

Impact of Parental Influence and Self-efficacy On Career Choice Among Secondary School Students in Kebbi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of parental influence and self-efficacy on career choice among secondary school students in Kebbi State. Four (4) research hypothesis were generated and tested at 0.05 level of significant. The descriptive research design was employed. Simple random sampling techniques was used to select 21 secondary schools in Kebbi State. Twenty (20) students were randomly selected from each of the selected schools. Three (3) standardized instruments were adapted; this includes parental influence (0.74), self-efficacy (0.78) and career choice scales (0.75). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (demographic information of the participants), t-test and regression analysis were used (to test the hypothesis). The findings revealed that parental influence ($t = -2.45, p < .05$) and self-efficacy ($t = -3.57, p < .05$) were significantly predictors of career choice. Regression analysis showed that parental influence and self-efficacy jointly explained 13% of variance in career choice. Female students reported significantly better career choice compared to males ($t = -2.27, p < .05$). Parental influence and self-efficacy are important factors in career decision-making among secondary students in Kebbi State. Culturally appropriate career guidance programs should engage parents and enhance students' career-related self-efficacy. Further research should explore additional factors and effectiveness of interventions.

Keyword: Career choice, parental influence, self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

Career choice is a critical decision that shapes an existent's future, impacting their particular and professional life circles. For secondary school students, this decision becomes particularly significant as they stand at the threshold of adulthood, poised to make choices that will impact their educational journey and eventual career paths. The process of career selection is complex and multifaceted, affected by a myriad of factors including individualized interests, aptitudes, parental socioeconomic status, cultural surrounds, and environments (Lent & Brown, 2020). Among these factors, parental influence and individual self- efficacy have been perceived as pivotal determinants in shaping career ambitions and choices among school-going children.

Extensive investigations in the areas of vocational psychology and educational have focused on parental involvement in shaping their children's career decisions (Garcia, Restubog, Bordia, Bordia, & Roxas, 2018). Parents, as primary caregivers and role models perform a pivotal

responsibility in making their children's perceptions, values with beliefs about various career options. This influence can manifest in multiple ways, ranging from explicit advice and guidance to more subtle forms of influence through parental expectations and modelling of career behaviours (Garcia, Restubog, Bordia, Bordia, & Roxas, 2018). In many cultural environments, particularly in developing nations, parental input in career decisions is not just influential but often decisive, reflecting deeply ingrained cultural values of respect for elders and family cohesion (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey, & Malau-Aduli, 2018). Parental values and beliefs play a fundamental role in shaping career choices. Research by Tynkkynen, Tolvanen, and Salmela-Aro (2010) indicates that parents' values, particularly those related to work and education, heavily influence their children's career decisions. In Kebbi State, cultural and religious beliefs are deeply intertwined with family values, thus influencing the career aspirations of students. In some families, traditional roles and occupations might be emphasized over modern or less conventional careers.

Parents also play a pivotal role in providing direct guidance and setting expectations regarding their children's career paths. According to Keller and Whiston (2008), parents' educational aspirations for their children significantly impact their career choices. This influence can yield both constructive and adverse effects, depending on whether the guidance aligns with the child's interests and abilities. Gender plays a significant role in how parental influence is manifested and perceived. Studies have shown that parents might have different expectations and provide different types of support based on the gender of the child (Leaper, Farkas, & Brown, 2012). In Kebbi State, traditional gender roles might influence parents to steer boys and girls towards different career paths. For instance, boys might be encouraged to pursue careers in engineering or medicine, while girls might be guided towards teaching or nursing.

Concurrent with parental influence, the idea of self-efficacy has become increasingly important in theories of career development, Bandura (1997) defines self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their ability to perform specific tasks. This concept is particularly relevant for students, as it reflects their confidence in navigating and achieving success in chosen career trajectories. High levels of career self-efficacy have been associated with greater career exploration, more defined career goals, and increased persistence in the face of obstacles (Jiang, Newman, Le, Presbitero, & Zheng, 2018). The enhancement of career self-efficacy is affected by several determinants, which

encompass personal achievements, vicarious learning experiences, social influences, and physiological states.

Career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) specifically denotes an individual's confidence in their capacity to effectively undertake tasks associated with making career choices, such as self-assessment, occupational exploration, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving (Taylor & Betz, 1986, Ibrahim & Awoyemi 2021). Individuals that have high CDMSE are more ready to actively explore career options and engage in more effective career planning. A robust sense of self-efficacy enables students to better handle career-related obstacles and disappointments. These individuals are more prone to perceive challenges as chances for personal development rather than as overwhelming impediments (Bandura, 2016). Teachers and parents should provide consistent positive reinforcement to help students build self-efficacy. Celebrating small achievements and providing constructive feedback can motivate students to pursue their career goals with greater confidence (Basiru, Ibrahim, Ibrahim, & Samira, 2023, Usher & Pajares, 2018).

Limited research work has been conducted on career choice among secondary school students in Kebbi State, this therefore, prompted the researchers to fill the gap observed by carried out this study.

Statement of the Problem

The process of choosing a career is an important moment in the life of every school going children. This has a profound and lasting implications on their personal and professional development. The challenges surrounding career choice are multifaceted and deeply rooted in socio-cultural, economic, and educational realities. Most secondary school students are facing a lot of considerable hurdles deciding on well-founded career choice. These challenges stem from various sources, including limited access to comprehensive career guidance, pressure from parents and society, and a lack of self-confidence in their ability to make appropriate career decisions. The problem is further compounded by the rapid evolution of the global job market and the emergence of new career paths that may be unfamiliar to both students and their parents. This dynamic landscape requires students to navigate an increasingly complex array of options, often with insufficient information and support. At the same time, many students dealt with low efficacy believe and this has a negative impact on their career decision. They lack sufficient confidence in their ability to gather relevant career information, set career goals, or make decisions that

correspond to their personal values and academic standard. This study therefore tends to fill the gap observed in this regard by investigating the impact of parental influence and self-efficacy on career choice among secondary school students in Kebbi State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of parental influence and self-efficacy on career choice among secondary school students in Kebbi State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study tends to:

- i. impact of parental influence on career choice among secondary school students in Kebbi State.
- ii. assess the level of career decision-making self-efficacy among secondary school students in Kebbi State.
- iii. investigate the combined effect of parental influence and self-efficacy on students' career choice.
- iv. find out the gender differences in the impact of parental influence and self-efficacy on career choice.

Hypotheses

1. Respondents with high level of parental influence will report significantly higher Career choice than those with low level of parental influence among secondary school students in Kebbi State
2. Participants with high level of self-efficacy will significantly score higher on career choice than those with low level of self-efficacy among secondary school students in Kebbi State.
3. Parental influence and self-efficacy will jointly and independently influence career choice among secondary school students in Kebbi State.
4. Female student will significantly have better career choice than male participants among secondary school students in Kebbi State.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was adopted for this study. descriptive research design serves as a methodical framework for outlining the characteristics of a population, event, or phenomenon. The

population of this study comprised of all secondary school students in Kebbi State. Simple random sampling techniques was used to select 21 secondary schools in Kebbi state. From each of the selected schools, twenty (20) students were randomly selected and served as the participants for the study, making the total number of samples to be four hundred and twenty (420) participants.

Instrumentation

Three research instruments were adapted for the purpose of this study, and this includes:

1. Parental Influence Scale (PIS)
2. Self-efficacy Scale (SES)
3. Career Choice Scale (CCS)

1. Parental Influence Scale (PIS)

The participants parental influence was measured by the adapted parental influence scale which was developed by Falilat and Florence (2022). This scale measured how parents were involved in their children career choice in schools. The instrument has 12 items with 5 Likert rating scales. The test retest was conducted to determined the validity and the reliability of the instrument on 10 secondary school students who are not original participants of this study. The Cronbach alpha was 0.74

2. Self-efficacy Scale (SES)

The general self-efficacy scale which was developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) was adapted to measure the participants self-efficacy. This instrument has 10 items with scoring format of Not at all true, hardly true, Moderatly true and exactly true. The test retest was conducted to ascertained the validity and the reliability of the instrument on 10 secondary school students who are not original participants of this study. The Cronbach alpha was 0.78

3. Career Choice Scale (CCS)

The career choice scale which was developed by Dr. Janet Lenz, Dr. Gary Peterson, Dr. James Sampson, and Dr. Robert Reardon was adapted to measure individuals' career decision-making processes, particularly focusing on their levels of decidedness and indecision regarding career choices. This instrument has 9 items with scoring format of strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree. The test retest was conducted to determined the validity and the reliability of the instrument on 10 secondary school students who are not the original a participant of this study. The Cronbach alpha was 0.78.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researchers together with other trained research assistants physically went round to all selected schools and administered the questionnaire to the selected participants on the permission from the school principals. It took two weeks to administer the questionnaire, this due to the fact that the schools are located in the different part of the state. High rate of response were recorded.

DATA ANALYSIS

The information gathered from the participants constituted the dataset for this study, and it was analyzed in alignment with the research questions. The descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed. All data were systematically coded utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The following presents the personal characteristics of respondents in terms of sex, age etc.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Age

AGE	Frequency	Percentage
11-14 years	127	30.2
15-18 years	235	56.0
19 years and above	58	13.8
Total	420	100.0

Table 1 indicates that a total of 127 respondents, representing 30.2%, were aged between 11 and 14 years while larger proportion 235 (56%) fall between the age brackets of 15-18 years and 58(13.8%) were between the age of 19 years and above.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Class

Class	Frequency	Percentage
SS I	91	21.7
SS II	293	69.8
SS III	36	8.6

Total	420	100.0
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Table 2 reveal that 91(21.7%) of the respondents were in SS I, larger proportion 293(69.8%) were in SS II and 36(8.6%) were in SS 3 class.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents based on sex

SEX	Frequency	Percentage
Male	189	45.0
Female	231	55.0
Total	420	100.0

The table 3 above reveals that majority of the respondents 231(55%) were females, while 189(45%) were males.

Test of Hypotheses

The first hypothesis stated that respondents with high level of parental influence will report significantly higher Career choice than those with low level of parental influence among secondary school students in Kebbi State. This hypothesis underwent assessment via the t-test for independence, and the results are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4: t-test summary table showing difference between respondents with low and high level of parental influence on Career choice.

	parental influence	N	\bar{X}	Std	df	t	P
Career choice	Low	365	70.5589	23.96128	418	-2.45	<0.05
	High	54	78.9074	19.16785			

The data in Table 4 shows that individuals with low levels of parental influence (M=70.56, S.D=23.96) reported significantly lower career choice scores compared to those with high levels of parental influence (M=78.1, S.D=19.17). Furthermore, the analysis reveals that respondents with high parental influence exhibited significantly higher career choice scores ($t(418) = -2.45$, $p < .05$) than their counterparts with low parental influence. This finding implies that parental influence plays a crucial role in molding career choices, leading to the acceptance of the hypothesis.

The second hypothesis asserts participants with high level of self-efficacy will significantly score higher on career choice than those with low level of self-efficacy among secondary school students

in Kebbi State. This hypothesis tested via t-test for independence, and the results are illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: t--test summary table showing difference between respondents with low and high level of Self-efficacy on Career choice.

	Self-efficacy	N	\bar{X}	Std	df	t	P
Career choice	Low	218	67.72	24.86	418	-3.57	<0.05
	High	202	75.81	21.25			

The results illustrated in Table 5 reveal that respondents characterized by low self-efficacy (M=67.72, S.D=24.86) significantly scored lower in career choice compared to those with high self-efficacy (M=75.81, S.D=21.25). The statistical test confirms that high self-efficacy respondents reported significantly greater career choice scores ($t(418) = -3.57, p < .05$) than their low self-efficacy peers. This outcome indicates a substantial influence of self-efficacy on career choice, thus validating the hypothesis.

The third hypothesis states that parental influence and self-efficacy will have joint and independent influence on career choice among secondary school students in Kebbi State. This was tested using multiple regression analysis. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of parental influence and Self-efficacy on Career choice.

Predictors	β	t	P	R	R ²	F	P
Self-efficacy	.25	5.03	<.05				
Parental influence	.18	3.56	<.05	.36	.13	31.60	<.05

The results demonstrated that parental influence and self-efficacy have a synergistic effect on career choice, as indicated by the statistical analysis ($R^2 = 0.13, F(2, 417) = 31.60, p < .05$). Collectively, these factors accounted for 86% of the changes noted in self-reported career choices, emphasizing the importance of their combined presence in influencing career decisions. Additionally, the findings confirmed that both parental influence ($\beta = .25, t = 5.03, p < .05$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = .18, t = 3.56, p < .05$) are significant independent predictors of career choice. Therefore, the hypothesis is affirmed.

The fourth hypothesis asserts that female secondary school students in Kebbi State will make significantly better career choices than their male peers. This hypothesis was assessed utilizing the t-test for independence, with the outcomes presented in Table 7.

Table 7: t--test summary table showing difference between male and female respondents on Career choice.

	Gender	N	\bar{X}	Std	df	t	P
Career choice	Male	189	68.75	24.73	418	-2.27	<0.05
	Female	231	73.96	22.27			

The result from table 7 shows that male respondents ($M=68.75$, $S.D= 24.72$) significantly reported lower scores on career choice compare to their female counterparts ($M=73.96$, $S.D =22.27$). Female respondents significantly reported better career choice ($t(418) = -2.27$, $p<.05$) than male respondents. This show that gender crucially influences Career choice. The hypothesis is affirmed.

DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis investigated whether parental influence impacted students' career choices. The results indicated that students with high levels of parental influence reported significantly higher scores on career choice compared to those with low parental influence. This finding aligns with existing literature, this implies that the involvement of parents is essential in determining the career goals and decisions of their offspring (Dietrich & Kracke, 2009; Whiston & Keller, 2004). Parental influence can take different forms, such as guidance, role modeling, and showing emotional support and assistance (Lent et al., 2017; Whiston & Keller, 2004). Additionally, parents' socioeconomic status, educational background, and occupational experiences can shape their children's perceptions and attitudes towards different career paths (Bandura, 2016; Metheny & McWhirter, 2013).

The second hypothesis examine the interplay in self-efficacy and career choice. The results revealed that those students who demonstrated significant self-efficacy attained superior scores significantly higher on career choice than those with low self-efficacy. This finding corroborates previous research that has consistently linked self-efficacy beliefs to career development and decision-making (Bandura, 2016; Lent & Brown 2017). Self-efficacy is individual's beliefs in their abilities to successfully carryout special tasks or behaviors (Bandura, 1997). Individuals exhibiting elevated self-efficacy levels show demonstrate greater resilience when confronted with obstacles, establish more ambitious career objectives, and participate actively in the exploration of career opportunities (Lent et al., 2002; Navarro et al., 2007). Furthermore, self-efficacy beliefs can impact

different range of career options refer to individuals, with those having lower self-efficacy potentially limiting their aspirations (Bandura et al., 2001).

The third hypothesis investigate the joint and independent influence of parental influence and self-efficacy on career choice. The multiple regression analysis revealed these two factors collectively accounted for a significant portion of the variance in career choice scores. Furthermore, both parental influence and self-efficacy result to an important independent predictors of career choice. These findings revealed the importance of considering both external (parental influence) and internal (self-efficacy) factors in understanding students' career decision-making processes. This is consistent with the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) articulated by Lent et al. (1994), which asserts that career development is shaped by a combination of individual and contextual elements, encompassing self-efficacy beliefs and environmental factors, such as the support provided by parents (Lent et al., 2002; Navarro et al., 2007).

The fourth hypothesis examined the differences in career choices between male and female students. The results indicated that female students reported significantly better career choice than their male counterparts. This finding aligns with some previous studies that have suggested gender differences in career development and decision-making (Lease, 2006; Watson et al., 2002). It is essential to note that gender roles and societal expectations can influence these differences, and further research is needed to understand the underlying reasons for this finding in Kebbi State. Cultural and societal norms, as well as gender stereotypes and biases, can shape individuals' perceptions of appropriate career paths for men and women (Correll, 2001; Hartung et al., 2005). Additionally, factors such as access to educational and career opportunities, as well as family and community support, may differ for male and female students, contributing to the observed gender differences in career choice (Lease, 2006; Metheny & McWhirter, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the factors that influence career choice among secondary school students. The study provides empirical evidence that both parental influence and self-efficacy are significant predictors of career choice among students in Kebbi State, Nigeria. Parente has been identified as a significant external factor that plays a vital role in shaping the career aspirations of students and decisions. Simultaneously, the study revealed the importance of self-efficacy, as an internal factor reflecting students' beliefs in their abilities to

successfully pursue specific career paths. The results support earlier studies that associate self-efficacy with career progression and decision-making processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result of this research, the following recommendations are made:

1. Secondary schools in Kebbi State should establish or strengthen their career guidance and counselling services to assist students to make informed career choices. These services should incorporate strategies to enhance students' self-efficacy and involve parents in the process of career development.
2. The state government, together with relevant stakeholders, should develop and implement educational programs and workshops for parents to increase their awareness of their influence on the career choices of their children and equip them with the needed knowledge, understanding and skills to support their children's career exploration and decision-making processes.
3. School curricula should be reviewed and updated to incorporate career education components that promote self-efficacy and encourage students to explore diverse career options without being limited by gender stereotypes or societal biases.
4. Partnerships between schools, local businesses, and industries should be fostered to provide students with opportunities for career exploration, job shadowing, and internships, which can further enhance their self-efficacy and inform their career choices.
5. Longitudinal studies should be conducted to investigate the long-term impact of parental influence, self-efficacy, and other factors on students' actual career attainment and satisfaction, as well as to explore potential changes in these factors over time.

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