RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-CONCEPT AND CAREER CHOICE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY ABUJA, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated relationship between self-concept and career choice of Senior Secondary School two students in F.C.T Abuja. Correlation design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in Municipal and Bwari Area Council of F.C.T Abuja. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The population for study consists of 9066 (SS11) students in the selected Government Senior Secondary Schools in F.C.T Abuja. The sample size for the study was 385 students sampled across the Area Council. Proportional and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting the respondents. The two research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while the hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics. An instrument titled Self-concept and Career Choice Scale (SECS) developed by the researchers was used to collect the data. SECS has six items on Self-concept and eight on career choice. The reliability value of 0.86 was obtained for the instrument. The result of the study shows positive relationship between self-concept and career choice. It was therefore recommended that professional career counsellors, parents and teachers should be consulted to assist students in planning and choosing their careers based on their self-concept

Keywords: Self-Concept, Career Choice, Students

Introduction

Nigerian adolescents have problem over the years in making appropriate career choices. The vocational interest level of secondary school students is very crucial in their daily activities. As observed by the researchers, majority of secondary school students lack necessary knowledge to make realistic choices. Many students have been frustrated by wrong combination of subjects. Some students do not seek counselling on what combination of subjects to sit for in examinations and such students are not doing well in academic subjects which they do not really have interest in. This make many go into other careers which they did not intend in life. Many of the secondary school students express apparent ignorance about career choice. Still the

majority of the students who are conversant with some professional careers erroneously believe that one can find himself in any career as long as he attends a university.

Students are been forced to read courses by their parents, friends and some teachers in higher institutions which they are not interested in and this has placed many of them jumping from one course to another. So many Nigerian students have neither the understanding of themselves nor the different vocations of interest that are available as well as the necessary requirement for jobs. A number of the students manifest lack of interest in the vocation and intellectual ability to handle the courses they are studying. Hassan (2008) reported that many Nigerian secondary schools have their own patterns of aspiration or no vocational interest and subject combinations for the school certificate examination. This is to say that most Nigerian adolescents lack adequate information about their own self-concept and the information on the world of work.

Self-concept is a crucial variable in vocational guidance. Self-concept is defined by Rogers (1957) as an organized pattern of thought and perception about oneself. It is one's acceptance of oneself regardless of what others say about him. It implies having an unbiased and undistorted assessment of one. Therefore, one can say that one's thoughts, expressions or appreciation of himself can propel him to take a visionary decision of a vocation that will enhance his self-concept. A distorted view of it will lead to a deceptive decision to a vocation. The end result will be frustration and maladjustment for failure to meet the tasks, roles and functions of the given vocation. It is, therefore expected that one not only knows his potentials and limitations but acknowledges and appreciate them to have self-fulfillment in a given vocation. It is therefore very important for counsellors to know their students strength and weakness as a person to be able to assist them in making the right career choice, ensuring that they are not following their peers in taking decisions but that they understand their needs and what they are going into as individuals.

Onoyase and Onoyase (2009) carried out research to investigate the relationship between personality types and career choice of 49 secondary school students in the Federal Government Colleges in Nigeria. The result showed that there were significant relationships between the artistic, social, enterprising and investigative personality types on one hand and career choice on the other. However, no significant relationships were found between the realistic and conventional personality types and career choice. Kniveton (2004) investigated the influences and motivations on which students base their choice of career. The aim of the study was to provide a current profile of the influences and motives related to student career choices. The results showed that parents have a greater influence than teachers. With birth order, the eldest child is more influenced by the father, the youngest by the mother. Males more than females want to get a job, but females more than males want to get married in addition to having a job or further education. The primary 'motivations to work are instant gratification such as money and liking for the job, then altruistic rewards, then the use of a job to provide 'status' and finally, longer-term goals, including pension provision.

In another study, Mei, Wei and Mark (2008) explored the factors influencing high school students' career aspirations. The result revealed that high school girls, compared with their male counterparts, were more interested in and had higher self-efficacy on occupations that involve working with people and ideas that is,

the artistic and social types in Holland's theory. The high school girls also were found to more likely choose occupations that involve helping others and expressing oneself. In contrast, boys were more interested in, had higher self-efficacy for, and were more likely to choose occupations involving data and things or realistic, investigative, enterprising and conventional in Holland's code.

This paper is anchored on Donald Super's vocational theory. Super (1990) fitted together the aspects of developmental psychology with self-concept theory. He identified and outlined the following five developmental stages of vocational life stages through which people under go to include:

1. The growth stage (from birth to 14 years). At this stage the individual develops self-concept through identification with key figures in the family or school. In other words, the concept of who he is and what he can do to become identified as a person distinguishable from others depends on his model or significant other. Needs and fantasy are dominant at the early part of this stage. Towards the end of the stage, the young individual must have acquired basic interest and abilities which will enable him consider possible alternative occupation and job training requirements.

2. The Exploration stage (15-24 years): The period is characterized by self-examination, role trial, and occupational exploration. Leisure activities and part time work on the part of the individual who has developed abilities and interest through school activity and practical work experience are observed. Initially, the individual makes a lot of tentative choices which are often discussed in schools, home and among friends. He tries them out in work experience where possible. Toward the end of this period, the individual may come up with appropriate job and also tries out the new job. The counsellor is concerned with assisting the individual to understand the realities of himself, his abilities or potentials and the unique nature of his environmental opportunities so as to make more realistic choice of occupation in line with this understanding. Moreover, the individual would have either found an appropriate field of work, he chooses a specific job in that field and tries out his life work.

3. Establishment stage (25-44): The individual discovers an appropriate or suitable work-field. He tries to make a permanent place in his chosen job especially if he considers that his aspirations and ambitions are being met. However, there may be some trials at the early stage of this period as the individual does some shifting as he discovers that the chosen job or occupation is not meeting up with his set goals. The shifts or change at this period is normal as it helps the individual acquire a clearer picture enhance his striving to establish and maintain the job especially in the face of potential competitors for the same job.

4. The Maintenance Stage (45-64 years): At this stage, a place has been made in the world of work. Efforts are geared to build it and little new grounds re-opened. There is great zeal to establish, secure and make a name in the job until retirement.

5. The Decline Stage (65 and above): This stage tallies with most agreed age of retirement worldwide. There is usually a decline or reduction of both the physical

and mental powers of the individual. Work activity changes and eventually ceases. The individual is less productive and since he can no longer deliver the goods to the expectations of his employer, he either proceeds on voluntary retirement otherwise he may be forced to retire. However, in a healthy condition, the retired person can still function in varied capacity where less energy is exerted and where his long acquired experiences could be in high demand. Nevertheless, there is a point in one's life when work must have to stop.

In view of the both theoretical and empirical literature reviewed above, the researchers focus basically on variables of self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT

Statement of Problem

In most of schools, there are insufficient counsellors to assist the students make appropriate career choice based on their self-concept. Wrong career choices have led a great number of youths into untold psychological problems arising from series of academic failures or absence of job satisfaction for those in employment already. This has led people in employments prolonged exploration of work environment causing late or no achievement in the people. Such people are in the state of despair in their midlife. There is need for students to choose their career based on their self-concept and interest so that they consolidate on their work environment to be early achievers instead of late or no achievers. This study therefore focused on relationship between self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study was tofind the relationship between self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the mean score and standard deviation of the respondents on self-concept of senior secondary school students in FCT.
2. Ascertain the mean score and standard deviation of the respondents on career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

3. What is the mean score and standard deviation of the respondents on self-concept of senior secondary school students in FCT
4. What is the mean score and standard deviation of the respondents on career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT.

Methodology

The design adopted for the study was correlation research design. This design was seen to be most appropriate because it sought to determine if any relationship exists between self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT. The population for this study was nine thousand and sixty six (9066) from the selected Secondary School Education Board (SSEB) for 2016/2017 session Bwari and Abuja municipal area council (AMAC). The sample size for the study was 385 determined by krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula for sample size determination.

Proportional sampling technique was adopted for the distribution of the sample in two area councils in the FCT while purposive sampling technique was employed to choose the respondents directly.

The researchers developed an instrument titled Self-concept and Career Choice Scale (SECS). Six (6) items were used to measure self-concept while eight (8) items was used. It was a fivepoint Likert scale of Strongly Agreed 4: Agreed 3: Disagreed 2 and Strongly Disagreed 1 and Undecided 0 to measure career choice. The content validity was 0.78 indexes and the reliability coefficient of the instrument was determined by **Cronbach alpha method of estimating reliability** and the value is 0.86.

In processing the data. the researchers visited the different schools personally to administer the copies of the questionnaire to the respondents with the help of some teachers and school counsellors. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the two research questions and PPMC statistics was used to test the formulated hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the mean score and standard deviation of the respondents on self-concept of senior secondary school students in FCT

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents Rating on Self-Concept of Senior Secondary School Students in FCT

Self-Concept items	X	SD	Decision
1. My subject combination will not help me to choose a career now	3.90	1.40	Accept
2. I want to be my own boss by starting up my business	3.50	1.62	Accept
3. I know my career capabilities and limitations	3.98	1.25	Accept
4. I know I can perform well in choosing career if given the opportunity	4.17	1.25	Accept
5. I know my strength and weakness	4.15	1.42	Accept
6. I know what I can and what I cannot do	3.94	1.32	Accept

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation for the six items measuring the self-concept on career choice of senior secondary school students. The results reveal that the respondents' ratings on the items are above the criterion mean score of 3.00 set aside as bench mark for the study. This indicates that the respondents were of the opinion that positive self-concept has a strong influence with students' career choice.

Research Question 2: What is the mean score and standard deviation of the respondents on career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents Rating on Career Choice

	Career Choice items	X	SD	Decision
1.	I understand what a career means	4.10	1.13	Accept
2.	I am aware of the various careers available in the country	3.58	1.65	Accept
3.	I know the training requirement for various career	4.23	1.31	Accept
4.	I know how various jobs are related to each other	4.61	.77	Accept
5.	I have made my career choice	3.86	1.50	Accept
6.	I have explored my career interest	4.56	.75	Accept
7.	I have read about my career of interest	4.33	1.03	Accept
8.	I choose my subjects based on my future career	2.09	1.35	Reject

Table 2 shows the mean score of the respondents on their career choice. The results reveal that with the rating on the items by the students, seven items are above the criterion mean score of 3.00 set aside as bench mark indicating that the students agrees to the statements. The result shows that agreed that all items except item 8 did not meet the criterion mean of 3.00, implies that students disagreed that they choose subjects based on their future career choice.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and career choice of secondary school students in FCT Abuja.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient between Self-Concept and Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students in FCT

Variable	N	Mean	Std	R	R^2	Sig	Decision
Self-Concept	385	23.63	3.11	.118	.014	.02	Rejected
Career Choice	385	31.36	3.59				

< .05 shows significant relationship

Table 3 shows the relationship between self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT. Findings reveal r = .118, r^2 = .014, at p .02. Since p .02 < p. 05 , the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between self-concept and career choice of secondary school students in FCT Abuja is rejected. This implies that there is a significant correlation between self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students. The result also shows r^2 = .014 which implies that only 1.4% of the variation is accounted for between self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students in FCT while 98.6% of the variation is unaccounted for due to error variance.

Discussion of Results

Findings from the study on the hypothesis show that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and career choice of students in senior secondary schools in FCT. The result agrees with the findings of Affum-Osei, Adom, Barnie and Forkuoh (2014) which showed that, majority of the high school students were highly motivated, have high self-concept and performed well on the Mathematics Achievement test. The study also found a

significant correlation between self-concept and academic achievement. This was further supported by the study of Oluwatosin and Bamidele (2014) which revealed that there was a positive correlation between students' self-concept and their academic performance in chemistry and that chemistry students attending private school have higher level self-concept compared to those attending public schools. The paper therefore concluded that having good self-concept is an important psychological factor that is relevant it achieving success in science subject

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study. the following recommendations were made:

1. Counsellors and parents should educate their children on how to make a career choice and not impose on them their own preferred careers.
2. Counsellors and teachers should put more efforts to understand the self-concept of their students and help them in their career choice.

Conclusion

This research work found that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and career choice of senior secondary school students in Federal Capital Tertiary Abuja. Though there are many factors that correlate career choice and development. among which include intellectual ability. personality and self-concept:self-concept is significant.

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