

STUDENTS' INTEREST AS CORRELATE OF CAREER ASPIRATION OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

Study investigated the relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of senior secondary school students in Rivers State. One research The question and four hypotheses tested at .05 level of significance. The population of the study comprised senior public secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The sample of the study consisted of 200 senior public secondary school students drawn through stratified sampling technique. Two standardized instruments – motivation for occupational preference scale (MOPS) and vocational interest inventory (VII) were used in gathering data for the study. Pearson product moment correlation method was used in analyzing the research question and hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that there was significant relationship between students' interest and their career aspiration. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made and conclusions were drawn.

INTRODUCTION

The choice of a career is an important decision in a person's life. It influences one's economic status, social status and sometimes religious status. It is desirable that a person chooses a career where the person's best output can be exhibited.

However, the fact that individuals are different in ability, social background and other attributes plus the reality of an expanding field of career choice makes aspiration diverse and sometimes confusing. It thus becomes necessary to have studies in career aspiration, especially with a focus on analyzing characteristics of students who are at aspiration stage. There is the belief that failure to make a wise decision leads to later frustration arising from disappointment and disillusionment. A person's career, therefore, plays an important role in his life.

According to Peterson and Billups (1999), career choice takes place in the context of a changing set of social environments which are largely academic in the early years. Ginzberg, Eli, Ginzburg, Axelrad and Herman (1951) have added that the process takes place

over a minimum of six or seven years and sometimes over ten years or more. Therefore, there is no doubt that the secondary school stage becomes suitable for career intervention.

This assertion finds support in the findings of super and Overstreet (1985) that boys in secondary schools know little about the world of work.

Career aspiration is vitally important for today's youth, who are more than ever "motivated but directionless" (Schneider and Stevenson, 1999). Young people have high ambitions, expecting to be highly educated and have professional careers, yet research has shown that many do not develop coherent plans for achieving their goals (Schneider and Stevenson, 1999).

Every individual is very unique. No person is exactly the same as the other, including identical twins that may differ in certain aspects. These differences which affect all aspects of the individual's life can be attributed to hereditary and environmental factors. The problem of individual differences was what prompted psychologists of the old to find out whether personalities are of various types.

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Most of the students in secondary schools do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice.

According to Kerka (2000), career choice is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interest, self-concept, cultural identify, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and finance.

Bandura (2001) state that each individual undertaking the process is influenced by several factors including the context in which they live in, their personal aptitudes, social contacts and educational attainment. According to Hewitt (2010), factors influencing career choice can either be intrinsic or extrinsic or both.

He further stated that most people are influenced by careers that their parents favour, others follow the careers that their educational choices have opened for them, some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them while others choose the careers that give high income. However, this study investigates students' interest as correlate of career aspiration in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Therefore, the main purpose of the study was to investigate students' interest as correlate of career aspiration in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. Investigate the relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of male students.
2. Determine the relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of female students.
3. Investigate the relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from high socio-economic background.
4. Determine the relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from low socio-economic background.

Significance of the Study

The result of this study will be very useful in so many ways and to various people. Firstly, it will help establish the type of relationship that exists between students' interest and their career aspiration. This information will be very useful to guidance counselors in giving vocational

assistance to students in Nigeria. It is no longer news that most students in secondary schools in Nigeria have need for vocational guidance and counselling.

The result of the study will suggest to government the need for employment of guidance counselors into our secondary schools in Nigeria. Employment of guidance counsellors into our schools will help deal with the problem of shortage of guidance counsellors in our schools. The outcome of this study will also be very beneficial to secondary school students in that through proper guidance and counselling, they will conveniently match their interest with the right job. This will reduce cases of vocational maladjustment resulting from job dissatisfaction later in life.

The following research question guided the study;

1. What is the relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students?

The following null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of male students.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of female students.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from high socio-economic background.
- Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from low socio-economic background.

Methodology

The study examined students' interest as correlate of their career aspiration. It is a correlation study. The dependent variable is career aspiration while the independent variable is students' interest. Thus students' career aspiration depends on their interest in the required school subjects.

A sample of two hundred (200) students from selected public secondary schools was randomly selected using stratified random sampling technique to ensure equal representation of the students used for the study. Vocational Interest Inventory (VII) and

Motivation for Occupational Preference Scale (MOPS) was used for data collection.

The data collected were analyzed using person's Moment Correction to answer the research question while independent t-test was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results were presented in line with the research question and hypotheses.

Research Question

What is the relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration among senior public secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 1: Relationship between vocational interest an career aspiration.

Variable	N	Σx	Σy	Σx^2	Σy^2	R
Vocational interest(x)	200	3558		72498		0.68
Career aspiration(y)			2985		53964	

Table 1 Shows that descriptive statistics of vocational interest(x) and career aspiration(y). An observation of table 1 shows that the correlation coefficient between vocational interest(x) and career aspiration(y) is 0.68. This revealed a positive and moderate relationship between vocational interest(x) and career aspiration(y). This means that as scores in vocational interest(x) increases there is

corresponding increase in the score on career aspiration(y).

Hypothesis One:

There is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of male students.

Table 2: Relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of male students.

Variable	N	Σx	Σy	Σx^2	Σy^2	Σxy	R	Cal Zr	Crit Zr	Remark
Vocational Interest(x)	100	2294		42654		32425	0.64	6.361	1.960	Significant
Career Aspiration(y)			1487		29716					

Table 2 Shows that the correction coefficient between vocational interest and career aspiration of male senior secondary school students is 0.64. This shows a positive and moderate relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of male students. When subjected to z-test analysis, the correlation coefficient of 0.64 yielded a z-value of 6.361. This value is higher

than the critical z-value of 1.960. The null hypothesis is rejected. The alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of female students.

Table 3: Relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of female students.

Variable	N	Σx	Σy	Σx^2	Σy^2	Σxy	R	Cal Zr	Crit Zr	Remark
Vocational Interest(x)	100	2174		42558		31642	0.62	6.162	1.960	Significant
Career Aspiration(y)			1463		28614					

Table 3 Shows that the correlation coefficient between vocational interest and career aspiration of female senior secondary school students is 0.62. The calculated Zr value is 6.162 while the critical Zr value is 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated Zr value (6.162) is higher than the critical Zr value (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant relationship between

vocational interest and career aspiration of female students” is rejected. The alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from high socio-economic background.

Table 4: Relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from high socio – economic background.

Variable	N	Σx	Σy	Σx^2	Σy^2	Σxy	R	Cal Zr	Crit Zr	Remark
Vocational Interest(x)	74	1824		38916		34193	0.69	5.893	1.960	Significant
Career Aspiration(y)			1638		36458					

Table 4 shows that the correlation coefficient between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from high socio-economic background is 0.69.

The calculated Zr value is 5.893 while the critical Zr values is 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated Zr value (5.893) is high than the critical Zr value (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from high socio – economic background” is rejected.

This indicates that the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis Four

There is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from low socio – economic background.

Table 5: Relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from low socio – economic background.

Variable	N	Σx	Σy	Σx^2	Σy^2	Σxy	R	Cal Zr	Crit Zr	Remark
Vocational Interest(x)	126	2393		44683		41762	0.51	5.702	1.960	Significant
Career Aspiration(y)			2156		42395					

Table 5 shows that the correction coefficient between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from low socio – economic background is 0.051. The calculated Zr value is 5.702 while the critical Zr value is 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated Zr value is (5.702) is higher than the critical Zr – value (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of students from low socio – economic background” is rejected. This indicates that the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

DISCUSSION

The result of research question (table 1) shows that the relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration among senior public secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area is 0.68. This result reveals that there is positive but moderate relationship between vocational interest and career among the students. The result shows that as scores on vocational interest is increasing, there is a corresponding increase in the scores on career aspiration. This result is in agreement

with Kochung (2012), Steleton (2007) and Kniveton (2004) who observed that the vocational interest of students are related to their career aspiration.

The result of hypothesis one (table 2) shows that there is insignificant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of senior male secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The correlation coefficient between vocational interest and career aspiration of senior male secondary school students was 0.64 when Z statistic was applied, r – value of 0.64 was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. The calculated Zr value (6.361) is higher than the critical Zr value (1.960). The positive relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration among senior male secondary school students means that as scores on vocational interest increase, there is corresponding increase in career aspiration scores. This result is in agreement with Kerka (2000) who observed that the vocational interest of senior male secondary students significantly relate with their career aspiration.

The result of hypothesis two (table 3) shows that there is significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of senior female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The correlation coefficient between vocational interest and career aspiration of senior female secondary school students is 0.62. When Z statistic was applied, r-value of 0.62 was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. The calculate Zr value (6.162) is higher than the critical Zr value (1.960). The position relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration among senior female secondary school students means that as scores on vocational interest increases, there is corresponding increase in career aspiration scores. This result is in agreement with Dick and Rallis (1991), who noted that there is a significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of female secondary school students.

The result of hypothesis three (table 4) shows that there is significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of secondary school students from high socio-economic background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The correlation coefficient between vocational interest and career aspiration of

secondary school students from high socio-economic background is 0.69. When Z statistic was applied, r-value of 0.62 was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. The calculated Zr value (5.893) is higher than the critical Zr value (1.960). The positive relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration among secondary school students from high socio-economic background means that as scores on vocational interest increases, there is corresponding increase in career aspiration scores. This result is in agreement with Mau and Bikos (2000) who observed that there is a significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of secondary school students from high socio-economic background.

The result of hypothesis four (table 5) shows that there is significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of secondary school students from low socio-economic background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The correlation coefficient between vocational interest and career aspiration of secondary school students from low socio-economic background is 0.51. When Z statistic was applied, r-value of 0.51 was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. The calculated Zr value (5.702) is higher than the critical Zr value (1.960). The positive relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration among secondary school students from low socio-economic background means that scores on vocational interest increases, there is corresponding increase in career aspiration scores. This result is in agreement with Trusty (2002) who noted that there is a significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of secondary school students from low socio-economic background.

CONCLUSION

The study examined students interest as correlate of career aspiration in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The following conclusions were drawn from the study: (1) there is positive and moderate relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of senior public secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. Again, there is significant relationship between vocational interest and career aspiration of senior public male and female secondary school

students and senior public secondary school students from high and low socio-economic background.

RECOMMEDATIONS

The following recommendations were made from the study.

1. Vocational counseling should be strengthened at the senior secondary school level to ascertain students' vocational interest.
2. Career aspiration of senior secondary school students should be determined so that it will be harnessed and sustained.
3. Facilities for counseling especially for vocational counseling should be provided in senior secondary schools in the state.
4. Guidance services should be provided in all secondary schools in the state.
5. Activities such as field trips and career conferences should be utilized by counsellors to expose students to the world of work and thereby provide vocational information to them.
6. Vocational information should be provided right from the primary schools up to the university level. This calls for the provision of educational and vocational reading materials for the students.
7. Curriculum for counsellors-in-training should be innovative and enriched to provide a comprehensive range of activities to guide students of varying abilities, aptitudes, interests and personality traits.

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