



## **Parental Influence on Choice of Career among Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State**

Falilat Anike Okesina and Florence Bosede Famolu

### ***Abstract***

Career choice has become a complex task today as one not only has to undertake career planning but also has to do exhaustive career research before making a career choice based on evolving social-economic conditions. The study therefore investigated parental influence on choice of career among secondary students in the Ilorin Metropolis. The relative influence of variables such as parents' level of education, parents' occupation and family types were examined. A descriptive survey design approach was employed for the study. The population for the study comprised all students of secondary schools in the Ilorin Metropolis. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 200 respondents who participated in the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire entitled "Parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis". Content validity of the instrument was established and the reliability coefficient of 0.68 was obtained to ensure consistency of the instrument. Data analysis was done using percentage and frequency, mean and rank order analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA); all hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level. The findings of the study revealed that parents' encouragement to students on making good career decisions, parents informing students about specific careers, and parents' encouragement to students on considering different education and career options were significant influences of parents' choice of career among secondary students in the Ilorin Metropolis. The research hypotheses tested revealed that there were no significant differences in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on parents' level of education, occupation and family type. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that school guidance counsellors should organize a meaningful career program that will help to educate both parents and students on the concept of career choice.

Keywords: parents, choice of career, secondary school students, Ilorin

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## ***Introduction***

A career plays a very fundamental and significant role in the life of the individual not only because it determines the pattern of income but also because it affects the individual's personality and concepts in life. A career, therefore, is a choice pursuit, life work or success in one's profession occupied by a person throughout his/her lifetime. In a nutshell, a career is the totality of work one does in his/her lifetime and is person-centered, and is of utmost importance to every individual as he/she prepares for the future. A career can be defined as the sequence and variety of occupations undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress. More broadly, a 'career' includes life roles, leisure activities, learning and work. It includes the sum total of paid and unpaid work, learning and life roles you undertake throughout your life (Hammell, 2004; Adegboyega, 2017).

A career is a life pursuit, life work or success in one's profession occupied by a person throughout his or her lifetime. A career is the totality of work one does during a lifetime and as it is person centered, it is of utmost importance to every individual as he or she prepares for the future. Stebleton (2017) indicated that, a career is the totality of experience through which one learns about and prepares to engage in work as part of his way of living. A career is a lifelong process that is unique for every individual. There are many factors that contribute to an individual's career such as self-concept, interest, skill, knowledge, personality, ethnicity, age and gender. Choosing a career is something that is very hard to decide, especially as one's life will depend on it.

One's career may be in business, law, teaching, or entertainment professional way of life such that the former has implications for the makeup of the latter. A person may or may not "make money" or "earn a living" from a career, but a person who has a career may very well seem internally related to the work and way of life so that they become a part of his personal identity for practical purposes. A career usually imposes certain terms upon its pursuit. For example, it may require a certain specific location or type of location, a certain kind of geography or climate, a certain mix of uses of body and mind, or certain kinds of education and training. Such terms generally force some elements into and others out of a person's way of life. Careers may not dictate all the elements of one's way of life so that a career choice is the only serious life decision one makes; but careers certainly restrict and focus options in the many subparts of human lives, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of career choice among the major decisions persons can make. Career choice and selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining their future plans and this decision will impact them throughout their lives (Borchert, 2002).

Career choice is something that is very hard to decide, especially as his/her life will depend on it. Stebleton (2017) indicated that a career is the totality of experience through which one learns about and prepares to engage in work as part of his way of living. Splete, Weaver and Atiyyah (2011) stressed that a career is an enjoyable process that occurs over the life span and includes homes, schools and community. Every human being needs to do one job or the other to help contribute his/her value to the development of the country. The world is marking such drastic demand upon the coming workers, every truthful man and woman, every teacher and reflecting parent is planning way to fit the students for the life and needs of this new century (Adegboyega, 2017).

Since the early 2000s, career development or vocational guidance at it was then known, has increasingly gained more and more attention and respect. In essence, career counselling is a specialty within the profession of counselling. It is one that fosters the vocational development and work adjustment of an individual's abilities, interests, and goals along with the work roles structured by the community and occupations organised by companies that assist individuals in deciding and making a suitable and viable choices. Popoola (2014) refers to the need for one to discuss with one's peer school counsellors, parents and teachers the choices regarding life span work as a "career convention" or a "career conference". A career convention according to Popoola is an instrument of career information. Work experience during industrial training or those experiences acquired during vocational education also aids the students in choice of career. This is a technique in which students do jobs under realistic conditions without payment. This may help them choose a career to that effort.

Roach (2010) observed the influence that the home has on a child's learning is a fundamental concept of life. This cause and most of the habits and basic adjustments were established during pre-school years by highlighting the fact that home and parents occupy the most important position in a child's education. It should be stressed that work experience is not an attempt to find jobs for the students but an attempt to widen the horizons of students and ease the ultimate transition from school to work. This is usually based on the information given to the school by the parents. Such guidance and information are necessary because most school children are adolescents and are controlled by double standards, hypocrisy, truancy, materialism, and dishonesty.

Borchert (2002) observed that several factors influenced the career choices of high school students and identifying these factors would give parents, educators, and industry an idea as to where students place most of their trust in the career selection process. These factors include the students' immediate environment, opportunities available to the student, and finally his/her personality. He further observed that every student carries the unique history of their past and this determines how they view the world. In some cases, the career chosen is as a result of significant impact or impression made in the student's life, leading to a definite career choice.

Parents' educational background may influence student views on whether or not to continue their education. Someone they saw on television may have influenced the student, or parents may have demanded that they assume a family business. These are various environmental factors that would lead a student to a chosen career. The environment in which a student is brought up may greatly influence the career that one chooses. The student's support system made up of parents, relatives, siblings, peers, teachers, and counsellors may be the most important environmental factor. Lawyers, Doctors, Teachers, Accountants and Engineers, are some of the occupations which may run in families as children take up the careers of their parents. For example, students who have lived in a hospital environment may choose a career dealing with medicine. On the other hand, they may hate the hospital environment and consequently never choose a career that has anything to do with a hospital or medicine. Those who live near Airports may choose a career in piloting due to their fascination whenever they see airplanes flying over their homes (Natalie, 2016).

In some cases, the career chosen is as a result of a significant impact or impression made in the student's life, leading to a definite career choice. Parents' educational background may

influence student views on whether or not to continue their education. Someone they saw on television may have influenced the student, or parents may have demanded that they assume a family business. Therefore, it is essential to assess parental influence on the choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis.

### ***Problem***

Nigerian school leavers are faced with the problem of unemployment in the world of work which is rapidly expanding in technological advancement. This problem coupled with economic uncertainties was brought about by inadequate career information on the availability of jobs, lack of knowledge of what career to choose by the students, and misguided information by parents because most parents are ignorant of existing careers. Parental background, on the other hand, tends to be the single most influential factor in students' career choice. Most often, parents owing to personal idiosyncrasies, pressure their wards into taking up family occupations and other careers even when they do not possess the requisite abilities, interests, values, preferences, and personalities which are very important determinants of career choice.

The result of this is that the child may not concentrate on the parents' needs and so may not adjust positively towards the career. Career choice tends to be a persistent problem for students in contemporary society. That is why it is not uncommon for students to acquire occupations that are not suitable to their abilities. Sometimes, they enter the work completely pseudo-aspirations. What usually happens in the end is job dissatisfaction. Consequently, they rapidly become delusional and depressed, which leads to frustration, malfunction and inefficiency. All of this translates, in the long run, into a national economic crisis.

It is therefore important to explore the issues regarding career choice and the role that parents play in this decision. This is an important topic because parents may not realize the major impact their norms, values and gender roles have on career choice, and yet parental influence on students' career selection may present opportunities or obstacles for students during the career exploration process. It's upon this basis that this research project aims to explore parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis.

### ***Research Question***

This research question was raised to guide the conduct of the study:

- What is the influence of parents' choice of career among secondary students in the Ilorin Metropolis?

### ***Research Hypotheses***

The following hypotheses were postulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on parents' level of education.
2. There is no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on parents' occupation.
3. There is no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on family type.

### ***Methodology***

The research design that was used in this study is a descriptive survey design approach. According to Orodho (2012), the descriptive survey design is effective and easy to conduct and it also ensures ease in accessing information. The descriptive survey design allows the researcher to gather information, summarize and interpret data for purposes of clarification. The descriptive survey design is useful in collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or perceptions about issues under investigation (Orodho & Kombo, 2012). Descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) defined a population as the particular entity of people, objects or units which a researcher can reasonably generalize his or her research findings. The population for this study consists of all students of secondary schools in the Ilorin Metropolis. From the population, a simple random sampling technique was used to select four (4) secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. To get the required number of respondents, simple random sampling was used to select fifty (50) students from each selected school. This made a total of two hundred (200) respondents for the study.

The instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire entitled "Parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students' in Ilorin metropolis". The instrument is divided into two (2) sections that is section A and B. The Section A of the instrument consists of the demographic data of the respondents while section B consists of parent occupation, parent's highest level of education, and family type. It also consists of statements to which the respondents are expected to react on their opinion using the key: SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; D: Disagree; SD: Strongly Disagree.

Validity is the degree to which any measurement technique or instrument succeeds in describing or quantifying what it is designed to measure. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2019), validity is considered to be the degree to which results obtained from analysis of data

actually represent the phenomena under study. For the purpose of this study, content validity was established. Content validity involves both facial and note expression of experts. The idea is that the instrument has to conform to the objectives of the study while the researcher asks a few people to check whether the tool covers all areas. Thus, the draft of the questionnaire was given to the experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin for validation assessment. Corrections were made to ascertain the content validity of the instrument.

According to Roach (2010), reliability is the ability of an instrument to produce the same result when administered at different occasions. Reliability is the extent to which an instrument is consistent over a period of time if the study were to be re-examined a second time. Reliability is the degree to which an assessment tool produces consistent results. The reliability of this study was conducted using the test re-test method in which the instrument was administered twice at an interval of three weeks and the two sets of score were correlated using Pearson Product Moment correlation formula giving a reliability coefficient of 0.68.

Percentages were employed to analyse the demographical data of the respondents. The research question was answered using mean and rank order analysis while the hypotheses postulated were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 alpha level.

## ***Results***

### *Demographic Data*

This section presents the demographic data of the respondents.

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Based on Parent Education Status, Parents' Occupation and Family Type**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Parent Education Status</b>		
Primary	29	14.5
Secondary	56	28.0
Diploma	50	25.0
University Degree	65	32.5
Total	200	100.0
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>		
Civil Servant	61	30.5
Trading	56	28.0
Artisan	28	14.0
Self Employed	55	27.5
Total	200	100.0

<b>Family Type</b>		
Monogamy	82	41.0
Polygamy	118	59.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 1 presents the distribution of the respondents by parent education status, parent occupation and family type. The Table revealed that out of 200 respondents who participated in the study, 29 (14.5%) parents had primary education, 56 (28.0%) had secondary education, 50 (25.0%) had diploma while 65 (32.5%) had university degree. This shows that the majority of the respondents had parents with a university degree. With respect to parents' occupation, 61 (30.5%) were civil servants, 56 (28.0%) were traders, 28 (14.0%) were artisans, while 55 (27.5%) were self-employed. This also revealed that majority of the respondents' parents were civil servants. Also, based on family type, 82 (41.0%) of the respondents were from a monogamous family while 118 (59.0%) were from polygamous families. This shows that the majority of the respondents came from polygamous families.

**Research Question 1:** What is the influence of parents' choice of career among secondary students in Ilorin Metropolis?

**Table 2: Mean and Rank Order on Influence of Parents' Choice of Career among Secondary Students in the Ilorin Metropolis**

SN	In my own opinion	Mean	Rank
15	My parents encourage me to make good career decision	3.58	1 <sup>st</sup>
13	My parents tell me about specific careers	3.41	2 <sup>nd</sup>
14	My parents encourage me to consider many different educational and career options	3.40	3 <sup>rd</sup>
11	My parents tell me they have high expectation for my career	3.37	4 <sup>th</sup>
10	My parents ask me what careers I am considering for my future	3.33	5 <sup>th</sup>
9.	My parents help me feel better when I tell them I am worried or concerned about choosing a career	3.32	6 <sup>th</sup>
7.	My parents will accept any career I choose that is not in line with the type of education they want for me	3.30	7 <sup>th</sup>
8.	My parents support me when I tell them I am interested in a specific career	3.26	8 <sup>th</sup>
12	My parents are happy about the career path I have chosen because of their type of occupation	3.24	9 <sup>th</sup>
6.	My parents know everything about the career I have chosen because of their level of education	3.02	10 <sup>th</sup>
5.	My parents like the career I have chosen because it reflects on their educational qualification	2.85	11 <sup>th</sup>
4.	I developed an early understanding of my career choice through observation of my parent	2.73	12 <sup>th</sup>



3.	I would like to take after my parents' occupation because I admire it	2.51	13 <sup>th</sup>
2.	My career choice has been influenced by the occupation of my parents.	2.03	14 <sup>th</sup>
1.	My parents chose my secondary school subjects.	1.95	15 <sup>th</sup>

Table 2 presents the mean and the ranking of influence of parents' choice of career among secondary students in the Ilorin Metropolis. The Table shows that all the 13 out of the 15 items have a mean score above 2.5 which implies that the items above 2.5 mean score were all agreed upon by the respondents while 2 items which were below the mean score 2.5 indicates the respondents' disagreement. However, items 15, 13 and 14 with mean scores 3.58, 3.41 and 3.40 were ranked as the top three that is, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. The items stated that my parents encourage me to make good career decision, my parents tell me about specific careers and my parents encourage me to consider many different educational and career options as significance influence of parents' choice of career among secondary students in Ilorin Metropolis. On the other hand, items 14 and 15 with mean scores 2.03 and 1.95 were ranked 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> respectively. The items stated that my career choice has been influenced by the occupation of my parents and my parents chose my secondary school subjects were not significant influence of parents' choice of career among secondary students in Ilorin Metropolis.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the Parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on parents' level of education.

**Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Parental Influence on Choice of Career among Secondary School Students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on Parents' Level of Education**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	94.152	2	47.07	0.29	3.00	0.54
Within Groups	5367.535	197	24.73			
Total	5461.686	199				

Table 3 shows that the calculated f-ratio of 0.01, a critical f- ratio of 3.00 and a p-value of 0.00. Since the calculated p-value of 0.00 is less than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypotheses was not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on parents' level of education.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on parents' occupation.

**Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Parental Influence on Choice of Career among Secondary School Students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on Parents' Occupation**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	15.184	2	7.59	0.30	3.00	0.73
Within Groups	5446.503	197	25.09			
Total	5461.686	199				

Table 4 shows that the calculated f-ratio of 0.30, a critical f- ratio of 3.00 and a p-value of 0.73. Since the calculated p-value of 0.73 is greater than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypotheses was not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on parents' occupation.

**Hypotheses 3:** There is no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis based on family type.

**Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Parental Influence on Choice of Career among Secondary School Students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on Family Type**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	22.661	2	11.33	0.45	3.00	0.64
Within Groups	5439.025	197	25.06			
Total	5461.686	199				

Table 5 shows that the calculated f-ratio of 0.45, a critical f- ratio of 3.00 and a p-value of 0.64. Since the calculated p-value of 0.64 is greater than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypotheses was not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on family type.

### ***Discussion of Findings***

The findings of this study revealed that parents' encouragement to students on making good career decisions, parents informing students about specific careers, and parents' encouragement to students on considering different education and career options were a significance influence of parents' choice of career among secondary students in the Ilorin Metropolis. Baruch (2004) stated that each individual undertaking the choice of career process is influenced by several factors including the context in which they live in, their personal aptitudes, social contacts, encouragement from parents, and educational attainment.

Another finding revealed that there was no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on the parents' level of education. This means that parent's level of education has no significance influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis. This finding is in disagreement with Mortimer et al. (2012) who revealed that the variable that had the most effect on educational plans and occupational aspirations was parental education emphasizing that parents with post-secondary education tend to pass along its importance to their children. Such parents are more likely to offer their children an opportunity of a better education by enrolling them in good schools and in disciplines of their own choice.

Findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on parents' occupation. The above observation is in line with the findings of Popoola (2014) who established that parents' attitudes towards occupations such that if parents complain about their jobs or struggle to support the family on the income their jobs provide, children are more likely to seek more fulfilling or higher-paid roles. This implies that parents' occupation does not influence the choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis.

Findings also revealed that there was no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis based on family type. This implies that family type does not have a significant influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin Metropolis. The finding is in agreement with the submission of Jungen (2018) who observed that, while it is likely that parental values and expectations are conveyed within each household, the strength of their influence may be reliant upon the type of family the child was raised in. The polygamous family parental attachment over time and daily interactions in the home is lesser than the monogamous family. Both of these factors play a role in children's identity development and their career aspirations.

## ***Conclusion***

The findings of the study revealed that parents' encouragement to students on making good career decisions, parents informing students about specific careers and parents' encouragement to students on considering different education and career options were a significance influence of parents' choice of career among secondary students in the Ilorin metropolis. The research hypotheses tested revealed that there was no significant difference in the parental influence on choice of career among secondary school students in the Ilorin metropolis based on a parents' level of education, occupation and family type.

## ***Recommendations***

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

1. School guidance counsellor should organize a meaningful career program that will help to educate both parents and students on the concept of career choice.
2. Teachers and Guidance counsellors should realise that parent's educational level influences student's career choice and should therefore pass the importance of higher education onto students in relation to their careers.
3. Parents should not force students to pursue careers similar to their own against their will. With parental guidance and support, children are able to make the right choice of career.
4. A family relationship is essential in shaping the students career choice. In this regard, it is recommended that parents should take time to discuss different career choices with their children.
5. Whenever necessary parents should express satisfaction and words of encouragement with their child's decision.

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