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SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

INFLUENCE OF SELECTED SELF-AWARENESS ASPECTS ON VOCATIONAL CHOICES AMONG YOUTHS IN TAITA TAVETA COUNTY, KENYA

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY) OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY.

NOVEMBER, 2019.
DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

I affirm that this is my original work and has not been submitted in any other university.

Signature………………………….. Date……………………………

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Recommendation

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

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DEDICATION

First, I dedicate this research project to my late mother Mrs. Peris Kinyasi Mwandawiro and late mother-in-law Mrs. Lucy Wanjuki Wandimi may their souls rest in peace who would have been happy for this advance step in my schooling. Second, I dedicate the research project to my father Mr. Ben Mwandawiro and father-in-law Mr. Patrick Muturi for their encouragement. Third, is to my wife Millicent Mukami for her support and our son Princecarson Mwandawiro. Lastly, is to my sisters Hope, Joyce and Jane and all the youths in Kenya.
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ILO: International Labour Organization

LDES: Labour Demand Enterprise Survey

NACOSTI: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

SD: Standard Deviation

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

SWTS: School-to-Work Transition Survey

YGs: Youth Groups

YPs: Youth Polytechnics

USIU: United States International University
# OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**In School Youth:** A youth schooling in a youth polytechnic (now vocational training centre).

**Out of School Youth:** A youth currently not schooling in any educational institution.

**Personal interests:** That one likes doing.

**Personal strengths:** One’s ability/talent and skills.

**Personal values:** Beliefs and principles that one considers to be important in one’s life.

**Psychosocial interventions:** Interventions that have both psychological and social aspects of improving self-awareness among youths.

**Self-Awareness:** Understanding oneself in terms of one’s strengths, interests and values.

**Vocational choices:** Selection of a job or career that is, either formal or non-formal.

**Youth:** A person aged 18 to 34 years.

**Youth group:** A group registered by the Department of Social Development whose members are mainly out of school youth.
ABSTRACT

Despite studies revealing that self-awareness is important when choosing a vocation, few studies have been conducted on influence of various aspects of self-awareness on vocational choices especially among youths. To address this gap, the study determined the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. The study was guided by Frank Parsons’ (1854-1908) trait and factor theory that identifies self-awareness as a significant element in choosing a vocation among youths. Descriptive survey design was used in the study that entailed multi-stage sampling of 384 youths from an accessible target population of 3,451 youths aged 18 to 34 years in the county. A researcher developed questionnaire was used to collect data. Data was analyzed using descriptive techniques such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 and were presented in tables. The findings revealed that youths indicated high awareness levels of both selected personal aspects and vocational choice requirements. The findings also showed that awareness of selected personal aspects influenced vocational choices among youths. Guidance and counselling, personality tests, self-awareness trainings among others were suggested by youths as some of the psychosocial interventions that may enhance awareness of selected personal aspects among them to facilitate informed vocational choices. Based on the findings the study recommends that youth development stakeholders in the county should be sensitized on the importance of awareness of selected personal aspects in enabling youths make informed vocational choices.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Making a vocational choice is one of the important decisions that the youths have to make in their life. According to Bakshi, Gandhi, Shan and Maru (2012), just as personhood (being a person) may affect career choices it (personhood) may also be affected by career choices. The individual therefore, is a crucial factor in determining a vocational choice. One aspect of the individual that has been found to influence the choice of a vocation is self-awareness (Bakshi et al., 2012). In this case, self-awareness is conceptualized as the ability to identify one’s strengths, interests and values. Landine (2013) acknowledges that for the youths to make knowledgeable vocational choices, those leaving school at all levels should be competent in self-awareness. For instance, according to Nthangi (2013) for the youths to make informed vocational choices they should be aware of their strengths, interests and values. Therefore, the need to determine the influence of these personal aspects on vocational choices among the youths.

Globally, the International Labour Organization [ILO], (2013) observed that one of the priority policies of most countries was to improve the transition of youths from school to the world of work. However, ILO observed that may not be attained as expected because there was lack of adequate information regarding school to work transition process among youths. Therefore, in response to the inadequate information on school to work transition process among the youths, ILO developed a research framework that entailed two surveys.

The first survey was a broad based household survey called the ILO School-to-Work Transition Survey (SWTS) involving young people aged 15 to 29. The survey was to be undertaken at national
level where one of the aims was to avail information on the perception and inspirations of youths as regards their choice of vocations. That is, determining the extent self-awareness influences vocational choices among young people. The second survey was called Labour Demand Enterprise Survey (LDES) which aimed at investigating both the current and expected human capital needs of enterprises and the opinions of managers regarding the capacities of young job workers and seekers.

ILO (2013) noted that the findings of the two surveys (SWTS and LDES) may have assisted the employment services providers and vocational guidance counsellors, in establishing the expected competencies in different vocations. That youths should be aware of, hence may match them with their awareness of personal aspects such as their strengths, interests and values to make informed vocational choices. Moreover, ILO in conjunction with other agencies developed tools for anticipating skill needs from macro-economic levels to local levels. The results of these anticipation analyses were to inform the policy making decisions on helping young people in making vocational choices that matched their awareness of various personal aspects.

Other international studies also show that awareness of one’s interests is important in making informed vocational choices. For instance in a study carried out at Karachi in Pakistan among Business students from different universities, Ahmed, Sharif and Ahmad (2017) found that interest in the subject determined vocational choices among business students. The findings concurred with that of an earlier study by Fatoki (2014) who found that interest in the course affected career choices among international students in South Africa. The studies by Ahmed et.al and Fatoki imply that awareness of personal aspects such as one’s interest is crucial in making an informed vocational choice.
Similarly, in Africa studies indicate that self-awareness is crucial in determining vocational choices. For instance, according to a study conducted in Nigeria among secondary school students (adolescents), Otta and Williams (2012) found that there was significant relationship between self-concept and vocational interest. That implied youths should have a clear understanding of themselves in terms of their personal aspects for them to make informed vocational choices. It is probably on that basis, ILO (2013) recommended the adoption of person centred approaches in vocational counselling especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, to enable youths improve on their self-awareness of various personal aspects hence make reliable vocational choices.

In Kenya studies also show that awareness of personal aspects such as one’s interests and abilities plays an important role in determining vocational choices. For instance, Kochung and Migunde (2011) found that personal interests influenced career choices among secondary school students in Kisumu Municipality. Similarly, Korir and Wafula (2012) found that personal factors such as personal interest influenced career choices of Hospitality Students in Moi University. Moreover, in a recent study Lidovolo and Iravo (2016) found that majority of youth polytechnic students in Vihiga County chose entrepreneurship course because of individual preferences and individual capabilities. All these studies indicate that awareness of personal interests and abilities is crucial in enabling youths make informed vocational choices.

Furthermore, in Kenya the government recommended the establishment of career guidance and counselling units in educational institutions and career centres to enable the youths make informed vocational choices (Murugami, 2010; Kaane, 2014). In Taita Taveta County, the County Government of Taita Taveta (2013) found that youths form 48% of the estimated total labour force in the county. Therefore, youths in the county just like in any other county in Kenya form the largest labour force that needs to be assisted to make informed vocational choices. However,
minimal research has been conducted in the county on influence of awareness of various personal aspects on vocational choices among the youths hence the need for this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Youths are expected to be aware of personal aspects such as their strengths, interests and values for them to make informed vocational choices. However, some studies in Kenya show that some youths select courses and later on discover they have no interest in them (Koech et al., 2016). That begs the question if really some youths relate their awareness of personal aspects such as their strengths, interests and values with the vocational choice requirements to make an informed choice of vocation. Despite various studies within and without Kenya showing the importance of awareness of personal aspects in choosing a vocation, few studies have been conducted on the influence of awareness of different personal aspects on vocational choices among youths. It is on that basis, this study aimed at determining the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices among youths to fill the knowledge gap.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

i. To establish awareness levels of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.
ii. To determine the levels of awareness of vocational choice requirements among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.

iii. To investigate the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.

iv. To generate psychosocial interventions likely to enhance awareness of personal aspects in making vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions of the study were:

i. What are the awareness levels of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya?

ii. What are the awareness levels of vocational choice requirements among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya?

iii. Does awareness of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) influence vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya?

iv. Which psychosocial interventions are likely to enhance awareness of personal aspects in making vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya?

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

The study aimed at determining the influence of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) on vocational choices among youths, because few studies had been done on the influence of selected personal aspects on vocational choices among the youths. That is, despite studies
showing awareness of the selected personal aspects is crucial in making informed vocational choices. Therefore, the study may provide information about the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County that may be replicated in other counties in Kenya and all over the world. Consequently, facilitate comparison with an aim of making reliable generalizations.

The findings of the study may be beneficial to various youth development stakeholders in Taita Taveta County and the country especially the policy makers, youth services providers, parents/guardians and the youths themselves. The findings of the study may present factual information for evidence based interventions in identifying, developing, implementing and reviewing policies, programmes, projects and activities that will help youths to improve their awareness levels of personal strengths, interests and values on choosing a vocation. That may lay a foundation for success and happiness in their (the youths) life for they are likely to choose vocations that match their potential hence achieve expected performance and make commendable societal contribution. In addition, parents/guardians will invest in vocational choices that their children will pursue to completion and practice them as expected.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

The study was carried out among the youths in school and out of school aged 18 to 34 years in Taita Taveta County. The youths in school were sampled from youth polytechnics (now vocational training centres) while the out of school youths were sampled from youth groups. The study was mainly to determine the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) on vocational choices. Since the study was carried out in one county its findings may be used in making general remarks for the county only and not the whole country.
1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The following were the assumptions of the study:

1. The youths have different vocational choices based on their strengths, interests and values.
2. The youths in the target institutions within the county had an equal chance of being sampled for the study.
3. The youths in the target institutions responded objectively to the questions during the study.
4. The youths in the target institutions had the expected literacy levels to understand the questions in the questionnaire.
5. The questionnaire was exhaustive in providing the information needed to achieve the objectives of the study.
6. The youths provided relevant information in answering the questions in the questionnaire to realize the objectives of the study.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a review of related literature on the study on influence of selected self-awareness aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. The chapter contains the theoretical framework of the study, a review of related studies, a summary of literature review and the conceptual framework.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by trait and factor theory of career development by an American educator and reformer Frank Parsons (1854-1908). Parsons is regarded as the founder of vocational guidance movement for believing that social justice can be attained through vocational guidance especially among youths (Mcmahon, Arthur & Collins, 2008). One of the major contributions of Parsons in career development was the identification of self-awareness with respect to awareness of an individual’s strengths, interests and values as a key element in making a wise vocational choice. The reason being if one chooses a vocation that matches one’s potential one is likely to exploit that potential which leads to job enjoyment and satisfaction hence expected performance and happiness. Parsons (1909) insisted that young people should be assisted through counselling to understand their strengths, interests and values in order to make informed vocational choices.

The theory was considered relevant to the study as it emphasizes the importance of self-awareness in terms of one’s strengths, interests and values in making informed vocational choices especially among youths. The theory enabled the researcher determine measurable aspects of both selected self-awareness aspects and vocational choices as the study variables. For instance, the researcher
determined that selected self-awareness aspects could be measured in terms of personal aspects such as one’s strengths, interests and values while vocational choices could be measured in terms of vocational choice requirements. In addition, the theory enabled the researcher to investigate the extent to which the selected personal aspects were matched with the requirements of a vocation among youths hence determined the relationship of the variables of the study. The findings therefore, facilitated the researcher to determine the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices among youths. Thus generate strategic vocational guidance and counselling interventions of enhancing awareness of selected personal aspects among youths to enable them make informed vocational choices as emphasized by the theory.

2.3 Review of Related Studies

As mentioned in the previous sections of the study, awareness of selected personal aspects was conceptualized in terms of the ability of an individual to identify one’s strengths, interests and values. Therefore, the section reviews related studies on awareness levels of selected personal aspects and vocational choice requirements as well as on the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices among youths. It then ends with a review of studies on psychosocial interventions likely to improve awareness of selected personal aspects in making vocational choices.

2.3.1 Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects

Awareness of selected personal aspects as noted earlier referred to the ability of an individual to identify one’s strengths, interests and values. Studies show that awareness of selected personal aspects is crucial in making vocational choices among youths. For instance, in a study of Thornton (2016) carried out among 11 undergraduate students sampled using stratified purposeful sampling
from 47 students who had enrolled for career education course in the main campus of George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Thornton found that majority of the students who attended the course reported that they had a sense of self-understanding in terms of their strengths, interests and values thus were able to make informed vocational choices that matched their potential. Therefore, the study of Thornton indicated that awareness of selected personal aspects is important in enabling youths make informed vocational choices.

In another study conducted among 202 university students who had enrolled for Introductory Psychology class in the University of New Brunswick, Canada, Landine (2013) found that students rated self-knowledge of abilities and interests relatively high. Where in a scale of 10 they recorded an average of 7.4 and 7.8 respectively. Therefore, the findings revealed that respondents for the study indicated higher self-knowledge of interests than that of abilities. This finding provided an opportunity for this study to equally investigate if youths in the county would indicate higher awareness levels of personal interests than personal abilities.

In an earlier study carried out in Mumbai, India that involved 65 youths aged 18 to 28 years from at least middle-income family, Bakshi et al. (2012) found that 80% of the respondents indicated that they were aware of themselves it terms of their ability/talent and interests. The study of Bakshi et al. implied that youths involved in the study indicated high awareness levels of selected personal aspects in terms of their strengths and interests. Therefore, this study provided an opportunity to also determine if youths in the county would equally indicate high awareness levels of selected personal aspects.

In a study that involved 133 first and second year university students among South African students who were sampled purposively, Shumba and Naong (2012) found that majority of the students indicated that they were aware understanding of the self was crucial in making informed vocational
choices. Similarly, in a study conducted among 799 senior secondary school students sampled purposively from all similar schools in Ohafia Education Zone of Abia State, Nigeria, Otta and Williams (2012) found that students who made informed vocational choices had recorded high awareness levels of self. These studies implied that awareness of selected personal aspects is crucial in making vocational choices especially among youths and it is on that basis this study aimed at determining the awareness levels of selected personal aspects.

In another study that involved 399 participants sampled using multi-stage sampling from Moi University undergraduate students, Kemboi, Kindiki and Misigo (2016) found that 73% of the respondents who were satisfied with their course of study had an initial awareness of their interests, values and abilities that enabled them make informed choice of course. The study of Kemboi et al. agreed with an earlier study that was conducted among 295 undergraduate students sampled from 2,959 Daystar University undergraduate students. In that study, Khamadi, Bowen and Oladipo (2011) found that majority of the respondents (82.7%) reported that they had a good understanding of themselves hence it supported their proper vocational decisions. These studies provided an opportunity for this study to equally determine the awareness levels of selected personal aspects among youths in the county because it informs reliable vocational choices.

2.3.2 Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements

In this study awareness of vocational choice requirements was conceptualized as the capability of an individual to identify what is expected of him or her in a course to be pursued or a job of interest. Studies indicate that other than an individual being aware of the selected personal aspects, awareness of vocational choice requirements is equally important in making an informed vocational choice. With reference to the study of Landine (2013), respondents also indicated
relatively high awareness levels of information regarding occupations they considered as their choice as revealed by an average rating of 7.1 out of 10. Therefore, providing the researcher in this study an opportunity for comparison.

In a study that involved 217 participants sampled from first year college students in United States of America, Wasylow, Mellott and Martin (2018) found that both male and female students had similar needs for career information. Similarly, in another study conducted in an international school in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia that involved 165 students from 42 different countries, Nasir and Lin (2013) found that students who had high career awareness levels were likely to make informed vocational choices. These studies despite showing the significance of vocational choice information in making informed vocational choice they did not determine the awareness levels of vocational choice requirements.

In Africa, studies also show that vocational choice requirements are important in making proper vocational choices. For instance, in a study conducted in Nigeria that involved 300 final year students drawn from all senior secondary schools and University of Calabar, Petters and Asuquo (2009) found that majority of the students from both institutions had low awareness levels of occupational information and labour market trends. The study also revealed that university students had higher awareness levels of occupational information than senior secondary students as indicated by percentages of 40% and 30% respectively.

Similarly, in a study referred earlier that was conducted among undergraduate students in South Africa, Shumba and Naong (2012) found that students who were contented with their courses of choice had prior information of those courses hence it enabled them to make informed vocational choices. The study by Shumba and Naong implied that for youths to be satisfied with their vocational choices they were expected to be aware of vocational choice requirements to match
them with their potential. It is on that basis this study aimed to determine the awareness levels of vocational choice requirements among youths in the county of study.

Just like studies from other countries in the world, studies in Kenya also show that awareness of vocational choice requirements is crucial in making informed vocational choices among youths. For instance, in a study that sampled 13 teachers and 190 students that were sample from secondary school students in Kiambu West District, Gitonga (2013) found that majority of the respondents (64%) were uncertain about their career choices because they lacked information on them. On the contrary, in another study conducted later among 500 university students sampled randomly from regular and self-sponsored students in public universities in Kenya, Gacohi, Sindabi and Chepchieng (2017) found that majority of the respondents indicated that they had sufficient information of their degree programme of choice.

The studies of Gitonga (2013) and Gacohi et al. (2017) provided an opportunity to also investigate if the youths in the county were aware of their vocational choices before they settled on them. That also enabled comparison with a study that involved 250 students and six guidance and counselling teachers sampled randomly from public secondary schools in Marsabit Central District in Kenya where Ibrahim, Wambiya, Aloka and Raburu (2014) found that students who made career decisions were aware of the career choices while those students who were not aware of the career choices had difficulty in making the career decisions.

**2.3.3 Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices**

Studies have shown that awareness of personal strengths in terms of one’s abilities or talent and skills is crucial in choosing a vocation that matches one’s potential especially among youths. In the study noted earlier of Bakshi et al. (2012) they found that 80% of the youths reported that their
ability/talent made them settle on their vocation of choice. Similarly, in their further analysis of their study, Bakshi et al. found that 41% of the youths revealed that their own interest influenced their choice of vocation. According to this study, awareness of personal interests referred to one’s ability to identify what an individual liked doing. Therefore, the study of Bakshi et al. implied that awareness of both personal strengths and interests may influence vocational choices among youths. However, the study by Bakshi and others did not measure the influence of awareness of personal strengths and interests on vocational choices.

Studies also suggest that awareness of personal values is significant in making vocational choices among youths. In this study, awareness of personal values referred to an individual’s ability to identify his/her beliefs and principles that he/she considered important in his/her life. According to a study carried out in the largest Brazilian University that sampled 1,609 students, aged 18 to 30 and pursuing 42 different careers whereby 1,600 (99.4%) responded as desired, Añaña and Nique (2010) found that the choice of career was dictated by personal values that a student considered paramount. That implied for the youths to make wise vocational choices they had to be aware of their values. The reason being one was likely to choose a career that upholds his/her values.

In another study conducted in Ghana that involved 430 students aged 15 to 44 years sampled from Takoradi and Ho Polytechnics, Ayiah-Mensah, Mettle and Ayiah (2014) found that ability/talent influenced career choices of technical and vocational students. Also in another study carried out in South Africa that involved 126 international students and 75 (59.5%) responding accordingly, sampled from all the international students pursuing business courses in two universities located in Limpopo and Gauteng provinces. Fatoki (2014) found that interest in the course was one of the most important determinants of career choice among the international students pursuing business
courses. Therefore, that shows youths should be aware of their personal interests if they are to make informed vocational choices.

Furthermore, in a study by Ayiah-Mensah et al. (2014) they also found that personal interests were rated as more important than one’s ability/talent on making a vocational choice. That implied one’s interests were likely to be given more consideration compared to one’s ability/talent. The findings provided an opportunity to equally investigate if youths in the study would rate the influence of awareness of personal interests higher than the influence of awareness of personal strengths on vocational choices. In another study conducted at Adamawa State University in Mubi, Nigeria that involved 100 students, sampled from a target population of 1000 undergraduate students in the Department of Public Administration, Sababa and Benson (2010) found that personal values greatly influenced the students’ vocational choices and aspirations. These studies provided an opportunity to determine if awareness of selected personal aspects influenced the decision of vocational choice among youths in the study.

Moreover, in a study carried out at Kisumu municipality in Kenya that sampled 332 form-four students from four secondary schools with a target population of 2,464 students. Kochung and Migunde (2011) found that 74.7% of the respondents revealed that the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills influenced their career choice. These findings therefore, implied that for the youths to make informed vocational choices they needed to be aware of their abilities, talent and skills. Similarly, Kochung and Migunde found that most students strongly agreed that personal interests influenced their career choices. However, the study of Kochung and Migunde did not measure the awareness levels of selected personal aspects of the respondents and determine whether the respondents related them to the requirements of their vocational choices. These studies
therefore, implied awareness of personal aspects may equally influence vocational choices among youths.

Furthermore, in a study conducted in Kenya at United States International University (USIU) that sampled 115 students from a target population of all students totaling to 5,533 as of October 2013 aged 18 to 50 years, Omari (2014) found that majority of the students (89%) were positive that personal values influenced their career choices. The findings of these studies suggest that personal values were significant when students were deciding on a career but failed to indicate whether the respondents after identifying their personal values related them to their vocational choices an aspect this study aimed to achieve.

2.3.4 Psychosocial Interventions Likely to Enhance Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects in Making Vocational Choices

As explained in the previous sections psychosocial interventions in enhancing awareness of selected personal aspects among youths were conceptualized as ways of improving the ability of an individual to identify his/her strengths, interests and values when choosing a vocation. Studies have shown that one of the ways of improving self-awareness among youths is through vocational guidance and counselling. For instance, in a study carried out at South and South West Districts in Delhi, India that involved 160 students from a target population of all students in eight secondary schools. Sirohi (2013) found that students who accessed vocational guidance and counselling services, showed higher career maturity with respect to self-awareness and occupational information than those who had no such privileges.

In another study conducted at Agona West Municipality in Ghana that sampled 200 students from all final year senior secondary schools students with a target population of 2,328 students, Amoah,
I. Kwofie and Kwofie (2015) found that majority of the students agreed that provision of career guidance and counselling services, self-assessment, administration of personality and aptitude tests were among career interventions that the school counsellors provided to influence their career choices.

In addition, in a study carried out at Marsabit Central District in Kenya that involved 250 students from public secondary schools and six guidance and counselling teachers sampled from a target population of 2,259 students and nine guidance and counselling teachers respectively. Ibrahim, Wambiya, Aloka and Raburu (2014) found that effective career guidance and counselling enabled students to be aware of their strengths, interests and values hence make informed vocational decisions. Similarly, this study aimed at determining ways that youths could use to enhance their awareness of selected personal aspects in making vocational choices hence facilitated a comparison with the findings of earlier studies cited.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Frank Parsons’ trait and factor theory guided the study, which states that awareness of one’s strengths, interests and values was crucial in making informed vocational choices especially among youths. The theory was relevant to the study as it enabled the researcher identify personal aspects an individual should have the ability to identify that is, one’s strengths, interests and values hence make an informed vocational choice. The theory therefore, provided guidance on the measurement of both awareness of selected personal aspects and awareness of vocational choices hence measure their relationship. That is, the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices. Previous studies revealed that selected personal aspects were crucial in choosing an informed vocation especially among the youths. However, the said studies did not
determine if the respondents had the ability to identify the selected personal aspects and vocational choice requirements, and if they matched the two variables to make reliable vocational choices that matched their potential hence this study to fill the gap.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

![Conceptual Framework Diagram]

**Figure 2.1: Relationship between Selected Self-Awareness Aspects and Vocational Choices**

Source: Author (2019)

Figure 2.1 shows that selected self-awareness aspects may influence vocational choices positively. Selected self-awareness aspects in the study were with respect to awareness of selected personal aspects in terms of an individual’s strengths, interests and values while vocational choices were in relation to awareness of vocational choice requirements. The framework further shows that gender
differences may have moderated the influence between the two variables under study as an intervening variable. That self-awareness may differ between males and females with reference to gender roles since gender is a social construct.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter contains the research methodology on the study of influence of selected self-awareness aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. It begins with a discussion of the research design of the study, followed by an explanation of the study variables and site of the study. That is followed by a description of the target population and an elaboration of the sampling techniques and sample size. The other sections that follow are specifications of the research instrument, validity and reliability of the research instrument, pilot study of the research instrument and data collection procedures. Finally, the chapter ends with the sections on data analysis and presentation, and data management and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey design. Rahi (2017) defines descriptive research as one, “that aims at obtaining information on current state of a given phenomenon” (p.2). Descriptive survey design was suitable because the study aimed at determining whether the selected personal aspects influenced vocational choices of youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.

3.3 Study Variables

The independent variable was selected self-awareness aspects that were measured in terms of awareness of selected personal aspects that is one’s strengths, interests and values. The dependent variable was vocational choices that was measured in terms of awareness of vocational choice requirements that is, awareness of the course or job requirements of one’s choice. In addition,
gender differences were an intervening variable hence was controlled through pro rata representation of male and female youths in the sample as in the accessible target population.

3.4 Site of the Study

The study was carried out in Taita Taveta County which is one of the six counties in the Coast Region of Kenya. The county has four sub-counties namely: Mwatate, Taveta, Voi and Wundanyi/Taita (see Appendix A5). The site was suitable for the study because youths in the county comprised of a relatively sizeable labour force of the county (48%) as earlier noted. In addition, according to the County Government of Taita Taveta (2013), the county is among counties with the highest number of youth polytechnics (now vocational training centres) and registered youth groups in the country. Furthermore, the County Government noted that some of the youth polytechnics and youth groups were found in rural areas while others in urban areas, with most of those in urban areas and some in rural areas being cosmopolitan. Therefore, the county provided a reliable target population in terms of diversity for drawing the sample.

3.5 Target Population

According to the statistics gathered from both the Department of Youth Training (2017) and Department of Youth Development (2017) in Taita Taveta County the accessible target population of the study was 3,451 youths. The accessible target population comprised of 2,113 youths in 24 youth polytechnics and 1,338 youths in 106 youth groups in the county. In relation to gender there were 1,380 male youths and 733 female youths in youth polytechnics (now vocational training centres) while there were 702 male youths and 636 female youths in youth groups.
3.6 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Multi-stage sampling was used to get the desired sample as follows. First, proportionate simple random sampling was used to sample 15 youth polytechnics (now vocational training centres) and 21 youth groups from the four sub-counties in Taita Taveta County on a pro rata basis as in Table 3.2 and Table 3.3. The figures were increased from 10 youth polytechnics and 14 youth groups to broaden the scope of sampling the respondents. The figures of 10 youth polytechnics and 14 youth groups were obtained using the formula by Nassiuma (2000) that is, \( n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2} \) where \( n \) was the sample size in this case 10 youth polytechnics and 14 youth groups, \( N \) was the population size of both youth polytechnics and youth groups which were 24 and 106 respectively, \( C \) was the co-efficient of variation and \( e \) was the margin of error. Nassiuma recommends \( C \) of 20% to 30% and \( e \) of 2% to 5% where in this study \( C \) was 20% and \( e \) was .05.

Second, the 15 youth polytechnics and 21 youth groups sampled from the four sub-counties were used as the sampling frame to proportionately sample 384 youths using simple random sampling as in Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. The sample size of 384 youths was obtained using Cochran formula that is, \( n_0 = \frac{z^2 x p (1-p)}{e^2} \). Where \( n_0 \) was the sample size that is 384 youths, \( z \) was the two tailed area under the normal curve where \( \alpha \) was .05 and \( z \) was 1.96, \( p \) was the proportion of the population with desired attributes in this case it was assumed to be .50 to maximize the sample size to be determined and \( e \) was the margin of error in this study which was .05 (Rahi, 2017).
Table 3.1: Distribution of the Sample among Sampled Institutions in the County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Number of Sampled Institutions</th>
<th>Number of Sampled Males (M)</th>
<th>Number of Sampled Females (F)</th>
<th>Sample (M+F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Polytechnics (YPs)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Groups (YGs)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>231</strong></td>
<td><strong>153</strong></td>
<td><strong>384</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Departments of Youth Training and Youth Development, Taita Taveta County (2017)

Table 3.2: Distribution of the Sample among Sampled Youth Polytechnics in the County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-county</th>
<th>Number of YPs</th>
<th>Sampled Number of YPs</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>Sample Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwatate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taveta</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taita/Wundanyi</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>1380</strong></td>
<td><strong>153</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Departments of Youth Training and Youth Development, Taita Taveta County (2017)
Table 3.3: Distribution of the Sample among Sampled Youth Groups in the County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-county</th>
<th>Number of YGs</th>
<th>Sample Number of YGs</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voi</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwatate</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taveta</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taita/Wundanyi</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>106</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>702</strong></td>
<td><strong>78</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Departments of Youth Training and Youth Development, Taita Taveta County (2017)

3.7 Research Instruments

A researcher developed questionnaire (see Appendix A3) was developed to collect self-report data from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part I collected demographic information on age, gender and schooling level. Part II collected data on the four objectives of the study and had four sections A to D. Section A to C had 12 Likert Scale items where 5 items were in A, 2 items were in B and 5 items were in C on objectives 1 to 3 respectively. The respondents were required in each of the 12 items to choose their level of agreement from 1 to 5 (where 1 represented strong disagreement and 5 represented strong agreement) with the statement provided. Therefore, the highest possible score could be 60 while the lowest possible score could be 12 from section A to C. Section D had an open ended question where the respondents were expected to
identify interventions likely to improve self-awareness among youths in terms of their strengths, interests and values in making vocational choices.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the attribute where the data collection procedures/instruments gather data they are expected to collect. Reliability refers to the concept of data collection procedures/instruments collecting similar data when carried out/administered at different times to the same respondents.

To facilitate construct, content and face validity of the questionnaire, it was reviewed by different readers of the research proposal who were appointed by Kenyatta University at different levels of evaluation of the document. The readers reviewed various aspects of the questionnaire such as readability, clarity and comprehensiveness as suggested by Bolarinwa (2015). Reliability was determined using test-retest method where the questionnaire was administered twice in different times to the same sampled respondents during the pilot study. The Pearson’s Co-efficient Correlation \((r)\) of the two measures was .89 hence the questionnaire and process of collecting data were considered reliable since \((r)\) was above .70 as recommended by Shaughnessy, E.B. Zechmeister and Zechmeister (2012).

3.9 Pilot Study

Thabane et al. (2010) define pilot study as “a feasibility study intended to guide the planning of large scale investigation” (p.1). The main aim of pilot study was to provide guidance in the main data collection exercise. The sample size of the pilot study was 42 respondents which was above 10 % of the main study sample size as recommended by Baker (1994) (as cited in Hazzi & Maldaon, 2015). This pilot study was carried out among youths sampled from two youth polytechnics (now vocational training centres) and two youth groups where one for each case was
obtained from Voi and Wundanyi Sub-Counties. However, those involved in the pilot study were excluded from taking part in the main study.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

First, the researcher obtained approval from the Graduate School of Kenyatta University (see Appendix A6) that enabled him to obtain a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to collect data in Taita Taveta County. Second, the researcher reported to the County Commissioner and County Director of Education, Taita Taveta County as was advised by NACOSTI to be authorized to collect data in the county. Third, the researcher reported to the heads of youth training department and youth development department of Taita Taveta County who liaised with the sub-county heads. The sub-county heads of youth training and youth development linked the researcher and/or the hired research assistants with the sampled youth polytechnics’ managers and youth groups’ leaders to mobilize the respondents. Lastly, the hired research assistants administered the questionnaires to the sampled youths who had given consent from sampled youth polytechnics and youth groups.

3.11 Data Analysis and Presentation

First, the researcher familiarized himself with the data from the questionnaires to identify its general features and cleaned it up. Second, data was summarized using descriptive statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 as follows. Demographic characteristics of the respondents by age, level of schooling and gender were analyzed in terms of frequencies and percentages that were tabulated. On objective one to three, the responses from respondents were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation and presented in tables.
Regarding objective four, designation content analysis on responses from respondents was conducted to determine the words and phrases that characterized their responses.

3.12 Data Management and Ethical Considerations

After the researcher obtained approval from the Graduate School of Kenyatta University he obtained the research permit (see Appendix A6) from NACOSTI that authorized him to collect data from the youths of sampled youth polytechnics (now vocational training centres) and youth groups. The researcher also sought permission from the County Commissioner and County Director of Education of Taita Taveta County to access the respondents from sampled youth polytechnics and youth groups. The sampled youths were then allowed to fill the questionnaire after signing the informed consent form (see Appendix A4) which assured them confidentiality for they were required not to indicate their names in the questionnaire thus were expected to be as objective as possible. Similarly, the respondents were assured that the information provided was to be used for this research only and was likely to be beneficial to them too.
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the findings of the study on influence of selected self-awareness aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. The chapter begins with a description of the demographic features of the sample. That is followed by a detailed data analysis on the measurement of awareness of selected personal aspects and vocational choice requirements and the relationship between the two variables. After that it presents suggested psychosocial interventions likely to enhance awareness of selected personal aspects in making vocational choices among youths. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary of findings.

4.2 Demographic Features of the Sample

The sample was analyzed with respect to various demographic variables namely: sub-county, schooling status, level of schooling, age and gender. During the sampling the researcher had control over only three demographic variables that is, geographical representation per sub-county, schooling status and gender. Therefore, the researcher ensured that there was pro rata representation of respondents with respect to the three variables.

4.2.1 Respondents by Sub-County and Schooling Status

The demographic features of the respondents by sub-county and schooling status are shown in Table 4.1.
Table 4.1: Respondents by Sub-County and Schooling Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schooling Status</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Sub-County</th>
<th>Total (n/N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mwatate</td>
<td>Taveta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In School</td>
<td>Males (n)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(14.58%)</td>
<td>(6.51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Females (n)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(8.33%)</td>
<td>(3.39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>88</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(22.91%)</td>
<td>(9.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of School</td>
<td>Males (n)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(4.17%)</td>
<td>(9.11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Females (n)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(3.91%)</td>
<td>(8.33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(8.08%)</td>
<td>(17.44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(n/N)</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(30.99%)</td>
<td>(27.34%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 shows that in school youths formed the largest percentage of the sample of 61.2% where Mwatate Sub-County contributed the largest percentage of 22.91 while Wundanyi Sub-County contributed the smallest percentage of 9.38. Out of school respondents contributed the smallest percentage of the respondents in the sample of 38.8%. Majority of out of school respondents were drawn from Taveta Sub-County which contributed 17.44% while Voi Sub-County provided the
lowest percentage of 5.46. Table 4.1 also shows that in both schooling status males were more than females. Among the in school, males formed 39.84% while the females formed 21.36% and among the out of school, males formed 20.31% while females contributed 18.49%.

4.2.2 Respondents by Age Groups and Level of Schooling

The frequencies and percentages of respondents’ sampled based on age groups and level of schooling are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Respondents by Age Groups and Level of Schooling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Schooling</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18-22</td>
<td>23-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6.51%)</td>
<td>(0.26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7.03%)</td>
<td>(6.25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(53.91%)</td>
<td>(13.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(67.45%)</td>
<td>(20.31%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 illustrates that 75.52% of the respondents were drawn from tertiary level thus were the majority. Table 4.2 also shows that minority of the respondents fell in the primary level that formed 8.59%. In terms of age, Table 4.2 shows that 67.45% of the sample drawn fell in the age group
between 18 to 22 years forming the majority while the age group between 33 to 34 years formed the minority among respondents with 4.69%.

4.2.3 Respondents by Gender and Level of Schooling

The frequencies and percentages of the respondents by gender and level of schooling is shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Respondents by Gender and Level of Schooling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Schooling</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.65%)</td>
<td>(4.95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9.9%)</td>
<td>(5.99%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(46.61%)</td>
<td>(28.91%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(60.16%)</td>
<td>(39.84%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 indicates that the males contributed the largest percentage of the sample of 60.16% while the females formed the smallest percentage of the sample of 39.84%. Table 4.3 also illustrates that majority of the females and males that formed the sample had attained tertiary level of schooling hence represented 28.91% and 46.61% respectively. In addition, females and males from primary level of schooling formed the least percentages of 4.95% and 3.65% respectively of the sample.
4.3 Data Analysis on Findings

This section presents the findings of the study according to the objectives thus has four sub-sections. In the first three sub-sections, the findings are presented in general and in relation to schooling status and gender.

4.3.1 Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects

The sub-section presents the findings on the first objective of the study that was to establish the awareness levels of selected personal aspects among youths in Taita Taveta County. Five statements were used to measure the awareness levels of selected personal aspects on a five-point Likert Scale where one (1) indicated strong disagreement while five (5) showed strong agreement with the statement scored. The first two statements measured awareness of personal strengths while the third statement measured awareness of personal interests and lastly, the last two statements measured awareness of personal values. The awareness levels of the selected personal aspects were based on the following ranges: Low: 1-2, Moderate: 3 and High: 4-5.

4.3.1.1 Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects in General

This segment presents the findings of awareness levels of selected personal aspects among respondents in general as illustrated in Table 4.4.
Table 4.4: Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects in General

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (N=384)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Self-Awareness Aspect Measured</th>
<th>Average Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know my ability/talent</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>1.012</td>
<td>Personal Strengths</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my skills</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what I like doing</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.820</td>
<td>Personal Interests</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my beliefs</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>0.967</td>
<td>Personal Values</td>
<td>4.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my principles</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>1.014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.27</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 shows that respondents indicated high agreement levels with the five statements that measured the awareness levels of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) as illustrated by an average mean of 4.27. In addition, Table 4.4 illustrates that awareness of personal interests was scored highest with an average mean of 4.35 while awareness of personal strengths was scored the lowest with an average mean of 4.21.

4.3.1.2 Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects by Demographic Variables

This segment presents the findings of awareness levels of selected personal aspects by schooling status and gender.
### Table 4.5: Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects by Schooling Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>In School</th>
<th>Out of School</th>
<th>Selected Self-Awareness Aspect</th>
<th>In School</th>
<th>Out of School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean (n=235)</td>
<td>Mean (n=149)</td>
<td>Average Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my ability/talent</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my skills</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what I like doing</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my beliefs</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my principles</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.29</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.24</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 illustrates that in school respondents had higher agreement levels on the five statements that measured awareness levels of selected personal aspects with an average mean of 4.29 than that out of school respondents who had an average mean of 4.24. Table 4.5 shows further that in school respondents scored both awareness of personal strengths and awareness of personal interests higher with average means of 4.27 and 4.37 respectively than out of school respondents who had average means of 4.12 and 4.32 respectively.
On the other hand, Table 4.5 shows that out of school respondents scored awareness of personal values higher with an average mean of 4.32 than in school respondents who had an average mean of 4.28. Furthermore, in both schooling status awareness of personal values was scored higher than awareness of personal strengths but lower than awareness of personal interests among in school respondents and equal to that of awareness of personal interests among out of school respondents.

b) Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects by Gender

The findings on awareness levels of selected personal aspects by gender are illustrated in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Selected Self-Awareness Aspect</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Average Mean</td>
<td>Average Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=384)</td>
<td>(n=231)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(n=153)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my ability/talent</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>1.043</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.967</td>
<td>Personal Strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my skills</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.967</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.841</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what I like doing</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.814</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.831</td>
<td>Personal Interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my beliefs</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1.028</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>0.868</td>
<td>Personal Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my principles</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>1.070</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>0.917</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Mean</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.6 shows that females had a higher average mean of 4.31 than males who had an average mean of 4.24 in scoring the five statements that measured the awareness levels of selected personal aspects. Table 4.6 illustrates further that awareness of personal interests was scored highest among males with an average mean of 4.35 which was equal to that of females who rated it as second. Awareness of personal values among males was rated second with an average mean of 4.24 which was lower than that of females of 4.38 being highest among females. Awareness of personal strengths was scored lowest among males and females with average means of 4.20 and 4.22 respectively meaning females had a higher average mean compared to that of males.

4.3.2 Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements

This sub-section presents the findings on the second objective of the study that was to determine the levels of awareness of vocational choice requirements among youths in Taita Taveta County. Two statements were used to measure the awareness levels of vocational choice requirements where, on a five-point Likert Scale one (1) indicated strong disagreement while five (5) showed strong agreement with the statement scored. The awareness levels of vocational choice requirements were based on the following ranges: Low: 1-2, Moderate: 3 and High: 4-5.

4.3.2.1 Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements in General

In this segment the results of awareness levels of vocational choice requirements are presented in general as in Table 4.7.
Table 4.7: Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements in General

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (N=384)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>Average Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I learn about the course requirements before I select it</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.132</td>
<td>Awareness of Vocational Choice</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find out the job requirements before I apply for it</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.078</td>
<td>Requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.93</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7 shows that the respondents reported high agreement levels on the two statements that measured the levels of awareness of vocational choice requirements with an average mean of 3.93. The findings revealed that the respondents indicated high awareness levels of vocational choice requirements.

4.3.2.2 Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements by Demographic Variables

The findings of awareness levels of vocational choice requirements among respondents with respect to schooling status and gender are presented in this part.

a) Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements by Schooling Status

The results on awareness levels of vocational choice requirements by schooling status of the respondents are presented in Table 4.8.
Table 4.8: Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements by Schooling Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>In School</th>
<th>Out of School</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>In School</th>
<th>Out of School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean (n=235)</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean (n=149)</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Average Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learn about the course requirements before I select it</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>1.115</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>1.160</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find out the job requirements before I apply for it</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.080</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.078</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.95</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.90</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8 shows that in school respondents recorded higher agreement levels of average mean of 3.95 than that of out of school respondents of 3.90 in scoring the two statements that measured awareness levels of vocational choice requirements. The results illustrated that in school respondents had higher awareness levels of vocational choice requirements than out of school respondents.

b) **Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements by Gender**

In this segment the results on awareness levels of vocational choice requirements by gender are presented in Table 4.9.
Table 4.9: Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>Males Average Mean</th>
<th>Females Average Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I learn about the course requirements before I select it</td>
<td>4.00 (n=231)</td>
<td>3.88 (n=153)</td>
<td>Awareness of Vocational Choice Requirements</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find out the job requirements before I apply for it</td>
<td>3.86 (n=231)</td>
<td>3.99 (n=153)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Mean</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9 indicates that females had slightly higher agreement levels with an average mean of 3.94 with the two statements that measured awareness levels of vocational choice requirements compared to that of males of 3.93.

### 4.3.3 Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices

The sub-section presents the findings on the third objective of the study that was to investigate influence of awareness of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County. Five statements were used to measure the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices among respondents. Where on a five-point Likert Scale one (1) indicated strong disagreement while five (5) revealed strong agreement with the statement scored. The first two statements were used to measure the influence
of awareness of personal strengths on vocational choices, the third statement was used to measure the influence of awareness of personal interests on vocational choices while the last two statements were used to measure the influence of awareness of personal values on vocational choices.

4.3.3.1 Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices in General

The results on the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices in general are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices in General

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (N=384)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Influence of Self-Awareness Aspect Measured</th>
<th>Average Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I match my ability/talent with the course/job requirements</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1.273</td>
<td>Personal Strengths</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider my skills when apply for a job</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I relate what I like doing with the course/job requirements</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.104</td>
<td>Personal Interests</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I choose a course/job that matches with my beliefs</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.264</td>
<td>Personal Values</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I select a course/job that agrees with my principles</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.93</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.10 illustrates that the respondents indicated high agreement levels with the five statements that measured influence of awareness of personal aspects on vocational choices as shown by an average mean of 3.93. That means majority of the respondents agreed that awareness of selected personal aspects influenced their vocational choices. Table 4.10 also shows that influence of awareness of personal interests on vocational choices had the highest average mean of 3.97 and was followed by influence of awareness of personal values on vocational choices with an average mean of 3.94. Lastly, influence of awareness of personal strengths on vocational choices had the lowest average mean of 3.91.

In addition, Table 4.10 illustrates that on influence of awareness of personal strengths, the respondents agreed that their skills influenced their vocational choices more than their ability/talent, as indicated by the comparison of the two means of 4.03 and 3.78 for each statement respectively. In addition, on influence of awareness of personal values the findings show that respondents agreed that their principles influenced their vocational choices more than their beliefs as indicated by mean scores of 4.07 and 3.80 for each statement respectively.

4.3.3.2 Influence of Awareness of Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices by Demographic Variables

This part presents the findings of the third objective of the study by schooling status and gender.

a) Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices by Schooling Status.

The findings of the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices by schooling status are presented in Table 4.11.
Table 4.11: Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices by Schooling Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>In School</th>
<th>Out of School</th>
<th>Influence of Selected Self-Awareness Aspect</th>
<th>In School</th>
<th>Out of School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean (n=235)</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean (n=149)</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Average Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I match my ability/talent with the course/job requirements</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.234</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.307</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider my skills when apply for a job</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.015</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>1.023</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I relate what I like doing with the course/job requirements</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.080</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.138</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I choose a course/job that matches with my beliefs</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>1.308</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.195</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I select a course/job that agrees with my principles</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>1.092</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>1.141</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.98</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3.84</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.11 illustrates that in school respondents reported higher agreement levels in scoring the five statements that measured the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices with an average mean of 3.98 compared to out of school respondents who had an average mean of 3.84. Furthermore, Table 4.11 shows that in school respondents recorded the highest average means for the influence of awareness of all selected personal aspects on vocational choices.

In addition, among in school respondents influence of awareness of personal interests on vocational choices had the highest average mean of 4.02 while influence of awareness of personal values on vocational choices had the lowest average mean of 3.96. On the contrary, Table 4.11 illustrates that among out of school respondents influence of awareness of personal values on vocational choices had the highest average mean of 3.91 while influence of awareness of personal strengths on vocational choices had the lowest average mean of 3.77. Therefore, in both schooling status influence of awareness of personal interests was scored higher than the influence of awareness of personal strengths on vocational choices.

**b) Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices by Gender.**

The findings on the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices by gender are presented in Table 4.12.
Table 4.12: Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices by Gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Influence of Selected Self-Awareness Aspect</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean (n=231)</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean (n=153)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.277</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>1.271</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I match my ability/talent with the course/job requirements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Strengths</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.055</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>.961</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider my skills when apply for a job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Interests</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I relate what I like doing with the course/job requirements</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.079</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.141</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I choose a course/job that matches with my beliefs</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1.286</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>1.234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I select a course/job that agrees with my principles</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.134</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.072</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Mean</td>
<td><strong>3.92</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3.94</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.12 shows that in scoring the five statements that measured influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices, female respondents indicated slightly higher agreement levels of an average mean of 3.94 than male respondents who had an average mean of 3.92. Table 4.12 also illustrates that among males influence of awareness of personal interests on vocational choices had the highest average mean of 4.00 while among females influence of awareness of personal values had the highest average mean of 3.98. That means male respondents reported that awareness of personal interests influenced their vocational choices more than other selected personal aspects while female respondents recorded that awareness of personal values influenced their vocational choices more than awareness of personal interests and values.

4.3.4 Suggested Psychosocial Interventions Likely to Enhance Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects in Making Vocational Choices

The fourth objective of the study was to generate psychosocial interventions likely to enhance awareness of selected personal aspects in making vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County. Following content analysis conducted on responses given by the respondents without any rating or ranking the findings indicated that the following interventions were suggested:

i. Guidance and counselling

ii. Participation in sporting, talent promotion and social activities

iii. Self-awareness talks

iv. Self-awareness seminars

v. Self-awareness programmes

vi. Talent promotion programmes

vii. Mentorship programmes

viii. Training on self-awareness
ix. Consulting experienced people

x. Personality tests

xi. Life coaching

4.4 Summary of Findings

In summary the findings of the study are as follows.

Respondents indicated high agreement levels with the five statements that measured the awareness levels of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) as illustrated by an average mean of 4.27. In school respondents had higher agreement levels with the five statements that measured awareness levels of selected personal aspects with an average mean of 4.29 than that out of school respondents of 4.24. Females had a higher average mean of 4.31 than males who had an average mean of 4.24 in scoring the five statements that measured the awareness levels of selected personal aspects.

Respondents reported high agreement levels on the two statements that measured the levels of awareness of vocational choice requirements with an average mean of 3.93. In school respondents recorded higher agreement levels of average mean of 3.95 than that of out of school respondents of 3.90 in scoring the two statements that measured awareness levels of vocational choice requirements. Females had slightly higher agreement levels with an average mean of 3.94 for the two statements that measured awareness levels of vocational choice requirements compared to that of males of 3.93.

Respondents indicated high agreement levels with the five statements that measured influence of awareness of personal aspects on vocational choices as shown by an average mean of 3.93. In
school respondents reported higher agreement levels in scoring the five statements that measured the influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices with an average mean of 3.98 compared to out of school respondents who had an average mean of 3.84. In scoring the five statements that measured influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices, female respondents indicated slightly higher agreement levels of an average mean of 3.94 than male respondents who had an average mean of 3.92.

Respondents suggested various psychosocial interventions likely to enhance awareness of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) in making vocational choices decisions. These included: guidance and counselling, life coaching, training on self-awareness, use of personality tests and participation in both sporting and social activities among others.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings, outlines the conclusions and recommendations of the study on influence of selected self-awareness aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. The chapter begins with a discussion of the findings, then conclusions based on the discussed findings and finally outlines the recommendations of the study.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

In this section the investigator discusses the findings of the study under four sub-sections. The section begins with a discussion on awareness levels of selected personal aspects and awareness levels of vocational choice requirements among respondents. That is followed by a discussion on influence of awareness of selected personal aspects on vocational choices among respondents. The section ends with a discussion on suggested psychosocial interventions likely to enhance awareness of selected personal aspects in making vocational choices among youths.

5.2.1 Awareness Levels of Selected Personal Aspects among Respondents

Generally, the findings showed that the respondents indicated high awareness levels of selected personal aspects as indicated by an average score of 4.27. These results indicated that youths in the county were aware of their strengths, interests and values as emphasized by Parsons Theory to facilitate informed vocational choices. Therefore, these findings were consistent with that of an earlier study by Thornton (2016) who found that majority of college students had a sense of self-
understanding. Further analysis on awareness of selected personal aspects revealed that awareness of personal interests was scored highest while awareness of personal strengths was scored lowest with average means of 4.35 and 4.21 respectively. That implied youths in the county were more aware of their interests than their values and strengths. These findings therefore, concurred with the study of Landine (2013) and Ayiah-Mensah et al. (2014) who found that students indicated higher awareness of their interests than their strengths in terms of ability or talent in choosing a vocation.

Regarding schooling status, the findings showed that youths in school recorded higher awareness levels of selected personal aspects than out of school youths as indicated by the average means of 4.29 and 4.24 respectively. Therefore, the findings indicated that youths in school in the county were more aware of their strengths, interests and values than out of school youths. The findings agreed with studies of Nasir and Lin (2012) and Thornton (2016) which showed that those in school were likely to record higher awareness levels of the selected personal aspects than those out of school probably because they were still being exposed to career education.

The analysis revealed that female respondents indicated higher awareness levels of selected personal aspects as shown by an average mean of 4.31 than male respondents who had an average mean of 4.24. That means female youths in the county had higher awareness levels of selected personal aspects than male youths. The analysis also showed that female youths scored awareness of personal values higher than awareness of other selected self-awareness aspects while among males, awareness of personal interests was rated higher than other aspects. That means female youths in the county focused more on awareness of their values while male youths gave more attention to awareness of their interests. Therefore, the study suggested further study to determine the reasons for that difference between male and female youths.
5.2.2 Awareness Levels of Vocational Choice Requirements among Respondents

In general, respondents indicated high awareness levels of vocational choice requirements whenever they were expected to make a decision of either choosing a course or applying for a job as implied by an average mean of 3.93. This means youths in the county obtained information of different vocational choices before engaging in them as in applying for them as a course to pursue or employment opportunity. The findings matched those of an earlier study of Gacohi et al. (2017) who found that majority of the university students had sufficient information about their degree programme of choice. However, the findings of this study were contrary to that of a study by Gitonga (2013) who found that majority of the secondary school students lacked certain career information. That discrepancy between this study and that of Gitonga requires further investigation to determine the reasons for the findings.

With respect to schooling status, the findings revealed that in school respondents recorded higher awareness levels of vocational choice requirements than out of school respondents as suggested by average means of 3.95 and 3.90 respectively. These results show that in school youths were more aware of vocational choice requirements than out of school youths whenever they were expected to make a vocational choice. That can be associated with opportunities to access career information probably by those in school than out of school youths as was found in a study of Gacohi et al. (2017). Gender analysis showed that awareness levels of vocational choice requirements was slightly higher among female youths than among male youths in the county as was indicated by average means of 3.94 and 3.93 for each respective case. This finding also provides an opportunity for further study to determine the reason for the gender difference in awareness levels of vocational choice requirements.
5.2.3 Influence of Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects on Vocational Choices

Generally, respondents indicated high agreement levels that awareness of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) influenced their vocational choices as illustrated by an average mean of 3.93. These findings revealed that youths in the county considered awareness of selected personal aspects was important in making informed vocational choices as emphasized in trait and factor theory. That they matched their strengths, interests and values with the requirements of a course they wanted to pursue or a job opportunity. The findings of this study agreed with that of an earlier study of Bakshi et al. (2012) who found that majority of the youths revealed that their strengths influenced their vocational choice. The findings also matched that of a study by Añaña and Nique (2010) who found that personal values dictated career choices among students.

With respect to schooling status, findings showed that in school respondents rated influence of all selected personal aspects on vocational choices higher than out of school respondents as indicated by average means of 3.98 and 3.84 respectively. That means in the county in school youths had higher agreement levels that they matched their personal aspects with vocational choice requirements than out of school youths. These findings agreed with that of an earlier study of Kochung and Migunde (2011) who found that majority of students, agreed that the opportunity to apply their skills influenced their career choices. Moreover, the findings were consistent with the study of Fatoki (2014) who found that interest in a course was one of the important determinants that influenced career choices among students. Including the findings of Omari (2014) who found that majority of the university students were positive that personal values influenced their career choices.
Gender analysis revealed that female youths in the county had slightly higher levels of agreement that awareness of selected personal aspects influenced their vocational choices than male youths as shown by the average means of 3.94 and 3.92 respectively. These findings can probably be related to higher awareness levels of selected personal aspects and vocational choices requirements among female respondents as compared to male respondents in the previous sections. Among females influence of awareness of personal values on vocational choices was scored highest while influence of awareness of personal interests was scored lowest. The findings were contrary to the study of Ayiah-Mensah et al., (2014) as earlier stated a difference that calls for further study.

Among female youths they reported that personal values had a greater influence on their vocational choices than other selected personal aspects. Therefore, among female youths in the county it was about making a vocational choice that upheld one’s principles and beliefs. The findings also revealed that among male respondents influence of their personal interests on vocational choices was scored highest while that of personal strengths was scored lowest hence agreed with the study of Ahmed et al., (2017). Therefore among male youths it entailed choosing a vocation that matched one’s interests. Similarly, the gender differences reported in these findings also call for further study.

5.2.4. Suggested Psychosocial Interventions Likely to Enhance Awareness of Selected Personal Aspects in Making Vocational Choices

The analysis of findings showed that respondents suggested different ways that may help youths improve their awareness levels of personal aspects in term of their strengths (ability/talent and skills), interests (what they like doing) and values (beliefs and principles). Among the psychosocial interventions that were identified were guidance and counselling, life coaching, training on self-
awareness, use of personality tests and participation in both sporting and social activities. These suggestions by youths in the county agreed with the studies of Amoah et al. (2015) who found that majority of students agreed provision of guidance and counselling services and psychometric tests among others influenced their career choices. Similarly, they also matched the study of Ibrahim et al. (2014) who found that effective guidance and counselling enabled students to be aware of their strengths, interests and values thus were able to match them with their vocational choices and make informed vocational choices.

5.3 Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the study:

That youths in the county indicated high awareness levels of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values).

That youths in the county equally recorded high levels of awareness of vocational choices requirements.

That youths in the county indicated that awareness of selected personal aspects influenced their vocational choices.

That youths in the county suggested various psychosocial interventions likely to enhance their awareness of selected personal aspects such as guidance and counselling, training on self-awareness and use of psychometric tests among others.
5.4 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study various recommendations are proposed to different stakeholders in youth development sub-sector who entail policy makers, youth development officers, youth polytechnic (now vocational training centres) managers and instructors, parents/guardians, youth leaders and youths. These stakeholders are crucial in ensuring that youths both in school and out of school are equipped with self-awareness competencies that will enable them to make informed vocational choices. The recommendations are as suggested below.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Stakeholders in Youth Development

i. Self-awareness programmes should be developed in the county for the youths to sustain and enhance their awareness levels of selected personal aspects.

ii. Vocational information programmes should be developed in the county for both in school and out of school youths to enable them maintain and improve their awareness levels of vocational choices.

iii. Capacity building programmes should be organized for all the stakeholders in the county to ensure that they are sensitized on the importance of awareness of selected personal aspects in making vocational choices among youths.

iv. Vocational guidance and counselling centres should be developed in the county for youths to access vocational guidance and counselling services with ease.
5.4.2 Suggestions for Further Study

Based on the fact that this study investigated the influence of selected personal aspects (strengths, interests and values) on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya the following suggestions are made for further studies.

i. That the study should be replicated in other counties to determine if similar findings would be obtained.

ii. That similar studies may be conducted using different methodology to ascertain similarity of results.

iii. That other studies can also be conducted in relation to this study to establish the reasons for differences among youths with reference to schooling status and gender differences.

iv. That a similar study should be conducted in other counties of the country before any countrywide policy is developed.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

APPENDIX A1: The Study Work Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2017/2018</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April-Oct</td>
<td>Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Correction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Submission</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A2: The Study Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Amount (Kshs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Printing and Binding Services</td>
<td>Piece</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Note books</td>
<td>Piece</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Pens</td>
<td>Piece</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Tea and Snacks</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Lunches</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>Days</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Airtime</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Research Assistants’ Wages</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Contingencies</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Pilot Study</td>
<td>Block</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24,575</td>
<td>24,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Editor’s Fees</td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>109,825</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

1. The budget was funded using the researcher’s savings.
2. Transport was paid per day @ Kshs 1000 for 4 days including one day of briefing and three days of administering the questionnaires.
3. Tea and snacks, and lunches were for the briefing day of the research assistants.
4. Accommodation was for the researcher.
5. The pilot study budget was pegged at 30% of the main study budget that is, 30% of Kshs 65, 250=19,575 plus Kshs 5,000 for contingencies which totaled to Kshs 24, 575.
APPENDIX A3: Questionnaire for the Youths

Instruction: Please tick [✓] in the right box (for PART I and PART II from Section A to Section C) and write your answer in the blank spaces provided for Section D in PART II.

PART I: Demographic Information

Age: 18-22 □ 23-27 □ 28-32 □ 33 and above □

Gender: Male □ Female □

Level of Schooling: Primary □ Secondary □ Tertiary □

PART II: Questions

Section A: Awareness Levels of Selected Self-Awareness Aspects

Choose your level of agreement with the statements in the table below. Where 1 represents (Strongly Disagree) 2 (Disagree) 3 (Neutral) 4 (Agree) 5 (Strongly Disagree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know my ability/talent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what I like doing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know my principles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section B: Awareness of Vocational Choices Requirements

Choose your level of agreement with the statements in the table below. Where 1 represents (Strongly Disagree) 2 (Disagree) 3 (Neutral) 4 (Agree) 5 (Strongly Disagree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I learn about the course requirements before I select it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find out the job requirements before I apply for it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section: C Influence of Awareness of Selected Self-Awareness Aspects on Vocational Choices

Choose your level of agreement with the statements in the table below. Where 1 represents (Strongly Disagree) 2 (Disagree) 3 (Neutral) 4 (Agree) 5 (Strongly Disagree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I match my ability/talent with the course/job requirements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider my skills when applying for a job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I relate what I like doing with the course/job requirements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I choose a course/job that matches with my beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I select a course/job that agrees with my principles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section D: Psychosocial Interventions likely to Improve Self-Awareness

Write ways that may help youths in knowing themselves better in terms of their strengths (ability/talent and skills), interests (what they like doing) and values (beliefs and principles) for them to choose the right course/job.

........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................

Thank You.
APPENDIX A4: Informed Consent Form for the Respondents

I am Paul Mwasambo Mwandawiro of registration number C50/CE/25985/2014 a student pursuing Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology at the Department of Psychology in Kenyatta University. I am carrying out a research on influence of selected self-awareness aspects on vocational choices among the youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya. I kindly request you to participate voluntarily in filling the questionnaire provided. Do not write your name on the questionnaire because it is not needed. You are expected to be honest in filling the questionnaire as the research will be beneficial to you too. Note that the information you will provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please read the instructions and the statements provided carefully before answering. Also feel free to ask any question for clarification before answering any question as well. After you have read the questionnaire and understood what you are expected to do, please sign this form to show that you filled the questionnaire on your own free will.

………………………………………………………………
APPENDIX A5: A Map Showing the Location of Taita Taveta County in Kenya
Taita Taveta County Map

Source: Maphill (2018)
APPENDIX A6: The Study Authorization Documents

(a) Approval Memo from Kenyatta University Graduate School

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: i.kyu-graduate@ku.ac.ke
Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00160
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel.: 810501 Ext. 4150

FROM: Dean, Graduate School
TO: Paul Mwasambo Mwandawiro
C/o Psychology Dept.

DATE: 2nd September, 2018
REF: CSC/CD/25985/2014

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

This is to inform you that Graduate School Board at its meeting on 22nd August, 2018 approved your Research Project Proposal for the M.A Degree Entitled, "Influence of Selected Self-Awareness Aspects on Vocational Choices among Youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya".

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the Progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University’s Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Thank you,

ELIJAH MUTUA
DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

cc. Chairman, Psychology Department.

Supervisors:

I. Dr. Robert C. Kipruto
C/o Department of Psychology
Kenyatta University
(b) Research Permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.

CONDITIONS
1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. The License shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.
8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623 - 00180, Nairobi, Kenya
TEL: 020 400 7000, 0713 788787, 0735 404245
Email: dig@nacosti.go.ke, registry@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

Serial No. A 21204

CONDITIONS: see back page

The Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation hereby grants the Research License to:

MR. PAUL MWASAMBO MWANDAWIRO of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 0-100 NAIROBI, has been permitted to conduct research in Taita-Taveta County on the topic: INFLUENCE OF SELECTED SELF-AWARENESS ASPECTS ON VOCATIONAL CHOICES AMONG YOUTHS IN TAITA TAVETA COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending 11th October, 2019.

DIRECTOR GENERAL
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation
(c) Authorization Letter from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Ref No. NACOSTI/P/18/18237/25443

7th November, 2018

Paul Mwasambo Mwandawiro
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on “Influence of selected self-awareness aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya” I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Taita Taveta County for the period ending 11th October, 2019.

You are advised to report to the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Taita Taveta County before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a copy of the final research report to the Commission within one year of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc, MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:
The County Commissioner
Taita Taveta County.

The County Director of Education
Taita Taveta County.
(d) Authorization Letter from the County Commissioner, Taita Taveta County

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

THE PRESIDENCY

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

County Commissioner’s Office
Taita Taveta County
P.O. Box 1 - 80305

MWATATE

22nd October, 2018

Email Address: cc.taitataveta@interior.go.ke
When replying please quote:
REF: CC/TVT/ADM.5/VOL.1(131)

All Deputy County Commissioners
TAITA TAVETA

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION - MR. PAUL Mwasambo Mwandawiro

Reference is made to a letter Ref. No. NACOSTI/P/18/18237/25443 dated 13th October, 2018 from the Director General/C.E.O, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation on the above subject matter.

The above named person from Kenyatta University, Nairobi has been authorized by this office to carry out research on “Influence of selected self-awareness aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya” for a period ending 11th October, 2019.

Kindly accord him the necessary assistance.

Rhoda N. Onyancha
County Commissioner
TAITA TAVETA

Cc
The Director General/C.E.O
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
P.O BOX 30623 - 00100

The County Director of Education
TAITA TAVETA

Mr. Paul Mwasambo Mwandawiro
(e) Authorization Letter from the County Director of Education, Taita Taveta County

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION TO PAUL MWASAMBO MWANDAWIRO


Authority has been granted to carry out a research on "Influence of selected self-awareness aspects on vocational choices among youths in Taita Taveta County, Kenya" for the period ending 11th October, 2019.

On completion of the research, you are requested to submit a hard copy of the research report/thesis to our office.

NDUNGE KAMANGA
FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
TAITA TAVETA.

C.c.
County Commissioner,
TAITA TAVETA