



INFLUENCE OF INFORMATION USE AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ON CAREER CHOICE OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT:-

This study investigated the influence of information use and demographic characteristics on career choice of adolescent students in Nigeria. A correlation research design was used and 15% representing 1,922 SS3 students of 14,414 adolescent students were sampled from 48 public senior secondary schools in South-West Nigeria. The survey instruments titled "Influence of Information Use, Demographic Factors and Career Choice Questionnaire" (IIUDF-CCQ) were administered. Data generated were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and Pearson Moment Correlation and Regression analysis. The findings revealed that information use ($r = .461, P(.000) < .01$), sex ($r = .673, p(.000) < .01$), parent education ($r = .514, p(.000) < .01$) and parental occupation ($r = .501, p(.000) < .01$) were strongly and positively related with career choice of adolescent students while religion ($r = -.325, p(.02) < .05$) and family structure ($r = -.214, p(.000) < .01$) are negatively related with career choice of adolescents. Finding also revealed that career information sources used and demographic characteristics significantly influence career choice of adolescents in South-West Nigeria ($R^2 = .851, \text{Adj. } R^2 = .848, F = 254.541, P(.00) < 0.5$). The study recommended that provision of career services in Nigeria public secondary schools should be arranged and this should be expanded to the adolescent parent. Such provision and expansion should perhaps provide for a separate career centre.

Keywords: Adolescent students, career choice, career information sources, demographic characteristics

Introduction

Career is a concept derived from Latin and French words denoting a pathway, racecourse, or a course of action (Collins, 2006). It is a process that describes or explains the choices that adolescent students make when selecting a particular career or vocation. Career also helps to identify different factors involved in adolescent students' career choice and provides an understanding of the way these factors have an impact on their career choices. Career choice can lead to career decision making and they are both synonyms and often used interchangeably. Career choice is a sequence of profession, job or vocation, which adolescent engages in during his working life. It takes a reasonable amount of years to achieve a particular career, for example ten, fifteen and twenty years duration.

Career development and choice should be initiated as early as the nursery school year through the primary, secondary and to the tertiary institution level (Brown, 2004). Career choice is a developmental process, extending over almost one's life span, through which adolescent students develop the capacity for and engage in career choosing as part of their total life style, that is, career education aims at helping adolescent students to investigate vocational, domestic and civic outlets for developing interest and abilities.

Today, one does not only need to make due career planning but also exhaustive career research before making career choice so as to adjust to the evolving socio-economic condition. Most adolescent students in secondary school do not have accurate information about career opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice. Career choice is influenced by multiple factors including demographic



characteristics like age, religion, family structure, parental level of education, occupation and available information resources. Information relating to career can be gotten from the internet, books, government and non governmental agencies, news media and other possible sources. These sources are tangible and organized collections of processed data, whether in print, microfiche or held through social network. Many sources of career information that are available from the indigenous knowledge system are relevant for improving the knowledge of the adolescents. On the other hand, career information can be acquired through print or non print media. It could be transmitted in print, orally, audio-visually, telegraphically or electronically. Effective use of these aforementioned career information sources may improve adolescents' ideas and as well lead to generation of new information which is not a scarce resource (Momodu, 2002).

It is believed that adolescent students in Nigeria may not have access to adequate and reliable information sources relating to their career. More so, career choices may likely be influenced by some demographic characteristics such as age, religion, family structure, parental level of education, and occupation. Some adolescents who make wrong choices may experience career frustration later in life. It is in the light of this that this study sets out to investigate the influence of information use and demographic characteristics on the career choice of adolescent students in South-West Nigeria.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Historical Concept of Adolescents Career Choice

Career choice can be defined as a process that describes the choices that a person makes when selecting a particular career. It also helps to identify different factors involved in a person's career decision and provides an understanding of the way these factors have an impact on their career choices (Sharf 2002). The term 'career choice' noticeably occurred in 1900 but the term did not become an accepted terminology until 1979. Frank Parsons first introduced the concept in 1909 (Patton & McMahon 1999). He discussed the ways careers are selected in his book 'Choosing a Vocation'. Parsons (1909) suggested that vocational choices should be based on three broad factors: "(1) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambition, resources, limitations and knowledge of their causes; (2) knowledge of the requirements, conditions for success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts". These three broad factors of vocational choice provided simple guidelines for individuals to consider when choosing their career

and emphasized the importance of individuals having an understanding of themselves, their career alternatives and how to use information for rational career choices (Jones 1994).

Parsons' theory of vocational choice, however, has remained extremely influential and his ideas became the foundation for later career development theories which focus on the relationship between individuals and career or work environments (Sharf 2006). The significance of Parsons' three broad factors is that they help individuals to gain a better understanding of themselves and their career alternatives and therefore enhance an individual's ability to make effective career choices. These factors continue to form the foundation for the current theoretical approach to career choices. In the 1950s and in subsequent years, there were many changes to career policies and the social environment of many countries. These changes led people to seek better career opportunities (Inkson 2007). In 1979, Michael Krumboltz introduced his 'social learning theory of career decision-making' and for the first time the term 'career choice' was used (Brown 2002). Krumboltz's (1979) social learning theory of career development is considered to be an important development for career choice theory as it introduced the concept of career and established a conceptual framework for understanding how individuals make career choice during different stages of their life (Sharf 2006).

2.2 Career Information Use and Career choice of Adolescent Students

Birks (2003) was of the opinion that information use is a dynamic, interactive social process of inquiry that may result in the making of meaning or the making of career choice. The inquiry cycles shows consideration of part on the whole and between practical detail and general assumptions. Participants clarify, and challenge each other's representations and beliefs. Choices may be made by personal intuition, political advocacy, as well as by rational analysis. Adolescents as information users, for example, study in an environment that has been described as information overloaded, socially constrained, and politically laden.

As new information is received and as the people reflect and act on the problem situation, the perception of the situation changes, giving rise to uncertainties. The problem situation is redefined, the adolescent students must seek new information, and the cycle iterates until the problem of career choice is considered resolved in the student's mind. The information structures and processes will have to be as open, flexible, and vigorous as the processes of inquiry and career they support. Choo (2000) said that in post primary institutions of learning, information is used by students to create knowledge, knowledge not just in the sense of data and facts, but knowledge in the form of representations that provide meaning and context



for purposive action. Adolescents in the secondary school therefore behave as sense makers who utilize information in action for career decision-making, and information use becomes a hermeneutic process of inquiry, in which understanding is realized through interpretation dialogue (Birks 2003).

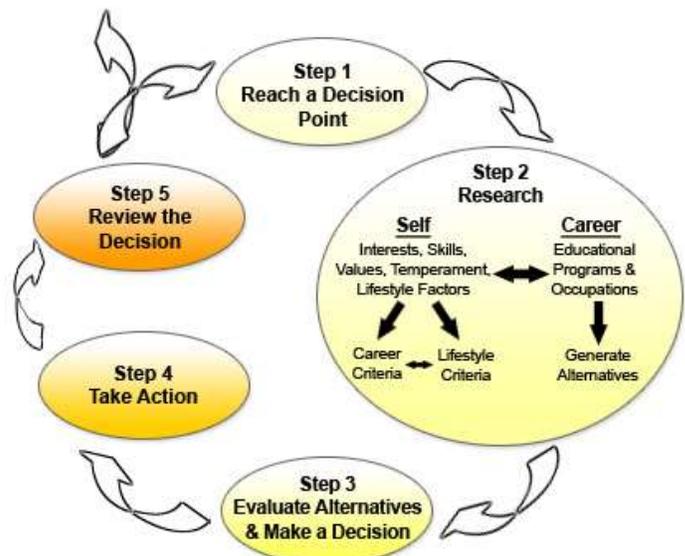
Many information system development projects have focused on improving the quality of data available to students' career decision makers. Projects with such limited focus result in only un-sustained improvements and often fail to achieve their intended impact. Experience suggests three key components to the successful development of a culture of information use. Information use reorienting the student's information system towards career choice is important. "Good information" is accurate, reliable, and readily available in a timely manner, easily accessible for people career choice relevant to adolescents' information needs to support the activities, and usable by intended users. Just as for central users, the "right information" for civil society has to be accurate, easily available, relevant and understandable. Given the low level of infrastructure and capacity to use information in South Western Nigeria, the meaning system cannot rely on information technology or other resource-intensive mechanisms for accessing data, nor should they be too technically challenging for students.

The use of information entails building capacity to use information for career choice of adolescent students. While this capacity includes technical ability to use information for planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluating, accessing, and researching career decision, it also includes "soft capacities" such as the ability to use information in dialogue and debate around education. It is counter-productive to concentrate efforts on building capacity in data-driven assessment if the beneficiaries do not receive complimentary skill building to enable them act on this assessment. The results is to engage policy maker to create career choice for students. Okwilague (2000) contends that the use of information for career choice tends to raise the demand for information. Where ensuring the quality of information is largely a technical issue, building demand for information implies a change in the attitudes of individuals, institutions, libraries and secondary school students to make career choice. Demand is built by raising awareness about the benefit of information use, attending workshop, debating and exerting pressure on education actors to use information. This entails understanding the interests of stakeholders and including information use in those interests, creating incentives for information use for career choice of adolescents.

2.3 Career Choice Model

This study is anchored on the career choice models which are primarily concerned with the process of adolescent students' career choice, with a view to describing and explaining different ways in which they select career options and guiding them in all fields in making the right career decisions. The decision to situate the study within the information use and career development theories is informed by the need to assist prospective candidates seeking admission into universities to understand the total development processes as they prepare to make career choices in life. The use of information is very important for career choice. It enables the adolescent students to be vigilant within their environment and therefore make choices that would be relevant and beneficial to them. In line with this direction, this study has adopted the career choice model (as indicated in figure 1).

Fig 1: Career Choice Model



Source: Adopted from Sampson (1992)

Information use is considered as a tool that helps to bridge the gaps which adolescent students lack to make career choice. Hence, all variables are independent with the interface of information use. The model suggests that there is a relationship between the use of information and the students who will make career choices. Therefore, information use is a tool and adolescent students are the actors (independent variable) while career choice is dependent variables. The model creates



awareness on how the variables in the study relate and interact for adolescent student’s career choice effectiveness. The model enables the researcher to envision the level of information gaps and possible implications for effective career choice of adolescent students. The model also enables young adolescent students to reach a decision making point. The process involves understanding where they want their interest or education and occupation to fit into their lifestyle. It determines which values; skills and interest that they want to satisfy in their educational program or in their future career and assesses what student’s personalities are and how this will be expressed in their occupational role.

III. Methodology

The study adopted correlation research design. The population consisted all adolescent students in Public Secondary Schools in South-west of Nigeria. A proportionate sampling technique was used to select fifteen percent (15%) of 14,414 adolescent students from 48 public senior secondary schools in South-West Nigeria. Therefore, a sample of 1,920 adolescent students was used for the study. The survey instruments titled “Career Information Resources, Demographic Factors and Career Choice Questionnaire” (CIRDF-CCQ) was administered. Data generated were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, Pearson Moment Correlation and Regression analysis.

IV. Findings

4.1 Respondents Information

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Information

Respondents Information		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	1200	62.5
	Female	720	37.5
	Total	1,920	100.0
Religion	Christianity	910	47.4
	Islam	893	46.5
	Traditional religion	31	1.6
	Others	86	4.5
	Total	1,920	100.0
Family Structure	Intact	1490	77.6
	Divorced	401	20.9
	Remarried	29	1.5
	Total	1,920	100.0
Parental Level of Education	NCE	687	35.8
	HND	451	23.5
	First Degree	330	17.2
	Master Degree	173	9.0
	PhD	279	14.5
Total	1,920	100.0	
Parental Occupation	Civil Servant	649	33.8
	Traders	553	28.8
	Farmer	432	22.5
	Others	286	14.9
	Total	1,920	100.0

Table 1 presents the percentage distribution of respondents’ information. The findings revealed that 62.5% adolescent students were male while their female counterparts were 37.5%. This indicates that majority of the adolescent students sampled for the study were male. Also, the religious distribution of adolescent students in South-West signified that 47.4% and 46.5%

were Christians and Muslim while 1.6% were traditional worshippers and 4.5% practiced other religions. This result indicates a very close figure for Christians and Muslim, but still majority of the adolescents students in South-West were Christians. Findings also revealed that majority of family structure of adolescent students in South-West Nigeria were from



homes that are intact (77.6%) while 20.9% and 1.5% were from divorced and remarried homes. Furthermore, parental level of education of adolescent students in South-West ranged from NCE to PhD with 38% of the majority having First Degree and 35.8% and 14.5% were NCE and PhD holders, while 9.0% had Master

Degree. Lastly, the parental occupation distribution of adolescent students in South-West Nigeria indicated that 33.8% of the majority students claimed that their parents were Civil Servants, while 28.8% were traders, 22.5% were famers and 14.9% were in other occupations.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Information Sources Used by adolescent students for career choice in South-West Nigeria

S\N	Career Information Source Used	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	S.D
1	Television (TV)	832 (43.3%)	453 (23.6%)	593 (30.9%)	42 (2.2%)	2.60	1.15
2	Magazines	373 (19.4%)	793 (41.3%)	703 (36.6%)	51 (2.7%)	1.88	.81
3	Newspapers	455 (23.7%)	660 (34.4%)	772 (40.2%)	33 (1.7%)	1.87	.83
4	Internet	128 (6.7%)	460 (24.0%)	1160 (60.4%)	172 (9.0%)	1.64	.95
5	Consultation with Colleagues (friends)	121 (6.3%)	455 (23.7%)	1171 (61.0%)	173 (9.0%)	1.63	.95
6	Radio	121 (6.3%)	451 (23.5%)	1184 (61.7%)	164 (8.5%)	1.62	.94
7	Books	108 (5.6%)	456 (23.8%)	1198 (62.4%)	158 (8.2%)	1.60	.92
8	Debates	107 (5.6%)	457 (23.8%)	1198 (62.4%)	158 (8.2%)	1.60	.92
9	Counselors	-	-	964 (50.2%)	956 (49.8%)	1.50	.50
10	School library	-	-	1919 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)	1.00	2.28



Table 2 reveals the extent of career information use by adolescent students in South-West Nigeria. The result signified that 69.9% of the adolescent students agreed that they utilize information heard from television in making their career decision. Therefore, television was ranked more than any other career information sources (\bar{X} =2.60, S.D=1.15). In conjunction with the career information from Television, a 60.7% of adolescent students claim that they used career information from magazines and 58.1% used newspapers while 30.7%, 31%, 29.8%, 29.4% and 29.4% used career information found from internet, friends/colleagues, radio, books, debates and counsellors respectively. But none of the adolescent students used career information from school library. This is expected since no information was available for career choices in school library as indicated by the respondent students. School managements are therefore advised to equip their school libraries and allow their students full access to it.

The finding deduced that, among the three available sources that are claimed by the adolescent students as

being more available (i.e. counsellors, magazines and television) only information got from counsellors were not used by adolescent students in making their career choice decision. This could be as a result of unsociable behaviour of counsellors allocated for adolescent students in public secondary school in South-West. Television and magazines were claimed to be more used by adolescent students in Southwest. This is not amazing because each household in South-West Nigeria has television sets at home; therefore, adolescent students are expected to be more pleased with career information programmes commonly showing on television. In addition, utilization of career information from magazines by adolescent students could be as a result of graphical illustrations that are always presented in magazines. However, low utilization of career information from newspapers and the internet by adolescent students could be as result of cost of buying newspapers or accessing internet and literacy level of adolescent students in understanding the grammatical illustration in newspapers. While low utilization of career information from radio by adolescent students could be as a result of low level of their listening ability and non-appealing nature of radio, that is, non-graphical.

Table 3: Correlation matrix showing the pattern of relationship that exists between Career Information Source Used, Age, Religion, Parental Education, Parental Occupation and Career Choice among adolescent students

	CC	CIS	Age	Rel	FS	PE	PO
Career Choice (CC)	1						
Career Information Source Used (CIS)	.461**	1					
Sex	.673**	.150*	1				
Religion	-.325*	.202*	.080	1			
Family Structure	-.214**	-.108*	.512*	.051**	1		
Parental Education (PE)	.514**	.188**	.358*	.364	.231*	1	
Parental Occupation (PO)	.501**	.184**	.133*	.131**	.431*	.980**	1

** Sig. at .01 level, * Sig. at .05 level



Table 3 demonstrates the relationship pattern that exists between career information used, age, religion, parental education, parental occupation and career choice of adolescent students. The findings exemplified that career information used ($r = .461, P(.000) < .01$), sex ($r = .673, p(.000) < .01$), parent education ($r = .514, p(.000) < .01$) and parental occupation ($r = .501, p(.000) < .01$) are strongly and positively related with career choice of adolescent students while religion ($r = -$

$.325, p(.02) < .05$) and family structure ($r = -.214, p(.000) < .01$) are negatively related with career choice of adolescents. Surprisingly, findings of this study are that as religion and family structure are negatively related with career choice of adolescent in South-West in Nigeria, conversely the information sources used, sex, parental education and occupation are positively and significantly related with career choice of adolescent students in South-West Nigeria.

Table 4: Joint Influence of Career Information source used, Age, Religion, parental education and Parental occupation on career choice of adolescent students in South-West Nigeria

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	44.132	1.234		22.227	.000
Career information sources used	.540	.131	.202	4.107	.000
sex	.456	.080	.449	5.668	.000
Religion	.321	.121	.355	2.531	.011
Family structure	.334	.213	-.413	-4.107	.000
Parental Education	.612	.145	.127	2.662	.003
Parental Occupation	.819	.180	.628	2.290	.000

$R^2 = .851$

Adj. $R^2 = .848$

F = 254.541

Sig.: 0.000

The parameter estimates in Table 4 complies with a priori expectations which explain that the career choice of adolescent in South-West Nigeria is grossly dependent on career information sources used and demographic factors (sex, religion, family structure, parental education and occupation). Considering the magnitude 1% increase in career choice of adolescent is brought about by 20% variation in career information used, 45% variation in sex, 36% variation in religion, 41% variation in family structure, 13% variation in parental education and 63% variation in parental occupation. The estimated value of R^2 of 0.851

indicates that 85% systematic variation in career choice of adolescent is caused by variation in information used and demographic factors. Therefore, career information sources used and demographic factors are good predictors of career choice of adolescent in South-West Nigeria. Furthermore, the overall significance of the entire model or the goodness of fit of the model as measured by the F-statistic shows that the calculated F-statistic value of 254.541 at 5% level of significance indicates that career information sources used and demographic factors significantly influence career choice of adolescents in South-West Nigeria.



V. Conclusion and Recommendations

The decision of adolescent students in choosing appropriate career depends mostly on the career information sources used and demographic factors like age, religion, family structure, parental education and occupations. Practically, it is not easy for adolescent students to choose appropriate career in their life without considering the aforementioned demographic factors with availability and use of career information sources. The study confirmed that information sources used, sex, parental education and occupation are

positively and significantly related with career choice of adolescent students, while religion and family structure are negatively related with career choice of adolescent in South-West, Nigeria. The study therefore concluded that the career information sources used and demographic factors are good predictors of career choice of adolescent in South-West Nigeria. The study recommended that provision of career services in Nigeria public secondary schools should be arranged and this should be expanded to the adolescent parent. Such provision and expansion should perhaps provide for a separate career centre.

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