



IFE JOURNAL OF BEHAVIOURAL RESEARCH

Vol. 6, No.2, October, 2014

**A Publication of the
Department of Educational
Foundations and Counselling,
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife**

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Vol. 6, No.2, October, 2014

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ISSN: 2141E 3770

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GENDER, SELF-EFFICACY AND PERSONALITY TRAITS AS CORRELATES OF CAREER CHOICE OF ADOLESCENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship among gender, self-efficacy, personality traits and career choice among adolescents with hearing impairment in Oyo State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was adopted in carrying out the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 100 male and female adolescents with hearing impairment from Durbar Grammar School, Oyo and Methodist Grammar School, (Deaf Unit), Bodija, Ibadan, Nigeria. A 30-item questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. Gender ($r=.287$, $P<0.05$), self-efficacy ($r=.105$, $P<.05$) and personality traits ($r=.087$, $P<0.05$) were positively correlated with career choice among adolescents with hearing impairment. Gender, self-efficacy and personality type significantly predicted the career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment ($F(3,97) = 6.824$, $P<0.05$) and contributed 74% of the total variance to the dependent variable. The relative contributions of the independent variables to career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment are as follows: Gender ($=.279$), self-efficacy ($=.212$) and personality traits ($=.045$) respectively. Gender, self-efficacy and personality traits are important factors that enhanced career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment. Parents, teachers and rehabilitators should encourage adolescents with hearing impairment to come to term with their disabilities in order to choice careers that would make them to be economical independent.

Keywords: Adolescents, career choice, Hearing Impairment, personality traits, self efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

Choice of career is one of the major decisions individuals make in order to live meaningful live especially for economic independence. It is one of the many important choices that adolescents make during the process of their transition

to adulthood. Choice of career is a crucial experience in everyone's life and a single mistake can lead one to end up in career failure. On the other hand, choosing a right career can be the beginning of a successful life. It is one of the considerations of adolescents, especially those with hearing impairment.

In addition, Akomolafe (2003) opined that career choice is one of the most important aspects of human endeavour because it determines a lot of things in human existence. A wrong choice of career could mar individual's joy or happiness. He reported that true joy, satisfaction and happiness are linked to proper choice of career. Also, emotional and marital stability could be enhanced by the choice of career. Career choice, as important as it is, could be one of the most difficult decisions to make in one's life time, since everyone. This is because most people choose their careers because of the reward system, without necessarily finding out that it takes to be successful in their chosen careers. There is the need to consider the reasons for choosing a career before going into it. These reasons vary from person to person. They range from the reward system, interest, influence of parents, peers and other environmental factors.

Furthermore, gender, self-efficacy and personality traits are other important factors to be considered in the choice of career by adolescents with hearing impairment. Gender means personal trait or attribute that makes men to think and behave as men (masculine) while women think and behave as women (feminine). It is based on this premise that adolescents with hearing impairment may likely choose their careers based on their gender. That is, males are likely to choose careers that are socially considered as male professions. Such careers include engineering and law, while the females are likely to choose careers such as teaching.

Furthermore, self-efficacy is a psychological state generally defined as possessing self-confidence in performing specific task. It has received attention in recent years as a key factor in explaining why some individuals are motivated in

choosing a career. For instance, Boyd and Vozikis (1994) reported that self-efficacy was paramount in performing tasks associated with venture creation. It was instrumental in motivating an individual in engaging in such activities. Again, Zhao and Hill (2005) proposed a predictive model of achieving a career in which self-efficacy plays a critical mediating role.

Personality is the set of psychological traits and mechanisms within the individual that are organized and relatively enduring and that influence his or her interactions with and adaptations to the intrapsychic, physical and social environment (Larsen & Buss, 2005). Personality could be a crucial factor to be considered by adolescents with hearing impairment when they are considering career choice. In the light of that, Michael (2002) posited that individuals need to have better understanding of themselves, if they are to make intelligent career choice. Such factors according to him include their mental abilities, special abilities and interest.

The study examined the relationship among gender, self-efficacy, personality traits and career choice among adolescents with hearing impairment in Oyo State, Nigeria. Adolescents with hearing impairment are often viewed as individuals who cannot be engaged in any career as a result of their personality gender and low self-efficacy. This has consequently posed problem to them when it comes to career choice. Hence, some of them are seen on the street engaging in begging. Several studies have focused on vocational rehabilitation of adolescents with hearing impairment; a little had been done to address the relationship among gender, self-efficacy, personality traits and career

choice of adolescents with hearing impairment. This study therefore, examined the relationship among gender, self-efficacy, personality and career choice among adolescents with hearing impairment in Oyo State, Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study:

- (1) What is the relationship among gender, self-efficacy, personality traits and career choice among adolescents with hearing impairment in Oyo State?
- (2) What is the composite contribution of the independent variables (gender, self-efficacy and personality traits) to the dependent variable (career choice) among adolescents with hearing impairment in Oyo State?
- (3) What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (gender, self-efficacy and personality types) to the dependent variable (career choice) among adolescents with hearing impairment in Oyo State?

METHOD

Correlational type of descriptive survey research design was used to carry out the study. The choice of this design was due to the fact the researchers were interested in looking at the relationship among variables and they did not manipulate any of the variables of interest. The population for the study comprised all the adolescents with hearing impairment in selected schools in Oyo State. A total of 100 male and female adolescents with

hearing impairment were selected from Durbar Grammar School, Oyo and Methodist Grammar School (Deaf Unit), Bodija, Ibadan. The participants were selected with purposive sampling technique.

A thirty-item instrument was used to collect data. It was tagged Adolescents Career Choice Questionnaire (ACCCQ). The instrument was divided into four sections, namely, sections A to D. Section A comprised information on the demographic data of the participants, section B comprised items on career, self-efficacy, section C comprised items on personality traits and section D comprised items on career choice. Experts went through the instrument in order to ensure its validity. Their corrections assisted the researchers in preparing the final draft of the instrument. The reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha and the reliability index of the instrument was 0.82 reliability index. This means that the instrument was reliable. The instrument was administered on the participants with the help of research assistants. The data collected in the study were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis.

RESULTS

This section presents the results of the study with respect to the three research questions raised to guide the conduct of the study.

Research Question One

What is the relationship among gender, self-efficacy, personality traits and career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment?

Table 1: Test of significant correlation among gender, self-efficacy, personality traits and career choice among adolescents with hearing impairment

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4
Career choice	29.5354	10.84624	1.000			
Gender	29.5354	13.96366	.287**	1.000		
Self-efficacy	28.9697	11.05943	.105**	.113	1.000	
Personality	33.2323	13.06122	.087*	.358**	.125	1.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above table revealed that there was a statistical significant relationship between career choice and gender ($r=.287, P<.05$), between career choice and self-efficacy ($r=.105, P<.05$), and between career choice and personality traits ($r=.087, P<.05$),

Research Question Two

What is the composite contribution of independent variables (gender, self-efficacy and personality traits) to the prediction of the dependent variable (career choice)?

Table 2: Summary of regression for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment

R=.289 R Square=.089 Adjusted R Square=.074 Std Error= 10.43452						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2052.684	3	684.228	6.284	.000(a)
	Residual	21122.568	100	108.879		
	Total	23175.253	97			

Table 2 above reveals a significant joint effect of the independent variables (gender, self-efficacy and personality traits) to the prediction of career choice. The multiple regression coefficient indicated that $R=.289$, $R\text{ square}=.089$, and $\text{Adjusted } R\text{ square}=.074$. The three predictors jointly accounted for 74% ($\text{Adjusted } R\text{ square}=.074$) variation in the prediction of career choice. The remaining 26% not accounted for is beyond the scope of this study, or might be as a result of extraneous

variables or sample error. The analysis of the variance reveals a significant joint effect of the predictors on the dependent variables. ($F(3, 97)=6.284, P<.05$).

Research Question Three

What is the relative contribution the independent variables (gender, self-efficacy and personality traits) to the prediction of the dependent variable (career choice)?

Table 3: Summary of regression for the relative contributions of the independent variables to the prediction of career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	β	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	20.657	2.751		7.508	.000
	Gender	.062	.072	.279	3.855	.000
	Self-efficacy	.215	.054	.045	.487	.038
	Personality traits	.025	.061	.212	.913	.000

Discussion

The first research question was meant to test for relationship among the independent variables and the dependent variable. The result showed that the variables correlated positively with career choice. That is, career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment was positively correlated with each of gender, self-efficacy, and personality traits. The reason for this could be the fact that these set of adolescents may become less efficacious in the world of work, few of them that have personal beliefs and sense

of self-efficacy would be successful in their search for appropriate jobs. The finding of the present study was in line with that of Schunk & Pajares (2002), who reported that high academic self-efficacy is shown to be a very strong predictor of academic achievement and positive career outcomes. Increased self-efficacy is accompanied by enhanced intrinsic motivation, the ability to sustain levels of motivation and achievement-oriented behaviours, persistence in the face of difficulties and better problem solving.

Regarding the relationship between career choice and personality traits, personality is a psychological factor that has influence on what humans do. In consonance with this result, in a meta-analysis of 15 studies about the Five Factor Model and performance prediction, Barrick, Mount, and Judge (2001) examined the predictability of each Five Factor Model trait with general levels of performance. For example, extroversion was shown to be related to teamwork, training performance, and managerial as well as police officer performance, neuroticism was found to be predictive of overall work performance across jobs and was related to performance in certain occupations, and conscientiousness was shown to predict performance and choice across all jobs along with teamwork and training (Barrick et al., 2001).

Furthermore, Sarason and Sarason (2005) reported that people with the ability to remain composed and effectively control and act on impulse are better able to cope with job stress. Also, people who can observe and adeptly control their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviours engage in more constructive problem solving (Sarason & Sarason, 2005). Conscientiousness involves the way people competently control, regulate, and direct their own impulses (Johnson, 2006). Workers high in conscientiousness are inclined to be diligent, exacting, disciplined, purposeful, and methodical (Witt, 2002).

Similarly, gender and career choice were positively correlated. The reason for this could be that gender and other demographic variables have been empirically studied to have relationship with so many psychological variables such as, adjustment and anxiety and career choice. This is also in agreement with the finding of Oyetade (2001). He reported

that career is the totality of work one does in one's lifetime and it is person centered. It is a meaningful progression on a person's working life or a course pursued over a period of time.

The findings of the study revealed that there was joint significant contribution of gender, self-efficacy and personality traits to the prediction of career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment. The independent measures jointly accounted for 74% in variation of career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment. The reason for this could be the all encompassing nature of the independent variables. In agreement with this finding, Nesdale and Pinter (2000) found that across diverse cultures career self-efficacy was a significant predictor of an individual's ability to continually find employment. Career self-efficacy has also been found to be one of the best predictors of many beginning career behaviours, such as job searching (Niles & Sowa, 1992). Goffin (2000) reported that both extroversion and dominance were correlated with job performance. Lunenberg (1992) also found that the factors of dominance, imagination, self-efficacy, and warmth were related to above-average performance. Schuerger and Ekeberg (1994) found similar results in their study, in comparing the five global personality traits with performance; they found correlations between performance and extraversion, anxiety, tough mindedness, independence, and self-control.

In the same vein, Issa (2009) found that choosing a career path or course of action essentially boils down to a career decision-making process. The effectiveness of an individual's career decision-making relies heavily on the available information at the decision making point. Information is power and

the more it is at one's disposal, the easier it is to make well-informed decisions.

The third research question stated that what is the relative contribution of the independent variables on the prediction of the dependent variables? It was found that all the independent variables were potent predictors and had significant relative contribution to the prediction of career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment. In consonance with this finding, Chusmir (1990) reported that males with untraditional career choices have been found to have less gender stereotypes than males with traditional career choices. In the same vein, Ferry (2006) found that adolescents' occupational choice is influenced by factors like life self-belief, context, personal aptitudes, and educational attainment; contending that whether college-bound or work-bound, meeting the challenge of this developmental milestone is critical in adolescents' lives. Career development, for most people, is a lifelong process of engaging the work world through choosing among employment opportunities made available to them.

Furthermore, many studies indicated a correlation between gender and a preference for traditionally male dominated professions (Ahrens & O'Brien, 1996; Feather & Said, 1983; O'Brien & Fassinger, 1993; Strange & Rea, 1983). The BSRI classifies individuals, regardless of biological sex, as being feminine if they score highest on feminine trait items, masculine if they score highest on masculine trait items, androgynous if they score equally high on both feminine and masculine items and undifferentiated if they score very low on both feminine and masculine trait items. However, Wuff and Steitz (1997) found that high school girls enrolled in

vocational cosmetology classes, who were assumed to aspire to work in the traditionally female field of cosmetology, were significantly more androgynous than girls enrolled in college preparatory upper-level mathematics classes.

The findings of this study showed that, self-efficacy, gender and personality traits were all potent predictors of career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment. These factors also had significant positive relationship with career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment when joined together; all of these variables had significant relative contributions to the prediction of career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment. It is safe to conclude that masculinity or feminist has influence on which type of job or career choice of individuals with hearing impairment. The level of self-efficacy determines type of career adolescents would like to enter into and personality traits and dispositional factors of adolescents with hearing impairment have influence on their career choice.

Implication of the Study

The findings of the present study have great implications for the practice of teaching and special education in Nigeria. In designing appropriate instructional strategies for students with hearing impairment, there is need to give adequate consideration to their sense of self-efficacy and their dispositional factors. The findings also have implications for both inclusive schools and special schools in their attempt to plan, develop and design intervention strategies for students with hearing impairment. The implications of this study for teachers, special educators, career psychologists and school psychologists cannot be overstressed.

The expertise, competence and knowledge of these stakeholders are very important factors in helping students with hearing impairment with respect to their career choice. This study also holds a great implication for teacher trainees and teachers of students with hearing impairment and educational providers in their understanding of some of their peculiar characteristics that can make or mar career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment.

Conclusion

The findings of this study has provided us with evidence that gender, self-efficacy and personality traits are potent factors in career choice of adolescents with hearing impairment. It is therefore important that the adolescents with hearing impairment should be assisted by parents, teachers and professionals in the field vocational rehabilitation, in order to strengthen these factors in them (adolescents with hearing impairment) when it comes to the issue of career choice.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made, based on the findings of this study:

- Career counselling centres should be established in all schools where trained special educators cum career counselling experts would be readily available for the adolescents' career needs and aspiration.
- Adolescents with hearing impairment should be taken out on career field trip during which they would be able to have a look at the world of work
- Career week or seminars could

also be organized for adolescents with hearing impairment. This would enable them to have encounter with many professionals in different occupations. Programmes like this would increase their self efficacy. Special educators should try to instill confidence and self-regulatory capabilities into adolescents with hearing impairment. This would enable them to develop adequate self-efficacy in their attempt to choose career when they enter into the world of work.

- School psychologists should monitor dispositional and personality traits of adolescents with hearing impairment, so as to ensure person-fit-environment in their career aspiration.
- Parents and teacher's co-operation are necessary for better career choice. This is important not only as the child enters kindergarten or nursery school but also as the child moves to higher schooling throughout the formal educational programme.

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