

Influence of Parent Educational Status on Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Mainland LGA, Lagos State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA of Lagos State. The study also examined the moderating variables of gender, age and parental educational attainment. A total sample of 250 respondents was randomly selected using simple random sampling technique. The finding of the study revealed family influence and parent educational status as significant influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Mainland LGA. There was a significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on age and educational attainment while there was no significant difference based on gender. Recommendations were made that both male and female students should be encouraged to seek career counselling for a successful career choice and encourage successful career development by identifying sources of psychosocial support available to students.

Keywords: Career choice, Career development, Parent educational status, Parenting Style

INTRODUCTION

The involvement of parents in the development and education of their children has become a topic of interest to policy makers and others who are in positions to make decisions about educational practices, including researchers, parents and guardians, and politicians. Formal education remains the vehicle for human development which must start from the family. There are different categories of families. The major categories of families according to Anderson and Taylor (2010) includes: Traditional families—where the father is the major breadwinner and mother at home rearing children; divorced families—families that have been reconstituted following the breaking of marriage; single parent families—likely headed by women; step families—with new siblings and new parents stemming from re-marriage.

Educational activities are geared towards ensuring that students achieve mastery of educational objectives. In school, the extent to which these objectives have been achieved, is determined by their level of peer pressure, time management as students' success are reflected in their academic performance. Peers play a large role in the social and emotional development of adolescents Allen (2015). Their influence begins at an early age and increases through the teenage years, it is natural, healthy and important for adolescent to have and rely on friends as

they grow and mature. A peer could be any one you look up to in behaviour or someone who you would think is equal to your age or ability (Hardcastle, 2020). On the other hand, the term “pressure” implies the process that influence people to do something that they might not otherwise choose to do.

Over the years, the investigation of the factors that influence the academic performance of students has attracted the interest and concern of educators. Educational researchers, including Clutter (2015), and Pomerantz (2017), have all argued on both home-based and school-based parental participation. For these scholars, “Home-based involvement represents parents’ practices related to school that take place outside of school, usually, though not always at home” (Pomerantz, et al., 2017). “School - based involvement represents practices on the part of the parents that require their making actual contact with schools” (Pomerantz, et al., 2017). As two major institutions in society, the family and the school are together responsible for the socialization and education of children. The family, whose influence is primary in the early years, assumes a secondary role as the child goes to school. As the child’s education progresses to the secondary level, the school becomes more specialized and oriented toward preparing students for a complex society, and the child becomes more independent.

The above-mentioned scholars believe that participation by parents at both home and school has many benefits for students, parents and guardians, and schools. The home is very germane and crucial to a child’s well-being and development in later life. According to Ajala and Olutola (2017), the state of the home affects the individual, since the family is the first socializing agent in the child’s life. This is because the family background and the context of children affect their reaction to life’s situations and their level of performance academically. Clark (2013) posited that when parents are actively involved with the school’s instructional program, both at home and in school, there is a greater likelihood of students becoming academically successful. He opined that when parents provide high levels of physical, affective, and instructional support, protection, and guidance to students, the students’ educational pursuits become more manageable and successful.

Home background factor found to be associated with career choice includes parent’s socio-economic status (SES), their level of education and biogenetics factor such as physical size, gender, ability and temperament. Panic and Jepson (2020), in a study on adolescent vocational development reported that had the most effect on education plans and occupational aspiration was education. Mortime et al (2020) also reported that parents with post-secondary education

tend to pass along its importance in their children a finding reported by other studies. Montgomery (2020) notes that students talented in mathematics viewed their career choice as reflective on the interest that stem from early home influence and educational opportunities.

Choosing a career is often considered a major turning point in a young adult's life. This decision alone has the potential to open the door for success or close the door of opportunity. While often perceived to be an individual choice, research suggests that a variety of influences such as family, school, community, and social and economic factors are likely to manipulate one's ultimate career decision (Ferry, 2016). Among these factors, students report that parents have the greatest influence on which career they choose (Kniveton, 2014).

Few parents seem to recognize this impact and still believe that they have little to do with the career choices of their children (Taylor, Harris, & Taylor, 2014). In a study from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (Taylor, Harris, & Taylor, 2014), almost half of freshman parents stated that they believed they should remain neutral about their child's career development. However, additional studies show that parents have a greater influence than teachers on career choice (Kniveton, 2014) and can even influence what major their children choose to pursue in college (Simpson, 2013). Parents believe they have less influence over their children's career decisions than the research supports. This perception seems to differ from the perception of children, who often report their parents to be of the highest influence (Ferry, 2016; Kniveton, 2014). Due to this perception gap, it is important to examine the result of parental influence about their children's career choices.

While parents assume that their direct career advice may be influential, they may be unaware that they can also exert a strong career influence simply by serving as examples of workers (Kniveton, 2014). In fact, children as young as five years old begin to identify with the occupation of their mother or father (Havighurst, 2014). Parents start influencing career decisions as soon as their children can pronounce their job title.

Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future. This decision will impact them throughout their lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what the student wants to do with their life-long work. Everyone should have an honest occupation” (Rosenstock & Steinberg, 2016). Every student carries the unique history of their past, and this determines how they view the world. That history created, in part by the student’s environment, personality, and opportunity, will determine how students make career

choices. It then follows that how the student perceives their environment, personality, and opportunity also will determine the career choices students make.

Factors in Career Choice, the first factor in career choice, environment, may influence the career students choose. For example, students who have lived on an island may choose a career dealing with the water, or they may choose to leave the island behind, never to have anything to do with water again. Maybe someone in the student's life has made a significant impact or impression, leading to a definite career choice.

Apart from the home, schools also benefit from parental involvement. Such benefits include improved teacher morale, higher ratings of teachers by parents, moral and financial support from families, and better reputations in the community. Abdul-El-Fattah (2016) argued, based on his research that was done in Nigeria, that parental involvement has been seen as a mechanism for raising standards, developing new partnerships between schools and parents in the local community, and promoting social inclusion. Attempts and efforts of the state and federal governments in Nigeria in terms of programs, policies, practices, and structures put on the ground to encourage and facilitate strong family-school linkages are commendable. These include the establishment of Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) in public schools (primary and secondary).

School Counselling provides career guidance and development for students as one of the major goals or missions in servicing the community. Yet there appears to be inadequate research on the development of career among high school students. Often, the assumption is that students can identify their abilities and understand how to integrate them into choosing a career. Another assumption exists which proposes that students possess knowledge of secondary education and universities that can meet their needs. The Knowledge and Skills for the Practice of School Counselling section is divided into three subsections: program development, implementation and evaluation, and counselling guidance and consultation. These three subsections require competencies in individual and group counselling, group guidance and approaches, developmental approaches to assist students at points of educational transition, methods of consulting with parents, methods of consulting with teachers and other school personnel, approaches to peer assistive programs, and methods to enhancing teamwork in the school environment.

Adolescents tend to have difficulty identifying their career interests. Research identifies how career interest can be linked to students' academic achievement. Counsellors and educators need

to help students develop skills for their job search in careers that are congruent with their individualized career plan (Teng, Morgan, & Anderson, 2021). This involves a great deal of career and vocational education. Career education requires that students explore activities associated with career choices over a life span considering family, work, and leisure. This includes job preparation, awareness of careers and occupations, the identification and examination of different life roles, and understanding various types of biases in occupations. As a result, the primary focus becomes identifying the best possible career options. In addition, career education seeks to teach people job skills or to help individuals improve job skills.

Parents prove to be an essential part of adolescent growth and career development. Family ties provide positive effects on student performance. Researchers defined a family-school collaboration as a cooperative process of planning and problem-solving involving school staff, parents, children, and significant others to maximize resources for students' academic achievement and social-emotional development. Specifically, in career development, adolescents tend to use their family environment as a point of reference. Therefore, parents need to be equipped with the necessary information or resources so that they can provide feedback and opportunities for career exploration.

Research shows that parental norms, values and educational attainment are most often affect children's career aspirations via parental interactions (Lavine, 2022), involvement in schoolwork and gender expectations (Simpson, 2013). While parents may assume other variables such as occupation or education to be most influential, their influence is most often exerted through normative channels including their interest in schoolwork and aspirations for educational achievement (Simpson, 2013).

Choosing a career is often considered a major turning point in a young adult's life. This decision alone has the potential to open the door for success or close the door of opportunity. While often perceived to be an individual choice, research suggests that a variety of influences such as family, peer influence, school, community, and social and economic factors are likely to manipulate one's ultimate career decision (Ferry, 2016). Among these factors, students report that parents and peers have the greatest influence on which career they choose (Kniveton, 2014).

It has also been revealed that secondary school students do better in school and make better career choices when there is positive parental influence. From the on-going, adolescent boys and girls exhibit differences in decision making regarding their relationship with their peers and

parent. This study will investigate the influence of parent educational status on career choice of secondary school students in Mainland LGA, Lagos State.

Statement of the Problem

Career choice tends to be a persistent problem for students in the contemporary society. That is why it is not uncommon for students to get into occupations that are not quite suitable to their abilities. Parent educational status on the other hand tends to be the most influential factors in student's career choice. Often, parents owing to personal idiosyncrasies pressure their wards into taking up family occupations and other careers even when they do not possess requisite abilities. What usually obtain in the end are job dissatisfaction, underperformance if not complete malfunction, frustration and inefficiency all of which translates in the long run to national economic crisis.

The standard of education in Nigeria today is gradually falling thus leading to lots of arrangements amongst scholars' civil servants, educational planners among others as to what is the immediate and remote causes of the failure and the factors hindering high standard of education, while we may blame governments, teachers, and children, the family which students comes from leave much to be desired. It is important to note that we cannot exonerate the parent educational status and family that a child came from when talking about the students' choice of career in secondary school. Family background factors found to have influence the student's choice of career is based on parent's socio-economic status, parents' educational level, parents love for religion and family size and parent's temperament home physical environment, type of religious places attended and accessibility to social activities.

Parents and peers prove to be essential part of adolescent career development. Family ties and peers provide positive and negative effects on student performance and career decisions. Researchers defined a family-school collaboration "as a cooperative process of planning and problem-solving involving school staff, parents, children, and significant others to maximize resources for students' academic achievement and social-emotional development" (Allen, 2015). Specifically, in career development, adolescents tend to use their family environment and friends as a point of reference. Therefore, parents need to be equipped with the necessary information or resources so that they can provide feedback and opportunities for career exploration.

Adolescents have trouble identifying their career interests. Career interests have been linked to positive student achievement. This research attempts to engage parents in the creation of

healthier schools and community activities by improving decision-making skills and self-regulation. As parents' knowledge of career development increases, it will encourage youths to remain in school while supporting healthy norms.

In view of the above statements, therefore, this study investigates the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA of Lagos State.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What is the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA of Lagos State?
2. What is the influence of student's parent career on student choice of career among secondary school students in Mainland LGA of Lagos State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were postulated to be tested in the study:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA of Lagos State based on gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA of Lagos State based on age.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA of Lagos State based on educational attainment.

METHODOLOGY

More so, the result attained through this method can be statistically analysed. Akinwumi (2018) described descriptive survey design as more useful method than others because it covered a wider scope with less expense and less time.

The population for this study consists of all secondary school students in Mainland LGA of Lagos State while target population comprises all senior secondary school students in Mainland LGA which is estimated at Male 575, Female 1133 making up a Total of 1708 students. This is determined based on given population by Lagos State Ministry of Education 2020.

For this study, five secondary schools were randomly selected out of 26 senior secondary schools in Mainland LGA for effective analysis. The five schools chosen are mixed schools; the respondents consisted of 50 students randomly selected from all the selected schools making total of 250 respondents. This was employed because not all the secondary school students can participate in the study. Every member in a sample population stands a chance of being selected and that the selection of one member does not affect the other. The selected respondents were stratified based on gender, religion, educational qualification and year of experience. Stratification is a process of classifying a sample or subjects under study into researcher's variables of interest.

The career choice survey (CCS) was developed to assess the effect of parental involvement on student's career choice of senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. The survey instrument has three sections: Personal Data, Response Guide, and twenty (20) items on parental involvement and students' career choice. It was a 4-point interval scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Responses were assigned values ranging from 4-1 points.

A test – retest method was employed to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. In this case, twenty copies of the questionnaires were administered on representative sample twice at the interval of three weeks. The two sets of scores were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient which was found to be 0.79 which is considered reliable enough to carry out the study were made.

The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Percentage and frequency were used to analyse the demographic data of the respondents. The hypotheses generated were tested using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of data obtained from the respondents in frequency and percentages.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender, age, class, parent occupation and parent educational status

S/N	Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Gender		
	Male	120	48.0
	Female	130	52.0
	Total	250	100.0
2	Age		
	below 10years	35	14.0
	10-11years	40	16.0
	12-13years	45	18.0
	14-15years	60	24.0
	16-17years	45	18.0
	above 17years	25	10.0
	Total	250	100.0
4	Parent Occupation		
	LG/Pry/JSS Teachers	137	54.7
	State/ SSS Teacher	93	37.3
	Federal Worker	20	8.0
	Total	250	100.0

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents that participated in the study. Out of the total number of 250 students, 120 students which represent 48% of the population are male. 130 students which represent 52% of the population are female. Based on age range of the students 35 students which represent 14% of the population are below 10 years. 40 students which represent 16% of the population are between 10-11years. 45 respondents which represent 18% of the population are between 12-13years. 60 respondents which represent 24% of the population are between 14-15years. 45 respondents which represent 20% of the population are between 16-17years while 45 respondents which represent 20% of the population are over 17years.

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on gender.*

Table 2: Mean, SD and t-test comparing respondents’ view on the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t	Crit. t	p-value
Male	120	66.87	6.027	248	1.37	1.96	.17
Female	130	68.55	5.970				

Table 3 presents the calculated t-value of 1.37 which is less than the critical t-value of 1.96, with a corresponding p-value of .17 which is greater than 0.05 alpha level. This indicated

that there was no significant difference in respondents’ view based on gender; hence, the hypothesis was not rejected.

Hypothesis Two: *There is no significant difference in influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on age.*

Table 3: ANOVA comparing respondents on the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on age

Sources	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal. F	Crit. F-	p-value
Between Group	625.878	2	312.939	10.20*	3.07	.00
Within Group	2974.962	147	30.670			
Total	3600.840	249				

* P<0.05

Table 4 presents the calculated F-ratio of 10.20 which is greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.00 with a corresponding p-value of .00 which is less at 0.05 alpha level. This implies that there was a significant difference in respondents’ view based on age; hence, the hypothesis was rejected. In order to determine which of the variables of age led to the significant difference observed in Table 4, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test. The results of the DMRT procedure are displayed in Table 5.

Table 4: DMRT showing differences in respondents’ view on the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on age

Age	Mean	N	Group
11-14 years	62.70	50	3
15-18 years	68.29	140	2
19-22 years	69.83	60	1

Table 5 presents the DMRT result to determine which of the age group mean that led to the significant difference noted in table 4. The table showed that the mean value of group 1-3 differed significantly from one another. However, group 1 with a mean score of 69.83 took precedence over from group 2 and 3 with mean scores of (68.29) and (62.70) respectively. This implies that secondary school students between the ages of 19-22 years are responsible for the difference noted in table 4.

Hypothesis Three: *There is no significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on parental educational status.*

Table 5: ANOVA comparing respondents on the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on parental educational status

Sources	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares ratio	Cal. FF ratio	Crit.F	p-value
Between Group	466.025	2	233.013	7.21*	3.07	.00
Within Group	3134.815	147	32.318			
Total	3600.840	249				

* P<0.05

Table 6 presents the calculated F-ratio of 7.21 which is greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.00 with a corresponding p-value of .00 which is less at 0.05 alpha level. This implies that there was a significant difference in respondents’ view based on parental educational status; hence, the hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there was a significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on parental educational status. In order to determine which of the variables of parental educational status led to the significant difference observed in Table 6, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test. The results of the DMRT procedure are displayed in Table 7.

Table 6: DMRT showing differences in respondents’ view on the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on parental educational status

Religion	Mean	N	Group
Degree	65.41	122	3
SSCE	69.31	113	2
Postgraduate	71.67	15	1

Table 7 presents the DMRT result to determine which of the parental educational status group mean that led to the significant difference noted in table 6. The table showed that the mean value of group 1-3 differed significantly from one another. However, group 1 with a mean score of 71.67 took precedence over from group 2 and 3 with mean scores of (69.31) and (65.41)

respectively. This implies that secondary school students whose parental educational statuses are Degree holder are responsible for the difference noted in table 6.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Hypothesis one revealed that there was no significant difference in influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on gender. This means that gender has no significant influence on respondent view on the choice of career among secondary school students. This finding agrees with Abdullah, Bakar and Othman (2019) who revealed that most students were not influenced by their gender when choosing their careers.

Hypothesis two revealed that there was a significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on age. This means that age has a significant influence on respondent view on the choice of career among secondary school students. The finding disagrees with the finding of Khami, Murtomaa and Jafarian (2018) who found that age of students does not influence career choices. This implies that when students make career choice their decisions are not influenced by their age range.

Hypothesis three revealed that there was a significant difference in the influence of parent educational attainment on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on parental educational attainment. This implies that parental educational attainment of respondents has a significant influence on the choice of career among secondary school students in Mainland LGA. The finding agrees with the finding of Adams (2018) who suggested that the level of education of the parent is the major contributor to the daughter's/son's career choice.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The following summary was drawn from the results of the study:

- that family influence and parent educational status as significant influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Mainland LGA,
- There was no significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on gender.
- There was a significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on age.
- There was a significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on parental educational attainment.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated choice of career among secondary school students in Mainland LGA. The findings revealed that family influence and parent educational status as significant influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Mainland LGA. The research hypotheses tested revealed that there was no significant difference in the influence of parent educational status on career choice among secondary school students in Mainland LGA based on gender while significant differences were found in age and parental educational attainment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

1. Since choice of career selection determined future, both male and female students should be encouraging to seek career counselling for a successful career choice.
2. School career counsellors should encourage successful career development by identifying sources of psychosocial support available to students.
3. For students to make the right career choice, the family (parents) should be encouraged not to force their children into careers. With parental guidance and support, children can make the right career choice.
4. Teachers are like parents who work very closely with learners in schools, and they know the abilities of their students in various subjects. Therefore, teachers should guide their students in their career choice and aspirations in line with their abilities in various subjects.
5. Schools need to provide career guidance to learners during their high school studies. The career guidance programmes guide learners in making their career choices and aspirations before entering university.
6. Students at earlier age should always be testing their ideas concerning possible careers. The more students explore, the better students become at the career choice process.

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