

**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE SELECTION OF UNDERGRADUATE
DEGREE CHOICES BY STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA: A
CASE STUDY OF MOI UNIVERSITY, KENYA.**

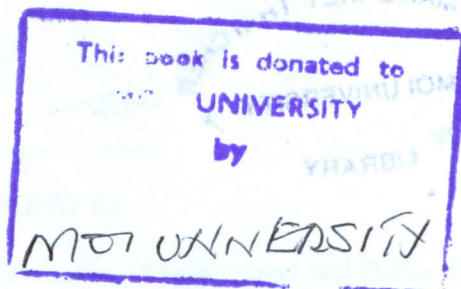


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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the selection of undergraduate degree programmes by students in Moi University, Kenya. It explored the attitudes and perceptions of the respondents on selection of undergraduate degree programmes. Planning theory was adopted for the study. A mixed methodologies and Case Study research design was used. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 9(nine) schools out of nine (9) and stratified random sampling to select 754 respondents to constitute the sample. A questionnaire was administered to seven hundred and forty two (742) students respondents in order to measure their perceptions, attitudes, values and behaviour on the subject of study and also to identify key research themes that were probed further. Three Focus Group Discussions and ten face-to-face interviews were conducted with nine (9) Document analysis of the archival documents was also done. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to determine and explain proportions. Analysis of respondents' narratives was done through a combination of reading and re-reading of the recorded material to search for meanings, explanations and relationships between the concepts. In the light of findings, the study concluded that the level of career guidance and counseling provided in secondary schools was neither well planned nor organized. In addition, there were no clear policies within which the service is provided. Students' degree programme decisions were guided by other factors rather than interest. Universities do not sufficiently market degree programmes in secondary schools. JAB places a high number of students in degree programmes they do not choose or have a passion for. Therefore, career guidance and counseling provided in schools is inadequate to enable students make informed choices of degree programs. It was therefore noted that the successes of students making informed degree programs choices will depend on the level of career guidance and counseling given in schools and marketing of degree programs offered by universities. Consequently, the study made the following recommendations. There is need to strengthen of career guidance and counseling in schools, it should be mainstreamed in the education system within clear policies. This service should be monitored and evaluated to ensure that all students benefit. The freedom to choose should be complimented by adequate career information which should be provided by trained personnel in secondary schools. Students should apply to individual universities once results are known. Universities should actively market degree programmes to students. Students can apply directly to universities, study general programmes in first year and choose degree programmes to pursue in second year.