

**INFLUENCE OF CAREER CHOICE ON THE ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN
OVIA NORTH EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EDO
STATE**

BY

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EDU1703081

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS,
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY.**

JULY, 2021.

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT
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OF THE DEGREE BACHELOR OF ARTS (EDUCATION) IN
RELIGIONS .**

JULY, 2021.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that this study was carried out by **EMMANUEL NGOZI** with the Matriculation Number **EDU1703081**, in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin city, Nigeria.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to God Almighty who saw me through this academic sojourn in the University of Benin.

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the career choices among senior secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo state. Four research questions were raised to guide the research.

A descriptive survey research design which involves collection of data through the use of questionnaire was adopted to solicit information from respondents. The population of the study consists of the hundred and fifty(150) in Ekosodin Secondary School. The sample size of the study is fifty(50) students which makes up 75% of the population size. A simple random sampling technique was used to select sample for study. Simple percentage and frequency count was used to analyse the responses of the respondents.

The findings of the research revealed that parental influence has a significant impact on the career choices of students. A student's choice of career can be affected by the peer group of such a student. Gender has no significant relationship with the choice of career of students. The age of the students has no impact on the career choice of senior secondary school students. There is a significant relationship between the student's career choice and academic performance. It was recommended that parents should enlighten their children on different career choices at a tender age. Guidance and counseling services should be made available in secondary schools to guide the students. Finally, students should ensure they have proper information about their intended career choice and such choice should be born out of passion and ambition.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Education is an act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment and generally of preparing oneself or others for a mature life. Education can also be said to be a form of acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding that is gotten from an institution of learning.

According to Njoke, Bort, & Changan (2012), the purpose of education is to equip the citizenry to reshape their society and remove any form of inequality. The value of education in the society is not one that can be over emphasized. Education is regarded to be the answer to many difficulties and the panacea to the current ills of the society. Not only is education seen as the solution, it is the channel through which the needed manpower in various sectors of the economy is gotten.

Education in Nigeria is organized at different levels ranging from nursery to primary to secondary and tertiary institution, each with their peculiar characteristics. At the secondary level, students are expected to

choose from the different fields in education which include; arts, commercial and science. The purpose of this is to ensure that every child or student contributes his or her quota to the society. The goal of the secondary school within the context of national objectives is to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and to prepare the student for higher education according to the national policy on education. The secondary school is divided into the junior secondary (JSS) and the senior secondary (SSS) each lasting for a period of three (3) years. The senior secondary level is more critical because at this stage the student needs to decide his/her career path.

Careers play a fundamental role in the life of an individual, not only because they determine the pattern of income, but they also affect the individuals' personality and perception of life. According to CDI (Career Development Institute), a career refers primarily to the sequence and variety of work roles, paid or unpaid, that individuals undertake throughout their lives; but it is also the construct which enables individuals to make sense of valued work opportunities and how their work roles relate to their wider life roles. The complexity of career decision making among individuals is mostly recognized by career theorists such as Ginsburg et al (1951), Tiedeman & O'hara (1953), and Gelatt decision making model (1962). They all recognized that career choices among individuals or students were influenced by different

factors. Research shows that homes, schools and the social setup amongst other factors contributes to the influence of an individual's career choice.

Many factors contribute to the career choices of senior secondary school students. Parental influence has been recognized as a determining factor in students' career decision making. These influences could be either positive or negative on their decisions (Rainey & Borders 1997; Sebald 1989). Sometimes, parents tend to choose careers for their children based on what they perceive to be good, prestigious and of high income. Also, the educational level of parents, their profession and income are also identified as very important factors (Hearn 1984, 1988). Herbart (2005) opines that a child coming from an environment where he/she receives parental support and lives harmoniously is more likely to be dictated by them.

Peer group influence is an important component in the determination of a student's outcome. Arab et al (2014) noted that peer influence is an asset for developing career opportunities and decision making among students. A typical student learns from discussions with their peers and can be affected by their personality and attitudes towards learning. On many occasions, students visualize what they intend to become through subject selection while playing among their colleagues. Eventually, they end up pursuing their intention through peer influence or pressure (Tella et al, 2007).

Different studies show that students all over the world, irrespective of their gender, face the same problem when making a career decision. They have to weigh their options according to the environment in which they live, their interest and their educational performance. According to Arthur & Rousseau, 1996, individuals with better academic performance are able to make better judgments about themselves. It was also reported that 80% of both the genders lay great emphasis on high status occupations. Stereotyping of jobs has also been observed amongst the genders, where boys tend to opt for high earning careers and girls in the educational sector. Various research reports that females traditionally avoid male-dominated fields. However recent studies show that women are adapting professions which are conventionally male-oriented.

Nuhum and Irene (2012) posited that there are careers that have very great appeal to adolescents. At the initial stage, such careers as soldiering banking, law, medicine and engineering have high attraction. Little concern is given to the antecedent pre-qualification requirements be it social academic or even environmental demands.

The career choice made by students goes a long way in affecting their overall academic performance in life. At the secondary school level, it guides the students to know the subject he or she is to give more attention to when studying. Not only does career choice affect the students' performance at the secondary school level, it also has an impact on the tertiary level. In a nutshell, the choice of career is very important

and is one that must not be taken lightly. This study concentrates on the career choices made by students at the secondary school level.

Other factors such as aptitude, life circumstances, and academic achievement have also been proven as determinants of career choice.

Statement of the Problem

Technology coupled with education is fast evolving and rapidly developing in Nigeria, and this has made the society more complex and opened the doors for more job opportunities. In the studies conducted by Ogungbemi & Ajayi (2009), it has shown that adolescents think and plan their education in relation to their future vocational goals. Experience shows that lack of guidance and information at the time of selection often shatter their plan for a successful career in life.

A lot of cases have been proven where students regret whatever career decision they made when it is too late. Also, the researcher has also observed that some students perform poorly in their chosen career and this has brought about the necessity for this study. It is on this note that the researcher intends to investigate the influence of career choice of senior secondary school students and to what extent they affect the students' overall academic performance.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

1. Does parental influence contribute to the students' career choices?
2. To what extent does peer group influence students' career choices?
3. To what extent does gender influence students' choices of career?
4. To what extent does age influence students' career choice?
5. To what extent does career choice influence academic performance?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of career choices of senior secondary

school student in Ovia North East L.G.A of Edo state, Nigeria and answer questions on how it affects their academic performance. Specifically, the study intends to find out:

- To identify the contribution of parental influence on students' career choices.
- To find out the influence of peer groups on students' career choices.
- To determine the influence of gender on students' choice of career.
- To know the influence of age on students' career choice.
- To ascertain the influence of career choice on academic performance.

Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes that the result of this research will be found beneficial to all stakeholders in the education sector.

Firstly, the researcher hopes that this research will help the national planners of the nations' curricula to make informed decisions with regards to subject allocation and career guidance. The finding will also serve as reference in the re-organisation and revision of schools curricula and programmes. That is, the subjects in the curricula would be of those that are important to the students.

Secondly, the findings of this research will help parents and guidance of students to guide them on the right path. The role of parents in students' career choice is not trivial so the parents need to have proper knowledge about career choices and how to guide their children and wards to make the right choices.

Thirdly, the findings from this research will be beneficial to school administrators and managers in the area of planning their school curriculum and activities. A proper planned school calendar with the right set of activities goes a long way in helping the students.

Finally, the research would be of immense benefit to the general public in knowing how to perform their roles as parents and counselors. At the same time, the students would be enlightened in wisely choosing the right career.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this study covers career choices of senior secondary School students in Ovia L. G. A. of Edo State. It is delimited to senior secondary school students in Ovia local Government Area of Edo State.

The following terms will be encountered during the course of this study. It shall be operationally defined:

Career: An individual's work and live roles over their lifespan. Career can also refer to a person's occupation or profession.

Choices: The outcome of a decision. It is also an opportunity to choose and select something.

Performance: To perform is to take a complex series of actions that integrate skills and knowledge to produce a valuable result.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with the review of related literature. It shall be discussed under the following subheadings:

- Concept of Career Choice
- Parental Influence on Career Choice
- Peer Influence on Career Choice
- Gender and Career Choice
- Age Influence on Career Choice
- Summary of Literature Review

Concept of Career Choice

A career refers primarily to the sequence and variety of work roles, paid or unpaid that individuals undertake throughout their lives; but it is also the construct which enables individuals to make sense of valued work opportunities and how their work roles relate to their wider life roles. Business dictionary defines career as the progress and actions taken by a person throughout a lifetime, especially those related to that person's occupation.

Kinance (2004) explained career as the sum total of the individual's vocation or job which a person does in life. Therefore, a career is a dynamic vocation or job which an individual has interest in and finds himself qualified to do in his lifetime. Efizah (2009) defined career as a

chosen pursuit that is called profession. It is about one's working life towards professional achievement. Career has traditionally been seen as a source of successive situations that makes up a person's work study life. In recent times, the concept of career embraces the dimension of time as not simply about one does for a living, but about what has been done in the past, at the present and might do in the future. Career according to Adamson, Daherty and Viney (2008) is believed to offer structure, direction, meaning and purpose to one's daily activities.

Choosing a career is not as easy as it appears because of its consequences for the individual and the society at large and because so many factors are capable of influencing an individual's choice of career, making it sometimes difficult for the individual to make decisions. Such factors include parental influence, peer group influence, availability of field trips and excursions. The dominance of each of these factors depend on students' environment. However, it must be understood that each of these factors never exist in isolation, rather, they interplay with one another depending on the student's environment. The importance of career to man is such that an unstable choice would ruin the individual and the society would begin to function below the level of maximum efficiency (Bakare, 2012).

The career choice decision is also difficult not just because of the range of career options available to an individual in the current environment, but having an adequate understanding of a career without

ting into it. Too often, only after a person has made sustainable commitment in time, energy and money or has cut off other opportunities by taking steps to enter a career, does he or she find that it is not what was expected or wanted. Another difficulty lies in having a clear perception, occupational preference testing, guidance counselling and experience in activities related to career are all resources for making this choice.

Making a career choice requires getting in touch with ourselves and our surroundings. There are clearly two ways of looking at and assessing options. On one hand, it is about intuition and listening to the heart which helps us create a vision of what one wishes to accomplish in life and how we influence the world. On the other hand, it is about the evaluation of the inner self and the environment and using the brain to evaluate what option is the most suitable one. The former evaluation is usually made in relating to the environment both physically and mentally. The later involves considering the perspective (both positive and negative) of each of the options that came from the first part.

Peter (2011) says that career choice is a developmental process that extends over many years and where freedom does exist, the choice of occupation has important consequences for both the individual and the society. For individuals, the career choices he or she chooses can be an important determinant of his or her entire life. That is, it will form the basis of his or her life. For the society, career choices are very important

because if the society's system is to function smoothly and efficiently, a sufficient number of people must be attracted to various career choices and professions.

In Nigeria, choosing a career has a lot of peculiarities due to innovations in technology. The careers available in the country have gone beyond the traditional "medicine, engineering" and the likes because of the new fields that have emerged under those ones. This however poses a problem to the secondary school children who are still in the adolescent stage as to what career they are to go into. Not only do technological innovations pose a problem to these ones. The prestige of the career and how much it pays is another problem. Choosing a career in Nigeria is not only based on one's abilities and interest, it is based on this prestige and attractive salaries of the intended career. Choosing a career is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interest, self-concept, identity, globalization, socialization, role model social support and available resources such as information and finance. Students all over the world are faced with the herculean task of career decision making and if not properly handled can lead to frustration.

According to Edwen (2000), different values are attached to different career options. These values according to him stem from life experiences, educational background, and the environment. Values are also attached to the stability which is attached to a particular career. An important factor in determining students' career choice is the school to

which they belong. Different curriculum options, hidden curriculum, and school culture are all determinants of a student's career choice. Schools role is to provide accurate guidance, and also encourage students to continue with education and not drop out (Olayede, as cited in Nyarko-Sampson 2013).

In his analysis, Watts (2016) concluded that developing countries direct their students into careers according to the country needs. Professions have varying degrees of acceptability in different cultures which also influences an individual's career choice, Kerka (2013). Socioeconomic factors, therefore, are also important in motivating the students to make career decisions, Sukovieff (2013).

Okon (2001) is of the view that economic development and incentives in a country dictate occupational choice. He maintained that in primitive societies choices are highly curtailed or non-existent while in developed" economies the possibilities of choices are much greater. He further indicated that in the earlier times when our economy was relatively young, some types of occupation and profession were unheard of, for instance, fields such as garbage collection, public relations, beauticians, interior decoration, real estate, journalism, professional footballers and dieticians. Equally, economic incentive that is the range of earnings attracted by different occupations determines career preference. Simply put, occupations that have higher pay attract a lot of people.

Cammish (2007), interviewed school children from six countries, viz. India, Bangladesh, Jamaica, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, asked them to share their opinion on gender factor which acts as a barrier for women education. Access to school was reported as a common factor for females. A major disadvantage to females is culture biases toward males rather than females. Media in today's world plays a very strong influence in decision making at various levels. Gender stereotypes are created by commercial advertising. Different commercials and posters provide information about different occupations. These messages leave an impact on the people and they adopt the careers which are not traditionally associated with their gender.

According to Wroblewski and Huston (2007), children tend to be more informed about situations they see on television and movies, rather than the reality, which serves as a strong influence on their career decisions. Similarly, Trujillo and Ekdom (2007) assert that media, particularly television teaches us to value those professions which are portrayed to be more socially valued in a society. According to Semali (2013), the various means through which we are bombarded with information are "television, radio, newspapers, magazines, internet, billboards and marketing materials". At the time of personal development, these types of advertisements leave a lasting impression on the youth. A factor which influences career choice is the lack of awareness regarding professions (Jones and Larke, 2015).

Students have misconceptions about professions due to lack of information, which prevents them from choosing them. On the contrary, these fields were actually gaining more demand and were expanding. Teachers were perceived to be influences of career choice more often for students. Some students may or may not choose a certain job as a result of the interaction they had with a particular teacher, while in some situations, teacher's characteristics such as mode of dressing and behavior, among others may influence student's career choice Alutu (2017).

There are also other factors like field trips and excursions which have been discovered to aid students in their career choice. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia describes that a field trip or an excursion is a journey by a group of people to a place away from their normal environment. The purpose of the field trip is usually observation for education, non-experimental research to provide students with experience outside the everyday activities. Field trip give them a chance to go out of the classroom and experience something new. Aggarwal (2008) opines that educational trips aim at enriching, vitalizing and complementing content areas of the curriculum by means of first hand observation and direct experience outside the classroom. According to Randy (2009), field trips are a substantial and substantiating way to expand the student's horizons and allow them to learn experimentally.

Parental influence on career choices

The first interaction of a child with people takes place within his home among members of his family who include parents, siblings and relatives (Bollu & Sanni, 2013). Parents generally would want their children to achieve where they failed. To enable them to achieve this, they send their children to high class schools, which expose children to good career choices (Ohiowera & Nwosu, 2001). Parents often begin the career discussions with their children as early as possible, since their childhood. Children should feel comfortable talking to their parents about anything, including their own aspirations for the future (Yean and Chin, 2019)

The parents provide many things for her children like guidance and protection, shelter and in the case of education, encouragement. They try by all means to educate the child about the outside world by interacting with what is happening around him Michael (2001). He maintained that a home that is marked by the persistent conflict and divergent aims between the parent and the child poses a threat to the child's life. He went further to say that a child is not yet informed on the factors and realities of life but with the help of parents, he or she will be very much aware of the steps to become useful to himself, family and the society in the general sense. Choosing a career based on their preferences or parents' favoritisms allows children to discover great career possibilities (Chan, 2013). If the necessary materials for the students are not provided, there will be no improvement in the child. The child therefore will lose a sense

of direction, Micheal (2011). Parents' advice and guidance exert a greater influence on their children's career choice as parents have regular interactions with their children compared to teachers and career counselors (Clutter, 2010). Studies revealed that parents influence the choice of careers among high level school students. Studies carried out in Kenya revealed that adolescents require information on topics such as career planning, they consult their parents (Edwards & Quinter, 2011). Another study conducted in Nigeria to investigate the influence of family background on the academic performance of secondary school students showed that supportive parents are important for their children's career decision making and the success of their career (Barker, 2010, Clutter, 2010). There are some family factors that influence the choice of career but students and they include: socio-economic status of parents, parental education and family size,

Parents can influence their children's career choices both intentionally and inadvertently. By the time children move into adolescence, they begin seriously considering their futures, often looking to their parents either as role models or for career advice. As such, parents can serve as the career role model for their children (Eccles & Davis, 2005; Garg, Melanson & Levin, 2006; Kniveton, 2004; Wright & Perrone, 2008)

In Nigeria, the socio-economic status of parents play a major role in the choice of career by an adolescent. A child who is from the wealthy and

upper class is more exposed to a lot of career opportunities than a child who is from a poor home. The child from the wealthy home would be placed in an expensive school with very good and qualified teachers or might even school outside the country because of the parents wealth. Such a child has a wide range of career to choose from due to the high level of exposure. Whereas, a child from a poor home would not be able to afford these luxuries and therefore finds himself restricted to some particular courses which the parents believe to yield more income and prestige. Parental education also influences choices of career but students. It was revealed unt Pfingst (2015) in Australia and Abiola (2014) in Nigeria that highly educated parents have more resources, both financially, mentally and in terms of advice, to support their children than poorer parents.

Olayinka (2005) asserts that it so happens that parents have pre-determined the careers for their wards, and only serve to steer them in that direction. In other research, it is elaborated that the attitude of parents and the influence of the home environment influences a child's career path. Similarly, parents' education has been proven as a factor influencing career choice (Grissmer, 2003; Ogunlade, 2013). Research supports the position that parents' education is linked with the students' career choice. Literature reports that parents' educational level is the most important factor in students' career decision (Grissmer, 2003; Ogunlade, 2013). The

results uphold that parents are a child's first teacher, and thus they have the role of a guide, advisor and counsellor in their lives.

Bladeless cited in Nyarko-Sampson (2013) explains that parents exert emotional pressure on their wards regarding the choice of careers. They make independent consultations regarding the career they think is most suitable for their children. The child's preferences are never a matter of concern for them.

Shazia and Muhammad, 2019 concluded that parents have a strong influence over the career choices that their children make. This influence may be positive or negative depending upon the moral values, educational level and financial status of the parents.

Asikhia (2010) noted that parental educational level and socio-economic status are related and one may rightly say that they are married and hence, go hand in hand. He is of the opinion that social class and status can be defined more effectively by using such indices as occupation, income and education. Family size, though appearing significant, also contributes to the choice of career. A large family size tends to have more needs financially, psychologically and in other areas than a small family. If these needs are not properly managed, it can have an adverse effect on the adolescent which in turn would affect his or her choice of career and also academic performance.

Peer Influence on Career Choices

Peer groups are usually made up of playmates, friends or people within the same age bracket. It has been observed that cooperative education between peers begins in infant hood and that most frequent were acts that limited the action of the peer models, which continues all through childhood and adolescence. Peer group influence is a source of pressure which induces the young adolescent into predetermined occupations, sometimes with little or no considerations on the potentials, actual needs and ego of their friends. Peer group influences career choice through peer interactions. It was revealed in Uganda (Okiror & Otabong, 2015) and in Kenyan (Walaba & Kiboss, 2013) that peer pressure interactions influence students in choosing a career. Yi-Hui (2006) in his study in China revealed that students' interactions with peers of diversified interests, races and backgrounds have the potential to stimulate reflections, knowledge and belief which may lead to new ways of thinking about the world, other peers and eventually themselves. For peers to understand the world of work, their interaction makes it possible for them to venture into careers they were unaware of. Kiuru (2008) also revealed the importance of peer interactions in Finland where he stated that the academic orientation typical of the peer group to which they belong may potentially have a long term impact on the individual adolescents vocational career. As Adeleke (2005) disclosed, peer influence appears to take upper hand and to be determining factors to

push peers to their occupations. Thus, peer influence can provide many positive elements in an adolescent's life. It is important however to remember that peer influence can potentially have a deadly impact or other various negative effects on adolescents' occupational choice.

Stuart (2000), found that peer attitude towards gender and ethnicity may increase or decrease a person's confidence in pursuing a career. Adolescents are easily influenced by their friends because they rely on their friends to provide validation of the choice that they make including career choices. The quality of relationship between adolescents and their peers, as well as the type of peers they are associated with play an important role in aiding or impeding their career choices, Aliku (2012). According to Ferry, (2006), an adolescent chooses a career just because "every other person is doing it", so if a teenager, particularly a leader decides to join the army, he might find that all his friends are going to boot camp with him.

Peer and friends have considerable impetus towards career decisions and academic choices. However, if we look to the role of parents in the socialization process and personality development, they usually play the initial leading roles in the value transmission but peer and friends seem to have the greatest role in adaptation of lifestyle, appearances, decision making and even educational choices (Arab et al)

Imo and Melvina (2020) concluded that some school children aspire for some career based not on personal ability but on peer influences. This is not very much in line with the Nigeria desire for education for democratic self-fulfilled living. There is the need to inject into the system among other things some philosophical principles that enhance learners capacity for free and independent decision making.

Gender and Career Choice

Gender is viewed as the division of people into two categories, men and women based on their biological differences (Jamabo, Enebeli and Ester, 2012).

Since gender is used to distinguish between males and females, it implies that there are a number of attributes that go with gender as defined by the society. Manju et al (2006), addressed the question of whether there are differences between women and men in experiences, attitudes and computer interest within and across program types. A number of gender differences were found to be significant for the sample overall. As in previous studies, the male students in both groups had used computers earlier in life, especially to play computer games; were more likely to be self-taught, including in programming; and had fathers who held traditional views about gender roles. The men also reported being more comfortable and self-confident with computers, more skilled, able to

learn programming languages more easily, more interested in understanding how computers work, more attracted to computing challenges, and more willing to stick with and resolve computing problems than did the women. Gokuladas (2010) states that men are more likely to value job content and long-term career objectives (intrinsic factors) while women place more importance on work environment and interpersonal relationships (extrinsic factors). This also influences the career they choose as society believes that there are different roles for men and women.

Traditionally, the belief across the world was that a woman's role is to be a homemaker and a man's role is to be a breadwinner. However, there is a paradigm shift as more individuals believe that women should share in financial support of the family and that men should participate in childcare and other traditionally feminine aspects of household labour. In other words, women have the capacity to engage in male dominated careers and men engage in what are perceived as women's jobs as defined by the society.

The influence of gender in career choices has been documented in many studies. Our society deems certain types of work appropriate to either men or women, Hooley (2012). Men are encouraged to explore a wider variety of occupations, yet the areas of childcare and nursing are seen as not appropriate for them. Women on the other hand are discouraged from seeking education and training in science and mathematics related

courses in trade such as construction, manufacturing and transportation, Hewitt (2010). In China, Chow and NGO (2002) state that gender differences are attributed to sex roles, prejudice and discrimination which affect the status of women in the economy. Kenyan females choose careers that correspond with their abente traditional gender roles and males also choose careers that match those of their traditional gender roles (Migunde et al., 2012)

Griffin et al., (2011) established that in America, when gender beliefs are salient, they shape behaviour most powerfully by affecting people's sense of what others expect of them. Similarly, Ahuja et al. (2006) revealed that gender influences behaviours and preferences across a variety of contexts. Ahuja et al. study further explained that male students use computers earlier in life especially to play computer games. It was also established in Nigeria that the use of computers and the internet has the potential to equip students with career information that would give male students an edge over their female counterparts (Durosaro and Adebanye, 2012).

Jamabo et al.(2012) also purport that generally Nigerian girls are interested in literacy, clerical, artistic, musical and social activities while boys indicated preferences for outdoor, mechanical, computational, business and industrial professions. The belief that boys and girls choose careers based on gender lines is built during adolescence when gender

roles manifest (Klapwijk and Rommes, 2009). For girls, the gender bias may result in an aversion to all technical occupations since they represent masculinity.

Eyo (2011) revealed that gender has a significant influence on the occupation preference among counselled and uncounselled Nigerian students. Whether the student received counseling or not, the gender influence continues to manifest in students while Salami (2008) observed no significant influence as regards gender on the maturity of adolescent in the choice of career.

Although many studies have highlighted the influence of gender on career choices, there are other studies that have different perspectives, for example Malubay, Mercado and Emeliza (2015) in the Philippines and UK (2015) in Albania, found that gender has no influence on career choices. Similarly, studies carried out in Nigeria (Ottu and Nkenchor, 2010) and in Kenya (Migunde et al., 2012) showed that there was no significant difference in the choices of males and females in professions such as trading or business, law and judicial services as both sexes made virtually equal choices. William et al, (2020) study also showed that there is no significant difference in the influence of peer group between male and female students in their choice of career

Age Influence on Career Choice

The age of the adolescent has implications for choosing a career. Many researchers are of the opinion that careers should be introduced to children in their teen years, that is, as early as age 13 or 14 years. Career decisions at this time are very temporary and unrealistic. Most often, the potential of the child cannot yet be ascertained. It is still a time of career illusion and uncertainties. The usefulness of the career information at this period can only be for both awareness and counseling. It could be for helping the young adolescent to begin to have a focus for the future career he may like to engage in, and the various prerequisite qualifications for them. The age range of 13-14 years is a period when the child is just graduating from fantasies to the tentative period of realities. These days in Nigeria, especially in the Southern part, the children in the school certificate class (SS 3) are on the average of 16 years. It means students mature earlier for decision making since most of them transit into the tertiary institutions immediately after writing their secondary school final examinations. This presupposes that they have to make career decisions earlier than expected. Thus is a clear case for career counseling at about 13-14 years. It is a good time to sharpen a child's perspective in respect of what the world of work portends for their future. It is a good time to start thinking of what one loves to do and how to get started.

These days in Nigeria, especially the Southwestern parts, children in the school certificate class are on the average age of 16 years. It means

students mature earlier for decision making since many of them transit into the tertiary institutions almost immediately after writing their secondary school final examinations. He presupposes that they have to take career decisions earlier than expected. This is a clear case for career counseling at about age 13 to 14 years. It is a good time to sharpen a child's perspective in respect of what the world of works portend for their future (Fabunmi and Adebayo, 2017)

Career Choices and Academic Performance

Career choice is one of the biggest dilemmas and challenges in any student's life. It involves an interplay of many factors which are intricately intertwined. It is not a straightforward task and involves a difficult process of decision making. This issue is not confined to Pakistan only but is universal in nature. According to Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (2011) an individual's environment, talents, skills, and academic achievement exert an influence on career choice. In case of a wrong choice, it may lead to resultant failure and disappointment. Research shows homes, schools and the social setup influence an individual's career choice. Financial prospects influence the career choice of men as they have to meet household expenses, whereas women show more concern for social values and utility, Sax (1994). Other factors such as aptitude, life circumstances, and academic achievement have also been proven as determinants of career choice,

Ferry (2006). Educational level of parents, their profession and income are also identified as very important factors, Hearn (2008). Every student at a certain juncture in their life has to make a choice regarding their career. It is incumbent that students make the correct choice, asserts Oladele (2013). This will make them more poised, stable, and endowed with a pleasant countenance. Consequently, it will lead to knitting a better fabric for the society. Unfortunately, career choices are made with little awareness of the real world (Bright, Pryor, & Harpham 2015).

Students make crucial decisions at a stage when they may not be fully informed of their choices, or else unavoidable circumstances prevent them from pursuing their goals. Thus counsellors can play a positive role in guiding them to make informed choices. Being interested in a particular profession is very important in decision making. If a student is forced into a career, he may exhibit low self-esteem and poor performance. Suutari (2013) reports that several studies have indicated a positive relationship between interests and career choice. It has also been investigated that individuals with better academic performance are able to make better judgments about themselves (Arthur & Rousseau, 2016). Herbart (2015) opines that a child coming from an environment where he/she receives parental support and lives harmoniously is more likely to be dictated by them. In such a scenario, a child's occupational aspiration is most likely to be influenced by the parents' profession. Research

reports career choice is greatly influenced by students' surroundings, society and family etc (Gim, 2015).

A comprehensive study by Ngesi (2013) reports that students from poor socioeconomic backgrounds made wrong career decisions, and chose professions which required a short duration of training, primarily due to financial constraints. As the old adage goes, nothing succeeds like success, similarly, a student who fares well academically has better career prospects and choices as compared to the struggling ones. Hoover - Dempsey & Sadler (2000) assert that a well-read person has more information related to career choice, and reads more to make the crucial decision. Thus their decisions are likely to be correct and wise.

Summary of Literature Review

Career has traditionally been seen as a source of successive situations that makes up a person's work study life. In recent times, the concept of career embraces the dimensions of time as not simply about what one does for a living, but about what has been done in the past, at the present and might do in the future.

Choosing a career has a lot of peculiarities. It is not something that can be rushed into especially in a country like Nigeria because the effects span over one's lifetime. A career carefully chosen brings joy to the individual and the society at large.

Alutu (2017) asserts that pressure or influences from parents and significant others in the home have a significant impact on the career choice of these students. Many parents have influenced both the educational and occupational aspirations of their children. Moreover, the socioeconomic and educational status of the parents or sponsors could also determine a child's vocational choice.

Most students are affected greatly by their peers in making career choices. They get to know about their intended career from their friends and always turn to them for guidance in the process of choosing a career. However, peer influence and mentorship if not properly guided may have an adverse effect on the child. Gender has an influence on the choices of career made by senior secondary school students. According to Alutu (2017), students tend to choose careers that are culturally associated with their gender or sex. For example, science oriented careers are set aside for males and most art-oriented careers are set aside for females.

In Nigeria, adolescents begin the journey to career choice as soon as they choose their subjects in SS 2, the penultimate year to write their final certificate examinations. The age of the adolescents can influence the career they choose.

Career choice and academic performance are intertwined. According to Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (2011) an individual's environment, talents, skills, and academic achievement exert an influence

on career choice. In case of a wrong choice, it may lead to resultant failure and disappointment. It is incumbent that students make the correct choice, asserts Oladele (2013). This will make them more poised, stable and endowed with a pleasant countenance. Consequently, it will lead to a better future for the society.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the procedures used in carrying out this study and they will be discussed under the following sub-headings.

- Design of the Study
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Techniques
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data collection
- Method of Data analysis

Design of the Study

The research design adopted for this study is descriptive survey methods which focus on the influence of career choice on the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Student in Ovia North East Local Government.

Survey research requires the systematic collection of data or information from sample of a population through the use of questionnaires. The rationale for descriptive survey is that the information provided is in itself the answer to the research question posted.

Population of the Study

A population is an arbitrarily defined group in which a statistician happens to be interested in due to the unique properties. The total population the researcher intends to make use of in this study is a total number of One hundred and fifty senior secondary school students of Ekosodin Secondary school.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A total number of fifty students were sampled out for this study out of the total population.

Research Instrument

To obtain the needed information for this study, the researcher made use of questionnaire based on the objectives of the study.

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor. He made the necessary comments on the construct and content of each item raised. The necessary corrections and suggestions were affected. The final instrument was constructed in compliance with the supervisor's comment and suggestions.

Reliability of the Instrument

To determine the reliability of the instrument Test retest method was adopted. 20 copies of the instrument were administered to 20 students

from Ekosodin Secondary School, Benin city that are not part of the sample population, after an interval of two weeks, the same test instrument were re administered to the same group of respondents and data were analyzed.

Method of Data Collection

The instrument for the study was personally administered and collected by the researcher on the spot and those who were not disposed to complete theirs on the spot were left and collected the next day.

Method of Data Analysis

The method of data analysis used for this study work is the percentage and frequency count.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter analyzes the data collected in the course of this research work; the results are designed in table and followed by the interpretation thereof. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and the mean score. The questionnaire on influence of career choice on secondary school students were distributed to fifty secondary school students.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

SECTION A: Demographic Data

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents based on Age

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
11-13 years	25	50
14-16 years	18	36
17-20 years	7	14
TOTAL	50	100

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents are between ages 11-13 years, 36% are between 14-16 years while the remaining 7% are between 17-20 years. This implies that the total numbers of respondents between the ages of 11-13 years are more than those within the age of 14-16 years, also those within the age of 17-20 are just few in numbers.

The age percentage of the students shows that the students between the ages of 11-13 years are more in Ekosodin secondary school, Benin City,

in Edo state, those that are within the age bracket 14-16 years are also well represented in senior secondary schools.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents based on Sex

SEX	FREQUENCY	
	PERCENTAGE %	
Male	15	30
Female	35	70
TOTAL	50	100

The above table shows that 30% of the respondents were male, while the remaining 70% were female. This implies that there were more females than males in the sampled respondents.

The higher percentage of females in our secondary schools shows that parents now enroll their female children into secondary schools unlike before when the secondary schools are largely populated by males

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents based on Religion

RELIGION	FREQUENCY	
	PERCENTAGE %	

Christianity	28	56
Islam	16	32
Africa Traditional Religion	6	12
<hr/>		
TOTAL	50	100
<hr/>		

The above table shows that 56% of the respondents are Christians, while 32% of the respondents are Muslims and the remaining 12% are Traditionalists. This implies that the total numbers of respondents that practice Christianity are more than those who practice Islam, while those who practice Africa Traditional Religion are just few in numbers.

The impact of religion in a society like Nigeria that is multi-cultural and practice different religions cannot be overemphasized. Religion in Nigeria is woven into every aspect of our lives education, politics, finance, etc.

SECTION B

Research Question 1: Do Parental influence contribute to the students'

Career Choices?

Table 4: Parental influence contribute to the students' Career Choices

S/N	Item	SA	A	SD	D
TOTAL					
1	My father influences me in my 50 career choice. (100%)	20 (40%)	10 (20%)	15 (30%)	5 (10%)
2	My mother had influence on my 50 career choice. (100%)	15 (30%)	15 (30%)	5 (10%)	15 (30%)
3	My parent's financial status had an 50 impact on my career choice. (100%)	18 (36%)	14 (28%)	8 (16%)	10 (20%)
4	The information I got from my parents, 50 and other members of my family helped (22%) (100%) me choose my career.	12 (24%)	16 (32%)	11 (22%)	11 (22%)
5.	My parents' educational background 50 influenced me in my career choice. (100%)	22 (44%)	8 (16%)	9 (18%)	11 (22%)
TOTAL		87	63	48	52
	250				

The item 1 of the table above shows that 40% of the respondents strongly agreed, 20% agreed while 30% strongly disagreed and 10% disagree that their father had influence on their career choice. This implies that most of the students agreed that their father had influence on their career choice. In item 2, 30% of the respondents strongly agreed, 30% agreed, while 10% strongly disagreed and 30% disagreed that their

mother had influence on their career choice. This implies that most of the students agreed that their mother had influence on their career choice.

In item 3, 36% of the respondents strongly agreed, 28% agreed, while 16% strongly disagreed and 20% disagreed that their parents' financial status had an impact on their career choice. This implies that the student parents' financial status had an impact on their career choice. In item 4, 24% of the respondents strongly agreed, 32% agreed, while 22% strongly disagreed and 22% disagreed that the information they got from their parent and other members of the family helped in their career choice. This shows that most of the respondents agreed that the information they got from their parent and other members of the family helped in their career choice.

In the above table, item 5 shows that 44% of the respondents strongly agree, 16% agreed, while 18% strongly disagree and the remaining 22% disagree that their parent educational background influenced them in their career choice. This implies that the respondents agreed that their parent educational background influenced their career choice.

Research Question 2: To what extent does peer group influence students'

career choices?

Table 5: Peer group influences students' career choices

S/N	Item	SA	A	SD	D
TOTAL					
6	My friends influenced me 50 in choosing a career (100%)	7 (14%)	24 (48%)	10 (20%)	9 (18%)
7	My career choice is similar to 50 that of my friends career choice. (100%)	13 (26%)	19 (38%)	12 (24%)	6 (12%)
8	My friends always give 50 comprehensive and proper (100%) advice on career.	12 (24%)	9 (18%)	19 (38%)	10 (20%)
9	Peer approval on career 50 choice is powerful. (100%)	21 (24%)	16 (32%)	7 (14%)	6 (12%)
TOTAL		53	68	48	31
	200				

The item 6 of the table above shows that 14% of the respondents strongly agreed, 48% agreed while 20% strongly disagreed and 18% disagree that their friends had influenced them in choosing their career

choice. This implies that most of the students agreed that their friends had influence on their career choice. In item 7, 26% of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% agreed, while 24% strongly disagreed and 12% disagreed that their career choice is similar to that of their friends. This implies that most of the students agreed that their career choice is similar to that of their friends.

In item 8, 24% of the respondents strongly agreed, 18% agreed, while 38% strongly disagreed and 20% disagreed that their friends always give comprehensive and proper advice on career. This implies that the most of the students disagree that their friends always gives comprehensive and proper advice on career. In item 9, 24% of the respondents strongly agreed, 32% agreed, while 14% strongly disagreed and 12% disagreed that peer approval of career choice is powerful. This shows that most of the respondents agreed that their peer approval of their career choice has a powerful influence on their career choice.

Therefore, it is concluded that the type of career a student choose is a result of the various influence their peers have on them. This will really help parents to know how to guide their children on the kind of friends they keep or the peers they move with since these have a lot influence on their career choice.

Research Question 3: To what extent does Gender influence students'

Choices of Career?

Table 6: Gender influence students' Choices of Career

S/N	Item	SA	A	SD	D
TOTAL					
10	There are suitable careers for men to that of women.	10	18	12	10
50	(100%)	(20%)	(36%)	(24%)	(20%)
11	Male have wider career opportunities than female.	16	19	8	7
50	(100%)	(32%)	(38%)	(16%)	(14%)
12	Societal belief about my gender influenced my career choice.	24	10	9	7
50	(100%)	(48%)	(20%)	(18%)	(14%)
13	I made my career choice irrespective of the societal belief about my gender	9	10	19	12
50	(100%)	(18%)	(20%)	(38%)	(24%)
14	I listen more to career advice from same people of the same sex with me	12	16	11	11
50	(100%)	(24%)	(32%)	(22%)	(22%)
TOTAL		71	73	59	47

The item 10 of the table above shows that 20% of the respondents strongly agreed, 36% agreed while 24% strongly disagreed and 20% disagree that there are suitable careers for men to that of women. This implies that most of the students agreed that there are suitable careers for men to that of women. In item 11, 32% of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% agreed, while 16% strongly disagreed and 14% disagreed that male have wider career opportunities than female. This implies that most of the students agreed that male have wider career opportunities than female.

In item 12, 48% of the respondents strongly agreed, 20% agreed, while 18% strongly disagreed and 14% disagreed that society believe about gender influences their career choice. This implies that the most of the student agreed that the society view on gender has an influence on their choice of career. In item 13, 18% of the respondents strongly agreed, 20% agreed, while 38% strongly disagreed and 24% disagreed that they make their career choice irrespective of the societal belief. This shows that most of the respondents disagreed that they choose their career irrespective of the societal perspective on gender.

In the above table, item 14 shows that 24% of the respondents strongly agree, 32% agreed, while 22% strongly disagree and the remaining 22% disagree that they listen to career advice from people of the same sex with them. This implies that the respondents agreed that they listen to career advice from people of the same sex with them.

Therefore, it is concluded that an individual gender influences his or her choice of career. The type of career an individual choose is mostly based on gender for instance we find more females working in the hospitals as nurse while there are males working in various companies and industries as an engineer.

Research Question 4: To what extent does career choice influence academic performance?

Table 7: Career Choice influence Academic Performance

S/N	Item	SA	A	SD	D
TOTAL					
15	My choice of career has made me give more attention to my studies.	14 (28%)	20 (40%)	9 (18%)	7 (14%)
16	Wrong career choice leads to poor academic performance.	19 (38%)	10 (20%)	12 (24%)	9 (18%)
17	My reading habit has improved since I made my career decision.	23 (46%)	11 (22%)	6 (12%)	10 (20%)
18	My career choice makes me work harder in school.	16 (32%)	19 (38%)	8 (16%)	7 (14%)

19	My grades have improved since 50 I made my career choice. (100%)	12 (24%)	13 (26%)	15 (30%)	10 (20%)
20	My academic success has nothing 50 to do with my career choice. (100%)	12 (24%)	16 (32%)	11 (22%)	11 (22%)
TOTAL		96	89	61	54
300					

The item 15 of the table above shows that 28% of the respondents strongly agreed, 40% agreed while 18% strongly disagreed and 14% disagree that their career choice has made them pay more attention to their studies. This implies that most of the students agreed that their career choice has made them to give more attention to their studies. In item 16, 38% of the respondents strongly agreed, 20% agreed, while 24% strongly disagreed and 18% disagreed that their wrong career choice leads to poor academic performance. This implies that most of the students agreed that their wrong of career choice has badly influence their academics such that they now perform poorly.

In item 17, 46% of the respondents strongly agreed, 22% agreed, while 12% strongly disagreed and 20% disagreed that their reading habit have improved since they make their career choice. This implies that the student reading habit have improved drastically as a result of the career they choose. In item 18, 32% of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% agreed, while 16% strongly disagreed and 14% disagreed that their career choice makes them work harder in school. This shows that most of the

respondents agreed that their hard work in school is not as a result of the kind of career they choose.

In the above table, item 19 shows that 24% of the respondents strongly agree, 26% agreed, while 30% strongly disagree and the remaining 20% disagree that their grades have improved since they made their career choice. This implies that the respondents' career choice does not really have an influence on their grades improvement.

The last item shows that 24% strongly agreed, 32% agreed while 22% strongly disagree and 22% disagreed that their academic success has nothing to do with their career choice. This implies that most of the respondents agreed that the success recorded in their academics is not as a result of their choice of career.

Therefore, it is concluded that student's choice of career does not really determine their work rate in school as well as their academic success. Although, all these does not have an influence on students' academic performance but it has greatly help in their study habit.

Discussion of Findings

The outcome of this study has been able to give some insight view on the influence of career choice on secondary school student. From the analysis shown above, the findings of the study revealed from research question one that parents are influential in their children's choice of career. The input from parents as regards the career path their children will follow is very essential as it greatly helps the children in their career choice.

Furthermore, research question two revealed that peer group influence student's career choices among secondary school students, using the Ekosodin secondary school as a case study. Therefore, parents should be able to guide their children on the type of friends that relate with as well as the peer group they move with since this contribute a great deal to the choice of career by their children.

From the research question three, the findings show that the child's gender often influences his or her career choice. Towards eradicating gender bias in the society there should be proper orientation for the child to know that certain profession are not restricted to a particular gender.

Finally, from the research question four, the findings revealed that career choice does not really have an impact on students' academic performance. Therefore, there is a need for those that are choose the so called difficult career such as being Medical Doctor, Lawyer, Engineer

etc. to focus more on their academics as this should serve as an extra motivation for them to put in more effort in their academics.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study investigates the influence of career choices on secondary schools students in Ekosodin secondary school, Ugbowo Benin City, Edo state. Four research questions were raised to guide the study. The study adopted survey research design, the instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaires which was built around the research question by the researcher and validated by the researcher's supervisor. Data collected were analysed using frequency count and simple percentages. The following are the summary from the empirical analysis of the study:

1. Parental influence has a significant impact on the career choices of students. Hence, the influence of parent's goes a long way to affect the career their children decides to undertake in life.
2. Peer group has a significant influence on student's choice of career. Therefore, the choice of career can be affected by the peer group, that is in or the company that one keeps.
3. Student gender has a significant impact on their choice of career. Hence, whether someone is male or female determines their choice of career.

4. Finally, there is no significant relationship between the career choice of students' and their academic performance. Therefore, student good or bad academic performance is not as a result of their career choice.

Conclusion

Based on the various findings that emerged from this study, it could be deduced that the influence of fathers on career choices of their children is just as the mother's influence. Parents' socio economic status has impact on the career choice of their students, as well as other members of the family. Also, parents' educational background influences the career choice of their children.

Furthermore, peer approval on career is powerful as peer influence can determine the course of direction of career choices. There are suitable careers for men and there are other suitable careers for women but males tend to have wider career opportunities than females due to societal outcome.

However, most of the respondents were of the opinion that the choice of career makes them improve their study habit, although the choice of career of the students does not necessary affect their academic performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made

- Parents should endeavor to enlighten their children on different career choices available to them at tender age so they can choose the one suitable for them.
- Teachers as well as school administrators should ensure that students are given good career guidance that will enable them choose the right career choice of life.
- Seminars and symposiums should be organized strictly to enlighten students of the best career choices in life.
- Students should ensure that the decision for a choice of career is not made for them by their parents, society, or peers, but out of their passion and ambition to achieve something in life
- Finally, parents should ensure that their socioeconomic status does not interfere in the choice of careers made by their children.

Suggestion for Further Studies

This study has not covered all the ground on the influence of career choices on students. Therefore further research can be carried out on the following:

1. The influence of peer pressure on students' choice of career.
2. The impact of socio-economic status of parents and its influence on the career chaos of their children.
3. The Impact of career choices on the academic performance of students in secondary schools.

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APPENDIX

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS FACULTY
OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY,
EDO STATE**

Dear Respondents,

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am an undergraduate student of the University of Benin, Benin City, conducting a research on the topic "**Influence of career choice on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State**".

I humbly request your assistance in filling the questionnaire. All information gathered shall be used purely for research purposes and shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.

SECTION A

(Demographic data of the respondents)

Age group: 11-13years (), 14- 16years () 17-20years ()

Sex: Male () Female ()

Religion: Christianity () Islam () African Traditional Religion ()

SECTION B

Instructions: using likert scale of **SA** (Strongly Agree); **A** (Agree); **D** (Disagree); **SD** (Strongly Disagree), please tick [] the option in the column that best fits your choice. Only one answer is required for each question.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D
	Parental influence contribute to the students' Career Choices				
1.	My father influences me in my career choice.				

2.	My mother had influence on my career choice.				
3.	My parent's financial status had an impact on my career choice.				
4.	The information I got from my parents, and other members of my family helped me choose my career.				
5.	My parents' educational background influenced me in my career choice.				
	To what extent does peer group influence students' career choices				
6.	My friends influenced me in choosing a career				
7.	My career choice is similar to that of my friends				
8.	My friends always give comprehensive and proper advice on career.				
9.	Peer approval on career choice is powerful.				
	To what extent does Gender influence students' Choices of Career				
10.	There are suitable careers for men to that of women.				
11.	Male have wider career opportunities than female				
12.	Societal belief about my gender influenced my career				

	choice.				
13.	I made my career choice irrespective of the societal belief about my gender				
14.	I listen more to career advice from same people of the same sex with me				
	To what extent does career choice influence academic performance				
15.	My choice of career has made me give more attention to my studies.				
16.	Wrong career choice leads to poor academic performance.				
17.	My reading habit has improved since I made my career decision.				
18.	My career choice makes me work harder in school.				
19.	My grades have improved since I made my career choice				
20.	My academic success has nothing to do with my career choice.				