

**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE
CHOICE OF HOME ECONOMICS
PROGRAMMES BY MALE
STUDENTS IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES:
A CASE OF EGERTON UNIVERSITY.**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influenced the choice of Home Economics by male students. Until 1985, Home Economics had traditionally been taught only to the females. To achieve the objective of gender equity and self-reliance, males were allowed in the programme.

Previous trend indicated chronic low choice of Home Economics by male students. The factors that influenced choice were not known and it is important that this study makes them known. Objectives covering status of enrolment, preference, the programme itself, and factors that deterred or inspired students against or towards Home Economics respectively were investigated.

Egerton University was chosen as the primary source of field data. Moi, Kenyatta Universities and Maseno University College provided supportive data. Purposive and random sampling methods were used to sample the Dean, 17 lecturers 60 male and 60 female students. The female students were used as an inbuilt control group. 10% of each sample was pilot tested to facilitate validation.

Data were obtained through questionnaires, interview and observation schedules. Percentages and frequency tables were used to summarize the results.

The study revealed the factors influencing the males' choice of Home Economics as traditional beliefs, lack of male role models, history of teaching Home Economics to females and the vocational aspect of the programme. Most students after being in the programme for some time found it more acceptable. The vocational aspect of Home Economics was the greatest inspiration. Financial, time constraints and negative attitudes were the major deterrents.

The main conclusion was that, specialization was a major factor that could change the negative attitudes and encourage choice of the programme.

The main recommendation was that Home Economics be reviewed and re-oriented to suit either gender. Specialization, vocationalization and more practical in specialized content areas, should be introduced.