

Factors Influencing the Career Choice of Business Education Programme among Students in Colleges of Education in Delta State

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Abstract

In order to carry out this study, two research questions guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The entire population of 365 final year business education students in the three government owned colleges of education in Delta State was studied. A four-point rating scale questionnaire containing 14 items, which was validated by three experts was used for data collection. Cronbach alpha formula was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire and reliability co-efficients of 0.86 and 0.72 respectively were obtained with an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.79. The researcher administered the instrument with the help of three research assistants to the respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Findings of the study revealed that economic factors and societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students to a high extent in colleges of education in Delta State. The researcher concluded that economic factors and societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students to a high extent in colleges of education in Delta State. It was recommended among others that a functional scholarship board should be created by government to provide encouragement and persuasion among students regarding the pursuit of careers in business education programme in colleges of education in Delta State.

Keywords: College of Education, Business Education Programme, Career choice, Economic factors and Societal factors

Introduction

College of education is one of the post-secondary education institutions in Nigeria where pre-service teachers are rigorously groomed for the teaching profession. Institutionally, Onokpaunu (2023) submitted that colleges of education are teacher training institutions that provide full-time and remedial courses in instructional methodologies, learning styles, school management, behavioural and sociological dispositions of children, adolescents and adults,

philosophical and theoretical underpinning of subject matters as well as curriculum development of programmes across all areas of learning. Colleges of education offer specialized educational programmes that usually run for three years leading to the award of the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE). One of the specialized teacher training programmes offered in colleges of education in Nigeria is business education. Azih and Igboke (2017) averred that business education is a segment of vocational education programmes that prepare learners for optimum professional performance in corporate offices, teaching of business subjects in institutions of learning or starting and managing business enterprises.

In the same vein, Ezenwafor and Onokpaunu (2017) submitted that business education programme is a branch of vocational education concerned with exposing its recipients to the internal and external foundations and functioning of the workplace. The peculiarity of business education programme is found in offering lifelong education that will enable students to acquire the necessary job-oriented knowledge, attributes and skills to function independently at a high level in world of work (Okorafor & Onokpaunu, 2023). No wonder, Amoor and Aliyu (2014) posited that business education is a dynamic programme for instruction that educates students ‘about’, ‘for’ and ‘through’ careers. Career can be viewed as what a person is prepared, educated and trained to do for a lifetime. According to Okojide, Adekeye and Bakare (2018), career deals with all activities and actions that relate to one’s vocation, and job type or specification that has to do with a person’s work-life. Before choosing a career, students are often provided with a list of careers from which they are supposed to make a choice.

Choice is the outcome of a process which involves assessment and judgment; that is, the evaluation of different options and deciding about which option to choose (Okiror & Otabong, 2015). For a choice to be made; there needs to be two or more alternatives from which to choose. Career choice involves choosing one occupation over another. Hence, in order for career choice to take place, two conditions are necessary; availability of alternative career option and an individual/personal preference between these career options (Vaghela & Matimbwa, 2019). The issue of career choice in business education is sensitive because students’ subject preferences and career choice are highly influenced by certain factors. The numbers of career options/alternatives available to an individual at any given point in time are influenced by external factors (Igere, 2017) as well as individual factors (education, family background and attitudes). Career choice, therefore, is not uninhibited, rather, career choices are often constrained by socio-cultural factors (Braza & Guillo, 2015), individual

factors, personal and cultural values, significant relationships and structural factors such as barriers faced by women in certain career (Lawer, 2015).

Career choice entails the examining of one's own lives by exploring and evaluating a wide range of career options. Career choice, according to Issa in Okojide, Adekeye and Bakare (2018), occurs in broad sequential stages; starting from childhood till death. The earliest stage is often a non-realistic conceptualisation of one's potentials and the world. But with time, the child begins to be more realistic in appraising himself with potential jobs. This second phase normally extends from about the end of primary school to secondary school. The third stage is referred to as realistic choice making. It is a process of choosing an occupation which directs future life. Most career choices research has focused on predicting career choice behaviours based on personality or demographic variables (Nyamwange, 2016). So far, studies attempting to identify career choice influencing factors have largely focused on individuals' aptitudes, interests, and opportunities (Olamide & Olawaiye, 2013). Career choice is not a straightforward decision making process in a student life because it involves interplay of many factors such as the immediate environment of the students, talents, interest, passion and academic achievement on certain school subjects.

With these in mind, the study would focus on the economic factors and societal factors that influence career choice of secondary school students on business education programme. In a bid to engaged in jobs that pays higher, the economic returns and lucrative features of a career may influence the career choice of students. Economic factors are the monetary and non-financial incentives associated with a career. In the course of choosing a career, individuals are after financial stable jobs and the comfortable lifestyle that follows the job. Economic factors include high earning potentials and opportunities for advancement on the job (Njeri, 2013), along with job availability, stability and accessibility, individuals may even look ahead to the retirement packages that come with a career (Lawer, 2015). Economic factors could play an important role in career choice because careers that come with lucrative benefits and employment opportunities may influence the career choice of students (Kaneez & Medha, 2018).

Choosing a career from the economic perspective is not enough; the career should have social acceptability and recognition. Societal factors refer to the positive and negative opinions among members of a society on certain careers. The glitz of prestige, respect, value and recognition placed by the society may have significant impact in the career decision making process of students (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). For example, the society place a premium value on law education, accounting education, engineering education, medical

education than teacher education, music education and technical education on the basis that those education programmes are for academic misfits and persons from the lower rungs of the society.

A good number of undergraduate students are studying certain careers not because they were chosen willingly or carefully guided but due to certain circumstances beyond their immediate control. Consequently, some of these students after graduation; ends up engaging in a career that is totally different from what they studied in tertiary institutions. In recent times, lawyers have left the bar for music, medical doctors have left the hospitals for politics and bankers have left the banks for comedy business and so on in Nigeria. One then wonders, what are the underlining factors that influence the career choice of students in choosing business education programme in colleges of education? In a bid to find answers to this question, this study sought to determine the factors influencing the career choice of business education programme among students in colleges of education in Delta State

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, it is perceived that students are studying certain courses to please their friends even when they do not have the requisite mental capacity, physical strength and personal attributes for such courses. There are cases where students choose a career they may not have all the information about the career they are pursuing. Consequently, these students are admitted in tertiary institutions without having career talks from professional guidance counsellors. Thus, the problem of this study is that, there is a decline in quantity and quality of student enrolments in business education programme in colleges of education in Delta State. Again, there seems to be paucity of research works on the factors influencing the career choice of business education programme among students in colleges of education in Delta State. This is the problem that this study sought to solve.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine the factors influencing the career choice of business education programme among students in colleges of education in Delta State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. The extent to which economic factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students in colleges of education in Delta State
2. The extent to which societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students in colleges of education in Delta State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do economic factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students in colleges of education in Delta State?
2. To what extent do societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students in colleges of education in Delta State?

Method

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey research design involves a collection of opinions, attitudes or feelings of a population or its representative sample using questionnaire or interview to explain existing phenomenon. Descriptive survey research design makes it possible for the researcher to have a broad view from a sample of business education students in in colleges of education in order to draw conclusions regarding factors influencing their career choice of business education programme in colleges of education in Delta State. The entire population of 365 final year business education students in the three government owned colleges of education in Delta State without sampling. A structured and validated questionnaire containing 14 items on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot test. Copies of the instrument were administered to 15 final year business education students in colleges of education in Edo State who were not part of the research population.

Cronbach alpha formula was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire and reliability co-efficients of 0.86 and 0.72 respectively were obtained with an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.79. The researcher together with three research assistants used direct delivery method to administer copies of the questionnaire to 365 final year business education students in the three government owned colleges of education in Delta State. Out of the 365 copies of the questionnaire administered, only 307 copies (representing 84 percent) were successfully retrieved and used for data analysis. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question and determine the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' views. Decisions on the research questions were based on the grand mean in relations to the real limits of numbers. Therefore, items with mean ratings of 1.00 - 1.49 are rated Very Low Extent, those with 1.50 - 2.49 are Low Extent, those with 2.50 - 3.49 are rated High Extent and items with mean ratings of 3.50 - 4.00 are rated Very High Extent.

Results

Research Question 1

To what extent do economic factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students in colleges of education in Delta State?

Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings on the extent economic factors influence their career choice of business education programme

S/N	Economic factors	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1	I choose a career in business education programme because of the salary associated with it	3.18	.70	High Extent
2	I choose a career in business education programme because of the standard of living associated with it	3.27	.59	High Extent
3	I choose a career in business education programme because of the job security associated with it	3.07	.81	High Extent
4	I choose a career in business education programme in order to be self-employed	3.34	.67	High Extent
5	I choose a career in business education programme because of the availability of jobs associated with it	3.26	.92	High Extent
6	I choose a career in business education programme because I can easily secure employment	3.40	.76	High Extent
7	I choose a career in business education programme because of the job flexibility associated with it	3.05	.53	High Extent

Data in Table 1 show that the respondents agreed that the seven listed economic factors with mean scores ranging from 3.05 to 3.40 influence the career choice of business education programme among students to high extent. The grand mean score of 3.22 indicates that economic factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students to a high extent in colleges of education in Delta State. The standard deviations for all the items are within 0.53 to 0.92. This shows that the respondents are not wide apart in their ratings.

Research Question 2

To what extent do societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among secondary school students in colleges of education in Delta State?

Table 2: Respondents' mean ratings on the extent societal factors influence their career choice of business education programme

S/N	Societal factors	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
8	I choose a career in business education programme because of the respect associated with it	3.01	.64	High Extent
9	I choose a career in business education programme because the society likes it	2.77	.32	High Extent
10	I choose a career in business education programme because it will increase my status in the society	2.98	.56	High Extent
11	I choose a career in business education programme because it is popular in my immediate society	2.85	.48	High Extent
12	I choose a career in business education programme because my friends chose it	3.16	.60	High Extent
13	I choose a career in business education programme because members of the society talks about it all the time	3.00	.37	High Extent
14	I choose a career in business education programme because people who chose it are popular in my immediate society	2.62	.53	High Extent

Data in Table 2 show that the respondents agreed that the seven listed societal factors with mean scores ranging from 2.62 to 3.16 influence the career choice of business education programme among students to high extent. The grand mean score of 2.91 indicates that societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among school students to a high extent in colleges of education in Delta State. The standard deviations for all the items are within 0.32 to 0.64. This shows that the respondents are not wide apart in their ratings.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study revealed that economic factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students to a high extent in colleges of education in Delta State. This finding agrees with Amoah, Kwofie and **Baiden** (2015) which discovered that remuneration, job satisfaction, ease of getting a job and level of job security respectively highly influenced choice of career of students. The finding that economic factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students to a high extent is

supported by Ebenezer and Adam (2020) which discovered the lucrativeness and self-employment potentials attract students to certain careers. The researcher is of the view that the financial and non-financial incentives associated a career greatly influences students choice of career in business education programme

Findings of the study revealed that societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students to a high extent in colleges of education in Delta State. The finding is in line with Ausman, Javed, Ahmed and Samad (2013) which reported that social environment of students influenced their career choice. In other words, business education students in colleges of education are influenced by members of their society in their choice of careers. The finding that societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students to a high extent is in tandem with Amoor and Aliyu (2014) who reported that many students go into unsuitable careers due to the prestige and glamour the society attached to those careers. The researcher is of the opinion that the higher reputation placed by the society on certain career, the more students are drawn to undertake such careers.

Conclusion

Career choice is one of life important decisions. Based on the findings of the study, the study concluded that, economic factors and societal factors influence the career choice of business education programme among students to a high extent in colleges of education in Delta State.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

3. Delta State Government through its agencies should endeavour to collaborate with major stakeholders in ensuring adequate supply of instructional and infrastructural resources in secondary schools to enhance students interest in pursuing their career of choice in business education.
4. A functional scholarship board should be created by government to provide encouragement and persuasion among students regarding the pursuit of careers in business education programme in colleges of education in Delta State.
5. Management of colleges of education in Delta State should organize periodic career enlightenment programmes to inform students about the importance of choosing careers in business education to enable students make a mark in the world of work upon graduation.

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