

Factors Influencing Choice of Career as Expressed by Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State

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Abstract

This study investigates the factors influencing career choices of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis. It also examined the influence of gender, class level, religion and father's educational status on the respondents' expression. It employed a descriptive survey method. A total of 200 secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis were selected through simple random sampling technique. The participants responded to a researcher-designed questionnaire entitled 'Factors Influencing Career Choice Questionnaire' (FICCCQ). The validity of the instrument was done by a team of 5 experts from the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. The reliability of the instrument was established using test re-test reliability method which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.61. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. For the demographic data, percentage was employed while t-test statistical tool was employed to test the four hypotheses at 5% level of significance. Results showed that the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis are ease of access to job opportunity ($X=3.50$), job remuneration ($X=3.48$), career guidance from school counsellor ($X=3.45$), societal values on jobs ($X=3.44$) family line of work ($X=3.25$), their performance in school subjects ($X=3.20$) and intellectual capability that they possess ($X=2.50$) among other factors. Similarly, there was significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary

school students in Ilorin metropolis based on gender ($p=0.01$), class level($p=0.02$), religion ($p=0.00$), and father's educational status ($p=0.01$). It was thus recommended that students should liaise with school counsellors to fully explore the factors influencing their career choices. Counsellors should ensure that students are given orientation as they move from one class to another. This is to ensure that all students, irrespective of gender and religion are abreast of the factors influencing career choice.

Keywords: Career, Career choice, Secondary school, Students, Ilorin metropolis

Introduction

Career decision making has become a difficult task for secondary school students in this modern world. This is as a result of technological advancement which has paved ways for individuals to get better-off with little skills and expertise they might possess; hence, exhaustive career research should be conducted to resolve the puzzle of career choice among secondary school students. According to Agarwala (2008), a career is a pattern of work experiences spanning the entire life of a person and which is generally seen with regard to a number of phases or stages reflecting the transition from one stage of life to the next. Bassey, Bassey and Omono (2012) defined it as a profession that someone has been trained for and intends to do for his or her lifetime. A career does not only refer to one's position but also involves the titles earned, jobs held and work accomplished over a lengthy period of time; hence, it is the total pattern of one's activities held in a lifetime.

Okobiah and Okorodudu (2004) described career as a pattern of decisions, transactions and adjustments that affects people's roles in work, education, family, community development and leisure. Career is important in human's life because it defines the personality of an individual. Therefore, choosing an appropriate career is significant in the life of individuals as it helps to determine their future. McQuerrey (2015) stated that choosing a career path can help one to set professional goals and develop a strategy for getting to where they are aiming. When students have an idea of the career path they want to pursue, they will be able to make the best decisions about their training and education. In literature, different factors influencing career choice have been reported. Asante (2010) highlighted income, job opportunities, personal

interest, and the school guidance department, while Taylor and Buku (2006) identified students' intellectual ability, aptitudes, influence of schooling, family, personality, self-concept, sex difference, values, prestige, remuneration, risk factors, security, satisfaction, needs and interest among the factor influencing career choice. According to Kerka (2000), career choice is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interests, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and financial facility. This follows that each individual undertaking the process is influenced by several factors.

Hewitt (2010) opined that factors influencing career choice can be intrinsic or extrinsic or both. Many people might be influenced by careers that their parents favour, others follow the careers that their educational choices have chosen for them, some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them while others choose the careers that give high income. Students perception of being suitable for particular jobs also has been found to be influenced by a number of factors including ethnic background, year in school, level of achievement, choice of science subjects, attitudes and differences in job characteristics (McQuaid & Bond, 2003).

For many people with spiritual or religious commitment, faith plays a critical role in their choice of career. Stebleton (2007) indicated that the students had an external locus of control and believe that there are numerous external factors which influence their career choices. These external factors include; political and economic considerations, previous work experience and the influence of key individuals in a person's life. Taylor, Harris and Taylor (2004) reported that external influences that help to shape an individual's career choice are also influenced by significant others through social support from peers. In a study by Natalie (2006), young adults through interaction with the context of family, school and community learn about and explore careers which ultimately lead to their career choice. One consistent finding in research suggested that adolescents' own aspirations are influenced by their parent's aspirations or expectations. Parental support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to influence career choice. Children may

choose what their parents desire simply to please the latter (Taylor, Harris & Taylor, 2004).

Choices that people make relating to their career can be categorized to be influenced by two factors: psychological and social. Social factors are part of an individual's social bond, their parents, family, history and other characteristics of their environment. Psychological factors can be an individual's perception, cognitive and effective intentions, beliefs, ideas, personality and assessments related to forthcoming business environment (Ozen, 2011). The results of a quantitative study conducted by Awujo (2007) among rural young adults and adolescents indicated that influence exerted by an individual's family, society, state of economy, their interpretation of better job and financial constraints were major reasons that can impact their career selection. Edward and Quinter's (2012) investigation disclosed that an individual's proclivity towards a particular field or subject, its predilection for a particular job and match between his personality and selected professions is an important factor contributing to career path.

Significant relationship has been found between personality and career choice of students. Ferry (2006) submitted that in the process of making career choices, personality plays a significant role; productivity, fulfillment and motivation are directly related to the individual. Lack of it can be most dangerous because of dissatisfaction and ends up in to the stress career failure. Kerka (2000) claimed that piece of information utilized by individuals and financial resources at their disposal significantly interfere in the career selection.

Shumba and Naong (2012) stressed that limited finances available to students will affect them negatively in their profession selection. Their desires to become specialist in renowned fields like engineering, doctorate among others would be restricted by the availability of finances to them. Shumba and Naong argued that in some cases even the children who belong to low status families end up entering in high status professions despite their high cost. This could be because their parents want them to enjoy those aspects of life that they have missed out due to their insufficient wealth. Duffy and Dik (2009) found that opportunities opened to an individual can contribute significantly in one's choice of desirable career. Poverty and income constraints hinder their way of

career success so these opportunities in various forms help them in shaping their career path. It is against this background that this study investigated on the factors influencing career choice of students in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State.

Statement of the Problem

Many adolescents in Nigerian secondary schools find making career choices very difficult because of the many available careers, the staggering array of jobs, the continual changes in the economy and job market, the great potential for making mistakes, and the misery that is likely to happen when people get into the wrong work. It appears that students lack the skills and knowledge to realistically plan for their future in the world of work; which is primarily the goal of education.

Mismatch of career and its influential factors among in-school adolescents may lead to problems in the nation. When students choose career without proper guidance from an experienced persons or career counsellors who can, with their expertise, guide the students towards appropriate career that can help them accomplish in life, the future of the students might be jeopardized because they will not be satisfied with their job and invariably, will be contributing less to the development of the nation, at the expense of their innate potentials. It is not farfetched in many societies in Nigeria, where an individual would be performing below expectations in a particular job but become vibrant in another profession. The low level of development in Nigeria might be evidenced to the mismatch between students' abilities, attitude, aptitude, personality, education and career choice, which has made a lot of Nigerian graduates half-baked; thereby, making sustainable development that the nation is yearning for a mirage. In view of this, the researchers deemed it fit to examine the factors influencing career choice of students in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State.

Research Question

This question was raised based on the problem of this study:

- I. What are the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis?

Hypotheses

In line with the purpose of the study, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis based on class level.
3. There is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis based on religion.
4. There is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis based on father's educational status.

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive research survey. The population for this study comprised all secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis. For the purpose of this study, 200 respondents were selected using random sampling technique. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 10 secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. Simple random sampling technique was again used to select 20 students from each of the selected secondary schools. This made a total of 200 secondary school students that participated in the study.

A researcher-developed questionnaire entitled "Factors Influencing Career Choice Questionnaire (CMTQ)" was used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire consists of three sections; A and B. Section A, focuses on the demographic data of respondents, section B consists of 20 items that focused on factors influencing career choice of students. The Four Point Likert-Type rating scale format was used to score each item on the questionnaire. The rating scale format is as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points; Agree (A) = 3 points; Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. The instrument was validated by

experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. The reliability of the instrument for this study was determined using test re-test method. The researchers administered the instrument on 30 students who were not part of the study in an interval of three weeks. The two set of scores were obtained and correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (r) statistics. The value obtain was 0.61 at 0.05 level of significance which rated the instrument reliable for the study. Section A which consisted three items on demographic data was scored using frequency and percentage. Sections B which contained items on factors influencing career choice was scored using the following modality: the score on the instrument ranges from 4 to 1. The average score any respondents can obtain is $4+3+2+1 = 10/4 = 2.50$. This follows that mean scores from 2.50 and above indicated the significant factors influencing career choice, while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as insignificant factors influencing career choice.

The researchers personally administered the questionnaire on the selected respondents with the help of three research assistants who were trained on the process of administration. The permission of the constituted authorities was sought through writing and personal contact. Also, the cooperation of the students was sought by explaining to them the purpose of the study and assuring them of confidentiality. This gave the researchers the privilege of creating rapport with the respondents; thereby, facilitating prompt and candid response to the questionnaire. The section A of the instrument which deals with demographic data of the respondents was analyzed using frequency and percentage. All the hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Research Question I: What are the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis?

Table I: Mean and Rank Order of Factors Influencing Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis

Item No.	I will choose my career based on the following factors:	Mean	Rank
6.	Easy access to job opportunity	3.50	1 st
1.	Job remuneration	3.48	2 nd
18.	Career guidance from school counsellor	3.45	3 rd
20.	Societal valued job	3.44	4 th
7.	Job satisfaction	3.40	5 th
9.	Personal interest	3.39	6 th
10.	Personal aspiration	3.36	7 th
12.	Personality characteristics	3.35	8 th
11.	Job attached to a specific sex in the society	3.34	9 th
2.	Job security	3.30	10 th
3.	Influence of significant person	3.28	11 th
5.	Family line of work	3.25	12 th
4.	My performance in subjects in school	3.20	13 th
8.	Teacher's influence	3.10	14 th
13.	Peer influence	3.00	15 th
16.	Prestige of the job	2.58	16 th
14.	Parental influence	2.57	17 th
15.	Religious belief	2.53	18 th
17.	Knowledge of a career path	2.52	19 th
19.	Intellectual capability	2.50	20 th

Survey 2017

Table I shows the means and ranks of the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis. Item 6 which stated, 'Easy access to job opportunity' with mean score 3.50 ranked 1st. Item 1 which stated, 'Job remuneration' with mean score 3.48, ranked 2nd. Item 18 which stated, 'Career guidance from school counsellor' ranked 3rd with mean score 3.45. Item 20 which stated 'Societal valued job' ranked 4th with mean score 3.44. Item 19 stated, 'intellectual capability that I possess' ranked 20th with mean score 2.50.

Since the cut-off point for taking decision on the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis is 2.5 and all the 20 items have mean scores above the cut-off; it can then be concluded that the factors influencing career choice of secondary school

students in Ilorin Metropolis are easy access to job opportunity, job remuneration career guidance from school counsellor, societal valued job, intellectual capability that they possess, Family line of work and their performance in school subjects, among other factors.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on gender.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value Showing Factors Influencing Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t	Crit. t	p
Male	96	56.20	7.19	198	2.94*	1.96	0.00
Female	114	51.01	7.51				

*p<0.05

Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value of 2.94 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. This means there is significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on gender thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on class level.

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value Showing Factors Influencing Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis Based on Class Level

Class	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t	Crit. t	p
JSS	110	54.11	8.34	198	1.81*	1.96	0.02
SSS	90	51.91	9.56				

*p<0.05

Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value of 1.81 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. This means there is significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on class level thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on religion.

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value Showing Factors Influencing Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis Based on Religion.

Religion	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t	p
Christian	88	64.09	9.49	198	2.20*	1.96	0.00
Muslim	112	60.00	8.71				

*p<0.05

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of 2.20 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. This means there is significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on religion thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on father's educational status.

Table 5: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value Showing Factors Influencing Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis Based on Father's Educational Status

Status	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t	Crit. t	p
Literate	121	58.76	8.57	198	2.84*	1.96	0.01
Not Literate	79	52.06	7.44				

*p<0.05

Table 5 shows that the calculated t-value of 2.84 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. This means there is significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on father's educational status thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis are easy access to job opportunity, job remuneration career guidance from school counsellor, societal valued job, intellectual capability that they possess Family line of work and their performance in school subjects among other factors. The findings of the study tallies with that of Zhang (2007) and Salami (2003) who found that factors influencing career choice are salary, employment availability, parental influences, guidance in school among others. The reason for this finding could be that Individuals must choose a career which is influenced by certain factors either intrinsic or extrinsic.

Hypothesis One which stated that there is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on based on gender was rejected. This implies that there was significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on based on gender. This also means that male and female secondary school students differed in the factors influencing career choice. This finding tallies with that of Kaneez and Medha (2018) whose findings showed a significant difference in the factors influencing career choice among secondary school students in Kenya based on gender. This could be that in the Nigerian society, male and female differ in the kinds of career they choose.

Hypothesis Two which stated that there is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on class level was rejected. This means that there was significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on class level. This also means that secondary school students who are in JSS and SSS class

levels differed in their expression of factors influencing career choice. This finding corroborates that of Omotere (2011) whose findings also showed significant difference in the factors influencing career choice based on class levels. This finding could be that students who are in SSS class have developed to a better stage of knowing which factors could affect their career choice than students in JSS class level.

Result from hypothesis 3 showed that there was significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on religion factors. This also implies that Christian respondents and Muslim respondents differed in their expression of factors influencing career choice. This finding tally with that of Stebleton (2007) which revealed that religion could influence the factors influencing career choice among secondary school students. This finding could be that in the Christian religious institutions, adolescents and youths are exposed to different training and skill acquisition in which career decision making is not an exception.

Hypothesis Four which stated that there is no significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on father's educational status. This implies that there was significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on father's educational status. This implies also that respondents whose fathers are literate differ from those whose fathers are not literate. This finding supports that of Ukaegbu (2014) that shows that parent's socio-demographic factors affect the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students. This could be that fathers influences the knowledge of their children therefore, respondents with literate fathers would be more knowledgeable than those respondents whose fathers are not literate.

Conclusion

It is concluded in this study that the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis are ease of access to job opportunity, job remuneration career guidance from school counsellor, societal valued job, intellectual capability that they possess, Family line of

work and their performance in school subjects among other factors. Similarly, there was significant difference in the factors influencing career choice of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on gender, class level, religion and father's educational background.

Implications of the Findings for Counselling Practices

The finding of this study has the following implications for counsellors:

- Counsellors could on continuous basis orientate secondary school students on the factors responsible for career choice with special emphasis on the importance on each of the factors.
- Counsellors should operate an open door policy for all students, particularly secondary school students at the lower class level so that they can also have ample knowledge of the factors influencing career choice.
- Counselling centres should be established in secondary schools so that students can be well guided on the factors influencing career choices and how to make career choices.
- Counsellors could from time to time invite professionals to give career talks to students of secondary schools right from the JSS class and for those students whose fathers are not literate.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Students should liaise with school counsellors to adequately explore the factors influencing their career choices. This will help them to be well situated in choosing the right career.
- ii. School administrators should as a point of duty incorporate career talks in the school time-table, so that all students will be taught these factors and their influence in making career choices.
- iii. Parents should be aware that certain factors influence the choice of career of their children however; they should not force their children to choose a career without considering their knowledge, interest, gender among other factors.
- iv. Counsellors should ensure that students are given orientation as they move from one class to another. This is to ensure that all

students, irrespective of gender and religion are abreast of the factors influencing career choice.

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