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Psychosocial Factors Influencing Vocational Choice Among Senior Secondary School Students In Sokoto State Implications For Counselling

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ABSTRACT
The study investigated Psychosocial factors influencing vocational choice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto State implications for Counselling. The study have two objectives, two research questions and two hypotheses. The study employed descriptive survey research design with total population of 18,671 and sample of 361 obtained through Raosoft sample size and used purposive sampling technique. The instruments titled questionnaire on career choice which was validated by exports in the Department of Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, Sokoto State University. The scores from validation of experts were used to obtained validity index of 0.86 and reliability index of 0.836, mean and standard deviation were employed for the descriptive data while hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the study showed, Self-concept has no significant influence on vocational choice of Senior Secondary School Students in Sokoto State, Competence has no significant influence on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State, The study concluded that a student's understanding of their own abilities, potentials, and self-perception in the world of work (self-concept) is a fundamental prerequisite for making a realistic and appropriate vocational choice, the possession of adequate vocational knowledge, information, and skills (competence) is crucial for empowering students to navigate the complex process of career selection confidently and effectively,. The study recommended that school guidance and Counselling units should develop and implement regular psycho-educational programs and workshops focused on self-concept clarification. These should use aptitude tests, interest inventories, and value scales to help students develop a robust and realistic understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, Counsellors should establish a comprehensive career information resource centre within schools. This centre should provide up-to-date information on various occupations, their requirements, and prospects, thereby directly enhancing students' vocational competence,
Keywords: Career, Self-concept, Competence

INTRODUCTION

The quest for survival to any man is very important and that is why man strives for the best continuously in order to satisfy his desires. And due to individual differences and the competing changing nature of

human society, man is saddled with options and duties of making choice to satisfy his desires or ambitions. The process of making choice is complex and unique for each individual depending on cognitive factors and the social structure of the individual. Cognitive factor which may refer to individual mental ability and reasoning, while social structure include the family background, school and friends an individual associate himself with. The word choice refers to the act of picking or deciding between two or more possibilities.

Vocational choice simply is the selection of vocations from given alternatives (Tor-Anyiin, 2018). According to Kolo (2020), Vocational choice is the selection or picking up of a career, which one has the potentials of entering.

Vocational choice is a process in which one not only chooses a career but also enters it; it plays role in establishing youth in a career path that opens as well as closes opportunities. In making vocational choice students needs to define themselves appropriately and to have knowledge of vocational information genuinely at their disposal.

According to Kerka (2020), vocational choice can be influenced by several factors including personality, interests, self concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and expected occupational financial benefits. Students' undertaking the process of career selection may be influenced by several factors such as, the context in which they live in, their self concept, skills, personal aptitudes, attitudes, interest, social contacts and educational attainment. According to Hewitt (2020), factors influencing career choice may either be intrinsic or extrinsic or both. However, in making vocational choice, students' may be influenced by vocational maturity or development.

Vocational maturity is a constellation of physical, psychological and social characteristics that can influence how an individual does in a given career. According to Edet (2018), it is central to a developmental approach to understanding vocational behaviour and involves an assessment of an individual's level of career progress in relation to his or her career-relevant development tasks. It refers, broadly, to the individual's readiness to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions and cope with career development tasks (Splavers, 2017). Vocational maturity evolves through life stages characterized by specific vocational developmental tasks, competencies and knowledge. It includes individual self concept which encompasses a robust knowledge of oneself in relation to the world of work. It also involves one's interest, attitude and competencies or skills to make informed vocational choice. Thus, a vocationally matured student is one who may have positive vocational self concept and competencies, skills, right attitude and interest needed for him to make realistic vocational choice. However, a good knowledge of vocational information at one's disposal may ultimately position one to have competence or skills, interest and attitude towards making an informed vocational choice that could be worthwhile. Therefore, vocational maturity involves individual level of vocational self concept, interest, attitude and competencies or skills in relation to individual vocational preparation and selection. It is the level of one's development in a career or profession he is preparing to choose or enter emphasizing on vocational self concept.

Vocational self concept refers to how an individual think or regards himself, irrelevant of what other people think about him in the world of work or either in a vocation he is about to choose or he has chosen. According to Ezeahurukwe (2021), the more realistic an individual is in terms of understanding of himself as well as the characteristics of different vocations, the better his choice of vocation be satisfied. Students require the understanding of themselves in relation to the world of work especially when making vocational choice. It is the Knowledge of oneself and how one regard himself in the world of work that can simply be referred to the vocational self concept. Ezenndu, (2023) observed that possible limited learning experiences, levels of vocational maturity, career and self knowledge can mediate the vocational or career decision-making process of students. Students should have a good understanding of themselves, their personality, if they are to make intelligent career plans (Splaver, 2017). Indeed, student who lack positive vocational self concept may be endangered to making unrealistic vocational choice.

Tor Anyi'in (2018) opined that religion as a social institution refers to one's relationship with God and members of the society. It is an inseparable factor from vocational aspirations, preference, choice and

entry since no society exists without a religion which guides its members. Thus, religious influence on vocational guidance cannot be overemphasized, since each religion has its doctrine which influences adherents lifestyle and behaviours, and so vocational choice. This is because religion, firstly determines one belief, social interaction and responsibilities, or roles together with obligations. For instance, Islamic religion prohibits taking of alcohol and pork. This implies therefore, that Muslims cannot work comfortably in a beer brewing industry or abattoir where pigs are slaughtered. This means that the religious affiliation can influence vocational aspirations, preference, choice and entry.

The above implies that counselling psychologists must understand a client's religious background and the conflicting situations before venturing into the vocational guidance. Counsellors must bring out students from the shackles of religion. Students must be made to know the difference between spiritual survival and economic surviyal.

Competencies are the abilities of an individual to accomplish a task properly. Students' competencies or skills to make career decisions that reflect decisiveness, self-reliance, independence, and willingness to compromise between personal needs and the requirements of career situation is important variable of vocational maturity. In view of the above students need to demonstrate competencies or skills to make vocational choice. Students' making vocational choice must be competent to examine himself in order to determine his ability or skills in relation to the career he is about to chose or enter. It is individual ability or skills to make an informed vocational choice that will tell how well they will fare in chosen vocation. According to Ubana (2018), competencies are what people indeed to be successful in their jobs; it include all the related knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes that form a person's job. Competencies can be a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills, behaviour and values necessary to improve performance; or as the state or quality of being adequately or well qualified, having the ability to perform a specific role like career selection (Allen, 2020). Students who are deficient in vocational information may not be knowledgeable and competent to make a justifiable vocational choice that will be in tandem with their skills and abilities.

Attitude is the readiness of individuals to consciously or unconsciously act or react in a certain manner to achieve a purpose. Vocational maturity includes one's characteristics during prevocational development like his attitude and interest. Therefore, individual attitudes toward vocational preparation are indices that may measure students' level of vocational maturity or development and by extension career choice making. Crites (2021) model of career maturity consists of affective and cognitive dimensions. The cognitive dimension is composed of decision-making skills; the affective dimension includes attitudes toward the career decision-making process. Students' disposition to subject selection or vocational selection is an indication to the level of their vocational maturity or development. To make vocational choice, right attitudes should be displayed by students'; he should personally seek for information about occupational opportunities to help him make appropriate career choice because, just as physical and intellectual development can be stunted if appropriate interventions are not applied, so can the normal developmental process of vocational development be stunted if appropriate interventions are not available in a planned, systematic way.

Furthermore vocational interest may also be indices of someone who is vocationally matured. Vocational interest can be defined as individual's likeness toward particular occupation. It can mean ones desired vocation. Interest is a very significant factor that may influence occupational choice (Akume, 2020). Parent, peer group, relatives, environment and government policies may have influence on individuals' career interest (Myburgh, 2015); however, according to Uyar (2021), personal interest may also have major influence on career choice of individual.

However, many Nigerian secondary school students' have neither the understanding of themselves nor the diversity of vocations that are available as well as the necessary prerequisites for jobs. Most of the students' do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice. A number of the students, according to Henseley (2020), manifest lack of interest in the vocation, incompetence and lack of ability to cope with the courses they are studying. Hassan (2018) observed that many Nigeria students have incongruent patterns between the aspirations

and do not know their vocational interest, ability and therefore do not know subject combinations for the school certificate examination.

In addition, studies outside and within Nigeria have revealed that adolescent vocational choices, preferences and aspirations are haphazard and often result in malaise such as: inefficiency, frustration, strikes, tension, conflicts, and low productivity (Hassan, 2018). This situation has given birth to a lot of vocational misfits which is not good in Sokoto in particular and country in general. Therefore, the importance of guiding our students to explore potentials and navigate through the vocational maturity in other to make realistic career choice can never be over looked. A wrong vocational choice can lead to job lost, absenteeism, frustration, poor attitude to work and work dissatisfactions. The consequence can be huge on the state and country's development in general. Consequently, this study will focus on psychosocial factors influencing vocational choice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto State to be able to proffer solutions to the problems.

Statement of the Problem

Most senior secondary school students do not have adequate vocational information. Vocational choice is a crucial decision every young adolescent must make at a certain stage in life. This choice is often made at the senior secondary school stage. They begin this choice by the selection of school subjects in their senior secondary school class. The researcher's personal observation shows that some secondary school students in Sokoto State are not properly guided to choose school subjects that reflect their academic strength in the preceding class. This may be because of the observed insufficient and unavailability of professional guidance counsellor in most of the schools in Nigeria including Sokoto state. It is noted that the problem of career choice is compounded by the present state of the country; inadequate professional like the Guidance Counsellor in our secondary schools to offer career guidance to the students' on subject combination that may lead him to future job ambition.

The above have exposed some of the students to making unrealistic choices of subjects that they are most time not able to cope with; thus, many of them leaving secondary schools without adequate awareness of the diversity of occupation available in the work force. Due to the above reason, most of the students make wrong vocational choices because they are vocationally immature in terms of low vocational self-concept, inability to match vocational choice with vocational competencies/skills, wrong attitudes and interest to occupational preparation. A vocationally matured student ideally should have a positive vocational self-concept, and vocational competence to take vocational decision; but, it is observed by the researcher that most of the secondary school students in Sokoto State have low vocational self concept, and concrete vocational competencies/skills, to make vocational choice thus making vocational choice based on unprofessional opinion, selfish personal emotion and ignorance. It has the tendency to lead the students to continuous or constant work dissatisfaction, career frustration, job insecurity, job instability which can lead to vocational maladjustment in future.

This has been a major worry to the students and stakeholders like parent, clan heads and chiefs. It is therefore imperative that something be urgently done to arrest this ugly trend because if the situation is allowed, they will continue to make irrational and unrealistic vocational choice and then end up in uninspired jobs like pushing wheel barrow, okada riding which is the popular name for commercial cyclist. In the light of the above, the researcher intends to investigate the psychosocial factors influencing vocational choice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto State: implications for counselling.

Objectives of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to determine the psychosocial factors influencing vocational choice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto State: implications for counselling. the study was also guided by the following specific objectives. These are:

1. To determine the influence of self-concept on vocational choice of senior secondary school student in Sokoto State.
2. To evaluation the influence of competence on vocational choice of senior secondary school student in Sokoto State.

Research Questions

In pursuance of this study, the following research questions are proposed.

1. What is the influence of self-concept on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State?
2. What is the influence of competence on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance;

1. Self concept has no significant influence on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State.
2. Competence has no significant influence on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State.

Review of Literature

Josep O. (2023) This study examined the influence of self-concept on the adolescent career choice among public senior secondary school students in Ika North East L.G.A of Delta State. To achieve the purpose of this study, three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated. Related literatures were reviewed in this study. Ex-post facto research design was adopted. The population of this study was 2000 comprised of all public SS2 students in Ika North East Local Government Areas, Delta State. A sample size of hundred (100) students was used. The instrument for the study is a questionnaire, titled: self-concept scale, and career rating scale. The instrument was validated through expert judgment. Cronbach Alpha method was used to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.99. Frequency count and the Chi-square (X2) contingency coefficient were used to analyze the stated research questions and hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that there was a statistical significant relationship between gender and the career choice of adolescent students. There was no statistically significant relationship between the career choice of adolescent students with a high self-concept and adolescent students with a low self-concept. There was no statistically significant relationship between location and the career choices of adolescent students. It was recommended among others, that since guidance and counselors play a vital role in assisting students to make choices concerning careers, the government should employ career guidance and Counsellors in all secondary schools in the Ika North East Local Government Area of Delta State.

Bohnick C., Kohlmeyers and Heike M.B (2017). Examined in contrast to other career choices, the teaching profession seems familiar to those interested in teaching because they have had the chance to observe teachers for years. This phenomenon is known as the apprenticeship of observation and manifests in naïve ideas and expectations of teaching among teacher students. Therefore, characteristics of students interested in becoming teachers are important for early teacher education and Counselling. These characteristics include competencies and motives, but nothing is known about their relationship to each other. Following international teaching standards and the expectancy-value framework, this paper analyses associations between both. Three competencies (i.e. planning, communication and cooperation) and seven career choice motives were examined using a paper–pencil survey of 907 high school students. Altogether, 463 students were able to imagine becoming a teacher and were included in the analyses. SEM analyses showed that (1) of all the competencies, communication had the most associations with motives, (2) the motive ‘low difficulty of study’ is positively related to planning, (3) the findings regarding extrinsic motives are ambiguous, and (4) gender differences are marginal. Practical implications for early teacher education and Counselling are discussed.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. Descriptive survey design is a type of quantitative research that entails studying a group of people or things by gathering and evaluating data from a small number of individuals or things that are thought to be representative of the entire group in Shehu, (2015). The population of this study consists of selected public senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. There are 42 senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis, with total population of Eighteen thousand six hundred and seventy-one (18,671) students. The sample size for this research

comprises of 361 senior secondary schools two (SS II) students in Sokoto metropolis. The sample size was obtained, with the aid of Rosorft sample size calculator (2023) A proportionate sampling technique was employed in order to have equal sample of respondents from each of the selected schools based on their population.

The instrument for this research is and adapted questionnaire titled career choice questionnaire. The career choice questionnaire has four (4) sections namely section A, B, C, D with (5) five items each, section A contain self-concept and vocational choice, section B contain competence and vocational choice, section C contain section D, contain interest and vocational choice. The questionnaire has 20 items each section contain 5 items. Face and content validation was done by experts from Department of Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, Sokoto State University and the validity index of 0.86 was obtained. And Test re-test method was used reliability co-efficient of 0.836 was obtained. Mean, standard deviation and frequency counts, percentages was used to answer research questions while. Hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance, using the SPSS statistical package.

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question One: *What is the influence of self-concept on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State?*

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Influence of Self-Concept on Vocational Choice

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	I make choice because I am aware of my potentials	4.52	0.61	Agree
2.	I make right career choice because I do know several occupations that befit me	3.89	0.78	Agree
3.	I make career choice because I am sure of my career plan	4.31	0.69	Agree
4.	I make appropriate choice because I know and understand myself	4.45	0.58	Agree
5.	I make proper vocational choice because I have positive development about vocation	3.95	0.84	Agree
	Cluster Mean	4.22	0.70	

The results in Table 1 show that the mean scores for all items in the self-concept cluster are above the decision point of 3.50. The cluster mean of 4.22 with a standard deviation of 0.70 indicates that the respondents strongly agreed that self-concept has a positive influence on their vocational choice.

Research Question Two: ***What is the influence of competence on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State?***

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Influence of Competence on Vocational Choice

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
6	I possess information in order to equip myself in making good career choice	3.72	0.91	Agree
7	I make career choice because I am certain of where to get career information	3.58	0.95	Agree
8	I make appropriate career choice because I have appropriate skills aptitudes to career information	4.21	0.65	Agree
9	I make realistic career choice because I certainly do consult the professionals.	3.68	0.88	Agree
10	I do make appropriate career choice because I possess career knowledge	4.05	0.72	Agree
	Cluster Mean	3.85	0.82	

Table 2 reveals that all items had mean scores above 3.50. The cluster mean of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 0.82 demonstrates that students agree that their vocational competence, in terms of knowledge, skills, and access to information, significantly influences their vocational choices.

Hypotheses Testing

The null hypotheses were tested using a one-sample t-test, with a test value of 3.00 (the midpoint of the 4-point scale). A significant t-value ($p < 0.05$) leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis One: Self-concept has no significant influence on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State.

Table 3: One-Sample t-test for the Influence of Self-Concept on Vocational Choice

Test Value = 3.00

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Concept	361	4.22	0.70	33.14	360	.000*

*** $p < 0.05$*

The result in Table 3 shows a calculated t-value of 33.14 with a significance level of .000, which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that self-concept has a statistically significant influence on the vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State.

Hypothesis Two: Competence has no significant influence on vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State.

Table 4: One-Sample t-test for the Influence of Competence on Vocational Choice

Test Value = 3.00

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Competence	361	3.85	0.82	19.81	360	.000*

*** $p < 0.05$*

Table 4. Indicates a significant t-value of 19.81 ($p = .000 < 0.05$). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that competence has a statistically significant influence on the vocational choice of senior secondary school students in Sokoto State.

Summary of Major Findings

The analysis of the data led to the following major findings, all of which were statistically significant:

1. Self-concept has a significant positive influence on the vocational choice of students.
2. Competence (knowledge, skills, and access to career information) has a significant positive influence on the vocational choice of students.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study are discussed in relation to the research objectives and the existing literature reviewed.

Finding on hypotheses 1 is in agreement with study of Josep O. (2023) with showed that there was a statistical significant relationship between gender and the career choice of adolescent students. There was no statistically significant relationship between the career choice of adolescent students with a high self-concept and adolescent students with a low self-concept. There was no statistically significant relationship between location and the career choices of adolescent students.

Finding on hypotheses 2 showed that competence has no significant influence on vocational choice of Senior Secondary School Students in Sokoto Metropolis.

This is in agreement with the studies of Bohndick C., Kohlmeyers and Heike M.B (2017) which reveled that (1) of all the competencies, communication had the most association with motives, (2) the motive low difficulty of Study is positively related to planning, (3) the findings regarding extrinsic motives are ambiguous and (4) gender differences are marginal.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. A student's understanding of their own abilities, potentials, and self-perception in the world of work (self-concept) is a fundamental prerequisite for making a realistic and appropriate vocational choice.
2. The possession of adequate vocational knowledge, information, and skills (competence) is crucial for empowering students to navigate the complex process of career selection confidently and effectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School guidance and counselling units should develop and implement regular psycho-educational programs and workshops focused on self-concept clarification. These should use aptitude tests, interest inventories, and value scales to help students develop a robust and realistic understanding of their strengths and weaknesses.
2. Counsellors should establish a comprehensive career information resource center within schools. This center should provide up-to-date information on various occupations, their requirements, and prospects, thereby directly enhancing students' vocational competence

Implications for Counselling

The findings of this study have profound implications for the practice of counselling psychology in Sokoto State and similar socio-cultural contexts:

Need for a Holistic Assessment: Counsellors must adopt a holistic approach when assisting students with vocational choices. An effective assessment must go beyond academic grades to include an evaluation of the student's self-concept, level of vocational competence, personal interests, and the socio-religious context that shapes their worldview.

Counsellor as an Information Provider: The counsellor's role must expand to that of a resource manager and information specialist. In an environment where access to career information may be limited, the counsellor is the primary bridge between the student and the world of work.

Ethical and Culturally-Competent Practice: Counsellors must practice cultural competence by respecting and understanding the deep-seated religious values of their clients. The goal is not to challenge these beliefs but to work within them to help the client find a vocation that ensures both economic survival and spiritual peace, as hinted at in the literature.

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