

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DETERMINANTS OF CAREER CHOICE AMONG STUDENTS IN
PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE ASIKUMA-ODOBEN-
BRAKWA DISTRICT

OLIVIA AGYIRWAH AFFUL

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BRAKWA DISTRICT

BY

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Master of Philosophy degree in Guidance and Counselling

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature.....Date.....

Name:

Supervisor's Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature.....Date.....

Name:.....

Co-Supervisor's Signature.....Date.....

Name:.....

ABSTRACT

The study examined the factors responsible for career choice among students of public senior high schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District. The descriptive design was employed for the study. The study used the purposive sampling technique to include 357 senior high students for the study. Closed-ended questionnaire with reliability co-efficient of 0.71 was used to collect data. Frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were used for the data analysis. Findings from this study showed that environmental factors influenced career choice among senior high school students. Students reported that opportunities and self-knowledge influenced their career choice. It was found that environmental factors influenced choice of careers. Respondents mentioned that money had been an issue in choosing a career, their parents had great influence in their career choice and moving with students in tertiary institutions did affect their choice of career. It was concluded that counsellors at various senior high schools should sensitize students regarding solutions to challenges they faced when making career choices. It is recommended that school guidance counsellors need to develop effective and comprehensive guidance and counselling programme for schools. This would help students to know about the various career options available in order to and utilize them.

KEY WORDS

Determinants

Career

Choice

Public

School

High

District

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DEDICATION

To my dear husband and my children Yaw and Stella Arhin-Hayford for their
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Choosing a career path is a huge part of a young man or woman's life. The career path students choose affects how they will live the rest of their life. A lot of students go through and in some instances after tertiary education without knowing what career path they want. When a student decides on a career path, this decision is mostly influenced by some factors. Some of these factors that affect this decision include family, academic ability and aptitude passion, peer influence, salary, childhood fantasies, and past experiences (Hewitt, 2009). This study attempts to identify what factors play a role in career choice. Identifying these factors would give parents, educators and industries ideas as to where students place most of their trust in the career selection process. It would also allow students to examine processes they use for career selection. Today, jobs are more diverse and many jobs have shifted from one area to another. Over time, the culture and the economy have changed. This development has made it imperative for students to have the orientation to make the right career decisions.

Background to the Study

Education is universally recognized as the answer to socio- economic problems of the world. Nations and individuals look up to education to provide a cure for poverty, ignorance, drought, excessive rainfall, mental deficiency, joblessness, bad government, poor communication system, hunger and inadequate shelter among other things. Every nation of the world aspires toward

quality of life and social status. Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future plans. This decision will impart them throughout their lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what the student wants to do with their life- long work (Basavage, 1996). Choosing an appropriate career is therefore of great importance to the individual (National Career Development Association, 2003). Career selection is one of many important choice students will make that determines future plans (National Career Development Association, 2003). The decision is so significant because it has the capacity of affecting the entire life of the individual. If the choice is properly made, it will guarantee some level of career success or satisfaction (National Career Development Association, 2003). Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future plans. This decision will impact them throughout their lives.

However, if the opposite becomes the case, there will be no career satisfaction, and this will ultimately affect the entire life of the individual in a negative way (Basavage, 1996). Such situations abound today among adults and young adults who do not find fulfilment in what they are doing at the moment. The implication is that a student, who understands himself or herself in relation to what he/she will want to do in life, will make a career choice that revolves around his/her personality (Basavage, 1996).

Career choice has become a complex science with the advent of information technology, the emergence of post industrial revolution and job competition (Wattles, 2009). It was a common practice in the old days to find feudalism converting it into a family affair where the son of a blacksmith was destined to become a blacksmith and a feudal was born a leader.

Industrialization and post industrialization has made it possible for a common person to be richer as long as she or he has due skills and knowledge (Wattles, 2009). Today, one does not only make due career planning but also exhaustive career research before making a career choice so as to adjust with the evolving socio-economic conditions. Most senior high students do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice (Wattles, 2009).

According to Kerka (2000), career choice is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interests, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and financial. Bandura, Babaranelli, and Caprara (2001) state that each individual undertaking the process is influenced by several factors including the context in which they live in, their personal aptitudes, social contacts and educational attainment. A study conducted by Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington and Chartrand (2001) found that role model supportiveness, and quality of relationship contributed to the career choice of students.

A study on career choice in Ethiopia by Stebleton (2007) indicated that the students had an external locus of control and believes that there are numerous extrinsic factors which influence their career choices. These extrinsic factors include; political and economic considerations, previous work experience and the influence of key individuals in a person's life. Pummel, Harwood and Lavalley (2008) report that external influences that help to shape an individual's career choice are also influenced by others through social support from peers. In a study by Natalie (2006), young adults through

interaction with the context of family, school and community learn about and explore careers which ultimately lead to their career choice. Parental support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to influence career choice. Children may choose what their parents desire simply to please them (Taylor, Harris & Taylor, 2004).

According to Myburgh (2005), parental education and family income are important predictors of learning experiences and by implication career choice of children. Oyamo (2008) opined that there is an association between parents education, career choices of students and the home environment. The influence of parents in career choices of children could be an important determinant of career choice, more so when the educational levels of the parents come into play, studies have shown that educated parent's expectation and perceptions of vocations that are fit for their children play a key role in shaping children's occupational choices (Natalie, 2006). Savickas (2005) found this influence to be a strong factor that overrides the influence of teachers, faculty and counsellors. Hewitt (2010) found that the higher the degree the parents have obtained the greater the support children will have from parents in pursuing their career choices. Davis, (2005) asserted that even though adolescents actively begin demonstrating their independence from parents in their high school years, they are still very much dependent on their parents for their occupational or career choices and growth. Moreover, this finding is further supported by Natalie (2006) who found that the level of parental formal education is one of the factors that determined students' career path. Bloomfield, Libby and Nelson, (2002) found that children whose parents and grandparents, uncles and siblings

were physicians and lawyers will invariably have different career interest from children raised in a family noted over the year as peasant farmers in rural areas.

Fred (1995) states that factors influencing career choice could be intrinsic, extrinsic or both. Financial motivation, desire and other personal interest do influence career choice (Abdullahi & Bukar, 2000). On the other hand, parents, peer group, relatives, environment and government policies have impact on individual career choices (Myburgh, 2005). From the research conducted by Abdullahi & Bukar (2000) and Myburgh (2005), factors that influence career choice are the extrinsic and intrinsic which relate to what Fred (1995) stated.

Denga (2004) opined that career choice of students at school rests on teachers and counsellors while Balogun (2006) believes that accurate vocational information, seminar, career talks and workshops may promote students' career choices. Studies have shown that in the process of choosing a career, individuals do consider their physical and psychological self, as they see them and how others view them, and that it is the occupation or career that agrees with what they think of themselves that they eventually take to, and that this is the way of attaining job satisfaction (Khami, Murtomaa & Jafarian, 2008; Alike 2011).

Alike (2016) also reveals that students' self-concept determines their career choice. This finding is in line with the assertion of Alutu (2007) who observed that the individual's self-concept, which is the mental picture of the student in relation to his environment do influence his choice of career. The finding is also in agreement with that of Ekennia (2011) who stated that an individual chooses a career that is consistent with his self-concept. It is pertinent to note that, this finding is at variance with the observation of Denga (2004)

who found that career choice of students at school depends on the influence of teachers and counselors. According to Oyamo and Amoth (2008), studies in Kenya show that rural students tend to seek help from parents more than urban students and that parents more than teachers play a major role in the career choice of students. Generally, the choice of a career is influenced by parents, friends, and counselors however variations occur from one population to the other.

According to the study carried out by Perrone (2011) on the opportunity of college students having a role model influence on the career influences the career choices one take, it was clearly discovered that role model supportiveness, and quality of relationship have an influence on the career choice a student pursues. In same study it was found that a great percentage of students selected same gender role models. There is also research on the role of spirituality and religion in growth of career, even though inadequate in possibility has suggested that such factors relate positively to desirable career development outcomes such as career decisions (Stebbleton, 2007). For a majority of people with spiritual or religious commitment faith plays a critical role in the career decision making process (Duffy & Dick, 2009).

The issue of career choice has implication for National Development, in that for every society, the quality of workers as well as their level of job satisfaction contributes directly or indirectly to economic stability and advancement of the nation. When workers experience little or no job satisfaction as a result of wrong career choice, frustration may set in, which may lead to a decline in productivity. Making a right career choice, no doubt may ensure job satisfaction and productivity. Career choice is one of the critical and vital

decisions most students in secondary schools make (Oyamo & Amoth, 2008). Career decisions taken at this stage often determines the future of the student (Denga, 2004). Parent educational level no doubt could be of immense benefit in helping parent provide the necessary assistant in making relevant career choices. The lack of education maybe a hindrance, in that without adequate educational information parent maybe limited in the amount of educational or career guidance given to the children which may hinder their chances of making realistic career choices (Oyamo & Amoth, 2008).

In choosing a career, it is important to know how students develop their preferences for one occupation or the other, and how these preferences are implemented. Parents, teachers, and counselors ought to be familiar with major factors which influence vocational or career development of individuals. This is necessary because career theorists believe that individuals have certain abilities, interests, personality traits and other characteristics that inform one's career choice (Bratcher, Barbarnelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 2001). It is thus believed by professionals that, if these characteristics are known together with their potential values, and where on the job market these values can be put into appropriate uses, the individual is more likely to become a happier person, a more effective worker and a more useful citizen. In other words, knowing oneself and knowing the career opportunities existing in one's environment can help an individual make a good vocational adjustment. This then attests to the fact that self-knowledge and occupational knowledge are very important means of ensuring a relatively accurate and adequate occupational decision toward career choice (Makinde & Kayode, 1987). Career choice has become a complex science with the advent of information technology, the emergence of post

industrial revolution and job competition. Lack of necessary information about technical fields or the world of work affect career decision making. Knowledge in career would help the student to be focused and clear about his or her career choice (Mohammed, Salleh, & Mustapha, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Today, many youth go into unsuitable careers due to ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, advice from friends, parents and teachers or as a result of the prestige attached to certain jobs without adequate vocational guidance and career counselling (Lawer, 2007). Lawer (2007) researched on assessing the effectiveness of career guidance in senior secondary schools in Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly. He concluded that majority of students were not aware of major occupation groups in Ghana. This clearly shows that majority of them were not concerned about their future career. This situation compels one to ask whether they are given the needed guidance on available careers relating to the programmes they are pursuing. Are they aware of what goes into career choice? And what specific factors influence their choice and how do those factors influence them?

Career choice is important but a very difficult process which one must undergo at some time in life. O'Brien (1996) asserted that everyone should have an honest occupation since work is one of our greatest blessings. It involves an inter play of many determinants which are intricately intertwined. It is not a straightforward task and involves a difficult process of decision making. Nonetheless, most undergraduates are likely to make wrong career decisions due to lack of information, ignorance, peer pressure, wrong modeling or as a result of prestige attached to certain careers without adequate career guidance

and career counselling (Salami, 1999; Ndambuki & Mutie, 1999). This issue is not confined to Ghana only but is universal in nature. According to Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli (2001) an individual's environment, talents, skills, and academic achievement exert an influence on career choice. In case of a wrong choice, it may lead to resultant failure and disappointment. Research shows homes, schools and the social setup influence an individual's career choice. Being interested in a particular profession is very important in decision making. If a student is forced into a career, he may exhibit low self-esteem and poor performance. Suutari (2003) reports that several studies have indicated a positive relationship between interests and career choice. It has also been investigated that individuals with better academic performance are able to make better judgments about themselves (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). Omotosho and Nyarko-Sampson (2012) demonstrated in their study that the career aspirations of students were poorly matched with the trends in the labour market. Omotosho (2014) asserts that, in choosing our careers in a hit or miss fashion, individuals miss more than hit. While a few students find career decision-making less cumbersome, many others struggle with career decision-making. Research reports indicate that career choice is greatly influenced by students' surroundings, society and family (Gim, 1992; Leong 1995)

Educational level of parents, their profession and income are also identified as very important determinant (Hearn 1984, 1988). Every student at a certain juncture in their life has to make a choice regarding their career. It is incumbent that students make the correct choice asserts Oladele (as cited in Nyarko-Sampson 2013).

The above studies from some parts of Ghana have confirmed that career choice or decision-making difficulty is a reality in Ghana. However, there appears to be dearth of studies related to Career choice in Asikuma Odoben Brakwa district which is in the Central Region of Ghana. Therefore, it was the researcher's desire to assess the determinants of senior high school student's career choice in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to find the factors responsible for career choice among public senior high schools. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the environmental factors that influenced career choice among public senior high schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District.
2. determine whether opportunities influenced career choice among public senior high schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District.
3. determine whether Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District public senior high school students' self-knowledge influence their career choice.
4. determine the challenges that senior high school students face in making career choice.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the environmental factors that influenced career choices among public senior high school students in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District?

2. What influence does opportunity have in career choosing among public senior high school students in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District?
3. How does student's self-knowledge influence career choice among public senior high schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District?
4. What are the challenges that senior high school students face in making career choice?

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference between influence of environment on career choice on the basis of gender.

H₁₂: There is a statistically significant difference between influence of environment on career choice on the basis of gender.

Significance of the Study

This research study would be significant in creating awareness of the factors that influence senior high school student's career choice in public senior high schools' student in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District. It would help in appreciating the peculiar challenges public senior high schools' student face in making a career choice and would also help school and career counselors provide specific counseling to students in senior high schools' deciding on a career when pursuing further studies. It would also help industry to examine where, why and when it could be beneficial for them to invest resources to train and educate students. For students, making the right choice would result in productivity and personal satisfaction on the job.

Delimitations

The study could have been carried out across the nation; however, this present study was confined to only public senior high school students in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District. Again, students had a lot of decisions to make in life, but this the study focused on factors which affected the career choice among public senior high schools.

Limitations

The research design that was used was survey which had demand characteristics problem. Respondents tried to give responses in ways that reflected their idea of what responses the researcher wanted from them.

Definitions of Term

For clarity the terms used in the study are defined as follows:

Determinants: Factors which decisively affect the nature or outcome of something.

Career Choice: The broad opportunities that exist for life long vocations. These vocations are set out in a framework of strategies moving toward personal goals. Fields of vocational, academic, and sociological endeavors are explored for the purpose of satisfying personal, economic, and intellectual goals.

Environment: The complex physical factors that make up our surroundings and in turn act upon us. For the purposes of this study they would include the forces of family, political, social, and economic issues that both typical and non-typical students may deal with on a day-to-day basis.

Opportunity: Those choices in one's life which are exposed either in a subtle or obvious manner. These choices or paths give the individual a selection

between two or more outcomes. The outcomes of one's choosing may or may not exceed one's present abilities.

Personality: A characteristic way of thinking, feeling and behaving (Britannica, 2002). Personality is the collection of impressions in the appearance of the student's body and the impressions believed to have been made on others, good or bad. One's personality may embrace attitudes and opinions that affect the way we deal with interactions of people and, in particular to this study, the situations of choosing a career.

Organisation of the Study

The study was organized into five chapters, with each chapter dealing with an aspect of the study. The first chapter dealt with the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, delimitation, limitation and significance of the study. Related literature was reviewed in the second chapter while the third chapter was devoted to methods of data collection, sample and sampling procedure and descriptions of research instrument used for data gathering and the method of data analysis. In the fourth chapter, the discussion of the results was obtained. Chapter Five was devoted to summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study focused on the determinants of career choice among students of public senior high schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa district. The first chapter dealt with the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and the research questions. Also, it highlighted the significance of the study and the definitions of terms. This helped to put the study in perspective. This chapter reviews literature related to the topic. The objective is to explore what major authors and writers have written on the topic. The review will be done under the following subheadings;

1. Theoretical Review
2. Conceptual Review
3. Empirical Review

Theoretical Review

In choosing a career, it is important to know how students develop their preferences for one occupation or the other, and how these preferences are implemented. Parents, teachers and counsellors ought to be familiar with major factors which influence vocational or career development of individuals. This is necessary because career theorists believe that individuals have certain abilities, interest, personality traits and other characteristics that inform ones career choice. It is thus believed by career professionals that if these characteristics are known together with their potential values, and where on the job market these values can be put into appropriate uses, the individual is more

likely to become a happier person, a more effective worker and a useful citizen. In other words, knowing oneself and knowing the career opportunities existing in one's environment can help an individual make a good vocational adjustment. This then attests to that self-knowledge and occupational knowledge are very important means of ensuring a relatively accurate and adequate occupational decision toward career (Mubiana, 2010).

Super's Theory

Super (1969) suggested that career choice and development is essentially a process of developing and implementing a person's self-concept. According to Super, self-concept is a product of complex interactions among a number of factors, including physical and mental growth, personal experiences, and environmental characteristics and stimulation. Super's theory has called for a stronger emphasis on the effects of social context and the reciprocal influence between the person and the environment. A relatively stable self-concept should emerge in late adolescence to serve as a guide to career choice and adjustment. However, self-concept is not a static entity and it would continue to evolve as the person encounters new experiences and progresses through the developmental stages. Life and work satisfaction are continual processes of implementing the evolving self-concept through work and other life roles. Super (1990) proposed a life stage developmental framework with the following stages: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance (or management), and disengagement. In each stage one has to successfully manage the vocational developmental tasks that are socially expected of persons in the given chronological age range. For example, in the stage of exploration (ages around 15 to 24), an adolescent has to cope with the vocational developmental tasks of

crystallization (a cognitive process involving an understanding of one's interests, skills, and values, and to pursue career goals consistent with that understanding), specification (making tentative and specific career choices), and implementation (taking steps to actualize career choices through engaging in training and job positions). Super (1990) postulated that a mini-cycle consisting of the same stages from growth to disengagement would likely take place within each of the stages, particularly when a person makes transition from one stage to the next. In addition, individuals would go through a mini-cycle of the stages whenever they have to make expected and unexpected career transitions such as loss of employment or due to personal or socioeconomic circumstances. Super (1990), has generated a life span vocational choice theory that has six life and career development stages. These six stages are:

- a. The crystallization stage, ages 14-18
- b. Specification stage, ages 18-21 3.
- c. Implementation stage, ages 21-24
- d. The stabilization stage, ages 24-35
- e. Consolidation, age 35
- f. Readiness for retirement, age 55

In addition to career maturity, there are other aspects of Super's theory that need to be examined across cultures. For example, self-concept is a prominent feature of Super's theory, and the implementation of one's interests, values, and skills in a work role is instrumental to vocational development and satisfaction. However, there are cultural variations in the importance of self in decision-making, and in some cultures important life decisions such as career choices are also subjected to considerations that are familial and collective in

nature. In order to maximize self-fulfilment and social approval, one has to negotiate with the environment to locate the most acceptable solutions and option. Consequently, career choice and development are not a linear process of self-concept implementation, but a process of negotiations and compromises in which both the self and one's environment have to be consulted. The concept of life role can also be useful in understanding the cultural dynamics involved in the career choice process. Values such as filial piety, family harmony, and loyalty might influence how the personal self is constructed, and the salience and importance of different life and work roles as well as their dynamic interactions.

The contextual emphasis of Super's (1990) theory is most clearly depicted through his postulation of life roles and life space. Life at any moment is an aggregate of roles that one is assuming, such as child, student, leisurite, citizen, worker, parent, and homemaker. The salience of different life roles changes as one progresses through life stages, yet at each single moment, two or three roles might take a more central place, while other roles remain on the peripheral. Life space is the constellation of different life roles that one is playing at a given time in different contexts or cultural "theatres", including home, community, school, and workplace. Role conflicts, role interference, and role confusions would likely happen when individuals are constrained in their ability to cope with the demands associated with their multiple roles. Many aspects of Super's theory are attractive to international career guidance professionals and researchers, including concepts such as vocational developmental tasks, developmental stages, career maturity and life roles. It offers a comprehensive framework to describe and explain the process of vocational development that could guide career interventions and research. The

recent anchoring of the theory on developmental contextualism takes into consideration the reciprocal influence between the person and his/her social ecology, including one's culture. Likewise, the conceptualization of career choice and development as a process of personal and career construction recognizes the effects of subjective cultural values and beliefs in shaping vocational self-concepts and preferences. Even though international research on Super's theory is still very much needed, Super's theory will continue to play an important role in career development practice internationally.

In the nutshell, this theory implies that career choice is a product of complex interactions among a number of factors, including physical and mental growth, personal experiences, and environmental characteristics and stimulation. Super's theory has called for a stronger emphasis on the effects of social context and the reciprocal influence between the person and the environment.

Social Cognitive Theory

The theoretical consideration of factors affecting career choice is grounded in Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), which was developed from Bandura's general social cognitive theory. Bandura's Social cognitive theory (SCT) emphasizes the bidirectional interactions between three elements, namely person, environment and behaviour. All the three operate interactively as determinants of one another.

Bandura's SCT theorised that a person's self-efficacy, or confidence that he or she can successfully perform a task, has a mutual relation with outcome expectations, or the consequences people anticipate resulting from a particular behaviour. These two constructs (self-efficacy and outcome expectations)

then influence a person's level and type of interests. Many different activities are attempted through a person's educational career, but generally a persistent interest is only developed in activities in which the person expects to be successful and in which a positive outcome is anticipated (Lent et al., 1994). Interests are thought to predict the goals a person has and therefore often behaviours that are pursued.

Consequently, individuals do not solely react to environmental events; they construct their own environments and do well to alter them. Cognitive events define which environmental measures will be observed and how they will be inferred, structured, and acted on. Ryckman (1997) asserted that either positive or negative feedback from behaviour, impacts people's thinking and the ways in which they act to change the environment.

Subsequently, self-efficacy has been defined as people's judgments of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy beliefs are about what one can do with the abilities they have, and beliefs about specific tasks. For example, an individual may have high self-efficacy beliefs about his or her ability to lead a team to accomplish a task but have very low self-efficacy beliefs about his or her ability to create a piece of art. Unlike relatively stable traits such as self-esteem, a person's self-efficacy beliefs may vary significantly depending upon the task (Lent & Brown, 2006). That is to say those individuals perceive themselves and note how well their abilities, welfares and standards equal the desires of the situation. These opinions have concerns for the type of work they might be good at. More so, individuals relate more to what they are interested in and what they value. People attempt to understand the

consequences of their actions and use this understanding in ways that change their environments to better meet their needs (Avugla, 2011).

One's beliefs about their efficacy in a particular realm may or may not be accurate (Bandura, 1986). Bandura theorised four sources of self-efficacy: mastery, modeling, social persuasion, and anxiety. The first three sources are listed in expected strength of influence; anxiety was theorised to be independent of the other sources.

Mastery: It is defined as a person's actual successes and failures, and is expected to have the strongest impact on a person's self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1986). When a person is successful at a task, their confidence to perform another similar task is thought to increase. Additionally, if the person fails, their self-efficacy is thought to decrease. In effect, failures are considered to be particularly influential if they are repeated, occur early in the individual's experience with a task, and cannot be attributed to external circumstances. On the other hand, once a person has a strong belief in their efficacy at a particular task, they will be influenced less by a failure.

Additional effort (leading to success) can substantially strengthen a person's efficacy for a particular task, as the individual sees they can overcome a very challenging obstacle. Once a strong self-efficacy is developed in a particular domain, an individual's efficacy beliefs in other similar domains may also increase (Bandura, 1986). For example, earning an A in a challenging English class may lead to increased efficacy for success in a challenging psychology class.

Modeling: It is defined as an individual watching a peer (someone the individual feels similar to in this particular task) succeed or fail. This contributor

to self-efficacy is theorised to be quite strong, but assumed to be weaker than actual mastery experiences. Bandura posits that when an individual watch a peer succeed, she/he is likely to believe that she/he, too, can accomplish this task. Conversely, if the individual watches a peer fail, especially after investing a substantial amount of effort, the individual's beliefs about their own efficacy is theorised to decrease (Bandura, 1986). Bandura discussed several situations in which one's self-efficacy beliefs are especially influenced by modeling. When one has less experience in a particular task and therefore less stable beliefs about their self-efficacy, Bandura theorises that modeling can have a larger effect.

Additionally, an individual who has had much mixed experience with a task will likely have more self-doubt and therefore place a higher value on modeling (Bandura, 1986). Learning from peers' new ways of performing tasks is also theorised to increase the self-efficacy of struggling, as well as successful, individuals, decrease the likelihood of the individual trying the behaviour again (Bandura, 1986). Another use of modeling is social comparison to gauge success and failure (Bandura, 1986). While modeling is expected to influence self-efficacy less than personal mastery experiences, this construct can influence a person to avoid tasks that would provide information about personal performance. If this avoidance happens, the individual will likely maintain low self-efficacy for a particular task without having actually tried it (Bandura, 1986).

When a peer or superior expresses an opinion to the person about his or her ability to perform a specific task this is referred to as social persuasion, the third source of self-efficacy. As discussed above regarding modeling, social persuasion has greatest impact when it can encourage or discourage an

individual from attempting a particular task (Bandura, 1986). While someone's self-efficacy is in an early stage of development, it can be easily influenced. Social persuasion can move someone towards attempting a task and obtaining personal mastery evidence for their efficacy.

Additionally, when someone is unsure of his or her efficacy, for example, because they have had both successes and failures at a task, verbal encouragement can serve as a motivator (Bandura, 1986). Once someone has an established level of self-efficacy for a task, however, Bandura posited that social persuasion has much less influence. It is theorised that social persuasion has more strength to decrease one's self-efficacy than to increase it. Additionally, if an individual has been motivated through social persuasion to attempt a task and then fails, the persuader may be discredited. In this way, it is clear that one's own mastery experiences should be a much stronger source of self-efficacy, (Bandura, 1986). This would aid one to make good and appropriate career choice

Physiological state: It is defined as the amount of anxiety an individual experience while performing a specific task. People read their anxiety in difficult situations as signs of their ability or lack of ability to succeed (Bandura, 1986). Specifically, people interpret their arousal in new or stressful situations as a sign that they are struggling. This agitation can lead to more anxiety and spiral upwards in a distracting way. This anxiety caused by the individual's physical state can easily become a self-fulfilling prophesy, as their preoccupation with worry makes them unable to perform the task as successfully as if they had not been distracted. If an individual is able to attribute their anxiety to an external source, the agitation is less likely to influence their self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1986).

The degree to which an individual processes and thinks about these four sources affects the strength of the individual's self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1986). When a person has a well-established efficacy belief (whether it is for success or failure) the following constructs in the model will remain more stable. However, Bandura posited that the effects of one's self-efficacy will influence a person's behaviour even when their efficacy beliefs are developmentally young and unsteady. Even as these four sources influence the creation of a person's self-efficacy, this self-efficacy influences their expectations and behaviours (Bandura, 1986).

Trait and Factor Theory

Patton and McMahon (2006) is often regarded as the founder of vocational psychology and his model for career decision-making remains essential in the vision of career development and counseling (Hartung & Blustein, 2002). Trait and Factor Theory sees vocational guidance as a process that requires rational decision-making in which individuals are matched to make the best fit with a specific career (Patton & McMahon, 2006). The main concept in Trait and Factor Theory is that of "matching" which states that occupational choices occur when an accurate understanding of individual's traits (for example, personal abilities, aptitudes, interests, etc), a knowledge of jobs and the labour market, and the rational and objective judgement about the relationship between these two groups of facts is present (Patton & McMahon, 2006). Langley, du Toit, & Herbst (1996) go on to state that a close match between a person's traits and his/her occupational profile will positively correlate with occupational success and satisfaction (Coertse & Schepers, 2004). The main assumption of the Trait and Factor Theory is that it is possible

to measure individual talents and attributes required in particular jobs and that these two can be matched to produce a good fit therefore ensuring that individuals are in jobs that are best suited for their abilities (Heussen, 2001). This leads to good and productive performance.

Therefore, according to Parsons as cited in Momberg (2004) the three steps needed to match individuals and occupations successfully involve the following: A clear understanding of one's self, one's attitude, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources and their causes. Parsons step cited in Momberg (2004) can be described as the "trait" aspect and is characteristic of individuals who are making career choices. The second, aspect related to the knowledge that is required and conditions thereof of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities and prospects in different work situations. The third aspects are that of deliberations on the relationships between the previous two elements and by matching these aspects, a better matching of the individual to the work can be obtained. As stated in Hartung and Blunstein (2002) Parsons' core values in his vocational model include that of guidance based on rationality and reason with service, concern for others, cooperation and social justice. Trait and Factor Theory has several assumptions; these include (a) every person has unique patterns of traits made up of interests, values, abilities and personality characteristics and these traits can be objectively identified and profiled to represent an individual's potential; (b) every occupation is made up of factors required for the successful performance of that occupation therefore, it is possible to identify a fit or match between individual traits and of factors using a straight forward problem solving or decision process, and; (c) the closer the

match between personal traits and job factors the likelihood for successful performance and satisfaction (Heussen, 2001).

Trait theorists are more interested in the measurement of traits that can be defined as habitual patterns of thought, behaviour and emotions. They also believe that these traits are relatively stable over time and therefore influence behaviour. As stated above the Trait and Factor Theory assumes that the best way of choosing a career or occupation is to know one's self and the world of work and thus integrate these two sets of knowledge and making an informed decision. Shearer (2006) also stated that in the wise choice of a vocation there are three broad factors: (1) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations and their causes; (2) a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts (p.5). Stead and Watson (2006) also state that Trait and Factor Theory assumes that knowledge of one's self as well as of one's work with its breadth of career opportunities would enable one to make more informed decisions. This is consistent with the view of Barker and Kellen (1998) that acquiring information about oneself, as well as career opportunities and the relationship between the two will prepare one to make good and well informed career decisions. However, it is rare to find a labour market that functions in such a linear manner. The process of occupational choice is not a single event but is influenced by many factors for example, subject choices at school, socialisation and occurs over a period (developmental) to prepare the individual for career decision making (Miller, 2006).

Contextual factors are largely ignored in this theory. Parsons' theory may be seen as limited in this regard. As stated earlier, the changing nature of the world of work requires that individuals adapt in order for them to have successful careers. In summary, according to the Trait and Factor Theory, a successful career choice is determined by a balanced accumulation of career knowledge, self-knowledge and the integration of the two. This theory clearly indicates the importance of self-knowledge, career knowledge (knowledge of the world of work) and the integration of the two factors in career decision-making.

John Holland's Theory of Career Developments

One of the most well-known career theories is that of John Holland. Holland's theory of career development is an influential vocational theory in career development. Holland's theory emerged from the Trait and Factor Theory and assumes that individual's personality characteristics and occupational environment should correspond to ensure success (Momborg, 2004). According to Rayman and Atanasoff (1999) Holland's typology describes personal and work environment characteristics that have utility in assisting individuals to understand personal and environmental characteristics that lead to successful career.

Capitalizing on Holland's (1997) observation that individuals engage in career planning and problem solving with the use of a personal career theory (PCT), Reardon & Lenz (1994) noted that people may seek help when their PCT is no longer effective and they need assistance from an expert in the field. Therefore, the longstanding person-environment theories have a natural, heuristic value, because it can come down to a matching process for most

people. This is very likely the reason that Holland's Self-Directed Search (SDS; 1994) has been translated into approximately languages and is very likely the most widely used interest inventory in the world. The SDS is, however, not simply a person-environment matching device; it makes use of a client's occupational aspirations, seeks to identify multiple options for further exploration by clients, and uses raw scores in a simulation that can easily be understood and discussed by clients. In this sense, it also reflects a constructivist view of career development.

There are six premises that can be used to explain Holland's theory. This theory states that most people have one of the six personality types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional (Armstrong & Rounds, 2008). These categories can be represented in the form of a hexagon which reveals the extent to which each of the categories correlate with each other. For example, studies indicate that categories which lie close to each other in the hexagon are more likely to strongly correlate with each other than those who lie at a distance (Miller, 2006).

Individuals who fall into the realistic type are often practical minded, physically strong, like to work outdoors, have difficulty communicating feelings, dislike radical ideas, like to build or repair things, aggressive, like to create things with their hands and like activities requiring motor coordination and skill. The investigative type consists of individuals who prefer solving mathematical problems, do not like rules, like science, not particularly interested in working with people, original and creative, especially in scientific areas, independent, rational, try to understand physical work, curious, and are challenged by theoretical problems. Individuals who fall into the artistic type

tend to be more self expressive, creative in artistic media (writing, 27 music, art), like to work alone, sensitive, don't like structure, unconventional, tense, need for individual expression, like to be original, and are often emotional.

Those who fall into the social category are concerned with welfare of others, responsible, get along well with people, express themselves well, sociable, like attention, tend to be popular, like to be a leaders, like intense relationships with others, and solve problems by discussing them with others. The enterprising type are good with words, enthusiastic, like leadership roles, adventurous, like to persuade others to a viewpoint, energetic, self-confident, don't like work that requires long periods of intellectual effort, like material wealth, like to work in expensive settings. The conventional types dislike work requiring physical skills, dependable, like to know what's expected of them, stable, prefer structured activities, good self-control, don't mind rules and regulations, know what is right and wrong, don't seek leadership roles, and like well-defined tasks (Smart, Feldman & Ethington, 2006).

Holland states that people of the same personality tend to stick together, working in a specific context, and create a working environment that fits their type (Myors, 1996). He also refers to six basic types of work environments: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. People who choose to work in an environment similar to their personality type are more likely to be successful and satisfied. How one acts and feels at work depends to a large extent on their workplace environment. Lastly, if you are working with people who have a personality type like yours, you will be able to do many of the things they can do, and you will feel most comfortable with them. Therefore,

this means that one should probably choose an occupation whose type is the same as, or similar to, their personality type.

Holland provides a criterion that people can use to base their career decisions on by checking which personality type they fall in according to which best describes them. Individuals need to be aware of aspects of their personality (self-knowledge) in order to determine where they fall. Therefore, one must be able to match their personality and compatibility with the work environment to ensure a successful and satisfactory career. Holland believed that career success largely depended on the congruency between the person's personality and the work environment. Holland's premise of the immutability of individual personality traits and the necessity of matching them with occupational or academic environment to achieve success has been criticized. Feldman, Smart and Ethington (2004) argued that the emphasis on the congruency as criterion to judge success in explaining vocational interests and behaviors when the focus is on educational interests and behaviors might be problematic. Feldman et al., (2004) reflected upon the fact that historically educational institutions such as universities and colleges have sought to promote student growth and development of multiple and distinctive abilities and interest domain regardless of initial individual personality characteristics. Therefore, the argument centers on the question of immutability of characteristics as well as if such a concept is valid in the development of individuals.

Holland's theory has been tested and re-tested. One of the focus areas has been that of congruency, which can be described as reflecting the degree to which an individual's personal qualities match environmental demands in chosen careers (Miller, 2006). A number of studies conducted to test the

congruency hypothesis (Alvi, Khan & Kirkwood, 1990; Gottfredson & Holland, 1990; Schwartz, 1992; Swanson & Hanson, 1998) indicate that congruency between preferences and occupational characteristics of individuals are positively related to occupational satisfaction. Using the Vocational Preference Inventory to assess congruency, studies have shown significant positive correlations between congruency with stability of career choices (Miller, 2006). In summary, Holland's theory predicts that individuals will choose careers which are consistent with their personal characteristics, however, lack of self-knowledge and career information might impede on making career choices which might lead to individuals making career choices that lie outside individual's dominant personality domains resulting in poor personality/occupational fit. Therefore, like Parsons' theory, it is vital that individual acquire the necessary career knowledge and self-knowledge during career decision-making. This again illustrates the importance of exploring career knowledge and self-knowledge. It is important to note though that personality characteristics are not stagnant but evolve as the individual develops. Therefore, it becomes difficult to predict that an individual's present match between personality traits and occupations choice will be stable across their life time. As stated above, it may not always be possible for individuals to acquire work that compliments their traits (which are ever evolving).

Conceptual Review

Concept of Guidance and Counselling

Guidance is a programme of service meant to enhance the ability of clients to cope with circumstances and be of need to themselves and the society (Omebe, 2005). Guidance enables clients to make choices which are intended

to bring self-direction and adjustment. It is designed to help clients adjust meaningfully to the environment, develop the ability to set realistic goals and improve on total educational programmes.

Thus, Zera and Riccio in Omebe (2005) defined guidance as a process, developmental in nature, by which an individual is assisted to understand, accept and utilize own abilities, aptitudes, interests and attitudinal patterns in relation to the aspirations. Olayinka in Igbo (2009) asserts that guidance programmes should help clients in reaching rather, two opposite goals: adjustment to society, and freedom to act as unique individuals. As well, Isakson and Minsk in Omebe (2005) see guidance as a programme of service to individuals based on the needs of each individual; an understanding of his immediate environment and the influences of the factors on the learner and unique features of the school. This is why guidance assists each pupil to understand himself, accept himself and live effectively in his society in addition to having learning experiences about his world of work (Alao, 1991). Pupils' right from school start preparation for the world of work and should be properly guided in educational, personal –social and vocational spheres of life in order to make right choices.

Guidance comes from the root word, guide which means to direct, protect, steer and lead. It is therefore a process and procedure for achieving a helping relationship. Guidance therefore could simply be defined as a helping process through which troubled individuals are encouraged to receive terms and situations in order to be fully adjusted in the face of related difficulties. That is why Ipaye in Egbo (2009) upholds that guidance in everyday language has always carried the connotation of help given to an individual or group of

individuals in areas like personal, social, educational and vocational which are designed to ensure meaningful adjustment in their existence. Good guidance programmes organized for learners at the primary school level are therefore intended to actualize positivity in whole life adjustment meant to cushion the growing child into meaningful living and adaptations. Guidance and counselling has been conceptualized as a programme of activities which has provided us with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in our present age of complex scientific and technological development (Okobiah & Okorodudu, 2004).

According to the Commonwealth of Learning (2010), guidance is the process through which an individual is helped to choose a suitable occupation, make the necessary preparations for it (such as enrolling in a training programme), entering into it, and developing in it. This is a continuous process since an individual is likely to re-evaluate the career choice at various points in his/her life and may make changes at any point in his/her career. Guidance may be defined as professional aid to individuals and small groups in dealing with commonly recurring personal, educational and vocational needs and problems (Oladele, 1987). Makinde (1990) stated that the guidance service is classified according to the area of life in which the problems occur. According to Shertzer and Stone (1981), Guidance as a concept denotes the utilization of a point of view in order to help an individual; as an educational construct, it refers to the provision of experiences that helps students to understand themselves; and as a service. It refers to procedures and processes organized to achieve a helping relationship. Guidance is therefore a process, not an end result. Learning how to solve problems is more important than the solution of a specific problem.

“Guidance is a learning process (Strange, 1983). Shertzer and Stone (1981) see guidance as the process of helping the individual to understand himself and his environment/world so that he can utilize his potential.

The UNESCO module on guidance and counselling (2000a) also posited that Guidance is a programme of services to individuals based on their needs and the influence of environmental factors. Guidance and counselling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities, programmes and services geared toward assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world and also to develop adequate capacity for making wise choices and decisions. There is agreement among experts that there are three major components of guidance and counselling. These are educational guidance, vocational guidance and personal social guidance (UNESCO module 2000a). Under these three major areas, there are several guidance and counselling services such as appraisal, information, placement, orientation, evaluation, referral and follow-up (Denga 2001). Each of these major components of guidance and counselling along with their services address students’ needs challenges and problems. The goal of guidance and counselling services is to enable each learner in institutions of learning to derive optimal educational benefits so as to actualize his/her potentialities.

Thus, the highlights of the National Policy on Education (1998) states “in view of the apparent ignorance of many young people about career prospects and in view of personality adjustments among school children, career officers and counsellors will be appointed in post primary institutions and tertiary levels”. Unfortunately, the practice of these services in our institutions of learning is nothing to write home about. The programme is not encouraging at

the secondary school level and even at the university level. Anwana (1989) argued that if the society is not to be plagued by a band/group of disgruntled, frustrated and unrealistic individuals, it is desirable that adequate guidance and counselling and career information be provided, to enable the school and society arrive at a realistic vocational choice for their children/wards with due realization of their potentialities.

Smith (2006) proposed and outlined ten stages of strength-based counselling to illustrate how the approach may be implemented. The ten stages are: (a) Creating the therapeutic alliance; (b) identifying strengths; (c) assessing presenting problems; (d) encouraging and instilling hope; (e) framing solutions; (f) building strength and competence; (g) empowering; (h) changing; (i) building resilience; and (j) evaluating and terminating (Pg).P.57. Following the stages, the approach will result into a disciplined group of youths with a focus on the strengths that they have to achieve specific life goals. It will lead to a clear consideration of how problems are to be rated and the value to assess and determine the level of urgency in every obstacle encountered.

Without a clear focus on the depth of the existing problems many youths may not be able to articulately establish solutions to the many challenges facing them. For empowering students to have hope in life and confidence in them they should be enabled to solve life challenging issues by themselves and have change in the way they react to occurring problems. In the process their discipline standards will be well improved, thus creating a sense of responsibility to deal with issues in life. In overall speaking, providing responsive service and designing guidance activities is vital. There is an obvious move from a remedial to a preventive, strength-based orientation (Smith, 2006).

Counselling, on the other hand is the soul of the guidance programme, and the wheel upon which guidance rotates. It is a process in which a specialist counsellor undertakes to assist another person in a person to person or face to face encounter. The assistance may take many forms which includes educational, vocational, social, recreational, emotional and or moral, and this could be organized in groups or individually. Thus, Roux in Anagbogu (2002) defines counselling as a dynamic and purposeful relationship between two people in which procedures vary with the nature of the students' needs, but in which there is always mutual participation by the counsellor and the client with the focus of self-actualization and self-determination by the client.

Who is a Counsellor?

The counsellor is a professional who through diagnosing, planning, predicting, interpreting and evaluating provides educational, personal, social and vocational assistance to the clients in such a way that it would reflect their interests, objectives, potentialities and needs for effective adjustment (Anagbogu, 2002). To her, the counsellor has the skilled task to aid the personal growth and development of his clients. As a result, she classified the qualities of the professional counsellor to include being understanding, sympathetic, friendly, humorous having stability, patience, sincerity, tactfulness, tolerance, calmness, broadmindedness, kindness, pleasantries, intelligence, resourcefulness and cordiality in all characteristics.

Emenogu in Igbo (2009) writes that the term- counsellor is reserved for those with professional training in counseling; that is an expert in his area of specialization and has cultivated skills in helping people understand their situations, classify their values and make informed decisions. The counsellors'

personality therefore is relevant to his effectiveness as the person of the counsellor is a key element in any counseling relationship. Accordingly, the counsellor should be understanding, have a sense of humour, respect other people's opinion, be sympathetic, patient, friendly, objective, sincere, tolerant, neat, clean, broadminded, kind, intelligent, self-confident, cooperative and pleasant.

Goals of Guidance and Counselling

The Federal Ministry of Education in Nigeria as cited in Egbo (2009) in their blueprint for Guidance and Counselling, made a 12-point objective of Guidance and Counselling at the junior and senior secondary schools.

1. Tutor learners for higher achievements
2. Encourages client to develop adaptive skills to cope with changes in family and home life.
3. Help children cope with examination anxieties
4. Equip clients with problem solving and decision-making skills
5. Enable children develop positive self-image
6. Encourage children to develop good interpersonal relationship
7. Equip students with skills for making appropriate and satisfying choices
8. Assist in smooth transitions from one educational level to another
9. Assist school administration in improving educational opportunities and programmes.
10. Mobilize all the available resources of the school, home and community for the satisfaction of childrens educational vocational and psychological needs.

11. Assist the teachers, other school staff members and parents in understanding the needs and problems of the school children.
12. Assist students develop adequate time management skills.

Scope of School Guidance

Guidance is defined differently by various authors depending on their theoretical background. Oladele (2000) defined guidance as a concept, an educational construct and a service. As a concept, guidance denotes the utilization of a point of view in order to help an individual. As an educational construct, it refers to the provision of an experience that helps students to understand themselves, accept themselves and live effectively in their society. In this wise, the school becomes responsible for the total personal growth and development of the child and not only for character training and intellectual development.

As a service, guidance refers to procedures and processes organized to achieve a helping relationship. From the view point of Oladele (2000) guidance is seen as an “umbrella term” to refer to every activity that is aimed at protecting and guiding the development of students. It is a help given to an individual to assist him or her to take decisions, make choices and adjustments and in the solution of need situations. This then makes the recipient to grow independently and acquire the ability for self-responsibility.

For Gibson and Mitchell (1990) the basic guidance activities in the secondary schools should include pupil-appraisal, counselling, placement, follow-up, research and evaluation. Oladele (2000) notes that at the senior secondary school level, the student faces the decision of continuing his/her formal education to the university or any tertiary institution or going to work.

Consequently, the scope of guidance at the senior secondary school should encompass the educational, vocational, and personal-social needs of students.

Comprehensive school guidance programme is a developmental sequential and continuous programme of counselling, consultation, appraisal, information, orientation and placement services for all students from kindergarten through to the higher level of education. The programme becomes an integral part of the total educational experience and seeks to focus attention on individual students as they strive to make useful choices based on realistic concepts of themselves and the world in which they live. Thus, for Shertzer and Stone (1976) guidance should serve the purpose of making sure that the students, the teachers and the parents understand the various phases of the individual's development and their impact on the growth, adjustment, and decision-making process.

Empirical Review

Environment and Career Choice

Throughout a career, an individual seeks to accommodate the environment with one's goals, while at the same time being incorporated into the environment (Kroll, Dinklage, Lee, Morley & Wilson, 1970). Career development is the balancing of recognising and meeting needs of the individual while at the same time responding to the outer forces and realities of life. Career decision factors involve two sets of input: the self and the world of work. The individual in a career has to constantly balance his or her aspirations and how they have fit into the reality of the workplace. "Man's occupation determines the kind of person he becomes since, through his waking hours, his cognitions about himself, his wants and goals, and his interpersonal response traits are

molded' (Kroll et al., 1970, p. 19). Kroll et al. went on to say that much of the informal and formal knowledge provided through our society and our environment has focused on the acquisition, retention, and utilization of information pertaining to the world. Gostein (2000) stated that parents influence their children's choice of career in a number of ways which include direct inheritance, the provision of apprenticeship and role models. Sometimes the "influence" is an order to enroll in particular courses or predetermined action.

The first of the influences identified by Gostein (2000) is "direct inheritance". By this Gostein meant that the adolescent is brought up on the idea that the family business is his inheritance. When this happens the child finds it easier and even wiser to continue the family business than to go off on his or her own. Gostein uses the findings of Gofflich and Moses (2003) as the basis of his statement that 95 per cent of boys who choose farming as a career were sons of farmers (Gostein, 2000). Secondly, he asserted that parent influence comes through apprenticeship training". That is a parent who is a plumber takes his child with him on careers or actually apprentices the child to a friend. This however occurs more in low socio-economic circles where the child may not have any other choice.

A third influence from parents is the "development of interest." From the time they are young parents cultivate certain career interests in their children. This is done through the play materials they provide, "the encouragement or discouragement of hobbies and interest, by the activities they encourage their children to participate in and by the total experiences they provide in the family" (Gostein 2000, p. 532). For example a musician mother

encourages her child to take music lessons. In the U.S.A, an estimated 44% of physicians sons take to medicine, 28% of lawyers sons choose law (Yao, 1999).

A fourth type of parental influence on the choice of careers by the youth is “role model”. This Gostein (2003) stated, worked well where the child identifies closely with the parent (Bell, as cited in Gostein, 2000). Mortimer (2005) is reported to have found a confirmation for this when he stated that a combination of prestigious paternal role model and a close father-son relationship fostered a very effective parent’s “transfer” of career values and influence on children’s career choice. Gostein (2003) opines that parents of low socio-economic status are not able to influence their children’s choice of careers that much. Gostein gives reasons for this. These include: (a) they are not close to their children who are young adults nor are they very actively involved in their care (b) their careers are less prestigious and because of the lack of career prestige there is also a lack of admiration from their children and therefore no encouragement to emulate.

King (1993) in a study in Kenya, specifically linked parental behaviour to the career choice of teaching. In King's study, 53% of the participants identified mothers as very encouraging in their choice of teaching. Additionally, mothers in the study created a desire in their children to work with individuals of diverse family backgrounds, to be creative, and to feel that their abilities were well suited for teaching.

In a study in North Africa Natalie (2006) found that young adults through interaction with the context of family, school and community learnt about and explore careers which ultimately led to their career choice. One consistent finding in research suggests that adolescents’ own aspirations are

influenced by their parent's aspirations or expectations. Parental support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to influence career choice. Children may choose what their parents desire simply to please them (Taylor, 2004). According to Oyamo and Amoth (2008), studies in Kenya shown that rural students tended to seek help from parent more than urban students and that parent more than teachers played a major role in the career choice of students.

Lastly, Gostein (2003) saw parental influence in choice of career in a direct order. That is parents insist on the choice of school and even the courses they concentrate. Most often this happened regardless of the child's talents, interests and desires. Where the youth have no strong objection to the choice being made for them, they get condemned to a life's work to which they are not suited. One of the motives of parent's action is to get the child to take up the career, that the parents were always interested in but never got to do (Gostein, 2000). The children accede to the parental wishes or order most often not only from a desire not to offend them but from not knowing what else to do with themselves (Gostein, 2000).

Gregory (1998) argued that that sometimes the choice made by parents for their children are were the same status category or one above theirs. For example, while a parent who was a physician would encourage the child to choose the same career or one of comparable status a skilled worker may encourage the child to follow him or urge him to seek a higher grade – managerial work. Gostein (2000) reported that an estimated 67% of all boys chose a career in either their father's career category or the next higher one.

According to Holland (1973) the most significant in career behaviour or choice is that of parental influence. Using the national sample of 1959 in Virginia, Holland administered his Parental Attitude Research Instrument (PARI) to mothers of respondents. The findings indicated that the student's personal orientations were related to some of the attitudes held by their mothers. Parental upbringing, children take to the values of parents and almost move in the same direction as their parents (Osipow, 2003). Holland's approach to the influence of fathers was a bit different. Each of the fathers was asked to rank nine goals he had for his child. He also ranked his hopes for his child's eventual income. The results indicated that fathers of sons in the realistic category valued ambition in their sons and hope their income would be considerable Osipow and Jackson (1993) suggested that women who entered male-dominated fields such as science often came from families where mothers were working, both parents were highly educated, and success was considered critical. Mothers with four-year degrees were more likely to influence career choices than mothers without such qualifications (Smith, 2000). Although college educated mothers influenced both traditional and non-traditional career choices, women choosing non-traditional careers indicated that their fathers had a stronger, more direct bearing on careers choices in non-traditional environments (Gates, 2002; Trauth, 2002; Dryler, 1998; Leslie, 1998; Scandura & Ragins, 1993). One of the subjects interviewed in Trauth (2002,) reflected on the role of her father: 'If I didn't have my father who sat down, and you know, helped me choose the subjects, then I might have chosen the wrong subjects. I might have chosen the ones that I could get good grades in or that wouldn't have led to anything' (p. 106).

Turner (2002) in Liberia found that 73 percent of working women indicated their fathers as strongly influencing their career choice. Osipow (2003) after considering the literature on parental influences on career choice of their children concluded that parents' behaviour created environments which exerted a powerful influence on the personal characteristics of their offspring. He went on to state that, the consequence of the influence was the particular career environment the child selected.

Gensinde (1993) in a study in Kenya wanted to know why students chose their careers. After studying 400 students in teacher training colleges and in technical colleges, he reported that 66% of students in teacher training colleges and 56% of those in technical colleges were influenced by parents and significant others to enter the career programmes. Okeke (2000) in East Africa studied the relationship between parental careers and their children's career choice. Okeke in his study found 60% of the children willing to take their father's career and that 25% were willing to follow their mother's career.

Olando (2010) used 320 respondents in Liberia to study the factors that influenced the career choice of undergraduate students. After the research, it was found that, 65% of the students chose careers because their parents wanted them to be in that career and nothing else. Family is one of the most influential contexts of socialization in childhood and adolescence (Dryler, 1998). While the impact of parental guidance is felt unequivocally in the choice of traditional and non-traditional careers, it is most strongly observed in the choice of non-traditional careers. Direct forms of parental influence, such as the degree to which students saw their parents choosing IT careers or having contact with technology, were strong motivators to train for technical jobs (Breakwell., 1988;

Dryler, 1998). Family members can also motivate career choices indirectly equally persuasively. For instance, a parent may not be an IT professional but may encourage girls to pursue or actively compete in careers perceived to be “masculine”. These parents may still be acting as role models of perseverance and achievement without being IT professionals.

Literature is unequivocal regarding the positive influence of parents, particularly fathers, on career choices. Siblings can have some influence on career choices. In particular for girls, older brothers can influence the entry of girls into traditionally “masculine” careers (Banks, 1995). On the other hand, girls who have only sisters tend to choose careers that are more traditionally “feminine”. Similar sibling influence is found for boys with male sibling (Brown, 2002).

Environment plays a significant role in the career position the student attains in many ways. The environment that is spoken about here is a factor that is used to nurture decisions in career choice. Gender, for example has played a significant role in this environment. In a statement released to the press on the thirtieth anniversary of the Title IX barring of the sex discrimination, Greenberger (2002) of the National Women’s Law Center stated that boys were still being steered toward the traditional ‘male’ jobs, which were higher paying. Girls were still expected to cluster into the traditional fields of cosmetology, childcare, and other similar jobs. In Florida for example, Greenberger found that “99% of the students in cosmetology were female, while 100% of the students taking plumbing were male”. While it should be noted that lawsuits were filed in these cases, not all states were guilty of gross failure on the part of technical school to desegregate the jobs to both of the genders.

Schools in some states have been able to do a better job in creating a better environment for students who want to cross gender lines while choosing a career. Skills present in males and females alike have been indicative of their vocational interests. Grace Laleger, in her Ph.D. dissertation, set out to ascertain the skill levels of girls as they applied to interests that the girls had. The conclusion showed that there was a disappointingly low correlation of skills to interest (Laleger, 1942).

Also, one's social and economic background has some bearing into family's resources. According to Bolles (2011), at one point individuals inherited from their parents certain financial and other resources that, to some extent, influenced career choices. He argued that family financial status determined things like individual lived and which school they attended. These in turn affected values, occupational expectations, opportunities, and gender role expectations of individuals. Usually, social status is passed down from generation to generation, one may not benefit by being exposed to many opportunities or on the other hand one may not have the opportunity to recognize all the career option opened to them (Hooley, 2012). Although few studies exist on the topic of effects of socioeconomic status on career choice, researchers concur that socioeconomic status influences career choice (Gottfredson, 2008; Sellers, Satcher & Comas, 2009). Mau and Biko (2010) cited previous result showing a positive relationship between the family's socioeconomic status and one's aspirations. Individual raised from higher socioeconomic statuses were more likely to be knowledgeable of and decide on professional occupations (Sellers et al., 2009).

Contrary, Brown and Barbosa (2009) established that career aspirations of young females who came from low-income families were restricted to experiences of their family and acquaintances. Prominent siblings were thought to play a key part in the career direction of teenagers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Ali, Mc Whirter & Chronister, 2005). Besides socio-economic status, Sears and Gordon (2008) believed that family members also played a role in the career choice students made.

Moreover, According to Sear and Gordon's (2002), additional aspects of one's family background can be influential in career decision making. Parents were the most influential career role models for students Sear and Gordon's (2002). Mothers in particular seem to exert greater influence during their children's high school years and fathers seem influential in college aged children's decision making.

According to Herbart (2006), environment is essential for evolving abilities to heights close to capacity heights and if teenagers were raised in a home with a healthy environment and that parents live in harmony and are caring and helpful to their children, a child was therefore destined to take orders from his parents. Hence their career choice aspiration was influenced by their parent's occupational status. Next on factors influencing career is gender of the students.

Again, whether one is male or female has to some extent influenced some of the career choices that one made, as well as some of the choices parents made. For example, gender might have influenced the high school attended, whether they were encouraged to take risk or not, and more so, the choices of academic major (Hooley, 2012). According to Sears & Gordon, (2008), gender

related messages are subtle and their influence is difficult to discern. Example, if a family has generation of men 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.

In a study on factors affecting female students' career choices and aspirations conducted in Zimbabwe, Mutekwe, Modiba and Cosmas (2011), found that the way students often answered questions relating to career choice divulged the intrinsic societal prejudices distinctive of their backgrounds. It was also revealed that the way they mingled in their families and exemplified the importance of gender roles nature in their society. Most traditional societies have placed gender role to the children and children grows up knowing that some responsibilities, duties, careers are preserved for certain genders.

Most female students merely neglect certain career fields due to stereotype insights. Perera and Velummayi-lum (2008) noted that theories on gender roles and work, masculinity was categorised habitually as dominance and effectiveness, whereas, in contrast, females chose occupations that had steady hours of work to allow them to accomplish domestic duties. It is also proposed that females liked work that was foreseeable, inferior and less financially productive, with low pressure levels, and they did not aim to occupy leadership position and decision making positions (Hewitt, 2009). The preceding argument supports the fact that career choices are usually a product of one's socialization since society's gender role socialization regulates what roles men and women should aim at (Sear and Gordon, 2002). In many African civilizations there are careers that are believed to be male or female fields and

society attempts to train this attitude in boys and girls during socialization (Momsen, 2000).

Notwithstanding, one's stereotype about certain occupations, can also influence career choices. Stereotypes come from beliefs that our society and our families have about different groups; female, males, Africans, Jews, Christians, etc. Stereotypes can result in inaccurate judgment about situations and people and hold you back from taking particular steps (Hooley, 2012). For example, if you are female and you have been taught that only certain occupation are for women e.g. nursing, teaching, clerical, they you will believe that you have limited option (Sears & Gordon, 2008).

Our society deems certain types of work appropriate to either men or women (Hooley, 2012). Men are encouraged to explore wider variety occupations, yet the areas of child care and nursing are seen as not appropriate for men. Women are discouraged from seeking education and training in science and math related courses or in trade such as construction, manufacturing, and transportation (Hewitt, 2012). The effects of such stereotyping are that many women work at lower paying occupations with fewer opportunities for advancement (Sear & Gordon, 2002).

There are discrepancies in the income earned by men and women, women getting a raw deal, this is because of the type of occupation picked by different gender (Sears & Gordon, 2008). For example, women are less likely to be employed in engineering or science related jobs since these are traditionally considered to be men's occupations. In the event that there are women employed in this field, the remuneration is also biased with women earning less than what men earn (Graham & Smith, 2005). Some of these factors

that narrow women into traditional role include social and family influences, lack of education and awareness regarding non-traditional option, environment, and discrimination within career fields.

According to Sear and Gordon (2002), lack of education caused students to make uninformed decision in career choices. They believed that some students made career choices or hate some other careers because they knew little about the career. Others made uninformed career because they were not aware of the areas they were best at, or what their colleagues preferred and wanted to associate them with. Hooley (2012) on the other hand believed that lack of knowledge and discrimination within career fields led to occupational stereotyping among the Kenyan universities students.

Career Knowledge

Zhou and Santos (2007) stipulated that one of the major factors that affect career decision-making was lack of information. This factor includes a lack of information about steps involved in the career decision-making process, lack of information about the self and various occupations and lack of information about ways of obtaining additional information. According to Arnold (as cited in Zhou & Santos, 2007), there is a need to have congruent information about knowledge to ensure progress in the career decision-making process. One of the most important tasks that one undertakes as part of the career decision process is to gather information about the possible career options that one is interested in (Mubiana, 2010).

Bimrose and Barnes (2007) go on to say that career development in people can be identified through their increased greater awareness of opportunities and options in their way. Access to and the use of career

information is an important and often integral part of the decision-making process (Stead & Watson, 2006). However, there is evidence indicating that there is lack of career knowledge as well as career misconceptions amongst learners, parents and teachers alike (Mbetse, 2002). Research has shown that most students do not always seek information about job and career choices and options before they make their decisions. For example, research conducted by Pang as cited in Webber and Zhu (2007) on young Chinese people found that lack of information about career and employment opportunities was a key factor in the narrow range of occupational aspirations. Therefore, students should be encouraged from an early age to engage in career information searching activities to ensure that they make informed career decisions. For instance, psychology requires one to have a long-term view at the profession because of its unique career path.

Stead and Watson (2006) stated that research in South Africa indicated that school leavers often had limited career knowledge and that this problem impacted on effective career decision making. Stead and Watson (2006) further added that black adolescents had inadequate career knowledge because most of their information was mostly derived from hearsay. This can be attributed to the lack of vocational guidance that was available in formal educational systems (Stead & Watson, 1998). Research conducted in South Africa showed that the youth were expressing a greater need for more and better information to assist them in decision making on education and employment issues (Stead & Watson, 2006). Therefore, there is an urgent need for more and comprehensive career guidance in schools. According to Mbetse (2002), career misconception and lack of career knowledge were fuelled by the media industry such as television

and film which further supported and strengthened the misconceptions that were held mostly by youth. According to Crosby (2005) individuals tended to make assumptions about an occupation's working conditions, job duties, educational requirements, and employment prospects. Some common myths held by individuals included the fact that people thought that there was only one career choice for them and that until they found it they won't be satisfied or successful; another myth pertained to the fact that individuals thought that they must be experts in their field in order to succeed (Stead & Watson, 1993). Therefore, there is need for interventions aimed at correcting the misconceptions that young people have for instance through the use of career counselling programmes which should be aimed at institutional levels as well as communal levels (Mbetse, 2002). Stead and Watson (2006) stated that career information services played a vital role in an individual's career development during various stages of career decision making. Sources of career knowledge range from parents and other family members, friends and peers to career teachers and career advisers. Hargrove, Inman and Crane (2005) advocate that the ability for young people to explore and consider career options and thus make appropriate career decisions was directly influenced by the quality of family interactions, boundaries, and emotional interdependence. Barker and Kellen (1998) advocate that "as a general rule, the most successful people in life are those who have the best information" (p.1). Therefore, career exploration should be encouraged early in schools.

Self-knowledge Factors in Making career Choices

Self-knowledge refers “to the insight into one’s personality which enables him to know what he is capable of” (Mbetse, 2002, p. 83). One of the most well-known theories that posited the importance of self-knowledge in career decision-making processes is that of Super, who stated that most career choices attempted to actualize the skills, talents and interests of one’s self concept (Gianakos, 1999). Barker and Kellen (1998) defined self-knowledge as person knowing their talents, skills, interests, values and other personal attributes that might be of value in the working environment. Self-knowledge aids one in making decisions that promoted good and informed career decisions. Anakwe, Hall and Schor (1999) advocated that self-knowledge encompassed information about the individual and included skills that focused on individual development. Acquisition of these skills contributes to learning about oneself and set realistic goal in managing careers. Thus, effective career decision-making happens when individuals acquired an in-depth self-knowledge.

Pickworth (1997) noted three factors that were involved in the process of choosing a career. These include self analysis, occupational analysis and the integration of self information and occupational information. Therefore, self-knowledge plays a crucial role in career decision making and to a large extent may determine the success of one’s career development. A study by Mbetse (2002) reported that self-knowledge was an essential attribute if young people were to make realistic career choices. It is therefore imperative that individuals have good self-knowledge to ensure that they make effective and adequate career decisions for successful future career and employment opportunities.

Lankard, (1996) posited that understanding one's self concept as well as its effect on different roles and relationships had major influence on career maturity. Therefore, self-knowledge is not only essential but necessary in the career decision process but also in life in general. Lankard (1996) proposed ways for acquiring self- knowledge which include the use of problem-based learning. This is an instructional model based on constructivism, the concept that learners construct their own understanding by relating concrete experience to existing knowledge; processes of collaboration and reflection are involved. In this model learners are presented with an ill-structured problem-one that has no obvious solution and for which problem-solvers cannot be certain they have the right answer. The problem must be content relevant and represent a real situation faced by an individual, group, company, or community. Savoie and Hughes (as cited in Lankard, 1996, pp. 2-3) maintained that solving the problem takes students through the following processes of engagement, inquiry, solution building, debriefing and reflection and presentation of findings. Engagement in problem-based learning requires students to self-direct their search for a solution by often assuming the role of a key factor in the problem situation for example, lawyer, an environmentalist, a statistician and so forth. The process of inquiry requires students to brainstorm with others and gather information from multiple sources.

In order to start building a solution, students work in teams discussing alternatives and examining possible solutions. Once alternatives and possible solutions have been explored debriefing and reflection requires students to share information, opinions and ideas with others regarding what they have learned through the experience. Thereafter, students write plans, reports and other forms

of work documentation to include in their portfolios of accomplishments and achievements. A problem based approach can enhance knowledge of self and knowledge of potential careers and how to access them.

Interests

Interest can be defined as the things that hold one's attention or arouse one's curiosity (Sear & Gordon, 2002). Interests are a person likes or dislikes and are characterized by the person's intensity of feeling about a subject or things (Hooley, 2012). Interests are learned from parents, in school, from friends, and from your life long experiences. For instance, when one engages in various activities he reacts with specific feelings or attitudes. These personal reactions plus the feedbacks one receives about his performance help to shape and focus his or her interest. One continues to acquire interests throughout his or her life and this in return influences the reasoning and choices one makes including career choices (Hewitt, 2010).

Interest can change, as one experiences life and meet more people; one become interested in new things and discard some of his/her old interests. One also develop more complex thinking and understanding process, and one may even seek new interest and activities with hope of improving his/her and making life more exciting (Hewitt, 2010). Once the interest of one keeps changes so does the career choice of a person changes. One seeks a career that meets his interest at time hence the career that one may have wished to take when he was young is not what he eventually does.

According to Hewitt (2010), interest has become the most important factors in determining and measuring occupational selection. Most people would like to work at something they enjoy. According to Sears and Gordon

(2002), interest inventories have been developed to help identify interests and relate them to career and occupations. Interests inventories tall ranking for specific career and occupational preferences. By measuring interests of successful and satisfied people in an occupation, researchers have developed scales that compare the interests of individuals to the interests of people who are certain about what they want to do. It is believed that these occupational scales are effective in predicting career and occupational satisfaction. The next aspects of the factors that play a role in students' career choice is the values that are deeply rooted in ones lives.

Values

Values are basic beliefs, the beliefs they hold most dear (Sear & Gordon, 2002). They are a source of motivation that can be seen in one's action; in the attraction to or avoidance of the pursuit of things such as money, power, or spirituality. Some values hold more meaning than others (Hooley, 2012). People tend to pursue more vigorously the values that have more meanings to them than those that are less important to them. For instance, getting education; must have positive implications to people. How actively one pursues education is related to the strength of the value he places to education (Hewitt, 2010).

Values at times conflict, fulfilling one interferes with achieving another (Hewitt, 2010). You would encounter conflicts throughout your life that will require you to rank your values, whether you are or you are not aware of the choice. Sometimes identifying your personal life values is difficult. One way of accessing values is to examine choices you have made in past (Sear & Gordon, 2002).

Sears and Gordon (2002) noted that a value that a community or society holds, plays a commanding role in influencing the type of career students make. They argued that students come from a society that is cultured with some deeply rooted values that they hold to and any career that seems to undermine these values are unlikely to be pursued. For instance, in Kenya among the Kalavokia sect community where going to see a doctor for treatment is prohibited, it's so unlikely that a student from that community will pursue a career in medicine because it contradicts their religion. The next aspect of career choice that influences students' career choice is personal skills (Hooley, 2012).

Skills

Hewitt (2010) defined skill as ability to do something. According to Sear & Gordon, (2002), one might be unsure of his or her skills and underrate or minimize them. Most of us have difficulties in identifying our skills. Skill may be natural abilities or may be acquired through education and training. In the university and college, one acquires life skills like finance management, organization and time management as well as skills to help him or her earn a living. There are different types of skills; transferable skills are those that can be utilized in several different occupations (Hooley, 2012). Example of these skills includes, teaching in school and training sales workers, both requires instructional skills. Other examples of transferable skills include analyzing, negotiating, communicating, clarifying and evaluating (Sear and Gordon, 2002).

Opportunity Factors in Making Career Choices

Careers and education do not always synchronize the abilities to the opportunities.” Recent studies show that every one in three college graduates could not find employment requiring a college degree <http://unescoghana.org>. Usually the opposite is true. This is shown to be a new twist on an old line. The study also stated that relevant work experience has given students an upper hand in building a career. Experience rather than education seemed to carry more value in some career choices. A statement from the National Planning Commission (2012) stated that cooperative education combined educational, financial, and career building opportunities. High school students (and parents of those students) should be aware of opportunities such as cooperative education. The commission stated that cooperative education, which has existed for over 90 years, should be an important criterion for selecting the right college (Sear & Gordon, 2002).

Many times the career that a student may have finally settled on, after much anguish, may no longer exist when the student is ready. Olsten Corporation, a temporary hiring agency, stated that as a result of the downsizing and reorganization of the past decade, many organizations have pared down to "core groups of full-time employees complemented by part-timers and networks for flexible staffing" (Kerka, 1997, p.27). According to Kerka (1997), training to be portfolio workers, managing one's skills as if was it their our own job entity, may be the opportunities students will be faced with in the future. He stated that individuals should consider themselves a collection of attributes and skills, not a job. The key skills of the portfolio worker are versatility, flexibility, creativity, self-direction, interpersonal and communication skills, a facility with

computer and information technology, the ability to learn continuously, and the ability to manage work, time, and money (cited in King, 1993). This would be quite different from the traditional view as is known today. Haase, & Lautenschläger, (2011) says fundamental changes of attitude and identity will have to be made. Ideal job is the next variable that will influence the type of career choice that a student will make.

Ideal Job

According to Super, Savicks and Super (2006), the career choice that student take is entrenched in the way they perceived a job to be. They explained most will take a career which conforms to what they perceive to be an "ideal job" and their career decision-making maturity. Professional choice is not ordinary corresponding process; rather, it is a choice made in a situation of many persuading factors. The insight of the perfect job turns as a screen for job suitability and inspires the choice process. One has to having an idea of what the perfect job is in his or her head, precisely what one desires to get up and go to do every day (Sears & Gordon, 2008).

Early career choice has been a cultural, developmental duty that students are required to have achieved by the end of their high school from surveyed high schools; varied difference existed in career choice maturity (Hewitt, 2012). In the most prosperous schools, career choices had been made, and students entering college or advanced training knew what they needed and what they were going to do. In the lower income schools, the lack of career decision-making was the norm of the day (Sear & Gordon, 2002).

Mentorship

In a study, Hin, Tim, Leung, Fleming, Elena, Vikis and Yoshida (2007), requested medical students to deliberate on the inspiration of mentors on their career choice. Of the total respondents who were questioned, 57 out of 118 with mentors 67 percent (38 out of 57) concurred that the mentors had some influence or strong influence on the career choice they made. About 40 percent of respondents in the student subgroups agreed that their mentors were helpful. The sampled respondents, either with or without mentors rated common guidance and career guidance as the types of backing from mentors that cherished most. When making comparison for those respondents with mentors and those without, or never had mentors, the ones who had had at least one mentor when in high school rated “influence from a mentor” expressively higher than those without, or who never had mentors and the variance was statistically substantial. When comparing mentor influence for students and physicians, there was substantial variance between the two groups (Hin, Tim, Leung, Fleming, Elena, Vikis & Yoshida, 2007). Those students who had access to mentorship at an early age tended to make informed career choice at an early time than those who did not have. These mentorship opportunities helped students to make informed career choice.

Education

According to Newton, Grayson and Whitley (1998), education plays a key part in how people make a career choice. Whereas some professions don't require formal education, ones opportunities are limited without the proper education. If one wishes to know which professions best fit one's education, try and look at some of the job adverts and it will show all the education background one needs to have to meet the requirement (Hewitt, 2010). Alternatively noble

place to start is the Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook. This gives thorough evidence on the essential and ideal education of hundreds of jobs across every industry.

Education falls under opportunities for students because education differs in terms of the system of education, the quality of education and even the level of education (Hooley, 2012). There are those students who are privileged to have access to the best and quality of education and even to the highest level of education whereas others don't. Those who have access to quality education are most likely going to make their career choices early (Sear & Gordon, 2002).

According to Sear and Gordon (2002), the level of parents, guardians and role models education have an influenced on the student's career choice. They believe that the level of education for instance of one's parent will definitely affect the type of career choice he or she made. Sear and Gordon (2002), stated if parents and guardian are not well educated, then this will eventually limits the career of your children. Education background according to Hooley (2012) determines the socialization of an individual. The well cultured and socialized class one was, well informed and informed career choice one is likely to make (Sear & Gordon, 2002). The next aspect in career choice is the personality of an individual.

In 1998, a study was conducted at University of Maine in Maine (as as cited by Moro, 2000) to find out the extent to which school personnel influence students' career plans. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents indicated their high school teachers and the programmes read at the senior high school had

been most influential in their decision, while 20% indicated that their university influenced their career choice.

Johnson (2004) in Kumasi Ghana, studied determiners of career choice of students. With a sample size of 300, he concluded from his study that school personnel influences more were pronounced on students in the boarding schools. This was because the boarders had a much closer rapport with teachers than other students. He found that as many as 41% of entering freshmen to have known one or two teachers well enough to be very friends with them and to be able to talk over such matters as future careers with them. Twenty-six percent (26%) knew three or four teachers that well and 24% knew five or more teachers on this basis.

Research findings lean towards the negative regarding the role of teachers and counsellors on Math, Science, and Technology (MST) career choices. Dick and Rallis (1991) examined 2,000 high school students in the United States of America, and found that teachers had a strong influence on girls' choices of career in mathematics. Other empirical evidence has not been as encouraging. Teacher or counsellor advising tends to reflect a gender bias when directing girls towards traditional careers and boys to non-traditional careers (Gates, 2002). Women in Information Technology (IT) are most discouraged by teachers, guidance counsellors, and male professors (Turner, 2002), although women who moved from non-IT to IT careers often indicated male professors to be a strong influence in that move (Canes & Rosen, 1995). An issue in the United States of America is also the fact that most full-time counsellors devote a small percentage of their time on occupational and job counselling. The National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES) of America

found that career and occupational counselling ranked fifth out of eight functions typically performed by high school counsellors (National Centre for Education Statistics, 2003). Considering that only about 29 percent of girls receive support from career counsellors, this directly impacts the amount of counselling provided to girls. Moreover, middle and high school teachers and counsellors tend to feel comfortable advising in more traditional fields, possibly because they did not have sufficient IT backgrounds to be aware of its career paths (Freeman & Aspray, 1999).

A study on education and its influence on students career choice by Arudo (2008) in Northern Nigeria, found that students believed that their certificate could greatly influence the type of career they found themselves in. So even though they have their choice of career made already, they believe their certificate has the potential of changing their choice of career. With 300 respondents, 75% shared this view while only 25% thought that the certificate cannot change their choice of career.

Challenges in Making Career Decision

There are several identified challenges that are common in the career decision making process among students. Some of the challenges identified include, interests, values and abilities which are perceived as important personal factors in career decision making; direct and vicarious work experience which influenced expected career choice of students (Lent, Singley, Sheu, Schmidt & Schmidt, 2007). Due to these challenges, there is need for support in practices of exposing students to career exploration activities that would enable them to clarify their interests, values and abilities in relation to the occupation field of their choice. Financial concerns, negative social family influences, role

conflicts, personal adjustment difficulties and ability limitations, impend on student's career choices and therefore such factors are seen as negative influences on career decision making processes (Hoffmann, Jackson & Smith, 2005). Mau (2004) identified lack of confidence, low motivation, lack of access to education and poverty as challenges to decision-making. Moreover, ethnic and gender discrimination, financial problems, family attitudes, perceived lack of ability and lack of educational opportunities have also been cited as acting as challenges to career decision-making (Punch, Creed & Hyde, 2006).

Harren (as cited in Julien, 1999) noted that challenges occurred when people did not know what information was needed, where to find relevant information, when there is a lack of awareness of sources of information, when sources of information needed were non-existent, when there was a lack of communication skills, self-confidence or ability, discouragement by sources approached for information, delays encountered in information seeking, and inaccurate and inappropriate information received and information scatter. According to Morgan and Ness (2003) factors that might also contribute to challenges in career decision-making include career indecision. Career indecision includes:

Lack of Readiness

Factors that contribute to lack of readiness include lack of motivation to begin the process of decision making. General indecisiveness that permeates all types of decision making and beliefs in dysfunctional career decision making myths, for example, that career decisions are best made by experts are also some of the factors that illustrate lack of readiness.

Lack of information and inconsistent information

Factors in this domain include lack of information about what entails career decision making process such as not knowing how to optimally make career decisions. Poor self-knowledge regarding one's capabilities, interests or personal traits serve as some of the issues relating to lack of information. Included in this category is limited information about occupations and what is involved in these occupations as well as various options that are available. Lack of information about the ways in which one can get career information. Inconsistent information often influences career indecision. This inconsistency is often due to unreliable information that students have. Coping mechanisms that were identified by Lent et al. (2002) in the career decision making process included direct problem focused coping and social support seeking; financial strategies for example soliciting loans; cognitive restructuring (acknowledging that everyone is different and have different abilities) and cognitive reframing that is using ones family situation as a motivation to work harder. Choosing a career and facilitating career development remains dynamic as lifelong learning, expanding lifestyle options and the changing workplace presents new opportunities.

Chapter Summary

The chapter reviewed literature on some theories on career choice. Super's Theory suggested that career choice and development is essentially a process of developing and implementing a person's self-concept. Another theory that was reviewed was Bandura's Social cognitive theory (SCT) which emphasises the bidirectional interactions between three elements, namely person, environment and behavior. All the three operate interactively as

determinants of one another. Bandura's SCT theorised that a person's self-efficacy, or confidence that they can successfully perform a task, has a mutual relation with outcome expectations, or the consequences people anticipate resulting from a particular behaviour. The chapter also reviewed literature on the environmental factors that influence career choice.

On personality factors in making career choices it was found that it is more helpful for one to know more about his or her personality because this increase ones self-awareness and may help one in identifying preferred career choice. Some of these are interests, values and skills. On opportunity factors in making career choices it was found that careers and education do not always synchronize the abilities to the opportunities." Some opportunity factors has to do with the ideal job, mentorship and education.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This study was about determinants of career choice among public senior high schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa. This chapter describes the research methods that were used in the study. These include the research design, sample and sampling techniques, population, instrumentation. It also describes the data sources including the methods of data collection, ethical concerns and data handling procedures.

Research Design

Research design describes the basic structure of a study, the nature of the hypothesis and the variables involved in the study (Gay, 1992). Mouton (2001) defines research design as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research. It provides procedural outline for the conduct of any investigation. It thus reflects the plan that specifies how data relating to a given construct should be collected and analysed.

For the purpose of this study, the descriptive design was used for the study. Descriptive design involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject of study (Gay, 1992). According to Kulbir (2009), descriptive design is a research design that seeks to find factors associated with certain occurrences, outcomes, condition or types of behaviours. Osuala (2001) noted that descriptive survey is versatile and practical, especially to the researcher in that they identify present

needs. He further notes that descriptive research is basic for all types of research in assessing the situation as a prerequisite for conclusion and generalisation. According to Best and Kahn (2007), the main feature of this type of design is that it describes the current state of a phenomenon, attitudes that are felt and trends that are ongoing. It involves the collection of data in order to test hypotheses or answer research concerning the current state of the subject under study. The main purpose is to observe, describe and document aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs. This design makes use of various data collection techniques such as pre-testing of questionnaire, observation, interviews, or examination of documents (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2003). This type of research is important because it makes use of visual aids such as charts and graphs to assist the reader in understanding the data distribution (Jacobs, 2011).

On the contrary, if strict measures are not taken, data in descriptive survey research may be susceptible to distortion through the introduction of bias into the research design (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2003). Another disadvantage of descriptive survey is that, though it relies on direct observation for the acquisition of data, the data have to be organised and presented systematically before accurate conclusions can be drawn. If care is not taken, the research might not draw accurate conclusions from the data gathered (Jacob, 2011).

It is a scientific tool where relationship between variables are being determined and follow up questions can be asked and items that are not clear can be explained, and since the population was so large, it enables the researcher make generalizations based on the representative sample chosen. Not only is descriptive survey objective, it also observes, describes and documents aspect

of a situation as it occurs naturally (Jacob, 2011). The descriptive design makes use of randomisation so that errors may be estimated when population characteristics are inferred from observation of samples (Wallen, 2000). The design is seen as appropriate for the study because:

- a. The nature of the topic requires that data is collected through self-report measures.
- b. Large amounts of data can be collected within a short period of time.

This design helps to collect data by asking respondents questions about the construct under investigation. The main difficulty with the design however is demand characteristics, as respondents try to give responses in ways that reflect their idea of what responses the researcher wants from them. Despite the inherent disadvantage, the descriptive design was chosen because would help to assess the factors responsible for the career choice among public senior high schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa public senior high schools. It simply specified the nature of the given phenomena with a description of the situation using a specified population.

Study Area

The study was carried out in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District which is located in the north-central part of Central Region of Ghana. It is bordered to the north by Birim South District of the Eastern Region, while Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam, Assin and Agona District share common boundaries with the district on the south, west and east respectively. Breman Asikuma is the capital town of the district. The population of the District according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census was 112,706 representing 5.1% of the region's total population. It covers an area of 884.84 square kilometres. It is located between

latitude 5° 51 and 5° 52 North longitude 1° 50 and 1° 5 West. The District is generally low-lying ranging between 15m-100m above sea level. The study area was chosen, as an indigene of the district, to give my quota to the youth base on my finding to aid in their career choice.

Population

Gay (1992) defines population in research as the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which he/she would like the results of the study to be generalized. He further explained that the defined population has at least one characteristic that differentiates it from other groups. According to Pilot and Hungler (1996), a study population reflects the entire aggregate of cases that meet designated set of criteria. It is the participants the researcher wishes to make generalisations of his findings to.

The target population for this study was of all student in senior high schools in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District. According to the GES, Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District (2017), the target population at the time of this study was 4667 students.

Table 1-*Distribution of Population for the Study*

School	Class	Number of boys	Number of girls	Number of students
Breman Asikuma	SHS 1	431	409	840
SHS	SHS 2	460	457	917
	SHS 3	350	314	664
				2421
Brakwa SHS	SHS 1	363	337	700
	SHS 2	61	51	112
	SHS 3	40	37	77
				889
Agona Odoben SHS	SHS 1	285	305	590
	SHS 2	177	159	336
	SHS 3	222	209	431
				1357
Totals		2389	2278	4667

Source: GES, Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District (2017)

The accessible population for the study was made up of all students from the three public senior high schools in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District, with 4,667 students.

Sampling Procedures

According to Sarantakos (1998), sample consists of carefully selected subjects of the units that comprise the entire population. Sarantakos (1998) sees sample as a subset of a population to which the researcher wants to generalize the results. Sampling techniques and procedures refer to the methods used to

select sample from the target population. The process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population is known as sampling (Polit & Hungler, 1999).

Concerning the sample size, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) recommended that with a population of five thousand (5000), three hundred and fifty seven (357) sample size was representative of the five thousand population. Therefore, since the total population is four thousand six hundred and sixty-seven (4667) a sample size of three hundred and fifty-seven (357) is representative of the target population.

The purposive sampling procedure was used to select only the public senior high schools in the district for the study. The stratified sampling method was used to group students into three strata, thus form one, form two and form three. Simple random sampling, thus the lottery method was used to select from each stratum. The researcher wrote “Yes” and “No” on a piece of paper and put them in a container and shook vigorously. Students were then made to pick from the container, all those who picked “Yes” were selected for the study. Moreover, to get an equivalent proportion of student participants from the schools, Babbie’s (2001) formula was used to determine the sample for each school. The formula is

$$s = \frac{(n)}{N} \times k$$

Where **s** stands for the sample to be selected from a school;

(n) stands for the entire population of the school;

N stands for the size of the target population (4667); and

K stands for the sample size (357).

Hence, for Breman Asikuma Senior High School whose students' population is given as 2421, applying the Babbie's (2001) formula, gave the outcome as shown below:

$$\frac{2421 \times 357}{4667} = 185 \text{ (approximately)}$$

Table 2- *Distribution of the sample size*

School	Male	Female	Number of Students	Sample from each school
Breman Asikuma SHS	1241	1180	2421	185
Brakwa SHS	464	425	889	68
Agona Odoben SHS	681	676	1357	104
Totals	2389	2278	4667	357

Source: Field survey, Afful (2017)

Data Collection Instrument

Instrumentation refers to the development of tools or instruments for gathering data from the field. Some of these include questionnaires, interview schedule, etc. Although a number of instruments for data collection could have been used, a questionnaire was deemed most appropriate for the study. Questionnaires are easy to administer, friendly to complete and fast to score and therefore take relatively less time from researchers and respondents (Knowles, 1980). Despite the numerous advantages of questionnaires dishonesty can be an issue. Thus, respondents may not be 100 percent truthful with their answers. This can happen for variety of reasons, including social desirability bias and attempting to promote confidentiality. However, dishonesty was reduced by

assuring respondents that their privacy is valued and that the process prevents personal identification. It also has a weakness of respondents skipping questions which are complicated, and this can affect the result of the study; notwithstanding, the questions were made uncomplicated to avoid questions skipping so that better completion rates could be obtained. With the development of the questionnaire, thorough reading was first of all done on the factors that influence career choice and with the help of my supervisors. Based on the items on factors that influence career choice, the rest of the items were developed to be utilized in this study. The questionnaire was self-designed respectively for students on factors that influence their career choice.

The questionnaire was made up of four sections, A, B, C, and D. Section A elicited demographic data of the students, section B which was made up of 9 items elicited information on the environmental factors that influence career choice of students. Section C was made up of 7 items which sought information on the effects of opportunity on career choice of students. Section D was made up of 9 items which sought information on self-knowledge on career choice of students. All the sections were structured with closed-ended questions

Pre-testing, Reliability and Validity

Content- related evidence helped to determine if the content of the instrument contains an appropriate or adequate sample of the domain it is supposed to represent or reflect. Content- related evidence and face-validity were used to ensure validity of the instrument. This was done by giving the questionnaire to an expert who had knowledge in educational research. The validity and reliability of the instrument was established to make sure that it was internally consistent within itself.

The instrument that was used for the study was pre-tested. Pre-testing in the view of Donald (1990) helps the researcher to decide whether the study is feasible and worthwhile to continue and also provides an opportunity to assess the appropriateness and practicality of the data collection instrument. The instrument was pre-tested in order to check understanding and ambiguity and correct any misunderstandings which would be due to the framing and construction of the items. The reliability index for the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha reliability to check for the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The reliability coefficient for the Section B of the questionnaire using Cronbach alpha was .71, Section C was .69 and Section D had reliability coefficients of .73. However, the overall reliability coefficient for the instruments was .82. Pre-testing was conducted at Bisease Senior High school because they have the have similar characteristics such as programmes, gender and size. The data was subjected to content validity by ensuring that the items were measuring the content sampled. This was known as content validity. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) defined validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results.

Data Collection Procedure

Letter of introduction was obtained from the Head of Department of Guidance and Counselling in the University of Cape Coast, which solicited for the assistance of the Headmasters/Headmistresses of Senior High Schools for data collection. Research assistant (who is Master philosophy colleague) was employed to assist me with the data collection. The research assistant happened to be a course mate at the University of Cape Coast. The research assistant helped with the administration and collection of the data. The stratified

sampling method was used to group students into three strata, thus form one, form two and form three. Simple random sampling, thus the lottery method was used to select from each stratum. Yes and No were written on a piece of paper and put them in a container and shook vigorously. Students were then made to pick from the container, all those who picked “Yes” were selected for the study. Students were encouraged to provide honest responses since the study was for academic purposes and was useful to the school and students. Ethical letter was also obtained from the faculty.

Data Processing and Analysis

Analysis of data provided facts and figures that enabled me to interpret results and make statements about the findings of the study. The data was collated and edited in order to address questions that have been answered partially or not answered. For effective statistical presentation and analysis, the questionnaire was serially numbered to facilitate easy identification. It was necessary to observe this precaution to ensure quick detection of tiny errors when they occur in the tabulation of the data. Responses to the various items in the questionnaires were added, tabulated and statistically analysed. All items of the questionnaires were coded. Items in the form of four-point Likert-type scale were rated between 4-1, with 4 being the highest and 1 being the lowest.

Section A was on some demographic data of the respondents. These responses were analysed using frequencies and percentages. Data on research question one was analysed using frequencies and percentages. Means and standard deviations were used to analyse data to answer research question two. Data on research question three was analysed using percentages and frequencies. Content analysis was used to analysed data to answer research

question four. Under this, the responses of respondents were studied to identify the pattern of their responses. The responses were categorised into themes and further presented in frequencies and percentages table. Independent samples t-test was used to test the hypothesis.

Ethical Consideration

Research ethics refers to the correct rules of conduct necessary when carrying out research. It describes the need for participants to understand the aims, objectives and potential harm that such involvement may have on them (Seidman, 2006). It also spells out that they have the right to withdraw even after consent has been given. This is in line with Cohen, Manion and Morrison. (2000) and Mertens (2010) who stated that informed consent arises from the participant's right to freedom. Researchers have moral responsibility to protect participants from harm. The primary responsibility for the conduct of ethical research lies with the researcher. Researchers have a responsibility to ensure as far as possible that the physical, social and psychological well-being of the research participant are not detrimentally affected by the research. Research relationships should be characterized, whenever possible, by mutual respect and trust. In this study, the purpose of the study was carefully reviewed with each participant before they were involved in the research.

Punch (2008) is of the opinion that researchers should be mindful of ethical issues especially in social research because it is concerned with data about people. Consideration for moral issues and respect for participants is essential in social research. Hence, in this research several ethical issues were taken into consideration. The research addressed all ethical concerns which include informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality. Appendix 3 was

ethical clearance for the study obtained from University of Cape Coast-College of Education Studies (Ethical Review Board)

The participants were made aware that their participation was voluntary, and that they were free to decline or accept or decline to engage in the research. Anonymity of study respondents was also highly taken into consideration in the present study. Oliver (2010) pointed out that anonymity is a vital issue in research ethics because it gives the participants the opportunity to have their identity concealed. In this research, fictitious names will be used for identification purposes which could not be traced to the participants. In order not to unnecessarily invade the privacy of participants, I made prior visits to schools before the data collection to seek for their consent. Neither names nor any identifiable information from respondents was taken as a way of ensuring the ethical principle of anonymity. This was to prevent possible victimization of respondents where certain responses may be viewed as unpalatable to other stakeholders.

On the issue of confidentiality, efforts were made to maintain confidentiality of the responses of the participants. Participants were told that their responses would be kept confidential and that no one known to them would have access to the information provided and none of the respondents' names were recorded in the study. Most importantly on the ethical issues of the study, pieces of information that were cited from earlier studies on factors affecting career guidance to support the review of related literature was duly acknowledged through both citation and referencing in order to avoid academic dishonesty otherwise known as plagiarism.

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted the research design, population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments and procedures and data processing analysis. Descriptive research design was deemed appropriate for this study though it is susceptible to distortion through the introduction of bias into the research design and it relies on direct observation for the acquisition of data. Public Senior High Schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District was the population for this study. The simple random sampling and multistage sampling techniques was used to sample participants for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The general purpose of this study was to find the factors responsible for career choice among public senior high schools' students in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District in the Central Region of Ghana. The study specifically sought to determine the environment factors that influenced career choice among public senior high schools' students, available opportunities that influenced career choice among public senior high schools' students', students' self-knowledge that influenced their career choice and the challenges that senior high school students faced in making career choice.

This chapter presents the results of the analyses and discussion of the findings of the study. The data were analysed through frequencies, percentages, computation of means, standard deviations, one sample t-test and content analysis as presented in the previous chapter. The test was conducted at 0.05 level of significance.

Background Information of Respondents

The study was carried out in public senior high schools' in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District in the Central Region of Ghana. The sample size for the study was 357 senior high school students.

Gender of Respondents

Table 3 presents the gender distribution of respondents involved in the study.

Table 3- *Distribution of Respondents by Gender*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	153	42.9
Female	204	57.1
Total	357	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

It was found that 57.1% of the respondents were females whilst 42.9% were males.

Age of Respondents

Table 4 presents the age distribution of respondents involved in the study.

Table 4- *Distribution of Respondents by Age*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 14 years	11	3.1
14-18 years	250	70.0
Above 18 years	96	26.9
Total	357	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

Table 4 shows that 70.0% of the participants were between 14 to 18 years of age whilst 3.1% were below 14 years.

Course of Study of Respondents

Table 5 presents respondents courses of study.

Table 5- Respondents Course of Study

Courses	Frequency	Percentage
Business	53	14.8
General Art	217	60.8
General Science	20	5.6
Agriculture	67	18.8
Total	357	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

It can be observed that 60.0% of the respondents read General Art, 18.8% read Agriculture, 14.8% read Business and 5.6% also read General Science.

Research Question One

What are the environmental factors that influence career choices among public senior high school students in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District?

The focus of this research question was to find out from respondents the environmental factors which influenced their career choices. Respondents were requested to provide responses to ten (10) items. The responses were score on a four-point likert type scale as 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-agree and 4-strongly agree. The responses of the respondents were combined and put under two categories as “Agree” and “Disagree”. The results of the data analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6- *Distribution of Results of Environmental Factors which Influence Career Choice*

Statement	Agree		Disagree	
	Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)
1. My parents have great influence in my career choice.	309	86.5	48	13.4
2. Teachers have been the greatest influence in my career choice.	230	64.4	127	35.6
3. My friends have been the greatest influence in making my career choice.	273	76.5	84	23.5
4. Counsellors have been the greatest influence in my career choice.	241	67.6	116	32.4
5. Money has been an issue in choosing a career	323	90.5	34	9.5
6. Moving with students in tertiary institutions do affect the choice of career among senior high school students	298	83.5	59	16.5
7. Living in a low socioeconomic environment can affect the choice of career among senior high school students	226	63.4	131	36.7
8. My parents chose my senior high school subjects.	55	15.4	302	84.6
9. Rules and regulations in jobs do affect choice of career among senior high school students	99	27.7	258	72.3
10. The success of my relatives in similar career path will influence my choice.	62	17.4	243	68.1

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

The results showed that in general respondents involved in the study indicated that environmental factors influenced their choice of career. It was found that 90.5% indicated that money had been an issue in choosing a career

whilst 9.5% disagreed. Also, 86.5% agreed that their parents had great influence in their career choice whilst 13.4% disagreed. The study found that 83.5% agreed that moving with students in tertiary institutions did affect their choice of career whilst 16.5% disagreed. The study revealed that 76.5% agreed that their friends had been the greatest influence in making their career choice whilst 23.5% disagreed. Moreover, 67.6% agreed that counsellors had been the greatest influence in their career choice whilst 32.4% disagreed. The results further showed that 64.4% agreed that teachers had been the greatest influence in their career choice whilst 35.6% disagreed. It was additionally observed that 63.4% of the respondents agreed that living in a low socioeconomic environment affected the choice of their career.

Research Question Two

What influence does opportunity have in career choosing among public senior high school students in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District?

The purpose of research question two was to find out from respondents what influence opportunity had in their career choice. Respondents were requested to provide responses to seven (7) items. The responses were scored on a four-point likert type scale as 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-agree and 4-strongly agree. A cut-off point of 2.5 was computed by multiplying the weight of responses divided by the number of responses. The cut-off point of 2.5 was compared with the mean scores for each item. A mean score below 2.5 indicated disagree whilst above 2.5 indicated agree. The results of the data analysis are presented in Table 7.

Table 7- *Analysis of Results of Influence of Opportunity on Students Career Choice*

Statement	M	SD
1. My perception of an ideal job will play a role in my career choice.	3.41	.96
2. Mentorship opportunity will play a role in my career choice	3.58	.63
3. Education opportunity will play a role in my career choice.	3.63	.82
4. My easy access to a particular job will play a role in my career choice	3.28	.80
5. My academic ability will determine my career choice	3.30	.62
6. My interest in a particular career is as a result of my family member who are in that career	2.94	.97
7. I have access to employment in a family business	3.45	.74

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

The results from Table 7 revealed that in general respondents indicated that opportunities influenced their career choices. Respondents indicated that education opportunity would play a role in their career choice ($M=3.63$, $SD=.82$). It was also found that respondent agreed that mentorship opportunity would play a role in their career choice ($M=3.58$, $SD=.63$). The results of the study showed that respondents agreed that they had access to employment in a family business ($M=3.45$, $SD=.74$). It was revealed that respondents agreed that their perception of an ideal job would play a role in my career choice ($M=3.41$, $SD=.96$).

Research Question Three

How does student's self-knowledge influence career choice among public senior high schools in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District?

This question sought to find out from students how their self-knowledge influenced their career choices. Respondents were requested to provide

responses to ten (11) items. The responses were scored on a four-point Likert type scale as 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-agree and 4-strongly agree. The responses of the respondents were combined and put under two categories as “Agree” and “Disagree”. The results of the data analysis are presented in Table 8.

Table 8- *Distribution of Results of Influence of Self-Knowledge on Career Choice*

Statement	Agree		Disagree	
	Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)
1. My values played or will play a role in my career choice	313	86.9	47	13.1
2. My skills played or will play a role in my career choice.	322	90.2	35	9.8
3. I will choose my career choice based on my interest in a particular occupation	285	79.9	72	20.1
4. Thinking about career choice now is a waste of time	233	65.2	124	38.8
5. My academic ability will determine my career choice	91	25.4	266	74.6
6. Once I have my WASCE results, then I can make a decision on my career choice	127	35.6	230	64.4
7. Teachers’ characteristics do influence students’ motivation in choosing a career	309	86.5	48	13.4
8. I choose a career based on the call of God upon my life	246	68.9	111	31.1
9. I will only make a choice that will make me fulfilled	308	86.3	49	13.7
10. I have no career plans at present	244	68.3	113	31.7
11. I will only make a choice that will make me fulfilled	218	61.1	139	39.0

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

From Table 8 the results indicated that respondents agreed that self-knowledge influenced their career choice. It was found that 90.2% of the respondents agreed that their skills played or will play a role in their career choice whilst 9.8% disagreed. Also, 86.9% of the respondents agreed that their values played or will play a role in their career choice whilst 13.1% disagreed. It was observed that 86.5% of the respondents agreed that teachers' characteristics do influence their motivation in choosing a career whilst 13.4% disagreed. The study results further revealed that 86.3% of the respondents agreed that they will only make a choice that will make them fulfilled whilst 13.7% disagreed. It was also shown that 79.9% of the respondents agreed that their academic ability will determine their career choice whilst 20.1% disagreed. Additionally, it was noted that 68.9% of the respondents agreed that they choose a career based on the call of God upon their life whilst 31.1% disagreed.

Research Question Four

What are the challenges that senior high school students faced in making career choice?

Research question four sought from respondents' challenges that they faced in making career choice. To analyze data pertaining to research question four, responses of respondents were examined to identify the pattern. The responses were then put into five categories. The results of the analysis of the responses are presented in Table 9.

Table 9- *Distribution of Challenges in Making Career Decisions*

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. Financial concerns	245	68.7	1 st
2. Negative family influence	28	7.8	4 th
3. Personal adjustment difficulties	30	8.4	3 rd
4. Low motivation	35	9.8	2 nd
5. Lack of ability	19	5.3	5 th
Total	357	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

Table 9 shows that 68.7% of the respondents indicated financial concerns as a challenge in making career decisions. It was also revealed that 9.8% indicated low motivation as a challenge in making career decisions. Moreover, 8.4% mentioned that personal adjustment difficulties as a challenge in making career decisions, 7.8% noted negative family influence as a challenge in making career decisions and lack of ability was indicated by respondent as a challenge in making career decisions. It was observed that respondents involved in the study mostly indicated financial concerns as a major challenge in career decision making.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference between influence of environment on career choice on the basis of gender.

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference between influence of environment on career choice on the basis of gender.

The hypothesis was to test whether significant gender difference existed in influence of environment on students' career choices. Independent samples

t-test was conducted at 0.05 level of significance and the results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10- *Independent Samples t-test of Gender of Influence of*

Environment on Students' Career Choice on account of gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	p-value
Male	153	27.20	2.63			
				-1.387	355	.167
Female	204	27.71	3.48			

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

It was found that the mean score for female respondents (M=27.71, SD=3.48) was higher than mean score for male respondents (M=27.20, SD=2.63) on the influence of environment on students' career choice. However, the results did not show any statistically significant difference on the influence of environment on students' career choice on account of gender at $t(355)=-1.387$, $p>0.05$. Hence the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Discussion

Environmental Factors Influence on Career Choice

The purpose of research question sought to find out from respondents the environmental factors which influenced their career choices. The findings of the study showed that in general respondents involved in the study indicated that environmental factors influenced their choice of careers. Respondents indicated that money had been an issue in choosing a career, their parents had great influence in their career choice, moving with students in tertiary institutions did affect their choice of career, their friends had greatest influence on making their career choice, counsellors had greatest influence on their career choice. It was also found that teachers had greatest influence on their career

choice and living in a low socioeconomic environment also influenced their choice of career. The findings of the study suggest that students' choice of career is mostly influenced by environmental factors. The findings are in line with findings of Gostein (2000) who reported that socioeconomic environment influenced career choices among adolescents. This occurs more in low socioeconomic circles where the child may not have any other choice. Here the parent who is a plumber takes his child with him on careers or actually apprentices the child to a friend.

The findings in terms of parent having great influence on their children career choice was supported by findings of Yao (1999) who assert that influence from parents has to do with the development of interest. From the time they are young parents cultivate certain career interests in their children. This is done through the play materials they provide, "the encouragement or discouragement of hobbies and interest, by the activities they encourage their children to participate in and by the total experiences they provide in the family" (Gostein 2000, p. 532). For example, a musician mother encourages her child to take music lessons. In the U.S.A, an estimated 44% of physicians sons take to medicine, 28% of lawyers sons choose law (Yao, 1999). Bell, as cited in Gostein (2000) opined that parental influence on the choice of careers by the youth is "role model". This Gostein (2003) says, works well where the child identifies closely with the parent Mortimer (2005) is reported to have found a confirmation for this when he said that a combination of prestigious paternal role model and a close father-son relationship fostered a very effective parent's "transfer" of career values and influence on children's career choice. Gostein (2003) opines that parents of low socio-economic status are not able to influence

their children's choice of careers that much. Gostein (2003) gives reasons for this. That is: (a) they are not close to their children who are young adults nor are they very actively involved in their care (b) their careers are less prestigious and because of the lack of career prestige there is also a lack of admiration from their children and therefore no encouragement to emulate. King (1993) conducted a study in Kenya on parental behaviour to the career choice of teaching. He found that 53% of the participants identified mothers as very encouraging in their choice of teaching. Mothers in the study created a desire in their children to work with individuals of diverse family backgrounds, to be creative, and to feel that their abilities were well suited for teaching.

Similarly, Natalie (2006) conducted a study in North Africa on young adults through interaction with the context of family, school and community learn about and explore careers which ultimately lead to their career choice. He noted that adolescents' own aspirations are influenced by their parent's aspirations or expectations. Parental support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to influence career choice. Taylor (2004) also confirmed that children may choose what their parents desire simply to please them. Oyamo and Amoth (2008) reported in their studies in Kenya that students tend to seek help from their parents more than teachers and that play a major role in the career choice of students.

Parents influence on their children career choice go a long way to affect children in so many ways. Olando (2010) conducted a study in Liberia to identify factors that influence the career choice of students and found that, 65% of the students chose careers because their parents wanted them to be in that career and nothing else. Family is one of the most influential contexts of

socialization in childhood and adolescence (Dryler, 1998). While the impact of parental guidance is felt unequivocally in the choice of traditional and non-traditional careers, it is most strongly observed in the choice of non-traditional careers. Direct forms of parental influence, such as the degree to which students see their parents choosing IT careers or having contact with technology, are strong motivators to train for technical jobs (Breakwell., 1988; Dryler, 1998).

It was found that teacher had great influence on students' career decisions. This was confirmed by findings of Dick and Rallis (1991) who noted that teachers had a strong influence on girls' choices of career in mathematics. Other empirical evidence has not been as encouraging. Teacher or counsellor advising tends to reflect a gender bias when directing girls towards traditional careers and boys to non-traditional careers (Gates, 2002). Women in Information Technology (IT) are most discouraged by teachers, guidance counsellors, and male professors (Turner, 2002), although women who moved from non-IT to IT careers often indicated male professors to be a strong influence in that move (Canes & Rosen, 1995).

It was found that generally respondents indicated that opportunities influenced their career choices. Respondents indicated that education opportunity, mentorship opportunity, access to employment in a family business and perception of an ideal job would play a role in their career choice. The findings of the present study confirm findings of Super, Savicks and Super (2006) who reported that career choice that student made was entrenched in the way they perceived job to be, most will take a career which conforms to what they perceived to be an "ideal job" and their career decision-making maturity. Professional choice is not ordinary corresponding process; rather, it is a choice

made in a situation of many persuading factors. The insight of the perfect job turns as a screen for job suitability and inspires the choice process. Sears and Gordon (2008) asserted that one has to have an idea of what the perfect job, precisely what one desired to get up and go to do every day before deciding for the job. Hewitt (2012) noted that career choice has been a cultural, developmental duty that students are required to have achieved by the end of their high school from surveyed high schools. In the most schools, career choices had been made, and students entering college or advanced training knew what they needed and what they were going to do. In the lower income schools, the lack of career decision-making was the norm of the day (Sear & Gordon, 2002). Students need to choose a career that is link to the programme there are perusing.

Mention should be made of the fact that the findings in terms of mentorship as an opportunity to have influence on students' career choice was supported by findings of Hin, Tim, Leung, Fleming, Elena, Vikis and Yoshida (2007) who noted that mentors had some influence or strong influence on the career choice students make. Respondents agreed that their mentors were helpful in choosing their careers. It was found that guidance and career guidance were found as the types of backing from mentors that they cherished most. When making comparison for those respondents with mentors and those without, or never had mentors, the ones who had had at least one mentor when in high school rated "influence from a mentor" expressively higher than those without, or who never had mentors and the variance was statistically substantial. When comparing mentor influence for students and physicians, there was substantial variance between the two groups (Hin, Tim, Leung,

Fleming, Elena, Vikis& Yoshida, 2007). Those students who have access to mentorship at an early age tend to make informed career choice at an early time than those who does not have. These mentorship opportunities help students to make informed career choice. The next in the opportunity factors that influence students" career choice is education.

The findings in terms of education as an opportunity influencing students' career choice was consistent with findings of Newton, Grayson and Whitley (1998) who reported that education played a key part in how people made a career choice. Whereas some professions did not require formal education, ones opportunities are limited without the proper education. Education falls under opportunities for students because education differs in terms of the system, the quality and even the level (Hooley, 2012). There are those students who are privileged to have access to the best and quality of education and even to the highest level of education whereas others don't. Those who have access to quality education are most likely going to make their career choices early (Sear & Gordon, 2002).Sear and Gordon (2002)the level of parents, guardians and role models education have an influence in the student's career choice. They believed that the level of education for instance of one's parent would affect the type of career choice he or she made. Education background according to Hooley (2012) determined the socialization of an individual. The well cultured and socialized class one wss, the well informed and informed career choice one is likely to make (Sear & Gordon, 2002). The next aspect in career choice is the personality of individual.

In 1998, a study was conducted at University of Maine in Maine (as as cited by Moro, 2000) to find out the extent to which school personnel influence

student's career plans. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents indicated their high school teachers and the programmes read at the senior high school had been most influential in their decision, while 20% indicated that their university influences their career choice. Johnson (2004) in Kumasi Ghana, reported that school personnel influences are more pronounced on students in the boarding school. This is because the boarders have a much closer rapport with teachers than other students. He found that as many as 41% of entering freshmen to have known one or two teachers well enough to be very friends with them and to be able to talk over such matters as future careers with them. Twenty-six percent (26%) knew three or four teachers that well and 24% knew five or more teachers on this basis.

The findings revealed that respondents agreed that self-knowledge influenced their career choice. It was found that respondents indicated that values played or would play a role in their career choice, skills played or would play a role in my career choice, would choose their career based on their interest in a particular occupation, thinking about career choice was a waste of time, academic ability would determine their career choice and respondents' teachers' characteristics did influence students' motivation in choosing a career. The findings corroborate with findings of Sear and Gordon (2002) who maintained that self-values influence career choice of students. According to them, one self-value could be seen in in one's action; in the attraction to or avoidance of the pursuit of things such as money, power, or spirituality. Some values hold more meaning than others (Hooley, 2012). Hewitt (2010) indicated that people tend to pursue more vigorously the values that have more meanings to them than those that are less important to them. For instance, getting education; must have

positive implications to people. Sears and Gordon (2002) noted that a value that a community or society hold plays a commanding role in influence the type of career students make. They argued that students come from a society that is cultured with some deeply rooted values that they hold to and any career that seems to undermine this value are unlikely to be pursued.

The study also found that student's skills influenced or played cardinal role in their career choice. This confirms findings of Hewitt (2010) who noted skill as ability to do something. Skill may be natural abilities or may be acquired through education and training (Sear & Gordon, 2002). In the university and college, one acquires life skills like finance management, organization and time management as well as skills to help you earn a living. There are different types of skills; transferable skills are those that can be utilized in several different occupations (Hooley, 2012). Example of these skills includes, teaching in school and training sales workers, both requires instructional skills and all these have influence on students' career choices.

Similarly, the findings in terms of interest as a self-knowledge factor which influence career choice was in line with previous findings of Sear and Gordon (2002) who assert interests as a person's like or dislike and are characterized by the person's intensity of feeling about a subject or things. Interests are learned from parents, in school, from friends, and from your life long experiences. Interest can change, as one experiences life and meet more people; one become interested in new things and discard some of his/her old interests. One also develop more complex thinking and understanding process, and one may even seek new interest and activities with hope of improving his/her and making life more exciting (Hewitt, 2010). Ones the interest of one

keeps changes so does the career choice of a person changes. One seeks a career that meets his interest at time hence the career that one may have wished to take when he was young is not what he eventually does. Hewitt (2010) noted that interest has become the most important factors in determinant and measures of occupational selection. According to Sears and Gordon (2002), interest inventories have been developed to help identify interests and relate them to career and occupations. Interests inventories tall ranking for specific career and occupational preferences. By measuring interests of successful and satisfied people in an occupation, researchers have developed scales that compare the interests of individuals to the interests of people who are certain about what they want to do. It is believed that these occupational scales are effective in predicting career and occupational satisfaction. The next aspects of the factors that play a role in students' career choice is the values that are deeply rooted in ones lives

Challenges in Making Career Decisions

The findings of the study showed that respondents indicated financial concerns as a challenge in making career decisions. It was also revealed that low motivation was a challenge in making career decisions. Respondents mentioned personal adjustment difficulties, negative family influences as challenges and lack of ability as challenges in making career decisions. Findings were confirmed with previous findings of Lent, Singley, Sheu, Schmidt and Schmidt (2007) who reported some challenges in making career decisions as financial concerns, negative social family influences, role conflicts, personal adjustment difficulties and ability limitations, impend on student's career choices. Mau (2004) identified low motivation a sa challenge to decision-

making. Moreover, financial problems, family attitudes and perceived lack of ability were cited as acting as challenges to career decision-making (Punch, Creed & Hyde, 2006).

Gender Difference in Environment Influence on Career Choice

The hypothesis was tested to find gender difference in environmental influence career choice. It was found that the mean score for female respondents was higher than mean score for male respondents. However, the results from further showed no significant gender difference in influence of environment on students' career choice. The findings of this hypothesis could be attributed to the fact probably it was because both males and females were found in the same environment that was why no significant gender difference existed in the environmental factors which influence students career choice. The finding of hypothesis disagrees with previous findings of Hooley (2012) who found that whether one is male or female has some significant difference in environmental influenced on career choices. For example, gender might have influenced the high school you attended, whether you were encouraged to take risk or not, and more so, the choices of academic major (Hooley, 2012). Often gender related messages are subtle and their influence is difficult to discern.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the Study

The study sought to find out the factors responsible for career choice among public students in senior high schools' students in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District in the Central Region of Ghana. The study specifically examined the environment factors, self-knowledge and challenges that students in the public senior high in the Asikuma- Odoben –Brakwa District faced in making a career choice.

The study used the descriptive survey research design. The target population for the study was all senior high school students in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District in the Central Region of Ghana. The sample size for the study was 357 senior high school students.

A 28-item questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection. The data collected were analysed mainly by descriptive statistics-frequency, percentage tables, means, standard deviations, and independent samples t-test.

Summary of Key Findings

1. It was found that environmental factors influenced respondents choice of careers. Respondents mentioned that money had been an issue in choosing a career, their parents had great influence in their career choice and moving with students in tertiary institutions did affect their choice of career.

2. The study revealed opportunities influenced their career choices. Respondents indicated that education opportunity, mentorship opportunity and access to employment in a family business and perception of an ideal job played a role in their career choice.
3. The findings showed that respondents agreed that self-knowledge influenced their career choice. Respondents indicated that values, skills and interest influenced their career choices.
4. It was also revealed that low motivation influenced the career decisions of respondents. Respondents mentioned personal adjustment difficulties, negative family influence and lack of ability was as challenges in making career decisions.
5. The results showed no significant gender difference in the influence of environment on students' career choice.

Conclusions

From the findings, it is concluded that factors contributing to students' career choice are multi-faceted and could be environmental, opportunity and students' self-knowledge. Students choose their careers under the influence of certain factors that are ideal to their occupational lives. Students' parents, friends, counsellors, teacher and their low socio-economic environment influence their choice of career. Therefore, it should be noted that students' immediate environment is very imperative in determining their career choice. Notwithstanding, education opportunity, access to employment in a family business, mentorship opportunity, perception of an ideal job, easy access to a particular and academic ability also play important role in determining students'

career choice. Moreover, students' interest, values, skills and the call of God upon their lives greatly influence their career choice.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following are recommended:

1. Since students' career choice is contingent on parents, it is recommended that parents should provide the right environment for students' to make their own career choice and not be forced on them.
2. Parents should be encouraged by counsellors, the school authority, government and the mass media on the need to positively guide their children with a view to making realistic career choices.
3. The government should make sure school counsellors are posted to all schools with a view to providing functional career counselling services to students especially as it affects matching their potentials and capabilities to appropriate careers.
4. Again, because interest and skills play important role in determining career choice it is recommended that individuals considering making career choice decisions should opt for a career in which they have interest. All individual should be encouraged to make career choice decisions in areas they have or can acquire knowledge easily, skills and interest as this is likely to promote productivity when someone is doing what they are interested in.
5. Ghana Education Service should make sure Career information is inculcated in the school curriculum so that right from the start students would know what should go into their choice of careers.

Implications for Counselling

1. Before students are counselled on what careers they are suitable, career guidance and counselling staff should endeavour to procure as much data as possible on a student's interests and skills. This will help them be able to guide the students in making right career choice.
2. Career counsellors should be conscious of factors like environmental, opportunity and self-knowledge determinants when guiding the students in order for them to make appropriate choice as regards to their career and future stability.
3. School counsellors need to provide effective conducive environment to support students make well informed career choices.
4. School counsellors also have to undergo rigorous training to equip the students with the necessary skills and knowledge they need in making career choices.

Suggestions for Future Research

The following are recommended for future research.

1. The study should be conducted in the other remaining districts of Ghana so as to have a nationwide representation.
2. Future studies should make use of qualitative methods in determining the career choice among public senior high schools' students in Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District in the Central Region of Ghana.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

The goal of this study is to obtain information of the determinants of career choice among public senior high schools. I, therefore, solicit your cooperation and consent to participate in this study. The confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed. There is no right or wrong responses.

Directions

Please indicate your choice by ticking (✓) or writing your response where necessary.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender : Male [] Female []
2. Age: Below 14years [] 14 - 18 years [] Above 18 years []
3. Course of study: Science [] Business Home [] Econimes []
General Art [] Agricultural Science []

SECTION B

Environmental determinants of career choice among Senior High School students

Please, indicate the extent to which you agree with the environmental determinants of career choice by using S. A means Strongly Agree, A means Agree, D is Disagree, SD means Strongly Disagree.

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
6. My friends have been the greatest influence in making my career choice				
7. Living in a low socio economic environment can affect the choice of career among senior high school students				
8. My parents have great influence in my career choice.				
9. Money has been an issue in choosing a career				
10. My parents chose my senior high school subjects				
11. Teachers have been the greatest influence in my career choice				
12. Moving with students in tertiary institutions do affect senior high school in career choice				
13. Rules and regulations in jobs do affect choice of career among senior high school students				
14. The success of my relatives in similar career path will influence my choice				
15. Counsellors have been the greatest influence in my career choice				

SECTION C

The effect of opportunity on career choice among senior high school students

Please, indicate the extent to which you agree with the opportunity determinants of career choice by using S. A means Strongly Agree, A means Agree, D is Disagree, SD means Strongly Disagree.

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
1. My easy access to a particular job will play a role in my career choice				
2. My interest in a particular career is as a result of my family member who are in that career				
3. I have access to employment in a family business				
4. My academic ability will determine my career choice				
5. Education opportunity will play a role in my career choice.				
6. My perception of an ideal job will play a role in my career choice.				
7. Mentorship opportunity will play a role in my career choice				

SECTION D

The effect of self-knowledge on career choice among senior high school students

Please, indicate the extent to which you agree with the personality as determinants of career choice by using S. A means Strongly Agree, A means Agree, D is Disagree, SD means Strongly Disagree.

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
1. Thinking about career choice now is a waste of time				
2. My interest played or will play a role in my career choice.				
3. I will only make a choice that will make me fulfilled				
4. Once I have my WASCE results, then I can make a decision on my career choice				
5. I choose a career based on the call of God upon my life				
6. My skills played or will play a role in my career choice.				
7. My values played or will play a role in my career choice				
8. Teachers' characteristics do influence students' motivation in choosing a career				
9. I have no career plans at present				