

Relationship between Parental Influence and Choice of Career among Senior Secondary School Students in Sokoto Metropolis

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Abstract

This study was designed to examine the relationship between parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. Three research questions and three research hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was six thousand and eighty-eight (6,088) students while three hundred and forty-six (346) students were selected as sample size. Three sets of validated instruments were used for collecting data: Adopted version of Bakare (1980) Motivation for Occupational Preference Scale (MOPS), adopted version of Adegoke (1987) Parental Socio-economic Status Questionnaire (PSESQ) to measure Socio-economic Status, and Parental Influence Questionnaire (PIQ). The results of the Pearson product moment correlation shows that there is significant relationship between parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students, while socio-economic status and choice of career among senior secondary school students were positively related but not significant. Based on the findings, recommendations were made which include that parents should encourage their wards to choose careers that are compatible with their personal interest and capabilities.

Keywords: Parents, Students, Socio-economic, Career, Choice,

Introduction

In recent times, there has been growing interest in the inter-relationships between career choice, peer group and parental influences. More importantly, the focus has been on the factors that enhance an individual towards a career. The achievement of children as they grow up has always been a matter of intense interest to parents. The young adolescent in school is expected to set high aspiration in him or herself and to work towards the achievement of those goals. Moreover, children are made to

become aware of the prestige that goes along with successful career choice. Education, socio economic status, culture, peer group influence and parental influence are sometimes used as pressure to induce the young adolescent into predetermined careers, regardless of the potentials, actual needs and ego of the child. Trost and Levin (2000) opined that the family influences the behaviour or character of a child. Tella (2003) says that parents play an invaluable role in laying the foundation of their children's career. In the same light, Wentzel (1991) pointed out that the more intensively parents are involved in their children's learning, the more beneficial are the achievement effects.

Career choice is simply the selection of vocations from given alternatives. According to Shenco (2003), career choice is the selection or picking up of a career, which one has the potentials of entering. Before a choice exists, there must be alternative occupations for one to pick from. The freedom of choice is also very fundamental in the success of any kind of work an individual will pursue. Oladele (1987) noted that in primitive societies choice is highly restricted or may not even exist; while in developed societies, the possibility of choice is much greater. He further observed that although some societies could have range of different occupations, certain strong societal sanctions often compel and restrict individuals to work in the same occupations of their parents. However, the freedom of choice of occupation has very important consequence both for the individual and the society. Sessay (1986) stated that the choice of career is the most important decisions one makes in life. This is because career itself gives meaning to life.

One of the major tasks of family system is parenting. Parenting refers to the physical protection, emotional nurturing and socialization of children. Parenting means implementing a series of decisions about the socialization of the children; and what is done to enable them to become responsible and contributing members of the society. It also includes decision about what to do when children cry, become aggressive, tell lie, do not perform satisfactorily in school etc. Parents sometimes find these decisions confusing and overwhelming. Such decisions are confusing because there is little consensus as to what children should be like when they grow up or what should be done to get them there. Another reason for these confusing decisions is that it is bidirectional and dynamic. An adult's behaviour toward a child is often a reaction to that child's temperament and behaviour, changing with time as the child develops (Lerner, 1998; Putman, Sanson & Rothbart, 2002). Thus, by influencing adults, children influence their own development. Parental influence greatly contributes to the occupational preference of secondary school students.

Several empirical studies have been conducted on the relationship between parental influence and career choice of students. Examples of such studies include Musa (2009) who conducted a research on parental preference in Career choice among secondary school students in Kebbi state with a population of 2868 students of post primary institutions of five educational zones in Kebbi State, with 280 parents as the sample for the study. The finding showed that parents have significant influence in the career choice of their wards. Osa-Edoh and Alutu (2011) investigated parents'

socio economic status and its effect on students' educational values and vocational choices. Survey research design was used. The sample of the study consists of 100 SS III students. Simple and purposive sampling techniques were used. The study revealed that there is significant difference in educational values and career aspirations of the students from high and middle socio economic homes in favour of the higher socio-economic status.

According to Nwachukwu (2003), certain groups of occupations are inherited. Though it is not known why an association exists between a father's occupation and his sons career choice, this relationship is present and influences the career choice of some students. This study supported the importance of the family on choice of career. He showed that a significant number of pupils said that their parents explicitly expressed opinion about their career choice. About 46.9% of his sample got occupational information from their parents.

Maxwell (2014) investigated comparative analysis of factors influencing career choice among senior secondary school students in Rivers state, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select four hundred (400) senior secondary school student from five secondary schools in Rivers state. The "comprehensive career choice survey (CCCS)" was administered to the respondents to collect necessary data. The findings revealed that there were significant differences among male and female secondary school students in their career choice in terms of prestige of a profession, gender disparity and parental influence.

There is no adequate readiness into the world of work by the secondary school students in Sokoto Metropolis as a result of the fact that students are not adequately prepared right from schools. They do not understand their own abilities, interests, aptitudes and values. These circumstances lead to frustration. Such victims drop out of school and end up roaming the streets or constitute public nuisance. It is in view of this that this study is designed to investigate the relationship that exists between parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Is there any relationship between parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis?
2. Is there any relationship between parental socio economic status and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis?
3. Is there any relationship between parental educational qualification and choice of career among secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide this study.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between parental socio economic status and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between parental educational qualification and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

Methodology

The researchers used correlational design in this study. A correlational design is a type of research that is concerned with determining or measuring the degree of relationship between two or more variables for the purpose of making predictions about such relationships. The population for the study consisted of all the senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. There are twenty one (21) secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis with total population of 6,088 senior secondary school students. A sample size of 346 was selected from the population using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size from a given population. Proportional sampling was adopted in selecting the respondents. This was derived by dividing sample size of 346 by 3255 (being population of the ten selected schools), then multiplying by 100; this gave 10.6%. Therefore, 10.6% was used to select 346 respondents from ten secondary schools. The ten schools were purposively selected from 21 secondary schools because of their characteristics which satisfied the interest of the researchers. Simple random sampling was then used to select respondents to represent sample from each of the ten selected secondary schools.

Table 1: Sample of students

S/N	Name of school	Population	Sample size
1	Arkillia Secondary School, Sokoto	298	32
2	Army Day Secondary School, Sokoto	319	34
3	Gidan Salihu Secondary School, Sokoto	110	12
4	Giginya Memorial Secondary School, Sokoto	305	32
5	Kofar Marke Secondary School, Sokoto	250	27
6	Kofar Rini Secondary School, Sokoto	211	22
7	Nana Girls Secondary School, Sokoto	896	95
8	Tudun Wada Secondary School, Sokoto	422	45
9	Sultan Atiku Secondary School Sokoto	332	35
10	Sultan Attahiru Secondary School Sokoto	112	12
	Total	3255	346

The instruments that were used in collecting data for this research are as follows: Researchers' designed Parental Influence Questionnaire (PIQ) to measure parental influence; Adopted version of Bakare (1980) Motivation for Occupation Preference Scale (MOPS) to measure students career choice; and Adopted version of Adegoke

(1987) Parental Socio economic Status Questionnaire (PSESQ) to measure parental social economic status.

The researchers' designed Parental Influence Questionnaire (PIQ) was divided into two parts. Part A consists of background information of respondents and it contains four (4) questions. Part B of the PIQ comprised of 20 items. The respondents were asked to respond to the items using a four point likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). In validating the self-constructed questionnaire, it was given to three experts in the field of Guidance and Counseling and two other experts in the field of Educational Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. The judgment from the experts indicated the level to which the items could actually measure what they are designed to measure and thus the instrument was adjudged to have content validity. However, in establishing the reliability estimate of the instrument, the test re-test method was adopted. The questionnaire was administered twice to the same group of 20 students from Federal Government College, Sokoto within an interval of four weeks between the first and second administration. Their scores were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the reliability which gave 0.76 reliability. This was considered high enough for use.

The adopted form of Motivation for Occupational Preference Scale (MOPS) developed by Bakare (1980) has three sections: A, B and C. Section A consists of personal information such as sex, age etc; section B consists of parents' occupational choice for their children with five questions and section C consists of reasons for occupational preference with five sub-sections A – E with twenty one (21) questions. In validating the instrument, the researchers took the items to the lecturers in Educational Foundations of Faculty of Education and Extension Services of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. After the scrutiny and correction of items in the instrument the researchers effect all the corrections. Hence, the obtained independent judgment from the experts were meant to indicate the degree to which the item can actually measure what they are designed to measure. The reliability of Motivation for Occupational Preference Scale was obtained using test re-test method, by administering the instrument to the respondents and re-administering after an interval of four (4) weeks; Pearson Product Moment Correlation was then used and reliability coefficient index of 0.75 was obtained and is therefore adjudged to be reliable for the study.

Parental Socio-economic Status Questionnaire was designed by Adegoke (1987) to measure the extent to which parental socio-economic status is related to students' academic performance. This questionnaire has three (3) sections; section A seeks for personal data of the respondent, section B is on parental level of education and occupation while section C is on the effect of high and low socio-economic status on student life. The score value for section B is 1=A, 2=B, 3=C, 4=D and 5=E, while the score value for section C is Yes=2, No=1. The adopted version of Adegoke (1987) which has 16 items was given to experts/reviewers in the Department of Educational Foundations of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. The independent judgments

of the experts were obtained which indicated that the instrument can measure what it is purported to measure. The instrument was therefore adjudged to have content validity and the current researchers accepted and adopted it for use in this study. The reliability of the questionnaire was obtained by Adegoke (1987) by giving it to 50 students in selected secondary schools using measure of stability. After 2 weeks interval between first and second administration, the scores were correlated using Pearson 'r' correlation co-efficient. The reliability index obtained was 0.68 which was considered high enough to have reliability and the current researchers accepted it for use in this study.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics was used in analyzing the gathered data.

Presentation of results

The analysis of the data was based on the research hypotheses earlier formulated to guide this study.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

Table 2: Relationship between Parental Influence and Choice of Career among Senior Secondary School Students in Sokoto Metropolis (N=346)

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-Cal	p-value	Decision
Parental influence	346	57.86	8.51	.267	.000	Significant
Choice of Career		47.81	8.79			

From the result of table 2, parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis were positively related and significant, with $r=0.267$ and $p=0.000$. This indicates that there is significant relationship between parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis because the p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between parental influence and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis was rejected.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between parental socio-economic status and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

Table 3: Relationship between Parental Socio-Economic Status and Choice of Career among Senior Secondary School Students in Sokoto Metropolis (N=346)

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-Cal	P-value	Decision
Parental SES	346	38.59	6.57	.066	.224	Not Significant
Choice of Career	346	47.81	8.79			

SES =Socio-economic Status

From the results on table 3, parental socio-economic status and choice of career of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis were positively related but not significant, Pearson's $r=.066$, $p=.244$. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between parental socio-economic status and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis because the p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between parental socio-economic status and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis was retained.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between parental educational qualifications and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

Table 4: Relationship between Parental Educational Qualifications and Choice of Career among Senior Secondary School Students in Sokoto Metropolis (N=346)

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-Cal	p	Decision
Parental Edu. Qu	346	1.96	1.03	.039	.469	Not Significant
Choice of Career		47.18	8.79			

Edu. Qu (Educational Qualifications)

From the result of table 4, parental educational qualifications and choice of career of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis were positively related but not significant, Pearson's $r=0.039$, $P=.469$. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between parental educational qualifications and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis because the p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between parental educational qualifications and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis was retained.

Discussion of findings

It was found from hypothesis one that parental influence was an important determinant of student's choice of career. This finding is in line with Musa (2009), who found that parents have significant influence in the career choice of their children. It implies that parental influence greatly contribute to the career choice of

senior secondary students, as many parents like children to enter certain occupations against the children wishes and abilities. This might be due to the fact that they (parents) want these children to inherit their books and occupation for maintaining their status or to live the life they themselves would have loved to live.

The result from hypothesis two revealed that there is no significant relationship between parental socio-economic status and choice of career among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. This is contrary to Osa-Edoh and Alutu (2011) who found that career choice of children who came from low income families were confined to their experiences with relatives and friends. However, technology-related fields such as engineering, computer science etc, which attract very good wages are being aspired by the youth irrespective of their parents' socio-economic status. The new invention in science made the profession to be lucrative to the members of society. The interest of the youth today is for highly lucrative jobs; this makes many of them particularly secondary school students to aspire for lucrative careers at the expense of the less lucrative ones. Therefore parental socio-economic status may be important but not a significant determinant of student's choice of career.

This study also found from hypothesis three that there was a positive but not significant relationship between parental educational qualification and choice of career among senior secondary students in Sokoto metropolis. This finding contradicts that of Nwochukwu (2003) who found that families who have either acquired better education and occupied key posts in the society are often seen as strong motivating forces behind their children urging them to strive hard to become persons of substance such as Doctors, Engineers, Pharmacists, Lawyers, Accountants, etc provided the children have aptitude, intelligence and ability to cope with high standard of education as pre-requisites for the careers. To support this, in Nigeria today with the wide exposure and establishment of educational institutions even in rural areas, parents with either high or low educational qualification urge their children to work hard at their studies in order to occupy one of the highly prestigious jobs or position.

Conclusion

Based on the analyzed and interpreted data of this study, it was concluded that parental influence was positively related and significant to students' choice of career. The parental socio-economic status was positive but not significantly related to their children's choice of career. Also parental educational qualification was found to be positive but not significantly related to their children's choice of career.

Recommendations

1. Since it was found that there is significant relationship between parental influence and career choice of the students, it is therefore recommended that parent should encourage their wards to choose careers that are compatible with their personal interest and capabilities.
2. Though, parental socio-economic status was found not to be significantly related to career choice of the students, nonetheless, parents should assist their

children financially, emotionally, and psychologically so as to discover themselves in areas of career and support their decision towards their choice of career.

3. Children should be allowed to exercise their free will towards their choice of career regardless of their parental level of educational qualification. Though parent could serve as guardian making sure that their wards make the right decision regarding their choice of career.

4. Career week, talk show should be organized by the school counsellor for children regardless of their gender, with various types of career and requirement needed to pursue certain career; and parent should be persuaded to support their wards' choice of career irrespective of their gender.

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