and parents shape the future personality of the student as he grows up. Parents have a crucial task of preparing the child for education. Students’ from rich backgrounds are more likely to gain a better education than those from poor backgrounds. In their task of socializing the child, the parents have a great influence on the child’s development and future life choices and thus

shaping their personality. Parents shape the personality of their children by influencing the level of education or training that their children achieve; the knowledge they have about work and different occupations; the beliefs and attitudes they have to working; and the motivation they have to succeed. Most of this is learned unconsciously as children and teenagers absorb their parents' attitudes and expectations of them as they grow up. According to Keller (2004) the key parental influencers to a student's career choice include; the attitudes and behaviour the parents reward or punish, approve or disapprove of, the expectations parents have for their children's education and career, the examples they set for their children, the values they show to their family, friends and to society, the opportunities they offer their children to learn and develop themselves, and the kind of parent-child relationship they develop.

In a report published in the Eric Digest No. 164, Lankard (1995) observes that young people form many of their attitudes about work and careers as a result of interactions with the family. Mortimer et al. (1992) noted that the family background provides the basis from which their career plans and decision making evolve. However, within each family, the level of involvement can vary, offering both positive and negative influences. From an examination of research on family influences on career development, Lankard (1995) identified the parents' socioeconomic status, their educational level, and biogenetic factors such as physical size, gender, ability, and temperament as the variables which influence career choice of young people.

By the time children move into adolescence, they begin seriously considering their future, often looking to their parents either as role models or for career advice. A parent's approach to this can either inspire teenagers to explore a diverse set of potential occupations or to stick to a path they think their parents will approve of. As Williams (2016) notes, if their parents' jobs give them great satisfaction or provide a comfortable lifestyle, children see the perks early on, and may favour these careers over others. In contrast, if parents complain about their jobs or struggle to support the family on the income their jobs provide, children are more likely to seek more fulfilling or higher-paid roles. According to Williams (2016), the parental variables which influence a student's career choice include the parents' occupations, the activities they allow their children to participate in (for example like music or dance lessons or to pursue certain sports activities sometimes influence them to commit to those activities full-time), parental encouragement and expectations of their children, and the Parent-Child relationship.

The above findings are similar to those of Whiston & Keller (2004) who observe that parents serve as a major influence in their children's career development and career decision-making. Parents want their children to find happiness and success in life and one factor which influences happiness and success is career choice. Research also indicates that when students feel supported and loved by their parents, they have more confidence in their own ability to research careers and to choose a career that would be interesting and exciting. This is important because studies show that adolescents, who feel competent regarding career decision-making, tend to make more satisfying career choices later in life (Keller, 2004). Both family structure variables (e.g., parents' occupations) and family process variables (e.g., warmth, support, attachment, autonomy) were found to influence a host of career constructs; however, the process by which families influence career development is complex and is affected by many contextual factors such as race, gender, and age (Whiston & Keller, 2004).

Jungen (2008), notes that while perception suggests career choice is an individual decision, research indicates a variety of influences are likely to determine one's ultimate career choice. Parents have been found to greatly impact the career selection process of their children. Many parents are unaware of all the ways they can influence their children's career decision. Work ethic, family values and gender stereotyping in the family may have a greater impact than previously thought (Jungen, 2008). Based on her literature review, she dispels the myth that children and adolescents defy their parents' values and expectations regarding career options. According to Jungen (2008), the major parental variables which influence children's career options include; parental values and expectations, the parent-child relationship, gender socialization or gender stereotypes and the mother's influence.

The purpose of this project is therefore to establish the extent to which the following parental factors influence the career choices of secondary school students in Nairobi County;

- i) The education level of their parents
- ii) The parents' occupations
- iii) The socio-economic status of the family
- iv) Parental values and expectations
- v) The parent-child relationship

1.2 Statement of the problem

Choosing a career is often considered a major turning point in a young adult's life. This decision has the potential to open the door for success or close the door of opportunity (Jungen, 2008). While often perceived to be an individual choice, research suggests that a variety of influences are likely to manipulate one's ultimate career decision. Among these factors, students report that parents have the greatest influence on which career they choose (Kniveton, 2004).

It is therefore important to explore the issues regarding adolescent career choice and the role that parents play in this decision. This is an important topic because parents may not realize the major impact their norms, values and gender roles have on career choice, and yet parental influence on students' career selection may present opportunities or obstacles for students during the career exploration process. It's upon this basis that this research project aims to explore the extent to which parental factors influence the career choice of students at secondary school level in Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to find out how parental variables, influence occupational aspirations of students in secondary schools. This information is crucial to teachers, parents and career counsellors in schools in the process of helping students make informed career decisions. Findings from the research will enable parents make informed decisions during the career selection process of their children.

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study sought to address the following objectives;

- i) To establish the extent to which the parents' levels of education influences career choice of students in Nairobi County.
- ii) To establish the extent to which the parents' occupation/s influences career choice of students in Nairobi County.
- iii) To assess the extent of how the socio-economic status of the family influences the career aspirations of students in Nairobi County.
- iv) To assess the extent of how the parental values and expectations, influences the career choices of students in Nairobi County

- v) To assess the extent of how the parent-child relationship influences the career aspirations of students in Nairobi County

1.5 Research questions

In order to realize the objectives of the study, the study addressed the following questions;

Is there a significant relationship between parents' levels of education and the career choice of students in Nairobi County?

- i) Is there a significant relationship between parents' occupations and the career choice of students in Nairobi County?
- ii) Is there a significant relationship between the parents' socio-economic status and the career choice of students in Nairobi County?
- iii) Is there a significant relationship between parental values and expectations, and the career choices of students in Nairobi County?
- iv) Is there a significant relationship between the parent-child relationships and the career choice of students in Nairobi County?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study was significant in that it explored the influence of parental variables on the career choice of secondary school students in Nairobi County where students could be helped to make realistic occupational career choices based on their aspirations. From the findings of this study parents and school administrators are discouraged from forcing students to take up occupations that are not at par with their personal aspirations and abilities. In addition, the school administration is urged to involve parents during the final subject selection process for final Kenya Certificate of Secondary School (KCSE) examinations. This enables students to pursue careers based on their preferred career choices.

1.7 Assumptions of the study

The study was based on the following assumptions;

- i) When conducting the survey for this project, it was assumed that all children were able to identify and describe their parents' careers, which might not be the case.
- ii) Further it was assumed that the parents described in the research had stable and consistent careers while raising their children.

- iii) Students chose careers of their interest based on their aspirations and capability, and that they had already arrived at a final future career choice.
- iv) The respondents gave honest, accurate, and truthful responses to the items in the questionnaire.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The study will limit itself to interview of form four students in Nairobi County secondary schools as the respondents. This was taken to be representative of students' career aspirations across the entire Kenyan student population.

In conducting the research, the following limitations were taken into account. First, not all variables of parenthood, such as gender, cultural differences, gender socialization and sexual orientation, were examined. Secondly the sampled population may not have accurately reflected the cultural norms of diverse populations in the country. In addition, parental expectations might have been linked with additional intervening variables that may not have been identified in the research.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

The study was conducted in Nairobi County. The subjects of this study were form four students in public secondary schools. The study excluded private schools since they operate in different environmental settings that may influence the students' career choice and aspirations differently compared to those from public schools. The target population for the study was form four students only since it was assumed they had already made their career choice decisions as compared to those from lower classes who were yet to make their decisions.

1.10 Definitions of Significant Terms

In this project paper, the following operational terms were taken to have the meanings defined below;

Career: Refers to the broad opportunities that exist for lifelong vocations. It is a profession for which one trains and which is undertaken as a permanent calling.

Parent: A person who brings up and cares for children

Environment: Consists of complex physical factors that make up our surroundings and in turn act upon us. For the purposes of this study they would include the forces of the family, political, social, and economic issues that students may deal with on a day-to-day basis.

Opportunity: This refers to those choices in one's life which are exposed either in a subtle or obvious manner. These choices or paths give the individual a selection between two or more outcomes.

Personality: Is a characteristic way of thinking, feeling and behaving (Britannica, 2002). One's personality may embrace attitudes and opinions that affect the way we deal with situations (like choosing a career) and interactions with people.

Socio-economic Status (SES): An individual's or group's position within a hierarchical social structure. Socioeconomic status depends on a combination of variables, including occupation, education, income, wealth, and place of residence.

Motivation: Are forces acting on or within a person causing an initiation of behavior or that which energizes us into action. In this study it was the issues that help or hinder students in making career choices.

Self-efficacy: This refers to people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances.

Gender Socialization: Individuals learn what men are supposed to do and what women are supposed to do.

1.11 Organization of the study

The study was organized in five chapters. Chapter one gives the background of the study. This chapter also gives the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, basic assumptions of the study, and definitions of operational terms. Chapter two is a presentation literature research highlighting findings of previous research on the influence of parental factors on students' career choice. Chapter three gives a description of the research methodology used which includes research design, target population, sample size, and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques. Chapter four gives a description of the analysis and interpretation of the findings of the study from the field while chapter five presents the summary of the project, the conclusion and recommendations and suggestions for further research.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining their future plans since this decision will impact them throughout their lives. As Michael Borchert notes in his research paper (Borchert, 2002), several factors affect career choices among high school students. He notes that identifying these factors gives parents, educators, and industry players an idea as to where students place most of their trust in the career selection process. According to Borchert (2002) these factors can broadly be categorised as Environmental, personality, and opportunity factors. Among the environmental factors are family factors, school factors, peer pressure etc. Family background factors found to be associated with career development include parents' socio-economic status (SES), their educational level, and biogenetic factors such as physical size, gender, ability, and temperament (Lankard, 1995). Thus parental influence is one of the factors which affect career choice and selection of students. Indeed research findings from studies done in Kenya and elsewhere are available in support of the role played by parental factors in influencing the career choice of their children.

Jungen (2008) notes in her research paper that choosing a career is often considered a major turning point in a young adult's life. This decision alone has the potential to open the door for success or close the door of opportunity. While often perceived to be an individual choice, research suggests that a variety of influences such as family, school, community, social and economic factors are likely to manipulate one's ultimate career decision. Among these factors, students report that parents have the greatest influence on which career they choose (Kniveton, 2004). Most parents believe that they should remain neutral in regard to their child's career development. However, studies show that parents have a greater influence than even teachers on student's career choice (Kniveton, 2004). While direct parental career advice may be influential, parents may be unaware that they can also exert a strong career influence simply by serving as examples of good workers to their children (Kniveton, 2004). In fact, children as young as five years old begin to identify with the occupation of their mother or father as soon as they can pronounce their job title (Jungen, 2008). Even though adolescents actively begin demonstrating their independence from their parents in their high school years, these young adults are still very much dependent on their parents for their career growth (Peterson, Stivers, & Peters 1986, as

cited in Clutter, 2010). In fact, parents tend to create the strongest impression on their adolescent's vocational choice more than any other group including counsellors, teachers, friends, or even people working in the identified occupation of desire (Bardick et al. , 2004, Kotrlik& Harrison, 1989).

As children begin to transition into adulthood through the formation of their own identity, the more comprehensive view of parental influence regarding the child's career development is preferred, from a counselling standpoint, as it takes into account the entire context of the adolescent's decision-making (Middleton &Loughead, 1993). Other studies have revealed that parenting does not occur in a unidirectional manner, but rather, parenting occurs as a part of a larger system of daily life (Bryant, Zvonkovic, & Reynolds, 2006). Additionally, even though parents have been typically thought of as positive influences on their children's career decision-making, it is also possible that parents may be negatively affecting their children's vocational development as well (Clutter, 2010).

The foregoing research findings indicate that parental education level, parents' occupation, the family socioeconomic status, values and expectations of the parents and the parent-child relations and interactions are among the parental factors that influence career choice of students. These factors will now be examined in more detail in the following paragraphs.

2.2 Parents Education Level

In a study of the influences on adolescents' vocational development reported by Mortimer et al. (1992), the variable that had the most effect on educational plans and occupational aspirations was parental education.

According to Mortimer et al. (1992) parents with postsecondary education tend to pass along its importance to their children. Such parents are more likely to offer their children an opportunity of a better education by enrolling them in good schools and in disciplines of their own choice. Montgomery (1992) notes that female students talented in mathematics related careers viewed their career choices as reflective of interests that stemmed from early family influence and educational opportunities.

Hahs-Vaughn (2004) explored the influence of parents' education level on college students by examining the differences in the experiences of students whose parental level of education was

high to those students whose parental education level was low. Significant differences were found between the two groups on anticipated highest level of education to be achieved, entrance examination score, non-academic experiences, and educational aspirations. In other words, parental education appears to have an effect on the academic and social development of students (Hahs-Vaughn, 2004).

Udoh and Sanni (2012) investigated the influence of parental background variables on the career choice of secondary school student in Uyo Local Government Area of Nigeria. Their findings implied that parents' level of formal education exert a significant influence on the career choices of secondary school students (Udoh & Sanni, 2012). This finding is supported by that of Kitivo (1989) in an investigation to study of the relationship between Kenyan secondary school pupils' achievement motivation and the educational/occupational levels of their parents. Results from the study showed a significant relationship between parental level of education and achievement motivation of the students. The results further indicated that the father's occupation was insignificantly correlated with the pupils' need for achievement while that of the mothers was both positively and significantly correlated (ibid.). This implies that parental level of education significantly influences their children achievement in school and consequently their future careers. In a study to investigate the environmental factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations of standard eight pupils, Aswani (2012) noted that parental level of education had significant positive influence on the pupils' educational and occupational aspirations. The findings conform to that of Mugenda et al. (2010) whose study established that the mother's level of education contributes more to girls' aspirations for higher education than boys.

The above observations are contracted by those of Roach (2010). From the results of a study to determine career selection self-efficacy among college students in the northeast region of the United States, she concluded that the highest level parental of education did not have an impact on the career selection self-efficacy of college students (Roach, 2010). This implies that a high parental academic achievement did not necessarily influence the career aspirations of college students. This could be due to other factors including college career counsellors and peer influence. This could also be attributed to higher independence of college students as compared to secondary school students who still look at their parents as role models. DeRidder (1990),

however points out that lower levels of parental education can retard adolescents' career development. He further notes that being born to parents with limited education and income reduces the likelihood of going to college or achieving a professional occupational goal and essentially predetermines the child's likely career choice (ibid.).

2.3 Parents Occupation

According to Williams (2016), a parent's occupation influences children's career choices both intentionally and inadvertently. By the time children move into adolescence, they begin seriously considering their futures, often looking to their parents either as role models or for career advice. A parent's approach to this can either inspire teenagers to explore a diverse set of potential occupations or to stick to a path they think their parents will approve of (ibid.)

The parents' occupations almost always influence the careers their children will take up in the future. This is best captured by Williams (2016), who noted thus;

It's no surprise that many people are the third or fourth generations of their families to work in the same profession. They have an insider's glimpse into their parents' occupations, making it easier for them to break in to the industry. If their parents' jobs give them great satisfaction or provide a comfortable lifestyle, children see the perks early on, and may favour these careers over others. In contrast, if parents complain about their jobs or struggle to support the family on the income their jobs provide, children are more likely to seek more fulfilling or higher-paid roles.

The above observation is in line with the findings of Udoh and Sanni (2012) in their investigation established that parents' attitudes towards occupations exerted a significant influence on the career choices of secondary school students in Uyo region of Nigeria. Kisulu et al. (2012) investigated the factors influencing occupational aspirations among girls in secondary schools in Nairobi region – Kenya. Results from their studies indicated that family members especially the parents and older siblings affect the occupational and career choices of students with 57.5 % of the respondents stating that they would choose different occupations from those of their siblings and parents. The remaining 42.5% indicated that they would prefer same occupations as their parents and older siblings. Majority of the respondents

(75.8%) affirmed that girls' occupational choice was more influenced by their mothers and older sisters than their fathers and older brothers.

From a study to investigate how parents influence African American students' decisions to prepare for vocational teaching careers, Hairston (2000) noted that respondents with parent educators were strongly influenced to enter teaching. Hence their parents helped them to gain an understanding of the field through direct, frequent, and early exposure to the profession. At a young age, respondents developed an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and lifestyles of a teacher and eventually began to consider teaching. One respondent preparing to become a marketing teacher explained, "...just hanging out around my mother's school, just getting a feel for what teachers do, I liked it...That whole background and what it involvement made me kind of interested in teaching" (Hairston, 2000). It would seem that early discussion about a certain career choice was one of the most influential factors affecting career choice since the more familiar an individual is with the requirements and rewards of the work world, the better equipped they are to make a career choice. The above findings are supported by those of Udoh and Sanni (2012), who noted that parents' occupations exerted a significant influence on the career choice of secondary school students in Uyo region of Nigeria. This finding is similar to that of Aswani (2012) who found out that parents' occupation and especially that of the mother had a significant positive influence on standard eight pupils' educational and occupational aspirations in Kenya. On the other hand, Mugenda et al. (2010) found out that boys were more likely to follow on the footsteps of their fathers and older brothers.

2.4 Family Socio-Economic Status

The family socio-economic status or income is another aspect of family background that influences the career development of youth, especially for girls (Mortimer et al. 1992). This is because families with limited economic resources tend to direct them first to the males of the family, giving less hope and encouragement for further education to the daughters in the family. Parents whose socio-economic status is low may hold values that place girls in the homemaker role and reflect less emphasis on occupational career preparation. Given this disposition, it is understandable that the self-efficacy of girls with respect to career opportunities is linked to the economic support they can expect to receive from their parents (Lankard, 1995). For low income families, a large family will make the parents spend less money to aid the older children in

attending school, while younger children may receive more financial assistance since the financial strain is less once the older children leave home. Mortimer et al. (1992) note that poverty was found to significantly affect the vocational development of high school students indirectly through its impact on feelings of economic self-efficacy. They further observed that, adolescents living in conditions of poverty have lower feelings of economic self-efficacy regarding future vocational goals, and this low feeling of economic self-efficacy is found to be adversely related to academic achievement and college preparation and positively related to dropping out of school (Mortimer et al., 1992). This is supported by Kibera (2012) who noted that secondary school students with parents in middle and high socio-economic status (SES) had higher educational and occupational aspirations and expectations than students whose parents were in the low SES class. The mothers' occupational level seemed to influence the children's career and educational aspirations more strongly than that of their fathers (Kibera, 2012; Aswani, 2012). Additionally students from high SES households preferred to enter professional jobs while those from low SES households were comfortable with clerical jobs (Kibera, 2012).

2.5 Parental Values and Expectations

Expression of parental values and expectations can be in the form of parental support and guidance on specific career or educational suggestions as well as experiences that indirectly support career development, such as family vacations, provision of resources such as books, and modelling of paid and nonpaid work roles. Based on her literature search, Jungen (2008) noted that parental values and expectations can play a large role in the career path that children choose to follow. She further notes that while many believe that children, particularly adolescents, pay no attention to the values of their parents, research has shown otherwise (ibid.). Therefore, it seems that children and adolescents pay much attention to what their parents expect of them, particularly when it comes to choosing a career. Taylor et al. (2004, as cited in Jungen, 2008) maintain that without parental approval, children are often reluctant to pursue, or even explore, certain careers. Adolescents were found to share their parents' values on major issues and even dismissed certain career options if they didn't have parental approval. This is contrary to popular belief that adolescence is a time of defiance, particularly against authority figures such as parents (Jungen, 2008).

Parents demonstrate their expectations by showing heightened support for particular careers. Based on a study that looked at the factors that influenced the career choices of adolescents in rural Pennsylvania, Ferry (2006) reported that parents, followed by other family members, provided valuable learning experiences through their own role models and supporting activities that assisted in exploring career interests. Hence by showing support for particular activities, parents demonstrated their preference for certain career options over others. This is supported by Kniveton (2004), who observed that parents tended to show additional support for occupational choices that mirrored their own.

In addition to demonstrating a preference for certain activities, most parental values and expectations can be seen in the norms they model at home (Jungen, 2008). The way in which parents influence their children's values is most often accomplished through socializing norms, rather than enforcing specific expectations or modelling behaviours. Therefore, instead of rewarding children for conforming to parental expectations, children simply internalize the norms of their parents and then pursue careers that fall in line with those norms. This was demonstrated in a study by Otto (2000, as cited in Jungen, 2008), who asked a cross-sectional group of juniors from six high schools how closely their ideas matched their parents' ideas about which occupations to pursue. In the results, 46 % said their ideas were "mostly similar" to their parents and 36% said "very similar". This shows that by the time children reached adolescence, they had adopted their parents' norms and expectations as their own.

The adoption of these norms and expectations occurs covertly, without parents even realizing that it is taking place (Jungen, 2008). Parents do this by demonstrating nonverbal responses to particular comments or by showing little interest in particular activities. Therefore, even indirect responses, such as body language, gestures, or tone of voice, will be important in shaping children's perceptions of certain careers (ibid.).

Hairston (2000) notes that parents' career aspirations aid their children in selecting occupational goals, influence their knowledge of occupations, and familiarize them with occupational roles and requirements. Whether the child internalizes those aspirations is greatly determined by numerous values found within the home. Another parental factor that influences adolescents' career choice is the desire to imitate parents' noble behaviour and role as community contributors. In his report, Hairston (2000) observed that adolescents who took up vocation in

teaching revealed that their parents' roles as community contributors influenced their desires to give to others through the general career of teaching, as well as through the specific teaching concentration in vocational education. Like their parents, respondents were eager to make notable contributions to the community by becoming vocational teachers.

Parents also communicate their expectations by urging their children to aim at high academic qualifications for a successful career. Hairston (2000) reports that respondents involved in his study consistently recalled parents pushing them to earn outstanding grades as opposed to being content with average grades. Furthermore, expectations of outstanding grades made respondents set high personal expectations.

Parental expectations may also be communicated through the support they offer their children in academic and occupational endeavours. According to Hairston (2000), children often indicated that their career choice apprehensions were eased when parents approved of their decisions to prepare for a certain career. Furthermore, parental support indicated career choice approval and elicited expressions of pride and satisfaction among students. Way and Rossmann (1996) note that by sharing workplace stories, expressing concern for children's future, and modelling work behaviours, parents serve as a context for interpreting the realities of work and future careers. Furthermore, the young adult's understanding of his or her parent's expectations will influence their own career decisions, depending on whether the adolescent feels the need to go along with their parent's views or to rebel against them (Clutter, 2010)

However, it has been observed that over-involvement of parents in their children's educational or career plans and unusual concern by the parents may negatively affect the career selection process for the child. The pressure for career success or the support for only a narrow range of occupations could inhibit the adolescent's ability to explore alternative careers that would be of greater fit to the individual (Middleton & Loughhead, 1993). For instance, if parents state they will only pay for college if the child goes into a certain major (e.g. law, engineering, or medicine), if they overtly tell the child that he or she is expected to graduate with a specific degree and take a position at a bank or law firm, or if they subtly reinforce the value of certain jobs while discounting other occupations (e.g. ---being a teacher is nice, but nobody wants to work with crazy kids for no pay anymore---) are examples in which a parent can negatively narrow their son's or daughter's career choices from an early age.

The parent's financial concerns and expectations therefore play a part in their direct or indirect influence on their children's career choice by adding their own biases and attitudes into particular occupational fields (e.g. ---you need a job at a big business, not some non-profit company helping the poor if you want to have and support a family in the future---.) Clutter (2010).

Additionally, family differences where one parent unites with a child to take sides against the other parent may also negatively influence the career choice of the child. This creates an unbalanced system where one parent's authority over the child is now negated because of the coalition between the child and the opposing parent. For instance, if the father is pushing his son into a career as a doctor but the son and mother disagree with that path the father will have a very difficult time influencing his son's career choice as long as the mother undercuts his parental authority by siding with the child. By having one parent side with their child's indecision and actively standing against the other spouse who is taking on the opposing role, effectively delays or halts the child's progress towards choosing a future career (Clutter, 2010).

2.6 The Parent-Child Relationship

Jungen (2008) observes that, while it is likely that parental values and expectations are conveyed within each household, the strength of their influence may be reliant upon the parent-child relationship. This includes parental attachment over time and daily interactions in the home. Both of these factors play a role in children's identity development and their career aspirations. Using a secure parenting style, proactive parents help children learn to be autonomous and successful in shaping their own lives. They also transmit values about work and teach important lessons in decision making, work habits, conflict resolution, and communication skills, which are the foundation of career success.

Parents' influence on career development stems from the continuous process of relationship with their children (Young et al. 1997). Analysing career-related conversations between adolescents and their parents, Young et al. (1997) found a reconstruction of the relationship between the parent and the adolescent through some aspect of career exploration. Their research demonstrates how relationships and family functioning are embedded in career conversations and how the construction of career occurs in families. This finding is similar to that of Ketterson and Blustein (1997) who noted that secure parent-child relationships are associated with progress in career

decision making, affirmative career self-efficacy beliefs, and career selection. Their study found that students who have secure attachments to parents engage in greater levels of environmental and self-exploratory activity enabling them to take the risks necessary in exploring new settings and roles (ibid.).

Way and Rossmann (1996) explore the question of differences in individuals' ability to make successful career transitions. From their interviews with youth and adults they identified a proactive family interaction style that significantly contributes to career readiness. According to Way and Rossmann (1996) proactive families are those that;

- i) are well organized, cohesive, and expressive
- ii) speak their mind and manage conflict positively
- iii) seek out ways to grow
- iv) are sociable
- v) make decisions through democratic negotiation
- vi) encourage individual development and
- vii) are emotionally engaged

In a related study, Keller (2004) reported that parenting behaviours seemed to be especially important to middle school students. The study results showed that perceived parenting behaviours discriminate between adolescents with high and low career maturity and decision-making self-efficacy scores. Keller (2004) noted that in order for parents to enhance the career development of their young adolescents, they should do the following;

- i) Express interest in various teenage issues that are important to their children.
- ii) Tell their children they have high expectations for their career.
- iii) Encourage their children to make their own decisions.
- iv) Tell their children they are proud of them.
- v) Help their children understand the results from career tests or interest assessments they have taken.

Keller (2004) further noted that middle school students and their parents have significantly different views about family relationships and parent behaviours.

Furthermore, the results revealed that students whose views about family relationships were very dissimilar from their parents' views had low levels of career decision-making self-efficacy. This implies that when the students and their parents agree on family issues, the students have more confidence in their ability to make good career decisions. Therefore support, love, communication and honesty between young adolescents and their parents may be important for the career development of the adolescents (ibid.).

In a post appearing in QualifaX(Ireland's National Learners' Database), the writer notes as follows, “ parents influence the level of education or training that their children achieve; the knowledge they have about work and different occupations; the beliefs and attitudes they have to working; and the motivation they have to succeed. Most of this is learned unconsciously as children and teenagers absorb their parents' attitudes and expectations of them as they grow up”. He goes on to identify some of the key influencers as;

- i) The expectations parents have for their children's education and career.
- ii) The example they set for their children.
- iii) The values they show to their family, friends and to society.
- iv) The opportunities they offer their children to learn and develop.
- v) The kind of parent-child relationship they develop.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study was based on the Social Cognitive Theory developed from the work done by Albert Bandura (1977, 1986, 1989, 1991, and 2001). The social aspect of the theory acknowledges the social origins of much of human thought and action; the cognitive aspect on the other hand recognizes the influential contribution of cognitive processes to human motivation and action. It is a learning theory based on the idea that people learn by watching what others do, and that human thought processes are central to understanding personality. In his research leading up to the definition of social cognitive theory, Bandura provided empirical evidence that children do, in fact, imitate adult models (Bandura & Huston, 1961, as cited in Weibell, 2011). Building on his earlier studies of aggression in adults and children, he conducted a series of experiments in which he demonstrated the transmission of aggression from adults to children through delayed imitation of aggressive adult models. In similar experiments he showed that imitation of adult behaviour could just as effectively be mediated by film, and that there were no significant

differences in the effective transmission of aggression via film model as compared to transmission via live model (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963). In other words, violent acts could be taught simply by carrying them out in front of the child, and whether they were presented by a live model or by film made no difference (Weibell, 2011). In another study, Bandura and McDonald (1963, as cited in Weibell, 2011) found that even the moral judgments of children are readily modifiable, particularly through the utilization of adult modelling cues. The implication of these findings to this study is that parental and the environmental factors can modify and influence children's career choice.

One of the tenets of Bandura's theory that can influence career choice is that people learn by observing others i.e. a student may like or hate a certain careers after observing the successes or failures of people practicing the career. According to social learning theory, observational learning is comprised of four component processes: (a) attention, (b) retention, (c) motor reproduction, and (d) motivational processes (Weibell, 2011).

Bandura (1977) adds that people cannot learn much by observation unless they attend to and perceive accurately the significant features of the modelled behaviour. In addition retention of what is learned is essential since people cannot be much influenced by observation of modelled behaviour if they do not remember it. Motor reproduction is the third component of modelling and involves converting symbolic representations into appropriate actions i.e. by organizing one's responses spatially and temporally in accordance with the modelled patterns of behaviour. Finally motivation is essential since generally people do not enact everything they learn. They are more likely to adopt modelled behaviour if it results in outcomes they value than if it has unrewarding or punishing effects. Those behaviours that seem to be effective for others are favoured over behaviours that are seen to have negative consequences (Bandura, 1977).

Another tenet of the social learning is concerned with selective response to stimuli. This in essence means that the same set of stimuli may provoke different responses from different people or from the same people at different times. This means attributes of a certain career can stimulate positive or negative influence on students regarding career choice.

Bandura (1991) also introduced the concept of triadic reciprocal determinism. This refers to the continuous reciprocal interaction between personal, behavioural, and environmental determinants (Bandura, 1991, 2001). In other words behavior determines the environment, to which a person is subjected to, and in addition cognitive regulation influences both behaviour and how environmental stimuli are perceived. The immediate environment to the student is the immediate family members. These are the role models the student interacts with as he grows up. The interaction of this environment and the student's personal and behavioural determinants is thought to influence how the student perceives his environment and the choices he makes in life. Since the parents are part and parcel of this environment, they will play a crucial role in influencing the students overall development and future career choice by constantly observing and taking cognizance of their parents' educational and occupational levels together with their values expectations.

The Social Cognitive Theory is therefore relevant to this project since it revolves around the notion that learning correlates to the observation of role models. In career choice, for example, certain professionals play the role of a model in a student career choice. In everyday life, the model could be media sources or those with whom you interact. Effective modelling influences the students in choosing certain careers and avoiding others.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a research tool which is used to help a researcher develop a better understanding of the variables under investigation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999, 2003) which depicts the relationship between the variables in the study. Figure 2-1 gives the relationship between the various variables that influence the career choice of students. These include the independent variables, the dependent variable, and the intervening variables. The independent variables are the parental factors which include; parents' highest level of education, parental occupation, family socio-economic status, parental values and expectations, and the parent-child relationship. The dependent variable is the career choice of the student. The intervening variables include environmental and opportunity factors (such as teachers and parents and siblings, curriculum offered and guidance and counseling services), and students personality factors such as (ability to adapt to new situations, assertiveness, beliefs and attitudes towards work).

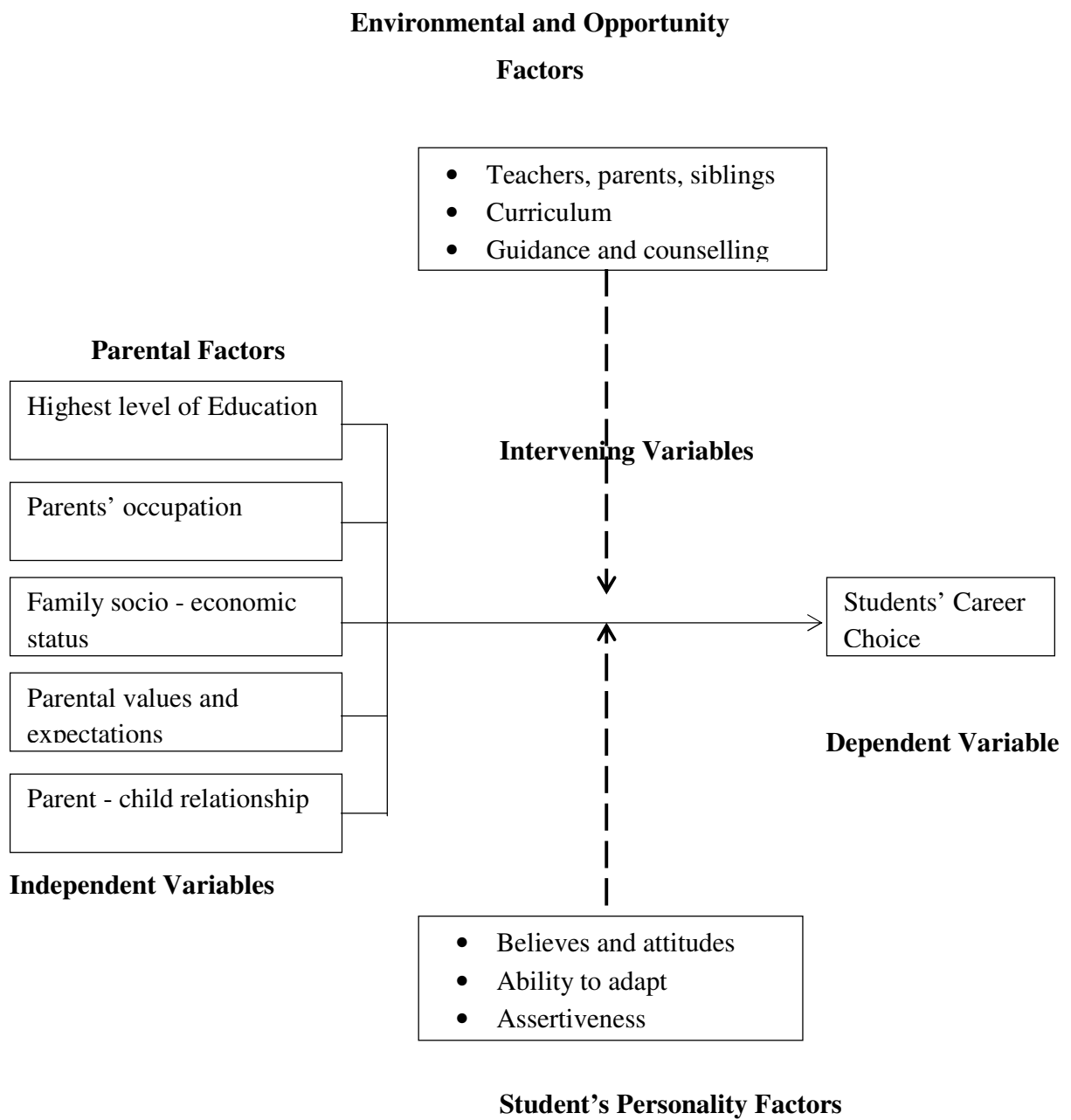


Figure 2-1: Conceptual Framework

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the relevant methodology which was used in carrying out the study. It highlights the research design, study area, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, data analysis techniques and ethical considerations. This study was carried out in eight public high schools in Nairobi County in - Kenya (day and boarding). The rationale for the selection of the schools was based on random distribution of parental variables in these schools due to the criteria applied in students' admission at form one level. Form four students formed the study sample. Their inclusion is based on the assumption that they are mature and has selected their examinable subjects which eventually determined the careers they were likely to engage in. Survey research design was employed since it allows the collection of data through a designed questionnaire. A total of 383 students participated in the study. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics.

3.2 Research Design

The study used the descriptive survey design approach. According to Orodho (2003, 2012), the descriptive survey design is effective, and easy to conduct and it also ensures ease in accessing information. The descriptive survey design allows the researcher to gather information, summarize and interpret data for purposes of clarification. The descriptive survey design is useful in collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or perceptions about issues under investigation (Orodho&Kombo, 2002).

3.3 Target population

The target population for this study comprised of form four candidates in Nairobi County who had registered for the final Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) examinations for year 2016. The choice of this group was based on the assumption that they had already selected a career which they intend to pursue. The KNEC nominal roll for 2016 – run on May 2016 - gave a total of **27,614** registered candidates for this year's examinations. This was taken to be the target population.

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedures

3.4.1 Sample size

In determining the sample size the following formula, developed by Krejcie & Morgan (1970) was used;

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP(1 - P)}{d^2(N - 1) + X^2 P(1 - P)}$$

Where;

S = required sample size

X = Z (chi-square) value at the desired confidence level (in this case $z = 1.96$ for 95% confidence level)

N = Population size

P = Population proportion (in this case assumed to be 50% since this would provide the maximum sample size)

d = Degree of accuracy as reflected by amount of error that can be tolerated in fluctuation of P , (in this case taken as 5%)

Substituting the value of $N = 27,614$ in the above formula,

$$S = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 27614 \times 0.5(1 - 0.5)}{(.05)^2(27614 - 1) + (1.96)^2 \times 0.5(1 - 0.5)} = 379$$

The required sample size was therefore **379** candidates.

3.4.2 Sampling techniques

Sampling is the act, process or technique of selecting a suitable smaller size of a population of a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population.

3.4.2.1 Sampling of Students

In each school, simple random sampling was used to select respondents out of the enrolled form four students from each school using the class registers. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), random sampling is the key to obtaining a representative sample. Most experts suggest sample sizes of between 10-30 % (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003, Orodho, 2003). A representative sample size of 20% of the total number of form four candidates in a school was therefore found to be adequate for this survey. Taking an average class size of 200 students in Kenyan schools, this translates to about 40 students per school. To get the required sample size of **379** students, the survey was therefore carried out in 10 schools giving a total sample size of **400** students. This was a necessary safeguard against instances when some respondents don't return the questionnaires as was the case in this survey.

3.4.2.2 Sampling Schools

The sampling technique used to select the schools in this project was purposive sampling. According to Kombo & Tromp (2006), the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich samples for in-depth analysis related to the central issue being studied.

In view of this, at least one school was selected from each of the national public school grading categories i.e. National, Extra County, County, District and Day Schools making a total of ten (10) schools. The number of Boys' schools selected was equal to the number of Girls' schools. The selected schools are given in appendix III.

3.5 Research instrument

Questionnaires were used as the instrument of collecting data. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), questionnaires are commonly used to obtain data about a population within a short span of time and are easy to administer. The questionnaires were distributed to the schools by the researcher and left with the deputy head-teacher for administering to the students. The questionnaires were designed using simple language so that students would give their responses to the survey questions with ease.

3.5.1 Validity of research instrument

This is the degree to which any measurement technique or instrument succeeds in describing or quantifying what it is designed to measure. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), validity is considered to be the degree to which results obtained from analysis of the data actually represent the phenomena under study. For the purpose of this study, both the face and content validity of the instruments were used. Theoretically to ensure face and content validity, a measure should contain all possible items used in measuring the content. Both face and content validity are non-statistical methods used to validate the content employed in the research instrument (Orodho, 2012). Content validity is concerned with establishing whether the content of the instrument is measuring what it is supposed to measure.

Towards this end, the researcher sought the opinion of colleagues, and other experts on the relevance of the initial draft questionnaires constructed. Such inputs enhanced the validity of the instruments to measure what they were intended to measure in relation to the research questions. Necessary corrections and adjustments were made to the instruments before they were used in the actual collection of data in the field.

3.5.2 Reliability of the research instrument

Reliability of an instrument concerns the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results over a number of repeated trials (Orodho, 2012). In other words, it is the degree to which a measurement technique can be relied upon to secure consistent results upon repeated application. To establish the reliability of the instrument, the split-half method was used. In the split-half method, the total number of items were divided into two halves (odd and even), and a correlation taken between the two halves using the Spearman - Brown correlation coefficient. According to Orodho (2003), a correlation coefficient of about 0.8 is judged high enough for the instrument to be assumed reliable. The correlation coefficient obtained in this case was 0.797 which was sufficient for the reliability of the instruments.

3.6 Data collection procedures

A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed in 10 schools within Nairobi County. The questionnaires were administered to the students through their respective deputy head-teachers for the respondents to self-complete. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the schools by

the researcher. Once completed, the researcher collected the filled questionnaires from the deputy head-teacher for analysis. The total number of returned questionnaires was 383 and all were used in the analysis.

3.7 Data analysis

The data from the field was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. All questionnaires were coded before analysis. Data was coded by identifying themes that related to the research questions and analyzed using descriptive statistics to obtain frequencies and percentages. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test relationships between variables and their significance. Correlations were tested at the 0.01 or 0.05 confidence levels (2-tailed). The results were presented in tables and figures.

3.8 Logistical and ethical considerations

The research instrument included instructions on how to fill the questionnaire. The preamble to the questionnaire had explanations on the purpose and nature of the study and assured all the respondents of their confidentiality. This ensured that the participants were able to make informed decisions on whether to participate in the study or not. To ensure anonymity, the participants were not required to write their names on the questionnaires.

3.9 The dependent and independent variables

The dependent variable refers to the outcome variable the researcher is attempting to predict (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The dependent variable in this case is career choice. On the other hand, the independent variables are factors which the researcher manipulates to explain the variation in the dependent variable. The independent variables in this study will include parents' levels of education, parents' occupation, parents' socio-economic status (SES), parental values and expectations and the parent-child relationships.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on the data collected from the respondents in relation to the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study was to establish the influence of parents' occupation, level of education, socio-economic status, values and expectations, and parent-child relationship on career choice of form four students in public secondary schools in Nairobi County. The sample size was 383 students.

4.2 Characteristics of the Respondents

The respondents were disaggregated by their gender, subject choices at form four level, and depending on whether they had chosen a career to pursue.

4.2.1 Distribution of respondents by gender

A total of 189 male students and 194 female students took part in the survey corresponding to 49.3% and 50.7% of the total respondents respectively. Table 4-1 gives a summary of the distribution of the respondents by gender.

Table 4-1: Distribution of respondents by gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	189	49.3	49.3	49.3
	Female	194	50.7	50.7	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	100.0	

4.2.2 Distribution of respondents by subject choice

A total of 312 of the respondents were pursuing science based subjects while only 71 of the total number of respondents were pursuing art based subjects at form four representing 81.5% and 18.5% of the total respondents respectively. Table 4-2 below, gives the distribution of the respondents by their subject choices.

Table 4-2: Distribution of respondents by subject choice

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Science based	312	81.5	81.5	81.5
	Arts based	71	18.5	18.5	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	100.0	

4.2.3 Proportion of respondents with a career choice

The students were asked to indicate whether they had reached a career choice. The results obtained indicated that 292 (76.2%) of the respondents had arrived at a career choice while 91 (23.8%) of the respondents were yet to decide on a career choice. Table 4-3 gives a summary of the proportion of respondents with a career choice and those without.

Table 4-3: Proportion of respondents with a career choice

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	292	76.2	76.2	76.2
	No	91	23.8	23.8	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	100.0	

The study also sought to establish the students' career choices. The specific career choices the students had made are summarised in figure 4-1 in the next page. The figure shows that 26.2% of the respondents indicated they wanted to be engineers, 22.8% medical doctors, 10.1% accountants, and 9.7% lawyers among others. Hence majority of the respondents wished to pursue science based careers like engineering and medicine while the others wished to pursue arts based courses like law, arts and design among others. This observation is not a surprise, since majority of the students were pursuing science based subjects at form four.

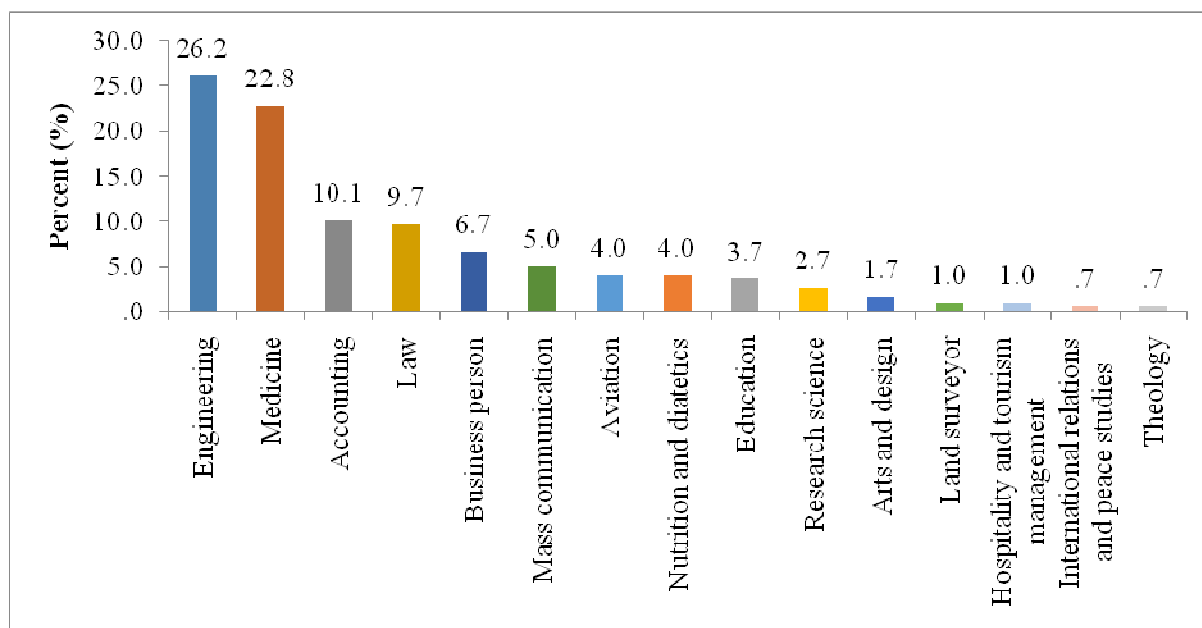


Figure 4-1: Students' career choice

4.3 Influence of parents' educational level on students' career choice

The students were asked to indicate the highest educational level of their parents whose findings are summarised in Table 4-4. From the table, 52.2% and 39.4% of the respondents indicated that their fathers and mothers respectively had attained university degree as their highest educational level. Additionally, 27.2% and 23.8% of their fathers and mothers respectively had attained college diploma certificates while 15.1% of the fathers and 28.5% of the mothers respectively were secondary school graduates. Only 5.5% of the fathers and 8.4% of the mothers had primary school education as their highest level.

Table 4-4: Parents' highest educational level

Highest Education level	Father		Mother	
	N	%	N	%
University Degree	200	52.2	151	39.4
College Diploma	104	27.2	91	23.8
Secondary	58	15.1	109	28.5
Primary	21	5.5	32	8.4
Total	383	100	383	100

Results in table 4-4 imply that parents of students attending Nairobi County schools have on average, a university degree or college diploma. According to Mortimer et al. (1992) parents with a university qualification pass its importance to their children and are more likely to offer their children an opportunity for a better education by enrolling them in good schools and in careers of their own choice. Hahs-Vaughn, (2004) also found out that high parental education has an effect on the academic and social development of students. A high parental education level also implies the parents are likely going to be engaged in professional and better paying jobs. Therefore parents in Nairobi County are likely going to influence students' career choices by enrolling them in better schools and supporting their career choices.

This study also sought to find out the relationship between parents' highest level of education and the career choice of the students. This was achieved by carrying out a correlation between students career choice and parents educational level. Results of this correlation are as presented in table 4-5. Results from the table indicate that the father's education level is insignificantly and negatively correlated with the students career choice ($r = -.012$, $p = .836$) while that of the mother's was both positively and significantly correlated ($r = .132$, $p = .023$). This is an indication that the mother's level of education significantly influences the students' future careers.

This finding is similar to that of Aswani (2012) who noted that parental level of education had significant influence on pupils' educational and occupational aspirations. Kitivo (1989) also found out that a high parental level of education significantly influenced their children's achievement in school and consequently their future careers.

Table 4-5: Influence of Parents highest educational level on students' career choice

		Parents highest education level	
		Father	Mother
Students career choice	Pearson Correlation	-.012	.132*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.836	.023
	N	294	294

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.4 Influence of parents' occupation on students' career choice

The students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the influence of their parents' occupation on their career choice. Their responses are summarized in Table 4-6 below.

Table 4-6: Influence of parents' occupation on students career choice

Parents occupation	Extent				
	SA %	A %	NS %	D %	SD %
My parents chose my secondary school subjects.	3.4	6.8	4.2	32.1	53.5
My career choice has been influenced by the occupation of my parents/close relatives.	8.4	13.8	12.3	24.3	41.3
I have access to employment in a family business.	7.0	12.8	23.0	21.4	35.8
I would not like to take after my father's/ mother's occupation, instead I will go for a better one.	73.4	16.2	3.9	3.4	3.1
I would like to take after my father's / mothers occupation because I admire it.	5.2	6.8	16.7	30.8	40.5
I developed an early understanding and desire of my career choice through observation of my father /mother	15.1	15.1	17.2	31.1	21.4

Key

SA Strongly Agree **A** Agree **NS** Not Sure **D** Disagree **SD** Strongly Disagree

The results, from the table indicate that majority of the respondents were not influenced by their parents or close relatives in choosing their careers with 85.6% of the respondents disagreeing/strongly disagreeing that their parents chose their secondary school subjects while 65.6% disagreed strongly/disagreed that their career choice had been influenced by occupation of their parents or close relatives. Further it is evident that the students would choose a different occupation from that of their parents or close relatives since 89.6% of the respondents strongly agreed/agreed that they would not like to take after parents' occupation and instead they would go for a better one. Another 71.8% agreed/strongly disagreed that they would take after their father's/mother's occupation while 52.5% disagreed/strongly disagreed that they developed an early understanding of their career choice through observation of their parents.

These findings are similar to those of Kisulu et al. (2012) who investigated the factors influencing occupational aspirations among girls in secondary schools in Nairobi region – Kenya. Results from their studies indicated that family members especially the parents and older siblings affect the occupational and career choices of students with 57.5 % of the respondents stating that they would choose different occupations from those of their siblings and parents. This finding is further supported by Williams (2016), who noted that if parents complain about their jobs or struggle to support the family on the income their jobs provide, children are more likely to seek more fulfilling or higher-paid roles.

To find the relationship between parents' occupation and career choice of the students, a correlation was performed between students' career choice and their parents' occupation. The results of this correlation are summarised in Table 4-7. The results indicate that the father's occupation is significantly and negatively correlated with the students' career ($r = -.141$, $p = .016$) while that of the mothers was negatively and insignificantly correlated ($r = -.030$, $p = .609$) to student career choice. This is an indication that there is a significant relationship between the father's occupation and the students' future careers. The negative correlation means that the students would choose careers different from those of their parents. This is supported by the results in table 4.6 above where 73.4% of the respondents indicated that they would not like to take after their father's/ mother's occupation, but instead they would go for better ones.

The findings in table 4-7 are further supported by that of Udoh and Sanni (2012), who noted that parents' occupations exerted a significant influence on the career choice for secondary school students in the Uyo region of Nigeria.

Table 4-7: Relationship between parents' occupation and students career choice

		Parents occupation	
		Father	Mother
Students career choice	Pearson Correlation	-.141*	-.030
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	.609

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.5 Influence of family socio-economic status on students' career choice

The respondents were asked to indicate their family's socio-economic status. The results of their responses are given in the table 4-8.

Table 4-8: Economic status of family

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low class income	29	7.6	7.6	7.6
	Middle class income	332	86.7	86.7	94.3
	High class income	22	5.7	5.7	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	100.0	

The results indicate that 86.7% and 5.7% of the respondents viewed their family's socio-economic status as middle class income and high class income respectively. Only 7.6% thought their families' socio-economic status was low income. This observation could be explained by the fact that most of the parents had an education of above college diploma and were likely going to be engaged in professional and high paying occupations. This implies that the parents in Nairobi County would have no difficulties financing their children's education and career aspirations since they are economically stable. This implies that the socio-economic status of the students' family would be a non-issue when it comes to career choice.

To find the influence of parents' socio-economic status on the students' career choice, the students were asked to indicate their level of agreement of the influence socio-economic factors have on their career choices whose results are summarised in Table 4-9. The results indicate that the family's socio-economic status did not influence the career choice of the students to any great extent. The results show that 74.4% of the respondents strongly agreed/agreed that their parents provided the relevant educational opportunities and resources to provide for their career development. Additionally a combined 72.8% of the respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed that they would consider working after secondary school to support the family rather than make a career choice. Another 66% disagreed/strongly disagreed that their parents were not able to finance their career aspirations and pay fees for the siblings at the same time.

From the study, 46.5% of the respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed that they will have to work for the money needed to attend any training after secondary school. However, 43.9% of the respondents strongly agreed/agreed that money had been an issue in choosing a career.

This finding is not surprising since most of the respondents (92.4%) indicated that their parents' socio-economic status was of middle class and above. As such, financing of their children's education and career aspirations presented no difficulties.

Table 4-9: Influence of family socio-economic status on students' career choice

Parents socio-economic status	Extent				
	SA %	A %	NS %	D %	SD %
I will have to work for the money needed to attend any training after secondary school	15.7	12.3	25.6	27.7	18.8
I will consider working after secondary school to support my family rather than make a career choice.	2.9	7.3	17.0	28.7	44.1
Money has been an issue in choosing a career.	20.1	23.8	13.1	24.3	18.8
My parents have provided the relevant educational opportunities and resources to provide for my career development.	41.0	33.4	9.4	9.9	6.3
My parents are able to finance my vocational aspirations whichever career I choose.	17.2	20.1	32.4	17.0	13.3
My parents say they will not be able to finance any career aspirations and pay fees for my siblings at the same time.	9.4	9.9	14.6	26.1	39.9

Key

SA Strongly Agree **A** Agree **NS** Not Sure **D** Disagree **SD** Strongly Disagree

Table 4-10 gives the results of a correlation performed to find out the relationship between the family's socio-economic status and career choice of the students.

Table 4-10: Correlation of family socio-economic factors and students' career choice

Students career choice			
Parents socio-economic factors	N	Pearson correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
I will have to work for the money needed to attend any training after secondary school	294	.031	.599
I will consider working after secondary school to support my family rather than make a career choice.	294	-.164**	.005
Money has been an issue in choosing a career.	294	.041	.486
My parents have provided the relevant educational opportunities and resources to provide for my career development.	294	-.067	.255
My parents are able to finance my vocational aspirations whichever career I choose.	294	-.084	.995
My parents say they will not be able to finance any career aspirations and pay fees for my siblings at the same time.	294	.000	.513

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results indicate that there is no significant relationship between most of the socio-economic factors considered for students in Nairobi County. However the results indicate there is a negative and significant relationship ($r = -.164$, $p = .005$) between the need to work after secondary school to support the family and students career choice. The negative correlation implies that the student would rather continue pursuing a career rather than work to support the family. It was found there was no correlation between the students career choice and parents not being able to finance the students career choice and paying fees for the other siblings at the same time ($r = .000$, $p = .513$). this could be explained by the financial stability of most of the parents.

4.6 Influence of parental values and expectations on students' career choice

The students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the influence of parental values and expectations on their career choice. The results obtained from the study are summarized in Table 4-11 below.

Table 4-11: Influence of parental values and expectations on students' career choice

Parents socio-economic status	Extent				
	SA %	A %	NS %	D %	SD %
My parents tell me they have high expectations for my career	65.5	23.8	7.6	2.1	1.0
My parents have encouraged me to be involved in extracurricular activities.	40.7	35.2	7.6	12.0	4.4
My parents have given me written material about specific careers.	8.9	21.4	4.4	47.3	18.0
My parents ask me what careers I am considering for my future.	59.5	33.9	1.0	4.4	1.0
My parents tell me about specific careers	26.1	39.4	6.5	21.1	6.8
My parents encourage me to consider many different educational and career options	32.9	35.8	9.4	17.0	5.0
My parents always warned me never to choose certain careers and that is why I am careful not to pick the one they won't like.	6.5	11.7	7.6	33.2	41.0
I have chosen the career to pursue because my parents always speak favourably of it.	5.0	9.1	6.0	37.9	42.0

Key

SA Strongly Agree **A** Agree **NS** Not Sure **D** Disagree **SD** Strongly Disagree

The results in table 4-11 revealed that 89.3% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed that their parents had high expectations for their careers. Another 93.4% agreed/strongly agreed the parents asked them what careers they considered for future. In addition, 75.9% agreed/strongly agreed that the parents encouraged them to be involved in extracurricular activities. There were 65.5% who agreed/strongly agreed that parents told them about specific careers and 68.7% who agreed/strongly agreed that the parents encouraged them to consider many different educational and career options. However, 65.3% disagreed/strongly disagreed that their parents gave

themwritten material about specific careers. In addition, 79.9% disagreed/strongly disagreed that they chose the career to pursue because parents always spoke favourably of it and 74.2% strongly disagreed/disagreed that parents always warned them never to choose certain careers and that is why they were careful not to pick the one they won't like.

The above observations are similar to those of Otto (2000), who asked a cross-sectional group of juniors from six high schools how closely their ideas matched their parents' ideas about which occupations to pursue. In the results, 46 % said their ideas were "mostly similar" to their parents and 36% said "very similar". Hairston (2000)notes children often indicated that their career choice apprehensions were eased when parents approved of their decisions to prepare for a certain career and that parental support indicated career choice approval and elicited expressions of pride and satisfaction among students.

The above observation is also supported by that of Way and Rossmann (1996), who note that by sharing workplace stories, expressing concern for children's future, and modelling work behaviours, parents serve as a context for interpreting therealities of work and future careers. Furthermore, as Clutter (2010) notes, the young adult's understanding of his or her parent's expectations will influence their own career decisions, depending on whether the adolescent feels the need to go along with their parent's views or to rebel against them

The study also sought to find out the relationship between parental values and expectations and career choice of the student. The results obtained from the study are summarized in Table 4-12. The results show that there is significant relationship between parental values and expectations, and students' career choice. There was a strong positive and significant relationship ($r = .195^{**}$, $p = .001$) between the students career choice and the parents telling their children they had high expectations for their careers. The results also indicated positive and significant relationships between students career choice and parents asking their children what careers they were considering for the future ($r = .152^*$, $p = .042$). Parents encouraging students to consider many different educational and career options had also a positive and significant relationship to the students career choice ($r = .112^*$, $p = .045$).

Table 4-12: Correlation of parental values and expectations and students' career choice

Parental values and expectations	N	Students career choice	
		Pearson correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
My parents tell me they have high expectations for my career	294	.195**	.001
My parents have encouraged me to be involved in extracurricular activities.	294	.047	.422
My parents have given me written material about specific careers.	294	-.004	.948
My parents ask me what careers I am considering for my future.	294	.152*	.042
My parents tell me about specific careers	294	-.097	.096
My parents encourage me to consider many different educational and career options	294	.112*	.045
My parents always warned me never to choose certain careers and that is why I am careful not to pick the one they won't like.	294	-.053	.073
I have chosen the career to pursue because my parents always speak favourably of it.	294	.362	.213

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.7 Influence of parent-child relationship on students' career choice

The students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the influence of parent-child relationship on their career choice. The results are summarised in Table 4-13. The results indicate that, 86.2% of the respondents strongly agreed/agreed that their parents told them that they were proud of them, 86.6% strongly agreed/agreed that parents encouraged them to choose whatever career they wanted, 88.3% strongly agreed/agreed that parents encouraged them to make their own decisions, while another 84.9% strongly agreed/agreed that parents expressed interest in various school issues that were important to the student. In addition, 69.4% agreed/strongly agreed that their parents helped them feel better when they were worried or concerned about choosing a career.

Another 68.1% of the respondents agreed that parents told them about the steps involved in making difficult decisions, while 60% agreed that parents understood their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about various topics. There were also 81% who agreed/strongly agreed that parents encouraged them to talk about their career plans and 85.1% of the respondents who strongly agreed/agreed that parents supported them whenever they told them that they were interested in a specific career.

Table 4-13: Influence of parent-child relationship on students' career choice

Parents socio-economic status	Extent				
	SA %	A %	NS %	D %	SD %
My parent tell me that he/she is proud of me	59.0	27.2	9.4	3.1	1.3
My parents encourage me to ask questions about different careers	27.2	37.3	16.7	16.7	2.1
My parents have encouraged me to be involved in extracurricular activities	35.5	38.6	10.7	11.2	3.9
My parents express interest in various school issues that are important to me	50.4	34.5	7.0	4.4	3.7
My parents encourage me to make my own decisions	52.0	36.3	4.2	3.1	4.4
My parents encourage me to try new things.	35.5	30.3	22.5	7.0	4.7
My parents encourage me to choose whatever career I want	52.2	34.4	8.7	4.2	0.5
My parents support me when I tell them that I am interested in a specific career	46.2	38.9	10.7	4.2	0
My parents help me feel better when I tell him or her I am worried or concerned about choosing a career	30.0	39.4	20.9	6.8	2.9
My parents tell me about the steps involved in making difficult decisions	31.3	36.8	18.5	9.4	3.9
My parents understand my thoughts, feelings, and opinions about various topics	28.5	35.5	23.5	7.8	4.7
My parents encourage me to talk to him or her about my career plans.	34.5	46.5	10.2	5.5	3.4

Key

SA Strongly Agree **A** Agree **NS** Not Sure **D** Disagree **SD** Strongly Disagree

The results in table 4-13 indicate there is a strong parent-child relationship between parents and students in Nairobi County and this influences the career choice of the students. This observation is supported by Young et al. (1997), who note that parents' influence on career development stems from the continuous process of relationship with their children. The findings are also similar to those of Ketterson and Blustein (1997) who noted that secure parent-child relationships are associated with progress in career decision making, affirmative career self-efficacy beliefs, and career selection.

The findings by Keller (2004) are also in support of this observation. He further notes that when the students and their parents agree on family issues, the students have more confidence in their ability to make good career decisions. Therefore support, love, communication and honesty between young adolescents and their parents may be important for the career development of the adolescents (Keller, 2004).

The study also sought to find out the relationship between parent-child relationships and career choice of the students whose results are summarized in Table 4-14. The results indicate that there was a significant relationships between students career choice and their parents stating they are proud of them ($r = .112^*$, $p = .046$), their parents encouraging them to try new things ($r = .182^{**}$, $p = .002$), parents encouraging them to make their own decisions ($r = .165^*$, $p = .040$), and when parents support them when they are interested in a specific career ($r = .163^{**}$, $p = .005$). However there were no significant relationships between students' career choice and the other parent-child relationship factors considered in the study.

The above findings are supported by the observation of Jungen (2008) who notes that while it is likely that parental values and expectations are conveyed within each household, the strength of their influence on career choice of the student is reliant upon the parent-child relationship which includes parental attachment over time and daily interactions in the home since both of these factors play a role in children's identity development and their career aspirations.

Table 4-14: Correlation of career choice and parent-child relationships factors

Parent-child relationship factors	N	Students career choice	
		Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
My parent tell me that he/she is proud of me	294	.112*	.046
My parents encourage me to ask questions about different careers	294	.012	.833
My parents have encouraged me to be involved in extracurricular activities	294	.042	.468
My parents express interest in various school issues that are important to me	294	-.040	.496
My parents encourage me to make my own decisions	294	.165*	.040
My parents encourage me to try new things.	294	.182**	.002
My parents encourage me to choose whatever career I want	294	.038	0.480
My parents support me when I tell them that I am interested in a specific career	294	.163**	.005
My parents help me feel better when I tell him or her I am worried or concerned about choosing a career	294	-.009	.882
My parents tell me about the steps involved in making difficult decisions	294	.054	.356
My parents understand my thoughts, feelings, and opinions about various topics	294	.066	.258
My parents encourage me to talk to him or her about my career plans.	294	.002	.969

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Chapter Four

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The objectives of the study were to establish the influence of parents' occupation, parents' level of education, socio-economic status, parental values and expectations, and parent-child relationship on the career choice of form four students in public secondary schools. This chapter highlights the major findings of the study, conclusion and recommendations made.

5.2 Summary of research findings

This section gives the summary of the results on the influence of parental factors on the career choice of form four students in Nairobi County.

5.2.1 Career choices of the Students

The study found out that 81.5% of the respondents were pursuing science based subjects while only 18.5% of the total number of respondents was pursuing art based subjects at form four level. The results obtained indicated that 76.2% of the respondents had arrived at a career choice while 23.8% of the respondents were yet to decide on a career. More than 60% of the respondents indicated had chosen science based careers like engineering, medicine, research among others which was a reflection of their subject choices at form four.

5.2.2 Influence of parents' educational level on career choice

Parents of students attending Nairobi County schools were found to have a high level education with 52.2% and 39.4% of the fathers and mothers having university degrees respectively. This has an influence on career choice of the students, since parents with a university qualification are able to pass its importance to their children and are more likely to offer their children an opportunity for a better education by enrolling them in good schools and in careers of their own choice. It was also established that there was a relationship between parental level of education and the career choice of students. However, while the father's education level was insignificantly and negatively correlated with the students career choice ($r = -.012$, $p = .836$) that of the mother's was positively and significantly correlated ($r = .132$, $p = .023$). This was an indication that the mother's level of education influenced the students' future career more than the father's.

5.2.3 Influence of parents' occupation on students' career choice

The study sought to find the extent to which parents' occupation influenced the students' career choice. Results from the study showed that the respondents were not influenced by their parents or close relatives in choosing their careers with 65.6% disagreeing strongly/disagreeing that their career choice had been influenced by occupation of their parents or close relatives. A further 89.6% of the respondents strongly agreed/agreed that they would not like to take after parents' occupation and instead they would go for a better one.

The results also established that there was a negative significant relationship between the students' career choice and the occupation of their father. Therefore the students tended to choose careers different from those of their fathers. The influence of the mother's occupation on the students' career choice was also negatively correlated but not significant.

5.2.4 Influence of family socio-economic status on students' career choice

Parents of Nairobi County students were found to be economically stable with 92.4% of the respondents indicating their parents were of middle class income and above. Therefore socio-economic factors were found not to influence students' career choice. It was established that the parents were able to support their children in pursuing careers of their choice by providing the relevant educational opportunities and resources to provide for career development.

5.2.5 Influence of parental values and expectations on students' career choice

Parental values and expectations were found to have to influence the career choice of their children to a great extent. From the results 89.3% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed that their parents had high expectations for their careers. Another 93.4% agreed/strongly agreed the parents asked them what careers they considered for future and 65.5% who agreed/strongly agreed that parents told them about specific careers while 68.7% agreed/strongly agreed that their parents encouraged them to consider many different educational and career options.

The results showed a strong positive and significant relationship ($r = .195^{**}$, $p = .001$) between the students career choice and the parents telling their children they had high expectations for their careers. The results also indicated positive and significant relationships between students career choice and parents asking their children what careers they were considering for the future ($r = .152^*$, $p = .042$).

Parents encouraging students to consider many different educational and career options had also a positive and significant relationship to the students career choice ($r = .112^*$, $p = .045$).

5.2.6 Influence of parent-child relationship on students' career choice

Results of the study showed that a healthy parent-child relationship greatly influences the career choice of students. The results indicated that, 86.2% of the respondents strongly agreed/agreed that their parents told them that they were proud of them, 86.6% strongly agreed/agreed that parents encouraged them to choose whatever career they wanted, 88.3% strongly agreed/agreed that parents encouraged them to make their own decisions, while another 84.9% strongly agreed/agreed that parents expressed interest in various school issues that were important to the student. In addition, 69.4% agreed/strongly agreed that their parents helped them feel better when they were worried or concerned about choosing a career.

There was a significant relationships between students career choice and their parents stating that they were proud of them ($r = .112^*$, $p = .046$), their parents encouraging them to try new things ($r = .182^{**}$, $p = .002$), parents encouraging them to make their own decisions ($r = .165^*$, $p = .040$), and parents supporting their interest in a specific career ($r = .163^{**}$, $p = .005$).

5.3 Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that parental factors influence the career choice of students in Nairobi County. Results from the study lead us to conclude that a high parental educational level has an influence on the career choice of students. In this respect, it is concluded that the mother's level of education influenced the students' future career choice more than that of the father.

In addition it can also be concluded that, students in Nairobi County would choose careers that are different from those of their parents, siblings and close relatives. It can further be concluded that the father's occupation had a more significant influence on the students' career choice than that of the mother. It was found that there was no significant relationship between the socio-economic status of the family and the students' career choice. It may therefore be concluded that the socio-economic status of the family did not have an influence on the students' career choice.

Further it was established that parental values and expectations played a major role in shaping the students careers. In this respect it can be concluded that parental values and expectations have a significant relationship with the career choice of students. Finally it is can also be concluded that a healthy parent-child relationship in which they spend time together sharing ideas on different career choices greatly influences the students' career choice.

5.4 Recommendations

It has been established that parental factors have an influence on the career choice of students' in Nairobi County schools. In light of this, it is recommended that teachers and career guidance counsellors should take this into cognizance when advising students on their future career choices. In particular;

- i) Teachers and career guidance and counsellors should realise a high level parental education influences students' career choice and should therefore pass the importance of higher education to the students in relation to their careers.
- ii) Parents should not force students to pursue careers similar to their own against their will. This is because majority of the students indicated they would not choose careers similar to those of their heir parents.
- iii) Teachers should recognize that parents from Nairobi County were willing to support the education and career aspirations of their children. In this regard it is recommended that the teachers should motivate the students to achieve their utmost potential since the parents are able to support any career aspirations of their children.
- iv) Parents should realise that their values and expectations influence the career choice to a great extent. In this respect it is recommended that parents should deliberately communicate their expectations to their children without being overly persuasive.
- v) A strong parent-child relationship is essential in shaping the students career choice. In this regard, it is recommended that parents should take time to discuss different career choices with their children. Whenever necessary, the parents should express satisfaction with the child's decision.

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Appendix I - Request Letter for Data Collection

**Mutinda Alphonse Mwaa
Ministry of Education
State Department for Vocational & Technical Training
Jogoo House B, Nairobi**

25-May-2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

DATA COLLECTION – POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION

I am currently working in the Ministry of Education and deployed at the department of Vocational and Technical Training.

I am pursuing a Post Graduate Diploma in Education Programme of the University of Nairobi. As part of programme, am carrying out a research project on **“Parental Factors Influencing Career Choice among High School Students in Nairobi County”**.

I am in the process of collecting data from among form four students in Nairobi County secondary Schools. I am requesting your assistance in administering the questionnaires to form four students in your school. Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Attached please find the letter from the University of Nairobi for your perusal.



Mutinda Alphonse Mwaa

Deputy Director, Technical Accreditation and Quality Assurance



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEAN**

Telegram: "CEES"
Telephone: 0202028238/0720209996
Our Ref:

P.O. Box 30197, NAIROBI
or P.O. Box 92, KIKUYU, KENYA
E-mail dean-extstudies@uonbi.ac.ke

May 19th, May

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

NAME: MWAA MUTINDA ALPHOUSE
REG. NO: L40/76947/2014

This is to confirm that the above named person is a student of the University of Nairobi where he is doing research project/data collection in the School of Continuing and Distance Education.

Any assistance given to him will be highly appreciated.

UON
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND
DISTANCE EDUCATION
CEES - UON
P. O. Box 92 - 00902
KIKUYU

PROF. HARRIET J. KIDOMBO
DEAN
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

HJK/gn

Appendix II - Permission for Minors to take part in the survey

I understand that the purpose of this study is to investigate the parental variables influencing career choices for High School students in Nairobi County. I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary and I may discontinue my participation at any time without prejudice. I further understand that any information about me that is collected during this study will be anonymously processed and that the results and interpretations of the study will be used only for the purpose of the study.

Signature of student: _____ Date: _____

Careers Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix III - Research Questionnaire

Preamble

Please do not write your name on the survey questionnaire. Your participation is strictly voluntary and you may discontinue it at any time without prejudice. Please indicate your responses by ticking [√] as appropriate.

A. Student Particulars

1. Gender: Male [] Female []

2. Which subject choices are you pursuing at form four?

Science based [] Arts based []

3. Have you arrived at a career choice so far? Yes [] No []

4. If your answer to Qn. 3 above is yes, please indicate the career you wish to pursue below.

Career chosen _____

B. Parents Particulars

1. What is your parents' highest education level? (*Tick as appropriate*).

Father: Primary [] Secondary [] College Diploma [] university Degree []

Mother: Primary [] Secondary [] College Diploma [] university Degree []

2. Please indicate the occupation of your parents (e.g. engineer, accountant, doctor, professor, teacher, lawyer, etc.).

Father: _____

Mother: _____

3. How would you rate your family's economic status?

Low class income [] Middle class income [] High class income []

For each statement given in parts **C, D, E, F**, below, please read each carefully and indicate the degree to which you agree with the statement by placing a tick [√] in the appropriate space using a rating scale of 1-5 where;

1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Not sure, 4=Disagree, 5=Strongly Disagree

C. Parents Occupation

To what extend did each of the following factors influence your choice of career?

1. My parents chose my secondary school subjects.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
2. My career choice has been influenced by the occupation of my parents / close relatives.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
3. I have access to employment in a family business.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
4. It would not like to take after my father's / my mother's occupation, instead I will go for a better one.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
5. I would like to take after my father's / mothers occupation because I admire it.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
6. I developed an early understanding and desire of my career choice through observation of my father / mother
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

D. Parents socioeconomic status

To what extend did each of the following factors influence your choice of career?

1. I will have to work for the money needed to attend any training after secondary school.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
2. I will consider working after secondary school to support my family rather than make a career choice.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

3. Money has been an issue in choosing a career.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
4. My parents have provided the relevant educational opportunities and resources to provide for my career development
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
5. My parents are able to finance my vocational aspirations whichever career I choose.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
6. My parents say they will not be able to finance my career aspirations and pay fees for my siblings at the same time
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

E. Parental Values and Expectations

To what extent did each of the following factors influence your choice of career?

1. My parents tell me they have high expectations for my career.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
2. My parents have encouraged me to be involved in extracurricular activities.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
3. My parents have given me written material about specific careers.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
4. My parents ask me what careers I am considering for my future.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
5. My parents tell me about specific careers.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
6. My parents encourage me to consider many different educational and career options.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
7. My parents always warned me never to choose certain careers and that is why I am careful not to pick the one they won't like.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
8. I have chosen the career to pursue because my parents always speak favourably of it.
 [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

F. Parent-Child Relationships

To what extent did each of the following factors influence your choice of career?

1. My parent tells me he or she is proud of me.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
2. My parents encourage me to ask questions about different careers.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
3. My parents have encouraged me to be involved in extracurricular activities.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
4. My parents express interest in various school issues that are important to me.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
5. My parents encourage me to make my own decisions.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
6. My parents encourage me to try new things.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
7. My parents encourage me to choose whatever career I want.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
8. My parents support me when I tell them that I am interested in a specific career.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
9. My parents help me feel better when I tell him or her I am worried or concerned about choosing a career.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
10. My parentstell me about the steps involved in making difficult decisions.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
11. My parents understand my thoughts, feelings, and opinions about various topics.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
12. My parents encourage me to talk to him or her about my career plans.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

Appendix IV - Schools Selected for the Survey

Table A-1: Nairobi County schools selected for the survey

Public school category	Selected schools	
	Boys'	Girls'
National	Starehe Boys Centre and School	Kenya High School, Pangani Girls' Secondary
Extra County	Pumwani Boys High School	Precious Blood Secondary School
County	Dagoretti High School	Ngara Girls' Secondary School
District	-	Pumwani Girls' Secondary School
Day	Jamhuri High School , Dr. Ribeiro Parklands High School	-