



PSYCHOLOGICAL PREDICTORS OF CAREER DECISION AMONG SCHOOL-GOING ADOLESCENTS IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the contributory impact of spirituality, parental involvement and locus of control to the prediction of career decision-making among school going adolescents. A multiple regression statistical method was used in analyzing the data collected from 150 final year secondary school students. They were randomly selected from three co-educational secondary schools in Katsina, Katsina state, Nigeria. Results obtained indicated that the three variables when put together contribute significantly to career decision making. There is significant relative effect of parental involvement and locus of control to career decision making. However, spirituality factor is not a strong predictor of career decision making in this study. Hence, counselling psychologist should consider these factors when making plans to boost career decision making skills among the adolescent. It was also suggested that parents should encourage their adolescent children to make explorations of occupational choices.

Keyword: *adolescents, Career decision, locus of control, spirituality, parental involvement*

INTRODUCTION

The social and economic stability of any nation always depend on the quality of information on career choice available to school-going adolescents who are leaders of tomorrow. Career choice is viewed as lifelong experiences, occurring in stages and contributing to an individual's values and belief, hence career development process addresses an individual's need and goals, thus mold ones character, determine his social status, and provides means of personality, expression and condition one's life styles at different stages of life.

Decision making regarding a career is an important task which occurs among school going adolescents in early years of high school and it is always associated with watershed. This is the stage the adolescents actively explore their interest and aptitudes and, develop career-related goals and aspiration.

The skills for making appropriate career decisions is very central to the psychological adjustment of the school going adolescents. According to Asuquo (2007), the choice of occupations becomes more difficult as new ones develop in ever increasingly complex contemporary society of the 21st century in which the range of career opportunities becomes greater. Projecting this view, Olayinka (1993) contends that in Nigeria, the choice of career are sometimes made at an age when most of the school going adolescent are too young and immature to be fully aware of the consequences of some of the choices they may make.

Also researches by (Salami 1997) , Onivehu(1991) reveal that the problems of career indecision, indecisiveness and unrealistic career decision are still prevalent among school going adolescents, despite the few career guidance programmes designed by some researchers, Adeyemo (1998), Salami and Onyeacho (1999) to foster career decision making , self efficacy and career maturity among school going adolescents. As indicated by Aziude and Iwundu (1995), career occupational choices information is required to facilitate this process of career choice as it leaves the school going adolescents with a better understanding of the deeper implication of the job he may want to take up. However, a great deal of researches exist that has frequently describes the goal of career counselling as



helping the school going adolescents attain optimal level of career choice satisfaction and job information with the implicit goal of promoting personal fulfilment (Brown & Krane, 2000).

This paper focuses on those conditions in which the spirituality, parental involvement and locus of control may serve as predictors of career decision making among school going adolescents.

Spirituality and career decision

Recently, the counselling and developmental researchers have taken a greater interest in understanding the role spirituality play in human functioning and career development. Underwood and Teresi (2002) defined spirituality as an individual's perception of the transcendent in his or her daily life which mainly includes a sense of connection to God or higher power. Spirituality in contrast, can refer to vary concepts such as an individuals relationship with higher power or powers a type of energy or guiding forces or a belief system in common good (Hill & Pargament, 2003; Miller & Thoresen, 2003). Duffy and Bluestein (2005) have provided preliminary evidence suggesting that spirituality or religiousness are predictive of career decision self-efficacy. The integration of spirituality or religiousness inspires the desire of school going adolescents, positively in career decision making. There were also observed a positive significant relationship between spirituality and marital satisfaction (Oluwole, 2008a), spirituality and job satisfaction (Oluwole, 2008b). Although it is a topic seldom covered in the training of social, behavioural and health scientists or practitioners, a very large body of scientific research on spiritual processes already exists (Oluwole, 2009).

For many school going adolescent with spiritual commitments, faith play a critical role as predictor in their career decision making process. This is basically true for those adolescent with intrinsic religious orientations (Allport, 1950; Allport & Ross, 1967) individuals with religious faith may approach career choice as an end in itself rather than a means to some other end base on an express belief in a divine will for career choice. (Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor & Lewis Coles 2006) view career decision as an extension of a general process of trying to discern God's will. Researches on the role of spirituality as predictor in career decision making, though limited in scope has suggested that such factor relate positively to desirable career development outcome.

Parental involvement and career decision

The social learning theory views early experiences as the basis for developing career self-efficacy and interest as well as career goals and choices throughout life (Bandura, 1997). Altman (1997, p 241) shows the role parents play in the development of school going adolescents career decision making process. Career related development literatures also acknowledge the fundamental influence of parents on the career development of adolescence and young people (Roe, 1957; Osipow, 1983). Using the attachment theory, Lopez & Andrews (1987) suggested that career indecision stems from an inadequate psychological separation of adolescents from their parent and other family dysfunctional patterns.

Parental involvement in their children's wellbeing serves as significant interpreter of information about the world and the adolescents' abilities (Hall, Kelly, Hansen, & Gutwein 1996). A review by Whiston & Keller (2004) explored parental involvement as they relate to the career development process across the life span, on the basis of 77 studies. These authors concluded that parental involvement in life span of a child is vital as it relate to the child's aspiration, interests, feelings of support, self-efficacy and career choice.

Recent studies have shown how parents interact with their children to better understand the development of the children's optimal functioning (Fletcher, Steinberg & Sellers, 1999; Gray & Steinberg, 1999; Groluide & Ryan, 1989; Steinberg, Lamborndailing, Mounts & Dorbusch, 1994). Parental support and guidance can serve as a context for interpreting the realities of work, these may include specific career educational suggestions



as well as experiences that indirectly support career development of school going adolescents, such as provision of resources and modelling of paid work and non-paid work roles (Altman, 1997); positive behaviours and communicating openly about negative behaviour (Way & Rossmann, 1996). The import of this is that sharing workplace stories, expressing concerns for children's future, and strengthening of early positive family experiences and relationships can help the school going adolescents identify the barriers to their career decision making process.

Locus of Control and Career Decision

Locus of control is defined as an internal source within the individual, whereby individual satisfaction represents the primary motivation; in contrast, an external source originating from someone or something outside the individual, these include factors that individuals have freely chosen to guide their choice process. According to Rotter (1966) locus of control describes the extent to which individuals consider themselves to be in control of the source of enforcement in their lives. Those adolescents with internal locus of control are likely to take both an active role in the direction of their career development and personal responsibility for making career decision and gathering information necessary to make such decisions (Taylor, 1982). Those adolescents with an external locus of control, on the other hand, are likely to believe that career development is primarily influenced by chance and therefore, may fail to engage in appropriate information gathering and career decision-making activities.

Empirically, locus of control has been linked to a variety of career development activities with individuals showing an internal locus of control demonstrating both higher level of career maturity and lower levels of indecision (Carver, Scheler, & Weltraub, 1989, Hartman, Fuqua & Blum, 1985). Kamspan and Etzel (2001) found that career self-efficacy and career locus of control were the most important predictors of career maturity. Adolescents who are involved in occupations congruent with their career interests should be more likely to possess an internal career locus of control because of their demonstrated belief in the concept that personal effort is necessary to career decision making.

In another development an adolescent who takes the time and expands the amount of effort necessary to obtain employment experiences congruent with his career aspiration is exhibiting the type of behaviour indicative of someone who believes that their efforts are meaningful, and effective. Such an individual is likely to have locus of control signifying the belief that efforts and persistence contribute to career success Luzzo (1995).

Against the backdrop of the available literature, the following research questions serve as a guide to the researchers.

1. What is the joint contribution of the independent variables, i.e. spirituality; parental involvement and locus of control to the prediction of the dependent variable, i.e. career decision-making among school going adolescents.
2. What is the relative contribution of the independent variable, i.e. spirituality, parental involvement and locus of control to the prediction of the dependent variable, i.e. career decision-making among school going adolescents.

Method

Research design

The research design utilized was a descriptive survey research design in which questionnaires were employed in collecting data on the variable studied.

Sample

Participant for the study comprised of 150 ss3 students randomly selected from 3 co-educational secondary schools in Katsina state. There are 83 males and 67 females. Their ages range was between 14-24 years with mean age of 19 years.



Instrumentation

Four instruments were used to collect data for this study.

Career decision scale (CDS) by Osipow et-al 1976. the first part of the scale consist of demography questions about the participant while the other part deals with simple self-descriptive item about the level of decision making of the participant with options of like me (1) and not like me (4).

Daily spirituality experience scale which examine how often the participant experiences these feelings in his or her daily, weekly, monthly or yearly activities. Scoring between 1 to 4.

Locus of control based on Rotter 1966 generalized expectancies for internal and external control of reinforcement. The participants pick out of two options the one that best describes his or her feelings on happening in one's life.

Parental involvement scale (PIS).the scale consist of detail information about the participants parent which seek to know the extent to which they agree with the item as to their involvement with the child's career educational development. The response ranged from (1) completely true (2) true, (3) somewhat true (4) false

Procedure

The participants for the study were administered three questionnaires namely career decision scale, daily spirituality experiences scale and locus of control scale in their various schools with permission from their principals. The parental involvement scale was collected the following day to allow the participants take it home for their parent to fill and returned. Some teachers in the schools assisted the researchers in the administration of the questionnaires. The data obtained from them were analyzed to answer the research questions.

Data Analysis

The multiple regression analysis was use to analysis the data. This is to examine the relationship between the independent variables .i.e., spirituality, parental involvement and locus of control and the dependent variable. i.e. career decision making.

Results

The study addressed two issues. One was the joint contribution of the independent variables to the prediction of career decision making among school going adolescent. The second issue is the relative contribution i.e. which of the independent variables made the most significant contribution to the prediction of career decision making of adolescents. The results of the data analysis that provided the answers to the questions raised are presented below.

Research question 1

What is the joint contribution of the independent variable (spirituality, parental involvement and locus of control) to the prediction of dependent variable (career decision)?

*Table 1: Summary of Regression Analysis on Sample Data*

Multiple R= 0.334 Multiple R square =0.111 Standard error of estimate =2.64					
Analysis of variable					
Source of variation	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	p
Regression	127.69	3	42.56	6.10	<.05
Residual	1019.57	146	6.98		
Total	1147.26	149			

Table 1 show that the contribution of the three independent variables (locus of control, parental influence and spirituality) in predicting the dependent variable (career decision) of the adolescents gave a coefficient of multiple regression (R) of 0.111. This translated into 11.1% of the variance in the career decision of the adolescents were accountable for by the linear combination of the independent variables and multiple regression data which produced an F ratio of 6.095 and found to be significant at 0.05 significant level.

Research Question 2

What are the relative contributions of the independent variable (locus of control, parental involvement and spirituality) to the prediction of the dependent variable (career decision)?

Table 2: The table testing the significance of regression coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	15.388	2.017		7.630	.000
Spiritual	-.101	.047	-.175	-2.168	<.05
Parental	7.307E-02	.037	.161	2.001	<.05
Locus of control	.269	.079	.268	3.389	<.05

Result on table 2 show the regression coefficient (standardized and un-standardized), standard error of estimate, t ratio and level at which the f. ratio is significant (beta) ranged from 0.268-0.105 unstandardised regression coefficient (B) ranged from 15.388 to 0.101, standard error of estimate ranged from 2.017 to 0.037 t. ratio ranged from 7.630 to 2.001 and that the three independent variables were significant at 0.05 critical region.

Discussion

The results obtained show that the combination of spirituality, parental involvement and locus of control when put together appeared to be effective in predicting career decision among school going adolescent. The observed f. ratio of 6.095, significant at .05 levels is evidence that the combination of the independent variables can be a motivator to career decision-making process. Hence the coefficient of multiple correlations of 0.334 and a multiple r square of .0111 show the magnitude of the relationship between career decision and the combination of the independent variables. The result indicated a close relationship of the independent variables which accounted for 11.1% of the total variance in career decision among school going adolescents.



The result on table 2 showed the contribution of each independent variable to the prediction of career decision making among adolescents. The t. ratio values associated with each independent variable that parental involvement and locus of control significantly contributed to the prediction than spirituality.

The result of this current study indicated that the independent variables are contributors to career decision-making among school going adolescents, which is in line with previous research findings of Underwood & Teresis (2002), Duffy & Blustein (2005) providing evidences which suggest that spirituality are predictive to career decision-making self-efficacy. This may be an important source of support that could prove valuable throughout the career development process, especially during times of career instability and could also be regarded as a source of driving force in career decision-making process.

The findings from this study also show that parental involvement and locus of control are the most important predictors of career decision-making among adolescents, which corroborate findings of Altman (1997) Bloir (1994) Blustein (1997). Riggs (1994) finds a close parental connection and strong role models. Rotter (1966) describes the extent to which individuals consider themselves to be in control of the sources of enforcement in their lives demonstrates high level of career maturity.

The findings from this study have implication for career counselling. There is need for counselling psychologist and career educators to identify these variables as they relate to career decision making among school going adolescents and should be considered when dealing with issues of career development .They should also support learning strategies that can promote career readiness, Such as encouraging the taking of challenging classes. Parent should do better in difficult situation, and making informal contacts for exploration of occupational choices rather than choosing career for their wards. That children develop better on what they hear from their parents, as well as what they observe for themselves. Although, the day-to-day patterns of parenting relationship may be the most significant gift parents can give to their children.

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