

Financial Benefit, Prestige of the Profession and Job Security as Correlates of Career Aspiration of Secondary School Students in Ekiti State Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined financial benefit, prestige of the profession, job security as correlates of career aspiration of students in Ekiti State. A sample of 600 secondary school students comprising 311 boys and 289 girls, whose age range from 14-21 years, covering the whole state, was used. Purposive and stratified sampling techniques were used to select the sample. The data collected were analyzed using chi-square (χ^2) statistic. The results showed that financial benefit, job prestige and job security were significantly related to career aspiration of the students. It is therefore, recommended that guidance counselors, psychologists, career teachers, parents and school administrators should provide adequate and appropriate assistance to students by de-emphasizing financial package and remunerations as basis for career aspiration. So, also appropriate rating scale for the prestige students attach to various professions should be provided.

Key words: Finance, prestige, security, correlates, career aspiration, students

INTRODUCTION

One of the problems confronting students in secondary schools in Nigeria today is that of choosing an appropriate career, which begins from appropriate and relevant choice of subjects in school, securing admission into higher institutions and ends with finding a satisfactory job after their secondary school education.

It is the first problem for man to find out what kind of reserach he will do throughout his adult life, which will give him adequate comfort, satisfaction and societal fulfillment. In fact Super (1957), Salami (2000) and Ogunsanwo (2000) contended that no other decision a young person makes is so crucial for happiness in life as his or her choice of an appropriate career and the relevant educational preparation for it.

Career aspiration is a subjective consideration of various factors, which are likely to affect future occupational satisfaction and life long adjustment. Crites (1969), Gambari (1990) and Salami (1997) stated that people enter occupation because of economic reasons with the aim that such occupation will provide them with adequate materials and financial rewards necessary to meet ones social needs. Ogunsanwo (2000) and Salami (2004) revealed that the need for good salary that is attractive financial package, which will determine his social class, attractive working conditions and a secured future are very important factors influencing students career aspiration. Hence, there is a cluster of people around such occupations that offer these advantages.

The prestige a child attaches to an occupation determines his choice. According to Orenuga and Da Costa (2006) and Quineby and O'Brien (2004) have confirmed the importance prestige attached to occupation play in choosing a career. Owuamanam (1982) concluded that planners should note that interests of a greater majority of adolescents tend towards professions like medicine. Law and engineering, which attract high social prestige. Nwagwu (1976), while arranging student's career choices in order of prestige attached to them concluded that the jobs aspired to by most students are the professional jobs because of the prestige the society attaches to them.

Now-a-days, it is observed that students will readily choose professions that can guarantee life-long job security, after which someone can retire and still claim some benefits for their past services. Hence, the desire of the researcher is to find out the influence of these variables on career aspiration of secondary school students in Ekiti.

The main purpose of the study was to find out the relationship between job's prestige, financial benefit, job security and career aspiration among secondary students in Ekiti State of Nigeria.

Research hypotheses: The following hypotheses were formulated for this study at 0.05 level of significance.

- There is no significant relationship between financial benefit and career aspiration of secondary school students

- There is no significant relationship between occupational prestige and career aspiration of secondary school students
- There is no significant relationship between job security and career aspiration of secondary school students

teachers in each school and it was ensured that all the questionnaires were collected from the respondents.

Data analysis: The data collected were analyzed using chi-square (χ^2) statistic and all the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design: This is a descriptive research design of the survey type that allows for the study of existing phenomena as they are on the field. It only involves eliciting relevant information from the participants and describing each information for the described objectives without manipulation.

Population, sample and sampling technique: The target population was all the SS3 students for the final in 2007/2008 academic session in Ekiti State. Total 600 secondary schools students consisting of 311 boys and 289 girls whose ages range from 14-21 year were used. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 20 secondary schools covering the whole state, while purposive random sampling technique was used to select 30 students in each school.

Instrumentation: The instrument for this study was a questionnaire, ‘Students Career Aspiration Questionnaire’ (SCAQ) adopted from Kopto (1984) and modified to suit this study. Both face and content validities of the instrument were ensured and accessed through critical review and evaluation by test experts in the faculty of Education, who ensured that each item is designed to bring forth the desired response. A reliability coefficient of 0.82 was also obtained through the test-re-test method. The instrument was administered by the researcher with the help of some

RESULTS

H₁: There is no significant relationship between financial benefit and career aspiration of secondary school students.

This implies that the value calculated fall outside the critical region indicating that there was a significant relationship between financial benefit and career aspiration of secondary school students. Hence, the null hypothesis earlier stated was rejected.

H₂: This hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between occupational Prestige (PRG) and Career Aspiration (CASP) of students.

From Table 1 and 2, the chi-square (χ^2) calculated was 14.15, while the critical value is 3.841 therefore, $\chi^2_c > \chi^2_t$ i.e., 14.15 > 3.841. Thus, the value falls outside the critical region; hence, the Null hypothesis earlier stated was rejected which indicates that there is a significant relationship between occupational prestige and career aspiration of students.

H₃: This states that there is no significant relationship between Job Security (JOBS) and Career Aspiration of Students (CASP).

A cursory look at the Table 3 shows that $\chi^2_c > \chi^2_t$ table that is 12.39 > 3.841 hence, the null hypothesis was rejected indicating that there was a significant relationship between job security and career aspiration of secondary school students in Ekiti State.

Table 1: Relationship between Financial Benefit (FINB) and Career Aspiration (CASP) of secondary school students

Occupations	FINB		CASP		χ^2_c
	O	E	O	E	
Business and services oriented occupation	80 (68.4)	-	227 (238.6)	-	2.53
Medical and life saving occupation	47 (55.0)	-	200 (191.96)	-	1.16
Engineering and allied occupation	22 (21.2)	-	73 (73.8)	-	0.04
Mass communication occupations	2 (6.2)	-	26 (21.8)	-	3.66
Clerical and sales occupations	5 (5.8)	-	21 (20.2)	-	0.14
Regimental occupation	1 (3.8)	-	16 (13.2)	-	2.65
Teaching and related occupations	5 (3.8)	-	12 (13.2)	-	0.49
Mathematical/service related occupations	6	(3.8)	11 (13.2)	-	1.38
Social science and helping occupations	2	(2.5)	9	(8.5)	0.13
Agricultural occupations	1	(0.9)	3	(3.1)	0.01
Entertainment and stage oriented occupations	1	(0.7)	2	(2.3)	0.13
	172	-	600	-	12.32

p<0.05 (significant result); $\chi^2_t = 3.841$; $\chi^2_c > \chi^2_t$ i.e., 12.32 > 3.841

Table 2: Relationship between occupational prestige and career aspiration of students

Occupations	PRG		CASP		χ^2c
	O	E	O	E	
Business and services oriented occupation	42 (34.7)	-	227 (234.2)	-	1.72
Medical and life saving occupation	23 (28.8)	-	200 (194.2)	-	1.33
Engineering and allied occupation	10 (10.7)	-	73 (72.3)	-	0.06
Mass communication occupations	2 (3.6)	-	26 (24.4)	-	0.81
Clerical and sales occupations	4 (3.2)	-	21 (21.8)	-	0.23
Regimental occupation	3 (2.5)	-	16 (16.5)	-	0.12
Teaching and related occupations	1 (1.7)	-	12 (11.3)	-	0.32
Mathematical/service related occupations	2	(1.7)	11	(11.)	0.06
Social science and helping occupations	1	(1.3)	9	(8.9)	0.08
Agricultural occupations	0	(0.4)	3	(2.6)	0.46
Entertainment and stage oriented occupations	1	(0.4)	2	(2.6)	1.04
	89	-	600	-	14.15

$p < 0.05$ (significant result); $\chi^2c = 14.15$; $\chi^2t = 3.841$

Table 3: Relationship between job security and Career Aspiration (CASP) of secondary students

Occupations	JOBS		CASP		χ^2c
	O	E	O	E	
Business and services oriented occupation	16 (17.7)	-	227 (225.3)	-	0.17
Medical and life saving occupation	21 (16.1)	-	200 (204.9)	-	1.61
Engineering and allied occupation	3	(5.5)	73	(70.5)	1.23
Mass communication occupations	1 (2.0)	-	26 (25)	-	0.9
Clerical and sales occupations	1 (1.6)	-	21 (20.4)	-	0.24
Regimental occupation	0 (1.2)	-	16 (14.8)	-	1.3
Teaching and related occupations	3 (1.1)	-	12 (13.9)	-	3.54
Mathematical/service related occupations	20 (0.9)	-	11 (12.1)	-	1.44
Social science and helping occupations	0	(0.6)	9	(8.4)	0.64
Agricultural occupations	0	(0.2)	3	(2.8)	0.21
Entertainment and stage oriented occupations	0	(0.1)	2	(1.9)	0.11
	47	-	600	-	12.39

$p > 0.05$ (significant result); $\chi^2c = 12.39$; $\chi^2t = 3.841$; $\chi^2c > \chi^2t$ i.e., $12.39 > 3.841$

DISCUSSION

The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between financial benefit and career aspiration of secondary school students in Ekiti. This implies that there is a relationship between financial benefits of any chosen profession and student's career aspiration. This can be explained in terms of the current wave of material acquisition syndrome prevalent in Nigeria, students are aware of the fact that the financial remunerations derived from a job determine one's status in the society. The present depressed economy in Nigeria, in which money plays a dominant role in determining who you are confirms this finding. This confirms that the general state of the economy among other factors influences the vocational choice of the individual.

It was found that there is a significant relationship between prestige of any profession and career aspiration. This implies that there is a relationship between prestige of any profession and career aspiration of secondary school students. The choice, a student makes affects his total life, his income, his social class, the friends he keeps. The factor becomes very prevalent and cogent since students see the status value of a profession as the attractive force for choosing such a career. It is observed

in this study that prestige accounts for the choice of service oriented occupations, medical and life saving occupations and agrees with Owuamanam (1982) and Salami (2008), which states that planners should note that interests of a majority of adolescents lean greatly towards professions like Medicine and Engineering. Orenuga and Da Costa (2006) and Chope (2005) supported this view that prestige determines to a large extent the choice of professions of secondary school students.

The study revealed that there is relationship between job security and career aspiration of secondary school students. Students are generally aware of the present economic situation especially in the labour market. There is a general unemployment and insecurity of jobs hence, permanency of a job/profession influences career aspiration. Hence, jobs that can guarantee self-reliance and independence are aspired to rather than jobs, which do not guarantee lasting practice. Thus, jobs like medicine and life saving professions, Engineering and Business occupations are highly rated.

CONCLUSION

From these results, it can be concluded that career aspirations of secondary school students are influenced by financial benefits, occupational prestige and job security.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has some implications for counseling in Nigeria. Most students are clouded by the state of the economy hence, career choices are not born out of their innate qualities, but due to the craze for material acquisition, financial benefit and recognition in the society, the counselor should help students explore their innate qualities before choosing career. Also, characteristics and requirements of various professions should be made known to students before choosing their careers.

It is also recommended that Guidance Counselors, career masters, parents and school administrators should provide adequate assistance to students by deemphasizing financial package as basis for career aspiration. So, also appropriate and realistic rating scale for prestige students attach to professions should be provided, while students should be assisted to develop a long term plan for self development and sustenance rather than job employment.

Also, institutions that offer courses that command high prestige and offer buoyant financial benefit should be enlarged to accommodate more students.

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