

Correlates of Career Choice among Senior Secondary School Student in Tarka LGA of Benue State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined correlates of career choice among 210 senior secondary school students in Tarka LGA of Benue State, Nigeria. The respondents were in the age range of 12-22 years. The study consisted of 93 male and 117 female students. Data were collected using career choice scale (CCS), Locus of control scale (LCS) and Conscientiousness scale (CS). Four hypotheses were tested using independent t-test. There was no significant difference between male and female students on career choice. There was no significant difference between students with internal and external locus of control on career choice. There was no significant difference between students from educated and uneducated parents on career choice. It was also found there was no significant difference between students who scored high and low on conscientiousness on career. It was concluded that all the study variables did not related to career choice. Based on these findings, it was recommended that guidance counselors should not consider sex difference, parental education, locus of control and conscientiousness when guiding the younger ones on which career to go for, but instead focus on the interest of the child.

Key Words: Career Choice, Locus of Control, Conscientiousness and parental education

Introduction

Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future plans. This decision will impart them throughout their lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what the student want to do with their life-long work. The choice of career has been a serious problem among the secondary school students in Nigeria. No matter what one's age is, the choice of career or desire is an important question for everybody.

A lot of student in secondary schools believe that their future is a glorious adventures in which they are bound to succeed. Many of them have the idea that they would be able to

work in the public or private establishments as soon as they complete secondary school education. Some have planned to become lawyers, engineers, medical doctors, accountants and so on. Students in secondary schools like many other young adults are always worried about what they will do with their lives, the kind of adult they will become. They are concerned about early entry into the occupational world and finding productive and rewarding places in and out rapidly, fast changing societies where wages employment is unlikely to be available on a scale sufficient to absorb more than a small fraction of the young people when they do arrive at the labour market. How they young people of today meet the problems of tomorrow will depend upon the amount of success they make in planning for that tomorrow. Planning for tomorrow itself is primarily the responsibilities of the parents, teachers and school counselor. Students need general orientation into the world of work through the curriculum. The choice of career is a delicate issue that requires caution and serious considerations. The kind of career the youths pursue can affect their lives in many ways. For instance, it can determine where the individual lives and the type of friends kept. It can reflect how much education one will have and determine the amount of money one will earn. People desires form a career are different, many people desire high income; others want adventures while some other want to serve people to make the world a better place. Every student carries the unique history of their past and this determines how they view the world.

That history created, in part by the student's environment, personality and opportunity will determine how students make career choice. It then follows that how the students perceives their environment, personality and opportunity will also determine the career choices students make. The first factor in career choice, the environment, may influence the career students choose. For instance, educational background of parents may influence student's views on whether or not to continue their education. The level of parental formal education influences the vocational interests of children. Parental education level determines the amenities and the cultural level of the home. Parents armed with adequate education often get gainful employment. Thus, with their level of income and exposure, they are better disposed to procure educational materials for their children and discuss job opportunities with them. Without doubt, a child surrounded with good magazines, books, as well as intelligent discussions could be expected to develop different and perhaps better, vocational interests than a child not exposed to those things (Onyejiaku, 2007). According to Denga (1990), children from low income homes fail to develop interest in and acquire vocation training because of the educational inadequacies of their parents.

Apart from environmental factors, personality of a student may also determine he/her career choice. For instance, according to Judge (2009) conscientiousness personality trait highly influences the career success in any organization. Conscientiousness trait holder people tend to be very careful about their future planning (Burch and Anderson, 2008); they are cautious about their surroundings, compact and fully scheduled (Cattell & Mead, 2008). They tend to be managed, prefer to be predictable and try to be risk free. They have propensity to work in such a way that have no flaw, where everything get done rightly and chaos can give them mental stress (Ostendorf, 2002). They try to be neat, clean and would like everything to be placed on right place (Sucier and Goldberg, 1998). People ranking low on this trait will be careless about their work. They are less likely to work in a mannered way which could be leading to stressful chaos. These people are not inclined to work in a concise way that can assure their work would be free of faults (Goldberg, 1992). This means that students who are highly conscientious are more likely to bog or jobs that meet their characteristics so as to achieve job satisfaction.

Another factor associated with career choice is locus of control. Locus of control is an individual's belief regarding the causes of his or her experiences and the factors to which that person attributes success or failure (Njus and Brockway, 1999). This can either be internal or external (Rotter, 1996). If a person has an internal locus of control, that person attributes success to his or her own effort and abilities. A person who expects to succeed will be more motivated and more likely to make a sound career decision. This person will seek out information and is more likely to use the information to make informed and a positive career decision. A person with an external locus of control on the other hand, will be less likely to make the effort to gather necessary information to will guide him/her in making career decision since he or she attributes his or her success to luck or fate.

According to Thelma (1998) internally focused students were more likely to believe that success in career was related to their ability and failure related to a lack of effort. He explains that on the other end of the continuum were the externals that were more likely to reject responsibility for failed career decision and thus remain indecisive.

Research has indicated that an internal locus of control is strongly correlated not only with completion of tasks (Parker, 2009), but also with career success. Additionally, report by (Coleman and Deleire, 2000) indicated that the locus of control does indeed strongly influence career choice and decision to graduate from high school.

Furthermore, gender of secondary school students seems to determine their choice of career. Because of our deeply rooted stereotypes about men and women, gender continues to have a significant impact on the career paths of our sons and daughters. Parental beliefs about scholastic ability and attitudes about performance are some of the most powerful influences. Many still believe that boys are better at math, mechanics, and logical thinking and expect boys to be engineers, doctors, and architects. Girls are expected to be better at verbal skills, intuition and nurturing, so they are expected to be nurses, social workers, or teachers. While all career choices should be equally respected and valued, the fact is, traditional career choices for girls tend to cluster them in lower-paying jobs.

According to Berz (2002) and Gates (2001) many females have been socialized to adopt nurturing roles rather than career or achieving roles that they traditionally have not planned seriously for careers, have not explored career options extensively, and have restricted their career choices to careers that are gender stereotyped. The duo maintained that the motivation for work is the same for both sexes. However, female and males make different choices because of their socialization experiences and the ways that social forces structure the opportunities available to them.

As growing numbers of young women pursue careers, they tend to be faced with questions involving career and family: should they delay marriage and childbearing and establish their career first? Or should they combine their marriage and childbearing in their twenties? Some females in the last decade have embraced the domestic patterns of an earlier historical period. They have married, bore children and committed themselves to full-time mothers. These "traditional" females have worked outside the home only intermittently and have subordinated their work role to the family role.

Sex differences in humans have been studied in a variety of fields. In humans, biological sex is determined by some factors present at birth which include: the presence of absence of a Y chromosome, the type of gonads, the sex hormones, the internal reproductive anatomy (such as the uterus in females, and the external genitalia (Knox and Schacht, 2011).

Lippa (2005) found that there were large differences in women's and men's preferences for realistic occupations (for example, mechanic or carpenters) and moderate differences in their preferences for social and artistic occupations. His results also found that women tend to be more people-oriented and men more things oriented. Olamided and Olawaiye (2013) investigated career choice among 100 students; they were randomly selected from five secondary schools in Ogun State. The sample consists of 37 males and 63 females. The percentage on male and female was carried out. 52% of male and 46% of female agreed that opportunity do affect career while 42% disagreed for both male and female, 51% of male and 51% of female agreed that personality do affect career choice while 42% and 45% of both male and female disagreed.

Haley (2006) replicated a study conducted at the Humboldt State University campus, in 1978, which researched how women's attitudes towards female sex-role stereotypes in our society are associated with their choice of major. Haley's study was done on the same university campus, 27 years later. The main interest of the investigator was to find out if the previous findings still hold today. Haley's study expanded on the original research by examining whether men's attitudes towards female sex role stereotypes in our society significantly differ from women's and in addition, whether men's attitude towards women affects their career choice. A sample of 120 undergraduates were administered the Attitude towards Women Scale (AWS). The original study (Copland, 1978) found that attitudes towards women's social sex-roles were not related to career choice. It was hypothesized in this study that students' attitude towards women as measured by the AWS would be different among students in traditional and non-traditional majors. The results of this study did not support this hypothesis. It was further hypothesized that differences in attitudes towards women would be found between men and women. The results of this study did support this hypothesis. In addition, a significant interaction was found between sex and major choice such that when considered together, they had a significant effect on students' attitude towards women.

According to Raffaele-Mendex and Crawford, (2002), boys limited their aspirations to more male dominated careers with higher prestige, while girls expressed interest in both male and female dominated options. This study also found that boys and girls attitudes towards women had very little to do with the types of careers to which the students aspired. Instead, boys who saw themselves as having more expressive traits such as kindness and understanding were less likely to rule out occupations simply because they were non-traditional for their gender. When comparing career preference of men and women; Gati, Osipow and Givon, (2005) found that men and women demonstrate strong differences in the preference of desirable characteristics of their occupations. Two thousand young adults in Israel participated in a study that showed that more men than women preferred negotiation, management, supervision and working in the fields of business and technology. In contrast more women than men preferred providing psychological help and community service, utilizing artistic ability and working in the fields of culture and service (Gati et al, 2005).

Eccles (2007) suggests that the differences found in men and women's vocational choices are a product of men and women on average, having different goals for their lives. Eccles proposes that occupational choices could be linked to expectations for success and subjective task value. These constructs in turn are linked to gender role socialization and self-schemas. For example, women are less likely than men to seek out careers with heavy mathematics components because women are less confident in their mathematics ability than men and because women are less likely than men to view mathematics and related fields as useful.

While women are more likely than men to place a high value on people-related endeavors such as combining a career and a family, men in comparison, emphasize more status-oriented values (Lips, 2002).

According to Chevalier (2004) not only goals, but also values may play a role in the highest gender imbalances being found in Engineering, Education, Arts and Mathematics. Chevalier maintained that women have characteristics traits that show lower career expectations and long-term values that are less driven by career success. While men are more likely to recognize career development and financial rewards as important long-term values women distinguish personal development, job satisfaction, and doing a socially useful job as important long-term values. Even when accounting for motivation and expectations, women seem to be more likely to work in the public sector than men (Chevalier, 2004).

Gender differences in competitiveness have been hypothesized as potential explanation for gender differences in education and labour market outcomes. Buser, Niederle & Osterbeek (2013) examined the predictive power of a standard laboratory experimental measure of competitiveness for the later important choice of academic track of secondary school students in the Netherlands. Although boys and girls display similar levels of academic ability, boys choose substantially more prestigious academic tracks, where more prestigious tracks are more math and science intensive. Their experimental measure shows that boys are also substantially more competitive than girls. They that competitiveness is strongly positively correlated with choosing more prestigious academic tracks even conditional on academic ability. Most importantly, they find that the gender difference in competitiveness accounts for a substantial portion (about 20 percent) of the gender difference in track choice.

Durosaro and Adebanye (2012) investigated gender as a factor in the career choice readiness at senior secondary school students in Ilorin, Kwara State. The main findings revealed that male and female secondary school students differ greatly in their career choice readiness. Grayson and Newton (2007) examined whether a career influences survey assessing the value medical students place on providing comprehensive patient care exhibited measurement invariance across males and females. Findings supported measurement invariance and indicated that women valued opportunities to provide comprehensive care when choosing a career specialty more than men.

Heiligers (2012) held that gender differences in motivations for preferred careers are consistent with earlier research. Osarenren and Ogunleye (2009) investigated gender differences in job ability perception and task performance among professionals in male dominated professions. Four professions from the male dominated professions were randomly selected from Lagos and Rivers states. A total of 800 professionals from the four male dominated professions namely: Engineering, statistics, Medicine and Estate management were selected using cluster random sampling technique. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in job ability perception among professionals (both male and female) in male dominated professions, while there was a significant gender difference in tasks given to the Engineers and Estate managers but no significant gender difference in the task given to the statisticians and medical Doctors.

Conscientiousness is the personality trait that is defined as being thorough, careful, or vigilant; it implies a desire to do a task well (Thompson, 2008). Conscientious people are efficient and organized as opposed to easy-going and careless. They exhibit a tendency to show self-discipline, act dutifully and aim for achievement; they display planned rather than spontaneous behaviour; and they are generally organized and dependable. It is manifested in

characteristics behaviours such as being neat, and systematic; also including such elements as carefulness, thoroughness and deliberation (Thompson, 2008)

Conscientiousness is one of the five traits of the Five Factor Model of Personality, and is an aspect of what has traditionally been referred to as having character. Conscientious individuals are generally hard-working and reliable when taken to an extreme, they may also be “workaholics, perfectionists, and compulsive in their behaviour. People who score low on conscientiousness tend to be more laid back, less goal-oriented, and less driven by success, they also are more likely to engage in antisocial and criminal behaviour (Ozer and Benet-Martinez, 2006) DeYoung, Quilty and Peterson, (2007) observed that individuals who are low on conscientiousness are unable to motivate themselves to perform a task that they would like to accomplish. Conscientiousness has been broken down, into two aspects: orderliness and industrious, the former which is associated with the desire to keep things organized and tidy and the latter which is associated more closely with productivity and work ethic (DeYoung, Quilty and Peterson, 2007).

Conscientiousness has consistently surfaced as a correlate of career decidedness (Jin, Watkins & Yuen, 2009; Kelly & Pulver, 2003; Lounsbury, Hutchens, & Loveland, 2005; Lounsbury, Page, Bruch & Haase, 2008). Except for one study about academic withdraw that did not report a significant correlation (Lounsbury, Saudargas & Gibson, 2004); the standard discovery has been an inverse relation with career indecision and positive association with being decided about a career. Meyer and Weiner (2003) provided more evidence of this connection when analysis revealed those who scored higher on the Q3 self-control (conscientious, goal-oriented) dimension of the 16 PF significantly differed with lower mean indecision scores intriguingly, Lounsbury, Hutchens & Loveland further reported that students across three grade levels (7th, 10th and 12th grade) who were more orderly, rule-following, dutiful, reliable, and structured were more likely to have decided upon a career. Theoretically, someone who is conscientious would approach task in the career selection process with diligence and discipline that should pave the way for reaching a career decision. Shafer (2000) provided additional evidence and further clarified that successful progress on career tasks may mediate the effect conscientiousness has upon decision making.

Statement of problem

Nigeria is rapidly developing her technological education which has made the society more complex than it was in the past. The number of occupations has increased greatly and also, there are many careers within one occupation. For instance, farming which was a simple occupation some decades ago is now a very complex occupation with many careers to choose from. These included poultry farming, vegetable farming, and fruitful farming to name but a few. The implication of this is socialization.

With little or no knowledge about self and job options in the world of work, students face a lot of problems in the choice of subjects that would lead them to their future careers. Many young persons have indicated their interest to read prestigious courses such as Medicine, Engineering, Law and Pharmacy without a single thought of the necessary subject combinations, lack of knowledge of career decision making skills and incongruent personality types. Consequently, when these individuals gain admission into universities, they study courses other than which they applied for. These research findings are inconsistent thereby creating a knowledge gap which needs to be filled. Therefore this study is designed to specifically find out if gender, parental education, locus of control and conscientiousness influence career choice among senior secondary school students.

Aim and objectives of study

This study seeks to:

- i. Investigate if there will be a difference between male and female students on career choice.
- ii. Find out if there will be a difference between students with internal and external locus of control on career choice.
- iii. Ascertain if students from educated parents will significantly differ from those of uneducated parents on career choice
- iv. Determine if there will be a difference between students who scored high on conscientiousness and those who score less on career choice.

Research Questions

- i. Will there be a significant difference between male and female students on career choice?
- ii. Will there be a significant difference between students with internal and external locus of control on career choice?
- iii. Will parental education significantly influence career choice among students?
- iv. Will there be a significant difference between student who scored high on conscientiousness and those who score less on career choice?

Hypotheses

This study was designed to test the following hypotheses:

- i. There will be a significant difference between male and female students on career choice
- ii. There will be a significant difference between students with internal and external locus of control on career choice
- iii. Parental education will significantly influence career choice among secondary school students
- iv. There will be a significant difference between students who scored high on conscientiousness and those who score less on career choice

Significance of the study

The dynamic and sophisticated socio-economic system of the contemporary society with accompanying innovations in science and technology present a wide array of occupations for our youths to choose from. However, several factors operate to make a realistic choice in this respect somewhat difficult. Prominent among these factors are parental education, gender of the student, locus of control and personality factors. This study is significant in that it would expose the influence of these variables on the career choice of secondary school students in the study area wherefore students could be helped to make realistic occupational choices. Furthermore, from the findings of this study parents would, through PTAs (Parents-Teachers Associations), be dissuaded from compelling their children into taking up occupations that are not in consonance with their personal characteristics and abilities.

Methodology

For the purpose of achieving the research objectives, the study adopted a cross sectional descriptive survey. The study employed a convenience sampling method. Many organization studies have used convenience approach in sampling respondents making it common and more prominent than probability sampling. This may be because of the feasible nature of the approach compared to probability sampling method. The researchers distributed 230 copies of the questionnaire among Senior Secondary School Students of Tarka LGA of Benue State

in Nigeria. They were distributed among male and female. 220 copies of the questionnaire were returned and 210 were found usable.

The analyses indicated that, 93 (44.3%) of the participants were males, while 117 (55.7%) were females. 171 (81.4%) and 39 (16.6%) participants were from educated and uneducated families respectively. The results further showed that 87 (41.4%) were SS 1 students while 29 (13.8%) were in SS 2 and 94 (44.8%) were SS 3 students.

Instruments

Data for this study were collected using three (3) instruments: Career Choice Scale (CIS), Locus of Control Scale (LCS) and Conscientiousness Scale (CS)

Demographic characteristics was measured using 6 item subscale, sample items of this scale include: information such as sex, course of study, religious affiliation, age, level of study and cumulative grade point average. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement for each statement by ticking and writing their response.

Scoring of the instrument

Career Choice Scale (CCS):

Career Aspiration Scale was developed by O'Brien (1996) measured the degree to which participants valued their careers and aspired to advancement and leadership positions within their careers. It is a 8-item scale scored on a 5-point Likert responses of not at all true of me=0, slightly true of me = 1, moderately true of me = 2, quite a bit true of me = 3, very true of me = 4. The total score is obtained by directly adding individual value for each item. Its internal consistency ranged from .72 to .77 (O'Brien, 1996).in this study, the scale was reported to have reliability and validity coefficients of .70 which is very okay.

Locus of Control Scale (LCS)

Locus of Control Scale (LCS) is the 13-item scale developed by Rotter (1996) to measure the extent to which individuals believe that they can control events that affect them. It scored on optional responses of A and B. this is the most commonly used instrument for measuring locus of control and is highly reliable and valid. A high score indicate an external locus of control while a low score indicate an internal locus of control. This scale has the Cronbach's alpha of .62

Conscientiousness scale

Conscientiousness was assessed using 5-item subscale of the Big Five Factor Scale. Statements were listed and respondents were asked to indicate how accurate they were for them on the scale ranged from 1 (very inaccurate), 3 (neither accurate nor inaccurate) to 5 (very accurate). Cronbach's alpha for conscientiousness represented .74. For this study, the Cronbach's alpha for conscientiousness indicates .77

Procedures for Data Collection

Prior to the administration of questionnaires, permission was obtained from five randomly selected secondary schools in Tarka LGA which include: Government secondary school Annuen, Mbaor Community Secondary School Annune, TBT Comprehensive College Annune, Mbajir, Community Secondary School Asukunya and Mbanoughul Community Secondary School Uchi. The researchers preceded and obtained informed consents of students who formed sample for the study. The researchers personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents at their various classrooms, in keeping with ethical standard, the respondents were debriefed accordingly.

Method of Data Analysis

Several techniques were used to analyze the data. The descriptive statistics (such as mean and standard deviation) and simple percentages were employed to analysis demographic data (the characteristics) of the respondents. To assess the mean difference in career choice between groups of students as well as test hypotheses, the study employed independent t-test.

Result

The first hypothesis states that, there will be a significant difference between male and female students on career choice. This hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the results are presented in table 1 below

Table 1: Independent t-test showing sex difference in Career Choice among students

	Sex	N	mean	std. Deviation	df	t	p
Career Choice	Male	93	24.12	7.055	208	1.44	>.05
	Female	177	22.76	6.536			

The results presented in Table 1 above indicates that there was no significant sex difference in career choice among secondary school students ($t(208) = 1.22, p < .05$). This means that gender is not a likely determinant of career choice. Therefore, this hypothesis has been rejected and the null hypothesis accepted.

Second hypothesis raised for the study says, there will be a significant difference between students with internal and external locus of control on career choice. This hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the results are made available in table 2 below.

Table 2: Independent t-test showing difference between students with internal and external locus of control on Career Choice among students

	LOC	N	mean	std. Deviation	df	t	p
Career Choice	Internal	135	23.48	6.948	208	.342	<.05
	External	75	23.15	6.530			

The results presented in Table 2 above indicated that there was no significant difference between students with internal and locus of control on career choice among secondary school students ($t(208) = .342, p < .05$). This means that locus of control is not a likely determinant of career choice. Therefore, this hypothesis has been rejected and the null hypothesis accepted.

The third hypothesis postulated for the study states that, there will be a significant difference between students from educated and uneducated families on career choice. This hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the results are made available in table 3 below.

Table 3: Independent t-test showing difference between students from educated and uneducated families on Career Choice among students

	Parental Education	N	mean	std. Deviation	df	t	p
Career Choice	Educated	171	23.37	6.874	208	.029	<.05
	Uneducated	39	23.33	6.482			

The results presented in Table 3 above shows that there was no significant difference between students from educated and uneducated families on career choice ($t(208) = .029, p < .05$). This implies that parental education has no considerable influence on career choice. Therefore, this hypothesis has been rejected and the null hypothesis upheld. Finally, the fourth hypothesis states that, there will be a significant difference between students who scored high on conscientiousness and those who score less on career choice. This hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the results are made available in table 4 below.

Table 4: Independent t-test showing difference between students who scored high on conscientiousness and those who score less on career choice among students

	Conscientiousness	N	mean	std. Deviation	df	t	p
Career Choice	High	86	21.39	6.32	208	-.36	<.05
	Low	124	21.67	6.90			

The results presented in table 4 above shows that there was no significant difference between students who scored high on conscientiousness and those who score less on career choice ($t(208) = -.36, p < .05$)

Discussion of findings

The discussion of findings was done according to the tested and verified hypotheses. Hypothesis one was tested and it was found that there was no significant difference between male and female students on career choice. This implied that gender is not a determinant of career choice among secondary school students. This further means that there are factors other than sex difference that affect career decision among students. This finding is not surprising because gone are the days that women were restricted to certain gender stereotyped jobs such as nursing, teaching and other simple jobs that were considered feminine friendly. In our contemporary society, women are found in the army, the medical field, engineering and even truck driving business. This is no longer a new trend in our society today as we often hear people say what a man can do, a woman can do even better.

This finding contradicts past research on sex difference in choice of medical career which has shown that women are more likely than men to choose primary care over other specialties such as anesthesiology (Bland, Meurer, & Maldonado, 2005). These researchers attribute to be a function gender differences in the values that influence students' career choices. They argued that one of such value involves the desire to give comprehensive care for one's patients which is a rare desire in men. Comprehensive care entails providing treatment that

encompasses psychological and social aspects of patient well-being in addition to biological aspects. Physicians who provide comprehensive patient care are often involved in providing social support to family members, education regarding lifestyle choices, or providing care over a patient's lifespan. As a result, this type of care can be viewed as more relationship-focused than treatment-focused which is the core interest of women. Also lips (2002) found that women are less likely than men to seek out careers with heavy mathematics components because women are less confident in their mathematics ability than men and because women are less likely than men to view mathematics and related fields as useful. While women are more likely than men to place a high value on people-related endeavors such as combining a career and a family, men in comparison, emphasize more status-oriented values.

Even though several studies like Olamide & Olamide (2013) and That of Harley (2006) which shows significant level of male and female on career choice, environment and personality, it is still not out of place to accept the finding considering the rapid social change in the society today.

Hypothesis two was tested and it was found that there is no clear marked difference between students with internal and external locus of control. This finding contradicts other findings such as Tella, Tella and Adeniyi (2009) who examined locus of control, interest in schooling and self-efficacy as predictors of career choice among senior secondary school students. The results indicate that locus of control predicted career choice among the Junior Secondary School Students. The comparism of this finding with other research outcomes reviewed has obviously shown that more researches needs to be done.

Hypothesis three was tested and it was found that there is no significant difference between students from educated and uneducated families on career choice. This implies that career choice among students is not determined by educational attainment of their parents but may be due to other factors. This contrary to previous findings that held that the level of parental formal education is a factor that influences the vocational interests of children. Parental education level determines the amenities and the cultural level of the home. Parents armed with adequate education often get gainful employment. Thus, with their level of income and exposure, they are better disposed to procure educational materials for their children and discuss job opportunities with them. Without doubt, a child surrounded with good magazines, books, as well as intelligent discussions could be expected to develop different, and perhaps better, vocational interests than a child not exposed to those things (Onyejiaku, 2007). According to Denga (1990), children from low income homes fail to develop interest in acquiring vocational training because of the educational inadequacies of the parents. But it worth to take to note that there are exceptional cases that exist on this lines of parental education level when issues like intrinsic motivation is involved. This implies that for the fact that a student falls in a family whereby his or her parents are low on formal education does not mean that will it can inhibit his or her vocational interests. Some children are driven by intrinsic motivation like self-determination which makes a child to desire to be better than his parents in all ramifications; such a child will never be limited by extrinsic motivation like parental education.

Hypothesis four was tasted and it was found that there was no significant difference between students who scored high on conscientiousness and those who score less on career choice. This means that conscientiousness as one of the big five personality trait that has no considerable influence on career decision of secondary school students. This is true because in Africa at large and Nigeria in particular there is dearth of employment opportunities and so

people no longer have choice to make. For instance, a graduate who has carefully chosen a course and upon graduation he is forced to become a commercial motor-cycle rider because of lack of a befitting alternative has no choice so far as career decision is concerned. Most people today hold to careers that do match their personality. This finding disagreed with position of Cattell and Mead (2008) who maintained that people who are high on conscientiousness seem to be mature, cool and not likely to over react in stressful environments and so are fit for stressful careers such as armed forces. These scholars argued that because highly conscientious person tend to be full of hope and self-efficacy in blind holes they are good on tasking jobs than those who score less on this personality trait.

Conclusion

This study examined the gender, parental education, locus of control and conscientiousness as correlates of career choice among senior secondary school students. Literature were reviewed, hypotheses were postulated and tested after data were collected using questionnaires. All the hypotheses were rejected and it was concluded as follows: there was no significant difference between male and female students on career choice. There was no significant difference between students with internal and external locus of control on career choice. Children of educated parents did not significantly differ from those of uneducated parents on career choice. There was no significant difference between students who scored high on conscientiousness and those who score less on career choice.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was therefore, recommended as follows:

- Guidance counselors should not consider sex difference, parental education, locus of control and conscientiousness when guiding the younger one on which career to go for. But instead focus on the interest of the child. Parents should not force their children to take after the level of education and career, but should nurture them towards achieving their personal dreams considering circumstances in our society.
- Adolescence represents a time of making fundamental career choice, therefore ministry of education and school managements should formulate policies and identify new approaches to teaching the curriculum so as to chart a pathway of intrinsic motivation development
- More researches should be carried out on the other factors influencing career choice among senior secondary school students using local sample.

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