

Factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria

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Abstract

Vocational choice refers to an occupation, which a person has followed for a period of years in which he/she is generally recognized to have become fairly an expert through experience. Vocational choice decision making is not an easy task, yet at one time or the other, individuals are faced with the task of making a choice of career, preparing for it and start making progress in it. The study investigated factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis. Two hundred senior secondary school students were randomly sampled from ten randomly selected senior secondary schools in the metropolis. A self-developed instrument titled "Factors Influencing Vocational Choice Questionnaire" (FIVCQ) was used to collect relevant data from the respondents. The instrument was developed on a 4 point Likert scale of SA, A, D, SD, which has subscales of parental, personal/social and school related factors within 10 items each. The instrument was validated, pilot tested and the reliability coefficient ascertained its reliability. The main finding of the study revealed that "Personal / Social Factors" was expressed to be the highest factor influencing senior secondary school students' vocational choice. Other factors as expressed by them are "School and Parental Factors". It was therefore recommended that school counsellors at all educational level should be trained to provide adequate and effective vocational guidance to students. And programmes like career day/week, vocational enlightenment programmes and other guidance programmes that are educative and informative should be sponsored in the school for students' benefit.

Keywords: Vocational choice, school counsellors, decision making, secondary school, Ilorin metropolis

Introduction

The problem of vocational choice has implication for national development. In every society, the quality of workers as well as their degree of satisfaction contributes directly or indirectly to the economic stability and the smooth running of the affairs of the nation. If workers are unable to derive satisfaction from their job, frustration will set in which will accompany decline in productivity and civil unrest. Occupation is seen as a way of life. It moulds one's character,

determine one's social status, income, style of life, choice of friends and physical and mental health (Denga, 1995). With Denga illustration, it means that the choice of occupation has a persuasive connection with one's entire way of life. One of the most difficult tasks confronting Nigerian society is how to make Nigerian youths make a realistic vocational choice that will enable them derive long lasting prospects, joy and satisfaction.

Oladele (2001) expressed that vocational choice is important

for the development of the Nigerian child as the happiness of an individual is in his/her career development is the happiness of the nation. The National Policy on Education (2004) placed emphasis on provision of career and vocational guidance. Okon (1984) added that one major goal of 6-3-3-4 system of education in Nigeria is to develop vocational competences among youths, and adults, so that they can contribute maximally to the national economic growth in their various occupational activities. The need for a well planned career education in Nigerian school is supported by various factors such as economic, social and political development among the emerging nations. Oladele further suggested that programmes need to be developed with lots of information for secondary school students about “self” and various jobs. Because students at this level need accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate vocational choice. If students are provided with adequate career guidance, they will make a realistic occupational choice which will give them satisfaction in their chosen job later in life (Makinde and Alao, 1987).

Statement of the Problem

The increasing phenomenon of unemployment of school leavers in Nigeria in recent time is attaining unprecedented dimension. Many unemployed youth roam about the street in most urban centres in Nigeria. This seems to reflect lack of vocational guidance for the youngsters when they were in school. Okon (1984) reported that most Nigerian youths are ignorant of career prospects; quiet obvious most of them have joined crew of delinquents, who take delight in terrorizing law-abiding citizens. This situation results from lack of planning and organizing system of vocational guidance in schools.

One of the deficiencies of the existing career programme in Nigerian schools is lack of vocational information that could facilitate vocational decision making. Similarly, parental intervention in the career choice of their children is a great concern. Most parents take delight in dictating careers that are at variance with ability, interest and aspiration of their children. In other to find a lasting solution to the problem of vocational choice which had affected job seekers and Nigerian employment status, studies have been conducted. Oladele (2001) researched on the problem associated with vocational choice of secondary school students and the major

finding revealed that societal influence play vital role on the adolescents’ self concept and vocational interest. To this end, the study is interested in finding out factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis. To find answer to this variable of study, the following research questions were formulated:

- ❑ What are the factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis?
- ❑ Is there any significant difference in the factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students based on gender, age and school locale?
- ❑ Is there any significant difference in the factors influencing vocational choice of secondary school students based on class level, religion, highest educational qualification of father and mother?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are drawn for the study:

- ❑ There is no significant difference in the factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students based on gender, age and school locale.
- ❑ There is no significant difference in the factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students based on class level, religion, educational qualification of father and mother.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is descriptive survey method. This design method has been acclaimed as the best whenever a research intends to describe existing current situation, prevailing practices and beliefs. The population for this study is all senior secondary school students in the metropolis while the target population is all senior secondary school students in the secondary schools that were randomly selected in the metropolis. Ten senior secondary schools were randomly selected and a total of twenty students were picked from SS 1 – 3 of each of these schools that gave a total of two hundred senior secondary school students that participated in the study. Researcher instrument was designed titled “Factors Influencing Vocational Choice Questionnaire” (FIVCQ) to

collect relevant data from the respondents. The instrument was framed on a Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree with subscales of parental, personal/social and School Related Factors with 10 items each. The instrument was pilot tested, validated and the reliability through test re-test with 0.86 confirmed the reliability status of the instrument. The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained. Some copies of the instrument were given to experts in measurement and

evaluation for validation and some corrected copies were given to five students outside the sampled schools ascertained their understanding of the language used in the questionnaire. The corrected copies were then administered personally by the researchers.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the study were reported with both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 1: Mean and Rank Order of Factors Influencing Vocational Choice of Senior Secondary School Students

Item No	As far as I am concerned:	Mean	Rank
16	I admire job where I can work together with people.	3.94	1 st
17	I do not like going into the same career as my friends.	3.93	2 nd
15	I like to choose a vocation that will permit me to assist the less privilege.	3.93	2 nd
14	I prefer an occupational that ensures stable and secure future.	3.93	2 nd
13	I will choose a career that will not go against my religion.	3.93	2 nd
11	I prefer a job that will permit the use of my special abilities.	3.85	6 th
30	my career choice wholly depend on my academic performance.	3.78	7 th
10	Parents' success in their respective jobs influences the career choice of their children.	3.78	7 th
21	my performance in school can help me in my career choice.	3.77	7 th
1	Parents' level of education has a great influence on vocational choice of their children.	3.77	9 th
12	I like to choose a career that will make me lead people.	3.75	11 th
27	subject teachers can make or mar my career choice.	3.74	12 th
7	children with good parental care usually aspire for prestigious professions.	3.74	12 th
28	my choice of subjects at senior class level can determine my future career.	3.74	12 th
8	illiterate parents give no vocational guidance to their children.	3.74	12 th
18	I will like to choose an occupation that will suit my health.	3.73	16 th
26	my school environment can influence my career choice.	3.73	16 th
6	children from rich home do have access to adequate career information.	3.73	16 th
29	student-teacher relationship can determine students' career choice.	3.72	19 th
9	the socio-economic status of a family determines the type of profession the parents would prescribe to their children.	3.72	19 th
19	I will not consider my parents' advice for my career choice.	3.68	21 st
23	I like the occupation that is similar to my school subjects.	3.65	22 nd
3	Parents' occupation can influence their children career aspirations to some extent.	3.65	22 nd
25	the school cannot choose a wrong careers for their students.	3.63	24 th
5	financial strength of a child's parents influences his/her career choice.	3.63	24 th
24	I will not need my teachers help to choose my career.	3.55	26 th
4	parents level of income influences the career choice of their children.	3.55	26 th
22	my school counsellor will help me to choose my career.	3.48	28 th
2	differences in parents' religious belief has adverse effects on her children career choice.	3.48	28 th
20	I will consider my friends advice before I choose my career.	3.47	30 th

With items 16, 17, 15, 14 and 13 that ranked 1st – 5th (2nd), it means those items reflected factors that influenced respondents’ vocational choice. While items 24, 4, 22, 2 and 20th that ranked 26th – 30th were less of factors that influence their vocational choice.

Research Question 1: What are the factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis?

Table 2. Factors Influencing Vocational Choice of Senior Secondary School Students

S/N	Factors Influencing Vocational Choice	N	Mean	Rank
1	Personal / Social Factor	200	38.15	1 st
2	School Related Factor	200	36.80	2 nd
3	Parental Factor	200	36.79	3 rd

Table 2 shows that senior secondary schools students expressed “Personal/Social Factor” as the major factor influencing their vocational choice. Other factors as expressed by them are “School Related Factor” and “Parental Factor” which has close means and were ranked 2nd and 3rd.

Hypotheses Testing

T-test and Analysis of Variance were used to test the hypotheses generated for the study.

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test of Respondents Based on Gender, Age and School Locale

Variable	Fre-quency	Mean	SD	Df	Calcu-lated t-value	Critical t-value
Gender						
Male	86	113.02	16.82	198	1.04	1.96
Female	114	110.60	16.10			
Total	200					
Age						
Below 15 yrs	100	111.09	18.50	198	-47	1.96
15 yrs and above	100	112.19	14.11			
Total	200					
School Locale						
Rural	31	111.32	18.93	198	0.25	1.96
Urban	169	111.51	15.32			
Total	200					

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students based on gender, age and school locale.

Table 3 shows that the calculated t-values for gender, age and school locale is lower than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significant. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. That is, gender, age and school locale of the secondary school students did not influence their expression on the factors influencing their vocational choice.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students based on class level, religion, educational qualification of father and mother.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance of Factors Influencing Vocational Choice of Senior Secondary School Students Based on Class Level, Religion, Educational Qualification of Father and Mother

Variable	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean	Calcu-lated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Class Level					
Between Groups	6191.65	2	3095.83	12.86*	3.00
Within Groups	7148.43	197	240.70		
Total	53610.080	199			
Religion					
Between Groups	501.888	2	250.94	0.93	3.00
Within Groups	53108.192	197	269.59		
Total	53610.080	199			
Educational Qualification of Father					
Between Groups	9717.229	3	3239.10	14.46*	2.60
Within Groups	43892.851	196	223.94		
Total	53610.080	199			
Educational Qualification of Mother					
Between Groups	3224.78	3	1074.93	4.18*	2.60
Within Groups	50385.30	196	257.07		
Total	53610.080	199			

*Significant, p < 0.05

Table 4 shows that the calculated F-value of class level, educational qualification of father and mother is greater than the critical values at 0.05 alpha level. This means that these variables influence respondents’ expression on the factors influencing their vocational choice. Religion on the other hand has a calculated F-value that is smaller than the

critical F-value. This implies that respondents' religion did not influence their expression on factors influencing their vocational choice.

Since significant differences were found based on class level, educational qualifications of father and mother, Duncan Multiple Range Test was employed as a post hoc test to find out where the significant difference lies.

Table 5. Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) of the Factors Influencing Vocational Choice of Senior Secondary School Students Based on Class Level, Educational Qualifications of father and Mother

Variable	Frequency	Mean	Duncan Grouping	Group
Class Level				
S.S. 3	38	116.95	A	1
S.S. 2	84	115.68	B	2
S.S. 1	78	104.71	C	3
Educational Qualification of Father				
S.S.C.E	43	115.72	A	1
OND/NCE/Sch. of Nursing	102	113.55	B	2
HND/First Degree	45	109.89	C	3
Post Graduate	10	82.50	D	4
Educational Qualification of Mother				
Post Graduate	6	120.00	A	4
HND/First Degree	63	114.24	B	3
OND/NCE/Sch. of Nursing	100	112.20	C	2
S.S.C.E	31	102.94	D	1

Table 5 shows that the means of the variables of class level, educational qualification of father and mother differs from each other. It means these variables were capable of influencing respondents' expression on the factors influencing vocational choice of senior secondary school students. With this, it denote that class level, educational qualification of father and mother influence their expression on the studied variable.

Discussion of Findings

The major finding of the study revealed that senior secondary school students expressed "Personal/Social Factor" to be the major factor influencing their vocational choice. This finding

agreed with Gesinde (1986) report that career choice is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interest, self concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and finance.

Gender, age, religion and school locale of the respondents did not influence their expression on the factors influencing their vocational choice. This finding means that these variables did not alter what the respondents express as factors that can influence their vocational choice. That is, based on these variables, they express their mind on the studied variable the same way.

Class level, educational qualification of father and mother on the other hand influence respondents' expression on the factors influencing vocational choice. This finding is backed with Gesinde (1986) words that parents generally would wish their children to achieve where they failed. To enable them achieve this, they ensure that they send their children to high-class school which exposes the children to good vocational choices.

Summary of Findings

The summary of the findings are:

- ❑ Personal/Social Factors was expressed to be the highest factor influencing secondary school students' vocational choice. Other factors are school and parental factors.
- ❑ Gender, age, religion and school locale does not influence the expressions of the respondents on the studied variable.
- ❑ Class level, educational qualifications of father and mother influence the expressions of the secondary school students on the factors influencing their vocational choice.

Recommendations

With the findings of the study, it is thus recommended that School Counsellors should be trained to provide adequate vocational guidance to students for a proper choice of vocation and their career. This will allow for more knowledge about vocational abilities in students and how to channel it for their personal interest and values.

Other programmes like career day/week should be organized in schools to expose and enlighten students mostly at senior secondary school level. This will go a long way to clarify issues on vocational choice among youngsters to eradicate youth unrest and societal evils perpetrated by adolescents due to wrong choice of career and joblessness.

Conclusion

The federal, state, local government, parents, teachers and education stakeholders should see where they can render assistance to educational sectors to clean up the mess that is facing the schools at all levels so that Nigeria can move forward.

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