

Extent Of Students' Knowledge Of Their Personality Traits, And Career Information In Career Aspirations Among Secondary School Students In Kiambu County, Kenya

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Abstract: The aim of the study was to investigate the extent to which students use the knowledge of their personality traits and knowledge of career options in their career aspirations. The following objectives guided the study: To establish the distribution of the Big Five Personality Traits among the students under investigation, to establish the career aspirations of the students under investigation, investigate the extent to which students use the knowledge of the Big Five Personality Traits when considering career aspirations, to establish the extent to which students make career choices with the knowledge of the careers available from the career guide book, to establish if students knew their Big Five personalities traits through taking personality tests. The Five Factor Theory by Costa and McCrae (1992) grounded the study. Kiambu County the locale of the study had 266 schools stratified as National, Extra County, County and Sub-County with a student population of 95,859 students at the time of the study. Stratified random sampling was used to select 10 schools two from each stratum and a sample of 400 students randomly selected from the selected schools. Data was collected through a students' questionnaire, focus group discussion, the Big Five Inventory (BFI) John et al. (1991) and Career Choice Inventory (CCI). The study findings revealed that many students were high in neuroticism and many of them selected careers that were not compatible with their personality traits. The findings revealed that students had neither interacted with the career guide book nor taken personality tests. Consequently they made career choices without sufficient information and therefore many of them were bound to be unsuccessful in career entry and progression. The study recommended that all schools should make the career book accessible to all students and that career guidance and counselling should be strengthened in all schools. The study also recommended that schools should engage the services of psychologists trained in the administration of personality tests. A further recommendation of the study was that students should make career decisions after careful balancing of the personality traits in order to prepare for careers, enter them and progress in them. This would ultimately lead to personal satisfaction and providing work maximum production for organizations that hire them. The study also recommended that career choice and admission to colleges and university should embrace personality traits and academic achievement as important prerequisite as opposed to the current trend of considering academic achievement alone. Key terms: agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience, career aspirations

Keywords: Knowledge, Personality Traits, Career Options, Career Aspirations, Big Five Personality Traits.

I. INTRODUCTION

Selecting career paths has been identified as one of the most important milestones of adolescents' development (Ferry, 2006). The career selection process begins early in

high school when students select subjects that lead to aspired career paths. This process is critical as it orients students towards the type of work they will engage throughout their adult lives. Thus, much consideration must be taken to ensure that from this early time students make career decisions after

carefully taking into account not only of their academic achievement but also their personality traits. This would ensure compatibility between personality traits of the individual students and the aspired career path. Studies such as Seibert, Nagler, Kramers & Liden (2001) have linked personality traits with educational and career decisions while Morjani et al. (2007) confirm that a good understanding of both the academic potentials as well as the personality characteristics is important for successful entry and progression in various career fields. When students aspire for careers they are best suited they are likely to enjoy career progression and overall quality life. On the other hand, students who aspire for careers they are not suited for, may experience difficulties completing studies as they may drop out of college. Such students may also acquire degrees in one field but eventually opt to work in areas that are totally unrelated to the degrees studied. In addition such students may switch jobs in mid-career or continue to do jobs that neither gives them satisfaction nor pleasure thus compromising the overall health and happiness not to mention the lowered production and poor work relations that may consequently ensue. This situation most likely arises when the only consideration guiding career selection is academic performance without taking into account the role of personality traits in career choices.

Research evidence links personality traits with occupational outcomes (Ozer et al., 2006; Roberts et al., 2007; Spurk, Daniel; Abele 2011 and Hirschi et al., 2011). These studies indicate that individuals high on certain personality trait are likely to be more successful in given careers but not in others. For example, extraverts are said to be more successful in occupations in the social and enterprising fields while people high in agreeableness are best suited in jobs that give them the opportunity to interact with people (Mount, 1998; Burch and Anderson, 2008). Individuals high in agreeableness are said to be good negotiators due to their innate flexible attitudes (Cattell and Mead, 2008). In addition to this, people high on the agreeableness can work well in social professions where the need to make profits is not stressed. Studies further link conscientiousness with high work performance and low rates of absenteeism Higgins (2007) due to discipline and high planning that characterize people high on this trait dimension (Burch and Anderson, 2008). Thus people holding managerial positions and those working in the public sector should be high in conscientiousness but low in neuroticism (Sajjad et al., 2012). Studies further indicate that for people to succeed in entrepreneurial fields they should be high in openness to experience but low in neuroticism. In addition, openness to experience is said to be advantageous for people in artistic and creative fields (Ozer et al., 2005). Other professionals who need to be high in openness to experience are scientists and researchers (Sajjad et al., (2012). Neuroticism has been related to poor job performance due to its association with low self-esteem (Sajjad et al., (2012). According to Burch and Anderson (2008) people high on this trait lack emotional intelligence and are prone to mental disorders and thus fail to attain career success in many areas.

Indeed making career decisions has for a long time been identified as a difficult undertaking for adolescents and young people. According to Gordon's (1981); Moss and Frieze

(1993); Feldman (2003); Germeijs & DeBroek, (2003) students are said to be either undecided about their careers or they find the transition from school to college difficult. This lack of decidedness may be a contributing factor to switching of career paths or fields of study. This study is cognizant of the fact that challenges that confront students as they select career fields, prepare to enter and make progress in them are not unique to Kenya. They are universally experienced and countries of the world have their unique ways of managing them. In Kenya, guidelines that provide information regarding career choices for students have been developed across time and one such document is the Careers Guide Book (Ministry of Education, 2009). Various reports such as the Ominde Report (Government of Kenya, 1963) have also given recommendations to guide the education processes and in particular career decision making process by students. This particular report recommended the establishment of Guidance and Counseling structures in schools with specific objective to give students guidance on career choices and employment opportunities available in the country. Other documents that have guided the education process and career choices have included the National Development Plans 1974-1978; 1979-1985; and the National Committee on Education Objectives and Policies Report, 1976 popularly known as the Gachathi Report. All these documents recommended that students in Kenyan schools should receive guidance on careers. In addition to these, the first Careers Guide Book was published in 1993/1994 and later reviewed in 2009. This document contains twenty six (26) career fields that students should be exposed to when making career choices. One of the most conspicuous highlights in the revised career booklet is the inclusion of personal characteristics relevant to various careers thus confirming that taking into account the personality characteristics of a person is an important prerequisite to making right career choices. Consequently, this study seeks to find out if the career choices students in Kenya aspire for are related to the Big Five personality traits.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Making careers decisions is a critical challenge that faces high school students due to its lifelong implications. At times students aspire for professions that they are not best suited a situation that leads to many challenges including inability to complete college as they drop out along the way. Other students may not quite drop out but they may change fields of study mid-way before completion. Further to this there are students who complete college studies but opt to work in fields totally different from the ones studied. Other people get highly paying jobs only to discover that they cannot cope with the requirements of the jobs and they resign early in life. It takes such a person a lot of time before finding careers that they find suitable. In addition, there are people who persist in jobs they do not enjoy doing consequently enduring a lot of psychological torture throughout life. In addition the employing organization suffers low productivity. The heavy investments made by the individuals themselves, their families and the government are lost as individuals struggle with re-establishing career fields they are best suited for much later. It

is therefore critical that individuals prepare for and enter careers they are best suited for as this would result in compatibility between the person and the job ultimately resulting in job satisfaction, retention, high productivity, and job security among other benefits. This is why this study sought to investigate the extent to which students aspire to get into career fields with their personality traits are best suited for.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following two objectives:

- ✓ To establish the distribution of the Big Five personality traits among the students under investigation.
- ✓ To establish the careers which students under investigation aspired.
- ✓ To investigate whether there was compatibility between the Big Five personality traits and career aspirations among the students under investigation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is grounded by personality trait theory by Costa and McCrae (1991). According to this theory there are five major personality traits dimensions termed as the Big Five which include openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Individuals who are high on extraversion are energetic, gregarious, fun loving, and assertive with the tendency of experiencing positive emotionality and like to seek excitement (Mount et al., 2005). According to research evidence agreeable people are sympathetic, trusting and supportive hence engaging in pro-social behaviors and are likely to be altruistic and modest (Cattell and Mead 2008). People who are high in conscientiousness personality trait have good impulse control and are task oriented, opting to follow norms and they are good in planning, organizing as well as prioritizing tasks. Individuals high in neuroticism tend to be anxious, nervous, sad, and tense tending to relate poorly to stressors as well as being self-conscious and shy Thomson (2008). Individuals high in openness to experience have active imagination, a preference for variety and intellectual curiosity, McCrae, John and John (1992). The knowledge of personality traits should complement the academic performance to ensure person-career compatibility.

The conceptual framework of this study underscores the importance of the knowledge of personality traits by individual students as well as the knowledge of academic performance and the use of this information in career decision making. According to the Big Five trait theory people manifest five personality traits namely, openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. Although all five are present in all people there are those that become more dominant and therefore manifest more in one person than other traits. For example some people may have openness to experience as the dominant trait while in others conscientiousness is the dominant one. Likewise for some people extraversion may be the dominant trait while yet in other people it is agreeableness that manifests dominantly. According to research each personality trait is associated with career choice outcomes. This therefore calls for individuals to know their personality traits and consequently make career decisions that suit them a factor that is beneficial for the person and the employing institutions. People, who consider their personality traits when choosing career fields are able to prepare for them, enter the fields and make progress in them with positive outcomes through life. On the contrary individual who make career choices in disregard of their personalities end up with poor life outcomes as they may experience challenges completing studies or joining and growing in the careers chosen.

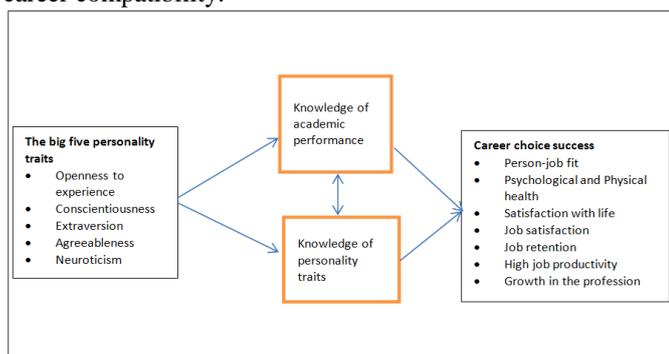
III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Kiambu County. Kiambu County was selected for the study because of its proximity to Nairobi County gives it an almost cosmopolitan characteristic as it attracts people from other parts of the Kenya. The County had 266 secondary schools at the time of the study. These were National, Extra County, County and Sub-County schools and had a student population of 95,859 students. Stratified random sampling was used to select 10 schools two from each school stratum. The study sample comprised of 400 students randomly selected from the sampled schools. Study data were collected through the Big Five Inventory (BFI) which is a 44-item self-report inventory designed by John, et. al. (1991) and measures the Big Five personality trait dimensions namely; extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. Items on this scale are scored on a Likert scale (5-point) from “disagree strongly” to “agree strongly.” The BFI scale has shown substantial internal consistency, retest reliability, and clear factor structure, as well as considerable convergent and discriminator validity with longer Big Five measures (Benet-Martinez & John, 1998). Each student was given the Career Guide Book (2009) and asked to select the career each aspired.

PILOT STUDY

STUDENTS TAKING PERSONALITY TEST

The study used a standardized instrument whose validity has been established and documented: Big Five Inventory,



Source: Author's 2018

Figure 1: relationship between personality traits and career outcomes

(BFI) by Benet-Martinez & John, O. P. (1998). However, before actual data collection, a pilot study was conducted in two schools in Kiambu County which were not included in the study. The respondents were 30 students from each of the 2 pilot schools (1 boys, 1 girls). The aim of the pilot study was to test the reliability and to assess the viability of the instruments in the Kenyan context.

Test-retest technique of reliability were employed whereby the pilot questionnaires were administered twice to respondents, with one week interval to allow for reliability testing. The scores were correlated using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation formula to determine the reliability coefficient. A report of 0.77 was obtained. According to Mugenda & Mugenda(2003) a correlation of 0.7 or higher would be acceptable.

The researcher was able to use the two instruments for the research on the basis of the results of the pilot study. The researcher distributed the instrument for Career Inventory (CCI), Career Guide Book, Ministry Of Education (2009) to each respondent. The respondents were asked to choose one career and the level of their aspiration on the career chosen. On completion of the exercise, CCI questionnaires were submitted. The completed CCI questionnaires were collected, later processed and analyzed.

The researcher then distributed the BFI (Benet-Martinez & John, 1998) instrument on personality to the respondents. The researcher collected all the completed questionnaires and processed for analysis.

Qualitative data was obtained through focus group discussions. The purpose of focus group discussions was to capture other factors other than those investigated through quantitative methods but have a bearing on career aspirations of students in Public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. A random sample of 8 students (4 boys, 4 girls) was taken from every sample of 40 students in each school for investigation. The group went through the preliminaries of establishing focused group discussions.

The focus group discussions sought to explore short term and long time plans of students after completing the KCSE at the end of the school before examination results were released. The discussion further sought to explore whether the students had considered choice of a career and the reasons for the reasons for the career choice. Various reasons were brought forward by different respondents. The focus group discussions also sought to find out about personal characteristics important for the career choice. The discussions further sought to explore whether respondents had ever taken a personality test.

The study wished to establish if the students had taken a personality test. However none of the respondents reported to have never taken a personality test nor considered personality traits relevant to career decision making. Some of the respondents seemed to know that certain subjects were important for entry to career fields of their choice in higher education institutions. This would imply that the respondents knew the subject requirements for careers in higher education. Many seemed to consider work related attribute were essential for the careers of their choice. Early financial independence and job security were mentioned severally during the discussion. Influence of mentors was mention by a significant number of respondents during the focus group discussions.

IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS AMONG THE STUDENTS

The first objective of the study sought to establish the relative distribution of the Big Five personality traits among the students under investigation. This was achieved through the administration of the Big Five Inventory (BFI) and the computation of the profiles. The results were presented in figure 2.

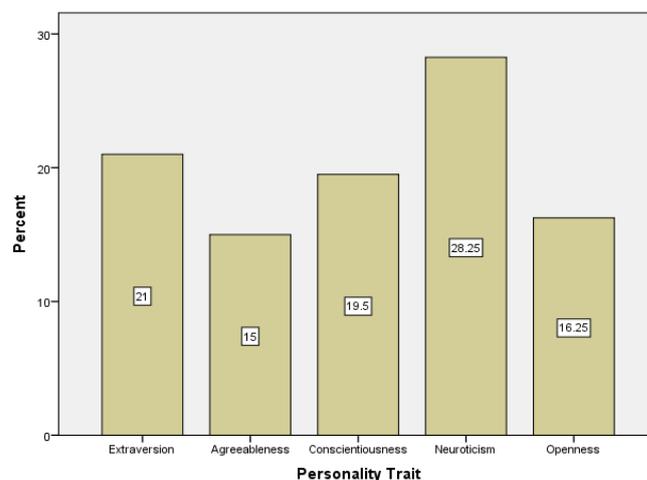


Figure 2: Distribution of personality traits among the students

The study established that 21% of the students were high in extraversion, 15% agreeableness, 19.5% conscientiousness, 28.25% neuroticism and 16.25% openness to experience. The significance of this finding is that studies have linked various personality traits with career success (Ozer et al., 2005; Roberts et al., 2007; Spurk, Daniel; Abele 2010 and Hirschi et al., 2010). The research findings raise a concern due to the high number of students who were high on neuroticism because of its association with negative career outcomes preparation, entry and success (Sajjad et al, 2012; Burch and Anderson, 2008). The individuals who are high in agreeableness succeed in careers that allow them to interact with people such as social professions while conscientiousness is associated with career success in many fields (Higgin 2007; Burch and Anderson 2008). In addition, people who are high in openness to experience are said to succeed in the careers in entrepreneurship, artistic and investigative fields (Ozer, 2005).

CAREERS ASPIRATIONS BY THE STUDENTS UNDER INVESTIGATION

The second objective of the study sought to establish the careers aspired by the students under investigation. This was achieved through presenting each student with the Career Guide Book (2009) and asking them to select the career field each one aspired for from the possible 26 career fields in the Career Guide Book (2009). The results were presented in figure 2.

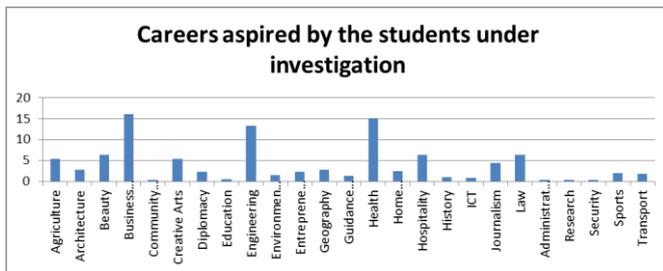


Figure 3

The findings revealed that the most popular aspired careers among the students were Business studies aspired to by (16%) of the students followed by careers in Health (15%) and engineering (13.3%). The three careers areas accounted for 44.3% of the students under investigation. Careers with moderate student aspirants were Law (6.3 %), Hospitality (6.3%), Beauty (6.3%), Creative Arts (5.3%) and Agriculture (5.3%). These five career field were aspired by 29.5% of the students under investigation. The career fields that attracted few aspirants among the students under investigation were Architecture (2.8%) Diplomacy, (2.3%) Environmental science (1.5%) Entrepreneurship (2.3%) Geography (2.8%) Guidance and Counseling (1.3%), Home science (2.5%), History (1.0%), Journalism (4.3%), Sports (2.0%) and transport (1.8%). These eleven careers attracted 23.1% of student aspirants. These findings seem to suggest that the students under investigation did not have sufficient career information to enable them to spread evenly among the careers provided in the guide book. This was evidenced by the fact that large sectors of the Kenyan economy for example entrepreneurship, architecture, environmental science; sports and transport have attracted very few aspirants.

PERSONALITY TRAITS AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS

The third objective of the study sought to establish if there was congruence between the careers students aspired and their personality characteristics. The study revealed that 343 (86%) of the respondents under investigation chose only 12 careers out of 26 possible careers in the Career Guide Book (2009). The results were arrived at through the cross tabulation of personality traits of 343 (86%) students and their career aspirations in 12 career fields and findings presented in figure 3.

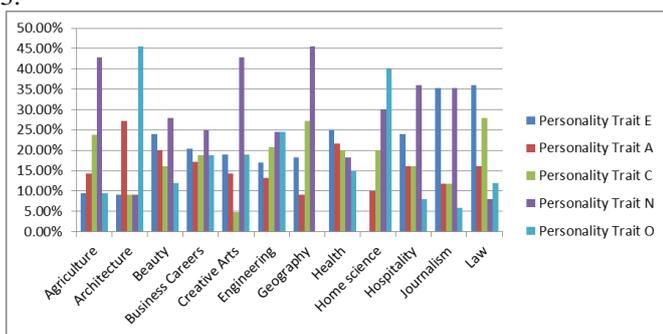


Figure 4

CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE

According to study findings the students who reported aspiring careers in agriculture were 5.3% of the total sample.

Of these 9.5% were high in extraversion while 14.3% of them were high in agreeableness. In addition students who displayed conscientiousness were 23.8% and those who displayed neuroticism were 42.9% while 9.5% were open to experience. Careers in agriculture require much resilience, commitment, ability to plan and keep schedules and manage people during the farming processes. The career fields also require having people who are knowledgeable about markets as well the ability to deal with people and organizations when managing sales of the produce. Therefore, students who reported aspiring for careers in this area would have to be high in conscientiousness, openness to experience. By inference therefore students high in neuroticism and extraversion and who constituted 58.2% of the students who reported aspiring for careers in this area would not be successful in this career field. This agrees with the findings by Muna et al., (2011) whose study noted that the personality trait neuroticism was not only negatively related to career decision making and (Verberkel, K. et al.,2008; Humburg, 2008; Thomson, 2008) but also to poor job performance. In addition, Mueller & Plug (2006) study established that emotional stability (low neuroticism) is positively related to performance in all occupations and consequently people high on neuroticism trait may not succeed in careers in agriculture (Burch & Anderson, 2008). The trait that would have a positive effect on agriculture is conscientiousness as individuals high in it are said to be more successful in careers in the natural sciences VerBerkel, K. et al., (2008); Humburg (2008; Muna, S. A. et al., (2011). Conscientiousness is related to high work performance as well as commitment Higgins (2007). The ability to plan that characterizes the people high on conscientiousness is a major advantage for aspiring careers in agriculture (Barrick et al., 1999); Burch & Anderson, 2008). By inference therefore, of all the students who indicated that agriculture was their aspired career 58.2% would not succeed as majority of them displayed neuroticism while others displayed extraversion which said to be negatively related to success in careers in the natural sciences.

ARCHITECTURE

According to the study findings, students under investigation aspiring careers in architecture were (2.8). The distribution of personality traits for this group were 9.1% extraversion, 27.3% agreeableness, 9.1% conscientiousness, 9.1% neuroticism and 45.5% openness to experience respectively. Among this group only the 9.1% who displayed neuroticism may not succeed in careers in architecture because the field requires people who are open to experience and are innovative, creative a desire for variety and appreciation of art (MaCrae, 1987). Creativity, intellectual curiosity and active imagination would be an important trait for a person aspiring to take architecture as a career. This is in agreement with the findings of John & John (1992) and Ozer et al., (2005) studies. Agreeableness may contribute to success in careers in architecture because people high in this trait have the ability to interact with clients in agreement with Muna, S. A. et al., (2011) study. A moderate level of agreeableness would be important for an architect to ensure that an architect would be more receptive to the ideas and needs of a client. Attributes of

conscientious personality traits would be critical for consistency and self-discipline in planning and focus to see a project from beginning to end. Among this group only a small minority of students (9.1%) who were high in neuroticism may not succeed in the career area.

BEAUTY

The study findings revealed that 6.3% of the students aspired for careers in Beauty. Amongst these 24.0% displayed extraversion, 20.0% agreeableness, 16% conscientiousness, 28.0% neuroticism and 12% openness to experience. These results reveal that majority of the aspirants opting for careers in beauty would be successful except for those high in neuroticism. Individuals high in neuroticism may not be suitable for careers in beauty due to their inherent negative emotions cited in studies by Jeronimus et al., (2014) Norris et al., (2007), Frinskel et al., (2009) Mueller & Plug (2006), Krammer et al., (2001). Beauty as a career would require a person who is artistic and creative and one who has an imaginative mind, characteristics found in people high in openness to experience personality (McCrae, 1987). In addition people in the beauty career would be expected to be fashion conscious, and having the ability to relate and socialize and interact with other people as well as being energetic all attributes of extraversion. Individuals who would succeed in this field are those with the traits of openness to experience, extraversion, conscientiousness and agreeableness in the right proportions. Thus slightly more than a quarter of students high in neuroticism may not succeed in the careers in beauty.

BUSINESS

The study findings revealed that 16.0% of the students under investigation aspired careers in Business studies. Amongst these 20.3% were high in extraversion, 17.1% agreeableness, 18.8% conscientiousness, 25% neuroticism and 18.8% openness to experience respectively. Among the students who aspired for careers in business, those high in extraversion would be successful because of their attributes of outgoingness, being energetic, and experience of positive emotions, sociability and the searching for stimulation would make them suitable for careers in business Bukhari et al., (2012) and VerBerkel (1999-2008), Humburg (2008). In addition students who displayed conscientious would also be successful in careers in business due to their propensity towards efficiency, being organized, having a preference for planned activities as well as their ability to focus on set goals (Boileau, 2008; Muna, S. A. et al., 2011). Another group of students who would be successful in careers in business studies are those who rated high in openness to experience due to their possession of attributes such as the desire for variety, innovation, creativity, and curiosity as well as appreciative of art (McCrae, 1987). The students who would not succeed in careers in business studies were those high in neuroticism because the trait is said to be negatively related to emotional intelligence a very important quality for careers in business Muna, S. A. et al., (2011). Careers in this field require people who are high in emotional stability (Burch and Anderson, 2008; Mueller & Plug (2006).

CREATIVE ARTS

The students who indicated aspiring for careers in creative arts were 5.3% of the total sample. Of these 19% were high in extraversion, 14.4% agreeableness, 4.8% conscientiousness, 42.9% neuroticism and 19% openness to experience. Students who would succeed in careers in creative arts were those high in openness to experience due to their inherent characteristics like innovation, curiosity, creativity and appreciation for art McCrae (1987); Careers Book, (2009). The students who displayed extraversion and reported aspiring careers in creative arts many not succeed in the career fields because they lack creativity, curiosity, variety appreciation for art and innovation McCrae (1987) attributes which would be important for careers in creative arts. However moderate to low levels of extraversion trait would add value to a person high in openness to experience in a career in creative art while neuroticism would be a major drawback in this career. The percentage of students high in neuroticism was very high and according to Muna, S. A. et al., (2011); Krammers et al., (2001); Burch and Anderson (2008); Mueller & Plug (2006) this group would not be successful in careers in creative arts. The percentage of students who reported aspiring for careers in creative arts and who would not be successful was very high (61%).

ENGINEERING

According to research findings 13.3% of the students under investigation indicated aspiring for careers in the engineering field. Among these 17% were high in extraversion, 13.2% agreeableness, 20.8% conscientiousness, 24.4% neuroticism, and 24.4% openness to experience respectively. According to research the traits that are positively related to careers in engineering and other technical subjects are emotional stability and low neuroticism (VerBerkel et al., (1999-2008); Humburg (2008); (Muellar & Plug, 2006). Other traits that are related to successful entry and development in this career field are openness to experience and conscientious. This is in agreement with other studies such as Catell and Mead (2008); Muna, S. A. et al., (2011); Barrick (1999) and Cannor (2007) that concur that careers in engineering require people who are self-driven, able to plan and execute their plans to a successful end through self-discipline and high levels of diligence.). In addition students who reported aspiring for careers in the business field and displayed openness to experience would also be successful in the field due to their innovativeness, curiosity, creativity and variety attributes that according to McCrae (1987); Catell and Mead (2008) would be critical careers in the engineering fields. In addition careers as researchers and scientists engineering would require people who are sensitive to their inner thoughts, deep insight, open to learn and make decisions, a personality trait of introverts (low extraversion (Ackeman & Beir, 2003 and Capretz, 2003) and therefore people who are high in extraversion may not succeed in such careers. Consequently, for people to succeed in engineering as a career they need a good blend of such traits as high levels of conscientious, moderate levels of openness to experience, low extraversion and agreeable personality trait. According to the

study findings the percentage of students who reported aspiring for careers in engineering but would not be successful is 41.5% which is a significant percentage.

GEOGRAPHY

The research findings revealed that (2.8%) of the students under investigation aspired for careers in geography that included geology, survey & mapping cartography and meteorology, astronomy. The findings also revealed that 18.2% were high in extraversion, 9.1% agreeableness, 27.3% conscientiousness, 45.5% neuroticism and 24.5% openness to experience. The study findings further revealed that 27.0% of the students who indicated aspiring for careers in geography displayed conscientious personality a trait that defines people who are efficient, organized and self-disciplined (Boileau, 2008). Conscientious people prefer planned activities and aim to achieve and is positively related to career decision making process Muna, S.A. et al., (2011) as well as academic and career success (Cannor, 2007; Sinclair, 2009; Cattell and Mead, 2008) as such this category of students are likely to succeed in their career choice. The personality traits that predict success in career fields in geography are conscientiousness, low extraversion as well as openness to experience. As such students high in neuroticism and extraversion may not succeed in such career fields Cattell and Mead (2008). Students who opted for this career field but would not succeed in it constituted 63.7%.

HEALTH

The study findings established that 15% of the students under study aspired for careers in the health field. Among this group, 25% displayed extraversion, 21.7% agreeableness, 20% conscientiousness, 18.3% neuroticism and 15% openness to experience respectively. Careers in health requires people who are warm, good in communication and have ability to interact with others, aspects of extroversion personality and also need, good mental ability and aptitude and are able to think logically, keen alert and with quick in interpretations, aspects of conscientious personality Career Guide Book (2009). It has been noted that 21% of those respondents aspiring for health and related services displayed agreeableness personality trait. However, agreeableness was found to be significantly related to career decidedness and probably students who considered careers in health may have considered all issues within their understanding while making their career decisions. It is also noted that Barrik and Mount (1991) decades ago had argued that careers in social and non-profit making as require a person who is sensitive to feelings of other people and have a desire to meet these needs and make sacrifices of time for the sake of others traits of an agreeable person. Agreeableness would therefore be suitable for those seeking to be in health related services. The study findings further revealed that 20% of students who reported aspiring for careers in the health and related services displayed conscientious personality trait. The view expressed by Muna, S.A. et al., (2011) was that conscientiousness was positively and significantly related to career decision making process and therefore students with this personality trait may have taken into consideration all the

necessary issues within their knowledge regarding the choice of health as a career. This particular finding agrees with VerBerkel et al., (1999-2008), Humburg (2008) who found that conscientiousness increased the probability of choosing a career in medical studies and as such students in this category were likely to enter the career field, make progress in it and enjoy career satisfaction throughout life. Health as a career would require a composite complementation of moderate levels of extraversion, agreeableness and high levels of conscientious personality characteristics of, one type of personality on its own would not meet all the necessary requirements of health as a career. Of all the students who opted for careers in health, 43% would not be successful as they displayed neuroticism personality trait. This is a very high percentage particularly in view of the critical need of having the right people in health services.

HOME SCIENCE

According to the findings of the study 2.5% of the students under investigation aspired careers in home science and related fields. In this group none of them displayed extraversion personality trait, 10% displayed agreeableness, 20% conscientiousness, 30% neuroticism and 40% openness to experience. The personality trait likely to be associated with success in home science have been identified as conscientiousness VerBerkel et al.,(1999-2008); Humburg (2008); Barra et al (1987) and Krammer et al., (2000), Muna, S. A. et al., (2011). In addition by Cattell and Mead (2008) concur that careers in science require people who are self driven, able to plan and execute their plans to a successful end through self discipline and high level of diligence which are traits of conscientious personality. In addition, people who are open to experience are likely to succeed in this career due to their inclination towards being innovative, creative, search for variety and appreciation for art, Macrae (1987) as well as their rational approach to work, analytical mind as well as enjoyment of practical work Careers Guide Book (2009). According to the study findings, students who may not succeed in careers in home science include those high in neuroticism due to the negative emotions and poor work performance and progress associated with people high in this trait Muna, S.A. et al (2011), Krammer et al (2001) and Mueller & Plug, (2006).

JOURNALISM

The study established that 4.5% of the students in the entire sample reported aspiring for careers in journalism. Among them 35.3% displayed extraversion, 11.8% agreeableness, 11.8% conscientiousness, 35.3% neuroticism and 5.9% openness to experience respectively. The implication of this finding is that students high in extraversion are likely to succeed in the career field because of they are outgoing, energetic, experience positive emotions, sociable and stimulation seeking Boileau (2008); Cattell and Mead (2008). Such students are also likely to enjoy career satisfaction Krammers et al., (2001) and according to (Career Guide (2009) such people tend to be observant, have a keen interest in current affairs, are inquisitive, creative, self-

motivated and persevering all characteristics that that are important for journalism. Conscientiousness is another trait that would be important in a person wanting to join career fields in journalism due to the intrinsic tendencies towards self-discipline, self-motivation, ability to plan, be focus, set goals and execute them. In addition traits that would interact with extraversion to make a person to succeed in the career include, and openness to experience. A traits like neuroticism according to Krammers et al., (2001) study findings would not be favorable for careers in journalism due to the inherent challenges identified in Jeronimus et al., (2014), Norris et al (2007), Friskel (2009) studies that include poor decision making and lack of career satisfaction Muna, S. A. et al., (2011); Krammer et al., (2001).

The study findings revealed that 6.3% of the students under investigation indicated aspiring for careers in hospitality related areas. Among these 24% displayed extraversion, 16% agreeableness, 16% conscientiousness, 36% neuroticism, and 8% openness to experience. The implications of this finding is that more than two thirds students who wished to enter career in hospitality would be successful due to their extraversion Boileau (2008), Careers Guide (2009) agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience. However slightly more than a third of the students high in neuroticism would not succeed due to the negative effect this trait would have in this career area due to their sensitive nature, inherent negative emotions (Jeronimus et al., (2014), Norris et al., (2007) and Friskel (2009). In the view of Muna, S. A. et al (2011) such students would not enjoy career satisfaction Krammers et al., (2001) and Mueller & Plug (2006) studies.

Another finding of the study established that 6.3% of the students under investigation choose law as their future career. Among this group 36.0% displayed extraversion, 16% agreeableness, 28% conscientiousness, 8% neuroticism and 12% openness to experience respectively. According to Boileau (2008); VerBerkel et al (1999-2008); Humburg (2008); Muna, S. A. et al., (2011) extraversion is beneficial for this career because of the outgoingness, energetic nature, positive emotions and sociable nature with a propensity for seeking stimulation in this group of students. In addition the career requires people with a genuine interest in people, excellent verbal expressions, ability to convince and explain unclear points have been identified an important attributes of those seeking to do law Career according to the Career Guide Book (2009). Other personality traits that would be critical for people opting to join careers in law include conscientiousness due to the propensity towards efficiency, organization, dependability, and self-discipline Muna, S. A. et al., (2011), Verberkel et al., (1999-2008); Humburg (2008). In addition agreeableness is a trait that would aid careers in law because such people tend to be sympathetic, trusting, and supportive hence engaging in altruistic according to (Cattell and Mead, 2008; Muna, S. A. et al., 2011). However there are contradicting findings that show that students who took law were significantly less agreeable than students in any other faculty Gidi (2004). Agreeableness has also been found to be negatively related to career satisfaction. Agreeableness may not add much value to a career in law apart from in the career decision making process. Each of the other personality traits on its own may not be able to make a good lawyer. A

combination of moderate to high levels of both extraversion and conscientiousness would be invaluable attributes for a career in law.

Roberts & Robins (2000) suggested that personality of people have a relationship with career choice. Further research findings by Onoyase & Onoyase (2009) indicated that there is significant relationship between personality type and career choice but in practice wrong career choices are made due to ignorance of specific personality type of the individual. In his study, Hirschi (2011) investigated on prediction and outcome of active engagement in career preparation of students and established that engagement in terms of self and environmental exploration and active career planning positively related to inter-individual increase in career decidedness and choice congruence. The findings from the current study seem to indicate that there was no active engagement in terms of self with regard to personality type for the respondents. The findings seem to further suggest that students under investigation had not engaged in career environment search and they had not engaged in active career planning. The study findings are in agreement to Moorjan, Satema & Gupta (2005) who suggested that there is need to provide guidance to help students make the right career choice. Early guidance in terms of personality assessment would be important for meaningful career choice. This knowledge and information seem to be lacking for the respondents in the study.

V. STUDENTS' FAMILIARITY WITH CAREER GUIDE BOOK

It was the intention of the study to establish the extent to which students were familiar with the contents of the Career Guide Book(2009). The researcher distributed the instrument for Career Choice Inventory (CCI). The instrument was an adoption of the Career Book, Ministry of Education (2009). The respondents were given time to chose one career out of a selection of 26 groups of careers in the instruments. The Career Guide Book (2009) by the Ministry of Education Science & Technology gives description of various personality characteristics relevant for different careers. The findings of the study established that the students under investigation had not been exposed to the Career Guide Book by Ministry of Education, Science & Education (2009) prior to preparation for the research. The book was not available in the schools where the research was undertaken. This is very significant finding and may have a bearing on the findings of this study in the sense that students select careers without the benefit of knowing the careers that are available and also without having the benefit of knowing their personality characteristics.

VI. CONCLUSION

The careers aspired by many students were business, health, and engineering accounting for about 44% of the students under investigation. Careers aspired by a moderate number of students were law, hospitality, beauty, creative arts, agriculture aspired by about 29% of the students. The careers

with the fewest number of aspirants were architecture, diplomacy, environmental science, entrepreneurship, geography, guidance and counseling, home science, history, journalism, sports, transport and accounting all of them aspired by 23.1% of the students. It was also evident from the study findings that majority of students aspired to enter career fields that were not compatible with their personality traits. The study findings further revealed that the students under investigation had not interacted with the career guide book prior to the study. Furthermore the study revealed that the students under investigation had not taken personality tests that would have helped understand themselves in order to make career choices informed by their knowledge of their personalities.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study the following recommendations were reached;

- ✓ The study recommends that further research be conducted in order to establish why many students were high in neuroticism a trait that is negatively related to success in many career fields.
- ✓ Another recommendation of the study is that career guidance and counseling program in Kenyan schools be enriched to include the consideration of students' personality traits, academic performance and career opportunities available.
- ✓ A further recommendation of the study is that all schools to have counselors with skills to administer personality tests to students and use this information in career guidance.
- ✓ The study also recommends that all schools be in possession of the career guide book and ensure that all the students are adequately informed about all the career opportunities available to enable students to choose careers on the basis of information.

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