Parental Influence on Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
The primary purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which parental influence on career choice of senior secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State. Field information was gathered through the distribution of questionnaires to 320 students in four secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The students were selected from senior secondary classes I, II and III. The structured questionnaire used for data collection was patterned after likert type scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Mean rating was used to determine the acceptance or rejection levels of each structured item in the questionnaire in relation to the research question. Findings revealed that parental occupation has no significant influence on the students’ choice of career. Educational background of parents has no influence on students’ choice of career. Parental socio-economic status has no influence on students’ choice of career. Parental career expectations have influence on students’ choice of career. Based on these findings, it was recommended that seminars and workshop be organized for the students to strengthen their career decision-making.

Keywords: parental, influence, career, choice, students, occupation, expectation.

INTRODUCTION
In the recent years, Nigeria witnessed a rapid economic, industrial and political growth and Nigerian students are now faced with problem of choice of career out of the numerous existing ones which is possibly unknown to the students. Besides, Nigeria as a developing country where appropriate human resources are at a premium, the influence of students’ occupational interest and their behaviour, the maximal development and utilization become a concern of primary importance. In fact there are a number of factors that influence the choice of career among students; such factors include parental influence, academic performance, prestige and monetary prospects, peer influence and intrinsic values within the students. Okigbo (2008) noted that one of the objectives of educational programme in Nigeria for the third National development plan is “to make an impact in the area of technological education so as to meet the growing needs of the economy”. The National policy on education 2014 is also designed to meet this line of development of Nigeria.

While academic performance in school subjects largely determines the choice of career and vocations among students, certain factors in the environment of the learner also influence this choice. Such environmental factors include the parents of these students. To give credence to this yew, Musgrave in a study on the family education and society stated that the family still exerts a powerful influence on the prospects, capacity for development and life chances of the young. He asserted that parental status is a strong influential factor on the choice of career among secondary school students.

Parents in Nigeria, influence their children’s choice of career without considering other factors that are relevant to choice of career. For example, some Nigerian businessmen would want their children to study Business Administration in the Universities so that they would be well equipped to take charge of their parents’ business enterprises whether such children are good in the subjects relevant to that study or not. Some other parents want their children to study medicine because it is considered a prestigious career in Nigeria whether such children are psychologically oriented in taking care of sick people or not, while others want their children to become computer scientist and technologists due to
technological changes. The case mongers would want their children to study law to help handle their numerous cases. Some parents go to the extreme of considering their children misfits when they do not pursue the career of their (parents’) choice.

**Statement of the Problem**
The career of a person plays an important role in his life. Career choice is a developmental process spanning almost throughout a person’s life time. For the adolescents, the realization that his/her chosen career does not meet his expectations can be a traumatic experience. Students’ rate of failure is alarming now, inability to cope academically has also become a major challenge and inability to make career choice because of their parental influence. This perhaps is due to the inability of the student himself, his teacher and to some extent his family background. Central to the child’s family background is his parental background. The will be aiming to find out the influence of parental occupation, education and socio-economic status on students’ career choice.

**The Purpose of the Study**
The purpose of this study is to examine the parental influence on career choice of senior secondary school students. The objectives among others will border on the needs;

1. To determine how parental occupation influence students’ choice of career of senior secondary school students.
2. To examine how parental educational background influence student’s choice career of senior secondary school students.
3. To ascertain how parental socio-economic status influence student’s choice of career of senior secondary school students.  
4. To investigate how parental career expectation influence students’ choice of career of senior secondary school students.

**Research Questions**
The researcher formulated the following research questions to guide the conduct of the study.

1. How does the occupation of parents influence the career choice of senior secondary school students?  
2. To what extent does the educational background of parents influence the career choice of senior secondary school students?  
3. How does the socio-economic status of parents influence the career choice of senior secondary school students?  
4. To what extent do the parental career expectations influence the career choice of senior secondary school students?

**Research Hypotheses**
The following null hypotheses were developed by the researcher to guide the study.  

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between occupation of parents and the career choice of senior secondary school students.  
Ho₂: There is no significant difference between educational background of parents and the career choice of senior secondary school students.  
Ho₃: There is no significant difference between socio-economic status of parents and the career choice of senior secondary school students.  
Ho₄: There is no significant difference between parental career expectations and the career choice of senior secondary school students.  

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**
**Factors that Influence Students’ Career Choice**
What children will be when they grow up has often been a matter of intense interest to mothers, fathers, and teachers and to some extent, manpower planners (Ayangbile, 2010). While academic performance in school subjects largely determines the choice of career and vocation among students, certain factors like home environment, age, sex, social class economic situation, students’ personal values and interest and parental background affect the students’ choice of career. Examining the aspects of the family that affect the child’s choice of career, some researchers have investigated the influence of the home and school environment on the students choice of career on the basis that the type of the environment in which a child is nurtured has a lot effects on his educational achievement and choice of career.
Subjects studied in the school and the academic performance of the students also influence the choice of career among secondary school students. With regards to the effect of subjects studied in the school, Okeke (2013) carried out a study on the impact of school subjects on choice of occupations. The respondents were required to state the most influential factors in obtaining employment and in planning for further studies, 84 percent of the respondents regarded school subjects and advised on how to choose them as the most influential factor. The school of the respondents was a commercial institution changed to a grammar school with commercial bias. The graduates of the school who went to universities pursued professional studies in accountancy, secretarial studies and business administration. This shows that subjects studied in school influence one’s occupational choice.

Asagwara (2009) in his study of attitudes towards some job related factors among form five students in Oyo State also found that extrinsic reward occupied the third place among factors influencing the career choice of the students. The first and second factors were individual contact and the general economic situation respectively which influenced the students’ career choice. Closely related to the above is the work of Ayangbile (2010) who carried out the study on factors influencing students’ choice of medicine as a career at the University of Jos. The sociological context may determine the occupational level at which one works. The child of a professional family will have difficulty not going to college and not working at white collar occupation while a child of a lower class family would have reverse difficulties. Also, the psychological make up of the individual may lead him to choose certain occupations that permit him to express his uniqueness.

The social, accidental, economic and psychological factors identified by Steffre are closely related to the work of Pearson (2006) who stated that in a wise choice of vocation, there are three broad factors:

i. A clear understanding of oneself, ambitions, resources, limitations and the causes.

ii. A knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities and prospects in different times of work.

iii. True reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts. The above approach is often used by most guidance counselors.

Parental Socio-Economic Status and Students’ Career Choice

Stephenson (2014) on the factors that influence occupational preference in America found that there is a positive correlation between parents’ social status and the categories of job chosen by their children. Contributing to this view, Osueke (2007) carried out a study on the “influence of urban, rural and socio-economic status on the pattern of vocational choice among post-primary pupils in Enugu area. He found that nearly a third, 96 out of 319 students indicated that they were influenced in their choice of career by their mother, father, brother or sisters. He also found that this influence varied with the socio-economic status of their parents and sex in which girls were more influenced than boys. In other wards, the higher the socio-economic status of the parents, the greater the influence they exert on their children’s choice of career.

Some notable Nigerians have also conducted researches on the effect of parents’ income level on children’s choice of career. According to Ojo (2015), parents’ income level affects their children’s choice of career because in most cases, children from high income parents receive not only secondary school education but they attend the best secondary schools where well qualified teachers and well equipped laboratories for science subjects are available. On the other hand, a large number of children from poor parents usually attend teacher training colleges because their parents cannot afford secondary school education. Subscribing to the view that parents have a great influence on their children’s choice of career, Durojaiye (2010) carried out a study on choice of career among students of the international school, Ibadan. He claimed that 95.5 percent of the students chose professional career such as university lecture, medicine, Engineering, Accountancy, Law etc. 63.3 percent of the students sampled chose the professional careers for academic reasons. The study also showed that parents were very influential in their children’s choice of career 42.3 percent of the fathers and 38.3 percent of the mothers wanted their children to engage in professional occupations.

Carter explaining in an edited copy of Ipaye (2006) that the solid working class families are those which more or less accept the standards upheld in the wider society but are rather easy going and inclined to take life as it comes. The home environment does little to encourage the children to aspire to anything other than the type of jobs held by their parents and immediate neighbors. Children from
low socio-economic status homes aspire to occupations at a higher level than their parents, they find no suitable role models with the family and few family activities relate to their aspirations; while children from high socio-economic status homes who are only equipped for occupations at a lower level than their parents find themselves similarly disadvantaged. Such children tend to depend more on influences outside the homes.

Boyd & Coop (2009) maintain that there is a relationship between socio-economic status and occupational achievement. Some studies revealed that upper class boys tend to aspire to higher level occupation than do those from lower strata. Empey (2012) found students from higher socio-economic levels aspire to higher level occupations that student from less advantaged backgrounds. In his contribution Rosenberg as supported by Prayor (2006) contends that the father’s economic background contribute greatly to the child’s career choice. He found that the higher the income of the father, the higher the income the child wishes to obtain. Researches conducted by American National opinion centre clearly stage that as good percentage of students from high status family background studied disciplines such as law and medicine. Socio-economic class therefore influences educational attainment which in turns influences occupational and career opportunities and development.

At this point an understanding of the Nigerian child in relations to his vocational needs is necessary. A consideration of conception of the child in the traditional and modern Nigerian society is also of immense importance. In the pre-literate and pre-industrial Nigeria, the child’s horizons were largely shaped by his family. His position in life was likely to be same as his father. If his father was an “Osu” or cult slave or a traditionalist, he would likely live his own life as any of the above. If on the other hand the father was a medicine man. He would likely to be a medicine, man. He was a part of his family production enterprise throughout his life.

Parental Educational Level and Students’ Career Choice

Hinchlifes (2013) reveals that factors such as father’s education, occupation and previous working experience were related to career choice of students. The study showed that father’s education, occupation and previous working experience cannot account for the pattern of occupational choice. Seventy percent of the students’ parents were non-literate and few were members of professional middle class groups such as Doctor, Accountants and Engineers. The occupations of the students’ brothers and sisters showed that some families tended to specialize in some careers such as Fine Arts as a result of special talents. In another study carried out by Oyehode (2000) on the influence of parental education on the level of vocational aspirations among form three and four students in Lagos, he found that the level of education of parents does not have much impact on level of job aspirations among secondary school student& He noted that irrespective of the parental educational background, students aspire to jobs that are highly rated in the society. Thus, he found that such professions as Medicine and Engineering ranked high among these mostly desired in the society.

Another study which investigated how much the educational level of parents affect the educational attainments of children was reported by Ogunlade (2013) who used demonstration schools attached to two urban centers in Western Nigeria. In classifying the children’s educational attainments, he used their performance in the test they had in the previous years. Results of the study showed that the education of parents affected the children’s academic achievement greatly. Children from literate parents perform better academically than those from non-literate parents. This is relevant to this study because according to Okeke (2013) academic performance also influences the choice of career among secondary school students.

In an extension of the study of Gurin & Katz (2014), Okediji studied the factors affecting occupational aspirations of students in ten Southern black institutions. The males showed a positive relationship between their fathers’ education and both the prestige and ability demands of their occupational choices. Effects of the mother’s education operate similarly with that of the fathers. In a family where the mother’s education is high, the females tend to choose careers that are prestigious and demand a lot of bard-work and dedication to duty. It was further revealed that the study was based on the author’s assumption that high educational status encourages choice of career that is less difficult among black girls.
Parental Occupation and Students’ Career Choice
Okeke (2013) and Aghainelu (2000) studied the relationship between parental occupations and their children’s occupational preferences. Okeke found that 60 percent of the children were willing to take after their father’s occupations (medicine) while 23 percent were willing to follow the mothers’ occupations (nursing). Adolescents tend to aspire after the careers of their parents. For example Hewer (2006) showed that high school graduates whose fathers were skilled traders tended to be interested in scientific and technical field; those whose fathers were in business tend to business careers. The research study findings by Okon (2007) revealed that more than 350 adolescents in an upper middle class showed that boys’ vocational preference correlated with their fathers’ but not their mothers’ jobs. Girls’ preferences were related to the jobs of both parents but especially to those of their mothers. The work of Calpow (2007) describes two basic patterns of occupational inheritance. In the phenomenon of occupational transmission, “the father transmits his occupation to the son through deliberate indoctrination. The instruction occurs in such area as belief, customs required skills of that occupation, and so on”. This is exemplified in the case of a father who owns a business and may wish his children to take over business. He may inculcate these values through family pressure. Parents should note that this does not in any way help their children’s developmental and career decisions. Uche (2009) posits that the family is the primary in shaping the child’s personality. The basic association of the child takes place in the home or family and that all the fundamental ideas, muscular skills and norms are got from the home some of these things learned at home consciously and deliberately taught to the children by their parents and other close relations alike. Uche in his opinion say that the parents play an exceptional role in determining the learning pattern the child will acquire which in turn affects the child’s vocational choice.

Streetmalter (2008) studies the social, academic and personal factors in the career aspiration of American female youths. The social variable examined were specifically parental aspirations for the daughters, father’s occupational status and mother’s occupational status. Results showed that women who aspire to home making have lower parental aspirations, their fathers were mainly craftsmen and their mothers held clerical jobs. On the other hand, woman with high level of aspiration had high parental aspirations, their fathers were professionals and their mothers held technical jobs. Streetmalter also found those fathers’ occupations exerts greater influence on the males’ level of aspiration while mothers’ occupation and educational expectations correlates more highly with the level of aspiration of the females.

Parental Career Expectation and Students’ Career Choice
Genside (2012) posits that parents influence is much more intricate and more pervasive than is shown. Students of secondary arid tertiary institution are often note aware of these influences and may accept the choice of their parents as theirs. This situation owes its origin to early childhood when the child grabs his parents’ choice while at the same time deeply resenting his submissions as he becomes aware of his loss of independence and finds his area of interest. Adigwe (2011) argues that culture is responsible for inability of our youth to decide on the career of their choice. In his words “Parents make major decisions concerning their children’s life, one of which is career “choice”. He further maintained that as a result of our educational system and colonial legacies, parents tend to dislike any vocation or career which is not money yielding. In the same vein the economic theory as postulated by the classical economist of the 19th century emphasize the consideration of monetary and other material advantages as the major factor in the choice of an occupation which he anticipates will pay him the highest income and provide him other fringe benefits.

In the six National Development Plan (1990-1995), the Federal Government stated that: For education to be complete, the beneficiary must have a good sense of self fulfillment. That particular feeling must go with the right choice of career. This view cannot be overemphasized because the problem of deciding on a career represents one of the crucial problems in the developmental task of adolescents. It is against this background that parents are likely to place considerable influence on their children to make a career choice. The parents influence may lead to a wrong career choice. This will create a problem both for the individual and parents and the society in general. The parents often forget that the child’s psychological factors of interest, aptitude and ability form the foundation stone of career choice. In Oti (2014), most Nigerian parents spend little time in discussing with their children in order to get their view about their future career. To buttress the above point, the researcher feels that
Nigerian parents should interact, communicate and discuss meaningfully with adolescents on issues relating career development and decision on choice of career, for the future. Ukeje (2010) contributed thus: “all fingers point at the lack of good career choice as one of the causes of unhappiness in many homes in our society”. He further stated that: “most of the offices are filled with workers who have taken up the jobs as a last resort either through parental influence, peer pressure, or for the love of money or prestige such a profession offers”. It is however obvious that a large proportion of young persons and their parents do not have adequate knowledge of the factors that are involved in the choice of a career or career decision processes. The factors include enjoyable work, pride on the job, pleasant working condition, creative satisfaction, recognition by the society and making meaningful contribution to the society all of which cannot be achieved if psychological influence and motivations from parents are lacking. Fear on the part of the parents about their children being victim of the above leads them into choosing careers out of anxiety for their children. This development is hazardous and parents should readjust to this especially in this era of sell reliance, accountability, computer gadget age, secondary expansion and technological change.

Cognner & Kogan (2014) observed that the problem of career choice which makes varying degrees of impact on both parents and children is because it involves strength of interest, pressures and influences, economic factors and the ability to structure the future and must be handled with care and patience in order to avoid future regrets. Ozizi (2007) states that children have particular problems and difficulties in choosing a career. The problems these children encounter vary a great deal in their degrees of seriousness” “Parents owe a very important role and responsibility to their children over their career choice. If we perhaps acknowledge that one of the important goals of education is to develop unique qualities to become an acceptable member of the society. Parents should therefore seek and get relevant career information from appropriate career centers Cognner & Kogan describe parental influence as a very important factor in the adolescents’ vocational choice and there is a good deal of variation in parental influence over their children’s choice of career because career choices and subsequent participation in it may help to crystallize and reinforce an adolescent self concept. Parental influence, to this end, tends to be related strongly to children’s career aspiration if well guided.

**Students’ Personal Interest and their Choice of Career**

Contributing to the view that the students’ interests and personal values influence their choice of careers, Olayinka (2009) carried out a study on the job aspirations of the youth and educational provisions in Lagos. He found that jobs like medicine, Nursing and pharmacy were selected mostly for humanitarian reasons while Agriculture, clerical work, and Air pilot were selected mostly because the youths had interest in them. In a similar study, Matthew (2008) discovered that the interest in the family socialization had some effects on students’ choice of career. It was observed that students tended to be influenced by the occupations of their family friends in their choice of career, for example, 38 percent of the sample used for the study choose their career as a result of the interest they develop for the occupations of their family friends and the benefits they have derived from them. With regard to value orientation in relation to occupation choice, Mesweeney (2007) analyzed correlation between orientation and career choice in the tradition and emergent groups in Anambra State. Results showed that adolescent who were traditionally oriented tended to be traditional in the practical situation of choosing careers while those who were emergent oriented like careers that were technological and business like. For example it was found that girls who were traditionally oriented choose careers that were traditionally means for woman, such as teaching and nursing while the girls that were emergent-oriented choose careers such as engineering, business administration which were thought to be more appropriate for boys. Parents should not dictate for their children in relation to career choice. They should aid their children to formulate positive attitudes about the dignity of work, increase their awareness of the range of occupations and obtain necessary information about their interest in such career. They should bear in mind that the right choice of career determines one’s life style friendship, affiliation and that operational problems will be created if one is not happy in his/her career. A happy life depends on a happy career.

The work of Ginzbg (2006) suggests the need for a programme on occupational guidance which will prepare those students for occupations at which they are well filled. This programme will widen the children’s horizon occupationally. Hoppock (2011) in his explanation about the essence of counseling
stated the, “The purpose of counseling is to help the client to recognize his own needs, and values, to see how these affect the goals that he seeks to reach, to identify these goals and to arrange them as well as he can in order of priority, to discover the possible courses of action which may bring him closer to the goals he seeks and to anticipate as accurately as possible the results of each course of action in terms of his own goal. In other words an individual prefers a job that he thinks would satisfy his basic psychological needs. Also the reason why he likes a job is the same as the things he hopes to get from the occupation which is a possible indication of this value orientation. An individual seeks those things which he holds clear that will bring satisfaction when obtained.

METHODOLOGY
The design that is used for this study is a descriptive survey design. This design will help to identify the influence of parental background on the students’ choice of career in Rivers State. It is used to elicit information from the respondents on the above topic. The population of the study will consist of all the students in Public Secondary School in Obio/Akpor local government area. There are a total number of eighteen public secondary schools in that area with a total population of thirteen thousand and two hundred (13,200) students in SS1, SS2 and SS3 respectively. A simple random sampling technique will be used to select nine of the secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The sample size of the study is three hundred and twenty (320) students from the selected senior secondary schools. The instrument that will be used for data collection is a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire will be divided into (2) sections. Section A is designed to obtain demographic information about the respondents while Section B will seek the respondents’ ideas on the subject matter. The instrument will be pattern in a five point (5-point) Likert scale ranging from strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and strongly Disagree (SD) with assigned values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. To determine the validity of the instrument, the instrument will be submitted to the dissertation supervisor and two other lecturers in the department of educational foundations who scrutinized the content in line with the purpose of the study. The final draft was based on the correction of the lecturers and the content and face validities were ensured. To determine the reliability of the instrument, test-retest method will be adopted using ten (10) lecturers from Rivers State University. Ten (10) copies of the instrument were submitted to the lecturers in two consecutive times in three weeks interval. A correlation coefficient of 0.85 was obtained using Person Product Moment Correlation Method, thus the reliability of the instrument was guaranteed. A total of three hundred and twenty (320) copies of the questionnaire were be administered directly to the respondents (students) by the researcher in their classrooms and adequate explanation was given in areas likely to be misunderstood by the students. All the copies were retrieved from the respondents. The responses made by the respondents to each of questionnaire items were converted to frequency counts and weighted mean. The frequency of each response was be multiplied by the appropriate nominal-value assigned to the five point Likert-type scale. The cumulative response score of each item was then calculated and divided by the total number of the respondents to obtain the mean. The meaning of each questionnaire item was interpreted in relation to the nominal values assigned to the instrument with their real limits. The decision taken therefore was that each questionnaire item is accepted if mean calculated is 3.00 and above while any mean below is considered rejected while the null hypotheses will be tested using T-test statistical tool at the significant level of 0.05.
RESULTS

Research Question 1: How does the occupation of parents influence the career choice of senior secondary school students?

Table 4.1 Response on Parental Occupations and Students’ Choice of Career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>ΣFX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>My parent’s occupation has to a large extent influence my choice of career.</td>
<td>170 96 48 164 164</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I chose my career because my parents are not in the profession.</td>
<td>170 104 93 118 170</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>My parents recommended my career since it is for boys and girls.</td>
<td>470 204 180 140 69</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>My parents recommended by career since it is only for boys.</td>
<td>225 316 216 106 71</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>My parents recommended my career since it is only girls.</td>
<td>325 344 225 100 44</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>1038</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I chose the career because my parents are in position to get work for me.</td>
<td>440 204 120 166 58</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I chose the career because my parents are in position to employ me.</td>
<td>205 212 186 168 80</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>My parents recommended my career because they want me to assist them in their occupation.</td>
<td>125 112 111 116 172</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 above, shows that the respondents rejected the views that parent’s occupation has to a large extent influence my choice of career and that they chose their career because my parents are not in the profession. It was also observed that the respondents accepted the item that while rejecting that parents recommended my career since it is for boys and girls. The table indicates that the respondents accepted that their parents recommended their career since it is only for boys and girls. It is reveal that the respondents rejected the point that they chose their career because their parents are in position to get work for them or employ them and that their parents recommended the career because they want me to assist them in their occupation.

Research Question 2: To what extent does the educational background of parents influence the career choice of senior secondary school students?

Table 4.2: Responses on Parental Educational Background and Students Choice of Career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>ΣFX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>The educational attainment of my parents contributed to my choice of career.</td>
<td>250 292 90 166 86</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I chose the career because no body in my family has knowledge about it.</td>
<td>230 212 204 112 97</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>The knowledge of my parents about the career influenced me most.</td>
<td>540 288 123 108 45</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>1104</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>My parents chose the career for me because they feel I can do well in it.</td>
<td>900 276 78 56 17</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>1327</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 above indicates that respondents rejected the views that the educational attainment of their parents contributed to the choice of career and that they chose the career because nobody in the family...
that has knowledge about it. It is revealed in the table that the respondents accepted the view that the knowledge of their parents about the career influenced them most. The respondents also accepted that their parents chose the career for them because they feel that they can do it well.

**Research Question 3:** How does the socio-economic status of parents influence the career choice of senior secondary school students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>ΣFX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>The financial status of my parents influenced me most in my choice of career.</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I chose the career because of my parents’ title in the village.</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>My parents’ inadequate financial assistant influenced my choice of career.</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I chose the career because my parents have provided all the requirements to assist me.</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I chose the career because of my parents’ position.</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3 reveals that the respondents accepted that the financial status of their parents influenced them most in the choice of career, but they rejected the views that they chose the career because of their parents title in the village and that their parents inadequate financial assistant also influenced their choice of career. It was also observed in the table that the respondents accepted that they chose the career because their parents have provided all the requirements to assist me and because of their parents’ status.

**Research Question 4:** To what extent do the parental career expectations influence the career choice of senior secondary school students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>ΣFX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>My parents’ career expectations guided me in choosing career.</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>The adequate information provided by my parents guided me in choosing my career.</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>My parents recommended my career because of my position in the family.</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>My parents recommended my career in order to satisfy the need of my family.</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 shows that the respondents accepted that their parental career expectations guided them in choosing career. It indicates that the respondents also accepted that the adequate information provided by their parents guided them in choosing their career. The table reveals that the respondents accepted that their parents recommended the career because of their position in the family and also accepted that their parents recommended the career in order to satisfy the need of their family.
Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between occupation of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students.

**Table 4.5:** t-test Analysis of Significant Difference between Occupation of Parents and Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Sum of Square</th>
<th>Est. Std. Error</th>
<th>t-cal.</th>
<th>t-crit.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupation of parents</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.679</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>1324.67</td>
<td>0.2362</td>
<td>1.892</td>
<td>1.960</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career choice of senior secondary school students</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.543</td>
<td>0.2524</td>
<td>1421.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 390 df = 388 P > 0.05+ = Not significant

The mean and standard deviation scores of the responses of occupation of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students are presented in Table 4.5 with N = 390, df = 388 and P > 0.05, the calculated t-ratio was 1.892 and the critical table value of t-ratio is not statistically significant at α = 0.05 level of significance since it is smaller than the given critical value of t-ratio. The hypothesis (H₀₁) is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significant difference exists in the mean response scores of occupation of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference between educational background of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students.

**Table 4.6:** t-test Analysis of Significant Difference between Educational Background of Parents and Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Sum of Square</th>
<th>Est. Std. Error</th>
<th>t-cal.</th>
<th>t-crit.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational background of parents</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.678</td>
<td>0.2782</td>
<td>1421.26</td>
<td>0.2431</td>
<td>1.785</td>
<td>1.960</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career choice of senior secondary school students</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.856</td>
<td>0.2914</td>
<td>1352.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 390 df = 388 P < 0.05+ = Not significant

The mean and standard deviation scores of the responses of educational background of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students are presented in Table 4.6 with N = 390, df = 388 and P < 0.05, the calculated t-ratio was 1.785 and the critical table value of t-ratio was 1.785 and the critical table value of t-ratio was ±1.960. Consequently, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at α = 0.05 level of significance since it is smaller than the given critical value of t-ratio. The hypothesis 2 (H₀₂) is thus accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference between educational background of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference between socio-economic status of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students.
Table 4.7: t-test Analysis of Significant Difference between Socio-Economic Status of Parents and Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>No. of Respondent s</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Sum of Square</th>
<th>Est. Std. Error</th>
<th>t-cal.</th>
<th>t-crit.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic status of parents</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.743</td>
<td>0.2684</td>
<td>1436.15</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.8849</td>
<td>1.884</td>
<td>1.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career choice of senior secondary school students</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.786</td>
<td>0.2834</td>
<td>1373.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 390 dF = 388 P > 0.05+ = Not significant

The mean and standard deviation scores of the responses of socio-economic status of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students are presented in Table 4.7 with N = 390, dF = 388 and P > 0.05, the calculated t-ratio was 1.884 and the critical table value of t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is less than the given critical value of t-ratio. The hypothesis 3 (H03) is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significant difference exists in the mean response scores of socio-economic status of parents and career choice of senior secondary school students.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no significant difference between parental career expectations and career choice of senior secondary school students

Table 4.8: t-test Analysis of Significant Difference between Parental Career Expectation and Career Choice of Senior Secondary Schools Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>No. of Respondent s</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Sum of Square</th>
<th>Est. Std. Error</th>
<th>t-cal.</th>
<th>t-crit.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental career expectations</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.679</td>
<td>0.2576</td>
<td>1324.67</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.2361</td>
<td>2.892</td>
<td>1.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career choice of senior secondary school students</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.543</td>
<td>0.2524</td>
<td>1421.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 390 dF = 388 P > 0.05+ = Not significant

The mean and standard deviation scores of the responses of parental career expectations and career choice of senior secondary school students are presented in Table 4.8, with N = 390, dF = 388 and P > 0.05, the calculated t-ratio was 2.892 and the critical table value of t-ratio was ±1.960. So, the calculated t-ratio is statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is greater than the given critical value of t-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 4 (H04) is thus rejected and the conclusion is that significant difference exists in the mean response scores of parental career expectations and career choice of senior secondary school students.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The findings of the research question one, the influence of parental occupation on students’ choice of career, 3 out of 8 questionnaire items are accepted while 5 out the items were rejected. It is obvious that parental occupation has no significant influence on students’ career choice. This result disagrees with Hewer (2006) that “students whose fathers were skilled workers tended to be interested in scientific and technical field in scientific and technical field while those whose fathers were in business tend to business careers”. The research study by Okon (2007) revealed that boys’ vocational
preference correlated with their fathers’ but not their mothers’ jobs. Girls’ preferences were related to the jobs of both parents but especially to their mothers. Furthermore, the results of the second research question as shown in table 3 revealed that out of the four items drawn from this question, 2 were accepted and 2 were rejected. A closer look at their mean scores shows that parental education has a minimal effect on students’ choice of career. This statement is in line with observation of Oyebode (2010) on the influence of parental education on the level of vocational aspirations among students in Lagos. He found that the level of education of parents does not have much impact on level of job aspirations among secondary school students. He noted that irrespective of the parental educational background, students aspire to careers that are highly rated in the society. Thus, he found that such professions as Medicine and Engineering ranked high among others and are mostly desired in the society.

From research question three, the study revealed that out of the 5 items posed under the question, 2 are rejected while 3 are accepted. This indicated that parental socio-economic status has to a large extent influenced career choice of students. This result agrees with Taiwo (2010) that “Nigerian parents with eyes on economic returns have exerted their influences on the kind of education given to their children. Douglas (2014) asserts that high socio-economic status parent take more interest in their children’s progress at school than the law socio-economic status parents do. Parents could influence their children’s choice of career by their parental attitude to their children’s education especially at the post - primary level. This could take the form of parental inspection of children’s notebook and textbooks, denial of privileges to children for poor performance at school, provision of good facilities to children for quite study and borne work and fulfilling demands made on them.

Finally, the findings of the study as in table 5 for research question four indicated that the four questionnaire items drawn under this question have positive influence on students’ choice of career. So it is obvious that parental career expectation has to a large extent influence the choice of career of students in Rivers State. This statement is in line with the observation of Wariso (2012) that perhaps children learn values, benefits and attitudes from their parents.

CONCLUSION
On the parameters of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Parental occupation has no significant influence on students’ choice of career. Students aspire to careers regardless of their parents’ occupation.
- Educational background of parents has minimal influence on students’ choice of career.
- Parental socio-economic status has to a large extent influenced students’ choice of career.
- Parental career expectation has to a large extent influenced students’ choice of career.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Within the context of the above findings, the following recommendations are made:
1. Parents and Teachers should meet regularly to discuss the welfare of the children. An adequate forum for such meeting is the Parent -Teacher’s Association meetings in such forums, lectures could be organized to enlighten parents on career services and this will make the parents less rigid in advising their children about their occupational aspirations.
2. The government as well as school administrators should provide guidance services. The few guidance counselors who are teachers should be encouraged to update their understanding of guidance principles and services. Regular seminars and symposia be conducted in secondary schools during which proper guidance on education and vocational occupation should be given to students to create awareness among them.
3. Seminars and in service training’ should be organized at both federal and state levels to educate many secondary school teachers on career guidance so that they will be in position to educate their students on relevant subjects that will lead them to the careers they aspire to.
4. Information about available career and their requirements should be made available to students in secondary school. Such information should specify the prospectus and hazards of such careers’.

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5. Parents on their own should consider other factors such as the students’ level of performance in the relevant subject areas and the future of the chosen career as it will affect the students before making a choice for their children.

REFERENCES


