

# Original Research Article

## Sources of career inspiration of adolescents in secondary schools and their career choice in Delta State

### ABSTRACT

**Aims:** To determine the sources of career inspiration of adolescents in secondary schools and their career choice in Delta State, Nigeria

**Study design:** Descriptive Survey Research Design.

**Place and Duration of Study:** Secondary schools in Asaba, Education Zone of Delta State, between March 2019 and July 2021.

**Methodology:** The population of this study comprises 5,273 (male = 3754, female = 1519) senior secondary school II adolescents drawn from the 65 secondary schools situated in four local government areas in Asaba education zone of Delta State. The sample for this study comprises 791 SS II adolescents (male = 357, female = 434). This represents 15% of the entire population. The multistage sampling procedure was adopted in sampling the respondents. Firstly, simple random sampling technique was used to draw two local government areas, from the existing four LGAs in Asaba education zone of Delta State. There exist 30 secondary schools in the sampled LGAs. Secondly, disproportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 26 senior secondary school II adolescents from each secondary school. The instruments for data collection were a structured questionnaire, structured on a 5 – point response option and a career choice inventory. The response options for the career choice inventory were structured as chosen -1 and not chosen – 0. The instruments were validated and reliability established. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was 0.715, and the Kuder-Richardson 21 formula yielded a coefficient of 0.671. The administration of the questionnaire structured for data collection was done through direct delivery approach. Data relating to research questions 1 - 3 was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. While research question 6 was answered using frequency and percentage. Data relating to the hypotheses was tested using the T-test for independent sample at 0.05 significance level.

**Results:** The mean of means score is a pointer that adolescents agree to family influence as a source of career inspiration. More so, the standard deviation score shows homogeneity of the respondents rating. The significant value is greater than the alpha value, hence there is a significant difference. This goes to show that male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State differ significantly in their mean rating of family influence as a source of career inspiration. The mean of means scores revealed that adolescents agree to environmental influence as a source of career inspiration. More so, the standard deviation score indicates a homogeneity of the respondents rating. The significant value is greater than the alpha value, this goes to show that male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State do not differ significantly in their mean rating of environmental influence as a source of career inspiration. Mean of means score reveals that adolescents strongly disagree to occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration. the significant value is greater than the alpha value, hence there is a significant difference. This goes to show that male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State differ significantly in their mean rating of occupational

stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration.

**Conclusion:** Based on the findings of this study it was concluded that adolescents in secondary schools agreed to family influence and environmental factor as sources of career inspiration. However, they strongly disagreed to occupational stereotyping as a source of career inspiration in Delta State. It was further concluded that adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State differ significantly in their mean rating of family influence and occupational stereotyping influence as sources of career inspiration. More so they do not differ significantly in their mean rating of environmental factor as a source of career inspiration based on gender.

*Keywords: sources of career, career inspiration, adolescents, secondary schools, career, career choice*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sources of career inspiration among adolescents as the general process through which career choices are made has been a huge source of concern in the education. Many educational institutions are of the belief that involving parents in education through family influence could improve the education of students and as well direct their focus. Involvement of parents in the education of their wards as well as decision making process has perceived as critical during the transition to life. [1] asserted that parents engage in both at home and school activities. The sources of career inspiration among students could be activated in many forms including good parenting in the home, provision of a secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, good models of constructive social, educational values, high aspirations relating to personal fulfilment and good citizenship, contact with schools to share information, participation in school events and participation in school governance [2]. In the context of this study, sources of career inspiration are the areas through which students choose meaningful career pursuits.

Students with actively and positively inclined physical environment tend to have a more positive attitude towards school and are in a better position to develop careers [3]. The role of parental factors among other issues in student's education has become a central issue in educational policy and research. This is because, parents play crucial role in both home and school environment. Generally, sources of career inspiration are associated with student's higher achievements in classroom subjects, enrolment in more challenging programs, greater academic persistence, better behaviour, better social skills and adaptation to school, better attendance and lower drop-out rates and informed career choice [4]. However, the main reason for creating such partnership is to enable students succeed in their school tasks and later in life. Sources of career inspiration are categorized under family influence, environmental factors, occupational stereotyping, peer groups, socioeconomic status and personality factors [5].

Family background can be influential in career decision making. In recent years, efforts have been made to probe the impact of different relations (that is, parents, siblings, peer group, guardians, teachers, friends among others) on career selection. Family influence as a source of career inspiration reveals a process wherein the family speaks in agreement concerning their wards career choices while also giving them the necessary moral support to succeed, this indirectly influences their career choice. According to [6], it is found strong influence of parents, guardians, teachers and friends on career choice of students. This goes to show that the family background provides the basis for which their career plans and decision making evolve. However, within each family, the level of involvement can vary, offering both positive and negative influences.

Similarly, the environment with which student's find themselves has a momentous role in the career choice students make and the position the student attains in various ways. Environment is a term which has many connotations. It has physical, economic, social and cultural dimensions. The environment being referred to here is a factor that is used to foster decisions in career choice. A home with healthy environment is also essential for evolving abilities to heights, close to capacity heights. This is because adolescents raised in homes with healthy environment where parents live in harmony with other family members are bound to make well-informed career decisions.

Occupational stereotyping on the other hand implies a process with which the society deems certain occupation for a particular gender [7]. This is a scenario where men are encouraged to explore wider variety of occupations, yet the areas of child care and nursing are seen as not appropriate for men. Women from the other hand are discouraged from seeking education and training in science and mathematics related courses or in trade such as construction, manufacturing, and transportation [8]. The effects of such stereotyping are that many women find jobs in less payed areas with fewer opportunities for advancement [9]. The various sources of career inspiration are necessary through which family influence

and encourage adolescents to explore vocational interests and abilities as well as various occupational options and facilitate open to them to reflect on career choice [10].

Career choice on the other hand is an important aspect of an individual's life because it determines the blueprint which is played by the individual in future. More so, [10] further stated that in recent times students have had problem in choosing their career when they finish their studies. In addition, students need to compete with working experience because lack of this competitiveness may lead to increase unemployment rate from year to year. Thus, career choice is one of the many choices that students would make in forming their potential strategy for life. Career is the sequence of occupations, jobs and positions occupied during the course of a person's working life [11]. They further stated that career is tied to occupation, which in turn is defined as one's work activities.

Unarguably, career choice of adolescents plays an important role in shaping the attitude of adolescents in secondary schools towards any chosen discipline and in line with subsequent achievement attained in such discipline. Career choice can be defined as a process which describes the choices a person makes when selecting a particular career [12]. Supporting the above view, [13] asserted that the career choice of students must be defined early in school. This is because early career selection is very essential for any student. It is a process of choosing an occupation which directs future life [14]. Career choice is the selection of a course of study which leads to a specific profession according to one's interest, passion and ability as influenced by factors such as parental factors, peers, and role model.

Career choice among adolescents in secondary schools could be influenced by gender. Gender is a broad analytical concept which highlights women roles and responsibilities in relation to those of men. According to [15], gender refers to all the characteristics of men and women which a particular society has determined and assigned each sex. Fan et al. further described gender as socially constructed aspect of difference between men and women. The impact of gender in career choice seems to manifest among adolescents. This was buttressed by [16] who posited that robust careers were mainly considered to be the reservation for boys, while girls usually take to trading, nursing, secretarial services and catering. Several studies have been carried out and findings arrived at regarding career choice. In a study conducted by [17] on family influence on the career decision making in undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) students in Nigeria, it was found that that profession dynamic self-adequacy is an essential develop in understanding people's vocation practices. Family, as an essential wellspring of social help, applies a considerable impact on youths' vocation advancement and dynamic cycles. This exploration centres around the outside and inner elements that rouses understudies for selecting a particular career way and distinguishing the most basic factors and decide their positioning. Likewise, this examination improves the information about least significant components while picking proper vocation.

In a similar study conducted by [18], they examined parental influence on career on career choice of their children. They study found that that career development is a lifelong process dependent on many factors including, basic personality type and self-concept, family influence, social interactions and academic excellence. It was also found that parental perceptions play dynamic role in children's education with respect to academic performance, vocation choice and eventually influence behaviour of their children towards career choice. Furthermore, [19] conducted a study on environmental factors as a predictor of students Career Choices in Ndop Central Sub-Division, North West Region of Cameroon. The findings equally revealed a substantial and affirming affiliation between school environment and secondary school students' career choices. Similarly, findings equally disclosed that there exists a substantial and positive relationship between religious groups and career choices of secondary school students. Based on the findings, it was recorded that school Counsellors should guide students so that they can choose careers based on their personality trait and interest. This will help students to gain career satisfaction. In another study by [20] on environmental influence on the career choice of undergraduates at the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, it was found that undergraduates at the University of Ilorin expressed that environmental factors have influence on their choice if career. Also, there was no significant difference in the influence of environmental factors on the career choice of undergraduates at the University of Ilorin based on gender. However, there were significant differences in the influence of environmental factors on the career choice of undergraduates at the University of Ilorin on the bases of age, level and religious affiliation. The study of [21] carried out a study on occupation and gender stereotypes in primary school: The case of the English language coursebooks in Greek primary schools found that according to the English language teacher's experiences, the existence of gender stereotypes on occupation is evident in the English language coursebooks of the 4th,5th and 6th grades, but is minimal in the textbook of the 3rd grade. the findings of the study further revealed that the teaching methods and approaches, which are applied by the teachers and which concern the teaching of the coursebooks and the social and family background of the students are the main factors, which influence the student and which exert a strong impact on the students career choice.

More so, [22] conducted a study which explored the influence of gender stereotyping on career choices among secondary school students in Moshi rural district. The study revealed that students had better knowledge on different types of careers available in the world of work. It was also revealed that, teachers, parents, relatives, books, television, career role models,

radio and the internet were sources of career information among secondary school students. The study showed a significant difference between re-categorized career and sex with a large effect size. The scope of this study is on the indices of the sources of career inspiration such as family influence, environmental influence, occupational stereotyping and career choice. The study is further delimited to adolescents in public senior secondary schools (SS II) in Asaba Education Zone of Delta State. This study benefited parents, adolescents, teachers, school counsellors, education authorities, society and future researchers. This is through the approval and publication of this findings in libraries and online journals that are accessible to these individuals. Based, on the foregoing and empirical studies conducted, they still exist a gap in the body of knowledge on students' career choice and the sources of career inspiration. hence sources of career choice mentioned earlier seems to be determining factors in secondary school adolescent's career decision making. Based on this, it becomes imperative to determine the sources of career inspiration of adolescents in secondary schools and their career choice in Delta state. Specifically, this study will determine;

1. The mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on family influence as a source of career inspiration.
2. The mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on environmental influence as a source of career inspiration.
3. The mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration.
4. The percentage scores of adolescents' career choice in secondary schools in Delta State.

### **1.1 Research Questions**

1. What is the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on family influence as a source of career inspiration?
2. What is the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on environmental influence as a source of career inspiration?
3. What is the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration?
4. The percentage scores of adolescents' career choice in secondary schools in Delta State.

### **1.2 Hypothesis**

1. Male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State do not differ significantly in their mean rating of family influence as a source of career inspiration.
2. Male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State do not differ significantly in their mean rating of environmental influence as a source of career inspiration.
3. Male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State do not differ significantly in their mean rating of occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration.

## **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. This research design type is aimed at collecting data and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics of, features or facts about a given population [23]. This study was carried out in Delta State. The population of this study comprises 5,273 (male = 3754, female = 1519) senior secondary school II adolescents drawn from the 65 secondary schools situated in four local government areas in Asaba education zone of Delta State. The sample for this study comprises 791 SS II adolescents (male = 357, female = 434). This represents 15% of the entire population. The multistage sampling procedure was adopted in sampling the respondents. Firstly, simple random sampling technique was used to draw two local government areas, from the existing four LGAs in Asaba education zone of Delta State. There exist 30 secondary schools in the sampled LGAs. Secondly, disproportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 26 senior secondary school II adolescents from each secondary school. The instruments for data collection were a structured questionnaire, structured on a 5 – point response option and a career choice inventory. The response options for the career choice inventory were structured as chosen -1 and not chosen – 0. The instruments were validated and reliability established. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was 0.715, and the Kuder-Richardson 21 formula yielded a coefficient of 0.671. The administration of the questionnaire structured for data collection was done through direct delivery approach. Data relating to research questions 1 - 3 was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. While research question 6 was answered using frequency and percentage. Data relating to the hypotheses was tested using the T-test for independent sample at 0.05 significance level. The decision rule for the study was as follows; reject the null hypotheses if the significant t- test value is less than the alpha value, otherwise do not reject the null hypotheses is the significant t-test value is greater than the alpha value. This analysis was conducted using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Research Question 1:** What is the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on family influence as a source of career inspiration?

**Hypotheses 1:** Male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State do not differ significantly in their mean rating of family influence as a source of career inspiration.

Table 1 shows the mean of means score is a pointer that adolescents agree to family influence as a source of career inspiration. More so, the standard deviation score shows homogeneity of the respondents rating. This finding aligns with the findings of [17] which revealed that profession dynamic self-adequacy is an essential develop in understanding people's vocation practices. Family, as an essential wellspring of social help, applies a considerable impact on youths' vocation advancement and dynamic cycles.

Data relating to the corresponding hypotheses in Table 2 indicates that the significant value is greater than the alpha value, hence there is a significant difference. This goes to show that male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State differ significantly in their mean rating of family influence as a source of career inspiration. This significant difference supports the findings of [18] which revealed that career development is a lifelong process dependent on many factors including, basic personality type and self-concept, family influence, social interactions and academic excellence. The findings further revealed that parental perceptions play dynamic role in children's education with respect to academic performance, vocation choice and eventually influence behaviour of their children towards career choice.

**Research Question 2:** What is the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on environmental influence as a source of career inspiration?

**Hypothesis 2:** Male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State do not differ significantly in their mean rating of environmental influence as a source of career inspiration.

Table 3 indicates that through the mean of means score, adolescents agree to environmental influence as a source of career inspiration. More so, the standard deviation score indicates a homogeneity of the respondents rating. This finding revealed that adolescents agree to environmental influence as a source of career inspiration. The finding of [19] reveals a positive relationship between peer groups and secondary school student's career choices. The Findings equally affirmed there was a substantial and affirming affiliation between school environment and secondary school students' career choices.

Data relating to the corresponding hypothesis as reported in Table 4 showed that the significant value is less than the alpha value, hence there is no significant difference. This goes to show that male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State do not differ significantly in their mean rating of environmental influence as a source of career inspiration. The baseline of the findings of this study is hinged on the study of [20] which revealed that undergraduates in universities expressed that environmental influence have influence on their choice if career. The findings also revealed no significant difference in the influence of environmental factors on the career choice of undergraduates at the University of Ilorin based on gender.

**Research question 3:** What is the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration?

**Hypothesis 3:** Male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State do not differ significantly in their mean rating of occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration.

Result presented in Table 5 and the mean of means score reveals that adolescents strongly disagree to occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration. More so, the standard deviation score reveals homogeneity of the respondents rating. This finding is in disagreement with the findings of [21] who found that the existence of gender stereotypes on occupation is evident in English language coursebooks of the 4th,5th and 6th grades, but is minimal in the textbook of the 3rd grade. The findings of the study further revealed that the teaching methods and approaches applied by teachers are the main factors, which influence student's and which exert a strong impact on the students' career choice.

Result relating to the corresponding hypothesis presented in Table 6 shows that the significant value is greater than the alpha value, hence there is a significant difference. This goes to show that male and female adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State differ significantly in their mean rating of occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration. This finding conforms to the findings of [22] which found a statistically significant difference between re-

categorized career and subject specialization with a large effects size, a significant difference between re categorized career and school with a large effect size, a statistically significant difference between males and females in career choice.

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on family influence as a source of career inspiration (N=780).**

S/N	Family influence as a source of career inspiration	Mean	SD	Remark
1	My career choice is influenced based on the wish of my family	3.87	1.12	Agree
2	My place of birth and the position in my family determines my career choice	3.66	1.02	Agree
3	My chosen career is what my parents can afford to train me through	3.70	.91	Agree
4	My choice of career is based on my parents (father and mother's) wish	3.88	.88	Agree
5	My choice of career is based on my family's social class	3.77	1.14	Agree
6	My choice of career is based on my family religious beliefs	3.86	.86	Agree
	<b>Mean of Means</b>	<b>3.79</b>		<b>Agree</b>

**Table 2: T-test of significant difference of male and female adolescents mean rating on family influence as a source of career inspiration (N=780).**

Sources of variance	N	Mean	SD	Df	Sig. value	Alpha value	Decision
<b>Male</b>	418	22.76	4.23				
				778	.952	0.05	Significant
<b>Female</b>	362	22.77	4.15				

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation on the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on environmental influence as a source of career inspiration (N=780).**

S/N	Environmental influence a source of career inspiration	Mean	SD	Remark
7	My career choice is based on the school counsellor's advice	4.10	.67	Strongly agree
8	My career choice is limited by the number of career domicile in my immediate environment	3.77	.68	Agree
9	My career choice is based on my teacher's advice	3.60	.76	Agree
10	My career choice is based on my level of awareness of the courses or programs that universities offer	3.52	1.23	Agree
11	My choice of a particular career is due the respect apportioned to career in my society	3.60	.94	Agree
12	I consider careers only traditionally accepted by people of my gender	3.95	1.02	Agree
	<b>Mean of Means</b>	<b>3.76</b>		<b>Agree</b>

**Table 4: T-test of significant difference of male and female adolescents mean rating on environmental influence as a source of career inspiration (N=780).**

Sources of variance	N	Mean	SD	df	Sig. value	Alpha value	Decision
<b>Male</b>	418	22.53	4.08				
				778	.045	0.05	Not Significant
<b>Female</b>	362	22.59	3.80				

**Table 5: Mean and standard deviation on the mean rating of adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State on occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration (N=780).**

S/N	Occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration	Mean	SD	Remark
13	The gender of my role model influenced my choice of career	1.99	.87	Strongly disagree
14	In line with my career choice, I consider only jobs held by people of my gender	2.99	.90	Disagree
15	Certain career choices are determined by gender of students	1.92	.90	Strongly disagree
16	My career choice is limited to the career I believe is suitable for my gender	1.00	1.04	Strongly disagree
17	I chose a career path because of the respect given to such choice of career	3.43	1.00	Undecided
18	My career choice is not based on my gender but on growth in such career	2.10	1.03	Strongly disagree
	<b>Means of Mean</b>	<b>2.24</b>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>

**Table 6: T-test of significant difference of male and female adolescents mean rating on occupational stereotyping influence as a source of career inspiration (N=780).**

Sources of variance	N	Mean	SD	df	Sig. value	Alpha value	Decision
<b>Male</b>	418	22.80	3.88				
				778	.313	0.05	Significant

Female	362	22.52	4.01			
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#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study it was concluded that adolescents in secondary schools agreed to family influence and environmental factor as sources of career inspiration. However, they strongly disagreed to occupational stereotyping as a source of career inspiration in Delta State. It was further concluded that adolescents in secondary schools in Delta State differ significantly in their mean rating of family influence and occupational stereotyping influence as sources of career inspiration. More so they do not differ significantly in their mean rating of environmental factor as a source of career inspiration based on gender.

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