



## Influence of Career Preference on Academic Performance and Graduation of male students: A Case Study of a University in Western Region of Kenya

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study was designed to investigate ways in which career preference affects academic performance and graduation of male university students from a university in Western Region of Kenya. Case study method was adopted and unstructured interviews were used to gather information from the six study participants while a journal was kept throughout the study. To analyze the data, thematic analysis tool was used and this culminated into thematic networks which formed the basis for detailed discussion and recommendations. The study revealed that when parents forced their sons to take courses against their will at the university, they harbored hatred, got demoralized, dissatisfied and frustrated towards the course. On the basis of the findings, the study recommended that the parents ought to stop forcing their opinion into their sons' careers since this caused frustrations among male students.*

**Keywords:** *academic performance, career preference, graduation, male, university*

### I. Introduction

#### 1.1 Background Of The Study

Male students' career preference is an issue since when a student is forced to take a course against his will; such a student will not feel motivated to perform well. According to [1], male students' motivation to undertake nursing could be due to the recommendation of family members, friends and the easy availability of work and job security, rather than an interest in nursing as a profession. This could hinder their motivation to work seriously to attain a good grade. [2] suggest that maintenance of high motivation influences psychological and social functioning, and facilitate academic performance as well as positive school perceptions and as such students will tend to perform well academically. In view of this, parents who are too demanding make students tensed and this result in poor academic performance. In agreement, [3] argues that the expectations of others and the climate which surround learners will determine their readiness to learn. This may lead to learners' low academic performance.

#### 1.2 Statement Of The Problem

The issue of the male students has not been adequately addressed especially at the university in Western region of Kenya. This position is supported by [4] who argues that in a country such as Kenya where girls are given prevalence, it leaves the boy child vulnerable in the foreseeable future. Besides, most of the studies in Kenya are mainly based on high school students. There is also lack of sufficient research on ways in which career preference affects academic performance and graduation of male university students especially in Kenya and more specifically at the university in Western region of Kenya. The study therefore sought to investigate ways in which career preference affects academic performance and graduation of male university students from the university in Western region of Kenya.

#### 1.3 Purpose Of The Study

The aim of this study was to investigate ways in which career preference affects academic performance and graduation of male students from a university in Western region of Kenya.

#### **1.4 Objective Of The Study**

The study was guided by the following objective:

1. To examine ways in which career preference affects academic performance and graduation of male university students.

#### **1.5 Research Question**

The question that guided this study was:

1. How does career preference affects academic performance and graduation of male university students?

#### **1.6 Significance Of The Study**

The study makes individuals who interfere with male students' career preference to critically rethink on issues surrounding students' poor performance by considering their views. The study makes the students' welfare office to encourage male students who have exceeded the expected years at the university to seek help from the career master and university counselors. The findings and recommendations of this study also add to existing reference for future researchers and readers.

#### **1.7 Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework for this study was informed by Bandura's social learning theory [5]. Social learning theory affirms that learning can be accomplished by observing a model or receiving instruction without first-hand experience. Therefore male students may behave in certain ways that make them not to perform well in their academic work and subsequently fail to graduate from the university. This is as a result of societal expectations and interaction with the environment.

## **II. Literature review**

### **2.1 Effects of career preference on academic performance and graduation of male university students**

Career preference is a preferred choice of a course taken by a student which culminates to a specific career. A comparative lack of interest in a career can affect students' interest or commitment to a course and influence their academic performance. [1]assert that male students' motivation to undertake nursing could be due to the recommendation of family members and friends, high availability of work and job security, rather than an interest in nursing as a profession. A likely explanation for this late contemplation among male university students could be that a course they are pursuing will not lead to a career of their choice. The development of nursing professional identity is related to people's perception of themselves in the context of nursing practice [6]. Not having a strong professional identity may have a negative impact on motivation to do well in nursing and other studies. The negative attitude towards learning could result in learners performing poorly, preventing them from obtaining required results [3].

Indicators such as career preference also affect lecture attendance and this determines whether learners perform well academically or not and remedial measures could be implemented before it is too late [7]. [8]advances the position that the most important reason a person chooses a particular career is that the person has intrinsic interest in the field. A good match between students' learning preferences and instructor's teaching style has been demonstrated to have positive effects on students' performance [9]. Where instruction is not geared according to the learners' learning preference little can be achieved in a learning situation and this culminates in poor academic performance. [10]argue that scholars who promote the learners' preferences approach to learning, agree that effective instruction can only be undertaken if the learners' learning preferences are diagnosed and the instruction is tailored accordingly.

The literature review supports the idea that where there is no interest in a career such as nursing among male university students, no amount of training motivation or gratification could significantly increase the students desire to study. It is also evident that it is important for students to attend their lectures if they have to perform well in their academic performance. However students may not attend lectures especially where they have a negative attitude towards the course.

## **II. Research design and methodology**

### **3.1 Qualitative Research Approach**

[11] posit that qualitative research design includes the research question(s), purpose(s) of the study... strategies of inquiry; and within the research methods; description of the data collection methods and tools, and discussion of the analytical processes. The researcher carried out an in-depth investigation of the complex and dynamic phenomena that was not easily quantifiable [11].

### **3.2. Relativist Ontology**

[12] defines ontology as the nature of being and epistemology as a way knowledge is studied, understood and/or interpreted. Ontologically the study applied relativist perspective on six participants since the meanings that the male university students gave when they got low marks depended mainly on personal underpinnings as people construct their actions and meanings in different ways that provide different realities [13].

### **3.3 Constructivist Epistemology**

The researcher applied constructivist epistemology to aid in arriving at the knowledge claim. Constructivist epistemology is about construction of knowledge as people interact in their natural settings [13]. The only way to understand why male university students outgrow the required years of their respective courses at a university in Western region of Kenya was to engage with them in their natural settings. This made it possible to construct and claim knowledge. This is in line with relativism which holds the view that knowledge is constructed as people interact [14].

### **3.4 Case Study Methodology**

The study adopted case study methodology. [15] asserts that the case researcher must decide which bounded system to study recognizing that several might be possible candidates for this selection. [16] argues that the case can be an individual, a group, an institution, a town or a profession. The study participants are from different schools within the same institution.

### **3.5 Selection Of Participants**

[17] defines sampling as the way through which the people who will be the sources of data are chosen and accessed. She suggests sampling strategically which she defines as sampling that targets a relevant range of context, participants or characteristics related to the issue under investigation. Six participants were purposively selected to participate in the study through assistance from male hostels caretaker's officer.

### **3.6 Method Of Data Collection**

The methods that were employed in data collection were unstructured interviews and journal keeping.

#### **3.6.1 Unstructured interviews**

Since constructionist research seeks to understand the world of the participants in their natural settings, it calls for a naturalistic approach in data generation. The researcher engaged unstructured interviews [18].

#### **3.6.2 Journal keeping**

The researcher kept a journal throughout the data collection period. [19] recommends that interviewers take notes regardless of whether the researcher uses audio or video recorder.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Research studies using qualitative and quantitative approaches must adhere to sound ethical principles [18]. To uphold ethical principles in this research, the researcher sought permission from the School of Education at the University of Eldoret, followed by research permits from the National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation, County Director of Education, County Commissioner and from the university in Western region of Kenya. However, qualitative designs bring with them unique ethical considerations involving; informed consent, anonymity (use of pseudonyms), confidentiality in data generation and treatment, and boundaries in participant-researcher relationships. The researcher made the participants fully informed of both the benefits and the risks of participating in the study. The researcher secured participants' consent by proving a consent form that was signed by each participant. The researcher ensured that at various points of the research process, there was evaluation of the participants' consent to participate in the study as consent that is truly informed may not be possible in qualitative studies. This is because with qualitative studies, neither the researcher nor the participant can predict exactly how data will present itself through interviews and/or observant participation and focus observation. [20] suggests a process informed consent, which requires that at various points in the research process, researchers need to evaluate participant's consent to participate in the study.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Procedures And Interpretations**

[21] Analytic technique called thematic analysis was adopted in this study.

#### **3.8.1 Analysis stage A: Reduction of the text**

#### **3.8.2 Analysis stage B: Exploration of the text**

### **III. Data analysis, presentation, interpretation and discussion**

The interviews were conducted for the six participants on career preference and the following are the transcribed data that were obtained.

#### **4.1 Transcribed Data For Career Preference**

**Researcher:** Kindly I would like to ask you questions related to ways in which career preference has affected your academic performance and graduation in the university.

**For example:**

**(Probing)** Kindly tell me how the course in which you are doing has hindered your academic progress and graduation.

**Rare Case:** I take a course in farming and sincerely I did not choose this course as I belief in business. My dad decided that I take this course against my will and being forced to be at the university forever I hate it. It is demotivating for my dad to force me to be in this university to take a course of his choice. Life in this university is not easy as I am not allowed to do any business nor course of choice. My dad claims that doing business is refusing school. Being away from the university you miss a lot, coming back, life remains the same. This is frustrating and it has taken me a lot of pain to adjust from being forced to take this course and being forced to be here against my will has contributed to lack of interest in my academic work. When there is no academic progress, you cannot graduate. I have been here since 2007 and each time I wanted to start a business my father told me that I had to study at the university first. This has made me to view school as a burden and I got fed up with it especially in my first generation.

**Msema Kweli:** I came to this university because my mother refused me to go to abroad and for me I wish I went to a different university in Kenya other than coming here since although I am doing a course of my choice it is very difficult(shake his head) to do it here. I could have preferred the city campus of this university, but then the course that I came to do here is not offered at the city campus. I hate the course since some lecturers do not test from where they taught while some assignments are never clear. You miss a class or sleep in class for surfing the internet throughout the night for feeling low after parents pushing you to a wrong career path.

In such a case one is assured of low academic performance and suspensions for persistent absenteeism from class. I am doing the course of my choice but you know this course is very demanding yet I hate to be in this university. Although I do the course of my choice, I did not want to come to this university, but circumstances forced me to be here. Besides, I hate lecturers who dictate notes from the text book. I mean I could still read for myself (points at self) from the same text book without any interference of an accent as this has made me to hate my course.

I hate the daily routine in this university, I mean it's never good in addition to severe punishment that accompany the failure to keep some assignments. Yes some students come and fail to register for units for even a whole year but just spend school fees on girlfriends because of wrong choice of career dictated by parents. I surf the internet too with friends throughout the night, miss classes or go and sleep in class. Yes being forced to come to this university has made my course to be hard.

**Msema Yote:** I was forced to come to this university to do a course that I did not like; I did it for one semester and I latter changed the university and the course that I also did with a lot of dissatisfaction for two years under heavy drinking. When I transferred to this university during my first generation of being here I took a different course that I am not doing it during this second generation even my third course in religion it was not my initial choice. I had even lost interest coming to school. I only desire to preach even with relapsing, yes, I want to serve God. It was the interest of my parents at that particular time for me to do what they wanted. But my first interest was to do medicine. I just, excuse me; I made a final decision.

I have been taking marihuana because of frustrations and I cannot concentrate on anything even my third course in religion. I had even lost interest coming to school. I only desire to serve God as he has protected me. I have seen my friends dying of drugs and substance related cases. I no longer have any other reason for living but only to serve God. Initially I did not want to come again to this institution and take any course because the community here is very hostile to substance and drug abusers yet madam! Relapsing is nobody's fault, addiction is the problem. I feel marijuana and alcohol have wasted me, but the problem is addiction not me. People need to isolate the two as I am a good boy. The course that led to my initial career is not offered here. The first time I even did not want to come here. I did not even like here and the course and that is why I went elsewhere when I received my admission letter. Initially I wanted to take medicine if I got support from my parents. This contributed to lack of interest in courses that I took later and this forced me to indulge more

and more in drugs and substance abuse. However, your head become very heavy, you cannot even reason well. Now I am resorting to a career in religion where I can read the bible and tell people something about God. Parents change the university for their children for feeling certain that the university is bad.

**Roho Safi:** I was in a different university taking a different course but drugs and substance abuse messed me up and it was a choice of my parents that forced me to come to this university where drugs also mess up with me. The choice of my passion is not offered here. I am struggling with what is at hand with no success. When I came here to school, yeah, yeah, yeah I started doing a different course. I could have gone to the University of my choice to take a course that I wanted but is not offered here. A course that will lead me to a career that I want.

**Mc Smiler:** I had been selected to join a university of my choice to do a course of my choice in vain. Demotivation led me to peer pressure where we watch videos but they consume a lot of academic time. My parents forced me to take a course in school of health sciences yes it was a parallel program. They claimed that the course is marketable. Well, I was not satisfied with a course in the school of health sciences and my parents resorted to bring me here. It was a parallel course and two years later I came to this university. I didn't complete their course because I liked the computers more, yeah, than any other career. Initially, it was my parent's idea and I got along with it in spite of my own reservations. However as it turned out, the course didn't work so well, aah, it was lack of motivation I would say. Yes, I didn't like it. I wanted to pursue something different. There was no urge to take the career choice of my parents. It was my parents who liked the course they chose for me not me.

Yes, yeah, yeah, I was enrolled in 2006 and I left in 2<sup>nd</sup> year. I came here, have been here ever since. I am taking a course of my choice now. Yeah, again it was my parents' choice, and if I were to say I think they asked the wrong person. We have a pastor who is a family friend. He is the one who was influential, yeah in persuading them to have me here. Well at first I didn't like it much, I was very none committal like, there is a reason why I chose the university of my choice when I was making university applications in high school after my Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). I liked to study there. I wanted to take, no, I made it, yeah, yeah especially that time, aah it was 77 points, yes they would have. However, yeah to pursue something else so I applied, then they accepted, yes, yes yeah many things the two places of study are very different in many regards.

Different places, different study programs. It doesn't affect the individuals, what affects the individuals is how comfortable you are at the place of study, Coz it affects your attitude I would say and that as a result, yeah, mmm. So depending on how well you fit in and how quickly you fit in. Aah, it took me more than usual to adjust. At university I was okay, I would say. It was nice yeah, yeah, yeah here the main factors that made it difficult for me to adjust were some of the rules and regulations, and yes there are rules everywhere. Yeah it is not that I am against rules, but, yeah no matter how well your intentions are, sometimes they feel just cumbersome. Yeah that one only, I would say it's the major one, and the other one. Aah, may be I would say it's major. I only wished to drop the course parents chose.

Yes they do, they take disciplinary measures against you, yes they have twice, not at all the disciplinary measures are often extreme, and they suspend you mmm, twice, yes, twice, another time I did not keep appointments. My idea was to remain in my former university, I wanted to change my course but still remain and pursue it there at the university of my choice, yeah because according to me yes, it's easier to excel in something that you like than something that you don't or you do for the sake of it or earning a living because in my opinion, if you are doing something that you like it won't even feel like it's work to you. Yeah, you even wake up every day looking forward to going to work. Such things, yeah, I would say these are pretty much major. I am not present in class for having a negative attitude towards the course. My parents forced me to be here. I was enrolled at the University of my choice to take a course of my choice but my parents wanted me to take a different course in a different school through a parallel program. They claimed that the course is good for it is selling. Well, I was not satisfied with the course and my parents resorted to bring me here. I struggled in my former university to finish my parents' course in vain as I thought I could start the course of my choice while there. Although I am currently doing a course of my choice, I fail exams not because I am poor academically but because I do not feel comfortable here as there is nothing appealing in this university and this has affected my mental disposition and academic progress. I feel my wings have been clipped.

Demotivation has made me to succumb to peer pressure where we surf the internet lot; play computer games and watch videos. Madam, they consume a lot of academic time. I intended to change the course not the university but my parents forced me to come to this current university. My parents decided to transfer me to this university when I told them that I was not picking anything in their course in my former university. I am now doing my course but I hate this university and I cannot concentrate either. I have resorted to surfing the internet to pass time and ease frustrations instead of pursuing a career of choice in a university of choice, this makes me feel bad.



I surf the internet for video games, music and movies both for my friends and mine to pass time and ease frustrations instead of pursuing a career of choice in a university of choice makes me feel bad. In my current institution I have been suspended twice for one year each for failure to attend classes and meet other assignments because of surfing internet with comrade instead of attending classes. Besides, I dislike this university despite the fact that I am taking a course of my choice. Although my parents took me through a very expensive program, I later dropped it because it is easier to excel in something that you like than doing for the sake of earning a living. In my current institution I have been suspended twice for failure to attend classes and meet other assignments because of surfing internet instead of attending classes.

**Patikana:** My parents could not pay my school fees and I was supported by a sponsor who decided that I come here since other students whom they sponsored were in the same university. Given an opportunity, I could have gone to the University of my Choice to take a course that I wanted but is not offered here. I had a problem with the course that I accepted to take since I am not good in mathematics. I could have gone to Nairobi or Egerton University to take what I wanted. Peers advised me to take the course that I do since they said the course was marketable. When I needed the support of my parents, they just said ‘work hard it’s your choice and should not complain about.’ I was expecting them to come and talk to a certain lecturer. I pass time browsing the internet for video games and movies to pass time and ease frustrations.

Each time I sleep late after surfing the internet or feeling demoralized at the university as parents do not give any support for the course, I am assured of not being able If I wake up then I will be sure of going to sleep in class. When I told my parents that I had a problem in the course that my peers chose for me, they told me that it was my problem since I had refused to take their choice. To wake up for classes. I got frustrated and ventured into surfing of the internet and substance abuse. But when I was given a series of suspensions my parents started coming to the university to talk to relevant people concerning my units. I feel I was actually forced to be here and my parents were not keen on my concerns. When my parents started coming to the university. My life in the university improved.

**4.2 Analysis stage A:** Reduction of the text on ways in which career preference affects academic performance and graduation of male university students

The researcher began the analysis of data by reducing the collected data on how career preference affects academic performance and graduation of male university students.

**4.2.1 Step 1:** Coding the Collected Data for Career Preference

Data on how career preference affected academic performance and graduation of male students was broken down with the aid of a coding framework that was based on the salient issues that arose in the study as shown in TABLE 1.

**Table 1:** Presenting and dissecting codes, and identifying basic themes for career preference

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Dissected codes</b>	<b>Basic themes identified</b>
Wanted	Choice	1. Parents choose courses for their sons
Selling	Desire	2. According to the participants, parents claim that the courses they are choosing are marketable.
	Marketable	
Decision	Opinion	3. Parent’s made a verdict for their children to be in this university.
	Preference	
Liking	Verdict	4. Parents choose courses for their sons since they have interests in those courses
	Interest	
Different	Choice	5. Participants, wanted to do something else
	Something else	
Perform	Excel	6. The male students excelled in their KCSE and they wanted to join the universities of their choice to do courses of their choices.
	achieve	
Dislike	do well	7. Participants detest career of their parents’ choice
	Detest	
Urge	Motivation	8. There is no motivation in taking the course of parent’s choice
	Crave	
Wish	Drive	9. The intention was to drop the course parents chose
	Intention	
Force	Feeling	10. Parents compelled their sons to drop a course and the university
	Desire	
Certain	Compel	11. Parents change university for their children for feeling convinced that the university is bad.
	Convinced	
Forced to be here	Sure	12. The participants feel that they are dumped here by parents.
	Dump	
Browse	Surf internet	13. Surfing internet for video games and movies to pass time and ease tribulations.
Present	Attend	14. Fail to attend classes because of having a negative attitude towards the course.
Keen	Attention	15. Parents do not have the attention to listen to their sons’ concerns.
Send home	Suspensions	16. Series of suspensions compel parents to get interested in their sons’ academic and social life at the university yet by then a lot of time had been wasted.

**4.2.2 Step 2:** Identification of Themes for the Objective on how Career Preference Affected Academic Performance and Graduation of Male University Students

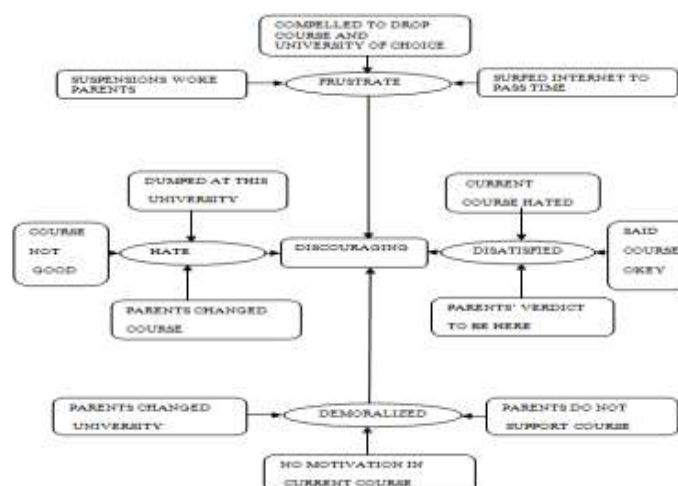
The identification was done through abstracting themes from the coded text to get basic themes, organizing themes and finally global theme as shown in TABLE 2.

**Table 2:** Theme presentation for career preference

Basic themes	Organizing themes	Global theme
1. Parents choose courses for students	Hate	Discouraging
2. According to students, parents and significant others claim that the courses they are choosing for the students are very marketable.	Dissatisfaction	Discouraging
3. It was parent's verdict that students come to this university.	Dissatisfaction	Discouraging
4. Parents choose courses for their children since they have interests in those courses	Hate	Discouraging
5. Wanted to do something else and so have dislike for the current course.	Hate	Discouraging
6. The male students excelled in their KCSE and wanted to join universities of their choice to do courses of their choice but parents chose the university and course for most of them	Demoralizing	Discouraging
7. Students detest a career of their parent's choice	Hate	Discouraging
8. There is no motivation in taking the course of parents' choice	Demoralizing	Discouraging
9. The intention was to drop the course of parent's choice only not the university.	Frustrating	Discouraging
10. Parents compelled their sons to drop course of choice and the university of choice.	Frustrating	Discouraging
11. Parents change university for their sons for feeling convinced that the university was bad yet their sons feel that the allegation was not true.	Demoralizing	Discouraging
12. Students felt they were dumped here by parents and they have a negative attitude towards the university.	Hate	Discouraging
13. Surfing internet for video games and movies to pass time and ease tribulations instead of pursuing a career of choice in a university of choice makes one feel bad.	Frustrating	Discouraging
14. Fail to attend classes for having a negative attitude towards the course.	Dissatisfaction	Discouraging
15. Parents do not have the attention to listen to their sons' concerns.	Frustrating	Discouraging
16. Series of suspensions make parents to get interested in the academic and social life of their sons at the university yet a lot of time had been wasted.	Frustrating	Discouraging

**4.2.3 Step: 3 Thematic Networks for Career Preference**

The researcher arranged themes on how career preference affected academic performance and graduation of male university students, into basic themes, organizing themes and finally came up with a global theme. This culminated into web-like networks referred to as thematic networks as shown in Fig. 1.



**Figure 1:** Structure of Thematic Networks for Career Preference

**4.3 Analysis Stage B: Exploration Of The Text**

Interviews yielded invaluable and rich information on how peer influence affected academic performance and graduation of male university students. The exploration of the text by the researcher was done through interpreting and discussing thematic networks.

**4.3.1 Step 4:** Interpretation and Discussion of Thematic Networks for Career Preference as in Fig.1

When the participants were asked to tell how peer influences affected their academic performance and graduation, the following global theme emerged; it was discouraging not to be allowed to choose a career of choice. The organizing themes that emerged were that the male students felt dissatisfied, hate, demoralized and frustrated. It was discouraging not to be allowed to participate in choosing a course that could lead to a career of choice. Male students believed that discouragement emanated from feelings of dissatisfaction, hate, demoralization and frustrations.

The organizing theme on failure to take a course of choice causing dissatisfaction is backed by a lot of information from the interviews. The study found out that parents and significant others chose courses for the participants as MsemaYote states that initially he wanted to take medicine if he got support from his parents. This contributed to lack of interest in courses that he took later and this forced him to indulge more and more in drugs and substance abuse. He claims that he has resorted to a career in religion where he can read the bible and tell people something about God. According to Patikana, if he had been given an opportunity, he could have gone to the university of his choice to take a course that he wanted yet not offered in the current institution. Rare Case maintains that although he was taking a course in farming, he sincerely did not choose the course sincerely he believes in business and hated to be at the university forever.

Male students were compelled by parents to take courses that were never of their choices just because parents had a liking for the same courses as McSmiler says,

*“My parents forced me to take a course in school of health sciences, yes it was a parallel program. They claimed that the course is marketable. Well, I was not satisfied with a course in the school of health sciences and my parents resorted to bring me here.”*

[1]assert that male student’s motivation to undertake nursing could be due to the recommendation of family members and friends, high availability of work and job security, rather than an interest in nursing as a profession. The study also found out that the category of the students who asserted their way in choosing their courses became worse than those whose parents chose courses for them since their parents did not give them support when they needed as Patikana says,

*“Peers advised me to take the course that I do since they said the course was marketable. When I needed the support of my parents. They just said ‘work hard it’s your choice and should not complain about.’ I was expecting them to come and talk to a certain lecturer.”*

The study also found out that it was parents’ verdict for the male students to come to this university. Besides the issue of course preference, the study also found out that for learning to be successful, learner preference approach to instruction ought to be upheld as Msema Kweli says,

*“Although I do the course of my choice, I did not want to come to this university, but circumstances forced me to be here. Besides, I hate lecturers who dictate notes from the text book. I mean I could still read for myself (points at self) from the same text book without any interference of an accent as this has made me to hate my course.”*

[10]argue that scholars, who promote the learner’s preferences approach to learning, agree that effective instruction can only be undertaken if the learner’s learning preferences are diagnosed and the instruction is tailored accordingly.

The organizing theme for hating a course because the participants had not chosen it was backed by enormous information from the interviews. The study found out that the participants detested a course that they did not participate in choosing as this led to their poor academic performance and inability to graduate. Rare Case claims that he has been in the institution since 2007 and each time he wanted to start a business, his father told him that he had to study at the university first. This made him to view the university as a burden and got fed up with it especially during his first generation. McSmiler points out that he struggled in his former university in vain to finish the course that parents chose for him, as he thought that he could start the course of his choice. When he was transferred to the university in the western region of Kenya to do a course of his choice, he did not find anything appealing in the university. This affected his mental disposition and academic progress as he felt, his wings had been clipped.

The study also found out that some of the respondents had been to the university in the Western region of Kenya for two generations while others had been to other universities too as MsemaYote says,

*“When I transferred to this university during my first generation of being here I took a different course that I am not doing it during this second generation even my third course in religion it was not my initial choice. I had even lost interest coming to school. I only desire to preach even with relapsing, yes, I want to serve God. It was the interest of my parents at that particular time for me to do what they wanted. But my first interest was to do medicine.”*



Parents chose courses for their sons since they had interests in those courses and this was detested so much by the participants according to the reflective notes in the researcher's journal.

*"Parents seemed to have seen the business aspect from the courses that they wanted their sons to take than the interest that the participants had for the courses" (excerpts from the journal, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015).*

Besides, parents changed universities for their children for feeling convinced that the former universities were bad yet that could not have been the situation. The reflective notes in the journal show that,

*"the major reason for transfers from one university to another seemed to have been the desire for parents to protect their sons from getting exposed to drugs and substances and peer pressure in public universities" (excerpts from the journal, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015).*

The study found out that parents did not know that drugs are everywhere even in heavily guarded institutions as Roho Safi says,

*"I was in a different university taking a different course but drugs and substance abuse messed me up and it was the choice of my parents for me to come to this university where drugs also mess up with me."*

The male students also had a negative attitude towards the university since they felt that they were dumped there by their parents. [8]advances the position that the most important reason why a person chooses a particular career is that the person has intrinsic interest in the field. [7]argue that indicators such as career preference also affect lecture attendance and this would determine whether learners will perform well academically or not and remedial measures could be implemented before it is too late.

The organizing theme for demoralizing to take a course that was not of the participants' choice was backed by rich information from the interviews. The study found out that the participants had excelled in their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) and they had the ability to be enrolled at the universities of their choice to do courses of their choice but parents chose the university and courses which to them were demotivating. McSmiler emphasizes that he had been selected to join a university of his choice to do a course of his choice in vain. He claims that demotivation led him to peer pressure where they watch videos that consume a lot of academic time. Patikana also explains that if he woke up after watching video games for many hours at night, then he would be sure of going to sleep in class. He got demoralized when he had a problem with the course friends chose for him yet parents refused to listen to him. MsemaKweli also claims that one misses a class or can sleep in class for surfing the internet throughout the night for feeling low after parents pushing someone to a wrong career path. In such a case they were assured of low academic performance and suspensions for persistent absenteeism from class. According to Rare Case, it was demotivating for his dad to force him to be in the university to take a course of his dad's choice. He claims that life in the university was not easy as he was not allowed to do any business nor course of choice. His dad claimed that doing business was refusing school. MsemaKweli also emphasizes that although he was doing the course of his choice, it was very demanding yet he hated to be in this university.

The study also found out that lack of interest in their courses made the male students not to attend classes yet the same offence earned one a suspension. The negative attitude towards the university further hindered these male students from making any move academically as MsemaYote notes,

*"Initially I did not want to come again to this institution and take any course because the community here is very hostile to substance and drug abusers yet madam! Relapsing is nobody's fault, addiction is the problem. I feel marijuana and alcohol have wasted me, but the problem is addiction not me. People need to isolate the two as I am a good boy. The course that led to my initial career is not offered here."*

[3]asserts that negative attitude towards learning could result in learners performing poorly and preventing them from obtaining the required results

The organizing theme for feeling frustrated to take a course that was not of your choice is backed by enormous information from the interviews. The study found out that when the participants took courses that they did not like and at the same time in the university that was never of their choice, they felt extremely frustrated as supported by MsemaYote who claims that he has been taking marihuana because of frustrations and he could not concentrate on anything even his third course in religion. He further points out that he had even lost interest coming to school and that he only desires to serve God as he has protected him. Rare Case also asserts that being away from the university made them to miss a lot and on coming back, life remained the same. For him this was frustrating and it had taken him a lot of pain to adjust from being forced to take the course and being forced to be in the university against his will that has contributed to lack of interest in his academic work.

Msema Kweli argues that he came to this university because his mother refused him to go to abroad and he is wishing he went to a different university in Kenya since although he was doing a course of his choice, it was very difficult (shaking his head) to do it there.

The study also found out that when parents chose careers for their sons, the decision hindered their motivation to work seriously to attain a good grade as McSmiler says,

*“Although my parents took me through a very expensive program I later dropped it because it is easier to excel in something that you like than doing for the sake of earning a living. In my current institution I have been suspended twice for failure to attend classes and meet other assignments because of surfing internet instead of attending classes.”*

The study also found out that parents created in their sons a negative attitude towards the university and the situation for the male students indeed proved difficult to deal with as it resulted in the learners' low academic performance, Roho Safi had this to say:

*“It was a choice of my parents for me to come to this university. The choice of my passion is not offered here. I am struggling with what is at hand with no success.”*

Parents also do not have attention to listen to their sons' personal concerns. From the reflective notes in the researcher's journal,

*“parents had no time for their sons and they only intervened when the situation was out of hand”*

(excerpts from the journal, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015)

The study also found out that a series of suspensions made parents to get interested in the life of their sons at the university when a lot of time had been wasted as Patikana says,

*“When I told my parents that I had a problem in the course that peers chose for me, they told me that it was my problem since I had refused to take their choice. I got frustrated and ventured into surfing of the internet and substance abuse. When I was given a series of suspensions, my parents started coming to the university.”*

[2]posits that boys are getting addicted to internet games, drugs, alcohol... while at the university when they should be settling on serious matters. The study noted that not having a strong professional identity may have a negative impact on motivation to do well in a course and this was responsible for driving male students into surfing of internet and girlfriends instead of focusing on their academic performance as McSmiler says,

*“My parents transferred me to this university when I told them that I was not picking anything in their course in my former university. I hate this university and I have resorted to surfing the internet to pass time and ease frustrations instead of pursuing a career of choice in a university of choice, this makes me feel bad.”*

[6]support this argument by asserting that the development of nursing professional identity is related to people's perception of themselves in the context of nursing practice.

The study also found out that when parents compelled their sons to drop the course and university of choice, they felt frustrated. The fact that the parents were not ready to listen to their sons until the situation went out of hand with suspensions around was never appreciated by the participants. The participants further felt frustrated as doing a course that was not leading to a career of ones' choice was extremely discouraging, where discouragement because of frustrations made the participants to surf internet a lot to pass time. [2]suggest that, maintenance of high motivation influences psychological and social functioning and facilitate academic performance as well as positive school perceptions and as such students will tend to perform well academically. The study also noted that although parents found the course to have been marketable and that they passed a verdict for their sons to be at the university in the western region of Kenya, the sons were feeling quite dissatisfied as they had no pleasure in their course and the university. Lack of motivation in the course was also attributed to the fact that even if they chose the course the parents dictated the university. In view of this, parents who were too demanding made male students to tense and this resulted in poor academic performance. In agreement[3] argues that the expectations of others and the climate which surround learners will determine their readiness to learn which in turn may result in learners performing either well or poorly academically.

The study therefore established that when parents forced their sons to take courses against their will, they got no interest to take up the courses and this led to demotivation to study. Besides the study found out that failure by parents to support their sons to take courses of choice led to their children having no interest in subsequent courses. The study also established that when parents forced their sons to come to this university against their will they hated the university and even pursuing a course of choice in such a university came with

resentment. The study also found out that the students who succeeded in choosing courses for themselves were worse since their parents did not support them when there was need and the discouragement led them to abuse drugs and substances which hindered academic progress. The study also established that it was easier for the students to excel in something that they liked with passion than doing a career for the sake of earning a living. The study also found out that lecturers who dictate notes from text books made the students to hate the course even if it was their choice.

#### **IV. Summary, conclusions and recommendations**

##### **5.1 Summary of Ways in Which Career Preference Affected Academic Performance and Graduation of Male University Students**

The participants blamed their parents for the courses that they were taking and the choice of the university since those courses according to the participants did not lead to the preferred careers. When parents forced their sons to take courses against their will at the university that was not of their choice, they harbored hatred, they got demoralized, dissatisfied and frustrated towards the course and the university forcing them to engage in the sale of drugs and substances to make money and forget about academic work. Frustrations also forced male students to spend school fees on girlfriends instead of studying because they were forced to come to the university against their wish and this interfered with their graduation since such students did not register for any units and they ended up just eating and sleeping at the university. The respondents also spent most of their precious time on the internet down-loading games, music, and videos for their peers who were busy pursuing their studies.

##### **5.2 Conclusions of Ways in Which Career Preference Affected Academic Performance and Graduation of Male University Students**

The study investigated ways in which career preference affects academic performs and graduation of male university students from a university in western region of Kenya. On the basis of key findings of this study, the following conclusions were made: Parents played a big role in influencing the career choice of their children. This was met with a lot of resistance from the participants where majority of them after feeling discouraged resorted to drugs and substance abuse to curb frustrations. Others declined to register for courses so that they could just leisure around as they eat and sleep at the university. While others engaged themselves in surfing the internet.

##### **5.3 Recommendations of Ways in Which Career Preference Affected Academic Performance and Graduation of Male University Students**

1. Parents are encouraged to stop forcing their opinion into their sons' careers since these caused frustrations among male students.
2. The Office of the Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs ought to intervene when students are being enrolled to ensure students are grilled to find out if they have chosen a course of choice and if the university offers the course.
3. During enrollment the Vice Chancellor Students' Affairs ought to ascertain from the students that they agree with the choice of the university where they want to pursue their course.
4. The study encourages university counselors to come up with strategies on how they can offer support to such male students so that they can improve on their academic work.
5. The study encourages university management to set time frame for completion of studies.
6. The study encourages the students' welfare office to guide male students who have exceeded the expected years to seek help from the career master and the university counselor.

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