INFLUENCE OF SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS ON CAREER ASPIRATION FOR HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS IN MOSOCHO DIVISION, KENYA:

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award

of any degree in any university.

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

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my dear and loving children; Albert, Nobert, Delvin and Laureen. Thank you for your encouragement. Also, to my other family members and friends, you have made this possible.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Many important career decisions are made during adolescence. These early decisions affect the rest of a persons' life. This is in the sense that the type of career an individual goes into determines the way of life and how life is spent. An individual's entry into a career is an outcome of a complex process of interaction between the individual's characteristics and those of the society in which one lives. The development of career preferences and choice is a process which at every stage, social experiences not only influences one's own characteristics but also influence the perception of the career implications of one's own characteristics. Thus social factors are a "summarizing" variable upon which all other variables are based or understood.

This qualitative study examined the influence of family, Gender/sex role stereotypes and social class on high school girl's career aspirations in Mosocho Division. The objectives that aided the study were; to determine family influence on career aspirations, to establish how gender/sex-role stereotyping influences career aspirations of girls in Mosocho Division.

In order to realize the objectives of this study, the study adopted the Ex Post Facto research design. The target population was 300 high school girls from which a sample of 100 was selected through simple random sampling. Data was analyzed descriptively through frequency distribution. Tables and percentages were used to present data. The findings revealed that the family, gender/sex stereotypes and social class had a significant effect on-girls' career development process and choice.

Among the recommendations made is more counseling program could be established to provide career information with special emphasis on career options and possible for females as well as he establishment of gender equity campaigns in schools to raise awareness that all genders can aspire for all occupations.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

A career is an indispensable factor in the life of an individual. This is in the sense that the type of career which an individual goes into, determines the way of life and how life is spent. In fact the world over today, ' fashioning a work identity" translates into "fashioning an identity" (Gibbs and McRoy, 2006).In all cultures, personalities are identified by what they do. For the young, this question is critical in determining the outcomes of their lives.

Research indicates that women's career aspirations have evolved steadily over time, a shift from primarily traditional female oriented roles. However, vocational researchers have noted that their participation is yet to reach the level of men in the work force. This is despite recent effort to increase their participation through advanced training and education.

Women are still underrepresented in many high status occupational fields particularly those associated with physical science, engineering, and applied mathematics. They have tended to enter the workforce in lower status; lower paying jobs and remains clustered in a limited number of conventional careers even when they have attained the same educational achievements with their male counterparts (Lebrenton & Loevy, 1992, Belz and Fitzegerald, 1987).

A survey undertaken by the Gender Equity Advisory Committee (GAEC), Illinois in 2005 reveal that women continue to be overrepresented in lower paid lowest opportunity jobs iiTthp economy. For instance, women are overrepresented in education (teaching) and healthcare (nursing), secretarial, cashier, customer service representatives, managers of administrative support. These careers typically afford less compensation, prestige and power (Spraggins, 2000, GAEC, 2005).

Studies carried out in Nigeria as in Britain indicate that while the percentage of women rose from 12% to 70% in the workforce due to their participation in further education and training between 1971 to 2004, distinct differences exist in the type of occupations entered by men and women. Women got more jobs in administrative, clerical, personal services and sales occupation (women and work commission, UK 2005, Ajayi, 2000). Statistics collected by the Equal Opportunities Commission show

that *Va* of working women in Britain are still in just five occupational groups and in the five 'C's   cleaning,   caring,   cashiering,   clerical,   and   catering (http;//www.EOC.org. UK, 2005).

A project that investigated the impact of gender segregation of European labor market on vocational training and education in UK, German, Portugal, and Greece in 2005 found that in spite of industrialization and societal development, men and women retained predominantly traditional expectations with regards to life (http.//www. pjb;Co. UK. 200

In Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Black Caribbean countries, while girls are ambitious and forging a head at school, they are more likely to face barriers in realizing their potential in the work place because they are not adequately prepared to make educated choices in a bias- free information which would have helped them to eliminate their barrier. (Http.//www.Women and Equity Unit.Gov.UK/research, 2005).

Inequality on training and participation of both men and women in the Kenyan labor force has equally defied recent efforts to correct it. Although some progress has been made towards improving women representation in economic activities, inequalities still exist signaling the need for policy makers to go back to the drawing board There still exists poor representation of women in the labor market, enterprise ownership as well as in decision making process.

According to the world fact book (Central Intelligency Agency, 2001), Kenyan women form 51% of the population, but constitute only 20% of the employed labor force. Most women^re engaged in the informal sector (i.e. handicraft and food market, commodity labor, unpaid labor, under-the-table waged labor), where they are active in agricultural and domestic labor.

Chlebowska (1990) also argues that the few women in the labor force (i.e. taxable wage labor) are secretaries, nurses and teachers and about 20% are unskilled casual laborers. In contrast, in the formal labor sector, upper income fields such as communication and manufacturing are male dominated (International Labor organization (ILO) 1981, 1991, Republic of Kenya, Ministry of labor, 1990, 1992, 1997).

A report by the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA, 2008) shows that women continue to be overwhelmingly represented in educational services employment

(55%), nursing (54%) social and clerical work (57%). They are however drastically underrepresented in areas such as building and construction (7%), manufacturing (18%), electricity and water (18%).

While representation of both men and women in decision making process is critical for effective implementation of policies that affect the general population, overall, a negligible proportion of women are represented in senior and middle level policy formulation and implementation process despite the substantial number of women in communities. A comparison between 2003 and 2006 indicate that the number of female ministers declined *from* three to two against a total of 32, even if the number of women assistant ministers increased from 4 to 6, still it is a mere 13% compared to male representation.

In other public service representation such as the level of provincial administrations, women were not represented at all by January 2006, while at the District commissioners administrative unit, the number of women actually reduced from three in 2003 to two in 2006 representing a mere 2.8%.

Also despite the fact that females constitute 51% of the population, they constituted 8% of members of the national Assembly during the 9th parliament, 6% of ministers, 13% of members of parliament, and 3% of District commissioners, 20% of District Officers, 13% of councilors and 21% of Deputy Secretaries.

It is worth noting however that 50-50 affirmative action was demonstrated in the nomination of women in the 10th parliament with 6 women out of 12 being nominated, however, in 2008 coalition cabinet, there area mere 6 (15%) female ministers out of the total 4^ ministers. (I.E. A, 2008).

The absence of womeA in high profile, well paying and prestigious jobs cannot be taken as evidence that they are not suited to those positions. Rather, it can be attributed to factors that curtail women's aspirations and development. This study was undertaken to examine the influence of sociological factors in career aspirations of high school girls as this is the stage when career aspirations are formed (Hellenga et al. 2002, Rainey & Borders, 2000).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Despite efforts to ensure equitable representation of men and women in training and labor force participation, there is still disparity evident between men and women in the labor force. Many Kenyan women continue to be overrepresented in careers that ofTer low pay, limited benefits and few opportunities for upward mobility (Kiluva - Ndunda, 2001), Women and work commission, 2005). They shy off from competitive professional careers (particularly those in science, Mathematics and technology fields) (Kithyo & Petrina, 2002).

Further, studies indicate that female students of all ages choose significantly less variety of careers than boys of similar age (Arap Maritim, 1984, Lindsay 1980, Kithyo & Petrina, 2002). This is a major concern because students choose their university majors and careers while in high school.

Given this disparity, that has life-long consequences. It becomes imperative to have a comprehensive understanding of how young women today are forming their career aspirations and what factors are influencing them. In this study the influence of family, gender/sex role stereotyping and social class on girl's career aspirations was examined.

1.3 Purpose of study

The purpose of this study was to examine the career aspirations of high school girls and determine the extent to. which family, gender/sex role-stereotypes and social class influence their career aspirations.

1.4 Research objectives. [1]

The study was guided by the following objectives.

1) Determine family influence on high school girl's career aspirations in Mosocho Division.

2) Establish how gender/sex role stereotyping influence high school girls' career aspirations in Mosocho Division.

3) To

examine the extent to which social class influence high school girls career aspirations in Mosocho Division.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following Research questions;-

1) How does the family influence high school girls' career aspirations in Mosocho Division?
2) What is the influence of gender/sex role stereotyping on career aspirations for girls in Mosocho Division?
3) To what extent does social class influence girls career aspirations in Mosocho Division?

1.6 Significance of the study

The selection of a career is among the most critical decisions in a person's lifetime. The decision has a far reaching impact on the individual in terms of lifestyle, status, income, security and job satisfaction. This study on the influence of sociological factors on career aspiration for girls will be of importance to various stakeholders.

The study presents relevant data and information that can influence design and implementation of gender related policies. Improving women profile in all sectors through among other factors, reducing gender disparities will not only benefit women alone but also men and children.

Further, this study will aid educators and guidance counselors to understand more fully the background variables and problems faced by young girls as they choose their careers. This may challenge educators to continue to create better curriculum and career opportunity programs in order for students to overcome the inequalities brought about by Stereotypes. This will enhance women empowerment and contribute to sustainable economic growth, reduce poverty and other forms of inequalities.

The study will also be of assistance to the subject schools in understanding how female students' career aspirations are formed. This will aid in assessing their progress as well as aiding them in career development.

1.7 limitations of the study.

Many factors **may** and do **contribute** to the global picture of any one human being, including those that are inherited biologically and those that result from social and cultural environments into which one is bom To separate each of these factors into unique and separate items for the purposes of investigation is difficult if not insurmountable and an inappropriate task. One factor does not exist in isolation from the influence of others, and the pattern of interrelationships among them may differ from one set up to another. However, the difficulty of examining intangibles did neither prevent nor deter their investigation, but did provide awareness that the results of such studies indicate suggestions and trends rather than absolutes.

Since the information regarding parents" education level was secured from the students. It is possible that some data may be incorrect because the student may not have complete or accurate information. Some students left parental education level blank. This could mean that the father is either absent or they did not know the educational level.

Finally, since the subject schools are from the middle to low class areas, the findings may not be generalized to include the entire high school girls' but the targeted population.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

The study was basically concerned with career aspirations for high school girls It was conducted in three secondary schools in Mosocho Division, Kenya, between May and June 2010 using Ex Post Facto research design on a sample of 100 girls in forms three and four from a target population of 300 students. The data was collected through questionnaire.

1.9 Basic assumptions of the study.

The following assumptions were made for the purpose of this research.

The first assumption is that the findings from the sample are representative of the entire target population. Secondly, the findings from the sample have formed the basis of my summary, conclusion and recommendations.

Thirdly, it is my belief that the responses given by the respondents were honest and well thought out

1.10 Definition of significant terms used in the study.

Interests - This are patterns of likes, dislikes and indifferences related to career development and occupations. Interests motivate and move a person toward or away from a certain activity.

Self-efficacy is the confidence in the personal ability to be successful in the performance of a task.

Sex is used to refer to the biological aspect of an individual and is sometimes used to refer to die characteristics which develop as a result of being male or female.

Gender is a person's learned or cultural status. These are certain behaviors and attitudes that are culturally assigned thus the development of traits to each sexual category.

Social class is the status hierarchy in which individuals and groups are classified on the basis of esteem and prestige acquired mainly through economic success and accumulation of wealth.

Occupation refers to any activity that serves as ones source of livelihood, a vocation. It's used interchangeably with career in the study.

Job traditionalism is the belief that certain jobs are meant for a particular gender.

Career preferences are choices that one makes in relation to work and training

Sociological factors denote the agents of society that influence or affect human behavior i.e. family background, cultural norms, socialization e.tc.

Upper class denotes an individual or group distinguished by the influence of power and wealth. It is the highe^f m(societal ranking.

Middle class is the social class comprising of white collar (Non-manual) workers, i.e. lower level managers and small business ownership.

Lower class is a socioeconomic class consisting of individuals or groups that are paid an hourly or weekly wage (casual laborers).

Vocation is a regular occupation especially one for which a person is particularly suited or qualified.

Gender- stereotypes is the conception, perception or image concerning the social roles of males and females both domestically and socially. It's the belief held about what is "deemed" appropriate for **men** and women.

Career barriers are internal or external blocks that interfere or disrupt career preparation. The manner in which an individual perceives a barrier determines to a large extent how the person will approach the barrier.

Career beliefs are attitudes, opinions, convictions and *notions* that seem to create mindsets that underlie people's orientation to the idea of a career.

A career aspiration is goals or desires one aims to achieve in relation to further education and work.

Career clusters- The collections of job categories according to societal ranking. Thus the existence of high, medium and low rank career categories.

1.11 Organization of the study.

Chapter one introduces the background of the study, the problem under study, the purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, the significance and scope of the study, assumptions, limitations and delimitation as well as the definition of significant terms used in the study.

Chapter two provides a review of relevant literature on the issues of gender/sex stereotypes, family and social class influence on career aspiration. Chapter three outlines the researcl^,design, target & sample population, sampling and data collection procedures, validity and reliability of data instruments as well as analysis and ethical issues. Chapter four presents the analysis of data and its presentation and discussion and chapter five summarizes the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, a comprehensive review of literature related to the variables of family, social class, and gender/sex role-stereotyping in relation to career aspiration and development with specific emphasis on high school girls is presented. It begins with a discussion of the discrepancies betwe«i the numbers of males and females occupying positions of high prestige, leadership, and power in occupational realms. Secondly, the variables are reviewed separately to establish the extent of their influence on women's career aspirations.

2.1 Existing discrepancies on career aspirations between men and women

While women are increasingly getting involved in the workforce, a shift from primarily traditional female oriented jobs, it seems that many are entering fields that remain mostly segregated by gender (Hesse-Biber & Carter, 2000). For instance women are four times as likely as men to work in administrative support positions. Other female-dominated fields include education (teaching) and healthcare (nursing National centre for Education statistics, 2002. In the U S A in 2001, 83 percent of elementary teachers, 93 percent registered nurses and 90 percent of nursing aids were women (USDOL, 2002).

The top 10 occupations in which women are employed in rank order by number are; 1) secretaries, 2) Elementary school teachers, 3) registered nurses, 4) nursing aides, 5) cashiers, 6) customer service representatives, 7) managers of administrative support, 8)1naijagers of retail sales workers, 9) bookkeepers, and 10) receptionists (USDOL,2003). Females continue to be overrepresented in these and other careers (Spraggins, 2000).

Generally, researchers have, consistently documented women's career, choices as lower compared to men s (Betz 1994, Betz & Fitzgerald 1987, Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980). More recently, researchers have documented declining aspirations of young women as they grow older (O'Brien et al, 2000) and the continued trend of women's lack of participation in non-traditional fields (Conton, 2002).

While overall women's work participation has increased, it seems occupational segregation and the ensuing wage gaps have not (Goldin, 1990). Women

have made notably important professional gains; however, half of all women who currently work. Continue to be overrepresented in lower paying occupations. Given this historical trend, the importance of young women's early career choices cannot be understated.

In Kenya, studies indicate hat women continue to be overwhelmingly represented in traditional career fields. A study on young undergraduate women reflected that the new generation of women still continue to be clustered in lower paying, traditionally female- oriented occupations. (Institute of Economic Affairs, I.E.A, 2008).

The annual Economic survey on wage employment in modem sector for 1999-2001 shows that women involvement was around 30%. A review of data on civil service employees shows that women made up 23% in September 2002 with majority concentrated on the lower cadres of employment (Job group A-D). Further, the data on wage employment shows that the proportion of women employees in the modem sector has remained stagnant at around 29.5% during 2000 - 2003.

A study on the socioeconomic profile of Kenyan women by the Institute of Economic affairs (2008) revealed that women's workforce participation had risen to 52%. The report revealed that women had the highest representation in educational services employment (55%), nursing (54%), social and clerical work (57%). Perhaps a further reflection of a gendered workforce, there are many careers where women are drastically underrepresented such as building and construction (7%) manufacturing (18%), electricity and water (18%).

Thus, while overal^ women's workforce participation has increased, it seems occupational segregation and Aie ensuing wage gaps have not (Goldin, 1990). Women have made notably important professional gains; however, half of all women who currently work continue to be overrepresented in lower-paying occupations. Given this trend, understanding young women's early career choices cannot be understated.

The absence of women in high profile, well paying and prestigious jobs cannot be taken as evidence that they are not suited to those positions. Rather, this can be attributed to factors that curtail women's career aspirations as well as development. The following section will deal with research related to explanations for these discrepancies especially based on sociological factors of gender/sex role-stereotyping, family influence and, social class.

2.2 Family and career aspiration

Most research has found that families (and particularly parents) influence decision making of children Family influence is an important force in preparing youth for their role as workers. Young people form many of their attitudes about work and careers as a result of interactions within the family. Family background provided the basis from which their career plans and decision making evolve.

"Family background factors found to be associated with career development include parents' Socioeconomic Status (SES), their educational level, and biogenetic factors such as physical size, gender, ability, and temperament"(Penick & Jepsen, 1992, p.208). In a study on influences on adolescents 'vocational development reported by Mortimer et al, (1992), the variables that had most effect on educational plans and occupational aspirations was parental education and occupation.

Mortimer et al. reports that parents with post secondary education tend to pass along its importance to their children- a finding supported by other studies. Montgomery (1992) notes that females talented in math viewed their career choices as reflective of interests that stemmed from early family influence and educational opportunities. Marso and Pigge (1994) found that the presence of teachers in the family was a significant factor influencing teacher candidates' decisions to teach.

DeRidder (1990), points out that lower levels of parent education retard adolescents career development- "Being bom 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 vocational choice"(P.4). [1]

Ball, Maquire & Macre (2000) found that family and family life formed an important backdrop to key decisions for the 16 to 19 year- olds they interviewed. The education and training decisions of the young people in their sample reflected the fact that most of them were part of, and in many cases continued to be obligated to their family. For some in their sample the family was a resource, a source of information, financial backing and support.

They found that parents influenced decisions on destinations at the end of compulsory schooling. Sometimes parents were more than "formal advisers" Ryrie (1984) found that, for most of the students interviewed, parents influenced the

decision to stay or leave at the end of compulsory schooling, and found little evidence of conflict between the young persons decision and parental expectations.

Taylor (1992) likewise found that for most of her sample of 200 interviewees in survey staying on in education post - 16 was both what was expected of them and what they preferred to do, and that the few who intended to leave at 16 they were also conforming to parental traditions and expectations. A few in Ball, Maguire and McRae, (2000) sample resisted parental desires and expectations, but even these individuals considered their parents' opinions to be important.

Similarly, Helmsley - Brown (1999) suggests that parents are moire influential at some stages in the decision-making process than others. She found that during the "preliminary search - stage" young people gathered information from family (and friends) in an 'informal' manner. She also found that the actions and attitudes of parents were significant at this stage. During "the refined Search stage", the gathering and assessment of formalized Institutional Information becomes more important. Nevertheless, as noted previously, this information appears to function as a post hoc justification for decisions already made at an earlier stage (in which parental attitudes and information are more significant).

The research evaluated reveals that different members of the family played different roles in the individuals' decision-making. Hodkinson, Sparkes and Hodkinson (1996) found that parents could be a valuable source of information, and instrumental in finding placements for young people on the Training credit scheme. Taylor (1992), Ball, Maguire and Ball (1996) found that mothers particularly played an instrumental informatipn-seeking role, but Brooks (2004) found that for the working-class students in her sample, fathers took a more active role than mothers in decisions about higher education.

Taylor (1992) also found that their current or recent experience of higher education, work-based, training or employment rendered siblings rather than parents a valuable source of detailed information. While Archer et al., (2005) found that advice from older siblings "not to make the same mistake I did" based on the experience of leaving school at 16 but finding it difficult to find work could encourage the pupils to re (engage) with education.

Parents are probably the most important source of advice and help when decisions are taken. MayChell and Evens (1998) found that when 11 years students in

their national survey were asked who they talked to about their plans; parents were named far more often than friends, teachers or career advisers. Keys and Fernandez (1993) found that nine year pupils talked to their parents about their career plans "often" or sometimes. Taylor (1992) stresses the importance of families as a source of career information and guidance.

"The family is the key and often the single most important informal source of guidance, information and influence —. Mothers played an especially Instrumental information seeking role".

Although much of the research on the role of family in vocational and career development has focused on family background, the investigation of family processes viewed in relation to life's role offers additional insight into the influences of the family. Family processes of interaction, communication and behaviour influence what the child learns about work and work experiences. Educational and career goals and aspirations, and values have a long term impact on youth's career choices, decisions and plans.

"Parents as daily models provide cultural standards and expectations and, in many ways, determine the eventual adequacy of self- acceptance and confidence, of social skills and sex roles. The attitude and behaviour of parents while working or discussing their work is what the children respond to and learn" DeRidder (1990). Through the process of educating their children about life roles, parents can influence the employability skills and values that children subsequently adopt. Grinstad and Way, (1993).

Middleton and Loghead (1993) suggest that adolescents' career aspirations be examined from an integraStionist perspective rather than a unilateral process of influence "focusing on the context and situations in which adolescents' career development occurs (p. 163). Middleton and Loughead (1993) present three categories to describe types of parental involvement inn adolescents' career development
1. Positive involvement 2. Non involvement 3. Negative involvement

The greatest anxiety adolescents feel about their career decisions or exploration, quite understandably, is in response to parents' negative involvement. Parents in "negative Involvement' category are often controlling and domineering in their interactions with their children. Children of such parents pursue careers selected by their parents rather than those they desire so as not to disappoint their parents or go

against their wishes. Likewise, they feel a strong sense of frustration and quilt when they do not meet their parents 'expectations' (Penick and Jepsen (1992).

Adolescents from enmeshed families may have difficulty mastering career development tasks because they are unable to distinguish their own from parental goals and expectations. On the other hand, adolescents from disengaged families may lack familial support and interaction, resulting in limits on self-knowledge and task orientation that interferes with mastery of career development tasks (Penick and Jepsen 1992).

P*arents' educational* level has been positively related to aspirations of youth (Mau and Bikos, 2000). Burlin (1976) stated that both parents' educational level wielded a strong influence on career choices of their daughters. Signer and Saldana (2001) noted the positive relationship between adolescents' career aspirations and their mother's educational achievements. Jones and Wombe (1998) found that those mothers who completed either a two year or four-year secondary degree had higher expectations of work and career related issues.

The occupational status and the educational level of females' parents have had a significant impact on girls' career aspirations and choice (Burlin, 1976). Wahl and Blackhurst (2000) indicated that children's career aspirations were more closely related to parental occupations. Among adolescent females in particular, career choice was strongly influenced by the mother's occupation (Burlin, Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000). The mother's occupation was credited with impacting children's aspirations because children who attended work with their mothers were more likely to know what their mother's did for^ living.

Burlin (1976) further deduced that career choices and aspirations in females were significantly predisposed by the mother's type of work. In an early study of college women, Burlin, *determined that daughters of* working mother's chose a life pattern comparable to their fathers. Burlin's findings reiterated the importance of mothers as role models in the development of their daughters' career goals and aspirations.

Similarly, Sagna & Saldanas (2001) study found that the social status of a mother's occupation as opposed to the social status of father's occupations had a stronger correlation with the social status of female students' career aspirations. The

researchers attributed these findings to the fact that mothers exhibit a greater presence in many homes.

The general and long term influence of parents on young peoples' attitudes, education and career preferences is demonstrated by different studies. Kelly's (1989) large longitudinal study of how young people's career preferences develop found evidence of parental influence. Further, mother- daughter relationships seemed to favour girl s educational and career achievement in three main interconnected ways;- a) Emphasizing Independence b) Providing emotional support, and c) Influencing the girls' values.

In looking at family influences on career choice, other family members other than parents should not be ignored. Keys and Fernandez (1993) found that more than two fifths of 16 year olds in their national sample talked to brothers and sisters, and more than two fifths to other family members. Similarly, Taylor (1992) reported that; "Siblings'" current or recent experience of further or higher education, training on job could be a more precise source of information than that of parents Taylor (1992 **p.** 319).

A study of female engineering students in several polytechnics in Kenya found that 50% of them made the decision due to influence from their fathers (Wambua, 2007). Female students in the non-engineering programs reported influence from their mothers. Influence from the family can also be negative with some studies showing parents put pressure on their-kids to pursue certain courses, especially low, socioeconomic status parents (Kithyo & Petrina, 2002).

2.3 Gender/sex role stereotyping and career aspirations

Although no difference in intelligence has been found between males and females with regard to reasoning, learning, perception, memory ad motor skills (Guttenberg & Bray, 1976, Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). There was a distinction between the two when it came to occupations (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974), self-concept (deNys & Wolfe, 1985), and interests (Sadker & Sadker, 1985). Further, girls generally had a poorer self-concept by the time they reached high school, rating themselves below boys in terms of intellectual and scholastic ability and leadership (deNys & Wolfe, 1985). Even when their achievement-
test scores and grades were

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comparable to those of boys, some girls became "less committed to careers" (Sadker & Sadker, 1985) by high school years.

Even the gifted girls tended to experience a similar pattern, giving up their special abilities or hiding them as they neared completion of high school (Shaffer, 1986). These same gifted females, according to a 40-year study, "were found to be less successful in occupational status, income, intellectual contribution to society than average males" (Shaffer, 1986).

There were a number of factors contributing to these discrepancies between males and females. According to Best (1983), for example, there was a "second curriculum"' in elementary schools which taught children as they read their textbooks that boys were aggressive, heroic, imaginative, adventurous, clever, independent and excellent problem solvers. Girls were described as "inferior, passive, dependent, fearful, lonely and, domestic", (p.62).

This "second curriculum" encouraged girls to be helpful and boys to look down on girls and "to accept as their due the help that girls offered" (Best, 1983, p.4). This bias in textbooks continued throughout the books of post-secondary level, stereotyping the roles of males and females and excluding females, in narrative and content (Sadker, 1984). Thus, while learning the cognitive information conveyed, (the child was) also learning, assimilating stereotypical values and roles through the language, content and illustrations.

As a result of the stereotypes presented to young girls, in their reading and through advertisements (Gough, 1976), it hardly seems strange that girls often had marriage and children as,their central concern (Ginsberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad & Herman, 1951; Herzog, 1982* Sadker, 1982). For the man, success was measured by his achievement within the field of occupation, for the women; however, success was generally linked to marriage and family (Bardwick, 1971). In effect girls were conditioned to find their achievement in terms of service to a male and children.

There was a significant decline in academic achievement of girls when they reached puberty (Gough, 1976, Greenberg- Lake, 1991), and the decline continued throughout the school years (Greenberg- lake 1991). This decline is related to career commitment (Sadker & Sadker, 1982). Part of this decline was explained by the societal view that a girl should have skills to fall back on if, for any unforeseen reason, she was forced to enter the job market after her marriage. (Sadker & Sadker,

1982) but that basically, a woman's role was prescribed in terms of home, marriage, and family (Best 1983, Sadker & Sadker, 1982).

Evidence found thai women, even gifted women, had a low self-concept, self-esteem, and motivation and were often intellectually underdeveloped, overeducated for the jobs they held, and were in the lowest jobs in pay, opportunity for advancement, and status (Shaffer, 1986). This concept was inherent in the stereotyped images of males and females presented in television and print. Certain traits were seen as masculine while others were seen as feminine, and those which were thought to be masculine were seen as more valuable (Sadker and Sadker, 1982).

Girls who excelled in traits and talents which were seen as more masculine such as mathematical skills and computer work or independence, may be seen as "deviant" rather than talented or gifted (Sadker & Sadker, 1982, Shaffer, 1986). In fact, achievement in academics, or in any area traditionally seen as masculine, often caused a fear and avoidance of success in girls (Gough, 1976, Maccoby, 1966; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974).

Both men and women, describing people who succeed in academic settings, depict "painful and embarrassing things happening to successful women, good things happening to successful men" (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974, p.348). Females therefore tended to fear success and intellectual achievement since they felt it could lead to "negative consequences such as unpopularity and loss of femininity" (Homer, 1969, p. 38). Consequently a gifted female was often caught in fear of success as well as fear of failure (Bardwick, 1971, Gillian 1982).

Other findings indicated that boys generally received more criticism and punishment than girls did, bift also more praise, instruction, and encouragement. In fact, adults tended to "respond as if they found boys more interesting, and more attention provoking, than girls (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974 p. 348). Girls were more likely to conform and comply than were boys while boys were aggressive (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974).

Studies also indicated that active students received more precise instructions and feedback than passive students and therefore, were more likely to achieve higher academic scores (Sadker & Sadker, 1985). When a male student was having difficulty with a problem, the teacher generally gave him more detailed instruction and encouragement. When a female student was having difficulty with a problem, the

teacher often did the problem for her or had other male peers complete it (deNys & Wolfe, 1985, Sadker & Sadker, 1982).

Girls were encouraged by this kind of interaction to feel that they were helpless and the difficulties were insurmountable when it came to mathematics and science (Sadker & Sadker, 1982). As a result, girls tended to drop out of courses which were oriented towards mathematics, science, and technology and computer science. Often, in fact girls received the message that these courses were masculine in nature and to excel in them was to lose ones' femininity (Lipkin & Sadker, 1985). Many of the occupations in today's market require these very areas (Schuster, 1992, Schwartz & Neikirk, 1983).

Generally, in all societies, whether Western or non-western, women appear to have been brought up to believe in and adhere to gender roles which are conveyed to them on a daily basis. These beliefs are so ingrained into the females that they are extended to vocational choices (Valiante, 1996). An individuals' acceptance of these stereotypes would have a strong effect upon whether or not one is willing to step outside the boundaries of career traditionalism.

Societies have also labelled different occupations as appropriate for males or females, and in general, women's work tends to be devalued (Padavic & Reskin, 2002). Gender role socialization theories suggest that boys and girls are socialized as children to be oriented towards jobs that are deemed appropriate for their gender (Kimmel 2000, Padavic & Reskin, 2002, p. 53).

The gender bias and stereotypes on career aspirations exists as early as pre-school where boys are ascribed as possessing high intellectual capabilities than girls. Thus from the pre-school £ge to adolescence where a sense of competence is entrenched, women are cast in non-achieving roles, subordinate and emotional while men are cast as directive, venturesome, enterprising and recreational. Through this socialization process, children grow into maturity to develop different interests. When time comes to make occupational choices, they've already internalized their gendered roles.

Both men and women's future ambitions are shaped by social norms and gender role expectations (Greene & DeBacker, 2004). Men tend to focus more on employment goals while women have a more diverse set of goals, including goals for "carriage and family as well as career (Greene and DeBacker, 2004). Thus for women.

occupational decisions are often made in conjunction with choices about marriage and children. (Eccles, 1994, Marini et al. 1996). Osipow & Fitzgerald 19%) stated that "gender is clearly one of the most powerful of all influences on vocational behavior".Jones and Wombe (1997) revealed that female secondary students were more conflicted between their future career commitment, marriage, and family.

Studies on gender and career aspirations revealed that girls opted for a narrow range of occupational categories (Looft, 1971, Crawford, 2002, Wahl and Blackhurst, 2000). Though other studies indicated that girls had broadened their career preferences, their expectations for career attainment remained low especially for high status- traditionally male jobs (Wahl and Blackhurst, 2000). This shows that gender stereotypes have a strong effect upon whether or not girls and boys are willing to step outside the boundaries of career traditionalism.

(Ben, 1981) developed a schema theory- that proposes gender to be a pervasive component not only in influencing the perception of information regarding the self but also the assimilation of the same type of information.

Hodkinson, Sparkles & Hodkinson, (1996) found that by the end of their longitudinal study of participants in a training credit scheme, all young people followed a chosen occupation within traditional gender stereotypical roles. One female started on placement in a male job (as a car repairer) but once she became redundant, moved to a typically "female" occupation (as a shop assistant).

Similarly, most of the pupils interviewed by Archer et al, (2005) expected to pursue traditional routes (skilled manual trades such as mechanic, plumber and electrician for boys and hair/beauty or care work for girls) and that the few girls who initially expressed non-traditional career aspirations ruled these out by the end of the research.

 Okonkwo, (1980), Adugbo (1980) found gender to be a dominant factor in occupational aspirations in the sense that male students preferred realistic, investigative and enterprising occupations than females who are more interested in humanistic, artistic, aesthetic, literary and clerical activities (also Engineering Council Report, 1991). This view tallies with the U S National Science Foundation (NFS). The Equal Opportunities Report (EOR, 2005) argues though, that its not only gender socialization that keeps women from high skilled jobs but the women themselves lack the courage to enter the fields. They also see the requirements for successful

performance in such areas as incongruent with the way they see themselves (Women and work commission, 2006).

Some behavioral difference related to sex can naturally be attributed in part to the obvious physical differences between the sexes. In general, males are taller, heavier, and stronger than females and as a result may tend to occupy positions of employment requiring physical strength and/or other qualities generally characteristic of males e.g. construction work or heavy labor may demand more in a physical sense than many females are capable of performing and as a result, the majority of females would naturally not seek out such employment nor be successful at it. Okonkwo, (1980), Adugbo (1980).

Gender/sex issue affect women s career development as it entails multiple role planning for women. Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) indicated that one of the most consistent findings in the literature is the incompatibility between the wife and mother role and women's career development. Some believe that women's lowered career aspirations result from their struggling with decisions to balance career and family. (Arnold & Betz, 1994). This explains why women choose traditional and lower paying careers because they are often perceived as most complementary in raising a family (Betz, 1994), Weitzman, 1994).

Research suggests that women may choose such careers even when there is little interest in the career itself (Koski & Subich, 1985, Feather & Said, 1983). This would seem to indicate that though women may plan on working in the labor force, many view this role as secondary to the family.

Today, females^continue to have low participation rates in science and technology based programs[1] This limits their choice of career preparation programs to the few that do not have science and technology requirements. Gender therefore is a central issue in any study involving access to technical *training* facilities *in* Kenya (Eshiwani, 1984, 1991, 1993, 1936, Ndunda, 1995, Stamp, 1989; World bank, 1989).

Several reasons have been advanced as to why women are underrepresented in the formal labor force (Eshiwani 1984, 1991, 1993, 1936). One of the main reasons has been that women believe that they are responsible for children, family and healthcare, thus taking up responsibility of tending to the young and the needy. Women often see competitive professional fields as the domain of men. Gender continues to militate against the full participation of female in technology based

programs (Eshiwani 1983, 1984, 1985, 1936, Ndunda, 1995). Gender also works to keep males in their "normal" occupational place as well, but these places are often accompanied by status and wages that far exceed the females' occupations. (Lather 1991).

Although women may have comparable income and employment experiences upon graduation from university, they are limited in how far up the employment ladder they can go, so the so called glass ceiling effect (Hughes & Mwiria, 1989).

Gender remains the most pervasive factor influencing career choice (Kithyo & Petrina, 2002). A study of 3rd, 5th and 7th grade students from Kipsigis ethnic group found that he girls chose significantly less variety careers than boys of similar age (Arap Maritim, 1984). Other studies of students in secondary and higher education Institutions found similar stereotypes (Kithyo & Petrina, 2002; Lindsay, 1980).

2.4 Social class and career aspiration

Social class boundaries have been identified as mayor factors in career development (Fredrickson, 1982). Although career progression is generally viewed as a primary means to "rise above one's station in life", such progression is not easily achieved, particularly for those in the low social class strata (Osipow, 1983). The conditions in these strata often inhibit and destruct career upward mobility because of limited economic and other resources, the lack of education and training, conflicting values, and a paucity of role models. For the most part, the higher the economic resources of the family, the higher the child's educational and occupational aspirations (Horner, Buterbaugh & Carefoot, (1967).

Researchers examining the relationship between social class and career aspirations implicitly or explicitly test the theory that wealth begets wealth and poverty begets poverty. Research spanning most of the twentieth century supports this theory by finding that social status is positively associated with career aspirations and expectations (Boynton, 1936, Brook et.al., 1974, Cook et al. 19%, Riesman & Banuelos, 1984, Vigod, 1972, Weinger, 2000).

Social class affects behaviour through its impact on individuals' aspirations, sense of efficacy, personal standards and emotional states. Low social class has an effect on goal setting in these individuals as they tend to set lower goals for themselves (Huitt, 1999, Dajares, 1996). Further, children of low social class start out

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in life at a disadvantage. They do not have the same kind of experiences as children of other social classes.

Social class and availability of resources greatly impact the decision- making processes of students (Freeman, 1999, Spohn et al, 1992). Bronfenbrenner (1986) documented the many areas of research that discuss the impact of economics on career development. Finances affect children at home, in their interactions with family members, at school and in the neighbourhood play area. Social class can dictate educational choice (i.e.) which school children attend, determine the availability of media and information. Entire cultures *or* subcultures are influenced by economic and accepted standards of living that are available to the members.

In effect, the social class into which one was bom influence the amount of education, the success in the academic realm and the range of occupations for which one qualifies (Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad & Herman, 1951). This can be partially explained by the stimuli and the cultural schemata one received from the family and partially from the realization that important and lucrative careers required a great deal of formal education, something which the lower class student may not have been able to afford (Hyman, 1966).

Generally, students from upper income families enrolled in high school academic programs, aspired to attend college, and aspired for careers with greater prestige. The opposite was also true; students from low income families tended to enrol in vocational programs and move directly from high school into the labour market. Children from lower income families often had little contact with college graduates or with people that were in more prestigious jobs or professions, therefore, they were less likely to have^role-models to emulate or to encourage them towards higher aspirations (Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axerlrad & Herman, 1951).

Herr and Cramer (1996) stated that socioeconomic status afTects information about work, work experience, occupational stereotypes which influence vocational interests. Studies show a positive association between high school students' aspirations and their families socioeconomic status (Mau & Bikos, 2000, Signer and Saldana 2001). Trusty (2002) indicated that a low S.E.S resulted in reduced and unrealized expectations. Compared with middle and upper class individuals faced ᵐore obstacles that limited their career aspiration levels (Gottfredson, 1981, Farmer, 1985).

Researchers agree that S.E.S influences career choice (Gottfredson, 1981, Setters et al. 1999, Mau & Bikos' (2000) cited previous findings showing a positive association between families' S.E.S and aspirations. Youth from higher S.E.S were more likely to be knowledgeable of and choose professional occupations (Setlers et al, 1999). In contrast, Brown & Barbosa (2001) found career aspirations of young females from low income families were confined to experiences of their relatives and friends. Influential siblings are thought to play a role in the career development of adolescents from lower S.E.S backgrounds.

S.E.S has long been considered an antecedent of vocational choice (Miller & Form, 1964). Children of lower S.E.S hold more conservative attitudes about the types of work men and women can do (Hageman & Gladding, 1983). They also report more favourable attitudes overall towards occupations, yet less occupational knowledge in general than children of higher S.E.S (Nelson, 1963).

Children's social class awareness influences their comprehension of the world of work such that they develop beliefs about appropriate jobs as being those that match their perceived fewer job opportunities for themselves than for children who are poor (Weinger, 1998) Awareness of differences in occupational prestige prompts children to ascribe higher status rankings of professional and managerial level jobs (Lehman & Witty, 1931) and this appears to occur sooner among boys than among girls (Simmons, 1962).

Family income greatly influences the career development of youth especially for girls (Mortimer et al. 1992). One reason for this may be that families with limited economic resources tend to direct them first to the males of the family, giving less hope and encouragement for tfurther education to the daughters in the family. Also, some parents especially working class or lower income parents may hold values that place girls in the home maker role and reflect - less emphasis on occupational preparation (Ibid). 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.

S.E.S **may also affect parents" perceived efficacy and academic aspirations,** which **may then affect their children's engagement in occupational activities (Bandura, Barbanelli, Capara and Pastorelli,** 2001). **Adolescents from lower** S.E.S **backgrounds may not have access to career resources as those from high** S.E.S

background (Valdez, 1998). As a result, students may not have adequate resources to achieve them.

Social class is linked to the decision to opt for vocational or academic "pathway". Students from primarily middle-class family backgrounds are more likely to opt for academic path ways, whereas students, who opt for vocational pathways particularly work-based training, are more likely to be working class in their family origin. (Helmsley - Brown, 1999, Furlong 1992). Faskett, Dyke & Maringe (2004) found that the sorts of patterns were replicated when looking at the social economic environment (S E E) those from low S E E expressed a preference for vocational progression routes whereas more pupils from schools in higher S.E.S environments expressed a preference for academic pathways.

There is also some evidence of a relationship between social class and which particular subjects or type of subjects students prefer to choose. In the case of working class pupils interviewed by Archer et al. (2005) this relationship was linked to pupil's perceptions to attainments. Many of these students were disengaged from "academic" subjects and expressed a dislike of reading and writing, preferring vocational courses and "practical", interactive and/or hands on activities" which they perceived to be related to their own interests, to be clearly useful for them in future, and to offer the chance to be "good at something.

Women who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds are not exposed to a variety of careers, possibly due to lack of female role models (Arap Martim, 1986). This can be seen in the fact that female students from professional backgrounds (their parents have some formal education and have a professional job as opposed to farming or unskilled labour) and consequently higher socioeconomic backgrounds usually chose a wider variety of careers compared to students whose parents are farmers or unskilled labourers (Lindsay, 1980).

Women from higher socio economic backgrounds also have a higher likelihood to pursue higher education than women whose parents are employed in unskilled labour.

2.5 Career Aspiration

In an effort to define career aspirations for women to aid in effective research, two distinct constructs have evolved, first, a body of research exists that has examined

career aspiration as career choice (Wang & Staver, 2001> These studies typically classify occupational choice based on salary/ prestige level (Belz, Hessacker, & Shuttleworth, 1990, Farmer, Waidrop. Anderson & Risinger, 1993), Nauta, Epperson & Kahn, 1998).

Secondly, career aspiration has been defined as intrinsic motivation for succeeding in one's chosen career field (farmer, 1997$_T$ O'Brien & Fassinger, 1993, Plucker, \998 Wang & Staver, 2001). Both operahonali^cd **definitions** yield valuable information, particularly for women who may aspire to a traditional career but be highly motivated to become a leader within that field.

Related to this, the construct of career aspiration as motivation has also received validation through researchers who have identified that women can hold traditional aspirations but expect to excel within that field (Coition, 2002, Edwardson, 1998, Rainev & Borders, 1997). Numerous researchers have also documented a dichotomy between expected and desired career aspiration (Contort, 2002, Davey & Stoppard, 1993, Mcnulty & Borger, 1998)

Aspirations have been considered an essential component in the motivation to achieve, operating somewhat like a self-fulfilling prophecy. One question that comes to mind in the study on women's career development is what happens to them enroute to their career goals? The data on what happens to women's career goals are inconclusive, althou^i some patterns have emerged.

Researchers have consistently documented women's career choices as lower when compared to men's' (Betz, 1994, Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987, Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980). More recently researchers have documented declining aspirations of young women as they grow old f^ Bnervel al, 2000) and **the continued** trend of women's lack of participation in non-traditional fields {Goaalon, 2002).

In addition, young *undergraduate women are continuing* to overwhelmingly choose traditionally female fields (National centre for Education Statistics (2002). This indicates that a new generation of women will continue to be clustered into lower paying, traditionally female occupations

Harman (1972, 1981) found thai although women aspired to non traditional careers in their teens, they changed to more traditional career goals when they reach their twenties What prevents individuals from working in their chosen field? A number of researchers have proposed the existence of barriers Some of these barriers

are present due lo sex-role socialization, while others occur due to environmental deterrents Despite the proposed existence of barriers, some women are able to attain their career goals. This may be due lo some women being able to overcome these obstacles due to their ability to do so as well as having high self-esteem

Thus perception of career barriers as wdi as self consciousness influences the path taken by *an* individual Women's' perceptions and expectations often result in self-fulfilling prophecies (Carson, 1982, Bower, 1975).

Linda Gottfiredson, a psychological theorist makes four assumptions about career aspirations and development;-

The career development process begins in childhood.

Careers aspirations are attempts to implement one's self concept (perceptions of intelligence, social status and gender, values and personality.

Career satisfaction is dependent on the degree to which the career is congruent with self perceptions.

People develop occupational stereotypes to guide them in the selection process.

When choosing an occupation, it is selected and organized by first the masculinity and femininity of the occupation This means that even if a "manly man" really wanted to teach in a kindergarten, he will likely choose older grades or school administrations, similarly, most housedeaners. daycare workers, and secretaries are women and construction workers, truck drivers, and plumbers are men Career choice is usually a compromise between the effort required, prestige level and sex-type when compromising, they give first consideration to sex roles, then prestige, then their interest and effort required   ^

Ginzberg, Ginsburg, **Alexalda,** and Herman (1951) stated that the developmental process of career decision making is not a single decision but a series of decisions made over a period of years "p. 185 "This process has three periods, fantasy, tentative and realistic.

In the fantasy period, choices are made without any concept limits. The child in this period generally up to age i I feds as if anything and everything is possible and wishing to make it happen Impulses and momentary needs are arbitrarily translated into career choices without the realization of facts on the occupation or the self. During this period, the child observes and hears about various careers *and* begins role- Paying on them The family responds wath attitudes (Hadley & Levy, 1962). The

family thus plays an important role in influencing the child during fantasy period (Super, 1969X

In the second period, tentative choice (age 11-16), the person makes choices basically on personal criteria, interests, abilities, and values. During this period, although the family may continue to act as an important reference, other groups (Classmates, Church, group members. Sports team m&es and other associates) move into prominence (Hadley & Levy, 1962). Also more information is acquired about occupations (Super, 1957) and the young persons begin to explore the traits of the people in them as well as the *attitude* of *other* people to the occupations (Hadley & Levy, 1962)

The third period, realistic (between the ages of seventeen and the early years of adulthood) is a time of compromise The individual considers all the factors (Liedman & O'Hara, 1963). One begins to balance personal criteria with opportunities, requirements, and limitations of the occupation presented in society (Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad & Herman, 1931). It is during this stage that the individual explores the alternatives and then determines the specific career choice area. Ginzberg (1952) stated that the choice made is a compromise of interest, abilities as well as satisfying values.

Hodkinson, Sparkes and Hodkmson (1996) developed a concept of "pragmatic rationality" to convey the way in which decisions are made. They argue that people are bound by horizons for action, which are determined by both external job and educational opportunities and personal perceptions of what is possible, desirable and appropriate perceptions whiter are derived from both the wider culture and an individual's life history. Banks et al. (1992) sees decision-making as a rational process constrained by perceptions of opportunity (shaped by an individuals' family background, class & gender) and shaped by individual personality.

Thus from the literature reviewed, it's agreed by researchers that there are many factors that enter into career aspirations. The choices a person makes, the values that person holds, the successes and failures experienced, socialization, the social class in which one develops, the interests, strengths, capabilities of the person all enter into these-decision. In other words career aspiration is a product of heredity and environment, and the person's self-concept (Herr, 1970, Hewer, 1963, Super, 1957). The choice of a career is, therefore, not merely a decision of a moment. It is a

complex and difficult process that spans a number of years (Ginzberg, Axelrad &
Herman. 195IX if not a lifetime This study was specifically able to establish the
extent of the role played by Gender/sex role stereotypes, social class, and family on
career aspirations for gjris in high school.

Summary

From the literature reviewed, it's agreed by researchers that there are many
factors that enter into women's career aspiration and development The choices a
person makes, the values that person holds, the successes and failures experienced,
the interests, strengths capabilities of the person all enter into these decisions, in other
words career aspiration is a product of heredity and env ironment aid the persons self
concept (Herr, 1970, Hewer, 1963, Super, 1957)

It's particularly clear thai the influence of the family; Gender-sex role-
stereotyping as well as social class on girls' career aspiralion is *enormous.* These
factors affect the career aspirations and development process by their role in the self-
elTicacv of the girls; ensuring girls adopt a gendered path as well as limiting resources
to the girls because in event of scare-resources, priority is given to boys.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

While Western career interventions may nOt be entirely suitable for Kenyan
girls and women, career theories may give insight into some ways in which career
choice may be as a result of social and environmental factors The social cognitive
career Theory (SCCT) is one such theory with elements *that* may clearly depict the
Kenyan situation.   t

The social cognitive career Theory is derived from Albert Bandura s social
cognitive theory and is basal cm three key variables that influence career choice;
namely self-efficacy, *outcome expectations and persona]* goals (Lent & Brown, 1996).
According to SCCT people engage in activities they believe they are competent in and
that are believed to produce desired outcome expectations. This process is mediated
by many factors that include skill practice and feedback from parents, teachers and
other significant others.

Self efficacy refers to people's judgement of their ability to organize and carry
out certain actions in order to achieve goals (Bandura, 1977) outcome expectations

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refer to beliefs about consequences of choosing to pursue certain courses of action. Personal goals refer to **intention** to pursue an activity to bring about a specific outcome. According to the social cognitive theory, there is a causal influence between the three variables thai is multidirectional (Sent el al. 1994). Goals are influenced by both self-eflicacy and outcome expectations and self-efficacy is believed to have the most influence on behaviour

Self-efficacy is influenced by several factors;-

a) Performance accomplishments, (b) vicarious learning, (c) social persuasion and (d) physiological states and *reactions (Lent* Brown *& HacketL* 1994). People may not pursue careers within their competence if they do not perceive themselves as capable of being successful in them i.e. they possess faulty self-efficacy beliefs. Empirical evidence suggests that occupational interests are influenced more by perceived capabilities than objective capabilities (Barak, 1981).

This difference between perceived capabilities and objective capabilities appears to be one of the reasons that Kenyan women do not choose careers perceived to be the domain of men thus opting to choose traditional female careers they perceive themselves competent in (Kithyo & Petrma, 2002).

Social persuasion also seems to be operative in career choice process through indirect feed- back such as gender-based instruction methods (Forum for African women Educationists (FAWE, 2007). Individuals may also exclude potentially rewarding caress because they perceive negative consequences (outcome expectations) of pursuing such careers or perception of barriers can deter individuals from finding and entering occupations that are congruent with the abilities and interests (Holland, 1995, Krumbbltz, 1996).

Empirical evidence in career choice behaviour of Kenyan women seems to support the influence of outcome expectations in the pursuit or exclusion of certain careers. Kithyo and Petrina (2002) found that anticipated discrimination from employees was cited by women in tertiary institutions as the reason they did not choose careers they perceived as male domain The negative outcome of expectation of discrimination thus leads to elimination of many potential careers for these women.

Environmental influences such as social cultural and economic factors are believed to have a profound effect on career development and are important in SCCT through the influence they have on self-efficacy, outcome expectations and personal

goals (Chatrands Rose, 1996). These include economic needs, dictates of the family, discriminatory institutional and social practice (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1991, Lent & Brown, 1996). People may develop narrowed career interests as a result of being in an environment that does not expose them to a broad range of experiences or one that communicates low self-efficacy or negative outcome expectations (Brown & Lent, 1996; Hacket & Byrars, 1996).

Educational, cultural and policy barriers seem to be pervasive in the Kenyan education system, affecting self-efficacy beliefs, perceived consequences and finally personal goals of Kenyan women Gender biased instruction methods, parental biases in educating their children based on gender are just a few of the environmental obstacles that seem to limit self-efficacy- building experiences for Kenyan Women in future careers (Lindsay, 1980, Sifuna, 2006).

Social constructs like gender are important in SCCT because they influence self efficacy and outcome expectations through reactions they evoke from the environment and also the opportunity structures related to them (Lent & Brown, 1996). Gender role socialization teases the information available for boys and girls in developing self-efficacy beliefs In Kenya gender appears to be a major determinant of the building of self-efficacy experiences. Female students have a lower likelihood of succeeding in science, maths and technology careers (Agesa & Agesa, 2002) as a result of unsupportive school and social environments.

Contextual aflordances and influences impact learning experiences, beliefs, interest formation, goals performance and attainment In the Kenyan context contextual factors such as cultural influences, socioeconomic status and educational policies interact with gendfer fo produce low self-efficacy and negative outcome expectations of pursuing careers perceived to be male domain Women's career goals and choices then become narrower *than* those *of* men in the same context. Social cognitive career theory thus seems especially suited to explaining career choices among Kenyan women, especially their failure to pursue non tradition career options.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Independent
Variable

Dependent
Variable

```
┌──────────────┐                                    ┌──────────────┐
│ Sociological │ ─────────────────────────────────▶ │ Career       │
│ Factors      │                                    │ Aspiration   │
└──────────────┘                                    └──────────────┘
        │                                                   │
        ▼                                                   │
┌──────────────────┐                                        │
│ Sex/Gender       │                                        │
│ Role – stereotypes                                        │
│   • Biological   │                                        │
│   • Cultural     │                                        ▼
│   • Perceptions  │                                ┌──────────────────────┐
└──────────────────┘                                │ Career               │
                                                    │ Aspiration           │
┌──────────────────────┐                            │   • Career           │
│ Family influence     │ ─────────────────────────▶ │     traditionalism   │
│   • Parental Education                             │   • Low/High status  │
│   • Parental Occupation                            │   • Career options   │
│   • Significant others                             └──────────────────────┘
└──────────────────────┘                                     ▲
                                                             ╱
┌──────────────────┐                                        ╱
│ Social class     │                                       ╱
│   • High         │                                      ╱
│   • Middle       │                                     ╱
│   • Low          │                                    ╱
└──────────────────┘                                   ╱
                                          ┌──────────────┐
                                          │ Self efficacy│
                                          └──────────────┘
```

Key   Independent variable

^   Intervening variable

Source (s e l f - 2010)
A conceptual frame work on the influence of sociological factors on career
aspirations for high school girls.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology for examining the influence of the family, gender/sex role-stereotyping, and social class on high school girls' career aspiration is described. The research design, target and sample population, the sampling procedure, instrumentation and data analysis together with validity and reliability of the instruments are presented Finally, the variables under study are operationall/ed.

3.1 Research **Design.**

The research design for this study was Ex Post Facto.This research design is effective in analysing career choice and similar data (Atkinson, 1990, Harding 1987, Hargreaves, 1995). Ex Post Fado is a research method which involves studies which investigate possible cause and effect relationships by observing an existing condition or state of affairs and looking back in time for valid causal factors (Davis, 2005 p. 145). It refers to causal inferences drawn after the fad. In Ex Post Facto study, the causal event of interest has already happened.

This design was appropriate for this study because the study was concerned with establishing the causes of an observed effect The literature reviewed clearly indicates that women's career aspirations are stifled by societal agents thus their under representation in certain careers as well as overrepresentation in others. Thus, this research design will help explore possible causes thai have led to the observed effect.

Further, the design ^xarpmes naturahstically occurring treatments that cannot be manipulated and data is often gathered in the most nonintrusive way possible (Davis 2005, P. 144). Besides, it can be used to assess altitudes, thoughts, feelings and perceptions. It was used to examine the career aspirations for gjiis. it was specifically to investigate the relationship between the influences of family, gender/sex role-stereotyping and social class on career aspirations of high school girls.

3.2 Target population.

The **population of interest in this** study **was 300** secondary school girls in forms three and four in Mosocho Division The subjects are drawn from three selected secondary schools. These participants were selected because they are in a stage when career preferences emerge (Helienga et **ai2002,** Rainey & Borders, **2000).** This is also the period when **occupational** interests are crystallized **as** individuals consider all of the factors (Tiedman *&* **0 Hara, 1963).** One also begins to consider career opportunities and limitations of the occupation presented in society (Ginsburg, Axerlrad & Herman **1951**, Gottfredson$_T$ **1981).**

Additionally, form three students choose subjects (eiectives) which are a pointer to their career preferences, while in form four, career choice is made in preparation for post secondary schooling and entry into the job market thus determining career pathway therefore career information is availed to the learners by career counsellors, parents, teachers and significant others.

Table 1; Designed target population, sample population and number of respondents.

school	target	form n	form rv	total (samnle)
A	120	22		40
B	100	20	14	34
C	80	18	08	26
total	300	' 60	40	100

3.3 Sample size and sample selection.

The sample consisted of 100 girls from three secondary schools coded as schools A, B and C.Chang (1996X recommends that a sanple size of 1/3 is representative of whole population. Purposive sampling was used to select the participating schools Tins was appropriate because it was only girls who were targeted in this study thus the selection of typical and useful cases only. Simple random sampling was used to select the respondents *Simple random* sampling was used because it ensures that each member of the target population stood an equal and

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independent chance of being included in the sample. Ft was also appropriate because the subjects under study were from the same geographical environmental set up thus were homogenous.

Thus the findings have little or no variability at all. Therefore, the findings of the selected sample are representative of the entire target population from which generalizations have been made. The selection of respondents from each school was based on the population of the school in the classes of concern

Recruitment of participants was accomplished through an introductory letter sent to the institutions indicating the purpose of the study *as* well as its significance to the researcher, the participants, institutions and society as a whole After permission was granted by the school principals, the research team fixed a date for the administration of the data collection instrument In total, 60 form three's and forty Form fours participated.

3.4 Research Instrument

The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire (Open ended questions). The selection of this tool was guided by the nature of the data to be collected as well as the objectives of the study. The study sought to uncover the nature and nuances that operate in young adult s lives during their career choice and decision making process. The research was concerned with views, opinions, perceptions, feelings and attitudes, such information can test be obtained through narrations to open ended questions (TouJiatos and *Complon^* 1988; Bdl, 1993).

The questionnaire consisted of nine open ended questions allowing the subjects to reveal information fifeely without constraint The instrument uncovered the demographic information as well as opinions, feelings, perceptions and altitudes in relation to the variables of family, gender/sex stereotyping, *and* social class and their influence on their career aspirations.

4 1. What career would you choose after school? This question was designed to uncover certain attitudes traditionally believed to be predominantly masculine or feminine e.g. working away from home, making "lots of friends", helping with people and pleasing others" are held to be traditionally female attitudes.

4 2. Why would you choose such career? The "reasons" to be chosen were not structured to discover the actual reasons for the subjects' career choice, but rather to

discover whether these reasons reveal stereotypic attitudes The choice "reasons" provided oo the instruments was selected from the literature and included those characteristics identified as being associated with stereotypes Each reason had been coded as feminine or mascuiiw oo the basis of the literature.

f 3. If you would get married in future; what career would you wish your spouse to be in? This question just like question 1 was meant to uncover traditional attitudes ascribed to roles based on gender/sex.

4 4. Describe what you fed will be a typical day in your life when you are 25 or 30 years old? This question examined *the* perceived ability and willingness to actually incorporate career aspirations into the subjects lives. (Iglitaen, 1972). It also addressed the question whether aspirations (question 1) were consistent with expectations and added another dimensions of judging the influence of gender/sex role stereotypes.

$ 5. Who may influence you in career choice? This question examined the influence of the family and significant others on career choice This question addressed the issue of the family and significant others influences on career choice. It was meant to reveal the extent to which the family influences girts" career choice.

4 6. Given an opportunity, what will you choose between the following? Give the benefits of your choice. I) Start work immediately li) further studies iii) Work and part-time studies. The question was meant to uncdver career plans and pathways of the respondents. Use benefits of opting for a particular pathway will reveal information on social class gender and family as indicated in the literature

4 7. What is the level of education attained by vour father and mother? The options provided guided in establishing parents" level of education This information was used to examine the relationship of parental education and the career choices of their children. As *already indicated* in the literature, *parents act as role* models to the children as well as a resource and source of information about work (Evens, 1998). Parental level of education is also an indicator of the social class which also has influence on career choice.

£ 8. What is the occupation of your mother and father[7] The occupations of parents revealed whether the subjects* would choose similar careers as their parents as indicated in the literature The career aspirations of the subjects were compared to the

occupations of their parents and classified into categories;- 1) Same occupational level as parents. 2) Higher occupational level 3) Didn't know parents occupation

4 9. What barriers are you likely to face in your career choice now, and in the foreseeable future[4'] This question aimed at examining the barriers that curtail career aspirations of girls. It brought to light how the variables of gender/sex, stereotyping, family and social class combine to curb *career* choice and development. Besides, it revealed other variables that may stifle career aspirations thus indicating gaps for further research in relation.

3.5 Data collection procedures

Recruitment of participants was accomplished through an introductory letter sent to the institutions indicating the purpose f the study as well as its significance to the researcher, the participants. Institutions and society as a whole.

The questionnaire was administered after class by the researcher and an assistant. Before administering it the researcher discussed the purpose of the study, the procedure for the administration of the instrument and the time needed to fill the questionnaire. The researcher took the respondents through the instrument clarifying the questions as well *as reminding* them *on* the need for honesty in filling it. While the participants completed the instrumentation packet, the researcher remained in the room to answer any questions or address any contents the participants raised. After the filing was over, the information was put in an envelope and sealed awaiting analysis.

3.6 Validity of instruments   t

The validity of the research instrument was ensured by constructing it primarily from the review of the literature. (Mason's 1996) argued that the literature review provides the context with which to interpret the data that has been generated. Also to ensure validity, the instrument was pilot tested with a smaller sample (N= 20) to ensure ease of administration and clarity of meaning for the students. Sudman (1983) posited that "A pilot test of 20-50 cases is usually sufficient to discover the major flaws in a questionnaire before they damage the main study t p . 181). On the basis of pilot testings the wording of several questions was altered and choices receiving fewer than five percent of the responses eliminated entirely.

3.7 **Reliability of** Instruments

To maximise reliability, *data,* triangulation was used The idea behind triangulation is thai the more agreement of different data sources on a particular issue, the more reliable the interpretation of the data (Yin, 2002) Multiple (two) sources of data were used (one question asked differently to uncover the same concept but in different ways i.e. gendered career options for girls, the girls were asked to give their own career aspiration as well as what they'll like their future spouses to do.

This clearly brings out the same concept of career traditionalism albeit in two different ways.   Also, Yin (2009) suggested the use of theoretical prepositions in order to build a strong case for causality In particular, pattern matching based on the adopted theoretical framework was used to determine if predicted patterns match the actual findings of the study.

3.8 Data **Analysis Techniques**

Data was analyzed descriptively using frequency distribution. In this case the frequency for each research question was obtained and their percentages calculated from the total number of respondents. The qualitative data emerging from the open ended questions were examined using a modified analytic inductive approach (McMahon, Patton & Watson. 2003). In this approach: -

Open coding-through thane analysis for data reduction and categorisation was done; Axial coding — to develop, connections and linkages between themes and categories. Selective coding — to validate core categories or central themes around which other categories could be refined to consequently generate a conceptual framework.   [1]

All research questions i.e. the family influence on career decision making, occupational preferences due to sex/gender role stereotyping and social class influences were analyzed descriptively and the frequency of the occurring themes, relationships as well as patterns established Tables of frequency are used to show the different patterns of data categories upon which conclusions are drawn.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION
AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and results of the finding The themes whose data is analyzed and presented are the family, gender/sex role stereotype and social class and their influence on high school guTs career aspirations.

4.1 Analysis of Data

The main instrument for data collection was a questionnaire meant to uncover the attitudes, feelings, perceptions and views in relation to career choice Open ended questions asked were connected to the variables and used to establish trends, themes and relationships among the variables. The study adopted measurement scales to measure occupations a social status and stereotypical attitudes

On occupations, a ranking scale of occupations that formed a baseline of high, medium and low respect (or value) upon which the respondent's career choices and parental occupations were measured 9Hudgins$_r$ 1987. Besides, the different occupations were coded based on Bern Sex Role indicator (BSR1) which is a single measure of sex role. The BSRI indicators for masculine stereotypes include items such as independence, assertiveness, leadership, and aggressiveness. Feminine indicators used to define sex roles are gentleness. compassion and sensitivity (Bern, 1974).

Further, the career categories were grouped into five broad categories clearly indicating their relevant thanes using the career and occupational prestige scale (COPS, Arulmam, 2004). The COPS themes include; I) linguistics theme; refers to the persons interest in using words attractively and effectively or spoken form. 2) Analytical - logical thane; refers to the attraction that activities such as analysis, reasoning, planning and calculating has for a person 3) Spatial thane, is linked to the person's interest in design, working with colors and shapes drawing and sketching, 4) interpersonal theme refers to an interest in *understanding* people and human behaviour, 5) physical - mechanical theme: refers to an interest in working with machines demanding activities. Thus the BSRI (Ben, 1974) and the COPS (Arulmam.

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2004) were used to code occupations as either feminine or masculine as well as prestige levels (High, medium and low).

The social class of the respondents was indicated by the Educational level of parents as listed by the participants it was as assessed using the socio-Economic Index (S.E.I, Stevens & Cho, 1985). In S.EJ those with post secondary diploma are grouped in middle class Those with post graduate are grouped as being high class and those with just secondary as low socio economic category.

To help gauge career aspirations levels of respondents as well as establish parental occupations *and* levels. Kenyan jobs *category was* used (Table 4).

Table 2; an **overview of Kenyain jobs by category**

Cluster	Rank	Occu nation
High	1	Medical-Dental
	2	Math-Science
	3	Legal work
	4	Entertainment
	5	Data Analysis
Medium	6	Management
	7	Education work
	8	Social services
	9	Technical
	10	Personal services
	11	Literary work
	12	Music work
Low	13	Skilled crafts
	14	Clerical
t	15	Artwork
	16	Customer services
	17	Manual work

Source; Kenyan jobs by category (Google Result)

4.2 Response return rate

The response return rate of the participants based on the objectives and subsequent questionnaire response was 90 percent There were instances where there were no responses e.g. on the parental occupation and level of education.

4.3 **Demographic characteristics «f participants**

As indicated in table 1, the respondents were girls only from three secondary schools (forms three and four). Depending on the size of the population in each school per class, the total sample from each school was; school A form three (22), form four (18) ; school B form three (20X form four (14): school C form (18) and form (8). The participants were mainly from low to middle social class. Upper middle class had only 10 percent participants The total sample was 100 girls.

4.4 Statistical insults for research objectives

Influence of family on career aspirations

The objective was meant to determine the influence of family members on career decision making of the subjects. According to the literature review, parents are probably the most important source of advice and help when decisions are made (Maychell & Evens, 1998) while older siblings were found also to offer advice (Archer et al., 2005).

To get information on family influence on career decision making, the respondents were asked o mention people who may influence them in career decision making. The question was left open in order to gather other influences outside the family. The respondents named: fothpr (30%), Siblings (25%), teacher (s) 20%, mother (15%), peers (10%), 5% indicated self as the source.

Table 3; frequency table CMʸ opinions oa **inflnenre on career choice.**

Source of influence	Fregneacy (f)	%
Father	30	30
Siblings	25	25
Teacher (s)	20	20
Mother	15	15
Peers	10	10
Self	5	5
Iota]	1M	100.00

On whether or not parental occupation had influence on girls career aspirations, parental occupations were measured against the respondents' and classified into four categories; 1) similar occupational level, 2) lower level, 3) Didn't know their parents occupational level or didn't want to reveal. 4) Higher occupational level than their parents Table 6 indicates there is no relationship between the subject's career aspirations and the occupations of their parents. The subjects exhibited higher aspirations than their parents.

Table 4;   **Career** Aspiration **levels *of subjects versus those of*** their parents.

Group	Same	High	Lower	Didn't Know
A Mother	1	10	1	00
Father	6	22	00	00
B Mother	2	10	00	01
Father	4	18	00	00
C Mother	00	10	00	02
Father	02	12	00	02
Missing				05
Total	15	80	01	

In relation to parental level of education as an influence, the lathers of the respondents tended to be more educated than their Mothers (Table 8) who are not as educated the level of their fathers. Even siblings and teachers seem to wield a lot of influence.

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Influence of gender/sex -role stereotyping on career aspirations

This objective was meant to establish how gender/sex role stereotypes influence high school girls' career aspirations The *literature* review had *indicated* that young women's career choice and aspirations are influenced by gender (Kithyo and Petrina, 2002). Gender mitigates against the participation of females in technology based programs 9Eshiwani 1983, 1984, 1985, 1993b, Ndunda, 1995). Gender also works to keep males in their "normaF occupational place as well, but these places are often accompanied by status and wages that far exceed the females" occupations (Lather, 1991).

To **establish the influence** of **gender** on **their career** aspirations, the **respondents were asked a number of questions that were meant to uncover** certain attitudes **believed to be stereotypical traditional attitudes. Question   1** required them to self report **their cares' choices which were then measured against the** BSRI (Bern, 1974) after **being coded as feminine or masculine**

The **relevant themes emerging were measured using COPS, Arulmani,** 2004). The emerging **trend indicated preference for medium level careers especially** those whose theme **is interpersonal i.e. an interest in understanding** people and human behaviors preference was *on Education* work, *social services and* personal services (Coded feminine). **A few however, aspired for high level careers - medical** - Dental, legal work **and entertainment (Table** 7)

Table 5; **Frequency summary on careor aspiration for respondents and** future spouses.

<p align="center">N = 100</p>

			SintuMx" beuuency
	Medical Dental	5	15
	Math science		15
High	ljegal work	.	to
	KdLertainmeat	5	
	I>j£a Analysis		10
	Management		10
	Kducaljnn Work	20	5
	Social scrvicp	25	
Medium	Technical		5
	Personal services	to	
	I .rterarv work	5	10
	Music work	5	10
	Sales work	10	5
	Skilled crafts		10
	Clerical		
	Artwork		
Low	Customer services	15	
	Manual work		
	Total		100

To further uncover gender/sex influence, the respondents were asked why they would choose that particular career question -§- *2.* The reasons' were meant to discover whether these reasons reveal stereotypical attitudes The reasons given included interest in a given area, ability prestige, parents' idea The other reasons included those indicative of stereotypical nuances te careers that will enable one balance personal interest and career Some who chose teaching argued that it will enable them to spend time with family. Some felt that careers that involve travelling a lot or working away from home will affect family obligations.

The subjects were also asked to *indicate* what career they would prefer their spouses to be in if they got married (question -j}- 3). The respondents indicated high to medium careers few their prospective spouses. They chose medical- Dental, Legal work. Data analysis and Literary work. This revealed that mayority of the respondents preferred their spouses to enter into "traditionally preserved" occupations for men as they also did the same thus "gendering" career 2.

From this finding, it can be inferred that females expect to gain from the outcomes of good occupations in terms of remuneration and social status indirectly via their spouses and not directly through themselves. However, in both, a tendency of aspiring for white collar jobs is ev ident as none wished to be a manual worker.

Additionally, the girls were asked to describe a typical day in their life when they'll be 25-30 years of age (question   4). This was to understand their career aspirations in relation to expectations Hie literature reviewed indicated that women's aspirations tended to decrease with time (Betz, 1994, O'Brien et ai 2000.

On the description of a typical day when 25-30 years, an analvsis of the themes that emerged indicated tfiat; Responsibilities as a wife and mother are part of young females' broader picture of life. 1) Household duties are the responsibility of women, even when they are *married,* the *spouses are* not in the *picture*, 2) Their life revolve around the family 3) some even indicated they will just be at home looking after the family thus one wonders what happened to their career aspirations. One indicated that she will take time of to take care of babies.

Influence of social class on career aspirations.

This objective was meant to examine the extent lo winch social influences girls' career aspirations. According to the literature review, social class greatly impacts the decision-making processes of students (Freeman, 1999, Spohn et al. 1992). Research further indicates that youth from higher S.E.S were likely to be more knowledgeable of and choose professional occupations than children who are poor (Settler et al, 1999).

The respondents' social class was based on parental educational level which determined the S.E.I (Stevens & Cho, 1985). The social classes were ranked as high, middle and low status To attain the parents* social class, the respondents indicated the level of education by ticking the appropriate level options provided.

Fathers' **Educational Level;** the fathers of the respondents tended to be moderately educated. Over 30% had attended some college education, 11% had some graduate level, 10%, were no sure of parents levd of education or did not want to indicate. The frequency data for fathers" educational level are presented in table 8.

Table 6; frequency table for father's Educational levd

N = 100

Education level	N	%
Primary school	18	18
High school	30	30
Diploma	38	30
Graduate f t	18	8
Post graduate	4	4
Missing	10	
Total	100	90

Mothers' **Educational level;** the mothers' of the subjects were not as educated to the level of their fathers. Majority of the mother's fall under the low S.E.I category (60%) while only 25% had attained Diploma Education, only 5% had attained graduate studies while again 10% indicated not sure of mother's level of education. From the parents' educational levd. It was evident that the subjects came mostly from middle and low class families.

Table 7. Frequency taMe for mother's educational level.

N = 100

Level of education	N	%
Primary school	25	25
High school	35	35
Diploma	25	25
Graduate	5	5
Post graduate	0	0
Missing;	10	

Totals

The influence of social class was further measured on the basis of career plans or career path orientations Question -§- 6 required the subjects to indicate their career pathways; starting work immediately if a job is available, further studies or part time work and studies. They were also required to give reasons for their choice. The question both revealed the influence of social class in determining career pathways.

The narratives of participants on the theme which career path are you going to take after high school? The observed trends strongly *indicated that* young people from disadvantaged backgrounds seem to be more strongly oriented toward finding work as soon as possible, those from privileged homes on the other hand prefer or are urged to go for further education and prepare for the woiid of work. It seems therefore that young people from privileged backgrounds grow up in an environment where going on for full time study is expected, approved and supported.

Table 8, Differences fcUma & L& Groups' perceptions on career paths

Career Path	Low SES	Mid SES	Umier-nrid SES
Work	25	5	2
Work and study	15	10	3
Study	5	25	5
Total	**40**	**45**	**10**

On the reasons for the options, the partidpaits indicated the reasons include family situation (lack of finances), lack of capacity to continue with studies (low grades or lack of self efficacy) as well as discouragement These reasons given also distinguished the classes as majority of those from disadvantaged backgrounds indicated lack of finance as the mam reason for starting working immediately while for those from the upper or middle class backgrounds indicated lack of interest as the reason for opting to working.

Finally to get a comprehensive understanding on factors hindering women from achieving their career potential, a general question was asked on the instrument. Question -‖- 9. ' What barriers do you imagine may stand in your way of attaining your dream career? Excerpts from participant's narratives (see appendix 4) indicated the existence of barriers pertaining to the family situation (poverty, discouragements, lack of concern on interest) and barriers pertaining to persona! capacity (lack of self efficacy, low grades, lack of interest).

Table 9; *% of* partiri|MMt&, across S.EJS groups, rating *on* harriers to career preparation.

Barrier	Low SES	MM SES	UMCTMNISES
Financial	25	5	0
Lack interest	5	25	8
Discouragement	15	. 10	2
Total	**45**	**40**	**10**

 As shown in the above table, tlfe analysis on perceived barriers indicates these trends. Barriers do exist between different S.E.S groups The number of barriers perceived seems to increase with S.E.S. The lowest S E S group perceives the largest number of barriers to career preparation. Financial difficulties topped the list of barriers fro low S.E.S group followed by difficulties with academic performance

The high S.E.S groups indicated lack of interest (personal) as their main barrier. Those in these category indicated they may not want to pursue studies further because they want out of the schooling system. Beliefs of gender are ever present (family situation) and blurttly stereotyping in expectations Being a girl in it alone is a barrier as it entails lower expectations in relation to study and career.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the findings, make recommendations pertinent to the problem as well as implications for counselling practice, counsellor educations and future research

Introduction

This study sought to provide insight into why women continue to choose traditional careers despite efforts to enable them access better educational and career opportunities. The study *examined* the influence of the variables of family, gender/sex- role stereotypes, and social class on high school girls' career aspirations. A questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents. The data was analyzed descriptively through frequency distribution and percentages The emerging themes, trends and relationships analyzed are used to draw conclusions.

5.1 Summary of fHndingSv

Influence of family.

The results of this study confirmed the influence of family on the career aspirations of girls as indicated by the qualitative data The respondents' opinions on influences on career choice indicated that family members - father, siblings and mothers are among people who will influence than in career choice This finding reinforced Bronfrenbrermer (1961), Lenger-mann and Wallace (1985) and Wambua (2007) research that the family had a direct impact on students' education and career aspirations. The research further stated that better educated fathers may stress more responsibility, show more interest in their child's education, and insist that their children be academically successful (Bronfenbrenner, 1961).

However, as indicated from the findings, the careers of parents had little bearing on the choices of their children, and most children reported higher aspirations that their parents Whether the parents worked or were educated or not had no apparent relationship to the aspirations of the subjects. Thus parental influence can be seen in relation to the social support, advice and encouragement offered.

This is contrary to the reviewed literature which had indicated that parental occupations had a bearing on their children's choices especially girls (DeRidder 1990). Besides, siblings in the study seem to widd a lot of influence, in this case more than even the mothers This clearly shows that young students are now turning to their

siblings for guidance This could be due to the fact that their siblings may have had more exposure than do of their parents(s)The stuffy also indicate that teachers also influence career choices of their learners They could be doing so as role models or as sources of information arid seemingly so in situations where parents may not be able to do so due to lack of efficacy.

Influence of gender/sex role stereotypes

This study shows that gender/sex-role stereotypes are related to career choice and aspirations regardless of social class. This finding is in line with research indicating that gender stereotypes shape women's *future expectations Greene & DeBacker, 2004*). Osipow Fitzgerald (1996) stated that '''gender''' is clearly one of the most powerful influences on vocational behaviour" Similarly, Archer et al (2005), Ball, Maquire and McRae (2000) and Hodkinson, Sparkes and Hodkinson (1996) found that for the females in their studies, domesticity and family were likely to overlap with education ***and*** employment.

In Kenya, literature reviewed indicate that pervasive gender stereotypes abound in Kenyan schools and many students make major choices based on these stereotypes as opposed to using interest and ability to determine career choice Kithyo (1999). This continues to militate against the full participation of females in Kenyan society (Eshiwani, 1983,1984, 1985, 1993b; Ndunda 1995)

As was reported by the findings of this study, females of all social classes are continuing to unrealisticaHy believe that they can only take female oriented careers and more specifically careers that will enable them balance family life and career irrespective of their educational achievement This makes women experience greater role conflict than their male counter parts. Women are forced to choose between internal desires and the ability to achieve in the workforce, and external pressures to conform to traditional behaviours.

Just as gender works to keep females in their domain as indicated in the study, so does it to the men. Asked what career they would like their spouses to be in if they got married, the young students chose traditional male careers But, it is important to note that these places are often accompanied by status and wages that far exceed the females' occupations.

Influence of social class   Findings from the study indicated that social status plays a significant role in determining career plans. Although no differences were

noted on career aspirations among the social groups, differences emerged in relation to career orientations and pathways. This confirmed what had been indicated in the literature review that social class is linked to the decision to opt for a vocational or academic "pathways" A number of studies 1992 reveal that students from primarily middle-class family backgrounds are more likely to opt for academic pathways whereas students from low class families opt for work-based training (Helmsley - Brown 1999, Furlong 1992, Foskett, Dyke and maringe, 2004; Lindsay, 1980)

Women who come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are not exposed to a variety of *careers*, possibly due to lack of *many female role models* (Arap Martim, 1986). Females from higher S.E.S usually choose a variety of careers and have likelihood to pursue higher education than those of low S.E.S (Lindsay 1980). Gambetta (1987, p. 176) argues that social class does not influence decision making in a simple way, but it interacts with individual preferences; Banks el a!. (1992) asserted that students from a middle-class background are more hkeiy to remain in full-time education than those whose parents had manual jobs.

The observed trends in this study strongly indicated that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds seem to be more strongly oriented toward finding work as soon as possible. Those from privileged homes prefer or are urged to go for further education and prepare for the world of work. This may be because they grow up in an environment where going on for full time study is expected, approved and supported. Social class was a major determinant of the subjects' career orientations and planning. Its influence ranges from the kind of schools attended, information received about career and parental approval in determining career pathways

On the subjects' response on likely banners to be faced in career planning and development, the barriers indicated had a significant relationship with social class. The number of these *barriers seems* to *increase* with S.E.S. The low S.E.S group perceives the largest number of barriers to career preparation The lack of financial resources to attend additional schooling or training was a major barrier, other barriers included lack of role models, and family responsibilities while those from higher S.E.S groups are shielded from these responsibilities. Further, lower S.E.S young people seem to perceive that their own personal capacities are such that they would have difficulties with career success

The following **conclusions can be** drawn from the results of this study. The influence of the subjects' parental occupations had little bearing on the career choices of their children, as most respondents had higher aspirations than the occupational levels. Whether the parents worked or not had no apparent relationships to the subjects' career aspirations, **even** those whose mothers were not working aspired to balancing both careers and families Therefore parental influence may be attributed to the advice, career information and encouragement in one's chosen area and not deciding for the subject on what is appropriate.

Gender/sex - role stereotypes on the participants and even their opposite sex (through inference) is confirmed. Pervasive gender/sex stereotypes abound in Kenyan schools and many students make choices based on these stereotypes as opposed to using interest and ability to determine choices. The young females were more concerned with family life and domestic responsibilities first and career comes second. Gender/sex stereotypes appear to be the most persistent and pervasive factor in students career choice. Thus il is clear that gender norms continue to mitigate against the full participation of females in Kenyan society.

The social status of the chiJd plays a significant role in determining career plans. It may be that generally in homes of higher S ES levels, the env ironment may be more conducive to providing exposure to a greater number of role models and occupational choices to encouraging non-traditional *career* choices as well as an enriched environment that will foster independency of thought *and* action while those from disadvantaged backgrounds are deprived of the same

Other variables affecting career choices. A discussion of career choices would not be complete without the mention of several other factors other than those under study that influence carer choices. This includes role models, exposure to a variety of occupations, individual personality traits, *and* ability among others

5.3 Recommendations

1) It is important thai counsellors understand what factors influence women's decision making and also what barriers are stifling their options. It is necessary to obtain this information to aid the development of interventions or educational programs to assist women in choosing careers that will better their economic and social circumstances.

The study highlighted differences in career options and orientations across social classes This is important information as it has **implications for counselling practice in the school, community, and career counselling arenas. Counsellors need to have an awareness regarding this difference so that they can choose appropriate interventions facilitate the personal development of their specific student population.**

2)Research suggested that female- only organizations and activities raised self esteem (Eickman, 1995), Therefore efforts could be made to establish peer support systems of specific projects within the academic area in order to encourage females to work in themes. The projects could include the science fair, debate clubs, and math learn or technology contests.

3) The establishment of gender equity campaign in schools to raise awareness. The theme could be "do not think blue (traditional female occupations " Think purple" with the realization that all genders can aspire for occupations" (Hoover, 1990).

5.4 Suggestions for future research

In the future, more research is needed to further define the relationship between career aspirations and sociological factors; more specifically how these factors interact to influence career aspirations. More understanding is required to understand the role society and family play in the formation of stereotypical attitudes. A deeper understanding of familial influence besides educational and occupational influences i.e. family set up or organization in general is needed. Social status should also be investigated beyond the levels of high, low or medium for example in terms of rural, urban or peri-urban.   ^

It is important to try and bxplain these relationships to help advance individual self-awareness and scientific understanding While career choice and sociological forces' relationship *is* found to be *significant* there *is need for continued* research seeking to uncover how this forces influence the self efficacy of individuals. The overarching question of why women continue to choose traditional careers remains largely unanswered fully. Additional research needs to be conducted looking at different variables and their impact on career choice As long as women continue to trail in the labour force research needs to be undertaken to explain why.

OPARETIONALIZATION TABLE

•research QUESTIONS	TYPE OF VARIABLES	INDICATOR	MEASURE	LEVEL OF SCAI.ES	DATA COLLECTIONS	TYPE OF ANALYSIS
i J o what extent jnd how is the family involved in l^gh school girls' fareer decision making in fyfosocho Division?	INDEP.VAR - Family role	- level of education - occupation of parent - sex of parent	- High/low	-Nominal	- Questionnaire	-Qualitative
	DEP.VAR - Career aspirations	- career options	- High prestige or low status - start working - *further studies* - pert time work	- Nominal	- Questionnaire	-Qualitative
THow do girls career preferences relate 0 sex/gender role stereotyping in Mosocho Division?	INDEP.VAR - Gender/sex role stereotype	- Biological (Male of female) - Social (Masculine and Feminine) roles	- (rendered careers - Career status	- Nominal	-QncstwiBBtre	- Qualitative
	DEP.VAR. - Career Aspirations	- career status - career traditionalism	- High prestige or low stains - traditional career status	- Nominal	- Questionnaire	- Qualitative
}. How does social class influence career decisions making for high Khool girls in Mosocho Division?	INDEP.VAR - social class	- income level	- High, middle low	- Nominal	- Questionnaire	- Qualitative
	DEPVAR. -Career Aspirations	- career status - career options - career traditional ism	- start working - Further studies - work and study - High *prestige* or low status	- Nominal	- Questionnaire	- Qualitative

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Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill the following questionnaire to the best of your knowledge and as honestly as possible. If in doubt of an aspect, seek clarification.

I. What career would you choose after high school?.

2. Why would you choose such a career?

3. If you would get married in future, what career would you wish your spouse to be in?

4. Describe what you feel will be a typical day in your life when you are 25 or 30 years old.

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5. Who is likely to influence you in career choice?

6. Given an opportunity, what will you choose between the following? Tick the appropriate answer.
i) Start work immediately after school
ii) Continue with further studies.
iii) Work and do part-time studies.

Give reasons for your choice.

7. What is the level of education attained by your parents? Tick the appropriate option underneath.
Mother

Father

i) Primary certificate level
ii) Junior high school.
iii) High school
 iv) Diploma level
  v) Degree
 vi) Post graduate.

8. What is the occupation of your parents and significant others.
i) Mother

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ii) Father

iii) Significant others

9. In your view, what barrier do you imagine may stand in your way of attaining your dream career?

Appendix 2

Responses from groups A, B & C. On career paths.

- Find part time job. It is what I have to do to help my family.

- I would prefer professional course because it has high salary and status in society.

- I will start work to become financially independent.

- Find a part time job and study. I will have to support my family.

- I have to work because of poverty. I cannot continue with studies even if I wished because of poverty.

- Higher studies take longer time. I would want to settle down and have a family.

- Parents may want me to work immediately. I have followers in school.

- Start working due to financial problems.

- As we are poor, to prepare for a career is difficult. Even when we have good degree there are no jobs.

- School life is hard and boring; I want a break.

- Want to start work immediately. Even if you study, due to corruption, you may not be employed. I know somebody who will fix me somewhere.

- All who study will not get jobs. If I get one immediately, I will join.

- People think that girls should not go further in education therefore working immediately will be okey.

- Even if I want to start work immediately, my parents will insist that I proceed.

- Everybody in my family is professional. I will also do the same by furthering my studies. Okey for me.

- I'm poor in class and therefore will not proceed with further studies.

- I do well in studies but may not due to financial constraints.

- Because if I get a job quickly, I can support my family happily.

Appendix 3.

Narratives of participants from different S.E.S groups on the theme; What kind of barriers will you face on your way of attaining your dream career?

- Poverty. This will be a barrier to further studies and career development
- I want to become a doctor. But there are no doctors in my village, so I don't know much about the career.
- Different opinions from parents. I want to become a doctor but my parents want me to become a lawyer.
- Getting less marks, financial problem, less information about career, lack of educational facilities.
- Why study? Even if you pass, there are no jobs.
- Some parents belief its better to support boys rather than girls.
- In my community, girls are not supposed to be highly learned.

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Occupation	Code
Medical - Dental	(masculine)
Math-science	(masculine)
Legal work	(masculine)
Entertainment	(masculine)
Data analysis	(masculine)
Management	(masculine)
Education work	(feminine)
Social services	(feminine)
Technical	(masculine)
Personal services	(feminine)
Literary work	(masculine)
Music Work	(masculine)
Sales work	(feminine)
Skilled crafts	(masculine)
Clerical	(feminine)
Art work	(masculine)
Customer services	(feminine)
Manual work	(feminine)

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Pilot study feedback form

Please complete this evaluation immediately after completing the questionnaire, noting any changes that could improve the study and/or instruments. Your comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

1) Do you think the instructions for the study questionnaires are clear/ Yes or No. If no, please comment

2) Were there any questions that were difficult to understand? Yes or No.
If Yes please comment noting where the problem was.

3) Were there any words or phrases that you would have liked clarified or changed? If yes, please comment;

4) Do you have any further sug^tions for improving the study/questionnaire?

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Appendix 2

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

BEATRICE GETUGI

PO BOX 1069 - 40200,

KISII.

13/4/2010.

THE HEADTEACHER

P.O BOX

KISII.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE; PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby write to request for permission to carry out a research study in your school. I'm a Master of Arts student from the University of Nairobi. The study is aimed at investigating career aspirations of girls and establishing the factors influencing their career choices.

The study is of importance as it will unearth the career formation and development process in girls. The findings will help in looking for ways to aid the career decision process of girls. The study will comprise of a questionnaire that will take 45 minutes. There will be confidentiality on the results' findings.

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Thanking you in advance for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Beatrice Getugi.

HIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

 of./ Dr./ Mr./ Mrs./ Miss....&MEMG)?.

          smmi

,f (Address)

h**as been permitted to conduct research in**

I..**Location,**

i,. . . . . .CENTRAL....................**District,**

L.........NYANZA..................................**Province,**

 jn the topic.*SFLUENCE^ OF▷ **SOCIOLOGICAL**

 \h**CT0RS   ON   CAREER   ASPIRATION**ᵢ(**F0R**

 GH   SCHOOL   GIRLS   IN   MOSOCHO

 VISIONf **KENYA.**

or a period ending...31ST . DECEMBER^ ₂Q   10

Research Permit Ho.HS.ST7 RRI / 12 / 1 / S S 7 7 9 4

Date of issue..?..?/.P.?/2010

Fee received ....855..1 f.S.22

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Applicant's
Signature

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S   *ecretary*
National   Council for
Science { nd   Technology

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