



Intrinsic Motivation as Determinants of Career Preference of Secondary School Students in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The focused of this study was to examine intrinsic motivation as determinants of career preferences of secondary school students' in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Literature for the study was reviewed empirical, conceptual and theoretical in line with the sub-variables of the study. The study utilized one hypothesis. The Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The population of this study comprised of 6,078 respondents' drawn from 84 public secondary school in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria with stratified and simple random sampling technique, a sample size of 609 respondents' were used in the study. The instrument for data collection was an adapted instrument on Intrinsic Motivators as Determinants of Career Preference Questionnaire ((IMDCPQ). Data collected were summarized and analyzed at .05 level of significance using percentages and chi-square and the results of the findings revealed that, intrinsic motivation has a significant influence on career preference of secondary school students. It was recommended among others that teachers/school management should endeavour to motivate students (intrinsically and extrinsically) this may help them to fit into the appropriate career that they are motivated to pursue in life. Parents should be enlightened to appreciate the career choice students make rather forcing their children to delve in to career they may lack the capacity to pursue.

Keywords: *Intrinsic motivation, determinants, career preference, secondary school students, Calabar Education Zone, Cross River State, Nigeria*

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Background to the Study

Knowledge of various kinds of career is indispensable for healthy vocational development. This is because it is a decision that nobody should make a mistake about since what a person pursue as a career affects him in the presents, as well as for the rest of his life. One's career determines the kind of friends one keeps, where one stays, how one spends his spare time, where one works and other related variables. From the economic stand point, it is a well known fact that one's take home pay at the end of the month (or any time period) is determined by the nature of work one does. Appraising this situation, Denga (2001) asserts that choosing an appropriate career preference is one of the most difficult or serious decision which a man or woman makes. In the same vein, Chandler and Connell (2001) opinions that the most complex problem confronting youth today involves choosing a realistic and appropriate occupation, preparing for it, liking it and keeping it. In the olden traditional system in Nigeria, career preference was not often a problem since an individual has to take up an occupation trusted on him or her by their fathers and mothers after a review o the situation surrounding the family. Boys were encouraged to take to their fathers' career while girls took to their mothers' career preference.

In this modern era such practices are not in force, in the present day Nigeria, the practice of dictating career preferences by parent and elders to their young ones does not seem to be functional and effective. This is because the Nigeria economy has become so complex in nature to the extent that making career choice is a great problem and complicated issues among the youths (Grolnick, Deci & Ryan, 2007). The difficulty in career preference decision making among the youths coupled with the confusion and helpless unreleased on the young ones faced with such responsibilities has necessitated the formalized career preference counseling practices as introduced by the educational system (Denga 2001). Career preference counseling is aimed at equipping individual students' with adequate and vital information about the world of work that can lead them into making appropriate career preference decision. For students to make appropriate decision, they must be driven by certain forces called motivation.

Motivation is a driving force that causes an individual to act in a certain manner For example; hunger is a motivation that induces a desire to eat. Motivation has been shown to have roots in physiological, behavioral, cognitive, and social areas. As it is rooted in a basic impulse to optimize well-being, minimize physical pain and maximize pleasure. It is an inner drive to behave or act in a certain manner. These inner conditions such as wishes, desires and goals, activate to move in a particular direction in behavior. Motivation factors, like internal and external factor can propel an individual to act in a certain manner. Theses factor could be external and internal. Intrinsic Motivation occurs when we are motivated to perform a behavior or engage in an activity based on our internal or innate drive. Sheldon and Kasser (2003) correctly defined motivation as the inner drive, which prompts people to act in a certain way. It involves a number of psychological factors that starts and maintain activity towards the achievement of personal goals. "Motivation is driving force but it should be noted that the same motivation can result in different personality disposition (personality factors) in different people. A specific occupation may demand of its workers personality traits, which may be different from those demanded by another occupation (Ojirah, 2004).

Objective of the Study

The focused of this study was to examine intrinsic motivation as determinants of career preferences of secondary school students' in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

Statement of the Problem

Preparing for a career is one of the developmental tasks of secondary school students' and, because of its important role in the achievement of adult independence. Secondary school students' future satisfaction and security largely depends on his career role. In spite of the importance of career preference for the growing generation, our secondary school students' are still beset with a myriad of vocational problems which make their life career pursuit thwarted. Experience and personal interaction with students' shows that majority of them still have very limited knowledge and vague ideas about different kinds of career preference available in the society, their demands and general characteristics. Worse still, most of our secondary school students' do not have enough knowledge about themselves in relation to different career aspiration as most of them desire to pursue lucrative career without minding whether their personality will match such preference.

Disheartening is that majority of them are influence by the career their parents choose for them to pursue. The government has done tremendously to encourage students in most secondary school on the choice of their career preference by establishment of counsellors in most schools, seminars and conferences on how to promote their individual career. However, this effort has not been really productive as there still lingers poor career preference among secondary school students. It is against this background and the fact that no work known to the researcher has undertaken a systematic study of the key variables. It is in line with filling this information gap that the researcher isolated the variables in this study for close study. This study therefore is aim at finding what is the influence of motivational factors and carrier preference of secondary school student in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River state of Nigeria? Could it be that the personality trait motivational facto influence their career preference?

Statement of Hypothesis

Ho: Intrinsic motivation does not significantly influence career preference of secondary school students.

Literature Review

Intrinsic Motivation as Determinants of Career preference of Secondary School Students'

Intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because the task itself is interesting or enjoyable (Ryan and Deci 2000). To further that explanation, intrinsic motivation is based on the need for competence and self-determination. Although intrinsic motivation is not a primary drive, it energizes behavior and is vital to human function (Deci & Ryan 2005). In past research, intrinsic motivation has been tested using the "free choice" measure where participants in the study are asked to perform a task, then later given "free choice time." Deci (2000) conducted a study with 123 respondents drawn from a population of 567 respondents.

23 items questionnaire was constructed and used for data gathering. The statistical analysis utilized in the study was chi-square analysis. The study was a descriptive survey type and the finding revealed that motivation strongly influence career preference in secondary school. In Deci's study, he found that those with only intrinsic motivation worked on the task longer in their "free choice" time than those that had also been given extrinsic motivation. In the schooling environment, a intrinsically motivated person will develop interest and value for his/her career choice. That is, an intrinsically motivated job would be described as a job that is enjoyed for the job itself (Deci & Ryan 2000).

One important study relating to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is the study effects of externally mediated rewards on intrinsic motivation by Deci (2000) who is a pioneer in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This study was conducted with two laboratory experiments and one field experiment to determine the effects of external rewards on intrinsic motivation. The hypothesis of this experiment was that if someone was engaged in an activity for intrinsic reasons and was then offered external rewards such as money, then the intrinsic motivation would decrease. In the study, students were asked to use puzzle pieces to produce different configurations. During each session, the experimenter would leave the room for eight minutes where the subjects could work on whatever they chose. The subject's intrinsic motivation was determined by how much of this "free time" was used to work on the puzzle. The results of this first experiment concluded that an extrinsic reward of pay increased motivation while it was available. Once it was taken away, intrinsic motivation decreased dramatically. The control group's intrinsic motivation increased throughout the experiment.

The second study mimicked the first, but was used in the real setting of a biweekly college newspaper. Subjects were asked to make newspaper headlines. The experimental group was given money for each headline but only for three weeks. The experimental group began underperforming when compared with the control group as soon as they began to be paid. In this experiment, the researchers found that when money is introduced as a motivator subjects lose intrinsic motivation. Money causes subjects to reevaluate the activity. It is used to "buy off" a subject's intrinsic motivation for an activity. It is seen as a controlling factor. Furthermore, once extrinsic factors are removed, instead of returning to being intrinsically motivated, the same behavior that was exhibited when extrinsic factors were present persisted. The control group that only had the option of being intrinsically motivated used more "free choice" time to work on the puzzle. The control group also wrote more headlines than those that were offered extrinsic factors as a motivator. Deci (2000) found that the lowering of "free choice" time spent on the puzzle and writing fewer headlines than the control group may have been because offering money in return for performance lowered their intrinsic motivation.

Relating to job opportunities, intrinsic motivation can be applied to determine how much a person enjoys doing their job. Hackman and Oldham (2000) came up with five key dimensions that must be present in order to make a job enriching and fulfilling. They are autonomy, skill variety, task identity, task significance, and feedback about results. These five core job dimensions can lead to three psychological states. These states are the

individual must feel responsibility for the outcomes of the job, the job must be meaningful and matter to others, and the individual must have feedback. Two of these, meaningfulness and autonomy are relevant to the current research. Hackman and Oldham (2000) have grouped skill variety, task identity, and task significance as leading to the critical psychological state of experienced meaningfulness of the job. This is defined as the degree that an employee sees the job as being meaningful, valuable, and worthwhile (Hackman & Oldham 2005). These factors are very important to how employees view their job. It also has a direct impact on the intrinsic motivation of the individual. Because of this link to intrinsic motivation, the current study uses meaningfulness of the job as the first factor used to distinguish a job as intrinsically motivated. Autonomy is described as the degree to which a person feels they have freedom and can use their discretion to schedule the work and decide how to complete it (Hackman & Oldham 2000). Deci and Ryan (2000) have also developed a theory called Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) which specifies that an individual will not enhance intrinsic motivation unless it is accompanied by a sense of autonomy. With autonomy being such a pivotal factor in whether an individual is intrinsically motivated from both the job characteristics standpoint and Deci and Ryan's theory of CET, the current study felt that it should be included in the research. Therefore, this factor is the second aspect used to describe a job as intrinsically motivated. O'Reilly and Caldwell conducted another study in 1980. It looked at the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic factors on satisfaction and commitment. This study was conducted with 171 graduates of an MBA program who answered a questionnaire prior to graduation. After graduation, these subjects went to work at whatever job they had accepted. Six months later 101 subjects returned to answer a questionnaire on their satisfaction and commitment to their current jobs. The findings of this study concluded that intrinsic factors tend to lead to higher attitudinal commitment. The study also found that extrinsic justifications for behavior and as a factor in job choice may have decreased commitment and job satisfaction.

Intrinsic motivation stems from a direct relationship between the doer and the task and it is usually self-applied. These are the self-generated factors which influence people to behave in a particular way or to move in a particular direction. These include, responsibility, freedom to act, scope to use and develop skills and abilities, interesting and challenging work and opportunities for advancement. Feelings of achievement, accomplishment and competence derived from performing one's occupation are examples of intrinsic motivators. Randolph, (2008) indicates that people can be motivated through such methods as pay, promotion, praise etc, which are termed extrinsic motivation and stems from the work environment external to the task and is usually applied by others or someone other than the person being motivated. This is what is done to or for people in order to motivate them.

Research Methodology

The main purpose of this study was to find out intrinsic motivation as determinants of career preference of secondary school students' in Calabar Education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. This section discussed the methodology applied under the following sub-headings: The research design to be adopted for this study was Ex-post facto research design. This design was adopted because there was no attempt to manipulate the variables since an Ex-post-facto design presumes that the data are collected after the events of interest have

occurred. The population of the study comprised 6,078 senior secondary two (SS2) students in the 84 secondary schools in Calabar educational zone of Cross River State. Stratified and simple random sampling was used to select subjects to participate in the study. The first stage involves the stratification of the target population Calabar education zone in to local government areas.

The second stage involved the random selection of 30% of schools from the local government areas. This gives a total of 30 schools. The third stage involves the use of simple random sampling to select the number of students that was used in the study. In doing this 10% was drawn which gave a total of 609 respondents. The sample consists of 609 secondary school secondary school students' which comprised of 10% of the estimated population from the seven local government areas in Calabar education zone of Cross River State. The instrument titled intrinsic motivators as determinants of Career Preference Questionnaire (IMDCPQ) was used as the instrument for data collection. The hypothesis of this study was restated here, the variables inherent in the hypothesis were identified and the appropriate statistical analysis using independent chi-square as presented.

Results and Discussion

This section presents a general description of the research variables and the results of the data analyses in line with the one null hypothesis that was tested in the study. The interpretations and discussions of findings are also presented.

Hypothesis one

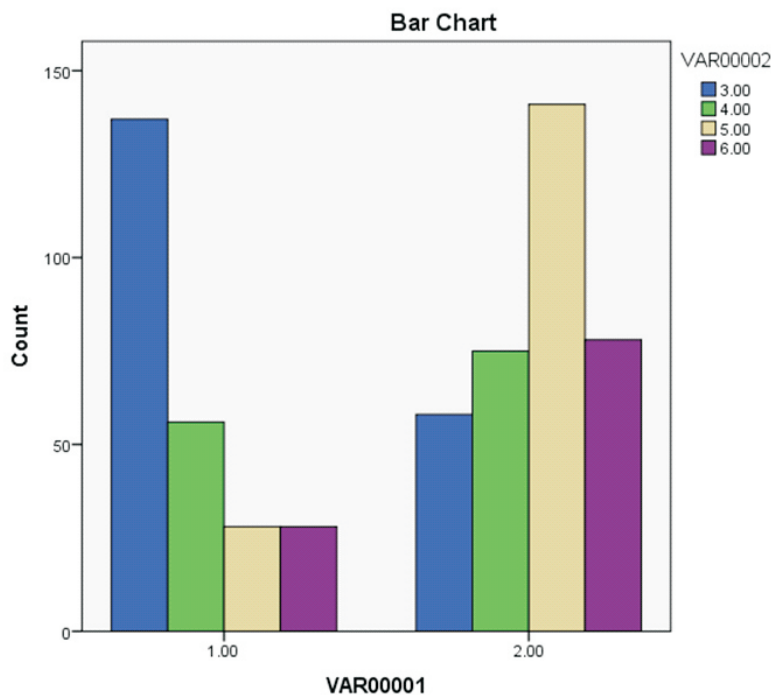
Intrinsic motivation does not significantly influence career preference of secondary school students. This hypothesis utilized is intrinsic motivation with the following categories; interest and value; the dependent variable is career preference categorized in terms of investigative, realistic, social/conventional and artistic/enterprising. To test this hypothesis, intrinsic was analysed with career preference. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Chi-square analysis of intrinsic motivation as determinants of career preference of secondary school students

Intrinsic motivation	Career preference				N	X ² -Cal
	Investigative	Realistic	Social / Conventional	Artistic/ Enterprising		
Interest	137 (80.8)	56 (54.3)	28 (70.0)	28 (43.9)	249 (29.0)	19.767*
Values	58 (114.2)	75 (76.7)	141 (99.0)	78 (62.1)	352 (352.0)	
Total	196 (196.0)	131 (131.0)	169 (169.0)	106 (106.0)	601 (601.0)	

*P<.05; df 3; Critical X² = 7.81

The result in Table 1 shows that the χ^2 analysis revealed that the calculated value of 119.767 with 3 degrees of freedom the table value was found to be 7.81. Thus the null hypothesis of intrinsic motivation does not significantly influence career preference of secondary school students is rejected ($P < .05$; $df = 3$; Critical $\chi^2 = 7.81$). The implication of this result is that there is a significant influence of intrinsic motivation does not significantly influence career preference of secondary school students.



Discussion of Findings

In this section the discussion of the findings emanating from hypotheses tested are presented. The discussion is done as presented below. Intrinsic motivation as determinants of career preference of secondary school students'

The findings revealed that intrinsic motivation significantly influence career preference of secondary school students. It has been a common observation that motivating students may lead to interest in a particular as such he/she may derive satisfaction from performing it. If a student is motivated from within desire will naturally increase. Personal interaction with most students shows that knowing how to effectively use intrinsic motivation will help make the students more effective and increase their career satisfaction at the same time. Intrinsic motivation comes from inside a person: it's a sense of achievement, responsibility, career satisfaction. All the things that make a student feel that what they are doing makes a big difference in their lives and in the career pursuit. If students feel that what they are doing is insignificant, they will feel insignificant and will develop negative career aspiration. The present finding conforms with that of O'Reilly and Caldwell whose findings revealed that intrinsic factors tend to lead to higher attitudinal commitment. It also found that extrinsic justifications for behavior and as a factor in job choice may have decreased commitment and

job satisfaction. In consonance with the present study Randolph (2008) indicates that people can be motivated through such methods as pay, promotion, praise etc, which are termed extrinsic motivation and stems from the work environment external to the task and is usually applied by others or someone other than the person being motivated.

Summary of the Study

The study aimed at examining intrinsic motivation as determinants of career preferences of secondary school students' in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Intrinsic motivation was broken into interest and value with four major career preference constitute the scope of this study; student's who are opting for occupation preference in Humanities, Science/Mathematics, Business studies/Administration and enterprise. The study utilized one hypothesis. From the reviewed literature which was presented in line with the variables inherent in the study, it was evident that careers itself requires some kind of motivation as intrinsic motivation significantly influence career preference of secondary school students (Witt 2002).

Conclusion

This research work conceptualized the importance of intrinsic motivation as a strong determinant for preference of secondary school students. However, the findings presented in this study may help students to excel in their careers, and before choosing their career, they will accurately assess their best match in terms of innate desire for the career they intent to pursue in life. Students' career success can be best attained if the right course suited to their ability and intellect serves as their guide in choosing the course they are to take in future. Experiencing the career suited to students by integrating career plan with the curriculum help students make good decisions in what course to take in college. It is also important to help students understand the important factors they have to consider in choosing a course like the economical importance of the course they would want to take at present and in the future. Collaborative effort of the school administrations, guidance counselor and parents should also be made to come up with better career plan for their children and allow them to choose career that they best suit with instead of forcing they to pursue lucrative career that may not be of their best match.

Recommendations

- On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered:
1. Teachers/school management should endeavour to motivate students intrinsically; this may help them to fit into the appropriate career that they are motivated to pursue in life.
 2. Parents should be enlightened to appreciate the career choice students make rather forcing their children to delve in to career they may lack the capacity to pursue

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