

Career Counselling in a Post-Modern Era among Undergraduates in a Tertiary Institution in Ondo State, Nigeria

Joseph Kayode ADEYEMI

adeyemikayodejoseph@yahoo.com

Department of Guidance and Counselling

Faculty of Education

Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State.

Abstract

Career Guidance and Counselling is a vaguely implemented concept in most educational institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations. The severity of the problem and scarcity of relevant information among university students have prompted the undertaking of this study. The study was conducted using descriptive survey research design. A sample of 200 first to third year students was randomly selected from the six faculties of the University. The data for this study was collected using questionnaire titled "Career Counselling Questionnaire (CCQ)" which explored the psycho-social factors that influenced students' career choices. Data was analyzed using inferential statistics. The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by the researchers. Pearson Product Movement correlation was used to determine the correlation coefficient which was 0.76 which certified that the questionnaire was reliable. Data were analyzed using chi-square statistics. Result shows that parents greatly influence their wards' choices of career and that students' academic attainments/performances at the university level influenced their choices of career. The environment was another factor that influences students' choices of career. Other factors are personal interest and advancement of science and technology. The study concludes that students' choice of career is influenced by parents/guardians, their school environment, academic performance among others. Based on the findings, it was recommended that parents/guardians should be properly oriented on the extent they should be involved in the career choices and decision of their wards.

Keywords: Career, counselling, post-modern, undergraduates, institution

Introduction

Career Guidance and Counselling is a vaguely implemented concept in most educational institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Students need a professional counsellor's guidance to develop their career. Student services should be available on campus to help them develop self-awareness (personal interests, skills, potentials, weaknesses) and assess occupational opportunities such as, employment trends, expected competencies in the field, requirements for employment and job descriptions related to the area. Students also need to prepare a career plan related to their career research, goal setting and means of accomplishing goals, and develop job-searching skills (identifying prospective employers, preparing résumés, preparing for interviews). Hence, the role of career guidance counselling services is invaluable in enabling students to select the best fit with their ability, interest and personality.

Nayak and Rao (2004) disclosed that discipline choice is a very important decision and that it is a long process rather than a simple incident. Vocational interests and choices do not appear all of a sudden during adolescence; they appear as a result of the development process. It has been observed that the main factors which can have a major influence on the selection of occupational types. Mesfin (2000) mentioned that the most frequent factors are interest in the job, personal abilities, personality traits, security, stability and prestige appeared to play a subsidiary role in influencing the choice of a vocation.

It has been observed that students are uncertain of what courses they should study, and there is always a preference for courses that are believed to be easy or enjoyable. Most of the students do not understand the relationship between course selections and their future destinations for business, interest and physical fit; therefore, the connection between education and career entry is also not understood by many (Stuart, 2002). It is emphasized that students who join different occupational training areas should select and be placed in accordance with their interests, aptitudes and capabilities for the requirements of that particular occupation (Antinios, 2006; Heluf, 2005).

Even though students' career choice, interest and aptitude are essential factors influencing their success in universities and colleges, the Nigerian tertiary education admission system is merely based on university entrance examination results and some affirmative action targeting high scores, subject combinations and catchment area or quota for admission process. It seems that comprehensive modern career guidance and counselling programmes will be effective in assisting students, along with their parents, in responding to these and similar issues. It is believed that when career counsellors have time, resources and the structure of a comprehensive programmes within which to work, worthy things happen. These include improving academic achievement, helping students to take more demanding courses and development and use of career plans (Yilfashewa, 2011).

Through improving career guidance demands for young people, policy makers can address challenges in tertiary education. Their challenges are in meeting gaps in access, level of quality of services and improving the nature of services. In Universities, the major challenges are to provide sufficient human and capital resources of the right type within educational settings. Gaps in access are particularly evident in career development and in the vocational tracks of universities settings. There is generally a lack of career guidance provision for students in tertiary education despite the significant benefits of career development (Sun & Yuen, 2012).the process of vocational development is a continuous, ongoing one, and it is essentially an act of developing and implementing a self-concept.

It has been established that the career choice of an individual is very important. It affects every aspect of life including the social, economic, mental and physical lives. Choosing a career has become so difficult in this particular time of advancement in information technology and post-industrial revolution (Kochung & Migunde, 2011). Today, anyone who wishes to make a good career choice and be able to adjust to the ever-changing social

economic situation and technological advancement is bound to carry out proper career research and planning (Wallace, 2009). Every individual in this world desires to be stable, happy and recognized, for these reasons, one must choose a career which will meet these needs; career that may last a lifetime. Career should be chosen according to one's interests and demand of time (Mirza, Zahra & Ahmed, 2014). A stage comes in a student's life when decision about future career has to be taken. This important decision gives the foundation for course of study in the institution of higher learning and influences life. Gesinde as cited by Durosaro and Nuhu (2012) noted that in our present society, education is the best ground to prepare the younger generation.

Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Postorelli (2001) stated that those going through the process of career choice are influenced by different factors which include the way they perceive things happening in their environment, abilities, interest, the people they associate with and educational achievements. Hewitt (2010) was of the view that things that motivate people in choosing certain occupations are either within them or in their environment. He further explained that most youths choose some occupations to please their parents or guardians. According to McQuaid and Bond (2003), students' ethnic background, years of study, degree of academic performance, subject combinations, activities and differences in job features have influenced students believe of being suitable for a given career. In addition, Kerka (2000) noted that career choice is influenced by student's characteristics, belief about self, culture, information technology, mentors, income of parents and social network. Shahzad, Zahra and Ahmed (2014) believed that career choices made by students are determined by their precedents, personality, opportunities, socio-economic background and environment where they live.

Career deals with all activities and actions that relate to one's vocation, assigned task, and job type or specification that has to do with a person's work-life. Career can also be seen as what a person is prepared, educated and trained to do over a period of time. Career choice refers to the profession and job which an individual has decided to go into which will lead to economic/social independence, productive and fulfilled life. Making a career choice is one's ability to identify and select a type of occupation or vocation that will enable him/her achieve a life goal. It also involves an individual utilizing information and knowledge about self, world of work and opportunities in his or her environment to make career decisions. Salami and Salami (2013) opined that secondary school students are always concerned about their future as regards to job availability and occupation mobility. They further explained that how the young people of today meet the problem of tomorrow will depend upon the amount of success they make in planning for the tomorrow. Durosaro and Nuhu (2012) noted that most undergraduates have problems in the course of their studies because they were not properly guided in the choice of subject combinations while in senior secondary school. Students who are not well guided may find themselves in courses for which they have no aptitude and may equally end up in jobs that do not fit their personality type.

Choice of career among undergraduates in this ever-evolving economic and technological advancing society has been a major issue that needs to be carefully addressed. A good number of undergraduates are studying certain courses not because they were chosen willingly or carefully guided but due to certain influences beyond their control, consequently, they end up doing a job totally different from what they studied in the universities. Waudu (2008) noted that there were students who insisted on studying courses that were obvious that they do not have what it takes to study them in terms of academic abilities and aptitude. They end up changing course, dropping out of school and most of the time frustrated. It is against this background that the researcher wants to examine career counselling in a post-modern era among undergraduates.

Literature review of factors influencing career choice every individual in this planet aspire for good quality life and appreciable social status. The only determinant of these is a good choice of career. Weijer and Meijer in Adesina (2005) see career as the totality of man's experience in the world of work and education. Making a career involves an individual utilizing information and knowledge about self, world of work and opportunity in his or her society to make career decisions. Career selection is one of the most important choices students make. Undoubtedly, this decision will influence their activities throughout their lives. Career development is enhanced by appreciating the fact that a person's current vocational status was as a result of previous experience which when correlated may suggest the ideal future. The connection between present experience and dream of the future enables individuals to prepare to meet challenges of tomorrow. Choosing a career/occupation rests on a process of individuation that constitutes a vocational identity by unifying one's interest, needs, abilities and values (Walsh, 2003). Salami and Salami (2013) opined that undergraduates are always concerned about their future as regards to job availability and occupational mobility. They further explained that to achieve future success, young people are to make good plans today for the anticipated future. Oyamo and Amoth (2008) listed some factors that affect career choices. This included motivation, the family and peer-group pressure. Durosaro and Nuhu (2012) noted that most undergraduates have problems in the course of their studies due to the absence of guidance in their choice of subject combinations. This initial mistake may rear its ugly head during search for jobs which may lead such students to doing jobs that negates their interests and aptitudes. Other factors that affect career choices as highlighted by Natalie (2006) are life context, personal abilities, natural propensity and academic achievement.

Watson, McMahan, Foxcoft and Els (2010) stated that a good number of boys have strong desire for investigative type vocation while girls aspire for social oriented type of occupations. Individuals who fail to develop convictions rooted in social interest pursue career plans that focus on power, possessions, and prestige. Rather than intrinsic goals, they pursue extrinsic signs of success. In so doing, they can achieve success, and even admiration from others, but the cost is the inner satisfaction one feels from sharing one's talents so as to enrich the community (Walsh, 2003). According to Faley and Adams (2008), schools encourage students to combine subjects that they identify to be in line with

their abilities, aptitudes and interest. Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa (2006) added that students who come from institutions that lack infrastructural facilities are adversely influenced due to lack of career information, resources and inadequate career counselling services. In his study of the systematic process influencing educational change in Izulu Medium School in South Africa, Ngesi (2003) found that poor economic background of undergraduates from remote areas negatively influence their abilities to choose the right course. These students wave off courses that are expensive to run and have longer years of study. According to Maree (2009) many learners passed through secondary school and they find it difficult to be admitted into universities or other tertiary institution due to not receiving counselling and guidance on good subject combination while in senior secondary school. Salami (1999) found that lack of knowledge, inexperience, peer influence, parents and teachers' advice, fame associated with certain jobs without and lucrative nature of some profession were the major factors that influenced students' choice of career.

Statement of the Problem

Career counselling helps the choice of a particular vocation. However, career decision is one vital decision one makes in a life time and is as important as life because of the enduring consequences on the individual. The 6-3-3-4 system of education in Nigeria was generally geared at harmonizing the society with its technological needs as it attempts to develop the society as the need arises. Choice of career among undergraduates in this ever-evolving economic and technological advancing society has been a major issue that needs to be carefully addressed. A good number of undergraduates are studying certain courses not because they were chosen willingly or carefully guided but due to certain influences beyond their control, consequently, they end up doing a job totally different from what they studied in the universities, because of lack of proper career counselling. Some of the students believe that there are courses they cannot take because of their parents' financial capacity, hence there has been a lot of career misinformation and many students find themselves in areas of study that does not interest them. They take them with no or little interest, hence the need for adequate career counselling in a post-modern era for proper career guidance and counselling to meet the demand of the present undergraduates to boost adequate manpower for the labour force of the nation.

The purpose of this study was to investigate career counselling in a post-modern era among undergraduates. It also aimed at investigating different factors responsible for career choice of undergraduates.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were generated to guide the study.

1. Parents/guardians have no significant influence on the choice of career among undergraduates.
2. Academic attainment has no significant influence on choice career among undergraduates.
3. Environment has no significant influence on choice of career among undergraduates.

4. Personal interest and aptitude has no significant influence on choice of career among undergraduates.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It is a form of descriptive design that uses a representative sample to collect data for systematic description of existing situation or phenomenon. The population consisted of all the undergraduate students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. A simple random sampling technique was used to choose the sample for the study. The sample of the study consisted of 200 undergraduate students in Adekunle Ajasin University, Akoko South-West Local Government Area Ondo State. The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled “Career Counselling and Post-modern Era” on four-point likert scale. Two hundred copies of the questionnaire were distributed, filled and returned. The instrument was divided into two sections; section A contains personal data of the respondents. While section B contains the items to answer the questions raised. The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by the researcher. The ambiguous items were corrected and irrelevant ones were removed for the success of the study. The researcher administered questionnaires to 20 undergraduate students that were not part of this study twice at an interval of two weeks. Data collected were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics the correlation coefficient of 0.764 was obtained which made it highly reliable. Data were analyzed using chi-square statistics.

Results

Hypothesis One: Parents/guardians have no significant influence on the choice of career among undergraduates.

To test this hypothesis, data collected on section B of the questionnaire were subjected to Chi-square statistics. The result is shown in table 1.

Table 1

Test of influence of parents/guardians on choice of career among undergraduates.

Variable	N	df	λ^2 cal	λ^2 crit	Decision
Parents/ Guardian Career choice	200	12	35.01	21.03	Significant

@0.05 alpha level of significance

From Table 1 the value λ^2 calculated is 35.01 and the λ^2 table value is 21.03. It is obvious that λ^2 table value. Therefore, null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that parents/guardians have no significant influence on the choice of career among undergraduates.

Hypothesis Two: Academic attainment has no significant influence on choice career among undergraduates.

To test this hypothesis data collected on section B of the questionnaire were subjected to Chi-square statistics. The result is shown in table 2.

Table 2

Test of influence of academic attainment on career choice among undergraduates.

Variable	N	df	λ^2 cal	λ^2 Crit	Decision
Academic Attainment	200	12	28.84	21.03	Significant
Career choice					

Table 2 shows that the λ^2 calculated values is 28.84 and the λ^2 table value is 21.03. It is obvious that λ^2 calculated value was greater than the λ^2 table value. Therefore, null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that Academic attainment has no significant influence on choice career among undergraduates.

Hypotheses Three: Environment has no significant influence on choice of career among undergraduates.

To test this hypothesis data collected on section B of the questionnaire were subjected to Chi-square statistics. The result is shown in table 3.

Table 3

Test of influence between environment and choice of career among undergraduates.

Variable	N	df	λ^2 cal	λ^2 Crit	Decision
Environment	200	12	23.62	21.03	Significant
Career choice					

Table 3 shows that the λ^2 calculated value is 23.62 and the λ^2 table value is 21.03. It is obvious that λ^2 calculated value was greater than the λ^2 table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that environment has no significant influence on choice of career among undergraduates.

Hypotheses four: Personal interest and aptitude has no significant influence on choice of career among undergraduates.

To test this hypothesis data collected on section B of the questionnaire were subjected to Chi-square statistics. The result is shown in table 4.

Table 4

Test of influence on personal interest or aptitude and undergraduates' choice of career.

Variable	N	Df	λ^2 cal	λ^2 Crit	Decision
Personal Interest	200	12	38.01	21.03	Significant
Career choice					

From table 4 λ^2 calculated value is 38.01 and the λ^2 table value is 21.03. It is obvious that λ^2 calculated value is greater than the λ^2 table value. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that personal interest and aptitude has no significant influence on choice of career among undergraduates.

Discussion

The finding from hypothesis one found a significant influence of parents/guardians on undergraduates' choice of career. This finding aligned with the findings of Oyamo and Amoth (2008) listed some factors that affect career choices. This included motivation, the family and peer-group pressure.

In the second hypothesis, there is a significant influence of students' academic attainment/performance on choice of career. This is supported by Durosaro and Nuhu (2012) noted that most undergraduates have problems in the course of their studies due to the absence of guidance in their choice of subject combinations. This initial mistake may rear its ugly head during search for jobs which may lead such students to doing jobs that negates their interests and aptitudes. Other factors that affect career choices as highlighted by Natalie (2006) are life context, personal abilities, natural propensity and academic achievement.

The third hypothesis also showed a significant influence of undergraduates' environment on choice of career. This agreed with Ngesi (2003) found that poor economic background of undergraduates from remote areas negatively influence their abilities to choose the right course. These students wave off courses that are expensive to run and have longer years of study.

Hypothesis four found that personal interest has a significant influence on undergraduates' career choice. This is in line with Watson, McMahan, Foxcoft and Els (2010) stated that a good number of boys have strong desire for investigative type vocation while girls aspire for social oriented type of occupations. Individuals who fail to develop convictions rooted in social interest pursue career plans that focus on power, possessions, and prestige. Rather than intrinsic goals, they pursue extrinsic signs of success. In so doing, they can achieve success, and even admiration from others, but the cost is the inner satisfaction one feels from sharing one's talents so as to enrich the community (Walsh, 2003).

Conclusion

The study concludes that undergraduates' career choices are determined by factors like parents/ guardians, academic attainment, environment and above all interest.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made for the study:

1. Guidance and counselling services should be properly entrenched in the school curriculum at every level. Professional guidance and counsellors should be employed and allowed to function as full-time counselors in order to boost the self-discovery of students.
2. Educational policy in a developing country like Nigeria should give priority to educational and vocational counselling designed to enable individuals to find bearing in this changing environment and to exercise control over it.
3. For the interaction of the government on the national policy on education to be realized, proper prominence should be given to guidance and counselling in all tiers of the new educational policy.

References

- Adesina, O. J. (2005). *Fundamentals of guidance and counselling*. Vol. ii, Ibadan: vantage publishers.
- Bandura, A. Barbaranelli, C., Caprara, G., & Pastorelli, C (2001). Self-efficacy beliefs as aspirations and career trajectories child development. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 364-374.
- Durosaro I. A. & Nuhu, M. A. (2012). An evaluation of the relevance of career choice to school subject selection among school going adolescents in Ondo State. *Asian journal of management sciences and education*, 1(2), 140-145.
- Falaye, F. W., & Adams, B. T. (2008). An assessment of factors influencing career decisions of in-school youths. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(3), 222-225.
- Heluf, G. (2005). Training in technical and vocational education and employment prospects: The case of Oromiya (Unpublished MA thesis), Addis Ababa University.
- Hewitt, J. (2010). *Factors influencing career choice*. Retrieved from www.ehow.com.
- Kerka, S. (2000). Career development, gender, race and class. Eric Clearing house on Adult. *Career and Vocational Education Columbus*, 2, 20-32.

- Kochun, E. & Migunde, Q. (2011). Factors influencing students career choices among secondary school students in Kisumu Municipality, Kenya. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)*, 4, 45-52.
- McQuaid, R. & Bond, S. (2003). *Gender stereotyping of career choice*. Retrieved from <http://www.careers-scotland.org.uk> 23.02.2010.
- Mesfin, A. (2000). *Employment market international and occupational guidance services for tertiary level students in Ethiopia: The case of prospecting agricultural college graduates* (unpublished Thesis), Ababa University.
- Nayak, G. & Rao, W. (2004). *Guidance counselling and vocational guidance*. New Daily Uikas Publishing House.
- Salami S. O. (1999). Relationship between work value and vocational interests among high school students in Ibadan. *Nigerian African Journal of Educational Research*, 5(2), 65–74.
- Salami, O. O., & Salami, O. O. (2013). The factors determining the choice of career among secondary school students. *The International Journal of Engineering and Science (IJES)*, 2(6), 33-44.
- Shahzad, M. N. Zahra, S. T., & Ahmed, M. A. (2014). Determinants and influences on students' career choices. *Universal Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 4(3), 23-34.
- Stuart, C. P. (2002). *Policies and guideline for education and vocational guidance*. Prepared and disseminated Bisection for TVET UNESCO, Paris.
- Sun, V. J., & Yuen M. (2011). Career guidance and counselling for university student in China. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 34(3), 201-210.
- Wallace, D. W. (2007). *The science of getting rich*. USA: Elizabeth Towne Company.
- Walsh, W. B. (2003). *Counselling psychology and optimal human functioning*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. Publishers.
- Watson, M. B., McMahan, M., Foxcroft, C., & Els, C. (2010). Occupational aspirations of low socioeconomic black South African children. *Journal of Career Development*, 37(4), 717-734.
- Yilfashew, S. (2011). Revitalization quality using guidance counselling in Ethiopian higher education institutions: Exploring students' views and attitude at Haramaya University. *International Journal of Instruction*, 4(2), 62–92.

Yusuf, A. (1998). *Gender sensitive counselling psychology: A handbook for Ethiopian high school counsellors*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Addis Ababa University press.

Oyamo, O. R., & Amoth, D. (2008). Choice of final year options by undergraduate students at the Moi School of Information Sciences. *East African Journal of Information Science*, 2, 243-254.