Extent to which personality disposition influences re-careering among working-class students in selected Kenyan Public Universities

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Abstract
Re-careering represents an important component of workers turnover. Re-careering is a phenomenon whereby already trained individuals seek a total shift to a new and different work field, demanding a new set of skills. Re-careering costs have far reaching impact to any organization doing business today. Further, it affects families, organizations profitability as well the economy of a country, thus becoming a global agenda. Since re-careering is not just a job change, but a move to a different career, there is need to explore the triggers. Studies show a paradigm shift from the traditional perspective to a more dynamic view of career. This study adopted a mixed – research design (i.e. quantitative and qualitative) to collect and analyze data. A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed to the targeted population sample. The study found that personality disposition had a significant influence in re-careering among the working class students. Working-class students in Kenyan public universities did not feel sufficiently satisfied to perform work adequately in their current careers. The government needs to formulate a strategy for incentives provision geared towards personality disposition related to re-careering of workers.

Keywords: personality disposition, re-careering, working-class students, Kenyan public universities

Introduction
Personality is defined as a set of habitual behaviors, cognitions and emotional patterns that evolve from biological and environmental factors (Strobel, 2011) [36]. While there is no generally agreed upon definition of personality, most theories focus on motivation and psychological interactions with one's environment (Joshanloo & Afshari, 2009) [24]. Trait – based theories, such as those defined by Raymond Cattell (1965) define personality as the traits that predict a person's behavior (Zelenski, Santoro, & Whelan, 2012) [40]. On the other hand, more behavioral approaches define personality through learning and habits. Personality is often broken into statistically – identified factors like the Big Five, which are openness to experience and change, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (or emotional stability) (Jeroninu, Riese, Sanderman & Ormel, 2014) [23]. These components are generally stable over time, and about half of the variance appears to be attributable to a person's genetics rather than the effects of the environment (Strobel, Tumasjan & Sporrie, 2011) [13].

In a study by Ebyan (2011) who sought to investigate the factors influencing career choices among students in public tertiary colleges in Garissa Municipality. The study used Ex-post facto research design. The target population consisted of 355 respondents. Data was gathered by use of questionnaire and was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative data. Findings revealed that family had influenced them to a great extent. Youth consulted their families since they felt that their families had good plan for them hence could guide them accordingly. The study also concluded that peers influenced the youth in career choice to a great extent. Findings also revealed that the community culture had a role to play in the career choice among the youth. Traditional ascribed roles in terms of gender also determined the choice of careers for the youths. Some cultures on the other hand restricted females to do some kinds of work hence would not allow them apply or join certain careers. Findings also revealed that access to occupational information influenced youth choices in career. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Parents should not force the youth in taking up careers which are appealing to them but should involve them in paving the way forward. It was also recommended that the government through the Ministry of Education should put mechanism in place to provide regular career guidance and counseling to school, Ebyan (2011) [13] presented a methodological gap since it employed ex-post facto research design while the current a descriptive research design. study used

In recent years, career success research identified several personality factors that influence people objectively (i.e., salary, promotions) and subjectively (i.e., career satisfaction) career success (Sorensen, 2015) [30]. Besides the Big Five Factors, the proactive personality, which is considered a stable disposition to take personal-initiative in a broad range of activities and situations, has been in the focus of personality and career researchers (Sampson, 2010). Proactive people are described as unconstrained by situational forces and they affect environmental change (Zhang & Arvey, 2009) [41], an aspect friendly to a re-careering mind. Fuller and Marler (2009) [15] elaborated about the mechanisms underlying the relationship between proactive personality and specific career criteria. As such findings allow important theoretical conclusions of personal and career functioning it seems very important to analyze them in more detail (Spurk & Abele, 2011) [2].

Annan (2006) [3] examined factors affecting career choice among senior secondary school students in Shama Ahanta East Metropolis and used descriptive survey design. He used simple random sampling and sample population of 200

respondents and also used descriptive statistics in analysis of data. This study revealed that personality was most influential factor that influenced career choice among senior secondary students in Ahanta East Metropolis and significant others as the least factor taking into consideration (ability, personality, material benefit, home background, gender factors, and significant others). The study revealed that many adolescents have difficulties in choosing a career and that there was adolescent male gender bias in career choice as compared to female counterparts. Nonetheless, Annan's study failed to look into the factors leading to re-careering among professionals and thus the need for the current study.

The research by Neapolitan (2008) showed that, prestige was the most important factor that influences career choice of students in Ho Township considering prestige, personal interest, and parental influence. Values and aspirations need to be considered as the individual makes a choice since the importance or usefulness one attached to his job and individual's desire or ambition to achieve inspires him to excel in his job. The individual's scale of values is based personal attitudes and beliefs about what is important in life. If one's values match closely those of other colleagues, then there is a likelihood of developing a sense of pride in work, willingness to devote time and energy towards the same (Autor, David & Handel, 2013). Value systems do change overtime - so what is right for you now may not be so appropriate in 5 or 10 years' time. Likewise, values do become more important as we get older. Examples of values include autonomy (making your own decisions, independence of action), authority (having influence over others), variety (change and diversity in tasks, places, and people), service (helping or caring for others), economic reward (high salary, property), prestige(having achievements recognized), social interaction (having pleasant, friendly contacts), and creativity (being original, developing new concepts) While Neapolitans' study explored the values that promote job security, the study did not addresses personality disposition comprehensively in triggering re-careering, which the current study undertakes.

Willie and Fey (2010) researched on career choice factors of high School Students. It aimed at finding out how influential were factors of personality, environment and opportunities in making career choice. The purpose of the study was to identify the most important factor within these three factors which the Germantown High School senior students used in deciding upon career choices. A survey was done with a sample population of 325 and descriptive statistics were used in analyzing the data collected. The findings revealed that, personality factors were identified as most influential in choosing career. Environmental factors were not significant in making their choice, though they did not show outright disregard for them.

Longitudinal studies from Higgins and Chandler (2008) [20] and Saks (1995) [32] reveal an influence of self-efficacy on job satisfaction or perceived career success. According to Heppner, Multon and Johnston (1994) [19] a key attribute that facilitates re-careering is self-efficacy. The more confident a person is, the more psychologically ready a person becomes, and the better suited in undertaking a challenging move such as re-careering (Zacher, Biemann & Gielnick, 2012). Wille and DeFruyt, (2010) reported that compared to a matched sample of non-changers, those who considered re-careering expressed confidence in their ability

to make a change successfully. Similar finding were reported by Zimmerman (2008) [42] and Ibarra (2007) [22] who noted that people who are confident people are open to new experiences and change. Such characteristics traits are strongly related to divergent thinking and creativity (Bond, 2013) [7]; both of which are personality traits that are instrumental in triggering re-careering (Fuller & Mahler, 2009). While Neapolitans study explored the values that promote job security, it has been found lacking adequate focus in relating personality traits with re-careering,, which the current study undertakes.

Organizational scholars have suggested that an individual's confidence to overcome career obstacles should increase one's willingness to change careers and, hence, his or her probability of doing so (Spurk & Abele, 2009) [1]. These scholars have suggested that the primary source of such confidence is one's self-esteem and or self-efficacy. For instance, a study by Erdogan and Baver, (2009) have found that individuals with higher self-efficacy engage in more job search behavior (e.g., interviews) which can affect positively one's opportunities as well as willingness to re-career.

A meta-analysis by Ng (2005) found age to be negatively related to career transition. As individuals age they become less likely to change careers (Berndt, 2011 [5]; Zacher & Bellman 2012; Harms & Gao, 2014). For instance, Sarah, Archer and Julia (2017) [34] found that the group of workers who most often changed careers was less than 40 years of age. The explanation is that younger people have not accumulated general and, or specific human capital in their occupation in contrast to older people who are more likely to have substantial investments (Lyons, Schweitze & Kuron, 2012). Younger people are flexible in their living and working arrangements, compared to the older generation of workers (Bradley & Devadason, 2008).

Clarkberg and Moen (2009) [11] stated that "it has been deemed a socioeconomic law that as the age of an individual increases, the likelihood of experiencing occupational change decreases". Using the same explanation Hellester, Miguel, Kuhn and Kailing (2014) [18] findings indicated that compared to older workers, younger workers have less attachment to their geographic residences or even their lifestyles. In support of this view Carless and Arnup (2011) [31] indicated that as far as re-careering is concerned, career stayers are older, have more children and have worked longer in their career than those who changed careers.

Some studies have reported that males change their career more frequently than females (Parrado, 2007) [31] and are more likely to report their intentions to change careers (Hellester, Miguel & Kuhn, 2014). In contrast, other studies have reported that woman's career decision remains more complex than men's because of their multiple family and work related roles. Findings from Hakim (2000; 2006) on women's careers in the UK and the US suggest that women mostly exhibit adaptive careers while men tend to have more linear, traditional career patterns placing more emphasis on monetary rewards and promotion (Huang, 2007; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Bertrand, Marianne, Goldin and Katz (2010) also found that prestige and salary were more important to men, and flexibility was more important to women. These findings comply with other findings who reported that most women valued balance between work and personal life more than men (Connelly, Rachel & Kimmel, (2010); Chioda, Laura, & Boudet (2011;

Booth & Jan (2008).

Some studies have shown that married women switch to careers to have flexible hours to accommodate family, community, and career concerns. For instance, Chioda, Laura and Boudet (2011) found that a large percentage of married women moved into professions that allowed them time to fulfill their female role. Other studies have indicated that those who are single are more likely to change careers (Carless & Arnup, 2011 [31]; Cesinger, 2011; Parrado, 2007) [31].

Earl and Minbashian (2013) [27] established that, conscientiousness and openness do predict a positive and significant impact on performance, meaning that the higher the level of transparency (openness), consciousness (conscientiousness), attention to the environment (extroversion), principals more success in their performance. Bond (2013) [7] examined the relationship between personality "Model five-factor "and the prototype image of effective leaders, and the extent to which the image is associated with features of transformational leadership. Questionnaires were investigated in a study involving 101 samples of Hong Kong-based permanent employees spread across twenty-nine organizations of any size. The findings of this study were based in Hong Kong indicating contextual gap with the current study.

People who have high conscientiousness are reliable and responsible people (Barrick & Mount, 2013) [4]. They have good self-control, act dutifully and always aim for achievement. They like to follow a plan rather than acting spontaneously. This makes them good at formulating long-term goals, organizing and planning routes towards achievement and work persistently to achieve goals. A research finding by Boyce (2010) has shown that, high level of conscientiousness may not always be good as conscientiousness could be detrimental to well-being when failure is experienced. Nonetheless, the above studies failed to show the connection between personality disposition and r-careering.

The empirical gaps that have been identified focuses on the influence of personality disposition to re-careering. Many of the studies were carried out for students as they made their university choices and no subsequent follow up was done to evaluate whether they retained those career paths after college completion. Likewise, many of the studies were carried out outside Africa and it would be prudent to carry out more studies locally to identify the critical factors that influence career choice. Furthermore there is need to evaluate whether the factors already studied are universal to all people. There are few studies carried out in Africa but little has been done to address re-careering among working-class students in Kenyan public universities. It is therefore prudent to carry out such a study in order to add to the existing body of knowledge.

This article discussed the extent to which personality disposition influences re-careering among working-class students in selected Kenyan public universities.

Statement of the Problem
Re-careering has become a major challenge globally due to its effects on the families, organization labor force productivity, organizations profitability and economy of a country as a whole (Safiah, & Noordin, 2013). Re-careering has been made a worldwide agenda due to intensity of re-careering challenges and the frequency of career change (Kim & Kim, 2015). In the year 2011 and 2012, 40% and 57% respectively of the staff resigned from the organization. Between 2013 and 2017, 51% of the workers globally, switched their career and also advanced their studies by studying in different courses.

Despite the much effort being put to reduce the rate of s re-careering in Kenya the trend continues to increase making the situation very worrying. For example, the banking industry in Kenya is drastically experiencing the effects of high rates of re-careering (Standard Bank, 2012). It is well known that a workforce can either boost or lower the performance of commercial banks in Kenya (Verbruggen, 2012).

Research Philosophy
A research philosophy is a belief about the way in which data about a phenomenon should be gathered, analyzed and used (Crowther & Lancaster, 2008).The term Epistemology (what is known to be true) as opposed to doxology (what is believed to be true) encompasses the various philosophies of research approaches (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Two major research philosophies have been identified as positivists and interpretivists (Galliers, 1991).

Research Design
This study adopted a mixed – research design (i.e. quantitative and qualitative) to collect and analyze data, therefore, it qualifies the research to be a mixed research. The mixed – research design was preferred because some of the objectives in the study required qualitative data while others needed quantitative data. In this study for instance, open ended questions yielded qualitative data while the close ended questions generated quantitative data.

Location of the Study
The study was carried out in Kenyan public universities, whereby the research comprised of twenty two public universities in Kenya. The study had two populations, one at university (organization level), and another population at the working class student level. The study population was drawn from 22 public Universities in Kenyan, in addition 10,080 working class students drawn from selected public universities were also considered for the study. The study participants were self-sponsored working students enrolled in the evening program in the five selected public universities. This study was conducted in five public universities in Kenya, that is; University of Nairobi (UON), Moi University (MU) - Nairobi campus, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology Kenyatta University (JKUAT) and Egerton University, Main Campus.

Target Population
Population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific query and to which the researcher is interested in generalizing the conclusions (Castillo, 2009).

Population studies are more representatives because everyone has equal chance to be included in the final sample according to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999). The study has two populations, one at university (organization level), and another population at the working class student level. The study population was drawn from 22 public Universities in Kenya and from 10,080 re-careering working-class students drawn from selected public universities. The unit of analysis

included undergraduates, Masters and PhD, self-sponsored working –class students enrolled for evening programme in selected Kenyan public universities.

Sample Size and Techniques
Sampling is the process of selecting units (people, organizations) from accessible population to generalize results to the target population (Castillo, 2009). According to Orodho (2009) sampling is the process of selecting units (people or organizations) from accessible population so as to fairly generalize results to the targeted population. A sample is therefore a subset of a population (Kothari, 2004). Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that 10% or more of a population may be adequate for a survey study. The study settles on 20% of the population of universities, which yielded 4.4 (approximately 5 universities).
In determining the sample size, the study employed Newman (2011) formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1 + Ne^2)}$$

Where n= the desired sample size.
N= the population size

$$N = \frac{10080}{(1 + 10080 \times 0.05^2)}$$

Using a margin of error of 5%, the sample size was 384 students
Stratified random sampling technique was used categorize students into 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th years accordingly.

Data Collection Instruments
Burns and Grove (2003) defines data collection as the precise, systematic gathering of information relevant to the research sub-problems, using methods such as interviews, participant observations, focus groups discussion, narratives and case histories. The study sought to generate quantitative and qualitative primary data. Primary data, also known as raw data or original data, is new data obtained from the sample of participants of the research study. According to Kothari (2008), primary data is information that a researcher gathers from the field directly while secondary data refers to information received from others sources like literature

review, case histories books and the others. In this study, the researcher utilized questionnaires and interviews to generate data for the purposes of answering the research questions. This study used….1, 2, 3, etc. as discussed below…guide the reader
A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed to the targeted population sample. The questionnaires were developed according to the research questions and in line with the research hypotheses. Each of the above research questions (sections three, four, five, and six) were measured using a likert scale that of 1-5 where 1 indicated strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 moderately agree, 4 agree and 5 strongly agree.
The researcher considered the maximum, and adopted the 30 participants approach recommendation in determining the pilot sample size. A Pilot study of 30 working –class students in two of the selected Kenyan public university that were not in the main study was conducted to detect weaknesses in design and tools applied and to provide proxy data for selection of a sample. The results were 0.799 for academic performance.

Quantitative Data Analysis
In case of the quantitative data a Likert type scale having ranges from 1 up to 5 was applied where 5 represented strongly agreed while 1 was for strongly disagreed. The editing of the data was done by checking the questionnaires that were completed. Editing of the data assisted in errors detection and omissions by indicating where correction was necessary.

Analysis of the Findings
The findings on whether the decision to change career is influenced by personality disposition indicated that majority, 71%, of the respondents stated that the decision to change career is influenced by an individual's personality disposition. Only 29% indicated that it is not influenced by personality disposition.

Descriptive Analysis of Attributes of Personality Disposition
The study sought to establish the perception of the respondents on various statements regarding personality disposition. The rating was on a 5 point likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree in order of strength. The results are as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis for Attributes of Personality Disposition

	N	SD	D	N	A	S A	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	
	Stats						Stats	Stats	Stats	Std. Error
Things Around	340	7%	13%	25%	36%	20%	3.85	0.93	-0.78	0.155
Initiating Projects	340	9%	14%	19%	32%	26%	3.85	1.07	-0.61	0.155
Situations that are unstructured	340	13%	12%	21%	29%	25%	3.90	1.17	-0.83	0.155
Manual Work	340	0%	4%	15%	46%	36%	3.77	1.06	-0.54	0.155
Jobs with Interaction	340	14%	17%	19%	28%	22%	3.67	1.11	-0.62	0.155
Steady routines	340	0%	2%	19%	48%	31%	3.89	1.09	-0.85	0.155
Men Likely to Change	340	0%	6%	11%	42%	42%	3.73	1.34	-0.78	0.155
Single people change	340	2%	4%	18%	45%	32%	3.64	1.37	-0.64	0.155
Valid N (listwise)	340						3.76	1.05		

The results indicate that majority of the respondents, 55.8%, agree that being observant and curious with things around and delighting in situations that call for creative or analytical approach motivates re-careering, 57.9% agreed that initiating projects involving many people and having the ability to convince people to do things their way motivates re-careering, 53.8% agreed that preference of situations that are relatively unstructured and interaction through artistic expression motivates re-careering, 81.3% of the respondents agreed that enjoying manual work, especially projects which allow one to be physically active and alone motivates re-careering, 49.8% of the respondents agreed that enjoying jobs that let one interact with other people motivates re-careering while 79.0% of the respondents agreed that enjoying steady routines that follow clearly defined procedures motivates re-careering and those who agreed that single people are more likely to change their career paths more often compared to married people were 76.5% of the respondents. The average mean score of 3.76 indicates that the respondents were agreeing with most of the statements while a standard deviation of 1.05 indicates that the variations in the responses were minimal. The mean was negatively skewed, an indication that majority rated the various attributes highly. The results of the chi-square statistic are for personality disposition is shown in Table 2 which is 2.550 with a p-value of 0.0139. The $p < 0.05$ indicating that there is statistical significant relationship between the variable personality dispositions and re-careering. The findings of the current study collaborate what other studies that similar findings. Personality disposition has effect on re-careering, and many scholars have confirmed it in various studies. Such studies state that personality disposition is the way people believe in themselves thus dictating their perception (Baron, 2007). Sacher, Biemann, and Gielnick (2012) findings support those individuals who are able to know their personality traits early enough are at an advantage because they do look for opportunities that utilize their inherent abilities. Individuals who are to open to new experiences and interactions are also able to explore new career opportunities, and, thus they are quick to think of re-careering (Ibarra, 2007). This implies that personality disposition in re-careering play a great role thus is likely to influence the frequency of re-careering.

Table 2: Personality Disposition (Chi-Square Tests)

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2sided)
Pearson Chi-Square Continuity	2.550	1	.0139
Correction	1.866	1	.172
Likelihood Ratio Linear-by-Linear	2.513	1	.113
Association	2.542	1	.111
N of Valid Cases	340		

Hypothesis Testing: H0; There is no significant relationship between personality disposition and re-careering among the working students in public universities in Kenya

Conclusions
Determinants of re-careering investigated include, academic performance, working condition, personal disposition and social interactions. This study revealed that additional training, age and experience by working students positively influence re-careering. On personality disposition, this study found that personality disposition had a significant influence in re-his careering among the working class students. Working-class students in Kenyan public universities did not feel sufficiently satisfied to perform work adequately in their current careers. The government needs to formulate a strategy for incentives provision geared towards personality disposition related to re-careering of workers.

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