

**IMPACT OF CAREER CHOICE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND  
COUNSELLING SERVICES IN CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE,  
NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study investigate career choice in secondary schools and career counselling Service in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. Intelligent children from poor socio -economic background should be encouraged by the government to take professional courses through scholarship, which will help them, enhance a brighter future. Teacher should also be allowed to identify the best course for each child through continues assessment and career counselling orientation, workshops and seminars should be organized for parents and students aimed at changing their mind set on gender streaming as Source of influence, parent or mentors should be brought into circle of counselling and discussion to help the student in a comprehensive career plan. Industries should invest resource for the purpose of training students, while still in secondary schools. Student should follow a career plan of informed decision making, rather than one of hypothesis.*

**KEYWORD:** impact, career, choice, counselling, service.

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## INTRODUCTION

Today one has not only to make due career planning but also exhaustive career research before making a career choice so as to adjust with the evolving social economic conditions (Wattles, 2009). According to kerka (2000), career choice is influenced by multiple factors which include personality, interest, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resource such as information and finances. Hewitt (2010), suggested that most people are influenced by career that their parent favor, others follow the career that their educational choice have opened for them, some choice to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them; while other chose the career that will give them more income. McQuaid and Bond (2003) cited that student perception of being suitable for particular jobs also been found to be influenced by a number of factors which include ethnic background, years in school, level of achievement, choice of sciences subject, attitude and difference in job characteristics. However, research show that the choice of career among secondary school student is determined by a combination of personal abilities, personality type of other factors (Okafor, 2012). This is why Onayase and Onyase (2009) suggested an investigation into other factors which include some environment factor such as family background, school environment, religious and peer group influences. Career according to Cambridge

advance learner's dictionary (2005) refers to "job or series of job that you do during your working life".

A career guidance counselor is needed to unreliable and dangerous source in search of career information such as culture peer group which can lead their graduating into armed robbery and other criminal business unintentionally. The primary goal of career guidance and counseling is to make it possible for an undeniable fact that the major service areas of guidance and counselling are, educational guidance and counselling which assists students in their choices of career, vocational guidance and counselling which assists the individual to choose and prepare for an occupation that is compatible with his interests and aptitudes, and personal and social guidance and counselling which assists the individual to behave appropriately in relation to other members of the society (Odeck 2009;Ipaye,2015). Career development provide insight to the fact that career counselling is being challenged to meet the needs of a society that is experiencing vest changes in the work place that is rapidly becoming more diverse (Zunker, 2012). The change in counselling needs have occurred because there is the need for quality work performance which is so pervasive in the live of individual since it influences all our life roles.

Career counselors on the other hand do offer a wide range of career related programme to students which are aimed at assisting students to plane their career, make informed decision and choose a career which will land him or her into the right vocation so as to make students enjoy their work (Zunker, 2012; Collins, 2007). in view of this, students received comprehensive career counselling programme (intervention) that required career and life plans through all level of schools and beyond, as well as school-to-work program mes which focus on preparing students for work through experienced internship activities in communities and organizations (Zunker, 2002). thus, it is important to provide career intervention activities in school with the aim to support students with information and guidance with regards to personal, academic and career option (Rosenbaum & Person, 2003), as well as to guide and prepare students for multiple roles within broad industry sectors from the transition from secondary school to workplace, college or secondary school is a critical path juncture. If such interventions are provided, it will enable the fit into the rapidly advancing technology. Thus there is the need for increased training and education to enable students break into most fields that are important and sophisticated than ever to choose thoughtfully (Weiten & LIyod, 2013).

Guidance counselors therefore have an important role in advocating for broad based career plans that focus on the students' interest and abilities which will give students increase future career options. Most student are provided with inadequate realistic information about occupations and careers on which to base their interests. Meanwhile, job experience plays and important part in the development of maturity with regard to vocational interests, abilities and traits (Black & Langone, 1997; Levinson, Peterson, & Elston, 1994; Pumpian, Fisher, Certo& Smalley, 1997). Career interests, thus need to be stimulated through short-termism job tryout experience and

job shadowing experience that includes documentation of preference and performance.

The role (s) of the counsellor is therefore to plane career development intervention activities to support students make informed choices. These activities can empower the students to cope effectively with career development tasks (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002), it can be a deliberate act aimed to enhancing some aspect of students career development in teams of career maturity and career decision making (Isaacson& Brown 2000) the counsellor thus can focus on career development intervention including career guidance, career counselling, career information career education, career development program and career coaching (Isaacson & Brown, 2000).

The first factor choosing a career is the environment factor that influence student career choice. Student tend to choose career that is directly linked to the surrounding environment and try as much as possible to solve the existing challenges in the surrounding (Splaver 2011). For example, student who have lived their entire lives on an island will most likely choose a career dealing with the environment around them which is mostly to do with water, or alternatively choose to have nothing to do with the island will most likely choose career dealing with the environment around them, which is mostly to do with water, or alternatively choose to have nothing to do with the island, on one occasion to have anything to do with the environment around water again (Perrone, 2011). Maybe someone in the students “life has made a significant impact or impression, leading to a certain choice of career (Hewitt, 2010). Parents” educational background may also influence students” view on whether or not to continue their education. Media influence also play a role in the process of career choices among student, a student may see some prominent media personalities on television who may have influence them to either make or alter a similar career choice to those personality or parent may have demanded that their career choice to those personality or parent may have demanded that their Career Choice factor assume a family business (Splaver 2011). There are various environmental factors that would lead a student to a chosen career (Stebleton, 2007).

Again Shoffine and Vac (1999) posit that school counselors can help increase family collaboration by working closely with parent to increase family school communication, and by providing parents with the skill and attitudes necessary to encourage their children’s beliefs. Shoffner and Vac (1999), citing Fouad, (1995), mention that school counselor can work with student to address confidence, self-assurance, self-worth, and positive attitude. This clearly shows that environmental and personality factors play a great role in the secondary student’s career choice. This study will be carried out in River State will be useful to the guidance counselors in assisting senior student in their career also help the ministry education in curriculum planning to widen the students career choice opportunities through curriculum content of educational system.

### **The Secondary School Subject**

In Nigeria educational system we operate 6-3-3-4 system of education.

- primary school - 6years
- junior secondary school - 3 years
- senior secondary- 3 years
- tertiary institution - 4years

### **Junior Secondary School**

In the junior secondary school level the following subject are involved.

Elective subjects: three of the following subject must be passed before such student can proceed to junior secondary school year one; physical health Education, Christian religious studies/ Islam religious knowledge, Nigerian language (Hausa, Igbo, Edo, Efik) agricultural science, music, Arabic, French. The Core Subjects: at Jss Level all students irrespective of the student attitude or future ambition must register and pass the following compulsory subjects English language, mathematics, Basic studies.

**Prevocational Subject:** at junior secondary school level, the students are expected to offer and pass at least nine form the following subject; introductory technology, business studies, H.P.E, Christian religious knowledge, social studies , home Economics, Food nutrition, Agricultural science, Fine Art. Though English Language, Mathematics Basic science are very compulsory subject.

### **The Senior Secondary School Subject**

The subject offered at the senior secondary school level are grouped into two (2): Business based coursed and science based course.

#### **Science Based Subject:**

The major subjects offered by studies include chemistry, biology, Physics, and some extent of geography and mathematics. (National policy on Education, 1981 and national board for technical Education, 1994). All of the courses are career to study in the universities including Engineering and Technology, Environment Sciences, Medical Science, Agricultural science and a number of specific science discipline (Abbass, 1997). Below are five major categories of professional versed in specific field, should be invited on regular basis to give career talks to students. These course/career talks to students. Engineering and Technology :Agricultural Engineering, Auto Mobile, Engineering technology, ceramics Engineering Technology, building construction, chemical Engineering, civil Engineering, communication Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Forestry Engineering, Mining Petroleum Engineering .The Engineering petroleum course above require the conditions which each aspirant must be very familiar with, if you do not possess the necessary requirement you wouldn't be admitted.

Environmental science: Architecture, construction, Building Estate, Management, Industrial design, Farm Management, land surveying, Urban and regional Planing.

Medical Science: Dentistry, medicine and surgery, Pharmacy, medical laboratory science, physiology, Environmental health human nutrition, nursing, veterinary medicine.

Agriculture Science: Agriculture, Agriculture Economic, Crop science and production, agriculture Extension / Animal Science production, fisheries, food science/technology forestry with wild life, soil science, nutrition and Deities.

General and Specific Sciences: Analytical Chemistry, Applied Biology and BIO chemistry, Applied physics, applied Mathematics, Biology, Botany, Chemistry, Computer Science, Dye and textile Chemistry, industrial mathematics, industrial physics, mathematics, Nuclear Physics, Meteorology, Micro biology, Petrochemical science and technology.

Medical Science: to read the above courses you need school certificate with five credits including English, mathematics, physics, chemistry and Biology. Other programme in medical science require more or less a minimum of four subject. It should also be noted that English language and Mathematics are core subjects necessary for successful pursue of such careers.

Business Based Subject: the world of business also offer very fascinating opportunities for career life that could make an individual very comfortable and profitable in life. The area of business include Accountancy, business management, banking, marketing, Insurance and public Administration, etc. The business of production, transportation and spelling of goods leads to employment of millions.

### Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between parent status and student choice of career in secondary. The parent status was measured in terms of the response on the items of parent while the occupational choice was measured in terms of the first choice occupations in the ranked occupation. The chi-squared statistic was employed for the statistical analysis and the test was conducted at 0.5 alpha level as shown in tab 1.

The chi-square Analysis of relationship between parent status and career preference of students.

CAREER	HIGH	LOW	TOTAL
Law	42(34.5)	8(15.5)	50
Medical	28(20.7)	2(9.3)	30
Engineering	17(15.8)	5(6.2)	22
Army	6(5.2)	2(2.8)	8
Social worker	5(12.4)	13(5.6)	10
Agriculture	1(0.7)	0(0.3)	1
Educationist	5(4.1)	1(1.9)	8
Architecture	3(2.8)	1(1.2)	4
Total	107	32	130

$$X^2_0 = 200.12 \times 2e = 30.14d - f = 10$$

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Discussion on the finding of this study is done to reflect the manner in which hypotheses were presented.

The analysis of hypothesis one showed that there is a significant relationship between parent and student career preference in secondary school.

### **Summary**

The study set out investigate the career choice in secondary school students.

The study focuses on the relationship between parent and student career choice in secondary school.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Student choice of career is significantly influenced by the gender of the student.
2. Environmental factors play a significant role in determining the career choice student among secondary school student make.
3. The counselor played their role in order to assist the student to choose a reputable career, however, the effect or influence of the counselor's effort the career choice of student was low.
4. Counselor are not well resourced, did not do effective and efficient follow-up, counselor - parent consultation concerning student career choice as against their ability and interest was not properly done.

### **Recommendation**

Firstly, there is need for government to establish educational guidance service in all the schools to guide the student and give them opportunity to understand and aspire for a good course of study when the finish their secondary school.

Student should be given as much career and occupational information as possible to enable and encourage them aspire for prestigious courses in the university.

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