

PARENTAL FACTORS AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF STUDENTS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GOMBE METROPOLIS, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Career Aspirations implies the way in which an individual expresses himself and relates to society through work. This study investigated the Relationship between Parental Factors and Career Aspirations of Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Gombe Metropolis, Nigeria. The study was guided by five research objectives, and five research hypotheses. The population of this study comprised all senior secondary school students within Gombe metropolis. The sample for this study was three hundred and six (306) SS II senior secondary school students. Correlational survey research design was adopted while simple random sampling technique was used in drawing the sample for this study. Two adapted instruments were used for this study namely: Students' Career Aspirations Questionnaire and Socioeconomic Status Scale. The instruments were validated by experts and considered reliable for use with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of internal consistency of 0.739 for (SCAQ) and 0.913 for (SSS). Spearman's rank correlation coefficient and independent sample t-test were used to test the hypotheses. The result of the study found out that there is no significant relationship between parents' level of education, parents' occupation and career aspirations of students', but there is significant relationship between parents' socioeconomic status and students' career aspirations. The result of the study also reveals that there is significance difference between male and female students in terms of career aspirations but no significant difference exist between private and public schools in terms of career aspirations of students in senior secondary schools in Gombe metropolis, Nigeria. Based on the findings of this study the researcher recommended that parents should not force students to pursue careers similar to their own against their will. Government should intensify efforts to send trained Counsellors to secondary schools to provide vocational, educational and persona-social services to the students.

Keywords: Parental Factors and Career Aspiration

Introduction

Secondary education occupies a unique position in the educational system of Nigeria, because it is that level that determines the academic and professional career of students. However, at the secondary school level, a student may choose to pursue science based subjects, art based subjects or commercial based subjects. Many students are faced with the problem of realistic career preference hence Aspirations (Kolo, 2019), some students do not know school subjects that are relevant to their future preferred career. Some students make career Aspirations that are in opposition to their interest and personality structure. To some they do not understand the type of careers opened to them in the present Nigeria situation after graduation from secondary school. The future therefore looks very bleak as far as their careers are concerned and this constitutes a problem to motivation for learning among our students.

Career is a bigger term subsuming vocation, occupation and job or work in that descending order (Denga, 2016). He further explained that career Aspirations is one of the most difficult decisions in a person's life. It involves person total life because it determines his income, his choice of friends, his pattern of dress, his influence in society and very often the amount of risk to which he is exposed. Therefore, noting these consequences it is very important for career guidance to be provided so that by the time a student is making a career aspiration to enter into, he/she may likely choose those careers that could give an individual an inner satisfaction.

Generally, there are many factors, which are recognized as influencing career aspirations among students among which are extrinsic factors and intrinsic factors that motivate an individual to enter into certain career. The extrinsic factors includes: Parents, teachers and others who occupied a significant place in the life of a child, while the intrinsic factors are: Sex; gender is an important determinant in career aspirations and planning. Traditionally there are careers that are to be considered feminine such as teaching, nursing, catering, hospitality, hair dressing and dress-making while others are more suited to males engineering, building, and mining etc. But nowadays the dividing line between masculine and feminine careers is diminishing, in that you can find both sexes in almost all professional fields. Interests; individual's likes and dislikes contribute to his choice and performance in any given career. A person may also possess personal physical abilities required in a particular occupation. Children with high intellectual ability may like jobs that demand high intellectual ability and so on (Denga, 2016).

However, career aspirations is one of many important choices students will make in determining their future plans and this decision will impact them throughout their lives (Borchert, 2002). Career plays a very fundamental and significant role in the life of the individual because it determines the pattern of his or her income, affects the individual's personality and concept of life. Therefore, career is a lifetime pursuit for success. It is the sequence of major positions occupied by a person throughout his lifetime.

Students require guidance in order to make the right career aspirations. Maina (2013), states that positive or negative parental influence shapes one's career. Many children grow up idealizing the professions of their parents. If one looked up to their mother and admired her teaching skills that may influence one to pursue a career in education. Parents may also intentionally or unintentionally push a child toward a particular career path, especially in the cases of family-owned businesses, where parents expect their children to take over the company. Still other parents apply pressure on their offspring to strive for particular high-profile careers, feeling they are encouraging their children to reach high. 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 them.

Statement of the Problem

Choosing a career is often considered a major turning point in a young adult's life. Career aspiration has been known for long as an individual's choice of lifelong occupation. The problem of career aspiration among secondary school students has drawn the attention of many researchers. Secondary school students should have the opportunity to explore all of the choices available in order to make a logical educated plan when choosing a career.

However, parents occupied a significant place in the life of a child. Some parents may have occupation which themselves could not be fulfilled but want their offspring to fulfil them. Parents may directly or indirectly dictate to their offspring the careers to pursue. For example, most of the time, the students have problem in terms of career aspiration whereby they don't even know the career to choose; in the choice of subjects combination, they tend to follow crowd. Some of them are either positively or negatively influenced by their parents' career. At times some parents do force their children to go for certain careers which they do not interest in nor have the ability to cope with.

Some parents encourage what is known as family occupation by shaping up the interests of their children to take after their profession. Many parents may not realize that their influence on students' career aspiration may present opportunities or obstacles during their career selection. This study therefore, examined the relationship between parental factors and career aspiration of students' in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.

Research Objectives

This study was guided by the following objectives that specifically intended to:

- ◆ Determine the relationship between parents' level of education and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.
- ◆ Determine the relationship between parents' occupation and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.
- ◆ Determine the relationship between parents' socio-economic status and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.

- ◆ Find out the difference between students' gender and their career aspiration in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.
- ◆ Find out the difference between career aspiration of students' in public and private senior secondary schools in Gombe metropolis.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H0₁:** There is no significant relationship between parents' level of education and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.
- H0₂:** There is no significant relationship between parents' occupation and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.
- H0₃:** There is no significant relationship between parents' socio-economic status and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.
- H0₄:** There is no significant difference between students' gender and their career aspiration in senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis.
- H0₅:** There is no significant difference between career aspiration of students' in public and private senior secondary schools in Gombe metropolis.

Methodology

This study adopted correlational survey research design. The population of this study consists of all senior secondary schools students within Gombe Metropolis with the total number of one thousand seven hundred and sixty-six (1766) SS II students out of which 306 students were sampled. The instruments used for data collection of this study, were two instruments namely: Students' career Aspiration Questionnaire and Socio-economic Status Scale. The instruments were validated by experts and considered reliable for use with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of internal consistency of 0.739 for (SCAQ) and 0.913 for (SSS). The data collected by the researcher and research assistants. The statistical tools used to analyse the data were Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 while independent sample t-test was used to test hypotheses 4 and 5.

Results

Research Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between parents' level of education and career aspiration of students in senior secondary school in Gombe Metropolis.

Table 1: Results of Spearman Rank Correlation of the relationship between parents' level of education and students' career aspiration

Variable	N	X	S.D.	Rho.	sig.	Decision
Parents level of education	306	3.31	1.77	.044	.438	Accepted
Career aspiration	306	28.16	4.00			

Result in Table 1, shows that there is no significant relationship between parents level of education and students career aspiration. Spearman rank order correlation was used in testing the hypothesis. From table 4, the correlation value of $Rho = .044$ represents the correlation between parents level of education and students career aspiration while the sig-value of .438 represents the significance level. Based on the obtained correlation value ($Rho = .044$, $sig. = .438$, > 0.05), a statistically not significant relationship exist between parents level of education and students' career aspiration. This is because the obtained sig-value is $> .05$ level of significance. Based on the obtained result, the stated null hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis Two: There is no relationship between parents' occupation and career aspiration of students in senior secondary school in Gombe Metropolis.

Table 2: Results of Spearman Rank Correlation of the relationship between parents' occupation and students' career aspiration

Variable	N	X	S.D.	Rho.	sig.	Decision
Parents occupation	306	1.98	1.25	.080	.163	Accepted
Career aspiration	306	28.16	4.00			

Result in Table 2, shows that there is no significant relationship between parents occupation and students career aspiration. Spearman rank order correlation was used in testing the hypothesis. From table 5, the correlation value of $Rho = .080$ represents the correlation between parents occupation and students career aspiration while the sig-value of .163 represents the significance level. Based on the obtained correlation value ($Rho = .080$, $sig. = .163$, > 0.05), a statistically not significant relationship exist between parents occupation and students' career aspiration. This is because the obtained sig-value is $> .05$ level of significance. Based on the obtained result, the stated null hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between parents' socio-economic status and career aspiration of students in senior secondary school in Gombe Metropolis.

Table 3: Result of the Spearman Rank Correlation of the relationship between parents' socioeconomic status of education and students' career aspiration

Variable	N	X	S.D.	r.	sig.	Decision
Parents socioeconomic status	306	2.12	1.48	.129	.024	Rejected
Career aspiration	306	28.16	4.00			

Result in Table 3, revealed that there is significant relationship between parents' socioeconomic status and students' career aspiration. Spearman rank order correlation was used in testing the hypothesis. From Table 3, the correlation value of $Rho = .129$ represents the correlation between parents socioeconomic status and students career aspiration while the sig-value of .024 represents the significance level. Based on the obtained correlation value ($Rho = .129$, $sig. = .024$, < 0.05), a statistically significant relationship exist between parents socioeconomic status and students' career aspiration. This is because the obtained sig-value is $< .05$ level of significance. Based on the obtained result, the stated null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference between gender and career aspiration of students in senior secondary school in Gombe Metropolis.

Table 4: Result of the independent sample t-test showing gender difference on students' career aspiration

Career aspiration	N	Mean	S.D	df	T	Sig.	Decision
Male	149	27.59	3.92	304	2.492	.013	Rejected
Female	157	28.73	3.99				

Table 4, presents the results of the independent t-test on whether there is a significant gender difference in the career aspiration of senior secondary school students. The result showed that $t(304) = 2.492$ and $p = 0.013$. Since the p-value (0.013) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the hypothesis was therefore rejected. Thus, there was significant gender difference in the career aspiration of secondary schools students in Gombe Metropolis. It means female students have higher mean score than their male counterparts in terms of career aspiration.

Research Hypothesis Five: There is no significant difference between school type and career aspiration choice of students in senior secondary school in Gombe Metropolis?

Table 5: Result of the independent sample t-test on difference between school types on students' career aspiration

Career aspiration	N	Mean	S.D	df	t	p.	Decision
Private schools	52	27.37	3.86	304	1.563	.119	Accepted
Public schools	254	28.33	4.02				

Table 5, presents the results of the independent t-test on whether there is a significant difference between school type and career aspiration of senior secondary school students. The result showed that $t(304) = 1.563$ and $p = 0.119$. Since the p-value (0.119) is greater than the alpha value (0.05), the hypothesis was therefore accepted. Thus, there was no significant difference between private and public school in terms of career aspiration of secondary schools students in Gombe Metropolis. It means both private and public schools were the same in terms of career aspiration.

Discussion of findings

The study revealed that there is no significant relationship between parents level of education and students career aspiration. This result is in line with that of Clutter (2010), who sought to find out the relationship between parents' highest level of education and the career aspiration of the students. This was achieved by carrying out a correlation between students career choice and parents educational level. Results of this correlation indicated that the father's education level is insignificantly and negatively correlated with the students' career choice while that of the mother's was both positively and significantly correlated. This is an indication that the mother's level of education significantly influences the students' future careers.

The result of this study revealed that there is no significant relationship between parents' occupation and students' career aspiration. The negative correlation means that the students would choose careers different from those of their parents. This result is in line to that of Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2014), whose findings indicated that parental influence could not have significant effect on adolescents' career aspiration, and that perceptions of parental occupational satisfaction will not have effect on career choice of adolescents students in Badagry Local Government based on the following intervening variables such as sex, and type of school. The finding is also in line with that of Okeke (2002), who investigated the relationship between Kenyan secondary school pupils' achievement motivation and the educational/occupational levels of their parents. The results indicated that the father's occupation was insignificantly correlated with the pupils' need for achievement while that of the mothers was both positively and significantly correlated.

The result of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between parents' Socio economic status and students' career aspiration. This result is in line with that of Jungen (2008), who supported the view that parents' socioeconomic status has influenced on their

children's career aspiration. They noted that many parents due to certain personal likeness and social economic conditions of certain career persuade their children to study certain subjects that would lead to particular. Ferry (2013), identified schooling as one of the cultural and socioeconomic factors affecting the choice of a career. Davis (2009), found that parents that are very wealthy and rich would have programmed the kind of discipline or professions they want their children take to. For instance, they tend to have influence in students career aspiration for.

The result of this study revealed that there is significant difference between male and female in terms of career aspiration. This result is in line with that of Adamu (2013), in his study found a remarkable gender difference in occupational choice of students. Males were found to have preferred courses in social, science, persuasive and artistic while females favoured courses in social, clerical and science. Mburza (2002), investigated the relationship between gender and occupational choice of secondary school students in Borno State and found that there was significant difference between parents' occupation and students based on gender. (Momo and Ojugo 1999), carried out a study on gender difference in choice of courses on new entrants in Nigerian Universities; they found that there was a remarkable gender difference in choice of courses by new entrants into the Nigerian Universities. Males were found to have preferred courses in engineering, environmental studies, veterinary medicine and agriculture while female favoured courses in education, arts and administration. The result is also in line with the previous literatures reviewed in Nigeria (Akinboye, 1997), and those of western studies on gender differences in (Betz, 2005).

The result of this study reveals that there is no significant difference between private and public school in terms of career aspiration. This result is in line with that of Okwelle and Amakiri (2020), who conducted a research on Parental Background and the Career aspiration of Secondary School Students and found that there was no significant difference in the mean response of students' career aspiration from public and private secondary schools in Ahoada East Local Government Area.

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is no significant relationship between parents' level of education, parents' occupation and students' career aspiration but there is significant relationship between parents' socioeconomic status and students' career aspiration. It also concluded that there is significance difference between male and female students in terms of career aspiration but no significant difference exist between private and public school in terms of career aspiration.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

- ◆ Parents should not force students to pursue careers similar to their own against their will. This is because majority of the students indicated they would not choose careers similar

to those of their parents. A strong parent-child relationship is essential in shaping the students career aspiration. In this regard, it is recommended that parents should take time to discuss different kinds of careers with their children. Whenever necessary, the parents should guide their children in choosing a career and express satisfaction with the child's decision.

- ◆ School counsellors should educate the students to be aware of various environmental factors that might be influencing their career aspiration. They should also advice teachers and parents on how to prepare students at an earlier stage by choosing the right career.
- ◆ Government should intensify efforts to send trained Counsellors to secondary schools and primary schools to provide vocational, educational and persona-social services to the students.

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