

**INFLUENCE OF GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR ON CAREER PROGRESSION
AMONG MATURE FEMALE ENTRY STUDENTS IN EGERTON UNIVERSITY
KENYA**

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Abstract: This study explores the socio-cultural factors influencing career progression among mature female entry students at Egerton University, Kenya, with a particular focus on the impact of gender division of labor. Despite increasing participation in the labor market, women continue to face barriers in career advancement due to entrenched gender roles, which prioritize domestic responsibilities over professional ambitions. A case study research design was employed, targeting 127 mature female students, with data collected via questionnaires and interviews with departmental heads. Findings reveal that gender roles within households significantly hinder women's career progression, as women are often responsible for caregiving and domestic tasks, limiting their ability to pursue further education and professional development. The results also highlight the role of organizational support, mentorship, and societal expectations in shaping career trajectories. Regression analysis showed that factors such as gender division of labor, household size, mentorship, and cultural stereotypes strongly predict career progression. Other challenges identified include financial constraints, self-doubt, mental health issues, and language barriers. The study concludes that addressing these socio-cultural barriers is crucial for enhancing career opportunities for mature female students.

Keywords: career progression, gender division of labor, mature female entry students, socio-cultural factors