ASSESSMENT OF THE CHALLENGES OF CAREER CHOICE AMONG SOME SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS IN TARABA STATE: CASE STUDY OF JALINGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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Abstract

This study was carried out to determine and assess the challenges of career choice among school students in secondary schools. This is also evident in universities where peers share experiences and influence one another. A good number of respondents also admitted that men are inclined by nature to be more skillful than women. The factors that had the least consideration included the cultural background of the respondents influencing their career choice and women generally not performing well technical professions. The study was keen to identify from the respondents if there are careers considered masculine or feminine. Majority (79.9%) stated that it was not so while 20.1% stated that it was so. Majority who stated that there are careers considered feminine and masculine were of the male gender (68.4%) while the female gender was 31.6%. despite the fact that majority of the female respondents felt that there are no careers considered feminine or masculine, the tabulation of gender and career choice revealed that female respondents were a minority in science, technology, none in engineering and mathematics. According to the findings of the study, all the independent variables investigated had influence on career choice of the sponsored undergraduate students of Compassion International. The study however indicated that role models had the greatest influence with an average mean score of 3.1. Peer and gender factors had an equal influence on the choice of career with an average mean score of 2.3. The results also indicated that family factors have the least influence on career choice with an average mean score of 1.86.

Keywords: Assessments, challenges, career choice, secondary schools Students

Introduction

Education is universally recognized as the answer to socio- economic problems of the world. Nations and individuals look up to education to provide a cure for poverty, ignorance, drought, excessive rainfall, mental deficiency, joblessness, bad government, poor communication system, hunger and inadequate shelter among other things. Every nation of the world aspires toward quality of life and social status. Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future plans. This decision will impact them throughout their lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what the students 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 students 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 the 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 example, 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 from a career are different, many people desire high income; others want adventures while some others 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.

Career choice has become a complex task among students in the face of ever changing technology in the information sector. The term career is broadly defined as all life time roles people play including students, parents, employees, retirees and employers (Salami, 2016).

Ferry (2013) reports that career choices are pivotal points in adolescents' lives. So no matter if they are headed for work or for college, there are factors that affect their career decisions. Career development, for most people, is a lifelong process of engaging the work world through choosing among employment opportunities made available to them. Each individual undertaking the process is influenced by many factors, including the context in which they live, their personal aptitudes, and educational attainment, (Bandura, 2015).

According to Kerka (2014), 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. Several studies show that new students all over the world are usually faced with a dilemma in making a career choice decision in their lives, (McMahon and Watson 2015). In his study of career choice of Nigerian youths, Salami (2016) found that many youths made wrong career choices due to ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, advice from friends, parents and teachers, or as a result of prestige attached to certain jobs without adequate vocational guidance and career counseling. Therefore, the concept of career development involves the person's creation of a career pattern, decision-making style, integration of life roles, values expression, and life-roles self-concepts (Herr, 2014 In the United States of America, some students choose to go through the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test which is administered by the Department of Defense. The test is called an aptitude battery because it predicts one's ability to learn skills for different kinds of work. The ASVAB tests general academic areas such as reading, math, and science, plus technical areas such as mechanical comprehension and electronics information. No items on military topics are included. The battery is based on extensive research on

the effectiveness of different types of tests for predicting success in a wide range of jobs (Izumi 2015). Students require guidance in order to make the right career choices.

McQuerrey (2015) 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. Fisher and Griggs (1995) identified six factors that may affect the career planning and development of students: parental influence, the influence of friends or peers, teachers' influence, ethnic-gender expectations, high school academic experiences and self-efficacy and negative social events. The college years are a crucial time for career-related decision-making.

Ipaye (2016), have revealed in various ways that gender is a significant factor that influences career choice, and have found in their respective studies significant difference between males and females in their career choices. Secondary school students tend to understand that there are jobs for males and there are others for females. This perception is due to ineffective vocational guidance. These research findings indicate that gender has effect on vocational interest. As students try to make career choice, they face problems of matching their career choices with their abilities and academic performance (Korir 2014). In most cases, the choice of careers, subjects, and courses of study and the subsequent career paths to follow are a nightmare for prospective undergraduate students. Career choice is a complex decision for students since it determines the kind of profession that they intend to pursue in life.

Statement of the Research problem

Many Countries, Nigeria included, spend a lot of resources in education. There should be a well thought out link between education and progression into careers and the world of work. Career choice has meaning in the context of employability demands in a knowledge economy. It is therefore very important to have an empirical understanding of the factors that influence students' choice of particular careers. Ignorance about one's career is not bliss and planning one's career is better than leaving it to chance or fate. Choosing a career is difficult and many students are unable to express any choice of career. A major turning point in adolescents' lives involves the career choice that they make while in high school. Frequently, it is viewed by family and community as a mere start to workplace readiness; however, this decision plays a major role in establishing youth in a career path that opens as well as closes opportunities, given the differences in the social and economic context of college-bound versus work-bound adolescents. College students are faced with the need to choose an academic major as well as to develop career goals for the future (Guerra, 2014).

Regardless of great effort put forth by families, government agencies and non-government agencies, many young people encounter difficulties in the transition from the world of school to that of work

(Atchoarena 2015). Waudo (2013) states that some students insist on studying courses where they clearly lack basic foundation in academic and attitude preparation. He further says that there are cases where students have enrolled in certain programs but later on discover they lack interest in the particular field, (Waudo, 2013)

Objectives of the study

This study is based on the following objectives;

1. Assess how family factors influence career choice among senior secondary school students in Taraba State.
2. Examine the influence of peers on career choice among senior secondary school students in Taraba State.
3. Establish the influence of role models on career choice senior secondary school students in Taraba State.
4. Determine how gender influences career choice among senior secondary school students.
5. Determine challenges of career choice among school students in secondary schools.

Research Questions

To achieved the following objectives, the study raised the following research questions

1. How do family factors influence career choice among senior secondary school students in Taraba State?
2. What is the influence of peers on career choice among senior secondary school students in Taraba State?
3. How do role models influence career choice among senior secondary school students in Taraba State?
4. How does gender influence career choice among senior secondary school students in Taraba State?
5. What are the challenges of career choice among secondary school students?

Research Assumption;

This study assumed that;

Government policies regarding admission of students in the secondary schools remain constant.

The respondents would have good understanding of the challenges that influence their career choice

Conceptual Clarifications

Career: This is a profession that involves special training or formal education. It is an individuals' journey through learning and working.

Career choice : Selection of a course of study which leads to a specific profession according to one's interest, passion and ability as influenced by factors such as parental factors, peers, role models and gender.

Factors influencing career: These are aspects that control the decision on a student's career

Gender: These are socially constructed and culturally variable roles that men and women play in their daily lives that distinguish between male and female.

Peer influence: Persuasion of friends to make a choice regarding a specific career Stereotype: Belief that students hold about careers perceived to be masculine or feminine.

Role models: people who have had great influence in the lives of the students such as high school teachers and child development workers.

Empirical Literature Review

Influence of family factors on career choice

Parents are the primary authority in influencing sex role, socialization, providing social skills training, promoting character development and developing a sense of responsibility. Sometimes parental influence tends to ignore the child's personal interest. Individual interest in making career choice is central in trait and factor theory of career decision making. In every endeavour of human life, interest of the doer is very crucial for success. In other words, career interest is defined as preference for specific life events that often play a major role in career decision making and choice, (Borders, 2015). According to Amoth (2014), studies show that rural students tend to seek help from parents more than urban students and that parents more than teachers play a major role in the career choice of students. Palmer and Cochran (2010) empirically tested the effectiveness of a program focused on career development with both parents and adolescents. The results from the study concluded that parents do function effectively in fostering the career development of their children when provided with a structured program to follow. When young adults move away from home (for college or for work), their family will likely still have a strong influence upon them on two significant life events marriage and their career. Although schools, peers, and the student's community all have an impact on the young adult's self-identity and career choice, the parent's expectations and perceptions of vocational fit for their children have been found to be the key roles in shaping their career choices (Akeredolu (2012).

One study (Creamer & Laughlin, 2015), this influence has been so strong as to override the influence of teachers, faculty, and career counselors, who likely know more about the career field in question but were not as well-known and/or trusted as the student's parents for this type of decision. Parents, who were positively involved with their children's career development and career choice, were enthusiastic about their children's career exploration and were emotionally and/or verbally supportive of the young adult's individual goals. No supportive parents, on the other hand, were unaware of what to do, how to help, or that their involvement is desired at all according to Middleton and Loughead (2013).

A negatively involved parent was in a much more precarious situation where the adolescent felt anxiety or resentment, regarding career decisions based on parental attitudes. Parents in this category may have overtly pressured their son or daughter to focus on a particular career path which went against what the child believed was best for themselves. Research shows that parents and caregivers

influence children's career choices with the mother being the most influential person the adolescent talks to concerning career choice (Otto, 2013).

Most individuals are introduced to work and family roles as children by observing their parents. Attachment to parents may continue to have a profound impact on multiple life roles as individuals become adults. While all parents want the best for their children, there is always the danger of them trying to "live their dreams" through their children. On the one hand, children may be subconsciously influenced to tread the same professional paths as their parents, keeping the trade in the family. Children may be discouraged from exploring and considering other non-traditional career paths, even if their natural abilities and talents are more in agreement with a different professional or career life than that of their parents. On the other hand, parents may also become overly-involved in career decisions because they want their children to be more content in a career than they are in their own jobs. Children may begin to identify and accept their parents' views and neglect to challenge them or assess their validity, with negative consequences on their own career choices (Dharsee 2015).

Kerka (2015) found that high parental involvement, including an active interest in children's school subjects, homework, grades, activities, emotional well-being and future aspirations, predict positive attitudes towards school and the future, better grades and better career decision making skills.

Middleton and Loughead (2013) found out that active parental involvement in children's career development has contributed to children's ability to individualize and follow their own career aspirations later in life. 13 Interactions between parents and children and among siblings are a powerful influence. Interactions can include positive behaviors such as showing support and interest and communicating openly, or negative behaviors such as pushing and controlling. By sharing workplace stories, expressing concern for children's future, and modeling work behaviors, parents serve as a context for interpreting the realities of work. Parent child connectedness facilitates risk taking and exploration, which are needed for identity formation in general as well as for the formation of vocational identity (Pastorelli, 2001).

Influence of peers on career choice

Wentzel (2015) observed that associating with friends that serve as academic and social resources could have a direct and positive influence on achievement outcomes at school. According to him, peers may have a less influential role than parents in influencing adolescents' career choice. Supportive friends or peers have a crucial influence on the career planning of students and making key life decisions Students' career planning is not only influenced by the overall supportive mindset of their peers but also by the opportunity to learn from them (Fisher 2015).

Stuart (2012) contends that peers' attitude toward gender and ethnicity may increase or decrease a person's confidence in pursuing a career. He further noted that adolescents are easily influenced by their peers because they rely on their friends to provide validation of the choices that they make including career decisions. A study by Berndt (2014) indicated that the best friend exerts strong influence on individuals and their choices. The finding led him to conclude that peer influence leads to an increase in friends' similarity of decisions. However concluded that although boys and girls are

positively influenced in equal measure by their friends' interest in computer science, boys seem not to be affected negatively by their friends' lack of interest in the discipline. Youth gain information concerning planning for future careers from a variety of sources including parents, teachers, and peers (Jeffries & Baysden, 2012). Youth who perceive their parents, teachers and peers as supportive are more likely to consider work as an important part of their lives, to seek leadership positions in their chosen field and to expect that they will be successful in their chosen careers (Grossman & Gallagher, 2013).

Wikelund (2016), found out that in Nigeria, many youths go into unsuitable careers due to a number of factors among them being peer pressure and advice from friends. Consequently, many of them are unsuited for their careers as they usually find themselves in jobs where they could not satisfy their value needs. When this occurs, they constitute nuisance to themselves and their employers. They are usually unable to contribute meaningfully to the society and ultimately become liability to the nation.

A research by Paa and McWhirter (2013) studied the extent to which peer pressures have on high school students' career choices. They reported that peers and parental influence do significantly influence the students' eventual choice, especially in circumstances when the specifics of the course program are not familiar to them. Winfield and Royster (2012) reported that peers do directly influence the future career aspirations and other future plans of students.

Influence of role models on career choice

Role models have been defined as people whose lives and activities influence another person in some way. According to Gibson and Cordova (2013), the early role models for individuals are normally their parents and then later it is usually someone who comes from a wider arena', meaning one who sometimes is not known personally by the individuals. Gibson and Cordova further observed that once children grow up and know other people and other environments then they will find people from multi and different backgrounds and professions whom they identify as their role models.

According to Bandura (2013), role models affect career choice directly and indirectly through their influence on self-efficacy. Individuals tend to seek role models who are similar to them in some easily identifiable way, such as gender or race (Karunanayake & Nauta, 2014).Identification with role models is critical in the career decision-making. By identifying with an outstanding role model, individuals can become inspired to pursue similar achievements process (Gibson, 2013).

In a study by Perrone (2014) on role model influence on the career decisiveness of college students, it was found that role model supportiveness, and quality of relationship contributed to the career choice of students. The same study indicated that majority of the students selected same gender role models. Gibson (2013) noted that persons tended to identify with multiple role models, except in cases where there was limited availability.

According to Brown D. (2013) exposure to role models through video or written materials increased student's likelihood of considering nontraditional careers. Betz (2015) noted the importance of role models and mentors in facilitating positive career development, particularly for women. Mere exposure to role models is not always sufficient. Role model supportiveness and relationship quality

are key characteristics of role model influence on career factors. Research has shown a relationship between role model influence and a variety of career related outcomes, including career maturity (Flouri & Buchanan, 2012), career aspirations (Nauta, Epperson, & Kahn, 2014), career indecision (Perrone, & Chartrand, 2012), career salience, attitudes toward nontraditional careers (Nauta & Kokaly, 2012), and career choice (DeSantis & Quimby, 2014). Indeed, researchers found that students who had observed a successful role model in a specific career field were more likely to report a preference for pursuing that career and to believe that they would be successful in that occupation (Scherer, & Wiebe, 2013).

Influence of gender on Career Choice

Gender is defined by Food and agriculture organization of United Nations (FAO) as 'the relations between men and women, both perceptual and material. Gender is not determined biologically, as a result of sexual characteristics of either women or men, but is constructed socially. It is a central organizing principle of societies, and often governs the processes of production and reproduction, consumption and distribution' (FAO, 2015). Gender relations refer to a complex system of personal and social relations of domination and power through which women and men are socially created and maintained and through which they gain access to power and material resources or are allocated status within society (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2000). Career has become an intrinsic factor in global economic developments. However, a decision on the choice of a particular career suit to one's interest is complex and poorly understood (AlMiskry, Bakar, and Mohamed, 2013).

People often select a job on the basis of experiences or exposures to the world of work. However, studies have shown that gender plays an important role in career choices. Male and female career choices are normally different because of the difference in their self-concepts (AlMiskry et al. 2013). According to Savickas and Lent (2014), it has been shown that females tend to score high in artistic, social and conventional occupations, while men are more likely to prefer realistic, investigative and enterprising occupations.

Greenberger (2012) stated that boys are still being steered toward the traditional 'male' jobs, which are higher paying while girls are still expected to cluster into the traditional fields of cosmetology, childcare, and other similar jobs. Skills present in males and females alike have been indicative of their vocational interests. Boys are shaped and groomed into stereotypic masculine careers and are given more status in the family (Grant 2014). However, Carter and Wojtkiewicz (2000) argue that female children receive more attention from parents than male off springs. They attribute the parents' behavior to the current emphasis on educational attainment for females. Mothers advising daughters that it's important to establish yourself in a career before you raise a family 'both constitutes and perpetuates particular gendered understandings between paid work and childrearing, (Medved & Brogan, 2016). These types of powerful messages, that start within the family, help lay the foundation of how young people will view their future career options, especially when the messages contain either overt or covert biases based on one's gender. Such messages, communicated from adults to

children, which focus on a person's ability due to their gender, may also increase or decrease a child's perception of his or her own skills or aptitude in certain areas (Woods, 2012).

At a conference organized by the Federation of African Women Educationists (FAWE), it was acknowledged that in many African states, girls are still restricted to studying what is perceived to be "soft option" Subjects, which has limited their access to scientific and technical disciplines in institutions of higher learning (Ramani, 2014). Part of this perspective may come from the routine socialization of women who are constantly and consistently exposed to messages that her life should revolve around caring for a family and her career plans are secondary (Cook, 2012).

The Role of the School towards Students' Career Choice

Career choice is a very central and topical issue at this stage of the students' conditions of study. This is thus the crucial stage with which the student's mind gradually being shaped to face the challenges of the transition to adulthood. Perhaps the first career question, which the student may ponder over, may be "what will I become after completing school? There are many things a student can become after completing the school. At this crucial stage, it is imperative that the student is exposed to a variety of career responsibility amongst themselves;

Career Education

The term career education is used to include those educational experiences and service provided at the elementary, secondary, post-secondary and adult levels, which help people to make more intelligent occupational of their choice, and to advance in their choosen field. All education should be directed towards preparing the individual for entry into and adjustment to the world of work (Osuala, 2012). Proper choice of career (Ogueze, 2008) leads to success and happiness and indeed is a prerequisite for self-actualization.

Career exploration begins in the secondary school

The career education at the Secondary School level is grouped into two parts; the career educators is junior secondary school (Jss) and senior secondary school (SSS). At JSS level, the progamme provide separate courses related to all fields of work. This includes opportunities for practical experience. Objective of career education in the (JSS) Junior Secondary school should be to:

Stimulated occupational interest

Provide exploratory prevocational experiences that involve specifics and occupational clusters.

While at the (SSS) Senior Secondary School level, the objective of career education in SSS is to provide. Provide advanced specific occupational training for specific occupations or occupational clusters to meet the specific needs of the individual. The question now is what are the subjects offered at the secondary school level that will enable these students to achieve their career target in life?

The Secondary School Subjects

In Nigeria educational system we operate 6-3-3-4 system of education. Primary school involves 6 years Junior Secondary school (SSS) 3 years Tertiary Institution 4 years Junior Secondary School

Subjects In the junior secondary school level the following subjects are involved; Elective Subjects: Three of the following subjects must be passed before such a students can proceed to junior secondary school year one; Physical and Health Education, CRS /IRK, Nigeria languages (Hausa), Yoruba, Ibo and Edo, Agricultural Science, Music, Arabic or French The Core Subjects:

At Jss level, all students' irrespective of the student's attitude, interest or future ambition must register and pass the following compulsory subjects. English Language , Mathematics, Social Studies, Integrated Science, Pre-vocational Subjects: At Junior Secondary school level, the students are expected to offer and pass at least nine from the following subjects introductory Technology, Business Studies, H.P.E, C.R.K, Social Studies, Home Economics, Food Nutrition, Agricultural Science Fine Arts or Local Arts. Though English language, Mathematics and Inter-science are very compulsory subjects.

Methodology
This section describes the overall methodology of the study to investigate the challenges of career choice among school students in secondary schools.it consist of research design, sources of data, method of data analysis as well as the description of data.

Research design
This study adopted a census survey design. This design was appropriate in describing the students' perception and attitudes on the challenges, influence of parents, role models, peer and gender on career choice.

Population of the Study
The target population of this study was 295 respondents. This population included 286 senior secondary school students in Taraba together with 9 teachers from each of the selected schools for the study.

Sample size and sampling procedure
This study was a census of some selected senior secondary schools students in Taraba state therefore no attempt was done at sampling the students. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), when the target population is small, taking the whole population would be advisable. Morris (2008) further says that when the population size is less than 300, the researcher can survey the entire population. In this study, the researcher surveyed the total population of 295.

Research instruments
The researcher used questionnaires to collect primary data. The researcher also used an interview guide to the nine staff who work as teachers in the selected senior secondary schools.

Technique of data analysis
Questionnaires filled by the respondents were edited for completeness and consistency. The data was checked for coding errors and omissions. The coded data was processed using statistical package for social science (SPSS) and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, mode percentages,

average mean and standard deviation. The researcher further organized the raw data into categories according to research questions and established expected theme categories for qualitative data. The results were then presented in tables.

Response Rate

The total population targeted by the study was 295 respondents. Out of these respondents, 2 were teachers who responded by use of an interview schedule while 293 were students. However, 284 out of 293 target respondents among students filled in and returned the questionnaire contributing to 97% response rate. The follow up done through emails and telephone messages offers an explanation for the good response rate obtained. This conformed to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) who recommended that for simplification a response rate of 50% is sufficient for scrutiny and exposure, 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent.

Table 1: Response Rate

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Returned questionnaires	284	97
Unreturned questionnaires	9	3
Total	**293**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.1 shows the response rate of 97%. The 9 students (3%) questionnaires that were not returned were due to rationale like; the respondents were not accessible to fill them in time. The response rate demonstrates willingness of the respondents' to take part in the survey.

Table 2: Respondents by gender

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	170	59.9
Female	114	40.1
Total	**293**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.2 shows gender distribution among the respondents who took part in the survey. 59.9% were male while their female counterparts were 40.1%. The findings suggest a gender imparity between the two sexes which can be attributed purely to more boys joining the university than girls.

Table 3: Career choice by gender

Career Choice	Male	Female
Law	2	2
Education	40	42
Information Technology	10	1
Entrepreneurship	5	1
Medicine	6	4
Engineering	13	0
Agriculture	2	0
Biotechnology	7	3
Architecture	1	0
Psychology/social work	8	7
Finance	35	27
Nutrition	0	2
Journalism	8	5
Designers	1	0
Public Relations	2	0
Scientist	8	5
Economics	7	4
Tourism	0	1
Marketing	2	2

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.3 shows an analysis of gender and the various careers that are being pursued by the respondents currently. There is fair distribution between the sexes with regards to careers like law, teaching, marketing, and social work while on the other hand there is unfair distribution of sexes in careers such as information technology where more males are pursuing it than females and the same applies to careers such as: biotechnology, medicine, architecture, finance, health, Agriculture, economics and Engineering where it is significant to note that among the female respondents, none is pursuing an engineering course. This is supported by the literature review that revealed women are a minority in Science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Factors Influencing career choice among Secondary school students in Taraba State

The rest of the chapter will address variables that affect career choice among Secondary school students in Taraba State.

Family factors influencing career choice

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the extent to which family factors influence their career choice. The findings are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4: Family Factors Influencing Career Choice

Description	Not At All	Low Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Very Great Extent	Mean	STD DEV	%
Parent career Uncle/auntie's	209	30	24	14	7	1.5	1.0	16
advice	154	41	51	22	16	2.0	1.2	22
Parent's advice	109	48	62	42	23	2.4	1.3	25
Sibling's advice	147	42	51	28	15	2.0	1.3	22
Sibling's career	220	27	25	6	5	1.4	0.9	15
Average Score	167.8	37.6	42.6	22.4	13.2	1.86	1.14	100

Tables 4 show findings regarding the family factors influencing career choices among the respondents. Most of the respondents suggested that their career choice was influenced by the advice of their parents having the highest mean of 2.4 (1.3) while uncles/auntie's and siblings advice were second having both means of 2.0 and standard deviations of 1.2 and 1.3 respectively. Parent's career and sibling's careers had the least means of 1.5 (1.0) and 1.4 (0.9) respectively.

Table 4.4 shows that 25% of the respondents felt that parent's advice had an influence on their career choice. This means that 75% of the respondents did not feel that parent's advice had an influence on their career choice. Uncle/auntie's advice and sibling's advice were at an equal percentage of 22%, while parent's career and sibling's career were at 16% and 15% respectively.

Peer Influence on Career Choice

Table 5 shows an analysis of the responses regarding peer influence on career choice.

Description	Not At All	Low Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Very Great Extent	Mean	STD DEV	%
Same career as Peer	178	46	34	16	10	1.7	1.1	18
Friend's advice	76	79	83	35	11	2.4	1.1	26
Mentorship by Friend	65	48	84	58	29	2.8	1.3	31
Friend's Approval of Career's Choice	113	61	57	31	22	2.3	1.3	25
Average Score	108	58.5	64.5	35	18	2.3	1.2	100

Peer influence on career choice was also of interest to the study and Table 4.5 shows the outcomes: mentorship of the respondents by their friends had the highest mean of 2.8 (1.3) followed by friend's advice having a mean of 2.4 (1.1) and friend's approval of career choice having a mean of 2.3 (1.3). Same career as peer had the least mean of 1.7 (1.1).

Table 4.5 shows that 31% of the respondents felt that mentorship by their friend had an influence on their career choice. This means that 69% of the respondents did not feel that mentorship by their friend had an influence on their career choice. Friend's advice, friend's approval and same career as friend were at of 26%, 25% and 18% respectively.

Gender Factors that influence career choice

The respondents were asked to state the influence of gender factors on their choice of career. The

findings are shown in Table 4.6.

Table 6: Gender Influence on Career Choice

Description	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STD	%
STEM career	170	80	19	9	6	1.6	0.9	10
Being male or female	88	58	64	62	12	2.5	1.3	15
Family commitments	78	73	37	81	15	2.6	1.3	16
Women's performance	120	81	43	30	10	2.0	1.1	12
Men's skills	95	57	52	70	10	2.4	1.3	14
Male dominated occupations	66	56	40	100	22	2.8	1.3	18
Men's inclination to skills	96	56	51	68	13	2.5	1.3	15
Average Score	**101.9**	**65.9**	**43.7**	**60**	**12.6**	**2.3**	**1.2**	**100**

The factor of gender influence of the career of the respondents was of pivotal concern to the study and Table 4.6 depicts that male dominated occupations are viewed as superior to female dominated ones had the highest mean of 2.8 (1.3) followed by the factor stating that society expects women to prioritize caring for their family as opposed to advancing their career having a mean of 2.6 (1.3) while men being inclined by nature to be more skillful than women had a mean of 2.5 (1.3). The factors that had the least mean included women generally not performing well in technical professions having means of 1.6 (0.9) and 2.0 (1.1) respectively.

Table 4.6 shows that 18% of the respondents felt that male dominated occupations are viewed as superior to female ones in their influence on their career choice. This means that 82% of the respondents did not feel that male dominated occupations are viewed as superior to female ones in their influence on their career choice. Society expects women to prioritize caring for their family as opposed to advancing their career was at 16%, while being male or female and men being inclined by nature to be more skillful than women were at an equal percentage of 15%. Men are naturally skilled in occupations that call for competitive and logical abilities; women do not perform well in technical professions and STEM careers were at 14%, 12% and 10% respectively.

Interview schedule response

The two staff from Compassion International office responded well to the interview. Both have worked in the sponsorship program for more than 4 years. The response rate was 100%.

According to Musa a teacher "students face major challenges regarding student's career choice. There is very little room for students to align their career choice with their gifts and talents because they have received very limited information on how one can align their gifting with a career. Students also lack exposure which tends to restrict their visions and choice of career".

Regarding the factors that influence career choice, the response was that role models, cultural perceptions, sponsor engagement with the students, exposure and perceived future income play a vital role in influencing student's career. Regarding the challenges faced by the sponsorship program related to career choice, Yator, a staff working with the students in the sponsorship program said that:- "some students select careers that seem prestigious yet they do not have the ability to succeed in them. They struggle to meet the minimum pass mark. Some are even discontinued by the university yet they would do better in careers of their interest".

The other challenge indicated was Indecision in terms of what a student wants to pursue in future. Students have very little exposure to the range of careers available and as such only choose careers that are common to them.

Discussion of findings

This study is in line with Mitchell and Krumboltz (2014), who stated that parents can have an influence on their child's career development by positively reinforcing or punishing certain behaviors that can encourage or discourage certain interests or abilities. This therefore means that family members play a significant role in the choice of career of the young people. In this study, parental advice played a role in influencing career among the sponsored students. Following closely were uncle's and auntie's advice on career choice.

A study by Berndt (2014) indicated that the best friend exerts strong influence on individuals and their choices. The finding led him to conclude that peer influence leads to an increase in friends' similarity of decisions. The results of this study concur with this since mentorship of the respondents by their friends, friend's approval of career choice and friend's advice were proved to have a great influence on their choice of career.

This research is in line with Perrone (2010) on role model influence on the career decisiveness of college students, who found out that role model supportiveness, and quality of relationship contributed to the career choice of students. This study revealed that students tend to be influenced most by the role model's career, followed by the mentor's advice, worker's advice and the least influence being high school teachers.

This study also revealed that gender factors play a role in influencing one's career. According to Savickas and Lent (2014), it has been shown that females tend to score high in artistic, social and conventional occupations, while men are more likely to prefer realistic, investigative and enterprising occupations. According to this study, more male students than female students pursue careers in engineering, biotechnology, architecture and economics. Majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that male dominated occupations are superior to women dominated ones and that society expects women to prioritize caring for their family as opposed to advancing their career.

From the findings of this study, majority of the respondents (78.9%) admitted that they would consider selecting their earlier career choices again if they were given another chance to select. However, 21.1% of the respondents admitted they would consider other choices different from the career choices they were pursuing. In addition to family factors, peer influence, influence of role models and gender, respondents indicated that other factors such as personal interest and passion, Joint Admission and Matriculation Board allocation of courses, technological trends and the demand in the job market also have an influence on career choice.

Conclusion

This study has successfully supported the fact that family factors do have an influence on career choice. According to this study, the family factors that had a great influence were parental advice and uncle's and auntie's advice on career choice. Parent's career and sibling's careers had the least

influence among these factors. Students are identified from needy families where the extended members of the family play a significant role in the lives of these students. This explains why uncles and aunties to the sponsored students still have a role to play. Peers influence each other in their choice of career. This study reveals that among the factors of peer influence that have a great influence included mentorship of the respondents by their friends and friend's advice. Friend's approval of career choice and same career as peer had the least influence according to this study. Students tend to mingle and share experiences owing to the fact that they share similar backgrounds. This offers the explanation why they mentor and advice one another. This is also evident in universities where peers share experiences and influence one another.

From the results of this study, gender has been seen to have an influence on career choice. The respondents expressed the fact that male dominated occupations are viewed as superior to female dominated ones and that society expects women to prioritize caring for their family as opposed to advancing their career. A good number of respondents also admitted that men are inclined by nature to be more skillful than women. The factors that had the least consideration included the cultural background of the respondents influencing their career choice and women generally not performing well technical professions. The study was keen to identify from the respondents if there are careers considered masculine or feminine. Majority (79.9%) stated that it was not so while 20.1% stated that it was so. Majority who stated that there are careers considered feminine and masculine were of the male gender (68.4%) while the female gender was 31.6%. despite the fact that majority of the female respondents felt that there are no careers considered feminine or masculine, the tabulation of gender and career choice revealed that female respondents were a minority in science, technology, none in engineering and mathematics.

According to the findings of the study, all the independent variables investigated had influence on career choice of the sponsored undergraduate students of Compassion International. The study however indicated that role models had the greatest influence with an average mean score of 3.1. Peer and gender factors had an equal influence on the choice of career with an average mean score of 2.3. The results also indicated that family factors have the least influence on career choice with an average mean score of 1.86.

Recommendations

i. The government of Nigeria has put in resources to enhance academic advancement of the children in the country. The government has further trained counselors in primary schools who take up the role of career guidance. The results of this study have shown that teacher's advice has the least influence on career choice. This study therefore recommends that the ministry of education should change its strategy from information and education only to information, education and exposure. Interaction of children with people pursuing diverse careers will influence them positively.

ii. Nongovernmental organizations that fund youth programs spend a good amount of their resources in academic advancement of the students. Results of this study have shown that

21.1 % of the respondents would change their course of study given the chance. 78.9% stated they would retain their current career line. The evidence of dissatisfaction in careers being pursued by students as brought out by the findings of the study calls for a more comprehensive approach to career guidance by all stakeholders which include parents, teachers and role models. This level of dissatisfaction need not be ignored. There is need to factor in gifts, talents and passion profiling of children from an early age.

iii. This study recommends a more comprehensive approach to career guidance and an exposure to technical careers among the sponsored students. This should however start in the early years of the sponsorship programs.

iv. This study recommends more robust career guidance by 51 these universities during their open days. By doing so, students whose schools are located away from the major cities would have the advantage of understanding specific courses and future careers during the open days

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