
CAREER INTERVENTION: A PANACEA TO SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' CAREER CHOICES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The science of career intervention uses theory and research to create career interventions within a variety of professional services and assess their efficacy. This paper examined low SES-related concerns, career development theories, high school career development, career counseling in a group context, and high school career development in general. This paper critically examined the concepts of career intervention and career development. It brought to the fore, discussions on relevant theories as well as some empirical evidences in support of the relevance of career intervention in secondary school students' career development. In order to help students make appropriate, satisfying personal, social, and educational choices and to instill in them the qualities of self-understanding, self-direction, skill in problem solving, and capacity for rational decision making, it is suggested that authorities of Secondary Schools should create Career Intervention Unit for effective guidance and counseling of students in their career choice. Finally, there should be a subject or topic in relevant subject that will deal with career choice and development. This is to equip students with necessary pieces of information regarding career issues.

Keywords: Career Intervention, Career Choice, Secondary school students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Generally, the term "Career" was traditionally associated with paid employment and referred to a single occupation. In today's world, the term career is seen as a continuous process of learning and development. Super (1976) defined career as the course of events which constitute a life, the sequence of occupations and other life roles which combined to express one's commitment to work in his/her total pattern of self-development. Career is the sequence and variety of occupations which one undertakes throughout a lifetime or the progression of an orderly hierarchy within an organization or profession (Du Toit & Van Zyl, 2012). Career can be conceptualized more broadly in terms of individual development in learning and work through life and this include voluntary work and other life experiences (Torrington et al., 2008). Popoola (2004) refers to career as a job or profession for which one undergoes regulated education and training over a period of time and which one intent to follow for the whole of one's life. It is thus a chosen pursuit, life work and success in one's profession. A career is now broadly defined as the unfolding sequence of a person's working experience over a period of time. (Arthur et al., 2012). Dawn (2013) defined career as the individual vocation or trade or how she/he makes living.

Career is the sequence and variety of occupations which one undertakes throughout a lifetime or the progression of an orderly hierarchy within an organization or profession, career advice and the provision of support, usually on a one-to-one- or small-group basis, whereby individuals are able to understand and interpret career information in their personal situation (Environmental, 2012).

Pliffo (2007) viewed career as a series of separate but related activities that provide continuity, order and meaning in a person's life. Career may be perceived as amalgamation of the changes in values, attitudes and motivating individual as he/she grows older. Career is a person's progress or course of action through life in a certain profession or occupation, which may or may not require specialized training, and which results in financial or other forms of payment.

GreenhausChain (2006) described the concept of career as the property of an occupation or organization. Career describes a sequence of related jobs, while a sequence unrelated job does not describe a career. Career according to Osipow (1999) is often defined as both external and internal career. External career is defined as objective categories used by a given society and different organisations to describe the progression of steps of different occupation. Whereas internal career refers to the set of steps and stages that makeup an individual's own concept of career progression within an occupation. Due to two different approaches in organizational context, career is considered as an integrated pace of vertical and lateral movements of an individual in an occupation during the span of his employment. Such integrated approach is basically intended to minimize diversity of hopes and expectations of employees by obtaining a match between individually perceived careers with that of organizational centred careers.

Career development is a critical part of human existence, and it starts at an early age. Secondary school students are at a point in their lives where they need to come to significant decisions regarding their future career. Notwithstanding, numerous students lack the necessary guidance and support to settle on informed choices. Career intervention in secondary schools is a viable answer for this issue.

Career intervention denotes the science and practice of counselling and related activities to promote career planning, occupational exploration, career decision making, vocational choice, job entry, work adjustment, and retirement. The science of career intervention builds theory and research to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of career interventions within a panoply of career services. Career intervention includes furnishing students with information, direction, and support to work with the investigation and identification of profession interests and choices. This intervention can take different approaches, for example, career advising, workshops, mentorship, and job shadowing programmes. These programmes have shown to be powerful in furnishing students with the important knowledge, skills, and abilities to settle on informed conclusions about their future professions.

Career Intervention Defined

OECD and World Bank (2004) defined career intervention as a service and activities intended to assist individuals of any age and at any point through their life, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their career. The activities may take place on an individual or group bases and may be face-to-face or at a distance (including help lives and web-based services) such services may find in schools, universities, and colleges, in training institution, in public employment services, in the workplace, in the voluntary or community sector and in the private sector.

Bashir (2017) Career intervention within junior secondary schools in Nigeria has historically been given low priority and funding when compared to other curriculum areas. Career intervention has

been one of the key programmes that provided in schools, however, despite its usefulness and relevance in preference identification, vocational choices and explanation studies involving career intervention efficacy in schools remains paucity. These services broadly encompass vocational guidance to match people to occupations, career education to help people manage career transitions, life design to assist individuals to imbue work with meaning, occupational placement to secure a training or employment position, and coaching to improve chances of success and advancement (Spokane, 1996).

One of the advantages of career intervention is that it assists students with fostering an internal direction and purpose. Numerous students battle with picking the right career way, especially when they need information about different career choices. Career intervention gives students with information about various vocations, including job prerequisites, compensations, and instructive necessities. This assists students with the identification of their strengths and interests and adjust them to possible career paths. Career intervention provides a platform for students to explore and identify career options that align with their strengths and interests, rather than external pressures. Furthermore, career intervention promotes students' employability skills as well as provides opportunities for students to gain practical experience, networking opportunities, and exposure to the job market. This helps students to develop relevant skills and experience that can be applied to their future careers.

Importance of Career Intervention in Schools

NPC (2004) A popular saying in the field of educational guidance and counselling has it that; "what enzymes are to food; Guidance and Counselling is to Education". This is obviously the case with career intervention in Nigerian schools. For, if one of the aims of the 6-3-3-4 system is to use education as a tool for overall national development through employment needs, then career intervention must become the enzyme that will aid the digestion of educational benefits by individuals to realize such an aim.

Super and Crites (1962) cited in Sambo (2016), assert that career intervention is the process of helping an individual to ascertain, accept, understand, and apply the relevant fact about the occupational world which are ascertained through incidental and planned activities.

Many activities can in fact be subsumed under career intervention in school activities or situation. These may include career informational services, organizing career resource activities, career convention activities, career club activities, career counselling and subject selection particularly for students preparing for final examinations. As Bojuwoye (1986), says; a primary concern of vocational or career intervention is the assistance offered to the individual in making decision, guidance and choice are necessary to affect satisfactory career adjustment.

In some vein, Bojuwoye (1986), was able to confirm his own studies and those of others, the need for vocational or career intervention in Nigerian schools. Some of the reasons put forward for such a need includes:

- i. Unemployment syndrome in the large society.
- ii. Manpower shortage in many relevant fields.
- iii. Dwindling oil revenue resulting in non-assurance of immediate job opportunities opening up.

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- iv. Under-utilization of some occupational fields.
 - v. Vocational mal adjustment of students resulting from inability of many teachers to help students clearly perceive the world of work, unrealistic career aspiration by students and uncalled demands by parent for their wards to tread a specific career course.

Relevance of Career Intervention in Schools

It is the belief of government that the provision of guidance and counselling services in schools will not only boost academic achievement but also enhance maximization of the society use of human capital and make possible the fullest and the happiest development of individual students. This is declared in the national policy on education (2004) thus:

In view of the apparent ignorance of many young people about career prospects and in view of personality, maladjustment among school children, career officers and counsellors will be appointed in post primary institution since qualified personal in this category are scarce, government will continue to make provisions for the training of interested teachers in guidance and the significance of guidance and counselling service and counselling will feature in teacher education programme (p. 13).

Concepts of Career Choice and Development

Determinants of Career Development

Okon (2001) identified the following as determinants of career development:

- i. **Role models:** In a student's life this is a great determinant in career choices. They include a parent, teacher, career counsellor, recent employer, celebrities, and religious leaders. The importance of parental influence upon their children's career choice is consistently important, even across gender and racial lines. Although schools, peers, and the student's community all have an impact on the young adult's career choice, the parent's expectations and perceptions of vocational fit for their children have been found to be the key roles in shaping their career choices (Creamer & Laughin, 2005). They added, this influence has been so strong as to override the influence of teachers, faculty, and career counselors, who likely know more about the career field in question but were not as well-know and/or trusted as the student's parents for this type of decision.

ii. **Peers:** Prospective students are most influenced by those who are living the experience, rather than guidance counselor, admissions officers, or other traditional experts. In a study conducted by Porter (2006), it was shown that most of the students seeking for admission value peer opinions above admission and guidance counselors.

iii. **Financial Consideration:** This is an aspect that students consider include high earning potential, benefits, opportunities for advancement (Beggs et al., 2008). Along with stability during their career, some students are looking ahead to retirement. Students want to make sure they are secure for the rest of their lives, and may look into careers that have benefits to help them in the long run (Wildman & Torres, 2002). The salary and benefits jobs offer play a role in their career choice.

iv. **Aptitude and Academic Ability:** This also is a determinant factor for career choice. Some students lack the ability or the work habits to succeed in some majors. These students may find a better fit in a major that requires fewer difficult classes which affects the career options available to them. Other students have the ability to handle majors with greater workloads and choose the career path that will lead to a job requiring more education, e.g., engineers, doctors, and lawyers. Some high school students join the armed forces after graduating. The armed forces can help students who struggle with structure and motivation (Gilroy, 2007). Other students will go to trade schools instead of attending college. Trade schools can provide training in fields such as mechanics, welding, electricity, or plumbing (Stamps, 1998). The short school year allows students to go to work more quickly after graduating from high school instead of having to stay in school for four or more years. Trade schools also allow students to work in a field of interest while going to school.

v. **Personality:** This is another determine in career choice. Studies have shown that students will choose a major that they think will fit their personality type. The confidence that a student has can determine how far they will go with their education. Students who believe in themselves have more confidence and are more likely to go for what they want instead of settling for something that is comfortable. Personality can also play a role in choosing a major. For example, students who have an investigative personality are more likely to major in science fields. Students with an artistic personality are more likely to major in arts and in interdisciplinary fields. Students who are very social people are more likely to major in social science (Porter & Umbach, 2006).

vi. **Gender:** Whether one is male, or female has to some extent influenced some of the career choices that you have made, as well as some of the choices your parents made for you. For example, gender might have influenced the high school you attended, whether you were encouraged to take risk or not, and more so, the choice of academic major (Hooley, 2012). Often gender related messages are subtle and their influence is difficult to discern. Example would be, if four generation of men in your family been doctors and you are a man considering a less career professional, for instance, catering your beliefs and attitudes about men who work outside the home may produce conflict in your career choice (Sears & Gordon, 2008).

vii. **Previous Experiences:** Having positive experiences and role models working in specific careers may be a determinant of career we consider as options for ourselves. One aspect of Social Cognitive Career Theory addresses the fact that we are likely to consider continuing a particular task if we have had a positive experience doing it. We tend focus on areas in which we have had proven success and achieved positive self-esteem.

viii. **Culture and Environment:** The environment in which a student grows up plays a vital role in their choice of career path. Regional culture, local community expectations, and extended family, may impact career decisions. Multicultural career counseling has emerged as a specialized field to take these influences into consideration when working with students. We can't attribute the predominant characteristics of a culture to any specific person, but an awareness of the values and expectations of the culture may help understand how we make our career choices.

1. **Socio-Economic Status:** One's social and economic background has some bearing into family's resources. According to Bolles (2011), at one point, an individual inherits from his/her parents certain financial and other resources that, to some extent, influence his/her career choices. Your family financial status determines things like where you live and which school you attend. In turn, these can affect your values, occupational expectations, opportunities, and gender role expectations, usually, social status is passed down from generation to generation, you may not benefit by being exposed to many opportunities or on the other hand you may not have the opportunity to recognize all the career option open to you (Hooley, 2012). Even though your socio-economic status may have affected your career decision so far, many careers related decisions lie ahead. High aspiration and motivation to achieve will help you to reach your goals.

Theoretical Frame work

Holland's Personality Fit and Environmental Theory and **Super's Self Concept/Developmental Theory** were the theories upon which this paper was anchored.

Holland's Personality Fit and Environmental Theory

John L. Holland is a vocational counsellor working in education, military and psychiatry institutions. According to Holland, career choice is the reflection of personality in business world. Holland argues that individuals have certain traits belonging to at least one of the six personality types defined and again choose a profession appropriate for one of these types. The individual achieves satisfaction if he chooses one of these professions (Yeşilyaprak, 2008, p.13).

Holland's theory is related with the theoretic viewpoint that has a long history in defining individual differences in personality types. Holland's theory is defined as structural-transactional because it provides an explanation for the connections between various personality traits and related professions and puts important data regarding individuals and professions in order. This

theory is based on four fundamental approaches (Niles et al., 2013; Zunker, 2008; Yeşilyaprak, 2008; Jordan, 1983; Pilavcı, 2007)

- a. Many individuals can be placed into one of the six types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising or conventional.
- b. There are six vocational environments: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising or conventional.
- c. Individuals look for environments giving them a chance to display their own skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values and undertake the problems and roles agreed on.
- d. The behaviour of an individual is determined by the interaction between his personality and environmental features.

Holland argues that career interests are mainly expressions of individuals' personalities. Personality traits are defined according to preferred free time activities, school subjects, hobbies and business choices. Every individual is defined according to one of the six personality types at different degrees. At different degrees, every individual resembles one of the six personality types. These personality types are explained below (Niles et al., 2013; Richards, 2005; Kamaşak & Bulutlar, 2010; Yılmaz et al., 2012).

Holland's Occupational and Environmental Fit Model

The theory has six models. These are

- a. Realistic (motoric)
 - b. Investigative (intellectual)
 - c. Artistic (aesthetics)
 - d. Social (supportive)
 - e. Enterprising (persuasive group)
 - f. Conventional group (confirming)
- a. **Realistic Type:** Realistic personality type prefers activities that he can form objects, tools, machines and animals systematically and regularly and doesn't like educational and therapeutic activities. Realistic individual has mechanic abilities; however, there can be deficiencies in his social skills. Realistic types prefer professions such as car mechanic, cadastral engineer, farmer or electrician. Realistic types are defined as; easy going, modest, free-spoken, materialist, stubborn, openhearted, practical, headstrong, natural, shy, honest and economizer.
 - b. **Investigative Type:** Investigative personality type prefers activities that require observational, symbolic, systematic and creative studies on physical, biological and cultural events to understand and control some events. Investigative individuals don't like repetitive activities and social activities requiring persuasion. While these tendencies provide opportunities for scientific and mathematical competences, they also cause deficiencies in leadership skills. Investigative types prefer professions such as biologist, chemist, physician, anthropologist, geologist or medical technician. Investigative types are generally defined as; analytic, independent, openhearted, cautious, intelligent, pessimist, introvert, complicated, rigorous, critical, systematic, curious and shy.

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- c. **Artistic Type:** Artistic personality type prefers flexible, independent and unplanned activities that require the formation of physical, verbal and human-related materials in order to create art forms and products. Artistic individuals don't like systematic and planned activities. While these tendencies provide opportunities for artistic skills in language, art, music, drama and authorship, they can cause deficiencies in office works or management skills. Artistic types prefer professions such as composer, musician, stage director, writer, interior architecture or actor/actress. Artistic individuals are generally defined as; complicated, dreamer, introspective, untidy, unpractical, intuitive, emotional, quick-tempered, independent, free-spoken, idealist and original.
- d. **Social Type:** Social personality type prefers activities that require directing others for informing, improving, treating, educating, and enlightening. They don't like planned and systematic activities including materials, tools or machines. While these tendencies provide opportunities in terms of human relations such as interpersonal and educational competences, they can cause deficiencies in mechanical and scientific skills. Social types prefer professions such as teacher, religious official, psychological counselling, clinical psychologist, psychiatric nursing or speech therapist. Social individuals are generally defined as; persuasive, idealist, social, collaborative, polite, sympathetic, friendly, patient, fine, generous, responsible, understanding, helpful and warm-hearted.
- e. **Enterprising Type:** Enterprising personality type prefers activities that require directing others for organizational or economic gain. They don't like observational, symbolic and systematic activities. While these tendencies provide opportunities in terms of leadership, interpersonal and persuasion competences, they can cause deficiencies in scientific skills. Enterprising types prefer professions such as marketing, management, business executive, television producer, sports coach or purchase specialist. Enterprising individuals are defined as; greedy, dominant, optimist, adventurer, high-spirited, ambitious, energetic, agreeable, extrovert, quick-tempered, self-confident, social and popular.
- f. **Conventional Type:** Conventional personality type prefers activities that require the systematic, planned and accurate formation of data such as using computer in order to achieve organizational and economic objectives, organizing texts and numeric data according to a certain plan, reproducing materials and recording. Conventional types don't like activities that are not systematic, flexible, independent or discovery-directed. While these tendencies provide opportunities in terms of office works, numeric or operating systems, they can cause deficiencies in artistic competences. Conventional types prefer professions such as accountancy, stenography, financial analyst, brokerage or taxman. Conventional individuals are generally defined as; sensitive, introvert, stubborn, conscientious, obedient, practical, cautious, tidy, economic, talented and literal-minded.

Evaluation of Personality Structures in Reference to Holland's Theory

Holland (1985) argued by determining the six profession fields mentioned above in the first phase that in every field these six personality types are dominant, and individuals will display traits and behaviours related to one of these personality types. It may not be logical to include all individuals in the world in these six personality types. Therefore, after determining the personality type that the individual resembles most, it can also be discovered which other types are suitable for him. For example, an individual can be included in the investigative type but he can also have the traits of social type. As a result of this ordering, "personality type" of the individual is defined and thus categorizing the individual as only one type is prevented. From these six personality groups it is possible to obtain different "personality types". For example, relations between some personality types are more powerful than others. For example, realist-investigative types have more in common than conventional-artistic types. Some individuals differ from others in terms of personality traits. For example, an individual can be included into only one type and have some common features of other types. However, some individuals can resemble six personality types equally.

Super's Self Concept/Developmental Theory

Achebe (1982) this theory is about how one perceives himself in terms of his ability, interests and potentiality. There are negative and positive self-concepts. Super is perhaps the prolific and the widest researcher in the area of vocational development. He proposed that the choice of a career constitutes an implementation of self-concept which permits a person full self-expression. Super indicates that self-concept information requires the person to recognize himself as a distinctive individual yet at the same time to be aware of the similarities between himself and others. Knowledge of oneself is therefore crucial in making an adequate and wise choice. Therefore, Super suggests that career choice is developmental in nature rather than being an event that occurs at a particular time. Super summed up career development process in a series of life stages which he characterized in the following:

- i) Growth from birth to 14 yrs) 0-14 yrs. At this stage, there is no interest or concern with vocation.
- ii) Exploration (15-24 yrs)
- iii) Establishment (25-44 yrs)
- iv) Maintenance (45-64 yrs)
- v) Decline (65 yrs and above)

He divides the growth stages into four e.g

- a. Pre-vocational (4-10 yrs): This stage neither has interest or concern with choice
- b. Fantasy (11-12 yrs): This stage needs are dominant. Role playing is important.
- c. Interest (12-13 yrs): At this stage, there is some thought about vocation based on the individual's likes or dislikes.
- b) Capacity (13-14 yrs): At this stage ability are given more weights and job requirements are considering

Career Intervention and Career Development: Some Empirical Evidences

Some empirical studies that are relevant to this paper were examined in this section of the work. For instance, Hoffman (2007) conducted research on Career Development Interventions with Low Socioeconomic Status Students. Research has shown that students that are of low socioeconomic status (SES) are less likely to engage in deliberate and planful career development. Sheftel A., Lauren L. and McWhirter B. (2014) conducted a study on the Motivational Enhancement Career Intervention for Youth with Disabilities. Youth with disabilities experience significant vocational and social hardships. Self-determination, self-efficacy, and critical consciousness are important components of positive post-secondary outcomes for this population.

The purpose of this study was to design, implement, and evaluate a motivational interviewing-based group career intervention (MEGI) that focused on increasing self-determination, self-efficacy, and critical consciousness among high school students with high incidence disabilities. A mixed methods research design was used to explore the relationship between the intervention and the main study variables. A total of 135 high school students and nine interventionists participated in this study. The results of a latent change score model indicated a positive and significant change in students' vocational skills self-efficacy, self-determination, and vocational outcome expectations. Thematic results of student focus group indicated that students experienced an increase in self-determination, awareness of systemic effects on their educational and vocational success, and uncertainty about the future. Additionally, thematic results of the interventionist focus group indicated an increase in students' self-understanding.

Rossier J., (2013) conducted research on Personality assessment and career interventions. Career interventions for adults frequently include personality assessment. Personality in career counseling contexts should no longer be considered as vocational personality associated with personality interests but, rather, as a set of dispositions that has an impact on several vocational and career-related outcomes, such as work engagement, work satisfaction, job performance, etc. Although the relationship between personality and the vocational and career related outcomes is not direct, it might certainly be mediated by several regulatory processes, such as work adaptability, and moderated by contextual and environmental factors. Personality assessment initiates an individual's self-regulatory process and contributes to the overall effectiveness of career interventions when feedback is individualized and stimulates a deconstruction, reconstruction, and co-construction of the vocational or multiple self-concept. Personality assessments can also promote the reconstruction of a self-concept more aligned with the perception of the environment about the personality of the counselee, strengthening the reality principle allowing more rational and controlled choices.

In addition, some specific personality profiles, such as having high levels of neuroticism and low levels of conscientiousness, can be considered as risk factors frequently leading to career decision-making difficulties. Moreover, people with low conscientiousness benefit less from career interventions, so special attention should be devoted to counselees having that characteristic. Two case studies are provided to illustrate these important aspects of personality assessment in career interventions.

Edwards (2011) examined career guidance activities as factors influencing career choice among form four secondary school students in Kisumu municipality, Kenya. The study was conducted

using descriptive survey design with a population of 332 students. The data for this study was collected using questionnaire and interview schedules. The finding of this study indicated that availability of counselling activities in schools such as organizing career week, functional guidance and counselling officers in schools are the most influential factors affecting career choices among students. While male reported learning experiences and career flexibility as the most influential factors, females however reported availability of advancement opportunity and opportunity to apply skills as the most influential factors. However, no variance was reported for person influencing career choice by gender.

Shumba (2012) also studied career choice and subject selection among South African students using correlation design. A quantitative paradigm guided this study. A survey method in the form of a structured questionnaire was used in this study in order to identify the factors that guide student's career choice and aspirations among South African students. A purposive sample of 133 first- and second-year university students (77 females, 56 males; age range 15 to 30 years) participated in the study the career aspirations questionnaire was used in this study. Career aspiration questionnaire which explored the factors that influence medical student's career choice and aspirations. Data were analyzed using percentages and tables. The preferred career choice; and teachers were significant factors that influence the career choice and aspirations of students. It was recommended that in order for students to make the right career choice, the family (parents) should be encouraged not to force their children into careers. With parental guidance and support, children are able to make the right career choice. Teachers like parents work very closely with learners in schools and they know the abilities of their students in various subjects.

2. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, career intervention is fundamental in assisting and guiding secondary school students in their career development. It furnishes students with the essential information, direction, and support to explore and identify career paths that align with their interests and abilities. This, thusly, promotes the students' capacity to arrive at informed conclusions about their future professions and work on their possibilities making progress in their chosen fields.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is hereby recommende that:

- i. Authorities of Secondary Schools should create Career Intevention Unit for effective guidance and counseling of students in their career choice.
- ii. There should a subject or topic in relevant subject that will deal with career choide and development. This is to equipp students with necessary pieces of inmformation regarding caeer issues.

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