

EFFECTS OF CAREER ORIENTATION ON YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY  
IN MARSABIT COUNTY

**ABSTRACT**

The effects of internship policy on the employability of the youth have been understudied. The youths are the present and future of any nation since they have crucial implications for future economic growth, development, and stability. As such, if youth unemployment is overlooked, it has the potential to have significant and serious social repercussions. However, unemployment among the youth is rampant across the world. This study aimed at examining how the Public Service Internship Policy (PSIP) affected young people's employment. This study was guided by specific objective which was to investigate the impact of career orientation on youth employability in Marsabit County. The researcher used a descriptive research design to assess the influence of PSIP on employability. The target population of the study was 1,439 interns who benefited from the government-sponsored internship programs and were posted in various state departments, agencies, and ministries in 2021. A sufficient sample for the research was selected using random and stratified sampling methods. Using Slovin's formulas, the sample size for the study was established. A structured questionnaire was used to gather the data, which assisted to gather both qualitative and quantitative information. The data was analyzed using SPSS. Data analysis used descriptive statistics like the mean and standard deviation. The study further analyzed the relationship between the predictor and predicted variables using inferential statistics. Pearson correlation and regression model was adopted to test the significance of the study variables. The researcher followed all the ethical considerations during the process of conducting the study. The research revealed significant and positive connections between various factors and the employability of young individuals. Specifically, it found a substantial and favorable correlation between having a career orientation and youth employability (correlation coefficient,  $r = 0.338$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). The study concluded that factors such as career orientation exert a positive influence on youth employability. Therefore, it is recommended that the Kenyan government collaborates with educational institutions and parents to ensure that young people receive comprehensive career guidance and counseling, make professional accreditation accessible to all, provide quality education in all educational institutions, and ensure that all learners have access to appropriate mentorship throughout their educational journey.

**Key words:** career orientation,

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**Introduction**

**Background of the Study**

The youth of any nation represent the present and future of the nation. Therefore, whether they are in school, undergoing training, or in employment, the youth have crucial implications for

future economic growth, development, and stability (United Nations [UN], 2018). As such, if youth unemployment is overlooked, it has the potential to have significant and serious social repercussions. It is blamed for unrest and social exclusion in many countries (O'Higgins, 2017). The youth employment challenges are partly blamed on their high population.

Globally, there are more than 3.4 billion people below twenty-five (25) years. This forms almost half of the total global population. Therefore, based on the United Nations classification of Youth as any person aged ranging from 15 and 24 years, there is approximately 1.2 billion youth in the World. This implies that the youth form about 16% of the world's population. Out of the 1.2 billion youths, 621 million of them are neither in education nor in employment, and most of this category of youth women. On the other hand, 75 million youths have the training but do not have jobs (UN, 2018). It is also estimated that 23 percent of the youth are underemployed as they earn less than 1.90 USD per day (ILO, 2020). While these statistics summarized the global outlook of youth employment, the situation in developed nations and developing nations are not the same.

In the United States of America, there are still challenges in youth employment. Youth employment has been influenced by seasons. In July 2021, youth employment in the US was 54.4%. This is an increase from 46.7% in July last year (2020) when youth unemployment in the US went to its unusual low due to COVID-19 epidemic. However, the current employment rate of 54.4% is a decrease from 56.2% in July (2019), before the COVID -19 epidemic. The current proportion of unemployment among the youth in the US is 10 percent. This is a decrease from 18.5% in July 2020, but an increase from 9.1% in July 2019 (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2021). In the United Kingdom (UK), youth employment is faced with challenges, similar to other part of the world COVID-19 epidemic adversely influenced the employment levels of the youth in the UK. However, this has slowly ben overturned but the youth empowerment is still low compared to the other section of the population. Comparing the periods between April –June 2021 and January to March 2020, youth employment in the UK decreased by 273,000, which translate to 7% decrease. The employment levels for men decreased by 10% while that of women decreased by 5%. The proportion of unemployed persons increased from 12.3% in 2020 to 13.1 in 2021 (Powell & Francis Devine, 2021).

The situation is not better in Africa. In South Africa, youth employment is a challenge that the nation is grappling with. The situation worsened during the COVID-19 epidemic. During the

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first quarter of 2021, youth unemployment (aged between 15 to 34 years) was 46.3%. Among university graduates, unemployment is at 9.3% (City Press, 2021; Stats SA, 2021).

In Tanzania, the youths, who also form the highest proportion of the country's population, are also faced with significant challenges when pursuing their destiny through meaningful employment. A survey by the government's integrated labor force in Tanzania revealed that the country's unemployment among the youths aged 15 to 24 stood at 13.7 percent, while among those aged between 25 and 35 stood at 9.8 percent (Kimaro, 2020). Every year, between 800,000 and 1,000,000 Tanzanian youngsters enter the labor market, yet work opportunities are limited (Mgaiwa, 2021).

In Kenya, the largest proportion of the population is youth aged between 15 and 35 years. The youth account for more than 76 percent of the total population (KNBS, 2019). Out of the 76%, 7.7 million were male and 8.1 million were female. In Kenya, the unemployment level among youth with ages ranging from 15 and 35 years is estimated at 47.7% (Nduvi&Mukwaro, 2018). The reviewed literature clearly indicates that youth unemployment has been a challenge for governments around the world. With the high population growth experienced coupled with the low capacity to create jobs for the youths, the rate of poverty increases year after year. Different governments have various initiatives to curb youth unemployment. However, this study focused on the Kenyan government's initiative of improving youth employment through the public service internship policy.

### **Public Service Internship Policy**

Kenya's public service is among the major employers. It; therefore, has a substantial role to play in ensuring that youths, particularly those with relevant degrees, are provided with chances to get actual job experience (Public Service Commission, 2019). It is on this basis that the Public Service Internship Policy (PSIP) was established to create an avenue for the youth to get workplace experience and enable them to have a competitive advantage in the job market (PSC, 2016). Therefore, the public service internship program is a government initiative to engage qualified youth in its various public service sectors to help them gain experience and practical skills

The establishment of the PSIP was a result of inadequate practical skills and experience which have been a key challenge for youth employment. The public service internship program has five objectives; to create a link between work and training, hence, enhancing the employability of the

youth; to offer them opportunities to build hands-on skills; to enable the youth to attain minimum legal requirements to be registered with professional bodies; to develop a positive work attitude and a culture of quality learning, and to establish a pool of experienced and skilled labor for the public service. The PSIP was meant to absorb only graduates for three and twelve months as prescribed by the professional body (Nduvi&Mukwaro, 2018).

The interns are not entitled to remuneration during the period but to a stipend as determined by the public service commission from time to time. The first cohort was enrolled in October 2016 in various government departments and ministries (Nduvi&Mukwaro, 2018). This exercise has continued over the years with more youths being engaged. However, the problem of unemployment among the youth is still rampant; hence, the need to assess the impact Public Service Internship Policy has had on Youth Employability

### **Youth Employability**

The term "employability" refers to a person's capability to secure an employment opportunity, keep it, and find a new one if necessary (Hillage& Pollard, 2013). This means that employability pertains to a person's capability to look for and sustain a decent job. Therefore, youth employability denotes the capability of the youth to secure the first employment opportunity, maintain the job, and switch to another employment if need be. Employability, according to Dacre, Pool, and Sewell (2007), involves having a range of abilities that increase an individual's likelihood of selecting and securing jobs in that they can succeed and feel content.

There are, therefore, employability skills that help individuals to enhance employability. According to Brewer (2013), while technical and vocational skills are essential, employers are seeking applicants with more experience. Employers prefer employees who can adapt and learn; read, write and be competent in computing; effectively communicate and listen; think creatively, and independently solve problems; interact with colleagues; work in teams; lead effectively, handle basic technology, and follow supervision.

The high rate of unemployment among the youth is partly attributed to their lack of employability skills. It is imperative to bear in mind that youth unemployment is a global issue. According to Plan International (2020), there are 621 million youths who are aged between 15 and 24 without education, training, or employment, of which 75 million are trained but have not secured a job. Unfortunately, it is expected that during the next decade, there will be one billion

youth who will enter the labor market. About 90% of the youth live in developing countries where the unemployment rate is high (Plan International, 2020).

Being a developing nation, the issue of youth unemployment in Kenya has been a serious issue. It is estimated that youth unemployment in Kenya is twice as higher as the country's rate of unemployment which is 12.7%. Further, it is estimated that by 2030, there will be about 24 million unemployed youth (Gachugu, 2019). The issues of employability of the youth in Kenya are attributed to the mismatch between labor market requirements and education or training; the large number of youths entering the labour market annually without experience; and the lack of network required in the labour market. An insight from Gachugu (2019) study showed that lack of opportunities (28%) and lack of skills and experience (45%) were the main barriers to youth employment. Most of the university/college students noted that lack of opportunity (39%) is the biggest barrier. Therefore, the youth need guidance to help them enhance their employability.

According to International Youth Foundation (2014) effective career orientation/ guidance are important in addressing the issue of youth unemployment as it helps to make the youth confident; tailor and have insightful career choices. Therefore, it is prudent for any government to guide and mentor its youths to enable them to access employment and maintain their job not only by ensuring they have the appropriate education and training but guidance and facilitation. Fortunately, the Kenyan government through the public service commission has established an internship programme to enable the youths to work on their employability through facilitating practice work experience (Public Service Commission, 2019).

### **Statement of the problem**

The establishment of the PSIP was a good idea by the government. While the programme has been implemented for about five years, the problem of unemployment among the youth is still rampant. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of the program has not been empirically assessed. Kenya's high young unemployment rate has been a key source of concern for the government and other stakeholders. The lack of practical work-based experience among graduates is blamed for the high percentage of young unemployment. Thousands of young people get certifications, diplomas, and degrees from post-secondary institutions and universities in a variety of fields. However, they have little preparation for an after-school job, which has a negative impact on their employability.

In Marsabit county majority of the youth have attended the formal education and they have moved to other parts of the country to look for jobs which are not forthcoming. With the presence of all the government services in all counties, devolution brought employment to the door step that when government policy on employment is given it will take care of everyone not only those who goes to the capital city. The government, through the PSC, establishes an intervention to the challenges by enforcing a Public Service Internship Policy. However, there is no empirical study that assesses the effects of the Public Service Internship Program on youth employability in Kenya, more than five years after introduction of the internship program. There is need to assess the effect of the Public Service Internship Policy on youth employability in Kenya particularly in Marsabit county.

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### **Research Objective**

To determine the effects of career orientation on youth employability in Marsabit County.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study focused on how Public Service Internship Policy influence youth employability. This study only targeted youths in Marsabit County. This was achieved by assessing how career orientation; professional accreditation; skills preparedness; mentorship; and career progression will influence youth employability. The study was done between April and august of the year 2023.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Theoretical literature review**

#### **Super's Career Development Theory**

The proponent of this theory was Donald E Super back in 1957. It is one of the most widely known life span views of career development theory. Super developed the theory by enhancing other career developmental theories such as the matching model, the trait-and-factor theory, and vocational theory and guidance practice. The Super's career development theory holds that occupational choice must be perceived as an unfolding process and not a point-in-time decision. As a result, Super supplemented the trains and aspects approach by creating a complete career theory that perceives professional growth as a relatively permanent change in

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behaviour unfolding in a sequence of developmental phases, and career paths as the accumulated result of a sequence of judgments instead of a single decision (Super, 1957).

The focus of the Super's theory is on aligning personal skills, abilities, and benefits with the effort if impacted by environmental, economic, social, and physical factors. When these factors change, there may affect a person's career choice and growth. The Super's theory describes five developmental stages during which people make job decisions. The stages are growth age, exploration age, establishment age, maintenance age, and decline age. During these stages, a person develops skills and reaches a degree of maturity that may be used in his or her chosen profession (Bama & Nnam, 2019).

Super's Career Development Theory is relevant in this case as it focuses on the career development of the youth to enhance their employability skills. The theories shed light on the stages of career development which are crucial in deciding the skills that need to be emphasized during the internship programs.

## **Empirical Literature**

### **Career orientation and Youth Employability**

There is limited scholarly work on career orientation and employability. Pitan and Tiku (2017) studied the structural effect of career guidance on the employability of Nigerians university students. The study was done among 600 final-year students from four southwest region institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. The data from the sample participants were collected using questionnaires. The results showed that career advice programs have a beneficial impact on graduates' employment prospects. Regarding the components of career counselling services, it was discovered that self-awareness was critical while decision-making abilities came close, and lastly, transition knowledge acquisition abilities, had the greatest influence on graduates' employment prospects.

Suryadi, Sawitri, and Hanifa (2018) studied "Career orientation of senior secondary school students". The study focused on students from senior high school as well as technical graduates from Indonesia. The study used a descriptive design and targeted a sample of 278 participants. The career orientation assessment and the advisor's responsibility in career guidance assessment were adopted in the collection of data. Field data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential analysis methods.

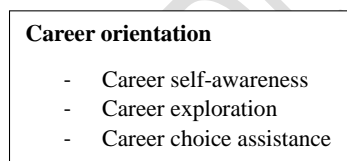
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The findings revealed that the majority of the students were aspiring to advance their studies at university and a few of them engaged in a business or find a job. It was further recognized that school counsellors are significant players in offering career management for senior secondary learners. Besides, the findings revealed that career orientation contributes to a bright career in the future. While this study didn't directly assess how career orientation influenced youth employability, it sheds light on the importance of career orientation for young people as it determines their success in the future job market. The study differed from the current study in that it was done in Indonesia and didn't focus on the influence of career orientation on youth employability. The current study will be conducted in Kenya and focus on the way career orientation influence youth employability.

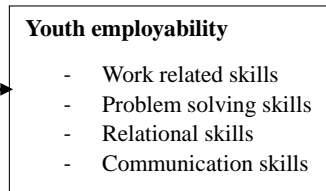
Bama and Nnam (2019) studied carrier guidance and youth employability with a focus on how career fairs impact youth employment. The researcher used a cross-sectional study design targeting 137 participants from two secondary schools in Douala, Cameroon. Simple random sampling, convenience, and purposive sampling techniques in the study's implementation. Questionnaires were used to collect data. The results showed a significant link between career counselling (career choice support, career decision-making, and networking events) and young people's employment. This study was conducted among secondary schools in Cameroon while the current study was conducted in Kenya among graduates.

### Conceptual Framework

#### Independent variable



#### Dependent Variable



**Figure 1: conceptual framework**

### Research design

A research design is a plan, strategy, and organization for researching to find responses to the study topic or research questions. The plan is a complete programme or scheme of the research.

This research will employ an explanatory research design. This study sought to expound on the how and why to explain the association and possible connections between predicted and predictor variables (Williamson, 2002). This study sought to analyze the effect of the Public Service Internship policy (PSIP) on youth employability in Marsabit County, Kenya. This design made it possible for the investigator to investigate the relationships between Public Service Internship Policy (PSIP) and youth employability in Marsabit County, Kenya. Explanatory also permitted the investigator to choose the variable to evaluate and the effective method for the evaluation.

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### **Target population**

The target population was the 1,439 interns who benefited from the government sponsored internship programs and were posted in various state departments, agencies, and ministries in 2021

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### **Sampling Procedures and Techniques**

To obtain a sample that serves to present the intended population; the investigator used stratified sampling and random sampling procedures. Stratified sampling was applied in categorizing the government ministry, agency, or departments where the targeted participants were posted for internship. Simple random sampling, on the other hand, was applied to randomly select participants in each stratum. This technique was preferred because it provided all subjects in the targeted population equal opportunity to be included in the representative sample since it is a probability sampling (Hamed, 2016).

### **Research Instruments**

Questionnaires were used in this study for the collection of primary data from the sampled participants. The questionnaire was semi-structured with both open- and closed-ended queries, which helped in the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data from the participants. The study preferred questionnaire due to its advantages over other instruments. For instance, by using questionnaires, a researcher can collection of data from a bigger sample and minimize chances of bias (Cooper and Schindler, 2006).

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## Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures

### Response Rate

Ensuring that a sample accurately reflects the target population hinges on the response rate. A robust response rate enhances representativeness, whereas a lower one elevates the risk of reduced statistical power and inaccurate estimations of effect size. In this study, the researcher distributed 313 questionnaires to all chosen participants, 262 questionnaires were completed and returned, constituting a 83.7% participation rate, as depicted in Table 3. This level of participation aligns with the criteria suggested by Kothari (2012) for valid population generalization.

### Reliability Test

To evaluate the reliability of the research instrument, the questionnaire employed in the pilot i study were entered into SPSS, and Cronbach's alpha correlation was calculated. This measure indicates the extent to which the items within the questionnaires for each variable are interrelated. A higher alpha coefficient signifies greater reliability, while a lower value suggests the opposite (Taber, 2018). Consequently, items with Cronbach's alpha coefficients below 0.7 were eliminated from the questionnaire to ensure accurate measurement of their intended constructs. Items scoring 0.7 and above were retained.

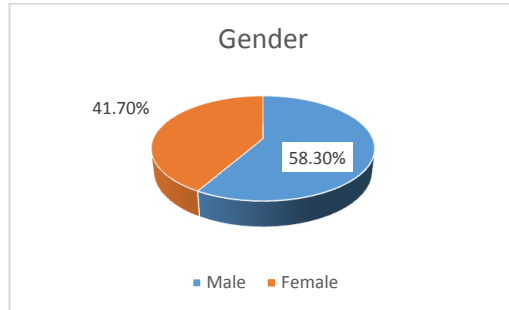
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### Demographic Characteristics

Participant demographics, encompassing details such as gender, age, educational background, and employment status.

### Respondent's Gender

Gender serves as a crucial factor within social, economic, and policy research. In the examination of the impact of the Public Service Internship Program (PSIP) on youth employability in Marsabit County, Kenya, gender data is employed to shed light on the participation of different genders in the PSIP and its correlation with youth employability. The researcher's objective was to analyze the gender distribution among all respondents, and the results are visually presented in Figure 2.

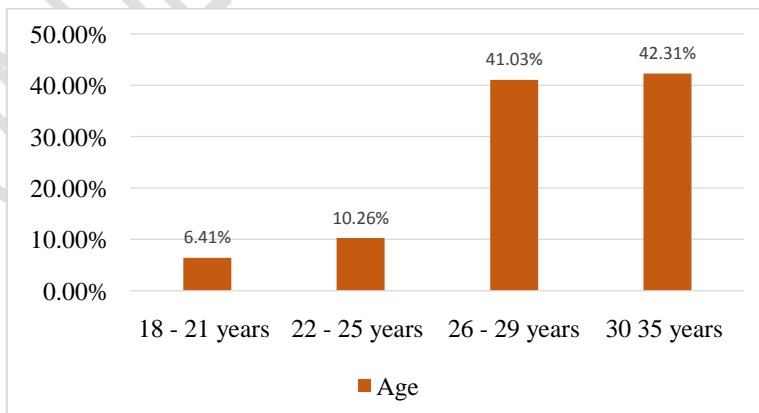


**Figure 2: Respondent's Gender**

The data presented in Figure 2 indicates that both men and women participated in the study. Nevertheless, the study's gender distribution showed a clear majority of male participants, constituting 58.3%, while females accounted for 41.7%. This suggests that there is an underrepresentation of females in the Public Service Internship Program (PSIP) compared to males. Although it meets the two-thirds gender rule, it falls short of the actual representation of graduates by gender, which is approximately 40% (Statistica, 2022). Consequently, there is a pressing need to enhance opportunities for female participation in the Public Service Internship Program (PSIP).

**Respondent's Age Bracket**

Age serves as a crucial factor in social, economic, and policy research. Younger individuals typically have a greater likelihood of pursuing extended educational paths, which tends to decrease as they grow older. The researcher established specific age groups for the study participants, and the results are visually represented in the bar chart depicted in the figure.

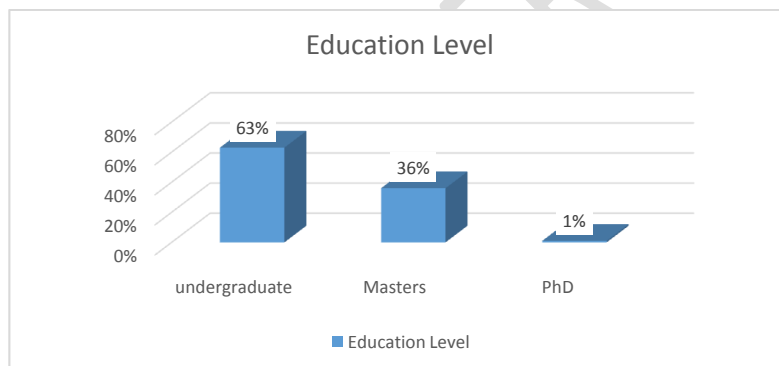


### Figure 3: Respondents Age

The data depicted in the figure reveals that a significant portion of the participants fell within the age range of 26 to 35 years. Specifically, 42.31% were in the 30 to 35-year-old bracket, while 41.03% were aged between 26 and 29 years. In contrast, 10.26% of the respondents were aged between 22 and 25 years, and 6.41% fell within the 18 to 21-year age group. This indicates that all the survey participants belonged to the youth demographic, implying a greater likelihood of pursuing higher education, thereby enhancing their prospects for future employment.

### Respondent's Education Level

In regards to the Public Service Internship Program (PSIP), one's personal educational background plays a significant role in determining the employability of young individuals. Those who possess higher educational qualifications tend to enjoy more extensive job prospects compared to those with limited education. The researcher also conducted an evaluation of the participants' educational levels, and the results are visually represented in Figure.

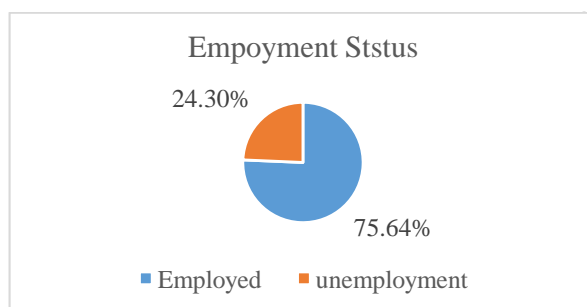


### Figure 4: Education Level of Participants

Figure 4 illustrates that a significant portion of the participants, specifically 62.82%, completed their undergraduate education, while 35.90% reached the level of a master's degree as their highest educational attainment. A mere 1.28% of the participants had earned a Ph.D. degree. It is noteworthy that most participants, more than 25%, fell into the category of those with undergraduate qualifications, forming the majority of the sample.

### Respondent's Employment Status

The significance of employment status was of utmost importance in this research, as it served as a valuable indicator of individuals' potential for gainful employment. A substantial rate of employment signified a potential positive impact of the Public Service Internship Program (PSIP) on youth employability, whereas a lower employment rate hinted at a limited influence of the PSIP on youth employability. The researcher also conducted an evaluation of the participants' employment statuses, and the findings are presented in Figure.



**Figure 5: Employment Status of Participants**

The data displayed in Figure 5 demonstrates that a majority of the participants (75.64%) secured stable employment following their internship programs. However, 24.36% of the participants who underwent internships remained unemployed. This suggests that the Public Service Internship Program (PSIP) might influence youth employability, although further confirmation is needed through inferential statistics. This discovery aligns with Eurostat's (2022) findings, indicating graduate employment rates between 57.9% and 93.1% in many countries. The employability rate among young adults aged 20 to 29, corresponding to recent university graduates, was over 67.6%, with a sustainable employability rate of 92.1%, falling within the global range as per KNBS (2021).

### Descriptive Analysis

#### Career Orientation through Internship

The first objective of the research was to establish the effects of career orientation on youth employability in Marsbit County. Therefore, descriptive statistics for the participant's responses to statements are meant to assess the effects of career orientation on youth employability. This study hypothesized that career orientation influences an individual ability to cope with the

dynamics at the workplace, comprehend available career opportunities in their profession, make informed choices, improve competitiveness, make the right choices and enhance career awareness (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Career Orientation**

Statements	N	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD	Mean	SD
<b>Career orientation helped me to cope with the dynamics in the workplace</b>	313	62.8	33.3	3.8	0	0	4.58	0.56
<b>Career orientation during the PSIP helped me to understand the career opportunities available in my profession</b>	313	65.4	34.6	0	0	0	4.65	0.47
<b>Career orientation during the PSIP helped me to make informed career choices</b>	313	61.5	33.3	5.1	0	0	4.56	0.59
<b>Career orientation during the PSIP helped me enhance my competitiveness in my profession</b>	313	71.8	28.2	0	0	0	4.71	0.45
<b>Career orientation during the PSIP assisted me in making the right career choice</b>	313	64.1	35.9	0	0	0	4.64	0.48
<b>Career orientation during the PSIP helped me enhance my career awareness</b>	313	57.7	42.3	0	0	0	4.57	0.49
Valid N (LISTWISE)	313							
Aggregate							<b>4.61</b>	<b>0.50</b>

Following participation in career orientation, participants are anticipated to acquire the skills necessary to navigate workplace dynamics, thereby enhancing their employability (Bravo et al.,

2017). The data presented in the table indicates a combined mean score of 4.61, signifying strong agreement among most participants regarding the effectiveness of the program. The low aggregate standard deviation of 0.50 suggests minimal variation in responses. Specifically, 62.8% strongly agreed, and 33.3% agreed that career orientation aided them in managing workplace challenges. This outcome aligns with the findings of Baruch, Bhaskar, and Mishra (2019), who observed that career orientation enhances graduates' ability to cope with workplace dynamics, thereby improving their employability. Notably, 3.8% of participants remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, indicating a positive impact of career orientation during the Public Service Internship Program (PSIP) on participants' ability to handle workplace dynamics.

Furthermore, the study emphasized the significance of individuals' ability to comprehend available opportunities and make informed decisions in the employment search process (Banu, 2021; Jackson & Wilton, 2016). Those with strong decision-making abilities tend to have higher employability prospects. This research investigated participants' agreement levels regarding the influence of career orientation on their employability. The majority of respondents agreed that career orientation facilitated their understanding of career prospects within their profession, with 65.4% strongly agreeing and 34.6% expressing agreement.

This supports the conclusions reached by Cortés-Sánchez and Grueso (2017), who observed that an inclination towards career development assisted individuals in selecting employment opportunities. Furthermore, a significant proportion of the participants expressed agreement or strong agreement that their exposure to career orientation during the PSIP (Professional Skills Improvement Program) contributed to making informed career decisions, with 61.5% strongly agreeing and 33.3% agreeing. This finding aligns with the research of Afanasiev et al. (2018), which indicated that career orientation increased graduates' capacity to make well-informed choices.

Additionally, career orientation is anticipated to enhance participants' competitiveness (Baruch, Bhaskar, & Mishra, 2019), their ability to make appropriate decisions (Kaplan, 2020), and their overall awareness of career opportunities (Uleanya, Naidoo, Rugbeer&Rugbeer, 2019).

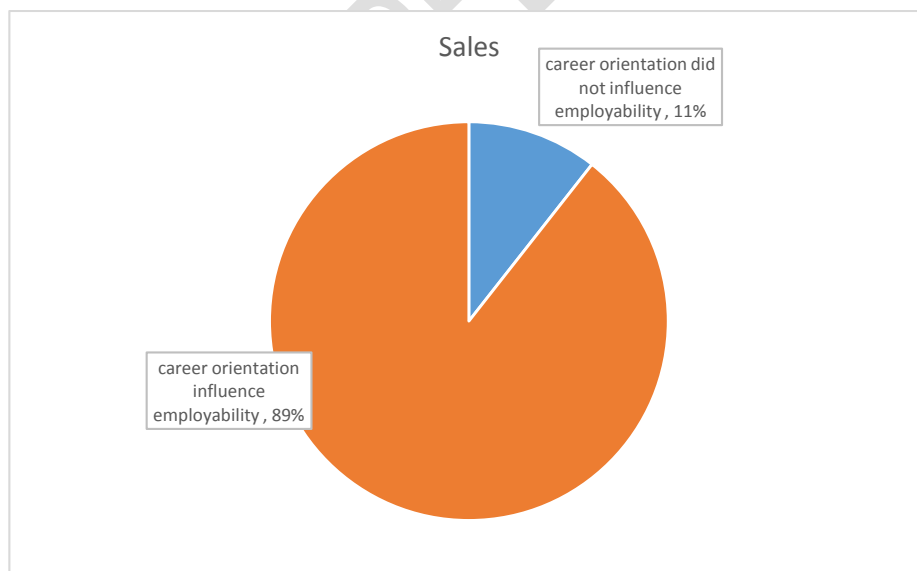
This study aimed to evaluate participants' agreement regarding the impact of career orientation on their competitiveness, ability to make informed decisions, and overall awareness of their career path. The research revealed that a significant majority of respondents either strongly

agreed or agreed with the notion that career orientation during the PSIP (Professional Skills Improvement Program) had a positive influence on their professional competitiveness. Specifically, 71.8% strongly agreed, and an additional 28.2% agreed, aligning with findings from a study conducted by Bönnte, Lombardo, and Urbig in 2017.

Similarly, a substantial portion of participants expressed agreement that career orientation during the PSIP assisted them in making well-informed career choices, with 64.1% strongly agreeing and 35.9% agreeing. These results were consistent with the research conducted by Jaskiewicz, Luchak, Oh, & Chlosta in 2016, which also found that career orientation improved decision-making abilities.

Further, all participants indicated that career orientation during the PSIP had a positive impact on enhancing their career awareness. Specifically, 57.7% strongly agreed, and 42.3% agreed with this statement. These findings were in line with those of Coetzee in 2022, who observed that career orientation had a similar effect on increasing career awareness among graduates.

Individual perception of the importance of career orientation during the Public Service Internship Program (PSIP) is critical in drawing the relevance of the relationship between the program and youth employability. The investigator also sought to determine the participant's opinions on career orientation influences on their employability. The results are presented in Figure 6



**Figure 6: Respondents' opinion on whether career orientation influences their employability**

As in Figure 6, the results indicated that almost all of the participants acknowledged that their employability is affected by their career orientation, with 89% expressing this view. The remaining 11% indicated that career orientation has no impact on their employability. Upon further inquiry into their responses, participants affirmed their belief in the positive influence of career orientation on youth employability. The majority of respondents mentioned that career orientation had enabled them to acquire new skills, foster teamwork, develop strong work ethics, and explore various career options within their chosen profession. Consequently, they felt better prepared to meet the specific job requirements. This finding aligns with the research of Baruch, Bhaskar, and Mishra (2019), who similarly discovered that career orientation significantly affects the employability of graduates.

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**Inferential statistics**

**Correlation analysis**

Correlation analysis was utilized to assess the connection between the predictor variables and the variables under investigation. The direction of the correlation is indicated by the sign of the correlation coefficients. Conversely, the magnitude of the correlation is determined by the numerical values of these coefficients. Coefficients ranging from 0.10 to 0.29 are categorized as weak, those between 0.30 and 0.49 are deemed moderate, and values between 0.50 and 1 indicate a strong correlation. Since this is a two-tailed test, statistical significance is established when the Pearson correlation is less than 0.05, and it is denoted with asterisks in the accompanying table.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis Matrix**

		Youth employability	Career orientation	Accreditation	Skills	Mentorship
Youth employability	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	313				

Career orientation	Pearson Correlation	.338**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation coefficient was employed in this study to investigate the relationship between career orientation and youth employability. This coefficient value serves as an indicator of how changes in career orientation impact changes in youth employability. The research revealed a statistically significant and moderately positive association between career orientation and youth employability, with a correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.338 at a significance level of  $\alpha=0.05$ . This suggests that a one-unit increase in career orientation results in a 0.338 unit increase in youth employability. These findings align with a prior study conducted by Pitan and Tiku (2017), which explored the influence of career guidance on the employability of college graduates in Nigeria, indicating a positive relationship between career guidance activities and employability.

### Regression analysis

#### Model Summary

The R and R-squared values are displayed in Table 3. The R-value demonstrates a straightforward correlation, whereas R squares demonstrate the contribution of the predictor variable's variance that is responsible for changes in the predicted variable.

**Table 3: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.934 <sup>a</sup>	.873	.866	.51875

a. Predictors: (Constant), Career Orientation

The R-value, found in the table as 0.934, illustrates a robust connection between the anticipated factors and predicted variables. Conversely, an R-squared value of 0.873 suggests Career Orientation account for 87.3% of youth employability in Marsabit County. This indicate that 12.7% of youth employability is as a result of other parameters not discussed in this study.

### Analysis of Variance

The F-ratio is a valuable tool for assessing the adequacy of the general regression model in explaining observations during an analysis of variance. The ANOVA results are presented in the Table 4.

**Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	616.072	4	154.018	29.017	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	387.467	309	5.308		
	Total	1003.538	313			

*Dependent Variable: Youth employability*

*Predictors: (Constant), Career Orientation*

In Table 4, the factors considered as independent variables, including Mentorship, Professional Accreditation, Skills Preparedness, and Career Orientation, exhibited a statistically significant influence on the dependent variable, which is Youth Employability. This statistical significance was confirmed by the results of the analysis, with an F-statistic of 29.017 and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the predetermined significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05. These findings suggest that the regression model employed in this study effectively explains and predicts variations in Youth Employability, making it a suitable and accurate representation of the data.

### Coefficient of Regression

The coefficient of regression provides the relative contribution of each predictor variable to the predicted variable. The results of the coefficient of regression are shown in Table.

Table 5: Coefficient of determination

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.553	0.774		5.141	.000

Career Orientation	.658	0.087	0.105	1.196	.007
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#### **a. Dependent Variable: youth employability**

The unstandardized coefficient represents how changes in the dependent variable (youth employability) are associated with variations in each of the independent variable (Career Orientation), while keeping all other predictor variables constant. Specifically, the unstandardized coefficient B1 for Career Orientation is 0.658, and its significance level is 0.007, which indicates that Career Orientation is a statistically significant predictor of Youth employability at the 0.05 significance level.

Therefore, the regression equation

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{Youth Employability} = 6.553 + 0.658 \text{ Career Orientation}$$

This suggests that in Kenya, the level of youth employability stands at 61.553 when all predictor variables are held at their lowest values. Additionally, a one-unit increase in career orientation corresponds to a 0.658-unit increase in youth employability. These findings highlight the critical role of mentorship in enhancing career orientation. These results align with the research conducted by Bakwena and Sebudubudu (2017), which underscored the positive impact of internships on youth employability in Botswana. Furthermore, Pinto and Pereira (2019) emphasized the significance of internships in improving youth employability.

#### **Summary of the Results**

This study was conducted to analyze the effect of Public service internship program (PSIP) on youth employability. The specific objective that guided this research encompassed establishing the influence of career orientation on youth employability and determining the effects of mentorship on youth employability in Marsabit County.

The study examined the influence of career orientation on youth employability. The findings indicated a strong correlation between the variables, with Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.338, and a significance value of 0.002, which is less than the predetermined alpha value of 0.05. This suggests that career orientation had a positive and statistically significant influence on youth employability.

## **Conclusion**

The study's conclusions underscore the positive influence of career orientation on youth employability. Career orientation emerges as a crucial initiative that governments and educational institutions can leverage to combat the prevalent issue of youth unemployment, both in Kenya and globally.

## **Recommendations**

The study has determined that career orientation exerts a positive influence on youth employability. Therefore, when effectively implemented, this factor possesses the potential to alleviate the high levels of youth unemployment in Kenya. As a result, the following recommendations are put forth:

The Kenyan Government, in partnership with educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities, as well as parents, should ensure comprehensive career guidance and counseling for all young individuals. This guidance should cover their educational and employment paths, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and readiness to excel in their future employment or entrepreneurial endeavors.

1. The Kenyan government should strive to make professional accreditation more accessible and affordable for individuals pursuing careers that require such accreditation. Simplifying and reducing the cost of the accreditation process would enable a greater number of young people, who are typically unemployed, to attain accreditation, thereby enhancing their prospects of finding employment in their respective fields.
2. It is imperative for the Kenyan government to ensure that the quality of education delivered in schools, colleges, and universities aligns not only with current market demands but also equips every student with the essential skills necessary to excel in their chosen professions.
3. Collaboratively, the Kenyan government, educational institutions, and parents should ensure that all learners have access to meaningful mentorship opportunities throughout their educational journey. This will ensure that they develop into competent professionals capable of making valuable contributions in their respective fields.

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