

Influence of Career Information on Choice of Degree Programme among Regular and Self-Sponsored Students in Public Universities, Kenya

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Abstract

Choosing a degree programme to study in the university is a critical career task that is a major turning point in a student's life which not only is a start to workplace readiness, but also establishes the student in a career path that opens as well as closes life opportunities. Failure to achieve this task may cause dissatisfaction within the individual and difficulty in handling later career tasks. This career task is influenced by various factors. This study aimed at determining the influence of career information on choice of degree programme among students in public universities in Kenya. The study used the *ex post facto* design that adopted the causal comparative research technique and data was collected from 500 randomly selected students using questionnaires. Percentages, means and standard deviations were used to describe the quantitative data and independent samples *t*-test was used to analyze the data and to test hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that career information had a high influence on the choice of degree programme of students in public universities. Further analysis of the results indicated that no statistically significant differences existed between the mean scores of influences of career information between regular and self-sponsored students. The study concluded that provision of career information was a significant factor in influencing the choice of degree programme of all the students in public universities. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) ensures that in all secondary schools in Kenya, the career guidance department is functional with adequate career information resources and activities, to facilitate career development among students. The study also recommended the training and equipping of career guidance counsellors in schools to enhance their competence in assisting the students in making career decisions.

Keywords: Degree programme, career information, career task, public university, regular and self-sponsored students.

1. Introduction

Career guidance is an inclusive term that is used to describe a range of career interventions including career education, career information and career counselling (Kidd, 2007; Savickas, 2005). The major goal of offering career guidance is to help people move from a general understanding of life and work to a specific understanding of the realities of life, learning and work options that are open to them (McMahon, 2014). Career guidance is often offered to people who are continuing with education, those transitioning to the labour market, those changing careers, during periods of unemployment, and during transition to retirement. Career guidance enhances the career development of an individual throughout the life span (Brown & Associates, 2002).

The career guidance services provided to students should focus on provision of career information through a variety of resources and activities (Mutie & Ndambuki, 2004). Career information involves provision of accurate and usable facts concerning careers that state the entry and training requirements, employment opportunities, nature and conditions of work, advancement opportunities, salary and benefits, trends and outlook (Zunker, 2006). According to Adell (2002), some of the students' career choice is embedded in their perceptions of the 'ideal job' and their career decision-making maturity which is enhanced by access to adequate and appropriate career information. Availability of adequate and appropriate career information enables students to develop their own career aspirations and goals and thus make informed career decisions (Patton & McMahon, 2014). Thus, the degree programmes that the students choose to study in the universities ought to be made when adequate information has been provided to the students. This will ensure that students make informed decisions and the choices made will engender satisfaction and productivity in their future careers.

The choice of degree programme that young people make when joining public universities is one of the series of decisions made in the process of career development. This is a major turning point in the students' lives which not only is a start to workplace readiness, but also establishes the student in a career path that opens as well as closes opportunities (Gibson & Mitchell, 2003). This decision is influenced by many factors, including the student's family, career interests, socio-economic factors, educational policies, peers, personality, academic potential, career information, employment opportunities and life context (Patton & McMahon, 2014). Ghose (2002) states that some individuals find themselves later in occupations never understanding what propelled them in that particular direction. According to Gaffner and Hazler (2002), lack of adequate career information and self

awareness was related to indecisiveness and career indecision among students entering college.

Students apply for admissions to public universities in Kenya through the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement service (KUCCPS), formerly known as Joint Admission Board (JAB). The students admitted through the service get funding from the government and study under module I (regular module) in the public universities (Mulongo, 2013). Qualified students who miss out admissions by KUCCPS apply for their degree programmes and admission directly to the public university as self-sponsored or module II students (Nyaigotti-Chacha, 2004). According to Onsongo (2011) the self-sponsored module offers the student the advantage of pursuing degree programmes related to their career interests and also study in their preferred university with the possibility of earlier completion of their programmes as compared to those in the regular module. A study by Lugulu and Kipkoech (2011) found out that 63.3% of students admitted in public universities were dissatisfied with the degree programmes because they were placed in degree programmes they did not choose nor had a passion for.

Taking into consideration the apparent increase in youth unemployment, mid-life career changes, frequent job lay-offs, restructurings and high job turnovers, a major concern is what might be the long term implications of unsuitable career choices on the Kenyan students and consequently on the job market. It is against this background that the study sought to establish the influence of career information on students' degree choice in public universities.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The students who carry out this career task of choosing a degree programme successfully are able to handle future career tasks, while those who fail are discontented and experience difficulties in handling future career tasks. Some of the difficulties that can be experienced in later career tasks are observed when several years later the students graduate and find no jobs related to their degree programmes or take up jobs for which they are not qualified or overqualified. In Kenyan public universities, not all students admitted under KUCCPS get their preferred degree programmes. Consequently, some students are either satisfied or dissatisfied with the outcome of their degree choices. Various factors have been known to influence students' degree choice and university placement. Thus, the study sought to find out the extent to which career information influence students' choice of degree programmes among the regular and self-sponsored students in public universities.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to determine the influence of career information on choice of degree programme among regular and self-sponsored students in public universities in Kenya.

1. Current Concern for Career Guidance in Schools

Young people need career guidance to be able to discover abilities, inclinations and to outline their future. Mihaela and Cristina (2015) state that the insufficiency of career information and guidance in the pre-university education, determines the high rate of disorientation of the potential students in choosing the degree programmes they want to pursue in university, or worse, determines school dropout. The need for career guidance is clearly evident in the increasing difficulties in career decision making, the underutilisation of human resources, job dissatisfaction, and such perennial and persistent problems of youth unemployment problems (Walsh & Osipow, 2014; Lenz & Sampson, 2008). The world of work has changed considerably and significantly and many young people are facing challenges in selecting a suitable and relevant career. Ponge (2013) attests that graduate labour market has changed noticeably with more university graduates experiencing difficulties in entering the labour market. He asserts that the greatest challenge for graduates in Kenya is not only lack of employment, but unemployability.

Career guidance makes information about the labour market and about educational opportunities more accessible by organising it, systematising it and making it available when and where people need it (Capuzzi & Stauffer, 2012). Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications and abilities; and helps them to understand the labour market and education systems, and to relate this to what they know about themselves. Comprehensive career guidance tries to teach people to plan and make decisions about work and learning (Gysbers, 2008). Career guidance activities may take place on an individual or group basis, and may be face-to-face or at a distance (including help lines and web-based services). According to Capuzzi and Stauffer (2012), career guidance services include provision of career information (in print, ICT-based and other forms), assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, career education programmes (to help individuals develop their self-awareness, opportunity awareness, and career management skills), taster programmes (to sample options before choosing them), work search programmes, and transition services.

A study by Orenge (2011) on the status of career guidance in public secondary schools found out that majority of schools implemented different of career guidance and counselling programmes. The study also found out that the career guidance and counselling teachers were available but not adequately empowered with career guidance skills, knowledge and facilities to carry out effective career guidance services, and the career guidance

and counselling resources available were inadequate. In another study by Gitonga (2013) on factors influencing career indecisiveness among students in Kiambu showed that insufficient occupational knowledge, poor self knowledge with students and ill equipped careers education resources in schools as major factors. The study further revealed that the career counsellors had inadequate knowledge and training on career counselling. The findings were also affirmed in a study by Ombaba, Keraro, Sindabi and Asienyo (2014) in secondary schools whereby the findings showed that not all schools had adequate career guidance resources and career information materials. The findings indicated that the students did not attribute their career choices to the effectiveness of the guidance activities and services offered in the school. The study recommended that the school resource centre should be more equipped to support the guidance programme. The career guidance programme's role in the school setting must be one of facilitating and enhancing the school's contribution to the learning, growth and development and preparation for work of the young people (Mumuikha, 2011). Together with the availability of career information resources, the career counsellors should be competent in helping students with career choice issues. Taking into consideration these findings, this research sought to find the extent to which career information resources (which include personnel and career information sources) influence the choice of degree programmes of students in public universities.

2.1 Career Awareness and Exploration

Career awareness helps the student to be conscious of the relationship between self, educational opportunities, and the world of work as an important aspect of career planning (Ellis, 2009). Counsellors may use group activities, educational awareness inventories, games that relate hobbies to recreational activities and guided activities to help the students understand the relationship between desirable school habits and good worker traits (Gibson & Mitchell, 2003). Career awareness involves providing the students with adequate and appropriate career information that fosters continuous expansion of the student's knowledge and awareness of the world of work (Lenz & Sampson, 2008). This is achieved by provision of accurate, understandable and usable facts that describe, explain, and interpret entrance requirements, opportunities for employment, working conditions, nature of work done, duties performed, opportunities for advancement, rates of pay, health hazard encounters, trends and outlook (Zunker, 2006). Integrating career information into classroom instruction enhances the meaning of the relationship between learning in school and living out of school (Savickas, 2008). Sources of career information include career booklets, media (both print and electronic), college catalogues, bulletins, career journals, audio visual aids and internet.

2.2 Career Choice and Development

Career choice is process involves comparing available career options, narrowing down the choices and coming up with what suits a person best at that point in time (Capuzzi & Stauffer, 2012). This step is based on the information acquired from self assessment and occupational exploration. It is the outcome of the synthesis of career and self-assessment, that is, a match between an individual's academic potentials, attitudes, talents, interests, personality, values, expectations and available resources (Super, 1996; Kidd, 2007). Career choice is the outcome of a series of decisions, transactions, and adjustments which are made over a period of years, and in the context of many influencing factors (Savickas, 2005; Leung, 2008). Patton and Creed (2001) describe career choice as a process of growth reflecting a phase or stage of development in a person's career development rather than a simple or single event.

Career development is a continuous lifelong process of developmental experiences that focus on seeking, obtaining and processing information about self, occupational and educational alternatives, life styles and role options (Mutie & Ndambuki, 2004; Brown & Lent, 2005). Thus, Career development can be defined as the life long process of developing beliefs, values, skills, attitudes, interests, personality characteristics and knowledge concerning the world of work (George & Cristiani, 2012). It is the aspect of one's total development that emphasizes learning about, preparation for, entry into, adjustment and progress into the world of work. Career development begins with an individual's earliest awareness of the ways in which people make a living (Gibson & Mitchell, 2003). For example when a child observes that some people are doctors, others are police officers and some are teachers, it signals the start of career development process, which continues as that person begins to role play, explores and ultimately decides on what career to pursue.

2.3 Career Guidance Information

Career information is the provision of accurate and usable facts concerning careers that state the entrance and training requirements, employment opportunities, nature and conditions of work, advancement opportunities, salary and benefits, trends and outlook (Gibson & Mitchell, 2003). Limited knowledge of occupations and range of alternatives available often leads to unrealistic career aspirations (Yosuf, 2008). Maingi and Wasanga (2011) also attest to the fact that lack of awareness about what happens at the universities by many secondary school students limits their university course selection and career decision-making process as a whole. Thus, adequate

career information resources and provision of professional career guidance and counselling at all education levels and direct or indirect exposure to work experiences from early stages of life plays a vital role in career development (Garnesby, 2013).

In another study by Kimiti and Mwova (2012) on the dilemma of career choice among secondary school students showed that students chose their careers based on the information they received from the career guidance teachers. The student acknowledged the fact that they were more knowledgeable because of the availability of information on careers available in their schools. The findings affirmed that the provision of career guidance services positively influenced students' decision on their career choice. Results from a study by Racho (2014) concur with other studies and affirms that students' career awareness had significant relationship with students' career decisions. A study by Lugulu and Musoga (2013) found out that career guidance provided in schools was inadequate to enable students make informed career choices. Since the success of students making informed degree programmes choices depended on the level of career guidance, students were uncertain about their career choices. Gitonga (2013) affirmed insufficiently prepared teachers and poorly equipped career guidance resources were the causes of career decisiveness among students in secondary schools. This study sought to fill the gap by determining the extent to which career information influences student's choice of degree programme and whether differences in the influence exist between regular and self-sponsored students in public universities.

3.0 Methodology

The study design was *ex post facto* in approach that adopted the causal comparative research method. This design allows a systematic empirical inquiry, in which the researcher is not able to control or manipulate the independent variables, because their manifestations have already occurred (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Kerlinger 2010). The research design also allows a comparison of groups without having to manipulate the independent variables (Zechmeister & Zechmeister, 2003; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The comparison groups comprised the students in regular and self-sponsored study modules in public universities. Provision of adequate career information was the independent variable.

3.1 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in the six (6) public universities in Kenya which already had been established by 2001. These are: University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, Egerton University, Moi University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and Maseno University. The study was done in the main campuses of the selected public universities. The main campuses of the public universities were presumed to have a wider variety of degree programmes in both regular and self-sponsored modules of study. The study was conducted in public universities and not in private universities because all students in private universities were self-sponsored.

3.2 Population of the Study

The study population constituted university students in the 6 public universities in Kenya. The target population was 160,110 first year students who completed secondary education in 2012 and are in their second semester. The first year students have a better understanding of the degree programme they are undertaking and the university they are studying in, and those who wanted to change degree programmes or university placement had done so. According to the Joint Admission Board (JAB) (2013/2014) and Commission for University Education (CUE) (2014), the population of first year students in all the public universities was approximately 160,110 students.

4.0 Results and Discussion

This study was guided by two objectives. The study sought to:

- i) Establish the influence career information on choice degree programme and university placement of regular and self-sponsored students in public universities.
- ii) Establish whether differences exist in the influence of career information on choice degree programme and university placement between regular and self-sponsored students in public universities.

4.1 Influence of Career Information on Choice of Degree Programme

The first research objective sought to establish the influence of career information on the degree programme of students in public universities. The study analysed statements that assessed how this factor influenced choice of degree programme of students. Influence on career information on degree programme was measured by six items on a likert scale scored as follows; strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5). Item 5 was negatively keyed and hence the scoring was reversed prior to analysis. The results obtained are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Influence of Career Information on Choice of Degree Programme

Statements	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I had sufficient information concerning my degree programme	116	24.3	201	42.1	60	12.6	78	16.3	23	4.8
There are many careers related to the degree course I am studying	194	40.6	206	43.1	46	9.6	18	3.8	14	2.9
My school counsellor gave me career information concerning my degree choice	44	9.2	99	20.7	30	6.3	182	38.1	123	25.7
Career information resources in school influenced me in choosing this degree programme	31	6.5	128	26.8	43	9.0	160	33.5	116	24.6
No one has ever talked to me about careers related to my degree programme	22	4.6	51	10.7	30	6.3	205	42.9	170	35.6
I do not know anything about the degree choice I am studying	10	2.1	14	2.9	19	4.0	175	36.6	260	54.4

Table 1 clearly points out that 66.4% of the students agreed that they had sufficient career information concerning their degree programme while 21.1% disagreed. Majority (63.8%) of disagreed with the school counsellor gave them career information and only 29.9% agreed that the school counsellor assisted them with career information. Additionally, 58.1% also disagreed that the career information resources available in school influenced them in choosing their degree programme while 33.3% agreed that the career information resources in school assisted them. About 91.0% of the students disagreed with the statement that they knew nothing about their degree programme as compared to 5.0% who agreed that they knew nothing. 83.1% of the respondents agreed that there were many careers related to the degree course they were studying and 6.7% disagreed. Majority (78.5%) of the students disagreed with the statement that 'no one had given them career information about their degree programme'. These findings indicate that although the career information resources were present in school, they did not play a significant role in influencing the students' degree choice. The students agree that someone helped them with career information about their degree choice but they do not agree that the assistance came from the school counsellor.

In order to determine the influence of career information on choice of degree programme, the means of the responses was calculated. The maximum possible mean score was 5 while the minimum possible mean score was 1. The mean scores of the influence of career information on degree programme of students were presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Means of Influence of Career Information on Degree Programme of University Students

Statements	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I had sufficient information concerning my degree programme	1743	3.65	1.154
There are many careers related to the degree course I am studying	1982	4.15	0.947
My school counsellor gave me career information concerning my degree choice	1193	2.50	1.317
Career information resources in my school influenced choosing this degree programme	1232	2.58	1.287
I do not know anything about the degree choice I am studying	2095	4.38	0.863
No one has ever talked to me about careers related to my degree programme	1884	3.94	1.122
Average Mean Score	10129	3.53	

The results of Table 2 indicate that the influence of career information on student's choice of degree programme was quite high. The computed average mean score of the influence of career information on degree programme was 3.53. Three levels of influence were created to represent the magnitude of the influence on the dependent variables (degree programme) based on the range of the calculated mean as indicated in the Table 3.

Table 3
Influence Levels and the Mean Score of the Influencing Factors

Mean Influence	Levels of Influence		
	Low	Moderate	High
	1.5 – 2.4	2.5 – 3.4	3.5 – 4.4

Table 3 indicates that low levels of influence will have a mean score that ranges between 1.5 and 2.4, moderate levels of influence with mean score ranging from 2.5 to 3.4, while high levels of influence will have mean scores ranging between 3.5 and 4.5. Comparing this mean score with the three levels of influence created

to represent the magnitude of the influence on the dependent variable (Degree programme) in Table 3, the results clearly show that the mean score of the influence of career information on degree programme lies between 3.5 and 4.5. This entails that the influence of career information on degree programme of students in public universities was high. This implies that career information is a significant factor in influencing the choice of degree programmes of students in public universities in Kenya. The lowest value of standard deviation (0.863) indicates the most the students in both modules did not know anything about the degree choice they were studying. These results underscore the importance of provision of adequate career information to students when they are choosing degree programmes. The highest value of standard deviation (1.317) indicates that the students gave varied responses to the fact that some strongly agreed and other strongly disagreed that the school counsellor gave me career information concerning my degree choice. This signifies that students who have adequate career information are in a better position to make informed choices in degree programmes, than students who have no knowledge of their career interests.

A recent study by Nyamwange (2016) on the influence student's interest on career choice found out that having prior knowledge about a career is important in developing and nurturing interest in the career. In fact prior knowledge prepares an individual for the conditions obtaining for a career and one will decide to enter a career from a point of knowledge. Knowledge on a career can be acquired through doing research and consultation, training, exposure as well as industrial attachment (Nyamwange, 2016). The study observed that the level of career guidance and counselling provided in secondary schools was neither well planned nor organized. In addition, there were no clear policies within which the service is provided. Students' degree programme decisions were guided by other factors rather than career information. Tillman (2015) agrees that the advice career counsellors give involved mostly the university degree application processes and cluster subjects, while it was the classroom teachers that gave more academic advice. Research by Dietrich and Nurmi (2011) pointed out that although students need and seek guidance from their when making plans for their career paths, they do not necessarily always turn to their parents/guardians for the advice.

Gurney-Read (2014) affirms that the school counsellors work hard in order to advise their pupils on which courses and careers will best suit their academic abilities, but teachers and schools cannot, on their own, be expected to have a thorough knowledge of all the developments in university teaching and in the many careers that are available for students. In Kenyan schools, studies indicate that the implementation of career guidance and counselling programme has been hampered by inadequacy of career guidance and counselling resources, unskilled career guidance teachers who also overloaded with academic class work (Orange, 2011). Useful career information on public universities and the degree programmes they offer is available in the KUCCPS website (KUCCPS, 2016). More information is available through university brochures and bulletins. Gitonga, Kigen, Wangeri and Orodho, (2013) attest that it is very important for schools to work closely with universities in order to access relevant and up-to-date information on degree programmes, what grades and skills they require, and which universities will help students best prepare themselves.

The schools should attend university open and career days in which the different faculties and departments in the universities explicate the various degree programmes they offer and career opportunities. Some universities such as Egerton University have periodically organized for career workshops for career teachers in Nakuru County. Schools need to provide career guidance to learners during their high school studies (Ngumi, 2008). The career guidance programmes guide learners in making their career choices and aspirations before entering university. School counsellors provide information, tools and perspective to parents, students, schools and their communities that build college and career readiness for all students (Mumiukha, 2011). School counsellors are uniquely positioned as the school professionals best able to guide all students toward college readiness. School counsellors interact with teachers, administrators, students and their families each day, marshalling forces from across the school, district and community (Ferry, 2006).

4.2 Influence of Career Information on Degree Programme among Regular and Self-sponsored Students in Public Universities

The second research objective research objective sought to establish whether differences existed in the influence of career information on the degree choice between regular and self-sponsored students in public universities. The research was guided by the hypothesis that 'there is no statistically significant difference in the influence of career information on degree choice between students in regular and self-sponsored modules. The independent samples *t*-test was used to do the analysis. Independent-sample *t*-test is used when comparing the mean scores of two different groups of people or conditions. The results of the independent samples *t*-test for the influence of career information on choice of degree programme among regular and self-sponsored students in public universities are presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4
Group Statistics of Career Information's Influence on Degree Programme by Module

	Module	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Influence of career information on degree programme	Regular	263	3.485	1.190	.0730
	Self-sponsored	215	3.602	1.099	.0750

The results in Table 4 indicates that there was a slight difference in the mean scores for regular ($M = 3.485$, $SD = 1.190$) and self-sponsored ($M = 3.602$, $SD = 1.099$) students. The mean score of influence of career information on choice of degree programme for regular students was lower than the mean score for self-sponsored students. This indicates that on average career information had a high influence on choice of degree programme made by the students. The results also attest to the fact that although the mean score for influence of career information was relatively high, the self-sponsored students had a higher mean score than regular students, which indicates that the self-sponsored students experienced more influence of career information on their choice of degree programme than the regular students.

Table 5
Independent Sample t-tests on Career Information Influence on Degree Programme

Career influence on Choice	Information on Degree	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std Error Difference	95% confidence interval of Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Equal assumed	Variances	6.477	0.011	-2.080	476	0.038	-.1170	.1060	-.4280	-.0120
Equal variances not assumed				-2.097	469.0	0.037	-.1170	.1050	-.4260	-.0140

Table 5 presents the results of the independent samples *t*-tests conducted to compare influence of career information on choice of degree programme for students in regular and self sponsored modules. The Levene's test significant value is 0.011, which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$; hence we use the values of the second line of the table; ($t(469) = -2.097$, $p = 0.037$), indicating that there was a significant difference in the mean scores of influence of career information on choice of degree programme.

In order to find out the magnitude of the difference in the influence of career information on degree programme for both groups of students, effect size statistics was computed. Effect size statistics provide an indication of the magnitude of the differences between your groups (not just whether the difference could have occurred by chance) (Pallant, 2005; Cohen, 1988). The eta squared value obtained above is 0.0090 which is less than 0.01. This indicates that the magnitude of the differences in the influence of career information on degree programme between regular and self-sponsored students was small.

The independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the financial resources' influence scores for regular and self-sponsored students. There was there was a significant difference in difference in mean scores for regular ($M = 3.485$, $SD = 1.190$) and self-sponsored students [$M = 3.602$, $SD = 1.099$; $t(469) = -2.097$, $p = 0.037$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was very small (eta squared= 0.0090). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and conclusions are made that there was a statistically significant difference in the influence of career information on degree programme between students in regular and self-sponsored modules in public universities. Specifically, the results suggest that career information had a higher influence on degree choice for self-sponsored students than regular module students. The results also attest to the fact that although the mean score for influence of career information was relatively high, the self-sponsored students had a higher mean score than regular students, which indicates that the self-sponsored students experienced more influence of career information on their choice of degree programme than the regular students.

The findings from the data above indicate clearly that career information in key in choosing a degree programme. The findings also show that although majority 66.4% of the students agreed they had sufficient knowledge about the degree programme, only 29.9% indicated that the source of the career information was from their school. This implies that the career guidance and counselling provided in schools is inadequate to enable students make informed choices of degree programmes. Lugulu and Musoga (2013) note that the success of students making informed degree programs choices will depend on the level of career guidance and counselling given in schools and marketing of degree programmes offered by universities. There is need to strengthen of career guidance and counselling in schools and it should be mainstreamed in the education system with clear policies.

A recent study on the historical, current and future statuses of guidance and counselling in Kenyan schools found out that counsellor training institutions lacked standardized training curriculums and counsellor's

role ambiguity still persisted (Wambu & Fischer, 2015). The study recommended the implementation of organized comprehensive guidance and counselling programmes for all schools. The government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education has been encouraging the teachers to undergo training by granting them study leaves and salary increments after graduation. The universities are offering counselling courses and advanced degrees in the field of guidance and counselling at the bachelor's level in regular and school-based modules. This offers the advantage of producing more school counsellors to serve in high schools and primary schools that currently do not have trained professional counsellors (Wambu & Wickman, 2011). At present, many Although the Ministry of Education in Kenya has periodically produced career booklets to support learners in the career choice and development process, these efforts have not being adequate in assisting the students in making career decisions (Masara, 2009). School counsellors are leaders and advocates who can profoundly influence students' academic achievement, aspirations, decisions and future plans. They are school-based professionals who connect students to resources and information about preparing for and applying to college.

5. Conclusions

Based on the summary findings, the study concludes that career information had a high influence the choice of degree programme of students in public universities. Therefore the following conclusions are based on the specific objectives of the study:

- i) Career information had a high influence on the degree choice of both regular and self-sponsored students. This implied that career information was a significant factor in influencing the choice of degree programmes of students in public universities in Kenya. This implied that students require adequate career information when choosing degree programmes. Availability of relevant and sufficient career information is necessary in helping the students choose their degree programmes. Although the schools seem not to provide adequate career information, the students are able to access and utilize other available sources of career information such as family, books and internet. Lack of sufficient career information from schools and counsellors led students to seek for other alternative sources.
- ii) There was no statistically significant difference that existed in the mean scores of influence of career information between regular and self-sponsored students, although self-sponsored students had a slightly higher mean score than students. Therefore, the self-sponsored students are more likely to be satisfied with their choice of degree programme than the regular students in public universities in Kenya.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made.

- i) The parents/guardian should furnish themselves with adequate and relevant information concerning university degree programmes in public universities to be able to advice their children well. They should also not force their choices on their children, but assist them in making the decisions.
- ii) The study recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) ensures that in all secondary schools in Kenya, the career guidance department is functional with adequate career information resources and activities, to facilitate career development among students and help students in understanding and developing their career interests.
- iii) The study also recommended the training and equipping of career guidance counsellors in schools to enhance their competence in helping students with their career development issues and assisting students with relevant career information.
- iv) The study recommends that all public universities establish career counselling centres to help students solve their career development issues. Career guidance and counselling services should be offered to the first years who have issues concerning the degree programme they were offered and the university placement in order to help them accept, adjust and cope with the outcomes.

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