DECISIVENESS IN CAREER CHOICES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN KIAMBU WEST DISTRICT-KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION

I confirm that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution. The thesis has been complemented by referenced works duly acknowledged. Where text, data, graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other works- including the internet, the sources are specifically accredited through referencing in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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I dedicate this work to my wife Lydiah Wanjiru and children Gabriel, Immanuel and Joel. To my sons, may you be inspired to achieve greater heights of excellence in life.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page.............................................................................................................................................i

Declaration...............................................................................................................................................ii

Dedication..............................................................................................................................................iii

Acknowledgements.................................................................................................................................iv

Table of Contents .....................................................................................................................................vi

List of Tables............................................................................................................................................viii

List of Figures...........................................................................................................................................ix

Abbreviations and Acronyms..................................................................................................................x

Abstract ....................................................................................................................................................xi

CHAPTER ONE...........................................................................................................................................1

INTRODUCTION........................................................................................................................................1

1.1 Introduction........................................................................................................................................1

1.2 Background to the Study...................................................................................................................1

1.3 Statement of the Problem..................................................................................................................4

1.4 Purpose of the Study.........................................................................................................................5

1.5 Objectives of the Study.....................................................................................................................5

1.6 Research Questions..........................................................................................................................5

1.7 Assumptions of the Study .................................................................................................................6

1.8 Limitations of the Study...................................................................................................................6

1.9 Delimitations of the study...............................................................................................................6
1.10 Significance of the Study..............................................................................7  
1.11 Theoretical Framework...............................................................................7  
1.12 Conceptual Framework.............................................................................9  
1.13 Operational Definitions of Terms................................................................11  

CHAPTER TWO .................................................................................................................13  
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE....................................................................................13  
2.1 Introduction...........................................................................................................13  
2.2 Major Tenets of Social Learning Theories of Career Development......................13  
2.3 Factors Influencing Career Decision Making......................................................16  
  2.3.1 Social Economic Factors...............................................................................18  
  2.3.2 School-Based Factor......................................................................................19  
  2.3.3 Home-Based Factors....................................................................................21  
2.4 Careers Education and Schools in Kenya..........................................................23  
  2.4.1 Career Counselling Resources in Career’s Decision-Making.........................27  
  2.4.2 Role of Career Counselling Teachers in Schools............................................28  
  2.4.3 Mentorship in Career Development...............................................................29  
2.5 Measures of Career Choice Certainty and Development .....................................30  
2.6 Overview of Transitions in Labour Market..........................................................34  
2.7 Previous Studies on Career Decision-Making......................................................36  
2.8 Summary and Gap Identification.........................................................................38  

CHAPTER THREE ..............................................................................................................40
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.................................................................40

3.1 Introduction.................................................................................................40

3.2 Research Design..........................................................................................40

3.3 Study Locale................................................................................................40

3.4 Target Population.........................................................................................41

3.5 Sample Design and Sampling Procedure.....................................................42

3.6 Research Instruments..................................................................................43

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Study .............................................................44

3.8 Piloting of Research Instruments.................................................................45

3.9 Data Collection Procedures.........................................................................45

3.10 Data Analysis .............................................................................................46

CHAPTER FOUR....................................................................................................48

FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS..............................................48

4.1 Introduction..................................................................................................48

4.2 Background Characteristics of Respondents...............................................48

4.3 Factors Influencing Career Decisions Among Learners.............................49

   4.3.1 Social Factors Affecting Career choices..............................................50

   4.3.2 Home based Factors Affecting Career choices....................................52

4.4 Students’ Certainty Levels in Career Choices in Schools............................54

4.5 Preparedness of Schools in Careers Education..........................................55

   4.5.1 Activities of Career Guidance Departments in Schools.......................65
Appendix v: Chi Square Distribution Table.....................................................111
Appendix vi: Introduction Letter ...................................................................112
Appendix vii: A Map of Kiambu West district..................................................113
LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Sample Distribution in the Study’s Population..................43

Table 3.2 Responsive Rates........................................................................46

Table 4.1 Career Guidance Teachers’ Length of Service..............................49

Table 4.2 Status of Parents/guardians Academic Characteristics................50

Table 4.3 Level of Students Satisfaction in Consultations with Parents/guardians and other Personalities on Career Matters.................................................................51

Table 4.4 Level of Students Satisfaction in Career Consultations with Relatives and Siblings at Home........................................................................................................52

Table 4.5 An Interpretation of Likert’s Scale as Used in CDP.......................55

Table 4.6 Sources of Career Information for Students..................................57

Table 4.7 Gender Comparisons of Certainty Levels with Form IV Students......62

Table 4.8 Coefficient of Correlations between Study Variables......................63

Table 4.9 CGD Activities According to Teachers............................................65

Table 4.10 Interactions of Students on CGR in Schools.................................70
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 A model of Career Decision Making among Students .................. 9

Figure 4.1 Teachers’ Perception of Certainty Levels of Form IV Students.............59

Figure 4.2 Students Participation in Field Trips with Career Themes..................67

Figure 4.3 Teachers Comfort Levels with Career Resources in Schools..................68

Figure 4.4 Students Views Regarding Career Guidance in Schools.........................71
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACCI: Adult Career Concerns Inventory

CBS: Central Bureau of Statistics

CDP: Career Decision Profile

CDS: Career Decision Scale

GDP: Gross Domestic Growth

ICT: Information Communication Technology

JAB: Joint Admission board

KCSE: Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination.

KESSP: Kenya Education Sector Support Programme

KIPPRA: Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis

KNBS: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

KNBS: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

LTCC: Learning Theory of Career Counselling

NICEC: National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling

OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

SLTACDM: Social Learning Theory Approach to Career Decision Making

SLTCDM: Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making
SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TIVET: Technical Industrial Vocational and Entrepreneurial training

UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UPE: Universal Primary Education

VDMD: Vocational Decision Making Difficulty
ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that career development process is life-long, choices made during the secondary school years are particularly important in setting the foundation for future professional choices to students. Selecting a career can be a daunting task for many students, who must balance a) their own personal interests, abilities, talents and dreams with, b) what is available in various accessible universities and tertiary institutions in a rather very dynamic global society, as well as with, c) what may come of their academic performance in the final examinations, for the purposes of pursuing and gaining vocational skills. Previous research and document evidence obtainable in popular media had consistently reported that Kenyan students’ career standing and general conduct in the wider labour market did not reflect stability in career choices. Consequently, this caused a lot of concerns to the stakeholders who had perceived career decisiveness for young people as very needy. These perceptions suggested that either the career counselling at schools were defective or their existed a discrepancy between the career guidance program objectives and the instructional practices meant to achieve them. The purpose of this study was to investigate decisiveness in career choices among secondary school students in Kiambu West District, Kiambu County, Kenya. It was guided by Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM). Specifically, it aimed at determining factors that were influencing career decisions, establishing how certain students were in their career choices, assessing the preparedness of secondary schools in careers education and finding out the views of both the students and teachers on careers education. Descriptive survey design was used in this work. Three instruments, a questionnaire, an interview schedule and documents analysis guide were used in collecting data. The study population comprised of 3720 Form IV students and 62 teachers. Out of this, 13 teachers and 190 students were sampled for the study. Notable findings in the study showed that 64% of sampled students were uncertain about their career choices. Moreover, 87% of teachers were found insufficiently prepared to run career guidance programs in schools. None of the schools had embraced information technology in career guidance processes. Based on these findings, it was recommended that schools should consider employing professional career counsellors who would assist the students on a day to day basis in all manner of career decisions- similar to the way schools engage medical personnel for medical issues with students.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the background information to the research problem, statement of the problem, conceptual frame work, theoretical frame work, research objectives and questions, justification and limitation of the study, scope and operational definitions.

1.2 Background to the Study

Giving young people the tools and knowledge to realistically plan for their future has generally been held to be a primary goal of education globally. Unfortunately, a general view of the dismal studies done on students’ decisions on careers in secondary levels of education in Kenya portrays some major knowledge gaps. However, career development process is perceived as life-long; though choices made during secondary school are critical in laying the foundation for future vocations. Department for Education and Skills (2005) in its Education and Skills White Paper, in the United Kingdom, outlined the need for young people to make their own career choices by encouraging the provision of quality and impartial advice to young people. The same paper noted that young people needed skills to make sound career decisions. Parallel to this work in thought is also the work by National Institute for Careers Education and Counseling-NICEC (2004), which identified a need for careers’ specialists to work with senior management in various professions for a number of reasons: namely, to set policy and resource priorities for careers education and guidance, to support those involved in its delivery, to constantly review the provision of careers education and to develop and evaluate careers work. Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD, 2003), a commission of
European countries, on the other hand has published career booklets that guides the careers education for its member countries. More importantly, OECD (2003) has a framework on harnessing information communication technology (ICT) in developing self service approaches to career-guidance with links to diagnostic instruments, user-support centres’ accessible via telephone, emails and fax or post office mails to mention a few. This international work provoked the researcher to interrogate careers education in Kenya. A number of career issues surfaced with the European countries (OECD 2003). These included:- a) policy and resources priorities for careers education and guidance, b) support for those involved in career guidance especially at schools, c) consistent review of career provisions and, d) evaluation of careers education. These values were in no doubt, a good basis of a well informed career decision processes for students in schools. It was in the interest of the researcher to find out the preparedness of Kenyan schools in light of the above issues with OECD countries.

Locally, Kenya education system as at the time of this study required that students choose some examinable subjects before joining Form III class, two years before sitting for the national examinations (Kenya National Examination Council, KNEC, 2002). These subjects in turn, form a basis for students’ growth and development in vocational skills. Further on, admissions in tertiary institutions have generally been pegged on among other criteria, the performances of these subjects in their final examinations- Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Subject selection, admittedly, has been noted to be a complex process, especially when viewed from a student adolescent’s stage, where majority of them were identified. This biological stage has been noted to be characterized by periods of instability, conflict, anxiety and tension- manifesting through idealism, experimentation, risk taking, emotional instability and inner turmoil; all of which affect rational decision-making (Mann, Harmoni & Power 1989). Trying to choose a subject from the various options
presented in school syllabus was considered, in the researcher’s view, as to students, especially when surrounded by competing time demands from a generally loaded school curriculum (Mwangi 2002).

Readiness of teachers in the careers’ education has its equal share of issues of concern in the local schools. Mwangi (2002) work on Education and Career Aspirations in Secondary Schools, observed that teachers had heavy teaching workloads and many students to attend to, leaving little or no time to offer substantial careers’ education. He noted that 65% of the students appeared not to have had specific orientation to careers, though, about half of them- career indecisiveness notwithstanding, dreamt of joining public universities. Another study by Osoro, Amundson & Borgen (2000) on Careers Decision-Making of High School Students in Kenya, indicated that 85% of teachers were insufficiently prepared for career counselling work for students at secondary schools. This trickled down to a conclusion that most students at the university admissions point (commonly taunted as freshers by old peers), may have had no thorough careers education and consequently may have lacked specific career choices. The study at hand attempted to find out the genesis of this disconnect, in line with careers’ education resources at secondary schools.

Shifting focus from careers’ education in schools to employment patterns after school, Gati, Krausz & Osipow (1996) in their work on Difficulties in Career Decision Making, observed that shifts in employment structures, high levels of unemployment and changes in the composition of the labor force demanded that students make appropriate career choices. Dynamics in the labour markets on the other hand, were noted to be contributing to the puzzle of subject selection in the minds of students. In addition, fear of unemployment, especially with students at the brink of joining universities or tertiary institutions, seemed to compel the students to flock in the most marketable programs- at the expense of their own best-placed occupations. The study was therefore an attempt
to examine and document the internal and external factors that influenced career decision-making processes in secondary schools in Kenya, in light of this aforementioned scenario.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Students’ levels of decisiveness in career choices have generally been an issue of concern to many education stakeholders. An observation made by Maingi (2007), in a recently completed work on Certainty in Career Choices among Kenyatta University Students, revealed that 63% of students who joined public Universities in Kenya, through Joint Admissions Board (JAB), were hardly admitted to pursue degree programmes of their choices. These were fairly high figures, despite the fact that Career Guidance and Counselling have been on-going for over two decades in Kenya secondary schools. Secondly, Mwangi’s (2002) work on Education and Career Aspirations in Secondary Schools, noted that 65% of students in secondary schools appeared not to have had specific orientation to careers, though, about 50%- career indecisiveness notwithstanding, dreamt of joining universities. Going a little further on this problem, Osoro, Amundson & Borgen (2000) work on Careers Decision-Making of High School Students, observed that 85% of career guidance teachers admitted to be insufficiently prepared for career counselling work. These observations suggested that either the career guidance in schools was malfunctioning or the Kenyan education system as a whole did not hold relevant elements that could enable students acquire pertinent careers education. From the above, it was evident that the nature of this discrepancy, needed to be comprehensively established for effective interventions to be put in place. Again, this was against the background that Counselling and Guidance Division has been in existence at Ministry of Education (MoE) in Kenya to guide the counselling services at schools for over a decade.
1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate decisiveness in career choices among secondary school students in Kiambu West District in Kiambu County, Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study was specifically designed to:-

1. Determine the factors that influence career decisions among secondary school students in Kiambu West District.

2. Establish and document students’ certainty levels in career choices in Kiambu West District secondary schools.

3. To assess the preparedness of Kiambu West District secondary schools in careers education.

4. To find out the views of the teachers and students on issues of careers’ education in secondary schools in Kiambu West District.

1.6 Research Questions

The proposed study sought to answer the following questions:-

1. What are the factors influencing decisions on career choices among students in Kiambu West district secondary schools?

2. What is the state of students’ level of certainty in career choices?

3. What are the available career decision resources in Kiambu West district schools?

4. How is the career guidance conducted in Kiambu West district secondary schools?

5. What are the views of students and teachers on careers education in Kiambu West secondary schools?
1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The study had the following assumptions:

i) It assumed that all respondents would be cooperative and provide reliable responses.

ii) It also assumed that all the students selected in the study had gone through the same level of tuition in terms of teaching, had covered the same syllabus and were exposed to similar learning facilities in schools.

iii) All selected schools were assumed to be following and using the prescribed up-to-date syllabus in the secondary schools’ curriculum.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

At the onset, study literature on career guidance with respect to Kenyan situation was found to be very minimal. Literature was therefore reviewed within and outside Kenya. The study also limited itself to students and teachers in public secondary schools, although career decisions were made by students from both private or public secondary schools. Finally, financial, time and other logistical constraints hindered the depth and width of this research work.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

The study limited itself to Kiambu West district, even though career decisions were certainly expected of students from all over the country. For a more conclusive result all the districts in the country ought to have been studied. Together as well, the study limited itself to the students and teachers present in school at the time of study, though, the researcher noted the aforesaid target respondents could be in or out of school environment for various reasons such as attending games, drama or as a result of other valid reasons.
1.10 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study, if implemented, were expected to have both theoretical and practical implications for the future of career decision making in the country. They were expected to be useful in extending the existing knowledge of the students’ issues and challenges in career decisions and therefore demonstrate some reasons for the need of a timely flow of career information to secondary schools students from various stakeholders such as Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC), Joint Admission Board (JAB) and the Careers Department in Secondary Schools (CDSS). Some government organs in education could also benefit from this study in their endeavour to formulate career guidance booklets, through to enacting policies aimed at sensitising students in matters of career-decisions in the country. The study was also expected to add to the base where other researchers can develop their studies.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM) by John Krumboltz (Krumboltz’s 1976; 1998). This theory was conceptualized as one theory with two parts, namely, the Krumboltz’s Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM)- which explains the origins of career choice; and two, Krumboltz’s Learning Theory of Career Counselling (LTCC)- which explains what career counsellors can do about many career related problems. Krumboltz’s SLTCDM was designed to address the reasons behind decisions to enter, change or express interest in educational programs or occupations. It highlights four factors that influence career decision making path. These factors include, a) genetic endowment and special abilities, b) environmental conditions and events, c) learning experiences, and d) task approach skills. The result of the learners’ interaction with these four factors was said to develop in them self-observation generalizations and world-view generalizations, which in turn make individual learners engage in behaviours that lead to entry into a
given career occupations. Krumboltz’s LTCC on the other hand, was designed to help career counsellors know what to do to help clients. The overall goal of this part of Krumboltz’s theory was noted as to facilitate learning of skills, interests, beliefs, values, work habits and personal qualities that enable each person create a satisfying life within a constantly changing work environment. It provided four fundamental trends namely: a) People need to expand their capabilities and interest, rather than base decisions on existing characteristics only, b) People need to prepare for changing work tasks, rather than assume that occupations will remain stable, c) People need to be empowered to take action, not merely to be given a diagnosis, and d) Career counsellors need to play a major role in dealing with all career problems, rather than just occupational selection.

In summary Krumboltz's SLTCDM, postulated that career transitions resulted from an uncountable number of learning experiences, made possible by both planned and unplanned encounters with the people, institutions and events in each person's particular environment. By examining the levels of career decidedness, investigating the existing factors influencing students career choices and exploring the preparedness of school in career decision paths, it was thought that it would be more evident how the students- while still acknowledging the role played by innate and developmental processes, initiated career choices following this model of Krumboltz’s SLTCDM.

1.12 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a model of presentation where the researcher represents relationships between variables in the study and shows the same graphically or diagrammatically (Orodho, 2008). Figure 1.1 illustrates the relationship between the IVs and the DV.
In this study, Independent Variables (IVs) included issues surrounding decisiveness such as student’s ability to make decisions, talents and genetic endowments, job market trends, career guidance practices in schools, professional personnel such as teachers and mentors, family members that interact with teachers. Dependent Variable (DV) included the student’s choices in the career decision.
making processes. An intervening variable in the conceptual framework entailed students’ performance in school examinations.

1.13 Operational Definitions of Terms

Academic counselling- Refers in this work to the professional counselling of students on their academic plans, for course-taking while in secondary school as well as for post secondary education. Academic counselling is also referred to as academic advisement.

Career- Refers to a sequence of employment related positions, profession, occupation, vocation and line of business or calling.

Career certainty- Refers in this work to the degree to which individuals feel confident or decided about their occupational plans.

Career counselling- Refers to the portion of the guidance program in which trained professionals interact with students to assist them with their career development.

Career decision status- Refers to the position of certainty or indecision about one's career choice. Career decision status, as used in this work, can be strongly decided, decided, not sure, not decided or strongly not decided.

Career decision-making- Refers to the process of making informed career choices based on one’s personal knowledge, experience as well as occupational information that one has.
Careers’ education - Refers to programmes, sessions or classes where students learn what subjects they need to take for the vocation they want in the future. It entails the wholesome career guidance practices aimed at grounding students in appropriate occupations.

Career guidance - Refers to the portion of the counselling program that focuses on general students’ career development.

Career indecision - Refers to the inability to make a decision about the career that one wishes to pursue.

Career uncertainty - Refers to the degree to which one is not sure of having made a career choice or decision. It is the opposite of career certainty.

Home based factors - Refers in this work as the career variables that combine parents, siblings and peers influence to simultaneously influence career decisions with students.

Decisiveness/decidedness in career choices - Refers to the degree of certainty or how capable a person is in making career decisions. In this study career decisiveness, decidedness and career certainty will be used interchangeably.

Joint Admission Board (JAB) students - Refers to students who are admitted to the university directly by the government and normally enjoy partial sponsorship.

Learning resources - Refers to books, wall charts, models, radio and computers useful in careers’ education processes.

Mentor - A mentor is an experienced person who advises and helps somebody with less experience over a period of time.
Social Economic Factors- Refers in this work as the factors that emanated from students’ cultural and social economic background, significant in determining career choices to many young people.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of relevant literature used to conceptualize the research theme. The review elaborates on: - tenets of SLTCDM theory as adopted in this study, factors influencing career decision making process, careers education in Kenya and measures of career choice certainty and development- paying special emphasis to young people in secondary schools. Some studies done on career decision-making have also been highlighted.

2.2 Major Tenets of Social Learning Theories of Career Development

Social learning theories, a group of theories where Krumboltz's Theory (1976; 1998) was found identified, according to Sharf (2000) were first introduced in the 1920's and were further researched and developed by scholars such as Mary Covert Jones, Albert Bandura and John Krumboltz himself - building upon and expanding on them. Learning Theory of Career Counselling (LTCC), highlighted in Section 1.9 under theoretical framework, for instance grew out of a theory first proposed by Krumboltz, Mitchell and Gelatt in 1975- going by the name Social-Learning Theory Approach to Career Decision Making (SLTACDM, Zunker, 2002). Krumboltz later in 1976 refined and improved the same, presenting it as Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM).

Focussing the attention to the two-part theory by Krumboltz, the first part of SLTCDM explains the origins of career choices. It shows how individuals make career decisions that emphasize the importance of behaviour (action) and cognitions (knowing or thinking) in making career decisions, teaching clients career decision techniques and how to use them. He observed that four basic factors come into play, in the process of understanding why people choose the work they do as well as in
making other occupationally related decisions. These four factors are discussed below briefly, as they have a bearing later on in this study.

a) Genetic endowments and special abilities- Include those aspects of the individual that are inherited or innate rather than learned such as physical appearance and predisposition to illnesses. Some people are generally born with special abilities in areas such as arts, writing, music etc. The greater an individual's innate genetic abilities, the more likely a person are to respond to learning and teaching.

b) Environmental conditions and events- Constitute factors outside the control of an individual's social, cultural, political and economic considerations. Social factors changes in society have had a great impact on available career options. Educational conditions include school system and the influence of teachers in career choices. Occupational conditions on the other hand constitute factors that learners may have little control over in terms of number of and nature of job opportunities.

c) Learning experiences- Career preferences are as a result of one's prior learning experiences. Each person’s learning experience is unique, gained by either of the two basic types of learning experiences: instrumental learning experiences and associative learning experiences.

d) Task approach skills- How someone approaches a task depends on previous experience and influences the outcome of the task i.e. goal setting, values clarification, generating alternatives, obtaining occupational information and making decisions. Thoughts and beliefs arise from the interactions among genetic endowment, environmental conditions and learning experiences, leading to skills in doing a variety of tasks.

In the light of the above, some behavioural strategies especially for career counsellors in schools could be enlisted as follows:- a) Reinforcement- this refers to a technique of strengthening behaviour and
applies to all phases of career counselling. Positive reinforcement increases the occurrence of a response, particularly when applied in terms of verbal praise and appreciation: b) Role models- constitute valuable associative learning experiences. Counsellors can be role models. Alternatively, they can arrange to provide their clients with role models from outside the school environment: c) Role playing- which may include acting out events such as information-seeking interviews and job interviews: d) Simulation- involves doing some of the tasks that an individual in a particular occupation performs.

LTCC model from the second part of Krumboltz theory, on the other hand, is based upon the belief that learning is a key ingredient in career counselling. A major task for career counsellors is to enhance learning opportunities for clients through a wide array of effective methods used from childhood throughout life (Zunker, 2002). Career counsellors can be mentors, coaches or educators. As educators, they provide an environment for clients to develop interests, skills, values, work habits and many other personal qualities (Krumboltz, 1998 as cited in Zunker, 2002). Acquisition of these personal qualities empowers clients to take actions that lead to more satisfying lives, preparing them for the ever changing circumstances and environments. A client in this case is viewed as an explorer. Indecisiveness or abandonment of a goal is not viewed negatively, but seen as a valuable part of the learning process, in choosing a career (Krumboltz, 1998). LTCC model can be categorized into four basic areas that counsellors need to address with clients. The first area covers the reason for assessment. Assessment instruments are used to stimulate new learning by identifying needed new skills, cultivating new interests, and developing interpersonal competencies (Zunker, 2002). The second area addresses the need for counsellors to plan and implement educational interventions to learn about abilities that help to meet many of life's demands. The third area states that success needs to be based on learning outcomes: and finally the fourth area which suggests that counsellors should integrate personal and career counselling (Zunker, 2002; Krumboltz, 1998).
2.2.1 Applicability to the School Setting

From the foregoing discussions, the SLTCDM theory was found to be appropriate for school counsellors in career counselling work. The cognitive or behavioural aspect of this theory was found attractive to the school counsellors in careers education. In addition, the four major factors that the theory suggests were noted to be instrumental in career selection. They were psycho-educational and therefore found relatively easy to evaluate through the existing curriculum and testing instruments. Even though it was unlikely that any school counselling program could completely implement SLTCDM or even LTCC in its entirety, these theories did provide somewhat workable models for implementation of aspects of career counselling programmes in the career counselling department. Depending on their needs, students could benefit from informational interviews, job shadowing, guest speakers, career fairs, computer research on careers and other career related activities. These lessons and activities would fulfil the need presented in this theory for career exploration and experiences.

2.3 Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making

Factors known to affect career choices have generally been observed to be extrinsic, intrinsic or a combination of both. Extrinsic factors are those factors that were observed from without of the students’ education environment, while intrinsic factors are factors related to internal environment of students’ education include the individual personality factors. Locally, many young people were said to be heavily influenced by the professions that their parents favored (Hewitt, 2008), while others followed the career paths that their educational choices opened up for them. Further on, some students chose to follow their passions, regardless of how much or how little money it would make for them in future, though, others looked to the careers that paid them the highest salary. In the same vein, Krumboltz’s (1976) work on four
main factors that were known to influence career paths of individuals- the innate genetic endowment and special abilities; the environmental conditions and events; the learning experiences, and finally the task approach skills interacted together to yield formation of generalizations about self and world. In support of this argument, Swanson & Fouad (1999) observed that career decision-making was effected as one began to internalize interests, skills and work values, and as a result, initiate career decisions. Seen from a different perspective, Phillips & Pazienza (1988) observed that for wise career decisions to be made, three broad requirements needed to be satisfied. These include:- (1) a clear understanding of oneself- the aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources and limitations, (2) a clear knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success- the advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities and prospects in different lines of work, and (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts. The researcher attempted to examine how students’ understanding of themselves and the requirements for different careers has played around with their decisiveness in career choices.

Below, is a summary of career decision factors in three broad categories, namely the socio-economic factors, school-based factors and home-based factors- grouped accordingly for ease of the research theme and discussions in light of secondary school students’ decisiveness status.

2.3.1 Social Economic Factors

These were categorised as factors that emanated from students cultural and social economic background and were significant determinants of career choices to many young people. Individuals, who, for instance, came from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds tended to have humble aspirations- determined by gender, race, ethnicity, social status or wealth. This was in
contrast with individuals who came from high social-economic backgrounds. A career counsellor need to constantly inculcate the confidence needed so that young people do not become oppressed by the heavy burden of their gender, racial, ethnic, social or economic circumstances (or differences when inclined to compare with others) to such an extent that they fail to achieve a career for which they had the potential.

Together as well, students' decisiveness was thought to be part and parcel of society's tailored perceptions. Their aspirations could be lowered or raised by either some discouraging or encouraging forces in the cultural or social-economic set-ups. For instance, students tended to take on parental, peer and media pressure, financial considerations and egotistic reasons among other influencers in social circles for their career choices. Any selected career from a student point of view was expected to enable them make a living, over and above their personal fulfilment and satisfaction it brought them. As a result of this, monetary and material reward was, seemingly, a very important determinant of career choice. This was especially true in developing nations such as Kenya, where individuals and families have been said to be still struggling with the fundamental issues of survival such as food, shelter, education and healthcare. Osoro, Amundson & Borgen (2000) confirmed the above sentiments by noting from their work that most young people chose careers that were seen to bring handsome salaries and perquisite.

Related to the above too, in the social economic arena, were the perceptions of marketability in the labour market. Occupations' that were perceived to be marketable tended to be aggressively pursued than those that were perceived as not. Hewitt (2010) observed that when unemployment numbers were high in a country, students tended to avoid those careers that were easily affected by recession- opting for more vocational areas of study. They were found less willing to take risks when the costs of those risks seemed higher because of high unemployment.
On the whole, social economic factors were not found to exert their influence in a mutually exclusive manner. Several other factors combined together in determining what career choices young people made, especially at a school set up. A career counsellor needed therefore to determine what these factors are, their appropriateness and relative significance in students’ career choices. The researcher sought to examine how the school career resources helped the students ride above social economic influences, to match their personal orientations with the appropriate career choices for them.

2.3.2 School-Based Factors

Secondary school education in Kenya has been crowned as the final transition into adulthood and the world of work as students begin separating from parents and exploring and defining their independence (Government of Kenya; GOK, 2007). While at school, students generally find themselves deciding or meeting who they are, what they do well and what they would do when they graduate from school. They discover and evaluate their strengths, skills and abilities. They are said to have the propensity to search for a place to belong to, and more often, have been known to rely on peer acceptance and feedback for decisions. They are noted to face increased pressure regarding risky behaviours like pre-marital sex, alcohol and drugs, in the process of exploring the boundaries of more acceptable behaviour and mature, meaningful relationships. Need for guidance and counselling in making concrete and comprehensive decisions could not have been overemphasised in secondary schools.

Career guidance practices in high schools were considered as helpful in assisting students plan for their next step in education and work. They exposed and helped students identify their work values and be clear about their life roles as consumers. Kenya introduced its first career guidance in schools in 1971 (as cited in Osoro, Amundson & Borgen (2000). This was done by publishing a career
handbook—which was meant for circulation in schools. In its Development Plan (1979-1983), Kenya’s legislature agreed that career guidance should form part of curriculum at the teacher training colleges and universities. Career guidance was therefore seen to have a role in providing career direction to the young people at the secondary school level.

In summary career counselling activities as well as resources for the same in Kenya education system constituted important factors that influenced career decisions. These factors tended to directly or indirectly influence students as they explored careers, searched for meaning, purpose and direction. They helped them see their talents, know their interests, abilities and skills, allowing them to plan for their future. School career counsellors, who apparently, were the main resources in students’ decision-making processes, tended to address the academic and developmental needs of all students, not just those in need, by collaborating with students, parents, school staff and the community. They designed, implemented and maintained guidance programs that aligned with the educational mission, philosophies of their schools and education policies.

2.3.3 Home-Based Factors

Home based factors include those career variables that combine parents, siblings and peers influence simultaneously. A good number of studies done in the past continued to note that, many young people were subtly pressured into a given career by parents and/or guardians and other persons in positions of moral superiority over them. Jones (2007) for instance, observed that parents affected the level of education or training that their children achieved, the knowledge they had about work and different occupations, the beliefs and attitudes they had about work and the job skills they learned. Some of the ways they did this was by the attitudes and behaviour they approved or disapproved of, the expectations they had for their children’s education and careers, examples they
were setting for their children, the influence they exerted on who was around the children, the opportunities they offered their children to learn and develop and the kind of parent-child relationship they developed. Peers and siblings influence also played a role in the students’ decisiveness in careers.

Closely related to peer-influence is gender and career stereotyping in career choice issues for students in Kenya. Osoro, Amundson & Borgen (2000) in their journal for the advancement of counselling noted that both students and teachers indicated clear-cut differences between careers suited for boys and those suited for girls. They identified nursing, teaching, secretarial and commerce as courses for girls, while engineering, accountancy, medicine and law were for boys. The group went on further to establish the reasons for these career differentiations and categorized the findings into attitudes, societal orientations, misconceptions and ignorance. Some of the reasons given for stereotyping women’s careers included: (a) women are weak, so they should take up careers that are less demanding (citing examples like teaching, nursing, catering professions); (b) women have family roles so they should not take up careers that take them far away from their families; (c) women are patient, kind, straightforward and caring, and so should be nurses; (d) women are attractive, courteous and fluent so they can make good secretaries. Among reasons given for men’s career choices included; (a) men are hard working, energetic and intelligent, so they can be engineers; (b) men are flexible, they can leave home, so they can do any career even those that take them away from their families; (c) men are courageous and fearless. In spite of the changes in a wide range of traditional roles, attitudes were still characterized by gender segregation in the labor force, prescribing clearly distinct work roles as they manifested in different occupations for the two sexes.

On the way to winding up on the factors influencing career decisions, researcher experience on students’ decisions making process was generally found to be vulnerable to other forces beyond
their control, such as the root causes of economic development, demographic forces and political processes within a society. These forces spelt greatly the trends within which important sectors such education policies, market trends and labour requirements took. They reflected the distribution of power in a society and were inter-connected to the functioning of a country’s policies and power of the state. These same dynamics in the larger environment, identified for the students (the prospective professionals in making) as the root causes into particular forms of insecurity that had to be considered in relation to the types of career decisions one took. For example, access to financial resources affected the careers students wished to pursue, convicted by the guardians or parents wherewithal. Secondly, global pressures on labour laws and work conditions arm twisted career decisions a certain group of students took, informed by the need to be relevant in a global society. These factors changed over time and sometimes rapidly, as the researcher generally observed. The same factors also interacted with each other in complex ways triggering unpredictable outcomes.

2.4 Careers’ Education and Schools in Kenya

One of the key tasks of secondary school students was cited as exploring and planning for the post-secondary career options. According to Super's (1990) Developmental Theory of Career Development, secondary school students were found to be at the exploration stage of career development, which involved crystallizing and specifying their occupational preferences, while also making preliminary decisions about their career choices. Students who completed Form IV class were then able to gain entrance to Universities provided they achieved a competitive score. Alternatively, those who got low scores, or those with limited financial means enrolled in tertiary colleges – either as a terminal qualification with skills in a particular field, or as a second chance for University admissions. Students were also noted to retake their
examination by either repeating or doing supplementary examinations on the subjects they had scored very low marks, enhancing them better chances of admission in tertiary institutions.

Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC), Joint Admission Board (JAB), and the Careers Department in Secondary Schools (CDSS) (MOE, 1996) – were noted as the key institutions at the heart of career guidance services for the pre-college students in Kenya at the time of this study. A brief overview of these important bodies is narrated below to help put careers education work at secondary schools in the proper perspective.

To begin, KIE, a governmental institution, was established in 1968 by Education Act, Cap 211, of the laws of Kenya and its legal status defined in the 1976 KIE Order, issued through Legal Notice No. 105 of 1976, as provided for by the Act. Amendments to this Order were made by Legal Notice No. 144 of 1980 and Legal Notice No. 126 of 1984 (Kenya Institute of Education, KIE 2009). Its key mission was to provide curriculum and curriculum support materials (syllabus development) responsive to the needs of a varied clientele in the country. This, according to the same source (KIE 2009) has been achieved through continual research, evaluation, assessment and the monitoring of client needs, in a changing social, economic and technological environment. Its Secondary School Section, which fell under Basic Education Department, had the principle mandate of developing curricula and curricula support materials. Secondary school education syllabus was found to be developed in thirty subject areas, presently offered at secondary schools in Kenya. Students were supposed to take eight (8) examinable subjects, according to some stated criteria. Below is a list of these subjects in the secondary school section as highlighted in the secondary school syllabus (Kenya Institute of Education, KIE 2009).

a) Languages- English, Kiswahili, Arabic, German and French.


e) Creative Arts- Music, Art and Design.


Some crucial tasks that were listed to be under this division, especially with great repercussions to the career development for students included:- orientation of teachers on the secondary school curriculum, monitoring and evaluation of the secondary school curriculum, providing information on any changes in the curricula and curricula related issues and analysis of KCSE and submission of reports to KNEC. These critical functions have substantial repercussions to the types of decisions made by students.

Next in line for assisting students’ career development was the Ministry of Education Science and Education’s Joint Admission Board (MOES&T-JAB). JAB has been responsible for defining the subject clusters of each college and university programs (Joint Admission Board, JAB, 2010). It has therefore been operating with an understanding that students were competent in career decision-making, through the hands of KIE, KNEC and CDSS. JAB, as per the time of this study, was found responsible for defining the subject clusters of each college and university program (Joint Admission Board, JAB, 2010) offered locally in Kenya. Public universities and their constituent colleges were noted to conduct a joint admission exercise under a common framework called the Joint Admission Board (JAB), aforementioned above. This was effected mainly to ensure that access to university
education was based on academic merit for institutional-based undergraduate students (excluding students who were admitted to distance education or self sponsored programmes). Students admitted through the board, got partial funding from the government, while the others had to arrange for self sponsorship. Admission exercise according to JAB (2010) has always been performed annually before the start of each academic year, for candidates who have sat the KCSE examinations in the previous year.

Taking on this important body further, JAB organization structure was found to have representation from all public universities among other stakeholders in its three levels of authority. At the top level was found the committee of vice-chancellors, responsible for ensuring all policies and procedures were followed, in addition to dealing with difficult ad-hoc admission cases. The Ministry of Education (MoE) representatives were found to participate at this level to ensure that national policies were incorporated into JAB decisions. The second level constituted deans committee that comprised of deans or directors of all faculties/schools/institutes in the respective public universities. The same source informed that the deans committee received the output of the JAB system and accepted the qualified students in their respective faculties/schools/institutes, a process said to be done in a transparent manner. Dean’s committee made recommendations on various policies, procedures and matters that were pertinent to the admission process. The third level of JAB secretariat had a combination of bureaucrats and Information Communication Technology (ICT) technical staff that ran and maintained the JAB ICT as well as administering the JAB process. Students and other stake holders were therefore noted to make enquiries over admissions to various courses in public universities on-line. Appendix VII shows a list of accredited universities by year 2010 (JAB, 2010).
To sum up on JAB, it is worth noting that not all students were absorbed in the public universities, from public secondary schools. Students who were not admitted in public Universities or their constituent colleges were either absorbed in local private universities, tertiary colleges or universities outside the country. It was also within the researcher’s general knowledge that another group of secondary school graduates may have joined the labour market as unskilled man-power or as casual laborers. The MoE through District Education Committees (DEC) was noted to be in charge of admissions into public middle level colleges in Kenya.

Moving on to the Careers Department in Secondary Schools (CDSS), school teachers were found to play a vital role at the grassroots, in facilitating students' career development in the first twelve years of basic education, particularly at the high school level where students were more actively engaged in planning and implementing their post-secondary career options. To better accomplish this mission (i.e) of helping students achieve their educational and career goals in today's social, economic and cultural contexts, school counsellors were of necessity, expected to be adequately informed about a few things noted below, according to the researcher. These included:-

a) The up to date subject clusters requirements from JAB,

b) What factors influence high school students' career choices, and

c) What approaches would best facilitate their career decision-making processes.

Students’ career choices were to a large extent determined by academic performance and by the subject clusters designed by the Ministry of Education (MoE). It was in the interest of the researcher to find out how communications happened in schools from these four crucial institutions at the heart of quality of career decisiveness with secondary school students in Kenya.

2.4.1 Career Counselling Resources in Careers’ Decision-Making
Schools were generally expected to provide resource materials that were useful in careers education processes. These resources were categorised into three groups and included: (a) physical infrastructure, (b) learning aids and (c) human and financial resources. While physical infrastructure had to do career offices and libraries, learning aids included text books, equipment and apparatus, science kits, computers, internet, profession catalogues, career decision making tools (career decision making tools are measures/tools counsellors use for appraising clients' career choice status), newspapers, magazines, teacher guides, audio visual aids among others. Materials (also referred to as learning aids) were noted to be the centre of career instructions and happen to be an important influence on what goes on in a career guidance class. Abela (2010) argued that learning materials should teach students to learn, be they resource books for ideas and activities for instruction and learning- should promote teachers rationale for what they do. He emphasized that materials control teaching and learning.

2.4.2 Role of Career Counselling Teachers in Secondary Schools

The role of Career counsellors in schools in general, has been found to include facilitation of career decision-making process through provision of careers’ information, enhancing clarity of personal values, interests, skills and abilities, facilitating confidence in decision-making all of which boosts self-confidence and ability to make sound career decisions (Maingi, 2007). For most young adults, students in particular, this has been found to be a daunting process. Career counsellors have been known to serve as teachers, confidants and advisors to their clients (Maingi 2007). They were noted to help students examine their interests, styles and their abilities so as to determine which profession best suit them. They were also known to be helpful to students who were yet to decide on a career: and those who were unhappy with their choices. In addition, career counsellors also assisted people in learning new skills and abilities related to managing and directing their careers.
and work life. Parrott & Parrott (1999) observed that vocational counsellors invest enormous amounts of time, energy and expertise in dispelling the mystery of career decision-making and assisting people in career discovery. They continued to affirm that counsellors also help clients identify potential role models, with whom they might develop supportive, value adding relationships.

It was also worth noting that progress in career development tended to be blocked when there was lack of information about self, the world of work (occupational information) and ways of obtaining information. Students who lacked career information entered colleges, only to quickly find out that their career goals were unobtainable or unsuitable (Larson, Heppner, Ham, & Dugan, 1988; cited in Gaffner, David, Hazler, & Richard 2002). Students with an adequate amount of self-information and occupational knowledge tended to make better decisions, whereas, those without this information, by default, made poor decisions. Lack of information was found to generally predispose one to four categories of difficulties: These include:- lack of knowledge about the steps involved in the decision making process, lack of information about self, and the various alternatives (i.e.) occupations and lack of information about the ways of obtaining additional information. Confidence in decision-making was seen to emanate from having made successful decisions in the past. This is now where decision making experiences came in.

2.4.3 Mentorship in Career Development

Mentorship refers to a personal developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. Another definition of the term mentoring, read as; - mentoring as a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital and the psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development (Ferry, 2006). Mentoring was perceived to entail informal
communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a people who was perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who was perceived to have less (the mentee).

The role of a mentor in career development, as an important professional resource has been found to include helping a mentee in filling the gaps— in terms of knowledge and skills in a very practical manner. A mentor was said to provide to a young person a pool of knowledge that could be tapped on, to help polish some particular key skills that were said to be pertinent in career development (Ferry, 2006). Identifying a mentor involved searching or seeking out for good performers and requesting them to be mentors in given careers. Any person looking for a mentor (in this case a student) was expected to seek out for positive and pleasing personality, besides a mere successful track record. Surprisingly, it was generally accepted that it was easy to find people who were good at what they did, but they did not love it. One should look for successful people who were known to be passionate and knowledgeable about what they did, and yet not intimidating. This would help vibrate very positive energy that fuelled the mentee to success sooner. A young person should was to be on the lookout for the titles that closely resonated with the role profiles that they desired to target in the near future. This involved exploiting social networks and professional forums. To this end students were expected to build their own databases of prospective mentors and design an action plan for connection. They were to certify first on what they wanted to learn from the prospective mentors, before contacting them. Mentorship was therefore a one good road to decisiveness on career development with students.

2.5 Measures of Career Choice Certainty and Development

Career certainty has been known to refer to the degree to which individuals feel confident, or decided, about their own occupational plans. The term is better explained clearly when considered in
terms of the larger domain of career decision making and specifically career indecision. Psychological research (Slaney, 1988a) has yielded a variety of instruments useful for assessing career indecision. These instruments typically included a measure of career certainty by using one or two items that in part comprise a larger inventory that surveys career choice status. These measures gave counsellors practical tools for appraising clients' career choice status as a step in assisting clients to alleviate their career indecision. Measures of career certainty and indecision also provided researchers with a means of determining the efficacy of career counselling interventions.

Parsons (1909) pioneered the study and assessments of career certainty and career indecision. His work classified people into career-decided (i.e.) certain group and career-undecided (i.e.) uncertain group. Some years later, Williamson (1937) discounted empirically, the then widely-held belief that certainty of vocational choice predicts scholastic achievement. As part of his research, Williamson asked students reporting definite vocational choices to rate themselves as very certain, certain, or uncertain about their choices. Researchers such as Williamson (1937) that used Parsons' dichotomous model Parsons (1909) to study career-decided and career-undecided groups produced mixed and inconsistent results according to Hartung (1995). Some studies found that decided and undecided people showed significant personality or performance differences, whereas other studies found no differences between these two groups (Slaney, 1988a). As one way of resolving these inconsistent findings, researchers re-conceptualized undecided people as comprising different sub-types and turned to developing psychometric instruments that would assess degree of, and reasons for career uncertainty. Work by Savickas (1992) suggests that these measures now constitute two generations of instrument development. The first generation measures which formed the initial development, followed later by second generation measures.

2.5.1 First Generation Measures
First-generation measures of career choice status instruments although not multidimensional by design, generated considerable research on identifying multiple subtypes of undecided people and developing differential interventions for each type. They were known to yield total indecision scores. Initially these types of questionnaire, known as the "Career Decision Scale, CDS" (Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, & Koschier, 1976) ranked as the typical first-generation measures. The original title of the CDS reflected the purpose of the instrument to scale various decisional problem types and to measure antecedents of career indecision. Although predated by other measures, such as the "Vocational Decision Making Difficulty" scale, VDMD” (Holland, Gottfredson, & Nafziger, 1973), the CDS represented the earliest published attempt to assess level of and reasons for career indecision.

Osipow et al. (1976) designed the CDS primarily for high school and college students although, as Slaney (1988a) noted, it has been adapted successfully for use with graduate students, medical students and non-traditional female college students. Extensive evidence exists for the reliability as well as the construct and concurrent validity of the measures (Slaney, 1988b). Counsellors use the CDS to efficiently gauge clients' levels of decidedness, reasons for indecision and to plan specific interventions based on item responses. Later on after substantive research, a second generation of career certainty and career indecision measures were produced, propelled by validity factors of the CDS as a multidimensional measure.

2.5.2 Second Generation Measures

These measures differed significantly from earlier instruments in that they were developed to assess multiple dimensions of career indecision. In so doing, these measures expanded Parsons' original model by operationally defining indecision as a multidimensional construct. A revision of the "Vocational Decision Scale, the Career Decision Profile, CDP" (Jones, 1989) typifies measures designed specifically to scale different dimensions of career indecision and career choice status. CDP assesses
respondents along the dimensions of (a) decidedness, or degree of certainty about choice, (b) comfort, or degree of contentment with decisional status, and (c) reasons, or basis for being decided or undecided. The CDP scale contains two items on which respondents rate themselves using an 8-point scale. The first item contains content about having an occupational field in mind. The second item concerns having decided on an occupation to enter. Two additional items comprise the CDP Comfort Scale and contain content related to feeling at ease with or worried about career choice. Counsellors can pair a client's scores on the scales of Decidedness and Comfort to profile a client's choice status as decided/comfortable, decided/uncomfortable, undecided/comfortable and undecided/uncomfortable. Four additional scales, each containing three items, assess respondents' reasons for their career uncertainty. These scales include (a) Self-Clarity, which concerned with having knowledge about one's own interests, abilities, and so on, (b) Knowledge About Occupations and Training, which tapped into world-of-work knowledge, (c) Decisiveness, which measured ability to decide independently and resolutely, and (d) Career Choice Importance, which gauged feelings about the significance of work and making a career choice. Counsellors could use these scales to identify specific barriers that prevent a client from reaching a career-decided state.

Some other measures of career choice and development that evaluate the achievement of these tasks include: (1) Career Beliefs Inventory which Identifies beliefs that may block career goals, (2) My Career Thoughts Inventory, which measures dysfunctional thinking in career problem solving and decision-making process of high-school and traditional-age college students, (3) Adult Career Concerns Inventory (ACCI), that measures concerns associated with the different developmental stages of adults, and (5) Career Development Inventory (CDI), which was designed to assess students' readiness to make sound educational and vocational choices.
2.6 Overview of Transitions in Labour Market

The numbers of pupils sitting for Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examinations were generally noted to be on the rise in the recent years. Those who did not join secondary schools entered the labour market or engaged in low productivity activities. Similarly, many young persons have been sitting for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), but only a few joined universities, leaving a large proportion to join either middle level colleges or the labour market as unskilled labour. All those who joined the labour market have their equal share of challenges, far and above the issue of labour and skills mismatch. Kilonzo (1986) work on primary school pupils’ perception of the world work, career awareness and their future plans, in Machakos district found out that school children did not have adequate career awareness, though they had realistic perception about the world of work. Ndambuki (1987) in support of findings also found out that school children were not very informed generally as to what job varieties existed outside their home and school environment. These findings suggest the great need of schools to guide pupils and students in career choices, preparing them adequately for proper transitions in labour market.

On the labour demand side, data from the annual economic surveys (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, KNBS, 2007) showed that formal sector employment growth has been slow-moving. It rose by less than 1.0% between 2005 and 2007. The estimated increase for 2005, 2006, and 2007 were 2.5%, 2.8% and 2.6% respectively. The same source showed that public sector employment declined by 7.4% in 1998 to 2002 due to public sector reforms, but recorded marginal growth of 0.3% between 2002 and 2005. On the other hand, informal sector employment increased by 10% between the period 1998 and 2002, and 6.4% between 2002 and 2005. This was attributed to shrinking growth in both formal public and private sector employment. These finding have significant implication to the
secondary schools graduates in the coming years.

High unemployment rates among the youth have been a major issue of concern in many developing countries. In Sub-Saharan Africa countries, for example, the unemployment rate for year 2005/2006 for youth aged between 15-24 years was 21%, which was twice that of the overall labour force, globally (International Labour Organization, ILO, 2008). Youth unemployment was also a problem in developed countries, though the unemployment rates were far lower than those of developing nations. Locally, it was noted as a big subject of intense debate and discussions. It has been, by and large, singled out as a potential contributing factor, linked to various social vices such as rampant criminal activities, drug addiction, psychological disorders and loss of self-confidence. This notwithstanding, policy makers and other stakeholders have been concerned about high unemployment, largely informed by a number of reasons. First, the unemployment rate has been seen as a key macroeconomic indicator, with low unemployment rate taken to indicate a healthy economy. Second, unemployment represented a waste of resources since unused labour could not be used to increase output growth. Okun’s law of economics, (Prachowny, 1993) postulated that there was an inverse relationship between changes in unemployment and the real gross domestic growth (GDP). Thirdly, unemployment has been associated with economic hardships such as loss of income and reduced chances of future employment for individuals and families. Working-age population in Kenya included persons between 15 and 64 years according to estimates by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2003). The working-age population, for instance, in 2005/2006 was close to 20 million estimated based on the Integrated Household Budget Survey. It was the researcher opinion that addressing these unemployment trends may require an approach that focused on secondary schools career guidance practices, more so, the subject selection for onward career developments.

2.7 Previous Studies on Career Decision-Making
A number of studies have been done, particularly outside Kenya shedding more light in the field of career choices. In a 1996 NICEC briefing paper, it was reported that young people’s career decisions were influenced by a range of factors and issues: including parents and other relatives, friends and peer-groups, careers specialists, subject teachers, contacts with employers and direct experiences of employment, and individual interests and values. A similar study was also carried out in Rural Pennsylvania (Blenkinsop et al., 2006) on Factors Influencing Career Choices of Adolescents and Young Adults, bringing out similar results.

Another very interesting comparative study involved two groups of high school students who took a career-decision making course. Results revealed that those who took the course had less career related indecisions than those who did not- the comparison group (Savickas, 1992). Participants also improved their long-term perspective as compared to the comparison group, meaning that the career course helped them understand the relationship between the present and the future, and to plan for and be motivated to achieve long-term goals.

Secondary school students on the verge of graduating dealt with academic pressures as they faced final testing, the challenges of college admissions, the scholarship and financial aid application process and entrance into a competitive job market. Blenkinsop et al. (2006:4) revealed that young people brought different mindsets to the decision-making process, illustrating clearly the state of these students, as the reality dawned that they were on transit. These mindsets are summarized as follows:-

a. **Determined realists** – those with a clear idea of what they wanted to do and had a realistic view on how to achieve it.

b. **Comfort seekers** – those with no clear picture of their future plans.
c. Long-term preparers – those who had a clearly defined progression plan, though not necessarily aware of the field in which they wished to work.

d. Defeated coppers – those who settled for what’s in front of them.

e. Confident inspirational – optimistic, self-assured and spurred on by ambition.

f. Indecisive worriers – overly anxious about the future and struggled to envisage career options.

g. Unrealistic dreamers – believed they would succeed, but felt their success would be the result of luck rather than hard work.

In addition, the study also noted that young people’s decisions frequently fluctuated over time, even among those who were very decided about their options in the first instance. The report recommended that young people would benefit from personalized and individualized support.

A sample of female college seniors experiencing career indecision participated in a career group counselling, a wait-list control group, and an additional career-counselling group. Participants were administered the Career Decision Scale and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory at pre-test and post-test. Analysis of covariance of state anxiety scores and career indecision scores yielded significant main effects for treatment. Participants in the career-counselling groups showed a decrease in scores on state anxiety and career indecision (Peng, 2001). Gaffner et al (2002) study on Factors Related to Indecisiveness and Career Indecision in Undecided College Students, proposed that proper interventions, which are more personal and intense, might result from a better understanding of what factors have strong relationships with student’s level of indecisiveness.

Locally, the few studies done focused more on career aspirations of secondary school students. Two most recent studies on the university students by Maingi (2007) at Kenyatta University, Karihe (2006) at Jomo Kenyatta University and Mwangi (2002) at Secondary school
indicated that students need assistance in career issues. Karihe (2006) suggested counseling to be considered as both a preventive and curative measure of students’ problems, and recommended mentorship as one way of assisting students with course selection, Mwangi (2002) recommended on retraining of secondary school teachers so as to offer competitive skills to the students in secondary schools.

Kilonzo (1980) observed that despite the fact that the MOE Career Guidance Department was established in the 1970’s, it had very little impact in the schools. According to him, schools continued to receive less and less assistance from the guidance department of the MOE; deriving a conclusion that most teachers relied on church institutions, non-governmental organizations and private individuals (such lawyers, doctors, engineers, parents from the community) for information on careers. Career teachers were known to occasionally invite some of these professionals and parents to address students about career exploration, choices and decisions.

2.8 Summary and Gap Identification

The theoretical rationale and literature reviewed applied either qualitative or quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. Studies visited globally provided evidence based on research that career indecisiveness existed among students in secondary schools, though surveying clients in terms of their choice status continued to help researchers understand the complexity of career decisiveness and choices. There was very little work done locally towards the decisiveness of secondary school students in schools. Global studies done, on the other hand has greatly aided practitioners in planning appropriate career counselling interventions especially with young people at schools. The situation on the local scene was short of well documented career counselling work as well as resources used towards this objective in secondary schools. The few local studies accessed by the researcher were as a result of case studies done in specific institutions like Kenyatta University
and a few secondary schools. Minimal literature was available on the factors affecting career decisions on the local scenes. The status of decisiveness with local students was not readily available within the period of the study.
3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the methodology that was used in the study. It discusses the research design, the location of the study, target population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection instruments, validity, reliability of data collection instruments, data collection, data analysis procedure and ethical consideration.

3.2 Research Design

The study explored the status of career decision processes in secondary schools. Descriptive survey design was used in this work. The design was found to be ideal as it enabled an in-depth study of the relevant variables made in order to establish existing conditions in the schools targeted for the study in Kiambu West District. Studies that are concerned with what people think and what they do, and different types of educational fact finding, have been noted as appropriate in utilizing this research design (Frankel & Wallen, 1993; Kombo & Trump (2006)). In this study, the independent variables (IVs) included issues surrounding decisiveness such as student’s ability to make decisions, talents and genetic endowments, career guidance practices in schools, professional personnel such as teachers and mentors, and family members that interact with teachers. Dependent variable (DV) included the student’s choices in the career decision making processes. An intervening variable in the conceptual framework entailed students’ performance in school examinations.
3.3 Study Locale

The study was carried out in Kiambu West district. The district was selected as the site for the study because it was in the researcher opinion that a good number of students in the area-about 70% were hardly admitted to pursue degree programmes of their choices at the institutions of higher learning. The researcher had also served in the same district for a couple of years as a professional teacher, heightening the need to find out the issues underlying this scenario and possibly come up with some intervention measures. Kiambu District- the larger district from where Kiambu West District was carved (Kiambu West District, n.d.), was noted as one of the seven districts in the Kiambu County and covers an area of about of 1323.9sq.km (Ministry of Planning and National Development, MOPND, 2005). The district boarders Nairobi City and Kajiado District to the South, Nakuru District to the west, Nyandarua District to the north- west and Thika District to the east. It lies between latitudes 0º 75' and 1º 20' south of equator and longitudes 36º 54' and 36º 85' east. The accessibility of the site to the researcher, time factor as well as some financial constraints made Kiambu West District a compelling choice for the researcher.

The researcher was also concerned about the progress of students in terms of their career development in this locale of study and therefore attempted to find out scientifically the issues acting on their career decisiveness, as noted above. In closing, Kiambu West district was also found typical of other districts in the country, in the sense that it has near gender parity in access and participation in secondary school education (Ministry of Planning and National Development, 2005). This was found to be a critical factor in the generalization of findings to other schools in the country.
3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study included 62 public secondary schools, 3720 Form IV students and 62 heads of career guidance department in Kiambu West District, with reference to year 2009 KSCE performance merit list (Kiambu West District Examination Analysis, 2009). Form IV students were selected because they had already determined their optional subjects and by extension were deemed to be focused on their career lines. The same students were also expected to apply for courses to pursue in higher institutions of learning, through JAB, as well as sit for their national exams in a few months time, scheduled in late October 2011. Career guidance teachers were selected because they were directly in charge of career counselling in secondary schools.

3.5 Sample Design and Sampling Procedure

Slavin (1984), observed that due to limitations in time, funds and energy a study can be carried out from a carefully selected sample to represent the entire population. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the schools and the category of respondents to be included in the sample. In this study the population strata included national schools, provincial schools and district schools. One (1), four (4) and eight (8) schools were selected from these strata respectively, through proportionate sampling technique to form a sample of 13 public schools from a total of 62 public schools. This accounted for 21% of the total public schools in Kiambu West district. Students were purposively sampled to select Form IV students and the same randomly sampled to give 190 students for the study. Career guidance teachers were purposively sampled from the sampled schools to form a sample of 62 teachers, in Kiambu West district. Table 3.1 shows a summary of sample distribution of the study population.
Table 3.1: Sample Distribution in the Study Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of schools (Strata)</th>
<th>Popu of schools in the District</th>
<th>No. of sampled schools</th>
<th>Popu. of Form IVs in Sampled Sch.</th>
<th>No. of Sampled Students</th>
<th>Sampled C/G Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National schools.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial schools.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District schools.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>13(21%)</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computations Based on KCSE Examination Analysis year 2009, in Kiambu West District- Kiambu County.

3.6 Research Instruments

The study used questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis guides for collecting data. These tools were assumed adequate in providing a good depth of response and consequently greater understanding of the study issues. Darlington & Scott (2002) observed that a thorough understanding could be gained from combining a number of qualitative and quantitative data collection approaches.

3.6.1 Student’s Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to gather information from the students. As Kombo & Tromp (2006) observed, questionnaires are good instrument for gathering data from a large sample. The researcher chose this tool because it was convenient in covering the wide range of sampled
students’ population across Kiambu West district. The students’ questionnaire consisted of three sections A, B and C. Section A inquired about the participants’ age, gender and class, as well as their parents’ education and occupation data; Section B entailed a CDP adapted and modified from Career Decision Profile (Jones, 1989) and inquired on the level of career decisiveness, while section C had structured questions which interrogated on career guidance practices in schools.

3.6.2 Interview Schedules for Career Advisors

Darlington & Scott (2002) observed that no matter how free flowing an interview was in terms of topics, the order in which questions were covered ought to have some structure. To this end, a guiding interview schedule was formulated in advance with three sections A, B and C. Section A addressed subject selections in school, as well as teacher’s career guidance proficiency: Section B addressed career guidance activities in school, while section C concluded the schedule with teachers views in careers education.

3.6.3 Document Analysis Guides

Document analysis guide in this work referred to a list of resource materials scheduled to be scrutinized for the purposes of ascertaining the collected data. To confirm on some data collected, a few resource materials were reviewed as were found in the sampled secondary schools in careers department. Such documents included KNEC syllabus, JAB handbook for careers and other related materials on careers work.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Study

3.7.1 Validity

Wiersma (1985) defined validity as the extent to which an instrument measured what it was supposed to measure. The researcher sought expert opinion in assessing the validity of the
instruments from research supervisors, as well as subjecting the proposed work to a study group for professional criticism.

3.7.3 Reliability

Test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of research instruments in the pilot study. Developed instruments were administered to a few identical respondents - not included in the actual study, twice in a period of two weeks. Completed questionnaires were scored manually, before employing Spearman rank order correlation to compute the correlation coefficient. A correlation coefficient (r) of 0.8 was obtained and considered high for the reliability of the study instruments. Orodho (2008) stipulated that measurements of reliability concerns with the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives equivalent results over a number of repeated trials.

3.8 Piloting of Research Instruments

The research instruments were pre-tested to a selected sample in the same locale, Kiambu West district, which was not part of the actual study. According to Orodho (2008) piloting aims at assessing the clarity of the research instruments so that those that fail to meet the standards are modified. After piloting, deficits in instructions, questions and spaces to write responses were detected and adjusted accordingly.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

Questionnaires and interview schedules were used in the field to collect data. The researcher started by obtaining an introductory letter from the Department of Education Management Policy and curriculum Studies of Kenyatta University. He then proceeded to obtain a research permit from the National Council for Science and Technology after which copies of the same were presented to the District Commissioner and District Education Officer, Kiambu West District. After the consent, the
researcher proceeded to the field to book appointments, familiarize with the schools, meeting teachers and explaining reasons of visit. The researcher supervised the filling of questionnaires, as well as conducted the interviews in person with teachers. Confidentiality of the respondents was also assured by the researcher, after which they were thanked for their cooperation. All other logistical issues pertaining to the research procedures were strictly adhered to.

3.9.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

The sample size as per the sample design had targeted 203 respondents comprising of 190 students and thirteen (13) teachers from Career Guidance Departments (CGD). A summary of the questionnaire return rates is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Responsive Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Expected responses</th>
<th>Actual responses</th>
<th>Response rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher 2011

According to Table 3.2 thirteen (13) career guidance teachers were interviewed (100%), while 170 questionnaires were returned dully filled forming 89.5% return rate. Overall, the response rate achieved was 90.1% which was considered as providing a relatively valid and reliable representation of the target population (Orodho, 2004). A statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to generate descriptive statistics and establish the relationship between the variables of the study.
3.10 Data Analysis

The study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. Descriptive statistics such as mean and range were used to analyze the quantitative data obtained. Inferential techniques such as regression analysis and chi-square were used to analyse relationships among the variables. Data collected from Career Decision Profile (CDP) in students’ questionnaire was in particular subjected to significance tests using these correlation techniques, to establish linear relationships between the variables. Qualitative data was thematically organised and presented in narrative forms. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to analyse the statistics. Analyzed data has been reported in form of frequency tables, graphs and percentages.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of data analysis, data interpretation and discussion of findings. The study aimed at finding out the decisiveness in career choices among secondary school students in Kiambu West district. Presentation is based on the research objectives. Tables and pie charts are mainly used to present the findings, while frequency tables and percentages are used to discuss them. This study aimed at achieving the following research objectives:

i. Determine the factors that are influencing career decisions among secondary school students in Kiambu West District.

ii. Establish and document students’ certainty levels in career choices in Kiambu West District secondary schools.

iii. To assess the preparedness of Kiambu West District secondary schools in careers education.

iv. To find out the views of the teachers and students on issues of careers’ education in secondary schools in Kiambu West District.

4.2 Background Characteristics of Respondents

Students respondents were asked to provide demographic information about themselves and that of their parents'/guardians’ level of education. The information obtained took into account the gender composition of students, class of study and the year of birth. The aim of this was to establish respondents’ characteristics as well as those of their parents/guardians which were assumed as vital in investigating the decisiveness of students as well as the various factors that influence student
choices in careers. According to Kunje, Selemani-Meke & Ogawa (2009) observations, there existed a strong relationship between the learner’s home ground and school environment with learning outcomes, which greatly affect students’ choices.

On gender representations, results showed that male students’ respondents were 57%, while female respondents were 43% at this study in Kiambu West district. This reflected adherence to the policy on gender parity and the ratio was considered good enough to provide information on the socio-economic factors that determine student decisiveness in their careers.

4.2.1 Profile of Career Guidance Teachers

The numbers of years a teacher takes in teaching profession, and more so in a school, was assumed to be linked with the teacher’s experience and skill in the schools’ management matters. Career guidance teachers of the sampled schools were therefore asked to indicate their length of service in the profession. The results are shown in Table 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of stay</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>c.f (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 15 yrs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 4.1, nine out of thirteen sampled teachers (70%) had been in the teaching service for over five years. All of them (100%) had been in the service for more than two years.
4.3 Factors Influencing Career Decisions Among Students

The first research objective sought to determine the factors that were influencing career decisions among secondary school students in Kiambu West District. To achieve this objective, the researcher grouped the factors into three categories, namely social economic factors, home based factors and school based factors. In this section social economic factors and home based factors are considered. The third factor, school based is addressed under the third objective of this study.

4.3.1 Social Factors Affecting Career choices

The researcher sought to find out how some social-economic factors embedded in the social environment affected the decisions students made. These factors were perceived as having a large stake in a child’s education (Gaffner, David C, Hazler & Richard J., 2002). It was the researcher’s opinion that students cultural and economic exposure rode, to a large extent on the parents/guardians educational status. Students were therefore asked to indicate any of their parents/guardians highest level of education completed. Responses are summarised in Table 4.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>c.f (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-Graduates</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Certificate</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 reveals that 94.1% (160) students had parents/guardians with college certificates and/or above, compared to 5.9% (10) who indicated that their parents had no college certificates at all. The data outcome on parents/guardians education background implied that almost all parents/guardians of sampled students in Kiambu West District were literate. These parents were expected to appreciate a lot of school issues and in essence, the importance of quality education for their children. Their influence was deemed to be positive in their education matters, for the simple reason that a majority were beneficiaries of formal education system. Interviews with career guidance teachers on the same subject of parents’ literacy levels confirmed the results from students. Findings from these interviews pointed to a conclusion that about 85% of the current parents/guardians for the target class were literate with over 50% perceived as having acquired Diploma certificates in their education profile. Seventy percent (70%) of interviewed teachers also observed that most students who came from low social economic backgrounds tended to have ‘humble’ career aspirations, such as nursing and teaching- determined by gender, social status or wealth, in contrast with individuals who came from high social-economic backgrounds who appeared to prefer ‘superior’ courses such as architecture, aviation and engineering.

Students were asked to rate the level of satisfaction gained after consulting or holding a career related discussions with their parents/guardians and friends, on the issues of career choices (formally or informally) within the past two years. Their views are reported in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3: Level of Students Satisfaction in Consultations with Parents/guardians and other Personalities on Career Matters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Not sure/not applicable</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents/guardians or sibling</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (the clergy, religious leaders, media)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings in Table 4.3 indicate that friends from social circles were not necessarily delivering satisfying career guidance to the students. None (0%) of them indicated to be ‘very satisfied’ with parents/guardians career guidance forums, friends or other personnel like clergy or media presenters. Friends seemed to be the best bet in terms of satisfying students with 24% of students perceiving them as having offered them with satisfying career consultation sessions. This may be suggesting that none of these people in the social economic forums—friends, religious leaders or media personalities were thoroughly equipped to deliver satisfying career counsel to the young people. However, an independent question on who influenced the respondents most in career decision showed that 56% of students were mainly influenced by parents/guardians in career decisions.

4.3.2 Home based factors influencing career decisions

On home based factors, students were asked to rate the level of satisfaction gained after consulting with a relative and sibling other than the parents at home environment. Table 4.4 shows the summary of the findings. Level of satisfaction took into account parameters such as answering of questions and level of fulfilment after the discussions. Findings are presented in Table 4.4.
Table 4.4: Level of Students’ Satisfaction in Career Consultations with Relatives and Siblings at Home (n=170)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Not sure/not applicable</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information was adequate</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions answered well</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions were fulfilling</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results in Table 4.4 in brief indicate a low level of satisfaction in matters of information disseminated. In particular, 30% of the students indicated to be dissatisfied, three percent very dissatisfied, while 51% were ‘not sure’. On the issue of their questions and answers obtained, 10% and 14% of the students indicated that they were ‘very satisfied’ and ‘satisfied’ respectfully. This suggests that question and answers obtained in career discussions were not necessary convincing in the eyes of 24% of students, who were either ‘very dissatisfied’ or ‘dissatisfied’, pointing to the fact that relatives and siblings were not delivering sufficiently satisfying career counsel.

To further ascertain whether the careers of parents/guardians played role in their children (students’) career choices, the researcher interrogated career guidance teachers on these issues and found out that there were cases where parents actively discouraged their children from following the careers they were engaged in. Others were reported to be persuading students to pursue the courses they thought offered lucrative returns, irrespective of students’ career profile. One career
guidance teacher reported a verbatim conversation from the student as encountered in one of the
sessions with a student, in response to a research question, “Do you think parents have a stake in
student’s choices over their careers?”

..My mother is a nurse by profession; however, she does not encourage me to do nursing. I
think it is because of the stress she is going through in her profession. She even stated that
she is not prepared to fund me if I enrol for nursing when furthering my studies......

In a few instances, there were parents who encouraged their children to choose the careers that they,
as parents, were doing. Majority of the parents were found to influence their parents to go for
superior courses far beyond what they were not able to reach at their school days. Some of the cited
superior courses included medicine, engineering, law and architecture.

In the overall, parents/guardians, teachers and relatives were found to be the most
influential people to learners, with approximately 56% of the learners reporting to being influenced
by their parents/guardians, 17% by teachers (school career guidance practices) and 7% of the learners
reported to be influenced by other persons outside school and home environment. Twenty percent
(20%) of the students admitted they were ‘not sure’ who influenced them. These results at Kiambu
West District depict a clear picture of lack of self awareness, especially on the part of 20% of the
sampled students who admitted as ‘not sure’ in the area of decisions on careers.

4.4 Students’ Certainty Levels in Career Choices in Schools

Research objective two sought to determine the certainty levels of students’ choices
in career decisions among secondary school students in Kiambu West District. Career certainty
referred to the degree to which individuals felt confident or decided about their occupational
plans. The researcher used a list of question statements referred to as career decision profiles
(CDP) adopted and modified from Jones (1989) to determine the career certainty index of the sampled students. Career certainty index was found to be useful in measuring how decided one was or how certain one was about career choice. Students were expected to circle the answers from the Likert scale varying from ‘strongly disagreed’ to ‘strongly agreed’. Responses of the CDP’s items were therefore distributed on a Likert scale of eight (8) responses, which were numbered 1-8 where one (1) indicated ‘strong disagreement’ and eight (8) ‘strong agreements’ to the statements given. The responses were finally organized into two main groups with the first 1-4 numbers in the scale representing a below average score and the next 5-8 representing an above average score for the positive responses. For the negative responses 8-5 indicated a below average score and 4-1 an above average score, as summarized in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: An Interpretation of Likert’s Scale as used in CDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive responses</th>
<th>Negative responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results obtained from the students sampled indicated that the percentage of those students ‘below average’ was 36% and 64% were ‘above average’. These results indicated that 61 students out of 170 (about 36%) of students in Kiambu West District candidates’ class in the year 2010 were certain about their career choices. To this end, therefore, it was notable that Kiambu West District secondary school students had a dire need of self information and occupational knowledge.
Crucial to the career choice certainty of the respondents once again were three factors relating to career choices namely: self clarity, occupational information and decision making ability. Self clarity scales were used to measure how clearly students understood their interests, abilities and personalities, and how these characteristics fit with different occupations. The knowledge of occupations and training scale measures were used to gauge how respondents were informed about occupations and educational programs that fit their interests and abilities, while decision making ability scales measured how capable one was in making decisions. Self clarity was measured through three (3) items on the career decision making profile. These included use of items, such as sampled below, to collect the data from the respondents;

- I wish I knew which occupations best fits my personality.
- I need to have a clearer idea of my abilities, my major strengths and weaknesses and I need to have a clearer idea of what my interests are.

After working out the self-clarity index, it was evident that only 18% of the respondents at Kiambu West District felt that they clearly knew their interests, abilities, strength and weaknesses: while 78% felt otherwise. Again, these were dismal scores particularly that they were coming from senior students expected to be graduating from secondary schools in a short period of time. Knowledge of occupational information index was measured using three items on the career decision making profile to gather the respondents’ information. These included the items:-

- I need information about education programs I want to enter.
- I do not feel I know enough about the occupations that I am considering.
- I know what my interests and abilities are, but I am unsure how to find occupations that fit them.

Responses obtained showed that 41% of the sampled students had sufficient knowledge about occupational and educational programmes that fit their interests and abilities, while 59% lacked
sufficient occupational knowledge. Although about 36% of the respondents indicated to be certain about their career choices, only 41% of these (a 16% of the students respondents) had sufficient occupational information to facilitate this kind of decision making. It was the researcher expectations that all of these students who had sufficient occupational knowledge would have been certain about their careers. Larson, Heppner, Larson, Heppner, Ham & Dugan (1988) in Gaffner et al (2002) in their work on Factors Related to Indecisiveness and Career Indecision in Undecided College Students observed that progress in career development becomes blocked when there is lack of information about self, the world of work (occupational information) and ways of obtaining information. Students who lacked career information ended up choosing careers that they would quickly find unobtainable or unsuitable in future.

Students were also asked to identify the sources from where they got information about careers. Their responses are given in Table 4:6, showing the various sources of career information for the sampled students at Kiambu West secondary schools.

Table 4.6: Sources of Career Information for Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of information</th>
<th>f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teachers in schools</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Parents/guardians</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Newspapers and Magazines</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Friends and Peers</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Relative and Siblings</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Media e.g. TV, Radio, Internets</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 4.6, it can be deduced that students obtained career information from both school and non-school sources. About 58 students cited school teachers as their main source of career information, as shown in the frequency (f) column. Parents/guardians came in as the second biggest source of career information at Kiambu West District, with 45 students citing them as their main source of career information. Interview with career guidance teachers (CGT) noted that students were rarely aware of the qualifications they needed to train in a certain career. One teacher noted that students shied away from courses they little knew about, for instance some careers rarely require advanced mathematical skills, yet students shied away from them after perceiving them to be heavily based in mathematics. This was generally attributed to inadequate career counselling, coupled with widely circulated stereotypes of some careers among students which could be said to be unfounded or misleading.
To conclude on this objective of certainty levels, decision making ability index was also measured using Career decision making profile (CDP) items on decisiveness. Results on this indicated that 50% of respondents were indecisive. To the third item, on the decisiveness, "I don't need to make a vocational choice at this time", about 65% strongly agreed, 15% were not sure, while 20% strongly disagreed. Together, this suggests that to greater extent students were poorly set for career take-off in tertiary institutions, once out of the schools, partly explained by the defective or poorly equipped career counselling departments in schools at Kiambu West District.

4.4.1 Teachers Perception of Certainty Levels with Form IV Students

Career guidance teachers (CGT) on the other hand, were asked to rate the certainty levels of students, based on their perception of the Form IV students. They were asked to rate the year 2011 candidate’s class certainty levels on a scale of 1-5, where 1 (one) represented the lowest level of uncertainty and 5 (five) represented the highest level of certainty. The average scores obtained in percentages are summarised in Figure 4.1.
Figure 4:1 indicated that teachers perceived a 10% of Kiambu West District candidates as ‘certain’ with their career choices. None (0%) were perceived as ‘very certain’, while 68% were perceived as ‘uncertain’ in their career choices. Eighteen (18) percent of these students were perceived as ‘not sure’ of what careers to choose, though were noted to be in a few weeks time to the national examinations. The results confirmed the findings from the students that their certainty index was more skewed on the negative side than on the positive one. Again, this concurred well with their performance results on the students self clarity, occupational knowledge and decision making indexes obtained from students responses.
Probing further during the interviews on the same subject, teachers were asked to rate the career certainty of student using a scale of ‘poor’, ‘fair’, ‘good’ and ‘excellent’. Thirty three point three percent (33.3%) of CGT indicated that the career certainty of the students was ‘poor’, 25% felt it was ‘fair’, while 16% felt it was ‘good’. None of them rated their certainty as excellent. All these academic advisors seemed to be in agreement that the career certainty of the students needed to be revamped to go higher. A low figure of 10% of the sampled Form IV class students (n=190), in Kiambu West district were perceived by their CGT (n=13) as ‘certain’ in their career choices. Majority (79%) of these CGT in addition, observed that students were quite confused during their year three (the Form III class) and had a tendency of seeking to change the subjects they had enrolled for the national examination. However, most of these students settled for whatever subjects they were offered due to the limited opportunities, knowledge and what they perceived as easy to perform subjects. This observation however, differed from the students’ results who evaluated themselves as ‘very certain’ (75.8%) in their certainty level. However, the academic advisors (CGT) were likely to have been more objective in their feedback than the students in their observation. This is because the advisors gave explanations as to their views, unlike the students, in their responses.

CGT were also asked to give their views on the students’ level of self-knowledge (i.e.) the knowledge of their abilities, potentials, personal resources, weaknesses, aptitude, likes and dislikes. Majority (90%) of them indicated that students lacked personal information and the knowledge necessary to match self-information and course selection. Students were therefore perceived in the eyes of their teachers as ignorant on how to determine their personal information necessary in career decisions. These findings compared negatively to those of the students, who recognized themselves as having sufficient self-knowledge to enable them make wise career choices. It was the researcher’s view that career guidance practices at the schools were not promoting student ability to understand themselves as unique individuals. This became real evidence when the cited strategic activities missed
on career decision making tools such as career decision making tools (CDPs) and personality profile tools (PPT), partly due to ignorance on the part of teachers.

Comments on the occupational information evident with the students to facilitate their career decision-making were also sought from teacher respondents. Teachers’ views indicated that an average of 20% of students in Kiambu West district, were perceived as possessing adequate labour market information, while 80% were rated as not equipped for the same. Teachers were also told to group the students in quartiles i.e based on how they perceived them to have ‘knowledge of their future jobs’ requirements’. Sixty seven percent (67%) of teachers indicated that ‘three quarters’ of the students did not have ‘knowledge of the job requirements’ for their future job options and did not bother getting this information. Twenty percent (20%) of teachers indicated that ‘half’ of the students did not have ‘knowledge of the job requirements’, while three percent of teachers were ‘not sure’. One of the CGT observed that she hardly advised students on refined career matters and that she expected the parents/guardians to be doing the same at home- pointing to a regrettable conclusion that some teachers at Kiambu West District were not adequately equipped to address careers education and therefore found it easier to pass the buck to parents/guardians.

Just as the student respondents, all the academic advisors rated the student’s occupational knowledge as low. These CGT concurred that students were not exposed to employers and the job market information where they could gather vital occupational information. They were noted to have been reporting that CGT did not provide the students with labour market information. There were gaps of information which were difficult to fill due to the school programme schedules. Students on the other hand did not have ways of accessing this information while at school. To this end, these results suggests that students as well as their teachers did not consider the career issues as
imperative, though they noted that career decisions were important to them. Another CGT observed that there was a lot of pampering of student in schools leaving them with little or no chances for making decisions. This was noted to hinder their maturity on decision-making abilities. This provided a possible explanation on why many students depended on other parties- the parents/guardians, teachers and friends in career choices. This finding was also parallel to the students’ own assessment of decision-making ability where 50% were noted to be indecisive.

4.4.2 Students’ Certainty Levels by Gender

To further determine disparities that existed between different genders, the researcher compared male and female student scores in the various variables examined in the study. Table 4.7 shows a comparison of male and female respondents’ results on career certainty and comfort levels.

Table 4.7: Gender Comparisons of Certainty levels with Form IV Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male student</th>
<th>Female students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Above average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>89.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The male students sampled scored better than female students on career certainty levels and comfort levels in decisions compared to girls. Scores for ‘above average’ in certainty were 93.1% and 90.3% for male and female students respectively. On comfort levels below average scores were 10.7% and
25.8% for boys and girls respectfully. Further scrutiny of the results showed that more female students had more relevant knowledge of their occupations as compared to male students.

To establish the relationship between students level of career certainty, the data was further subjected to significance tests using correlation techniques and other tests to establish linear relationships between the variables. Pearson Product-Moment correlation ($r$) was used, as some of the data collected was changed to dichotomous variables such as the decision-making ability, level of personal and occupational knowledge and comfort in decision-making and was measured at ratio or interval scales. Chi-square ($\chi^2$) test was also used to determine if there was any independence between students’ gender and their career certainty levels. Findings on the items related to career certainty were presented in a table of correlations. The coefficient of correlation between the level of career certainty and that of clarity of self knowledge was found to be 0.094, indicating a weak positive relationship between the variables: Table 4:8 shows the coefficient of correlations between given variables.

Table 4.8: Coefficient of Correlations between Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>certainty</th>
<th>clarity</th>
<th>knowledge</th>
<th>comfort</th>
<th>decisiveness</th>
<th>importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certainty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.094*</td>
<td>.145**</td>
<td>.272**</td>
<td>.225**</td>
<td>.168**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.342**</td>
<td>.148**</td>
<td>.177**</td>
<td>-.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.203**</td>
<td>.246**</td>
<td>-.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.122*</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.230**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pearson Product-Moment Correlation between occupational information of the respondents and the other independent variables were calculated to find out if there were any relationships existing. The findings showed a weak positive relationship between the respondents’ level of occupational information and career certainty. On correlating the respondents’ level of decision-making ability and the rest of the independent variables, a Pearson’s correlation value of 0.225 at the significance level of 0.01 was achieved. This indicated that the relationship between the student’s career certainty level and that of decisiveness or their ability to make personal decisions was a weak positive one. This was in support of literature reviewed that suggested that one requires both self-information and occupational knowledge to make good career decisions. According to Larson, Heppner, Ham & Dugan 1988 in Gaffner et al. (2002), progress in career development becomes blocked when there is a lack of information about self, the world of work (occupational information) and ways of obtaining information.

The researcher sought to investigate whether career certainty was dependent on other factors such as gender. Chi square test was carried out to establish whether career certainty was dependent on gender. Results indicated that chi square was 5.33 ($\chi^2 = 5.33$). Using a predetermined alpha level of significance (0.05), and degree of freedom (df =1) the value of $\chi^2 = 5.33$ lied between 3.841 and 5.412 at the Chi square distribution table with 1 degree of freedom. The corresponding alpha probability was noted as $0.05 < P < 0.02$. This was smaller than the conventionally accepted significance level of 0.05.
or 5%, so a hypothesis that the two distributions are dependent was rejected. The researcher therefore concluded that certainty levels were independent on gender.

4.5 Preparedness of Schools in Careers Education

Research objective three sought to determine the preparedness of Kiambu West District secondary schools in careers education. The researcher sought to find out how the schools at Kiambu West district were equipped or prepared in offering careers education. To this end, career guidance activities and the resources used with the Form IV cohorts were investigated. The comfort levels (i.e) with students and teachers about these resources were also examined and recorded.

4.5.1 Activities of Career Guidance Departments in Schools

All (n=13) the school sampled were noted to have had active Career Guidance Departments (CGD) in Kiambu West district secondary schools- as confirmed from the student’ and teachers’ responses within the last two years. All (n=170) students were equally in agreement on key strategic activities in CGDs, which included: a) guidance in subject selection from Form II to Form III, b) inviting guest speakers to speak on some career’ themes, and c) assisting students in applying for university admission through Joint Admission Board (JAB). Table 4.9 shows a summary of the main activities of CGDs according to teacher respondents in the district. These were assumed to be more objectively presented by the researcher, for teachers have better comprehension of career matters than students.
Table 4.9: CGD Activities According to Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic activities in careers education</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attending to students questions</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping in individual subject selection</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating field trips with career objectives</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosting resource personnel for career guidance objectives</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availing vital information on careers</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results in Table 4.9 indicate that ‘attending to students’ questions in career matters’ and ‘helping individual students in subject selection’ were the main activities in CGDs as noted by 54.6% and 42.5% of sampled teachers respectively. Field trips with career objectives and hosting resource personnel for career guidance talk were the other common strategic activities cited by both teachers and students at 12.4% and 8.5% respectively. A further analysis of these findings from teachers and students indicated that though the main task of CGD was ‘attending to students’ questions in career matters’, students did not rate the sessions as satisfying. Precisely, the researcher asked the students to rate their satisfaction gained from the previous session held with the CGD with respect to adequacy of information availed. Sixty seven percent (67%) of the students indicated to be ‘dissatisfied’, while 10% indicated to be ‘satisfied’. The rest 23% were ‘not sure’.

In exploring how schools were conducting careers education, the researcher used students questionnaire to find out availability of regular CG programmes or activities that have been running in the schools for the last two years. Availability of vocation/career assessment tests (VAT), library
resources, field trips with career objectives, teacher workshops on careers, teachers level of comfort with the resources available and the professionals hosted were all examined. Teachers, the facilitators in career guidance practices were asked “Do you have any special training in career guidance?” to which all (13) answered on the negative. The same teachers (100%) interviewed also confirmed to be unfamiliar with the Vocation Assessment Tests (VAT), though about one percent confirmed to have seen some of these tools via internet. Students on the other hand were asked. “Have you taken any vocational assessment in the last two years? To which eight percent (8%) answered ‘yes’, 30.4% ‘not sure’, while 61.6% answered ‘no’. Interview results with career guidance teachers noted that all teachers were mainly handicapped in the field of careers education as they did not have the resources to do the same. Others openly said they were intimidated for lack of skills.

Students were also evaluated on their participation in field trips with career exploration themes in mind. The results of the same are summarised in Figure 4.2.

![Figure 4.2: Students Participation in Field Trips with Career Themes](image)
Students who answered ‘yes’- indicating that they had participated in careers field trips were 26%, while 74% had not participated or were not sure. Of these students who had indicated ‘yes’, 95% of them (or about 42% of the sampled students population, n=190) admitted to have gone once in the last two years, while the rest 5% had gone twice within the same period.

4.5.2 Career Guidance Resources in Schools

On career guidance resources- specifically at school library and/or in career guidance department (other than the human personnel), students were asked to rate the extent to which they were satisfied with the provisions at the library or CGD for the last two years using the scale: - Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Not sure/Not Applicable=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5. Results obtained showed that only 2% were skewed on the satisfaction side (i.e) either satisfied or very satisfied, while 90% were negatively skewed. However, eight percent (8%) of the student respondents indicated to be ‘unsure’ in their responses.

On the same subject, teachers were cross-examined on their levels of comfort on schools provisions at the library or CGD on career related resources. They were asked to rate how comfortable they were with the resources for career guidance work using the scale: Very Comfortable, Comfortable, Not sure, Uncomfortable and Very uncomfortable. Results are summarised in Figure 4.3.
As Figure 4.3 has shown, majority (68%) of the interviewed teachers admitted to be uncomfortable with career resource equipment at schools at Kiambu West District. None (0%) were very comfortable at all, while less than indicated to be comfortable. This study found out that schools (teachers for this matter) had heavy reliance on external guest speakers – who were noted as good career resource personnel in bringing real time experience from their different field of specialisation, filling the gaps on inadequate knowledge in various fields of vocations. However, on probing further it was notable that most of these resource personnel were not perceived as communicating effectively with students, according to 52% of the interviewed teachers. There were no laid down procedures or criteria of selecting the personnel invited to speak to students on career matters, save for informal acquaintances or referrals from colleagues in schools. Almost all (85%) teachers interviewed concurred that students supported these sessions with guest speakers. Many reasons could account for this support with students- among them a break from the normal resource personnel, the teachers, who were as per the findings above, perceived as not
sufficiently resourceful in career matters. Documents analysis done in these departments/schools indicated presence of old career booklets and newspapers in favour of career guidance work.

On the overall, the researcher evaluated school’s readiness in offering effective careers education from students. Students were asked, to what extent they agreed with statements such as ‘I am able to contact my career guidance office very easily for clarification and issues; the school Library/Career Guidance Resources (CGR) section and career guidance department’. The school has adequate information on careers and overall, am satisfied with career guidance work in my school. A summary of the findings are recorded in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Interactions of Students with CGR in Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ratio of students ‘strongly agreed’</th>
<th>Ratio of students ‘agreed’</th>
<th>Ratio of students ‘Not sure/N/A’</th>
<th>Ratio of students ‘disagreed’</th>
<th>Ratio of students ‘strongly disagreed’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On consulting CG office</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed with a mentor</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate resources on careers</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of CG practices</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All (100%) teachers interviewed indicated that they had never used vocational assessment tests (VAT) with students, though 20% pointed out that they were familiar with these tools via internet.
Students on the other hand, when asked about the same, had 3% indicating as ‘yes’ - have used them, 64% answered ‘no’, while 37% answered they were ‘not sure’. Students were also evaluated on the field trips with the career exploration themes in mind. The researcher asked the question, “Have you ever been taken for any field trip with career exploration themes within the last two years? The responses showed that 74.4% indicated “No”, 16.1% indicated “Yes”, while the remainder 9.5% indicated “Not sure”. The responses of those who indicated “No” were the highest on this matter.

Students’ comfort levels on the use of the career guidance resources (excluding the human personnel in this case) at schools were also evaluated in this study. They were asked to rate the extent to which they were comfortable in using the career resources, using the scale: strongly agreed, agreed, not sure/not applicable, disagreed and strongly disagreed. The results are summarised in Figure 4.4.

![Figure 4.4: Student Views Regarding Career Guidance in Schools](image)

Figure 4.4: Student Views Regarding Career Guidance in Schools
From Figure 4:4 over 55% of the students were ‘not comfortable’ with the resource equipment of career guidance in school. Fifteen percent (15%) of the remaining students were ‘not sure’ of their comfort levels.

Teachers on the same subject of comfort levels with the school career guidance resources noted the results as follows. None indicated to be very comfortable or comfortable, while 22% indicated to be ‘not sure/applicable’, 68% answered ‘uncomfortable’ and 10% ‘very uncomfortable’. The study also showed that all the schools had heavy reliance on external career resource personnel, based on the frequency of the invited guest speakers in schools, and the level at which this particular career resource was weighed or referred by the teachers.

In conclusion on this third objective, all the schools sampled indicated to have had active CGD, though some (13%) were merged with guidance and counselling department. Many (87%) schools had career guidance departments with independent offices. ‘Attending to students’ questions’ was identified as the main activity in the careers office by teachers (52.4%), followed by the ‘facilitation of subject selection’ (22.8%) at the point of graduation to Form III class. Other strategic activities in career guidance department in schools included organising field trips and hosting resource personnel on careers in schools. No teacher admitted to have had special training in career guidance practices, save for the education psychology in the teaching pedagogy. Data findings also reviewed that teachers (98%) were uncomfortable with the resource equipment of schools for career counselling work. The same sentiments were noted with sampled students (78%) who shared the same feelings, pointing to the ill equipment of schools in career education work at Kiambu West secondary schools.
4.6 Views of key Stakeholders on Careers’ Education in Schools

The study’s last research objective, sought to get together the views of teachers and students on careers education in secondary schools in Kiambu West District. To achieve this objective, the researcher engaged the career guidance teachers on a number of issues during the interviews. Students were also interrogated on this objective using open ended questions. Key items used by the researcher included. What strong points does the school celebrate in terms of meeting the objectives of Career guidance department? What gaps do you think need to be filled in career guidance for students in school? In your opinion what do you think need to be done to successfully run career guidance programmes, in secondary schools? The findings are narrated in the sections below.

4.6.1 Teachers Views on Careers Work in Schools

A wide variety of issues resurfaced from the interview with career guidance teachers on the careers education with students at Kiambu West district. Some of these factors were noted to exert a positive influence, while others exerted a negative one in the career decision making of students. Schools as well as the students’ family background were generally noted to exert the biggest influence according to the teachers. It emerged from these respondents’ views that both the career counsellors and their client (the students in this case) were not aware of the key factors influencing the students career choices, though to a great deal operated in the assumption that students’ performances in classes influenced the career decisions made. It was the researchers drawn conclusion that careers chosen by students were not necessarily picked informed by wholesome reasons.

Teachers’ comments on the occupational knowledge level of students indicated that students possessed little knowledge, perceived to have been acquired from informal forums such as peers and
social media. To curb the limited knowledge/ignorance with students on career matters, these senior respondents in the survey proposed that information presented in JAB booklets be organised and presented in easily digestible form. They lamented that the materials as they were at the time of study, were more often than not promoting confusion and indecision, particularly arising from information overload from the JAB booklets. Students were therefore perceived as gaining limited knowledge from these resources, issues of limited choices notwithstanding.

More than half of the teachers (60%) also noted that a good number of students generally grew from a cloistered environment with few role models and limited information at their exposure, causing some hindrances on career options open to them. They observed that students ended up in careers not because the careers were found ideal for them, but because they were not aware of any other options available to them. Twenty nine percent (29%) recommended that government should open up a career resources centre to public for easy access to both parents/guardians, young people and career guidance facilitators. One teacher noted that these career resources centres could be incorporated with the district centres of excellence (A centre of excellence refers to a designated institution of learning equipped to be a resource centre for other schools in the district). This it was deemed would enhance the likelihood of making the right career choices, thus pre-empting the corrosive negatives associated with wrong career placement in future.

Right at the heart of school, 45% of teacher respondents viewed peer pressure as the biggest determinant factor influencing career choices in this group of young people with a shared sub-culture. Every generation of students in a given school, and probably even several generations, were noted to adopt certain careers as the ideal or ultimate choice. As a result, many of them, including those with no aptitude for the revered career, aspired to go for it – often at the expense of equally substantive options that they would be better suited for and happier at. This was however identified with above
average performing schools. Above average performing schools, in this context, referred to schools that had for a number of years obtained a mean grade of C plus (C+) and above in the national examinations. However, teachers also observed that peer pressure was not necessarily a negative force, and could be managed and channelled to ensure the group, collectively, developed positive values and aspirations. A number of these teachers (10%) noted that peer influence could be powerful tool in the career counselling work, if proper focus is given. Closely tied to the peer influence was the mentor influence. Teachers’ views indicated that some students were subtly pressured into a given career by parents, guardians and/or other persons in positions of moral superiority over them. However, this they noted skewed towards deception in correct career choices as the personality factors were normally ignored. Ten percent (10%) of teachers criticized the mentor influence, pointing out that it tended to go against the fundamental abilities and propensities of the mentees/the students. The other 90% felt it was also a good tool for counselling work, though difficult to account and manage it for the students.

When asked their opinion on how to run a successful career guidance programme, almost all (90%) teachers indicated that schools need to be adequately equipped for the career guidance and counselling tasks through the relevant training and capacity building departments in the Ministry of Education (MoE). They observed that they lacked adequate space to meet the students (68% of the sampled schools), others shared offices with other colleagues (32% of the sampled school) and therefore recommended the structuring of the offices, provision of adequate space and recognition of the post as an important organ in the school. However, a few teachers (14%) noted that some of the students in schools did not consider their future as an urgent matter to address. Most of these students were going about the secondary school life as though it was an end in itself, only to start panicking in the last term of their final year, when the issue of final examinations and subsequent exit from secondary education have dawned on them.
Further views from the teachers included the need for schools to network with professional counsellors outside the school, so as to supplement the teachers input on the same. Seventy four percent (74%) of the teachers suggested for the need to improve on the working environment at school. They suggested the need to reduce work load or exemption from some routine duties so as to research and offer effective career counselling to students. Other suggestions from teachers’ interview that also found their way at the students views are also edited and summarised below:-

a) That student should be more exposed to employers and job markets through invitation of employers from public and private sectors as guest speakers.

b) Field excursions should be made compulsory or better still a brief attachment programmes be organised for students taking technical subjects such as:- Drawing and Design, Building Construction, Power and Mechanics, Metal Work, Aviation, Wood Work and Electricity.

c) The gap (in terms of quick access for information) between secondary schools, universities and colleges should be minimized. This would help secondary school students understand courses offered in the universities and their requirements, while the latter would find it easy to market their courses at schools.

d) Career guidance booklets from Joint Admission Board (JAB) should be made more learner user friendly, but also availed to all students in secondary schools in good time. The same should also be tailored not just for the candidates’ class, but also other students in the lower classes to allow for wide consultations.

e) The interests of learners in other careers outside of what local universities offered were not being addressed adequately at secondary schools.
4.6.2 Students’ Views on Careers Work in Schools

An analysis of the students’ views at Kiambu West District tended to indicate that students aspired for careers that they thought were within reach and attainable in terms of their performances in the previous examinations. For those that appeared to have some knowledge in career matters-as per the research instruments, the same seemed to choose superior career professions- the likes of medicine, law, actuarial studies, architecture among others. These students, who accounted for the 40% of the respondents, had almost similar recommendations that are edited and summarised as follows:

a) Schools or the career guidance teachers should make effort in providing up to date resources on career matters.

b) Career guidance teachers need to expose their students to all career possibilities that are immediately available, as well as those that are more remote – but with the caution that to attain a career in the latter category, much more will be demanded of the student.

c) Career guidance teachers should embrace information technology (IT) in conducting careers education in schools. The noted that IT would open them up to bigger opportunities as well as wealth of information in the internet.

d) Young people also suggested that teachers should organise for visiting guests to come from easy to get and marketable professions, not just from the superior courses like engineering and medicines.

e) Students also proposed the equipment of the library with career related materials for students to learn from them on personal levels.

f) Students asked to be provided with information on courses offered in tertiary institutions such as carpentry, building and masonry. Teachers were asked to stop inclining their careers.
education on courses that are only offered in university, but also deal equally with courses offered in tertiary institutions.

g) They claimed to lack exposure and accurate information on some certificate and diploma courses, ending up depending on unreliable sources of information.

In conclusion, data findings on the views of students and teachers in secondary schools at Kiambu West district painted a dull picture of Kiambu West district’ schools unpreparedness, with the students getting all manner of influence in their career decisions from all quarters in the name of securing information. Schools were noted to be in dire need of rejuvenation in their careers’ education work.

4.7 Discussions of Findings

The study aimed at finding out the decisiveness in career choices among secondary school students in Kiambu West district. The findings, based on the research objectives were presented using tables, charts and thematic narratives. This section presents the discussions and interpretations of these findings. Overall response rate achieved in this study was 90% (i.e) 183 out of 203 sampled respondents. This was considered as providing a relatively valid and reliable representation of the target population in Kiambu West district. Gender-wise, male respondents stood at 57% while the female respondents were 43%. This was also considered as a good balance in gender representation for this study.

On the profile of the career guidance teachers (CGT), findings showed that all teacher respondents qualified in their jobs, were registered by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in the republic of Kenya, and hence were competent in their performance of teaching duties at the target district as shown in Table 4.2. Seventy percent (70%) of CGT were also noted to have worked in their
stations for over five (5) years. This was deemed as considerable period of time for a reliable orientation with career counselling activities in schools, hence were reckoned to be informed and reliable on career issues in the schools. Their wealth of experience came in handy in investigating the career guidance practices in secondary schools in Kiambu West district. Following section is a discussion of the findings as obtained in this study.

4.7.1 Factors influencing Career Decisions

Research objective one sought to determine the factors that were influencing career decisions among secondary school students in Kiambu West District. To achieve this objective, the researcher investigated these factors from three broad categories, namely social factors, home based factors and school based factors.

On the overall, 56% of the learners (n=170) indicated to be influenced by their parents/guardians, 17% by teachers (implying school career guidance practices at schools), while 7% of the learners indicated to be influenced by other persons outside school and home environment. Twenty percent (20%) of the same respondents indicated that they were ‘not sure’ who influenced them. These results portrayed about a half (56%) of the students sampled as directly influenced by parents in their career choices, at Kiambu West District. These findings suggest that the impact of the career guidance teachers (CGT) have been overshadowed by the parents/guardians influence in career decisions, holding constant the quality of influence offered by these parents. The same results could also be depicting a lack of self awareness on the part of students. More so due to the fact that 20% of sampled students indicated that they were ‘not sure’ who influenced their decisions. The same results were not surprising, as only 2% of schools sampled, were noted to be holding career guidance activities once per term (i.e) once every three months in their curriculum activities. Many schools
sampled (71%) in Kiambu West District were noted to conduct career guidance practices annually and limited participation to the candidate classes only, as observed within the last two years.

On assessing the level of satisfaction of students in career consultations with parents/guardians, results in Table 4.4 indicated that only 16% were satisfied, while the rest 84% were in the category of ‘not sure’ and/or dissatisfied. These ratings imply that these parents, though influential in career choices, were not delivering satisfactory counsel or influence to students on career matters. This spells an uncomfortable situation with the students in the manner of career decisions. It is a dilemma that calls for immediate attention.

Teachers’ views on the factors influencing the career choices of the students found out that peer pressure played the greatest role in this end, as noted by 63% of the teachers’ respondent. Parents were rated second in influencing students’ career decisions. They also noted cases where parents actively discouraged their children from following the careers they were practising or engaged in. When asked to rate the certainty levels of year 2011 candidate class, 68% of them perceived the students as uncertain, compared to 10% who were perceived as certain, as summarized in Table 4:8. These results suggest that career education processes at Kiambu West district were not yielding good results, and hence could be noted as possibly defective and required to be upgraded. The study therefore noted a dire need of programs that targets parents, in order to improve on the decisiveness of the students at schools on career matters. Phillips & Pazienza (1988) observed that for wise career decisions to be made, three broad requirements needed to be satisfied. These include:- (1) a clear understanding of oneself- the aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources and limitations, (2) a clear knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success- the advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities and prospects in different lines of work: and (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts. Common meetings at schools such as prize giving days and
annual general meetings (AGM) at schools should consider incorporating careers education for all stakeholders in schools, while the careers department position itself to make it felt in schools at Kiambu West district.

4.7.2 Certainty Levels in Career Choices at Schools

Research objective two sought to determine the certainty levels of students’ choices in career decisions among secondary school students in Kiambu West District. The researcher used career decision profiles (CDP) to determine the career certainty index of the sampled students. Responses from these items showed that 31% of the sampled students had sufficient knowledge about occupational and educational programmes that fit their interests and abilities, while 59% (n=170) lacked sufficient occupational knowledge. Although about 36% of the respondents indicated to be ‘certain’ about their career choices, only 41% of these (a 16% of the students respondents, n=170) had sufficient occupational information to facilitate this kind of decision making. All the career guidance teachers, on the other hand, noted that students lacked on personal information (i.e) did not synchronize self knowledge or self- information with careers/courses that they had selected. All the sampled students (100%) were ignorant of how to access their personal career silhouette or make up. They had no idea of the modern psychological career decision profile tests (CDP tests) that help in synchronizing personal orientation and careers. This therefore suggests that students assumed their abilities, like and dislikes values, interests and personal qualities in their career choices.

Though individual students indicated that they had sufficient self-knowledge to enable them make wise career choices, their levels of certainty did not attest to this fact. The point may be a good evidence for level of ignorance with students and perhaps with the teachers as well on career decision making processes. The same results may be implying that careers education in secondary schools at Kiambu West district, did not promote student ability to understand themselves as unique individuals.
Teacher and students appeared to be reading from different scripts. This may be explained by the little articulated instructional career skills on the part of teachers and also due to, conceivably, the emphasis in performance and competition in schools.

Self clarity index results indicated that only 18% of the respondents knew their interests, abilities, strength and weaknesses. The reasons behind these performances could be attributed to the kind of career guidance practices conducted in Kiambu West District schools. Georgia Career Resources Network (2005) indicated that career decision making begins with the self, ones awareness and of the world around him/her and the ability to understand what is important to him/her. The findings above contradicted this earlier finding. It appeared that most respondents made their career decisions without first internalizing their personal interests, skills, work values, strengths and weaknesses. This pointed to a rather unfortunate conclusion that the career choices of Kiambu West District students in the year 2011 candidates were not realistic, and hence not easily achievable. It could also be true that, by implication, other people such as parents, teachers or peers imposed the career choices on respondents. Maingi(2007) findings on career certainty with university students where 63% of students were noted to be uncertain may regrettably, be repeating itself again in the near future going by the above trend. Emphasis in performance and competition in schools, where every student was supposed to perform well in all the subjects done undermined efficient career guidance department (CGD) work or activities. This therefore implied that most students were not guided on how to consider their abilities, like and dislikes values, interests and personal qualities in their career choices.

Table 4.6 presented results of the sources from where students obtained careers’ information. Many of these sources were noted to be informal, a factor that may be suggesting information biasness. The same sources were also perceived by teachers as heavily affected by the
stereotypes in some careers which were consequently noted to be misleading. Ndambuki (1987) earlier observations that students were not generally informed on the right careers could also be true over twenty years down the road at Kiambu West district secondary schools, in the larger Kiambu County.

Further on, teacher’s views on careers decisions with the students indicated that some students about 20% of students were perceived as possessing adequate occupational information or labour market information to help them decide satisfactorily for their careers. The remaining 80% were perceived as not equipped with this occupational knowledge. They noted that most students (70% on average) were not aware of their future job options and were not necessarily bothered about it. They lacked knowledge of where to gain this information, besides the fact that their interactions with the CGT were minimal. While it might be easier to heap the blame to students for their level of ignorance, these results may also be insinuating that teachers were not adequately motivated or equipped to handle careers education, and therefore found it easier to pass the buck to other parties, be they parents/guardians or mentors.

The same results on students certainty were also not surprising, as only two percent (2%) of schools sampled reported to be holding career guidance activities on once per term (once every three months) basis in their curriculum. Interviews conducted with career guidance teachers (CGT) showed that all (100%) schools sampled in Kiambu West District career guidance sessions were conducted annually and limited participation to the candidate classes only. The number of students who were noted to be certain in career decisions were rather on the lower side, considering that the career guidance department (CGD) has been in existence for over a decade at the time of this study. It was evident that much more needed to be done to improve on certainty levels. Any assistance that could enable students establish the reasons for their career indecisions should go a long way in increasing
levels of decidedness as well as quality decisions. Earlier study by (Savickas, 1990) noted that high school students who took a career decision making course had less career related indecision at the end of the course than those who did a comparison group. Further on, literature reviewed indicated that students with adequate amount of self- information and occupational knowledge were found to make better decisions, whereas those without this information made poor decisions (Larson, Heppner, Ham & Dugan 1988 in Gaffner et al, 2002).

In conclusion, students scored poorly in the area of occupational knowledge, decisiveness, and self-awareness to facilitate mature career decisions. This implies therefore, even as was evidence in their career certainty index results, career decisiveness was a dilemma in Kiambu West district. Three possible reasons may be listed down to explain the basis of these results. One, students were not sincere about their career certainty and/or career decisions of most of the respondents may have been imposed on them by other parties- be they parents, peers or teachers; because their decision making ability was low as the findings indicated: and finally, career decision making of the respondents may have been influenced by other factors besides the ones under this study. Gaffner et al. (2002) observed that students who were known to be undecided about their careers had trouble with decision making. The fact that about 50% (half) of the respondents had trouble with decision making contradicts their results on career certainty level. It might therefore be safe to observe that career choices made by the respondents in this study were not realistic or were regrettably unwise as they did not match the students’ potential and other personal attributes.

4.7.3 Preparedness of Schools in Careers Education

Research objective three sought to determine the preparedness of secondary schools in careers education in Kiambu West District. Though about a half of the sampled teachers (54.6%) observed that ‘attending to students’ questions in career matters’ was the main activity in career
guidance department, an evaluation of these sessions at individual level with the students revealed that students did not think they were very helpful nor had enough resources and illustrations for their career concerns. A further analysis of these findings from teachers and students indicated that though the main task of career department was attending to students’ questions in career matters, 87% of students did not rate the past sessions held within the last one year as satisfying or fulfilling. Sampled teachers (98%) indicated to be unfamiliar with the vocation/career assessment tests (VAT), though about 1% confirmed to have seen these tools via internet on a personal level. A few students (12%) pointed out that they were familiar with these tools via internet. These results may be suggesting that teachers were generally handicapped in the field of careers education as they did not appreciate important resource tools to do the careers education. Other teachers (40%) appeared to openly note that they were intimidated for lack of skills. Literature review done outside Africa countries indicated, for instance American high schools (a general equivalent of local secondary schools) had resident school counsellors who used these tools with the students. Mwangi (2002) observations that sometimes teachers were too busy with curriculum activities to offer substantial career guidance to students, could also be true in Kiambu West district.

The results indicated that almost all the students (91%) of the sampled students were not satisfied with the resource equipments of career guidance work in school, though it was evident they did not know what to show for it, in a well equipped careers’ department. Teachers, on the other hand, on the same subject when asked about their level of comfort on the provision of career resources in schools had the following responses. None of them (100%) admitted to have had special training in career guidance practices, save for the ordinary psychology classes in teaching pedagogy. This perhaps, could be explaining why the priority activities in career guidance department at Kiambu west district schools constituted of attending to students questions, hosting resource personnel on careers and organizing field trips for students.
On evaluating career guidance sessions, at Kiambu West district schools findings indicated that one-on-one sessions between teachers and students were not very fulfilling to the students at schools. Sixty seven percent (67%) of the students perceived as not fulfilling. This may be informed by the teachers’ lack of resources and their limited knowledge in disseminating the career counselling. Teacher’s had indicated that they did not have any special training on career counselling except for the general skills in counselling acquired during training in the teaching profession. Literature reviewed in other European countries (Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development, OECD, 2003) indicated that some countries not only trained their personnel, but also licensed them to practice as career guidance professionals in various government departments. American high schools (a general equivalent of local secondary schools) were also noted to have resident school counsellors who were easily accessible to the students and encouraged use of career decision tools with the students.

Students were also noted to have had no or little opportunities of attending field trips with career themes in mind. Results indicated that only 26% of the students had attended these trips within the last two years. The rest 74% were either not sure or had never attended field excursions on careers education. Some probable explanation may range from the availability of financial resources in school, tight school programme as a result of the heavily laden curriculum or lack of appreciation of field excursions in careers education. Mwangi (2002) observations on a similar work at Murang’a district, that teachers were too busy with curriculum activities to offer substantial careers’ guidance to students, could also be ringing true at Kiambu West district.

On career guidance resources in schools, specifically the library and career guidance resources in careers’ departments, results showed that eight out of ten (80%) students incorporated in the study noted that they were dissatisfied with these provisions. These ratings
were also in agreement with the almost all the teachers (98%) who indicated to be uncomfortable with these provisions. These results may be suggesting how students had little access or no access at all to important resources deemed necessary for career education and decisions. They seemed to indicate little appreciation of the career resources. Teachers as well as students were both uncomfortable with these provisions. This could also be explained by poor policy communications on what ought to be availed to ensure effective career guidance practices at schools from the Ministry of Education (MoE). Countries such as those in European countries were noted to have well laid down policy papers that guide careers education in government sectors (Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development, OECD, 2003), American schools on the other hand had school counsellors who, on a daily basis, are involved in character education, violence prevention, career planning and much more (American School Counsellor Association, ASCA's, 2010). School counsellors from these countries were observed to be supported by sufficient on-line resources for their work in schools. Students at these countries were known to have access to both hard and soft copies online for easier learning. Practicing school counsellors were therefore found with a freedom to use any of these online materials at school sessions, faculty meetings, school board meetings, one-on-one parent meetings or any other time they wanted to share their roles and expertise with others. This could only be a good lesson or precedence for schools in Kiambu West district, for the purpose of effective decisions in career counselling.

4.7.4 Teachers’ and Students’ Views on Careers Education

The study’s last research objective, sought to gather the views of teachers and students on careers education in secondary schools in Kiambu West District. To achieve this objective, the researcher engaged the career guidance teachers on a number of issues during the interviews, while
students were probed using open-ended questions. Key views among the many highlighted views are sampled and discussed in the following section.

Both teachers and students were in one agreement in requesting their respective authorities that they should be more exposed to job markets information through invitation of employers in public and private sector as guest speakers or through field excursions. Twenty percent (20%) of teachers in particular were of the view that field excursions should be made compulsory or better still a brief attachment programmes be organized for students taking technical subjects such as:- Drawing and Design, Building Construction, Power and Mechanics, Metal Work, Aviation, Wood Work and Electricity. This it was perceived, would help move the subjects from mere theories to real life experiences for students taking the technical subjects.

Teachers and students also lamented on the gap between secondary schools, and universities, including tertiary institutions too. They called for action to minimize for students who were about to graduate from secondary schools. This would help secondary school students understand courses offered in the universities and their requirements, while the latter would find it easy to market their courses at schools. Career guidance booklets from Joint Admission Board (JAB) should be availed to all students in secondary schools, not just the candidates’ class, to allow for wide consultations. The same should also be released in good time.

Key views from students respondents included suggestions such as teachers should organise for visiting guests to come from easy to get and marketable professions, not just from the superior courses like engineering, architecture or medicine. They also had in some of their responses equipment of the library with career related materials for students to learn from them on personal levels. Students continued to note a lack of information for courses as are offered in tertiary institutions such as carpentry, building and masonry. Teachers were also perceived as favouring
students who had high chances of proceeding to university education- according to the researcher’s view of students’ comments on teachers’ careers work in schools. They claimed to lack exposure and accurate information on some certificate and diploma courses, and ended up depending on informal and sometimes unreliable sources of information. These findings suggest that the interests of learners in other careers (courses) outside of what local universities offered were not being addressed adequately at secondary schools.

In conclusion, it was evident from the findings in this work that career guidance work in secondary schools at Kiambu West District had some genuine gaps that required attention from all stakeholders, and especially the government, through its guidance and counselling department at the MoE. Career guidance teachers should also embrace and make use of modern career resources on career matters. The advancing globalization and computer technology makes any career anywhere easily attainable for those willing to put in the required effort and planning, providing a good impetus for the teachers and other stakeholders to work towards improving on the status of career education in Kenya. Today’s young people are living in an exciting time, with an increasingly diverse and mobile society, new technologies, and expanding opportunities. To help ensure that they are prepared to become the next generation of parents, workers, leaders, and citizens, they need support, guidance and opportunities. This can be easily facilitated from a proficient school career counsellor.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate decisiveness in career choices among secondary school students in Kiambu West District in Kiambu County, Kenya. This chapter contains a summary of the findings and recommendations based on the findings. Areas of further research have also been suggested. Presentation is based on the research objectives. Tables and pie charts were mainly used to present the findings, while frequency tables and percentages were used to discuss them. The study aimed at achieving the following research objectives:

i. Determine the factors that are influencing career decisions among secondary school students in Kiambu West District.

ii. Establish and document students’ certainty levels in career choices in Kiambu West District secondary schools.

iii. To assess the preparedness of Kiambu West District secondary schools in careers education.

iv. To find out the views of the teachers and students on issues of careers’ education in secondary schools in Kiambu West District.

The study adopted an exploratory approach using a descriptive survey design. Three instruments were used in collecting data: a students’ questionnaire, an in-depth interview schedule for teachers and documents analysis guides. The study population comprised of 3720 Form IV students and 62 teachers from 62 secondary schools in the study locale. Out of this, 13 teachers and 190 students were sampled as respondents for the study.
5.2 Summary of the Study Findings

This is a brief outline of the study’s findings from both the students and the teachers’ respondents. The purpose of the study was to investigate decisiveness in career choices among secondary school students in Kiambu West District in Kenya. The summary is presented as per the study objectives.

Objective number one sought to determine the factors that were influencing career decisions in secondary schools. About half of the students (56%) were noted to be influenced by their parents/guardians in manners of career decisions, while teachers and careers work in schools were cited as the main source of influence by 10% of the student respondents. People around the homestead of the respondents such as relatives and siblings were noted as the main source of influence by an equivalent number (10%) of students’ respondents. A small fraction of students’ respondents (8%) indicated to be influenced by ‘other persons’ in the social forum- the mentors, clergy and media personalities. This answered the study’s question ‘what are the factors influencing decisions on career choices among students in secondary schools at Kiambu West District.

Objective number two sought to establish and document students’ certainty levels in career decisions. The study found out that slightly more than a third (36%) of sampled students (n=170) rated themselves as ‘certain’ as shown by the results from Career Decision Profile (CDP) used by researcher to help in checking levels of certainties on career choices. However, teachers as indicated in Table 4.8 appeared to refute this finding from student, for according to them, only one out of ten students (10%) were perceived as ‘certain’. There was no indication of perceptions of students in ‘very certain’ or ‘very uncertain’ scales from both the students’ and teachers’ respondents. Even though slightly more than a third (36%) of the students’ respondents indicated to be ‘certain’ about their career choices, a further interrogation on the career choice certainty levels of students in Form IV class,
indicated that less than half of them (41%) - a 16% of the students respondents, n=190) had sufficient occupational information to facilitate this kind of decision making. All the career guidance teachers in the study perceived students as lacking on personal information, and hence were not expected to synchronize self knowledge or self data with careers/courses they had selected. A half (50%) of the sampled students indicated as ‘not sure’ in their evaluation on career certainty. Again, study also indicated that most students (87%) in Kiambu West District were found deficient in knowledge of their personal attributes and skills as well as in occupational knowledge, which have been noted as basic constituents of mature career decision-making. Notable as well, was finding from the career decision making profile (CDP) from the students questionnaire which showed that about half of the students (47%) were indecisive; a finding supported by almost all (95%) the sampled teachers in the study, based on their perception on decisiveness of the students.

Objective number three sought to assess the school preparedness for careers education. Findings showed that career guidance work started late for most schools (90%) sampled in the study in Kiambu West District. These were noted to incorporate or slot in career guidance programmes while a cohort was on the verge of joining Form III class. The key drive for starting at this time was noted as the need to facilitate selection of examinable subjects for the national examinations scheduled to be done in Form IV class. With respect to learning resources for careers education, all (100%) respondents, both students and teachers, noted that they had not exploited information technology, internet sources in particular, to facilitate careers education. Some career guidance teachers (33%) in small schools (small schools defined as those with one or two streams) lacked office space and the necessary access to career guidance booklets offered by Joint Admission Board (JAB) to be able to execute this role. These were however, noted to be relying on external resource personnel from outside the teaching profession. About one out every
ten schools (13%) in the sampled schools in Kiambu West District lacked careers department as indicated by respective career guidance teachers. In these places, the roles of the career advisors were noted to be merged with either ‘dean of studies’ or ‘guidance and counselling department in schools. About a quarter (24%) of the sampled teachers also indicated to have no or very little motivation, enough to go beyond their teaching obligation and do research for purpose of participating effectively on careers education matters in schools. The same number admitted to be insufficiently aware of their precise roles and expectations in careers’ department, and therefore felt it was just another ‘unnecessary’ load on top of what they already had in the curriculum. From the findings obtained, school preparedness in careers education in Kiambu West district secondary schools could be said to be faulty or in dire need of attention.

Finally, objective number four sought to find out the views of teachers and students on issues of careers education in schools. A dire need of information flow to the secondary schools at Kiambu West district was a common outcry from the views of the study’s respondents- students and teachers. There were notable admissions of the ill equipped career departments, lack of know how in career matters and the need for exposure to the reality in the field of vocations. Both teachers and students were in agreement on requesting their respective authorities to allow for external facilitators for career talks. Invitation of employers from public and private sectors as guest speakers or through field excursions was mentioned by 60% of student respondents as the main activity in career guidance work in schools. Twenty percent (20%) of teachers in particular were of the view that field excursions should be made compulsory or better still a brief attachment programmes be organized for students taking technical subjects such as drawing and design, building construction, power and mechanics. All the respondents lamented on the big gap existing between secondary schools and universities, including tertiary institutions in terms of what the latter institutions had to offer and the necessary
requirements. This, it was perceived, would help secondary school students understand courses offered in the universities and their requirements. Career guidance booklets from Joint Admission Board (JAB) were also viewed as never enough or completely not available. Where they were available study showed they only accessed by the candidates’ class, to allow for wide consultations. All teacher respondents were unanimous on the on the point- these resources should be availed in good time and presented in a more user (secondary school students) friendly manner. Key views from students respondents included suggestions such as teachers should organise for visiting guests to come from easy to get and marketable professions, not just from the superior courses like engineering, architecture or medicine, and equipment of the library with career related materials for students. Interests of learners in other careers (courses) outside of what local universities offered were not being addressed adequately at secondary schools as well.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

From the foregoing findings, career decisiveness of most students at Kiambu West district have been greatly compromised by insufficient occupational knowledge, poor self-knowledge with students as well as by the ill equipped careers education resources in schools. Inadequately equipped teachers on the other hand, coupled with poor career resources in Kiambu West secondary schools made very negligible contribution in the area of mature career decision making in secondary schools. On factors influencing career decisions, about half of the students were noted to be influenced by their parents/guardians in manners of career decisions, while teachers and careers work in schools were cited as the main source of influence by one out of every ten students. Parents/guardians and peers level of influence did not therefore appear to add much value to the career development of the students in schools. In brief, the students could be noted to be in a dilemma as far as the career decision making is concerned.
5.4 Recommendations of the Study

In this section, the recommendations made out of the study findings have been outlined.

i. Emphasis should be laid on activities that raise levels of students’ career choice certainties such as field excursions, visits to institutions of higher learning and equipment of career guidance departments in schools.

ii. Secondary schools should be encouraged to conduct events such as careers’ day or career’s week in schools, incorporating all stakeholders in careers education with an aim of allowing students interrogate on career issues.

iii. The role of the career guidance teachers (CGT) should be sufficiently distinguished from dean of studies (DoS) and guidance and counseling departments (GCD) in schools.

iv. Government should hire professional career counsellors for secondary schools.

5.5. Suggestion for Further Research

a) A study should be undertaken to establish the decisiveness in career choices in private secondary schools as this study was only carried out in public secondary schools.
b) Similar study should be undertaken in the other districts to establish whether there is any significant difference in the outcome of the findings.
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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Instructions

This questionnaire has 3 sections. Please answer all the questions. All the information given will be treated as confidential and will be used for research purpose only.

SECTION A

In this section tick (√) or fill in the appropriate answers in the gaps provided.

i) Please indicate your:- Gender- Male ( ) Female ( ) : Class______ : Year of birth______.

ii) Apart from ENGLISH & KISWAHILI, what other subjects shall you be examined in KCSE:

BIOLOGY( ), PHYSICS( ), CHEM( ), G/SCIENCE( ), MATH ALT(1)( ), MATH ALT(2) ( ), GEOGRAPHY ( ), HISTORY( ), RELIGION ( ), B/STUDIES( ), AGRICULTURE( ), H/SCIENCE ( ) COMPUTER( ) Others___________

iii) Please indicate any one of your Parents/Guardian's level of education: Certificate ( ), Diploma ( ) Degree ( ) Masters & Above ( ), Not sure/Not applicable ( )

SECTION B:

This section has a list of question statements. Such kinds of lists are referred to as Career Decision Profile (CDP) and they help in checking levels of certainties. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions below. Just circle the answer that best fits you. Do not spend too much time on them.

1. I have an occupational field in mind that I want to work in (e.g., Medicine, Agriculture, Management, Journalism or Performing arts).

   STRONGLY DISAGREE  1  2  3  4  5  STRONGLY AGREE

2. I don’t have strong interests in any occupational field.

   STRONGLY DISAGREE  1  2  3  4  5  STRONGLY AGREE

104
3. I feel relieved if someone else makes a decision for me.
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

4. I wish I knew which occupations best fit my personality.
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

5. I feel at ease and comfortable with where I am in making a career decision
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

6. My future work or career is not that important to me right now.
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

7. I frequently have difficulty making decisions.
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

8. I need information about educational programs I want to enter.
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE.

10. I’m not worried about my career choice.
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

9. I know what my interests and abilities are, but I am unsure how to find
career options that fit them.
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

10. I do not feel I know enough about the occupations that I am considering.
   STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

11. I am an indecisive person; I delay deciding and have difficulty making
    decisions.
    STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

12. I need to have a clearer idea of my abilities, my major strengths and weaknesses.
    STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

13. I don’t need to make a vocational choice at this time.
    STRONGLY DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE
14. I need to have a clearer idea of what my interests are.

STRONGLY DISAGREE  1  2  3  4  5  STRONGLY AGREE

15. I have decided on the occupation I want to enter (e.g., electrical, engineer, nurse, cook, etc.).

STRONGLY DISAGREE  1  2  3  4  5  STRONGLY AGREE

SECTION C:

This section has list of question statements. Write the appropriate responses as per the choices given.

1) Have you ever participated in any career guidance programs? Yes___, No___

2) Have you ever taken any vocational assessment test in school? Yes___, No___, Not sure____.

3) Have you ever been taken for any field trips with career exploration themes? Yes___, No___, Not sure/applicable____.
   If yes, about how many times were you taken in the year 2010? Once___, Twice___, Thrice___, Others____.

4) Thinking of the last time you attended career guidance sessions/seminars in school. Please rate your satisfaction using the scale: - Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Not sure/Not Applicable=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5.
   a) The adequacy of information on careers as was passed in the sessions/seminar. __
   b) Facilitation of the session/seminar was interesting and enthusiastic.__
   c) Facilitation of the session/seminar had good resource materials.____
   d) The facilitators answered questions well on careers__

5) Thinking of the last time you had a one-to-one career consultation with a Career guidance teacher in school. Please rate your satisfaction using the scale: - Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Not sure/Not Applicable=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5.
a) The adequacy of information on careers as was passed in the sessions?

b) The consultation session was interesting and enthusiastic.__

c) Discussions had good resource materials and illustrations.__

d) Teacher facilitators answered questions well on careers.__

6) Thinking of the last time you had a serious one-to-one consultation with mum/dad/sibling/guardian at home. Please rate your satisfaction using the scale: - Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Not sure/Not Applicable=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5.

   a) Adequate information on careers was passed on in the sessions? __

   b) The consultation session was interesting and enthusiastic. __

   c) Discussions had good resource materials and illustrations. __

   d) My questions on careers choices were answered well. __

7) Thinking of the last time you had a serious one-to-one talk with a friend about careers. Please rate your satisfaction using the scale: - Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Not sure/Not Applicable=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5.

   a) The adequacy of information on careers as was passed in the sessions. __

   b) The consultation session was interesting and enthusiastic. __

   c) Discussions had good resource materials and illustrations. __

   d) My questions on careers choices were answered well. __

8) To what extent do you agree with the following statement about career guidance resources at the school? Please rate your satisfaction using the scale: - Strongly agree=1, Agreed=2, Not sure/Not Applicable=3, Disagree=4, Strongly disagree=5.

   a. I am able to contact my career guidance office very easily for clarification and issues.__

   b. I need some more time to think and consult on this issue of careers.__

   c. I have been able to explore my career interests with somebody who is already in the career of my dream.__

   d. My subjects’ choices to be done in KCSE link well with my future career choice.__

   e. The school Library/Guidance and Counseling department/Career guidance department has adequate information on careers.__

   f. Overall, am satisfied with career guidance work in my school.__
9) In your view, what areas do you think Career guidance in school has done well to satisfy students’ needs in career choices?

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10) In your view, what areas do you think Career guidance in school need to improve to satisfy students in career choices?

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Thank you very much.
APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

All the information given will be treated as confidential and will be used for research purpose only.

Section A: Subject Selections

1) How long have you been in the teaching profession after graduation?
2) What is your highest level of education? (Master’s, Degree, Diploma, Certificate)
3) When do candidates get to select their examinable subjects?
4) How is the subject selection done in the school?
5) Do you have any special training in career guidance?

Section B: Career Guidance Activities in School.

6) What main activities do you incorporate in career guidance programs in school?
7) At what stage do you start career guidance counselling in school for a given cohort? Reasons.
8) What do you normally use when guiding students on career choices?
9) Do you invite professionals/ corporate for career talks? How often?
10) Which 3 main areas do you address in career counselling sessions?
11) Do you normally organise field trips with career exploration themes?
12) Do you normally help students with vocational assessment tests?
13) What are the main issues students seek advice for from your office in matters of their careers?
14) How would you rate the career choice certainty of the students across the Form IV class on a scale of 1-5? (Where 1 represents the highest level of uncertainty and 5 represents the most certain students)
15) How would you rate their job knowledge- Excellent, good, fair or bad? What quartiles has do they belong, under these categories?
Section B: Challenges and Teacher’s views.

16) What strong points does the school celebrate in terms of meeting the objectives of Career guidance department?

17) Still on the same, what gaps do you think need to be filled in career guidance for students in school?

18) Are you comfortable with the provisions/resources for career counselling work in school?

19) In your opinion what do you think need to be done to successfully run career guidance programmes, in secondary schools?

20) What final comment would you want to make with respect to career guidance and counselling in schools?

THANK YOU
APPENDIX III

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Career booklets from JAB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Invitation letters to universities</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Correspondences with the MoE on Careers</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Copies of CDP(Career Decision making Profiles)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. KNEC syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Resource text books on careers education</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Vocation Assessment Tests (VAT) Careers Departmental Files</td>
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APPENDIX IV

LIST OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES BY 2009 (JAB 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Universities- 2010 (Kenya)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. University of Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kenyatta University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Egerton University</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Moi University</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Maseno University</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture &amp; Technology</td>
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<td>7. Masinde Muliro University of Science &amp; Technology</td>
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<td>8. Kimathi University College</td>
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<td>9. Mombasa Polytechnic University College</td>
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<td>10. Pwani University College</td>
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<td>16. South Eastern University College</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Bondo University College</td>
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<td>18. Kabianga University College</td>
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### APPENDIX V

#### CHI SQUARE DISTRIBUTION TABLE

Probability Level (Alpha)

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</tbody>
</table>

Chi-Square ($\chi^2$) Formula

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$  

Where:  
$O$ is the Observed Frequency in each category

$E$ is the Expected Frequency in the corresponding category

$df$ is the "degree of freedom" (n-1) used
INTRODUCTION LETTER

DATE________________

FROM:
FRANCIS N. GITONGA (E55/12809/2009)
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
P.O. BOX 43844,
NAIROBI.

TO:
THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH.

This is to kindly introduce myself for the above referenced purposes. I am a second year master’s student in the School of Education, Kenyatta University, pursing MED (Education Planning).

I am preparing to survey on career issues with students, on a study entitled: DILEMMA OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CAREER CHOICES- RESULTS OF CAREER GUIDANCE PRACTICES: KIAMBU WEST DISTRICT, KENYA.
The findings of this study are purely meant for academic purposes. Kindly allow me to carry out the study in your institution. I wish to involve a few Form IV students and Career Guidance Teacher(s) in the school. Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCIS N. GITONGA
APPENDIX VII

A MAP OF KIAMBU WEST DISTRICT – KIAMBU COUNTY