

HOME FACTORS AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OGOJA EDUCATION ZONE OF CROSS RIVER STATE OF NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of home factors in terms of parental level of education, parental occupational status on career aspirations of senior secondary school students in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Two research questions were posed and two null hypotheses formulated to guide the study. The ex-post facto research design was adopted and through a simple random sampling technique, a sample of 720 senior secondary two students (386 males and 334 females) was drawn from a population of 18,445 senior secondary two students in the 90 public secondary students of 2023/2024 academic session in the Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State. The instrument used for data collection was the researcher designed 'Students Home Factors and Career Aspirations Questionnaire' (SHFCAQ). The contingency chi-square was used in testing the two null hypotheses stated for this study at .05 significant level. The findings of this study showed that home factors significantly influenced student's career aspirations. It was then concluded that home factors (parental level of education, parental occupational status) do influence career aspirations of senior secondary school students in the Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, it was recommended that parents should provide enough education and discuss their career prospects and others in the labour market more sincerely with their children.

Introduction

The most critical task facing many Nigerian secondary school students today is the decision making concerning appropriate career preference. This is as a result of absence of, or poor career guidance services in our secondary school system and the unwillingness on the part of the students to avail themselves of these services. The problem has become complex within the context of globalization and the effects of industrialization, technological development and urbanization which has resulted to increase in the range of career opportunities available in the world of work. Thus, making an appropriate career decision that will lead to effective employment and job satisfaction remains a challenge to the Nigerian secondary school student.

A person's career is one of the most important aspects of human endeavours because it involves one's total life. It determines one's income, choice of friends, pattern of dress, the extent of influence in the society as well as the amount of risk one is exposed to. Career is the totality of actions, positions and related activities involved in any vocation, occupation and jobs in an individual's lifetime of work. Career aspirations as defined by Petters, Asuquo & Eyo (2015), are the thoughts, feelings and fantasies that individuals visualize about their jobs which are capable of affecting their motivations and decision making in respect to their career choice.

This means that career aspiration is a process of development that incorporates ones decision making on his interest, aptitude, abilities, adequate knowledge of occupational information and influence of home variables.

One the crucial factors that influence student's career aspiration is the home factors. The home is an avenue where the entirety of human development takes place. It is a potent informal learning situation whereby family members, especially the parents and guardians act as educators. Young people form attitude about work and career as a result of interaction in the home which provides the basis on which a student's career planning and decision making evolves. According to researchers, home factors commonly found to be associated with student's career aspirations include parents socio-economic status (SES), level of education, family occupation, family type, home location and other biogenetic factors such a physical size, gender, ability and temperaments (Hewitt, 2015).

The world of work has become so vast, complex, and competitive that a good knowledge and understanding of some of the factors that may influence appropriate career choice becomes imperative. The lack of knowledge of influence of home factors have made setting appropriate

career goals difficult for young people at the senior secondary school level. This study therefore seeks to examine how home variables relate with career aspirations of senior secondary school students (SSII) in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Career aspiration has become a complex science with the advent of information technology, post industrial revolution and job competition. Today the individual has not only to make due career planning but also should be aware of information about the world of work and the requirements to access them before making career choices. Most of the students in secondary schools do not have adequate information about occupational opportunities in the world of work to help them make appropriate career choices so as to adjust with the evolving trend. This has led many to career frustration; job floundering, unemployment, underemployment and unemployability. The Nigerian youth today especially those from Ogoja Education Zone are not just unemployed, but suffer underemployment and unemployability as a result of inappropriate or misguided career aspirations and choices. It therefore becomes necessary to ask “Is there any relationship between Home factors and senior secondary schools student’s occupational aspiration?”

This study therefore seeks to examine how home variables relate with career aspirations of senior secondary school students (SSII) in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Aim and objectives of the study

Generally, the aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between home factors and career aspirations of senior secondary school students in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Find out the relationship between parental level of education and students’ career aspirations.
2. determine the relationship between parental occupational status and students’ career aspirations.

Hypotheses

This study will be guided by the following null hypotheses.

1. Parental level of education has no significant relationship with students’ career aspirations.

2. There is no significant relationship between parental occupational status and students' career aspirations.

Literature review

Parental level of education and students' career aspirations

Parental level of education is an indication of family status that has been regarded by many researchers as predictor of children's academic success. It is generally seen to have a direct association with individual's school outcome. Evidence provided by Brown, Waters and Shelton (2019), shows that secondary school student's educational outcomes and career aspirations are predicted by the educational level of their parents. They explained that parents with higher level of education provide greater opportunities for intellectual stimulation in their homes that aligns with occupational capital.

This agrees with earlier findings of Eccles (2011), Shumba and Naong (2012), and Gambo, Osagie, Salihu and Ogungbemi (2012), Mbagwu and Ajaegbu (2016). Their results revealed that teenagers whose parents are from high educational background are most consistent and do not have difficulties in making career choice when compared with those whose parents have low educational background

On the other hand, Roach (2018) and Okeke in Idowu and Dere (2018) disagreed with this. His findings supports Bakares' motivation model of external motivation. External motivation can come from parents, peers, school counsellors or teachers. It can also come from extrinsic reward such as good salary, and attractive working conditions and other factors including college career counsellors and peer influence.

Parental occupational status and students' career aspirations

Most often the careers or occupations embarked upon by parents tend to influence the career choices of their offspring. According to Williams (2016), a parent's occupation influences children's career choices both intentionally and advertently. Hairston (2020) noted that respondents with parent educators were strongly influenced to enter teaching. At a young age, respondents developed an understanding of the duties, responsibilities and lifestyles of a teacher and eventually began to consider teaching. The above findings confirmed those of Aswani (2012), Olaosebikan & Olusakin (2014), Okon and Archibong (2015), Ehigbo and Akinlosotu (2016) who agreed that generally, parents career orientation aid children in selecting

occupational goals, influence their knowledge of occupations and familiarize them with occupational roles and requirements.

Similarly, Williams (2016) and Wachira (2018) explained that parent's occupational level affects the vocational goals of young adults by influencing their aspiration to be similar to those held by their parents and by discouraging aspiration to level below the parental occupational status.

In contrast, Randwan and Gampat (2010), Shellenbarger (2016) and Njeri (2018) found minimal influence of parental occupation on their children choice of career, implying that depending on the influence of other factors, parents' occupational status had a very low influence on their choice of career.

Methodology

This study adopted the ex-post facto research design. This design was considered because of its capacity to ascertain the extent to which the independent variables have impacted on the dependent variable without the necessity for manipulation of the former. The population of this study consisted of all senior secondary two (SSII) students of 2023/2024 academic session in the ninety (90) public secondary schools in the Northern Education Zone of Cross River State. The stratified random sampling technique was used in the selection of schools, since the five (5) local governments do not have equal number of schools. Therefore, the schools were stratified according to their local governments and 40% of schools taken from each of the local government areas. The hat and draw method was used to select the number of schools that represent 40% of schools in the local government. This was to give equal chance to all the schools in each local government area to participate in the study. In the selection of the subjects, the simple random sampling technique was used. The sample for this study was made up of 720 SSII students (2023/2024 session), drawn from 36 public secondary schools sampled from the five local government areas that make up Northern Education Zone. The sample comprised 386 male and 334 female students with ages ranging between 12 and 18 years. The instrument used for data collection was the researcher's constructed "Home Factors and Students' Career Aspiration Questionnaire" (HFSCAQ). The data collected was analysed using the Chi - Square test statistic which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis one

Parental level of education has no significant relationship with secondary school students' career aspirations. The independent variable was the parental level of education. This was measured categorically using six (6) levels. On section A of the questionnaire viz: (i) no formal education (ii) first school leaving certificate (FLSC) (iii) senior school certificate examination (SSCE), (iv) OND/NCE (v) first degree (vi) higher degree. Therefore, the independent variable of this hypothesis was categorical with six (6) levels. Moreover, the dependent variable was the students' career aspiration, which was measured using eleven (11) levels of career choices. To this end, the dependent variable was a categorical variable with eleven (11) levels. Since, both the independent and dependent variables were categorical; the contingency chi-square analysis used.

TABLE 1

Summary of the results of the 6 x 11 contingency X² test of the relationship between parental educational qualification and students' career aspirations

Educational qualification	Architecture	Armed Forces	Accountancy	Banking & finance	Teaching	Engineering	ICT	Medical Sciences	Law	Entre/trading	Agric	Total	Df	χ^2 calculated	P-value
No formal education	2 (4.3)	11 (9.7)	9 (9.3)	22 (18.8)	6 (9.3)	11 (15.1)	5 (5.2)	37 (42.2)	14 (18.4)	11 (5.8)	21 (9.9)	149			
FLSC	3 (3.1)	7 (7.0)	6 (6.7)	18 (13.5)	0 (6.7)	8 (11.4)	2 (3.7)	33 (30.3)	23 (13.2)	2 (4.2)	5 (7.1)	107			
SSCE	4 (5.1)	10 (11.4)	3 (10.9)	17 (22.0)	10 (10.9)	24 (18.6)	7 (6.0)	43 (49.3)	27 (21.5)	12 (6.8)	17 (11.6)	174	50	127.200 *	.000
OND/NCE	6 (2.6)	3 (5.9)	8 (5.6)	10 (11.4)	7 (5.6)	14 (9.6)	2 (3.1)	26 (25.5)	5 (11.1)	4 (3.5)	5 (6.0)	90			
First Degree	6 (5.8)	11 (12.9)	14 (12.4)	21 (25.0)	24 (12.4)	25 (21.2)	7 (6.9)	58 (56.1)	22 (24.5)	5 (7.7)	5 (13.2)	198			
Higher Degree	0 (1.9)	7 (4.2)	2 (4.2)	14 (8.1)	4 (4.0)	0 (6.8)	5 (2.2)	24 (18.1)	6 (7.9)	0 (2.5)	2 (4.3)	64			
Total	21	47	45	91	45	77	25	204	89	28	48	720			

The 6 x 11 contingency χ^2 was computed. The value of the χ^2 co-efficient at .05 level based on the observed data are presented on Table 1.

From Table 1, the observed data frequencies for each cell have been presented. The expected values have been enclosed in brackets place directly below the observed frequencies. The results of the data evidence from the χ^2 statistics has a value of 127.200 ($p < .05$) while the P-value of .000 ($df = 50, \alpha = .05$). Since the P value of .000 was less than the calculated Pearson χ^2 value of 127.200; therefore the null hypothesis was rejected at .05 level. To this end, the study concluded that parental level of education has a significant relationship with students' career aspirations.

Hypothesis two:

There is no significant relationship between parental occupational status and students' career aspirations. In this hypothesis, the independent variable was the students' parental occupational status. This was measured using item 6 on sections A of the instrument. The item was categorical with four (4) levels viz: (i) farming/fishing, (ii) professional in public sector (iii) civil servant and (iv) self-employed/business. Each respondent was to select one and only one option. Therefore, the independent variable was categorical with four (4) levels.

In the same vein, the dependent variable was the students' career aspiration, measured using section C of the instrument. The item has eleven (11) levels of career choices from where respondents selected the most preferred. To this end, the dependent variable was also categorical. Since interest of this hypothesis was on the influence of a categorical variable with four levels on another categorical variable with eleven (11) levels, the 4 x 11 contingency chi-squared statistics was used at .05 levels of significance. The results are presented on Table 2.

From table 2, the observed and expected values of data obtained have been stated. The calculated χ^2 value of 121.823 ($p < .05$) from data evidence have equally been stated, more so, the P-value of .000 ($df = 30, \alpha = .05$). From data evidence, the calculated Pearson χ^2 value was greater than the P value; hence the null hypothesis was rejected at .05 level of significance. To this end, the study concluded that parental occupational status has a significant relationship with students' career aspirations in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State.

TABLE 2.

Results of the 4 x 11 contingency chi-squared of the relationship between parental occupation and secondary school students' career aspirations

Parental occupation	Architecture	Armed Forces	Accountancy	Banking & finance	Teaching	Engineering	ICT	Medical Sciences	Law	Entre/trading	Agric	Total	Df	χ^2 calculated	P-value
Farming/fishing	5 (5.9)	14 (13.1)	19 (12.6)	21 (25.4)	5 (12.6)	15 (21.5)	6 (7.0)	53 (57.0)	34 (24.8)	6 (7.8)	23 (13.4)	201			
Public sector	0 (1.8)	10 (3.9)	4 (3.8)	11 (7.6)	2 (3.8)	6 (6.4)	9 (2.1)	7 (17.0)	5 (7.4)	2 (2.3)	4 (4.0)	60	30	121.823	.000
Civil services	12 (6.1)	7 (15.2)	12 (4.6)	35 (29.4)	29 (14.6)	36 (24.9)	0 (8.1)	60 (66.0)	24 (28.8)	7 (9.1)	11 (15.5)	233			
Self employed	4 (6.6)	16 (14.8)	10 (14.1)	24 (28.6)	9 (14.1)	20 (24.2)	10 (7.8)	84 (64.0)	26 (27.9)	13 (8.8)	10 (15.1)	226			
Total	21	47	45	91	45	77	25	204	89	28	48	720			

Discussion of findings

Parental level of education and students' career aspirations: The result of this hypothesis shows that parental level of education has a significant relationship with career aspirations of senior secondary school students in Ogoja Education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The findings of this study agrees with the earlier studies of Shumba and Naong (2012), Gambo et al (2012) , Udoh and Sanni (2012), Aswani (2012) and Mbagwu and Ajaegbu (2016).

On the other hand, it contradicts those of Okeke in Idowu and Dere (2012) and Rorch (2018) who found that parent's level of education did not have an impact on the career selection self-efficacy of college students.

Notwithstanding these contradictions, the implications of these findings as explained by Brown et al (2019) are that educated parents have the habits, intellectual capital, belief in the benefits of, and willingness to expose adolescents to the various career and professions available in the world of work. They understand the importance of education and know that education is a social leveler and want their wards or children to enter into lucrative jobs.

Parental occupation status and students' career aspirations: The results of this hypothesis shows that parent's occupational status has a significant relationship with career aspirations of senior secondary schools students' in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. These findings agree with the results of Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2014) Ehigbo and Akinlosotu (2016), Williams (2016) and Wachira (2018).

In contrast, Randwan and Gampat (2010), Shellenbarger (2016) and Njeri(2018) all found that parent's career had minimal influence on respondent's choice of career choice.

Notwithstanding, the findings imply that parental occupational status influences children's career choices both intentionally or advertently. This, William (2016) noted that, it is not surprising that many people are in the third or fourth generations of their families to work in the same profession. This is because they have an insider's glimpse into their parent's occupations making it easier for them to break into the industry. Thus, it becomes important for career guidance to match student's parental background information with the student's interest; aptitude, needs and values in relation to labour market information for appropriate career plans.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between home factors and career aspirations among senior secondary school students in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The

conclusion reached from the findings of this study was that, home factors were found to have a significant relationship with student's career aspiration. Parental educational level and occupational status all contribute to providing the platform for motivating or inhibiting students' career aspiration and career choices of students.

Recommendations

1. Parents should provide their children with enough education and training that enable them enter or access various careers of their choices and satisfactory to their aspirations.
2. Parents should be honest enough to disclose advantages and disadvantages in their careers as well exposing their children to careers available in the world

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