

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

CAREER CHOICE DETERMINANTS AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN THE SUNYANI WEST DISTRICT IN THE BRONG
AHAFO REGION OF GHANA

GRACE AMA ASANTEWAA

2020

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AHAFO REGION OF GHANA

BY
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Thesis submitted to the Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of
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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:

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines of 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 main thrust of this study was to find out the determinants of career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region, Ghana. Descriptive survey design involving the quantitative approach was used for the study. A sample size of 297 (with 96% return rate of 285) students were selected for the study using a multistage sampling procedure. A self-developed questionnaire was used for data collection. Pre-testing of the instrument were done and reliability and validity were ensured. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (Linear Multiple Regression, independent samples t-test, and one-way analysis of variance- ANOVA). It was established that, generally, some school, parent, teacher and student factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The results further show that all the factors influence career choice, their influences varied in degree. The school factors were found to be exert major influence. Furthermore, it was evident that the mean differences (between male and female students) in career choice were not significant. Finally, no significant difference existed among the age range of the students with respect to the factors that influence their career choice. It was recommended that career guidance should be inculcated in the school curriculum so that right from the start (at the early stages) students would be aware and know the kind of career to choose.

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DEDICATION

To my husband and children

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The impact of education to a nation's development cannot be overemphasized. It is based on this idea that Olufunmilayo and Olawaiye (2013) postulated that 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 towards quality of life and social status of her citizens. Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining their future plans. This decision will impart students in Sunyani West District in Brong-Ahafo throughout the lives.

Olufunmilayo and Olawaiye (2013) further asserted that the essence of who the student is, will revolve around what the student want to do with their life- long work. The choice of career has been a serious problem among Senior High School Students in Ghana. No matter what one's age is, the choice of career or desire is an important question for everybody. A lot of students in senior high schools believe that their future is a glorious adventure in which they are bound to succeed. Many of them have the idea that they would be able to work in the public or private establishments as soon as they complete senior high school education (Olufunmilayo & Olawaiye, 2013).

How students have seen themselves in a role in which personality is a determining factor may influence a chosen career. Some careers demand that you have the personality to match the qualities of the occupation. For example, sales personnel have to be out-going. Splaver (2016) said “personality” plays an important role in choosing of the right career. A student’s personality must be self-motivated type, as to investigate career possibilities early in their lives, and not the procrastinating type that waits till they are compelled to decide. Students must take seriously the role grades play in limiting opportunities in the future. Splaver went on to say “It is important for you to have a good understanding of yourself, your personality, if you are to make intelligent career plans” (Splaver, 2016, p. 12). Opportunity is the factor that has shaped career choices of students. Opportunity may influence how students have perceived their future in terms of the reasonable probability of a future in particular career fields. The issue of poverty has played an important determining role in the opportunities available to all.

In the words of Bandura (2002), the major part of people’s life is spent in occupational activities and these pursuits do more than simply provide income for livelihood. There is a widespread agreement that the high school years are crucial for adolescents to become prepared for transition from school to work or college (Amoah, Kwofie & Kwofie, 2015; Ojeda & Flores, 2008). Career related decisions are complicated and have broad and long-term consequences that are not always obvious (Splaver, 2016). The context in which career decisions occur is complex and, therefore, many people require assistance in exploring alternatives and weighing the consequences associated with various options (Splaver, 2016). Holland (2014) cited that there were 190,

000 vacant jobs in the United States but employers could not find employees with the right qualifications to do them. He argued that people are being educated for the wrong future. He further explained that few young people imagine themselves working in services, crafts or technical industries even though government predictions were that these sectors would be the leaders in creating new jobs. This implies that students do not get well-informed guidance in terms of the job market.

Holland (2014) posits that, career is a lifelong assignment which decides how an individual would live. Being able to cater for one's self well, providing for one and the family all depend on the individual's career. As indicated by Holland (2014), an individual's lifestyle may most likely be influenced by his or her career. For example, where one will live, the kind of company one will keep, places where children will attend school and the frequency with which the family may move from place to place can be affected by the type of career one has (Hoppock, 2005). Other issues that may influence one's career include values, ideals, standards and how a person even dresses in his/her everyday life.

The importance of career cannot be overemphasized since through it one is able to provide the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter and clothing and other higher level needs such as those of self-actualization. Moreover, career provides a sense of purpose, self-fulfilment, challenges and development (Baruch, 2004). An individual's career does not influence his life and family alone but the society and country in which the person lives as well. When an individual has employment, he or she is able to contribute his or her quota through the payment of income tax to help in the development of the country making the country have a good economy.

The person with a career is able to put up developmental projects such as buildings that would help in the development of the community in which he or she lives. It can be noted that with employment, one can invest in so many things such as, creating job opportunities for others and thereby reducing the unemployment in our country. The individual who has the career may be able to live a good and a fulfilling life. Such an individual is able to raise a healthy family since with a good career choice all may go well for such an individual. These and many things show how relevant a career is in the lives of all humans (Obiyo & Eze, 2015).

Another point worth mentioning is that career choice is necessary because it makes the student learn about the job market and the opportunities available to young people. This is because even though students may have heard about certain careers, they know little about the job market. Thus, through career choice and career guidance, students can gain first-hand information on the nature of careers, the educational and professional qualifications and other academic requirements needed for the career. Additionally, as a result of career choice, students can be exposed to prospects career-salaries, opportunities for further training, career hazards and other risks in the career.

In 2005, career trend was observed in Ghana where most of the youth trooped into the nursing career because the government realized the risks involved in that career and, therefore, increased the salary of nurses (Amoah et al., 2015). This made so many young people strive to be in the nursing profession because they would earn much. These individuals forgot that career is not all about money and that their interest and abilities really count in their choice of career. The individual who went into nursing because of money sees

blood and may even collapse and with frustration shouts on patients in the course of performing his or her duties as a nurse. This is because the interest that took him/her there was not for the career itself but on the monetary aspect of the career.

Statement of the Problem

The background to the study revealed that Senior High School years are considered critical for adolescents (Amoah et al., 2015; Rowland, 2004; Obiyo & Eze, 2015) because they are in a transitional period from school to work. Failure by students to make the right choices may lead to unhappiness and disapproval by society (Obiyo & Eze, 2015). As noted in the background to the study, career guidance programmes are intended to help students understand their own potential and develop it to the fullest. Most students pass this stage without having chosen their careers because most of the students are confused and apply for tertiary education without knowledge of what they want to pursue (Senyonyi, Ochieng & Sells, 2012).

According to Hansen (2006), career guidance which is needed to provide students with realistic explorative opportunities that could lead to sustainable career choice is not available in most of the Ghanaian senior high schools. Furthermore, career choice which is a long process that empowers the prospective employees for exploration of occupational and educational opportunities as well as the sustainability of career development is lacking in the Ghanaian educational system (Hall, 2002).

From available literature, to the researcher most of the previous studies which were based on careers focused on the career choice of university students without or little on the career choice of the Senior High Schools especially in

the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Career choice, however, is a developmental process which continues till an individual reaches the age of 60 (Super, 2007). From the assertions of Super (2007), it can be said, every student in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region needs to make a career choice in every stage of his/her life.

In Ghana, many youths make wrong career choices 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 (Salami, 1999). Consequently, many of them may be choosing careers that are unsuitable for their personality. When this occurs, they constitute nuisance to themselves and their employers. They are usually unable to contribute meaningfully to the society, and they ultimately become liabilities to the nation.

In the in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region, it appears that most students are jittery when it comes to choosing their future careers. This mostly happens when they are about completing Senior High School. As a teacher in the district, I have encountered and experienced some of these career issues. Considering the aforementioned problems of career choice and the gaps created by previous researchers there is the need to provide empirical evidence in the case of Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. I therefore, undertook the study in order to create awareness about the determinants of career choice to fill the gap in the literature

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to find out the determinants of career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. However, specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify school factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.
2. Explore parental factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.
3. Find out student factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.
4. Explore teacher factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.
5. Find out the factors that best predict career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What school factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?

2. What parental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?
3. What student factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?
4. What teacher factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?
5. Which of the factors best predict career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study.

- H₀1: There is no statistically significant difference between male and female students with respect to the factors that influence their career choice.
- H₁A: There is statistically significant differences between male and female students with respect to the factors that influence the career choice.
- H₀2: There is no statistically significant difference among the ages of students with respect to the factors that influence the career choice.

H₂A: There is statistically significant difference among the ages of the students with respect to the factors that influence their career choice.

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of the study would be of immense help to stakeholders of career guidance in the country. The stakeholders include senior high students, educational institutions, and counsellors in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region and beyond. The study would help the students because they would come to know the importance of career choice. Students would also know the essence of considering their abilities, interests, aptitude before making an informed career choice.

The study may help schools to develop or improve the quality of career guidance and counselling they give to their students by taking into consideration factors that influence the choice of career pathways. School heads and teachers in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region may be made aware of the importance of career guidance in schools and counsellors in schools stand to benefit from this study as it highlights will help the counsellors in schools to provide career guidance to the students to know the factors that influence their career choices. The study may also help national planners of curricula to make informed decisions with regard to career guidance and counselling. The study may also be used as baseline study to encourage other scholars to carry out similar studies in other provinces in Ghana and also in other African countries.

Delimitation

The study did not survey all factors that influence the career choice of Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo

Region. The school, parents, students and teachers factors were employed in this study. The study was also delimited to only some selected Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

Limitations

The study sought to find out the determinants that influence the career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to all students in Ghana. Also, some respondents declined from participating in the study while others might keep on postponing the filling of the questionnaires. Others submitted the questionnaire uncompleted while others never submit it at all. This slowed down the process of data collection. Despite these limitations, measures were taken to ensure validity and reliability of the data that helped to limit some of the weaknesses of the findings.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are conceptually or operationally defined to enhance the understanding of the readers of this work.

Career Path: In this study, career path was used to denote the way that individuals achieve something or the way that their life develops. The term “pathway” was used interchangeably with career choice in this study.

Career: In this study, career is the job or work one does to earn a living.

Choice: In the study, the term career choice refers to the basis of student in preferring the career he wants whether it comes from his/her relatives, peer, and his values in life, interest and school guidance counsellor.

Economic factors: factors that have the potency of influencing one's career choice in the area of finances and conditions of the work.

Educational factors: factors in the field of learning that have potential of influencing an individual's career choice.

School Guidance Counsellor: A person specialized in assisting students in choosing their career and solving educational problems in schools.

Organization of the Study

The study was organised under five chapters. Chapter one consisted of the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study and the research questions. The chapter included delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, definition of terms as well as the organisation of the study. Chapter two dealt with issues concerning conceptual review, theoretical framework and empirical review that guided the study. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section focused on the concept of career, concept of choice. The second section focused on the theories on career choice. The identity of this study was based on these theories. The third section dealt with empirical review of factors and their implications on the present study. The third chapter covered the research design and procedures to be employed for the study. The chapter also described clearly the sample and the instrumentation and the last section of the chapter dealt with the procedures adopted for gathering data and analyzing the data. The fourth chapter presented the results and the discussions obtained. The chapter was grouped into two parts. The first part is the preliminary data and the second part being the main data. The final chapter presented the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations. Areas for further reasech was also suggested.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of the study is to assess the determinants of career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. This chapter primarily reviews literature related to the study. It focused on the work of several authors concerning factors that influence the career choice among Senior High School students. The essence of this review is to provide a framework which constitutes the basis for drawing similarities and differences between this study and those of other writers, and to identify areas that require further investigations. For easy referencing, the literature was reviewed under various sub-headings based on the objectives of the study.

Theories of Career Choice

Several theories have been formulated to explain how and why individuals choose and enter varying occupations. These theories have also attempted to describe and explain some of the difficulties that often arise in the process of making and implementing a career decision. It will not be possible to attempt to describe all the various theories. However, this study deals with five major theories that have viable educational implications for the Ghanaian school system.

The Developmental Theory of Career Choice

This theory was propounded by Ginzberg, Axelrad and Herma in 1939. The theory sees career choice as an irreversible process which occurs in

reasonably clearly marked periods of a person's development (Osipow, 2003). The process is characterized by a series of compromises the individual makes between his wishes and his possibilities. Thus, as children grow or mature they gain knowledge and exposure to alternatives. They, thus, understand themselves and their environment and are better able to make rational choices (Ginzberg & et al, 1939; Thornburg, 1975).

The career life of the individual then is viewed as a developmental process which involves different periods, phases of life which when taken cumulatively results in his or her career development (London, 2003; Osipow, 2003). Thus, when properly motivated, prepared and an adequate encouragement given to make the needed effort the individual will succeed equally well in any given career on this ability level. In developing their theory, Ginzberg and associates used the medium of case study and interview techniques and arrived at what might be summed up as follows:

1. Career choice is not a single decision. It is a developmental process that takes place over a period of time;
2. The process is largely irreversible as a decision made cannot be erased and time could not be reversed.
3. The final choice of career comprises interests, capacities, values and the opportunities and limitations in the real world.

Their theory identifies three phases of the career decision making process. These are (i) fantasy (ii) tentative and (iii) realistic stages. The fantasy stage occurs up to age 11. The period reflects the idealized career choice of the individual influenced by what is observed in the immediate environment. Thus, the students want to be teachers, nurses, doctors, truck drivers and so forth. The

“choices” are without regard to needs, ability, training or any other realistic considerations. The tentative stage (11–18 years) is further subdivided into four: interest, capacity, value and transition periods. During this stage, children begin their career consideration by asking themselves what their interests are and what they would like to do.

The first of these sub-stages is around ages 11 and 12 years. This is the age entry point to our Junior High School; it is the time when children begin to recognize the need to indicate the direction of their career decision. A show of concern occurs here as liked, and disliked activities are identified. Career choices are made on the basis of that career’s potential for intrinsic enjoyment. It has been observed that, often, career choices are reflections of strong identification with the mother even though this identification shows signs of ambivalence (Osipow, 2003). That is, the child recognizes his/her instability and accepts in him/herself the need to postpone final career selection until he/she was a bit older. Osipow (2003), pointed out that this is a developmental phenomena which manifests itself with the onset of adolescence with its physical and emotional changes.

At the second stage (12-15 years), individuals begin to introduce the notion of ability into their career considerations. Having focused on interests, they question themselves as to their ability to perform well in those areas. Identification with the father decreases while the influence of significant others increase. This occurs when individuals realize that there are things about the father’s work not suitable for them.

The third stage (value stage) occurs at age 15 to 16 years. A new concept enters the student’s career considerations – that of service to society (Pecku,

2008). Individuals seem to become aware that “work offers more than the potential for satisfying their own needs, and for the first time shows sign of choosing careers such as medicine for humanitarian reasons rather than because of its status or intrinsic work activities (Osipow, 2003). A few things become clear to the individual at this stage. For example, a clearer picture of the life style offered by different careers emerge. Also emerging is the ability to take into consideration how best to utilize one’s special ability. Lastly, individuals develop a sense of urgency in matters concerning career choice as the end of time in school draws near.

The last sub-stage which closes the tentative period occurs about age 17 or 18. This is when in the Ghanaian context; the adolescent is in the Senior High School (SHS). During this sub-stage, the individual feels the mounting pressure to face the necessity of making concrete and realistic decisions about the future career. Occurring at this stage also is the awareness of the externals of work – the amount of preparation necessary for various careers, the varying financial rewards and the different life circumstances. In effect as they grow older they discover their skills at certain tasks, that some activities have more intrinsic value than others and therefore begins to integrate the four periods of this stage and hold tentatively to choice.

The realistic stage (age 18+) years also has sub-divisions which are exploration, crystallizations and specification. This stage involves career entry or early years in the University (Osipow, 2003; Hansen, 2006). Individuals tend to evaluate career- related experiences in a realistic manner. From their studies up to the theory formulation, the authors of the theory concluded that four important ingredients contributed to the adequacy of an individual’s career

choice process during early adulthood. These are reality, the ability to defer gratifications and the ability to accept and implement compromises in their career plans (Osipow, 2003).

Research studies by O’Hawa and Tiederman (1990), Osipow (2003), Davis (2000), and Tucci (2005) in the United States of America yielded the conclusions that support the general tenants of Ginzberg’s theory though some question the age sequence. Generally, however, the findings indicate that some boys made relative stable career choices before Junior High School whereas others had not made up their minds even after Senior High School (Osipow, 2003; Gostein, 2003).

Super’s Career Development Theory

Donald E. Super’s career development theory is perhaps the most widely known life-span view of career development. Developmental theories recognize the changes that people go through as they mature, and they emphasize a life-span approach to career choice and adaptation. These theories usually partition working life into stages, and they try to specify the typical vocational behaviours at each stage. In the 1950s, when Super began to formulate his theoretical conceptions, differential psychology and the trait-and-factor theory permeated vocational counselling. The dominant assumption was that differing abilities and interests were crucial in determining occupational choice and success. For this reason, vocational counselling was seen primarily as a process of helping individuals match their abilities and other traits with those required by accessible occupations. By applying the matching model, practitioners of vocational guidance assisted their clients in choosing the “right” vocation, that is, the one that is well matched or congruent with an individual’s abilities,

interests, and personality traits. Super recognized the valuable contribution of the trait-and-factor theory and the matching model to vocational theory and guidance practice. But he also believed that they were too static and insufficient in explaining the complexities of vocational behaviour. Super proclaimed that occupational choice should be seen as an unfolding process, not a point-in-the-time decision. Therefore, he proceeded to supplement the trait-and-factor approach by constructing a comprehensive career theory in which (a) career development is seen as a lifelong process unfolding in a series of developmental stages and (b) career selection is not a one-shot decision but the cumulative outcome of a series decisions (Super, 2007).

In his attempts to shape a comprehensive career theory in the 1950s through the mid-1990s, Super complemented the traditional individual-difference approach to vocational guidance with three additional perspectives:

- (1) Developmental perspective focusing on the life course of vocational behaviour and stressing continuity in career development,
- (2) Phenomenological perspective emphasizing the role of self-concept in the development of an individual's career, and
- (3) Contextual perspective bringing forward the importance of multiple social roles and their interaction across the life span (Super, 2007)..

Developmental Perspective: Understanding Careers in the Life Span

While traditional vocational guidance focused on occupational choice and the prediction of occupational success at some later point in time, (Super, 2007) stressed the need to understand and predict a career. He defined a career as a sequence of occupations, jobs, and positions held during the course of a lifetime, including also pre-vocational and post-vocational activities. Super

asserted that what was actually needed in vocational guidance was a career model, which takes into account the sequence of positions that an individual occupies during her or his working life. Interest in understanding careers led Super (2007) to look into peoples' career patterns, which portray one aspect of vocational development—the sequence of changes in occupational level and field over a period of time.

Although initially “set out” by the individual’s parental socioeconomic level, patterns are also determined by individuals’ abilities, personality traits, and the opportunities to which they are exposed. The analysis of career patterns supported the view that the life cycle imposes different vocational tasks on people at various times of their lives. Drawing on the work of developmental psychologists and sociologists who independently studied stages of life and work, Super and his colleagues outlined five major stages of career development, with each one characterized by three or four appropriate developmental tasks (Super, 2007).

Growth (roughly age 4 to 13), the first life stage, the period when children develop their capacities, attitudes, interests, socialize their needs, and form a general understanding of the world of work. This stage includes four major career developmental tasks: becoming concerned about the future, increasing personal control over one’s own life, convincing oneself to achieve in school and at work, and acquiring competent work habits and attitudes.

Exploration (Ages 14-24) is the period when individuals attempt to understand themselves and find their place in the world of work. Through classes, work experience, and hobbies, they try to identify their interests and capabilities and figure out how they fit with various occupations. They make

tentative occupational choices and eventually obtain an occupation. This stage involves three career development tasks. The first one, the crystallization of a career preference, is to develop and plan a tentative vocational goal. The next task, the specification of a career preference, is to convert generalized preferences into a specific choice, thus a firm vocational goal. The third vocational task is implementation of a career preference by completing appropriate training and securing a position in the chosen occupation (Super, 2007).

Establishment stage (25-44 years) is the period when the individual, having gained an appropriate position in the chosen field of work, strives to secure the initial position and pursue chances for further advancement. This stage involves three developmental tasks. The first task is stabilizing or securing one place in the organization by adapting to the organization's requirements and performing duties satisfactorily. The next task is the consolidation of one's position by manifesting positive work attitudes and productive habits along with building favourable co-worker relations. The third task is to obtain advancement to new levels of responsibility (Super, 2007).

Maintenance (45-65) is the period of continual adjustment, which includes the career development tasks of holding on, keeping up, and innovating. The individuals strive to maintain what they have achieved, and for this reason they update their competencies and find innovative ways of performing their job routines. They try also to find new challenges, but usually little new ground is broken in this period.

Disengagement (over 65) is the final stage, the period of transition out of the workforce. At this stage, Super averred that individuals encounter the

developmental tasks of deceleration, retirement planning, and retirement living. With a declined energy and interest in an occupation, people gradually disengage from their occupational activities and concentrate on retirement planning. In due course, they make a transition to retirement living by facing the challenges of organizing new life patterns (Ireh, 2000).

Super's model demarcates the stages both with age bounds and task markers. Originally, Super viewed the stages as chronological, but later he also acknowledged an age-independent, task-centered view of stages. For example, individuals embarking on a new career in their middle adulthood might go through exploration and establishment stages. Thus the five stages spreading across one's entire life span, or the "maxicycle," might also be experienced as "minicycles" within each of the maxicycle stages. Individuals cycle and recycle throughout their life span as they adapt to their own internal changes or to changed opportunities to which they are exposed (Ireh, 2000).

Super assumed that not everyone progresses through these stages at fixed ages or in the same manner. This notion led him to develop and elaborate on the construct of career maturity (initially called vocational maturity), which denotes the readiness of the individual to make career decisions. Operationally, it is defined as the extent to which an individual has completed stage-appropriate career developmental tasks in comparison with other people of the same age. Super and his colleagues devoted much effort to define this construct and develop appropriate measures. They identified five primary dimensions of vocational maturity: "planfulness" or awareness of the need to plan ahead, readiness for exploration, informational competence (comprising knowledge about work, occupations, and life career roles), decision-making skills, and

reality orientation. Super believed that a young person should be mature enough to benefit from career assessment and counselling. In adults, where recycling through career stages is less dependent on age, Super suggested that readiness for career decision making should be referred to as career adaptability.

Phenomenological Perspective: The Notion of Occupational Self-Concept

In his account of vocational behaviour, Super incorporated in his developmental perspective the idea that people base their career decision on beliefs about their own abilities and other self-attributes. He saw career choice as the process of implementation of self-concepts, work role as a manifestation of selfhood, and career development as an active process of improving the match between one's self-concept and the occupational environment. Self-concept can be defined as the way the person sees herself or himself. For example, a young woman might believe that she is bright and creative, self-confident, spontaneous in behaviour, and unwilling to assume responsibility. This composite of her beliefs about her own abilities, traits, and values make up her self-concept. Since the self-concept is a subjective phenomenon or an appearance in experience, this perspective is often denoted as phenomenological (Ireh, 2000).

Super accepted the view that self-concept is central for understanding a person's behaviour. It is the product of the interaction of a person's inherited characteristics, neural and endocrine makeup, opportunity to play various roles, and resulting outcomes of role-playing success. Formation of self-concept begins in infancy when a sense of identity is developed. As they grow, individuals develop a personal image of their own abilities, personality traits, values, and roles. They then compare this subjective picture of themselves with

what they get to know about the world's occupations, and they then try to translate their self-concept into an occupational perspective. The outcome is the occupational self-concept, defined by Super as a constellation of self-attributes that are vocationally relevant for the individual. The occupational self-concept eventually may transform into a vocational preference. Super believed that career development process can be guided, among others, by aiding subjects to develop and accept their occupational self-concepts (Obiyo & Eze, 2015).

Thus the process of career choosing and development is basically that of developing and implementing a self-concept. The degree of satisfaction people attain from the work role is, according to Super, proportional to the degree to which they have been successful in their endeavour to implement self-concepts. This endeavour, however, requires a continuous personal adjustment; self-concepts development and change throughout people's lives as does also their living and working environments. This makes the career choice and adjustment a continuous process (Obiyo & Eze, 2015).

Contextual Perspective: Social Roles and Their Interaction across the Life Span

The third segment of Super's theory brings forward a contextual perspective, that is, the view of career development in the context of all life roles enacted by an individual. The work role, albeit of central importance for many people in our culture, is only one among many life roles that an individual occupies in his or her life. None of the roles can be properly understood without taking into account the whole constellation of roles (Lent & Worthington, 2000).

Already in his early theoretical writings, Super referred to work as a way of life and noted that satisfactory vocational adjustment is possible only when both the nature of work and the way of life complement an individual's aptitudes, interests, and values. However, this interdependency of various spheres of life is more completely addressed in Super's later writings, when he developed his life-span, life-space view to career development and portrayed it graphically in his popular Life-Career Rainbow (Lent & Worthington, 2000).

Super conceives life space as a constellation of social functions arranged in a pattern of core and peripheral roles. People play a variety of roles during their life. Some of them begin early in the life course (for example, that of child), others later (for example, that of student), or still later (for example, that of pensioner). At some life stages, a number of simultaneous roles (for example, that of worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, and citizen) may constitute an individual's life structure. However, usually two or three roles are salient or relatively more important than others. The salient life roles constitute the core of a person; they are fundamental for the person's identity and essential for life satisfaction.

The fact that people play several simultaneous roles means that roles interact and impact one another. The interaction among the roles can be supportive, supplementary, compensatory, or neutral. It can also be conflicting if some of the roles absorb too much of the available time and energy. As a matter of fact, for most people, the interpenetration of different spheres of life is inevitable in some life stages. By combining the life space with the life-span or developmental perspective, the Rainbow model shows how the role

constellation changes with life stages. As Super noted, life roles wax and wane over time (Lent & Worthington, 2000).

This simple account was indeed needed to clearly emphasize an all-too-often forgotten point-that peoples' careers cannot be understood outside of their social context. To fully understand an individual's career, it is necessary to explore the whole web of his or her life roles. After all, according to a more recent view of Super's, it is the constellation of role interactions that constitutes career.

Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory

John Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory, developed in 1979, emphasises the importance of behaviour (actions) and cognition (knowing and thinking) (Sharf, 2015). The essence of Krumboltz's view is that certain generic processes, such as learning experiences, affect the career development of all persons regardless of their cultural affiliations (Allen, & Stottenberg, 2017) hence the need to explore the factors that influence career pathways among high school students in Ghana. This theory differs from other theories of career development in that its focus is on teaching people career decision making techniques and how to use such techniques effectively in selecting career alternatives (Ireh, 2000). The types of learning experiences that affect an individual are dependent on his or her culture (Lent & Worthington, 2000).

Krumboltz identified four factors that play important role in the selection of a specific career: genetic endowment, environmental conditions, learning experiences and task approach skills (Beal, 2016; Ireh, 2000). According to the Social Learning Theory, genetic endowment refers to those aspects of the individual that are inherited or innate rather than learned. This

may set limits on individual career opportunities. Environmental conditions are those conditions that are generally outside the control of the individual and influence skills development and career preferences. According to Krumboltz, learning experiences include a) one's career performances as a result of prior learning experiences; b) individuals' prior learning experiences that eventually influence their career decisions; and c) that individuals' prior learning experiences have a direct effect on their career choices. According to Sharf (2015), individuals may make observations about themselves and their environment that they will then use to make career decisions. Observations about the self-include capabilities, interests and work values (Ireh, 2000).

Krumboltz emphasised task approach skills such as goal setting, values clarification, generating alternatives and obtaining occupational information in career decision making. Ireh (2000) explained that the interaction between genetic endowment, environmental conditions and learning experiences lead to the skills required for completing a variety of tasks. The Social Learning Theory by Krumboltz is relevant to this study because it includes environmental factors such as family, the learning environment and gender. Our behaviour is shaped by beliefs about ourselves and how we relate to society (Schonorr & Ware, 2001). According to Krumboltz (1991), people make assumptions and generalisations about themselves and the world of work based on their limited experiences. In this case, students in high schools have limited experiences to choose an appropriate career hence the need for a counsellor and/or a supportive environment. In short, Krumboltz's theory of career decision making and development is based on social learning or environmental conditions, genetic

influences and learning experiences. People choose their careers based on what they have learned.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura in 1986, purports that contextual variables such as social support, which includes friends, family and relatives, influence the career choice of an individual (Choo, Norsia & Tan, 2012). Social persuasion also affects an individual's choice of career (Bishop, 2014) because there is dialogue between children and their environment. Similarly, Bandura posited that when individuals watch their peers succeeding, they are likely to believe that they can also succeed (Mills, 2009). In this career development model, a person's background (or contextual factors) and individual characteristics influence his/her learning experiences and consequently self-efficacy (Bishop, 2014). According to Bandura (1989) and Alexander, Seabi and Bischof (2010), because of the bi-directionality of influence between behaviour and environmental circumstances, people are both products and producers of their environment.

Persons are affected by the nature of their experienced environment through selection and creation of situations. This is in line with the SCT which states that realistic encouragement that leads people to exert greater effort is likely to bring success in career development (Bandura, 1988). The researcher found this theory provided the framework to examine the environment that promotes development in students' quests for sustainable careers. The theory recognises both the cognitive and environmental factors although this study concentrates more on environmental factors.

Social Cognitive Theory focuses on several cognitive variables (for example, self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals) and on how these variables interact with other aspects of the person and his or her environment (for example, gender, ethnicity, social support and barriers) to shape the course of career development (Lent & Brown, 2000). According to Bandura (2002), the theory distinguishes three modes of agency: a) personal agency exercised individually; b) proxy agency in which people secure desired outcomes by influencing others to act on their behalf; and c) collective agency in which people act in concert to shape their futures. Students in high schools are influenced by these three modes when they choose careers, among many variables, that they feel are appropriate for them. The environment, which imposes itself on them, also impacts their choice of careers. These are the reasons that this particular theory is used in this study to investigate factors that influence career pathways among high school students in Ghana.

According to Social Cognitive Theory, career development is influenced by both objectives and perceived environmental factors (Lent & Worthington, 2000). Examples of objective factors include the quality of educational experiences to which a person has been exposed to such as school counselling and the financial support available from family or guardians for pursuing particular training. People live their lives in socio-cultural milieus that differ in their shared values, customs, social practices and institutional constraints and opportunities (Bandura, 2002). This study allowed the researcher to establish whether the above results can be achieved in Ghana using participants from different backgrounds.

The applicability of the SCT to explain career choice behaviour of school students was verified in a similar study by Tang (2008) and was therefore deemed suitable for the current study that looked at career choices among high school students. The theory applied to this study because social factors such as peer and family interactions that affect decision making were considered. In addition to career development, the theory has been extended to domains of behaviour such as educational achievement, affective reactions, and organisational and health maintenance (Lent & Brown, 1996).

Trait and Factor Theory

This theory deemed the oldest of career development theories actually began with the history of guidance with Frank Parsons (Parsons, 1909). Parsons formulated a three-step process that would lead to the best career fit (Patterson, 2000). The three steps are:

1. Self-understanding aptitudes, abilities, interests, limitations and resources.
2. Knowledge of the requirements and conditions on success, advantages and disadvantages compensation, opportunities and prospects in different lines of work.
3. True reasoning on the relations of the two groups of factors above.

The trait and factor theory of career choice stresses the fact that choices made with regard to a career are an attempt by an individual to find a career environment which is conducive to his personality. For instance an artistic person gravitates around musical dramatic careers – careers that are creative in nature. The degree of success, however, is dependent on the degree of compatibility between the career and the person. As it were, though persons

seek careers, careers look for people. Parsons (1909), therefore, believed that where individuals were employed in the line of work which they could best fit because of compatibility both the individual and the career and society at large benefits.

Decision Making Theories

Proponents of this theory include Bergland (1974), Kalder and Zytowski (1969). These theories focus on how the individual makes use of information and knowledge about self and work opportunity structures in his society to make a career decision. It, therefore, means that the individual has several possible alternatives to choose from and these alternatives have identifiable consequences. The consequences have their own values which the individual weighs and finally makes his decision and choice of a particular career.

Bergland's Process

With the above assumption Bergland (1974) has identified a sequence of events that occur in decision making, and which are stated below.

1. Defining the problem
2. Generating alternatives
3. Gathering information
4. Processing information
5. Making plans and selecting goals
6. Implementing and evaluating plans

Conceptual Review

The Concept of Career

A career is a sequence of positions held by a person during the course of a life time (Bedu–Addo, 2000). It comprises a series of work related activities

that provide continuity, order, and meaning in a person's life. A career may consist of the changes in values, attitudes and a motivation that occurs as a person grows older. In both the perception, the primary focus is on the individual. The underlying assumption is that a person can shape his destiny through a series of well-planned and well timed positive moves (Osipow, 2003). However, it must be stated here as a word of caution that mere choice does not ensure career success. He continued to state that, a person's career is shaped by many complex factors such as education, environment and parents.

Career is also defined by the dictionary as a person's course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life) (Webster's International Dictionary, 1998). It is usually considered to pertain to remunerative work. The term, career, comes from the French word, 'carrier', which means road or racecourse which, in turn, comes from the Latin word, 'cararia', which is a track for wheeled vehicles which originated from the Latin word, carrus, which means wagon (Bedu-Addo, 2009).

According to Bedu-Addo (2009), career refers to a person's lifetime sequence of occupations, activities, responsibilities and services performed. Furthermore, Shertzer and Stone (2006) saw career as a chosen pursuit, life work, and success in one's profession. It is a sequence of major positions occupied by a person throughout his lifetime. Additionally, Orlando (2010) pointed out that career is the totality of work one does in his lifetime and is person-centered. Orlando further posits that career is a meaningful progression on a person's working life. It is a course pursued over a period of time.

Further, Helliwell and Wolf (2002) defined career as encompassing a variety of possible patterns of personal choice related to an individual's total

lifestyle, including occupation, education, personal and social behaviour, learning how to learn, social responsibility and leisure time activities. Finally, Super (2007) proposed a definition of career that involved the interaction of various life roles over the life span. He called it the 'life career rainbow'. For Super the term, career, refers to all the roles a person may play during the lifetime and the pattern in which they fit together at any point in time.

The Concept of Choice

Webster's International Dictionary (1998) defines choice as the voluntary act of selecting or separating from two or more things that which is preferred; and the determination of the mind in preferring one thing to another. The definition incorporates two components: First is the availability of alternatives, which presents an objective reality, and the second one, is the act of preference, which involves a subjective process. If a reference to career 'choice' is made, availability of career choices and the dynamics of choosing a career should be examined. Hence, in order for career choice to take place, there should be alternative career routes available and there should be an individual preference between these career options.

Career Choice as a Concept

Bedu-Addo (2009) posits that, preparation for work involves developing an occupational self-image, wherein an individual attempts to match his or her strengths and weaknesses, values, and preferred lifestyle with the requirements and advantages of a range of different occupations. Brown (2002) describes the process of choosing a career as estimating one's ability and values, estimating the skills and abilities required for success in a given occupation, and estimating

the work values that will be satisfied by the various occupational alternatives available.

Career choice is a complex phenomenon which can be better appreciated through a study of its key components, that is. career and choice. Dating back to the seminal works of Hughes (2007) and Goffman (2008), career has been the focus of many studies. However, the contemporary formulations of the concept by critical realists embody a layered conception that embraces subjective experiences and objective structures of work in interplay (Layder, 2003). The dictionary definition of choice is the voluntary act of selecting or separating from two or more things that which is preferred; and the determination of the mind in preferring one thing to another (Webster's International Dictionary, 1998). The definition incorporates two components: First is the availability of alternatives, which presents an objective reality, and the second one, the act of preference, which involves a subjective process. If a reference to career choice is made, availability of career choices and the dynamics of choosing a career should be examined. Hence, in order for career choice to take place, there should be alternative career routes available and there should be an individual preference between these career options.

Osipow (2003) in the context of evidence of rigidities of supply and demand in career markets, persistence of structural and institutionalised forms of discrimination in employment, as well as path dependence by education and experience in many fields of career, deem career choice a highly contestable phenomenon. The constrained and variable nature of available career routes in real life makes career choice in its pure form, (i.e. a free and unconstrained

career choice based on individual will) a rare commodity, a naive expectation or even a misguided belief.

The basic definitions stated above embody the two highly polarized considerations on career choice: One consideration is that of individual agency in career choice. Individual agency includes dispositions, human capital, attitudes and personality, which act as moderators of career choice. Marshall (2009) stated that agency approach expresses independence through self-assertion and control over the environment. Agentic career choice seeks control, certainty and predictability. In other words, agency asserts itself in focused, direct action to alter or control environment. The second consideration is that of opportunity structures and constraints that make available or limit career choice.

Contextual affordance and opportunity structures are important constructs, through which the effects of the environments on the choice process can be studied. These constructs focus on the resources or hardships that are embedded in the individual career context (Lent & Brown, 1996). Studies in career literature characteristically examine career choice from either one of these considerations (Johnes, 2009), or from a mixed agency and structure framework where the contextual influences are viewed as antecedents or mediating factors of career choice (Kyriacou & Coulthardl, 2000; Kyriacou et al. 2002).

Although, Albert and Luzzo (2009) are congruent with the argument that individual agency cannot be considered in isolation from contextual factors and that there is an interplay between the two in shaping career choices, nevertheless, they continue to draw causal relationships of unidirectional and linear fashion between the influence of agency and structure in shaping career

choice. For example, Johnes' (2009) examination of the 1991 US National Household Education Survey revealed that expected earnings, fertility and schooling of women have an impact on their career choices.

Concerns of the Counselling Profession

Mudhovozi and Chireshe (2012) reported that the inability of many young adults to make career decisions had long been of concern to members of the counselling profession. They noted that career indecision had been shown to be associated with both state and trait anxiety and with various maladaptive beliefs that inhibit constructive career activities. Bakshi, Gandhi, Shah and Maru (2012) also highlighted on the inability of college and university students to make career decision as one of the most frequent problems reported to college and university counsellors.

Green and Parker (2014) found that the career needs of adults aged 18 – 25 were particularly not being met. They reported that many young adults had little or no career guidance, or counselling when they were “in school” and they often seek it now, making job or career changes spurred by their personal stage of development or by the ‘post-modern’ workplace.

Green and Parker (2014) explained that too often gifted and talented young people are expected to succeed on their own, or because of their multi-potentiality, they are expected to adapt to whatever happens to them. He explained that limited resources were devoted to those who really need them. He argued that, there was probably no better place to invest time and energy with a greater rate of return than on gifted and talented individuals.

Walther and Ritchie (2002) suggested that adult learners have unique counselling needs which need to be considered by colleges and universities.

They indicated that the five differences between adults and youth which need to be considered by counsellors are;

Education is often a secondary consideration for adults who have many other competing responsibilities and they want this to be recognized so as to be treated as adults. Adults have valuable experiences which add to the educational process and they want the opportunity to bring these experiences to their learning.

Adult learners want to be able to immediately apply what they have learned.

The adult student is likely to be enrolled due to life transitions.

Adults are self-directed and generally more motivated to achieve because they have specific objectives in mind. Walther and Ritchie further stated that many older adults fear they will be slower than their younger classmates and may fail in the classroom and this leads to anxiety. They further stated that adults may be grappling with life cycle transitions in addition to the initial fears upon entering college.

It is often assumed that the first day of school can be a scary prospect for anyone, but adult students confront special concerns and justified fears since adults are more likely to have multiple responsibilities, requiring them to juggle commitments to school, family and employment. Jackson and Nutini (2002) asserted that, a large number of adult students are struggling with the many demands of college life while also dealing unassisted with major emotional issues such as loss, depression, anxiety and many other undiagnosed and untreated problems that so often lead to academic difficulties or failures.

Green and Parker (2014) reported that, adults are concerned about reaching and maintaining satisfactory performance in a career; managing a home; developing adult leisure activities and relating to their spouses, where frequently enters into the occupational selection process. Teng and Rhodes (as cited in Green & Parker, 2014) stated that vocational maturity consisted of two components which were: adequate understanding of the world of work and adequate-decision-making skills.

According to Hacket and Betz (2013), arriving at a career decision was a difficult and anxious task for all students. It has been estimated that 25% of all students entering into college and universities do so without having decided on a career (Hacket & Betz, 2013). They stated that some students will continue to experience career decision making difficulty throughout their college years and beyond. Some students according to them were regarded as situational undecided because of either informational or character deficits. The Education Resources Information Centre (Hansen, 2017) also indicated that students of all ages need career exploration assistance, however, the way students go about investigating various opportunities may differ for traditional age students versus adults. The study also suggested that career change is one of the most common reasons adults enter college.

The adult student therefore needs to be helped to understand a variety of influences in his life that led to his present work and study role: to re-evaluate his work role in light of his being more mature, realistic appreciation of his potential against the opportunities now available to him in a demanding, complex society. Arp, Holmerg and Littrel (2015) revealed that adult students need assistance in searching for jobs. They further explained that “the

techniques used by career planning staff to prepare the 22-year old to locate the first job may not be appropriate for a woman who hopes to enter the labour market after a prolonged absence, or a man who desires a career change after receiving a degree at age 35”.

Arp et al. (2015) explained that as adult students begin to set goals for their future, they consider a marked change in their career path and need to know how to sort their priorities. Walther and Ritchie (2002) reported that, adult students were faced with taking decisions or prioritising their needs like time allocation for family care in exchange for career opportunities, materialistic needs or learning to obtain higher academic levels.

Walther and Ritchie (2002) stated that family issues can present a greater barrier to achievement for women who often shoulder more responsibilities at home and that impede their educational achievement. He further suggested that there was the need for these students to be made aware of possible reactions of their spouses both at entry, and later as spouses become jealous of either the growth they observe or if they sense alienation. Mohny and Anderson (as cited in Hansen, 2017), indicated that role demands such as family responsibilities and career or job demands were a major obstacle for women returning to higher education and this often impedes their successful adaptation of the additional role of student. Hacket and Betz (2013) reported that gifted women also faced the problem of having fewer adult role models of their own sex with whom to identify than to men.

Hacket and Betz (2013) suggested that the multiple roles of a wife, mother and an employee may lead to discomfort in women or even feelings of guilt about adopting the additional role of students (Hansen, 2017), indicated

that adult women typically return to community colleges during transitional or vulnerable stages in their lives, must maintain additional responsibilities related to other role demands and this could be very stressful for adult women students.

Bishop (2014) found that female managers had comparatively less work experience than male managers. The human capital paradigm suggested that women were less educated generally than men and had less experience and skilled. These deficits influence women's chances for success in their careers. Hacket and Betz (2013) stated that "men continue to perceive women as the rearers of their children and so find it understandable or indeed appropriate that women should renounce their careers and raise families". In an attempt to explain the gender differences in management, the human capital perspective suggested that rewards are based on past investment in education, job training and experience. Women were generally treated differently which could be due to impersonal, economic, societal, cultural barriers among others (Bishop, 2014). Wonk and Kwok (2014) found that men perceive greater opportunities for advancement and promotion than do women and that explained why women generally occupy commensurably lower positions.

Wonk and Kwok (2014) further explained that women experience more career interruptions like child-rearing responsibilities, which forced them to forego or postpone human capital enhancing activities and consequently stay longer on their current job. (Hansen, 2017) reported that the need to contribute to the family income or to gain financial independence, bereavement, loss of job, divorce and career limitations due to lack of education, were some of the reasons which made adult women to return to higher educational institutions to

acquire more knowledge and skills. This point is in line with those earlier suggested by Wonk and Kwok (2014).

Empirical Review

This section provides related works on the factors that influence career choice

Parental Influence on Career Choice

Research on family influence has increased rapidly during the last couple of years, yet an understanding of family influences on career choices still remains sparse. Much of the research on family influence focus on individual parents' careers, for instance, mothers or fathers influencing children to take up a certain career. This research considers family members' influence on career choices which includes parents, siblings and extended family members.

The first interactions of a child with people takes place within its home among members of its family who include parents, siblings and relatives (Bollu-steve & Sanni, 2013). A child is affected by a number of family-related factors such as the marital relationship of the parents, the socio-economic status of the family, the atmosphere of the home (whether parents are warm or hostile), the environmental condition, occupational status of the parents and the number of siblings in the family (Bollu-steve & Sanni, 2013). The family dynamics therefore play a pivotal role in the career readiness of the students.

Several studies bear testimony that parental involvement influences high school students' career choices, for example, in Romania (Marinas, Igrat, Marinas & Prioteasa, 2016), in Pakistan (Baloch & Shah, 2014; Saleem, Hanan, Saleem & Shamshed, 2014; Abbasi & Sarwat, 2014), in America (Bates, 2015), in Albania (Green & Parker, 2014), in the Philippines, (Aguado, Laguado &

Deligero, 2015), In America, Abbasi and Sarwat (2014) purported that the career process of young people can be compared to rocks in a rock polisher. All kinds of people grind away at them but parents are the big rocks in the tumbler. Other American studies also reveal that, even if schools had the resources with which to meet young people's career needs, neither teachers nor counsellors can replace the influence parents have on their children (Baloch & Shah, 2014; Abbasi & Sarwat, 2014). Besides parents, other American family members are viewed as influential in their children's career choices (Tillman, 2015; Griffin, Hutchins & Meese, 2011; Ojeda & Flores, 2008).

By using the specific roles of parents in influencing their children's career aspirations, the literature clearly identified mothers as the most influential parents (Bracey, 2008; Wortman, Loftus & Marshall, 2014). In early childhood, many African American children, especially, African American females (Bracey, 2008; King, 1993) are influenced by the aspirations of their mothers. Bracey (2008) also found that the employment status of mothers, as well as the mother-child relationship, influence the vocational outcomes of African American children. In a study of students from two schools in a Midwestern city in the USA, Paa and McWhirter (2000) discovered that 'both girls and boys identify their parents as important influences on their career expectations' and that both boys and girls indicated that they considered their parents influence to be positive.

Wortman, Loftus and Marshall (2014) also reported that African American mothers influence their children by establishing middle class values of hard work and responsibility, placing emphasis on education, maintaining high expectations and introducing cultural values. However, fathers play more

of a complimentary role in career decision making (Wortman, Loftus & Marshall, 2014). A study conducted by King in 1993 which specifically linked parental behaviour to the career choice of teaching showed that 53% of the participants identified mothers as very encouraging in their choice of teaching.

The income level of secondary school families may determine what career a student chooses during a specific time in the students' life; choices that will determine a large part of that students' future. Some students will have to budget education according to their personal income. Splaver (2016) addressed those in desperate needs, "Where necessary, these persons (individuals described as living under poverty level) must be assisted through special training programs to overcome educational and social handicaps so that minimum job standards can be met" (p.1). Students in many cases will need the proper mentoring opportunities to succeed.

These support groups will be another opportunity that if properly implemented, can help a student in the career choice process. The creation of support groups will have to be in place to sustain the student through times of financial, emotional and educational need. There are indications that students take the path of least resistance to enter the tertiary institutions. If a parent had exerted enough pressure on the student to enter a particular career field and the student had no current plans, then students followed their parents' suggestion. Student should be thinking about career decisions in their senior year of secondary school. It should become apparent at that time that the student will have to do something. The environment plays a large part in a student's career choice. Students traditionally stay at home to either obtain education or start

employment. Marriage also played a large part in career decisions (Bollu-steve & Sanni, 2013).

The economics of marriage either solidified the commitment to go on to higher education or stopped career plan short, depending on the stability of the marriage. Examples such as these are opportunities that can play a large determining factor in student's career choice (Bollu-steve & Sanni, 2013).

Other environmental determinants would include recreational facilities and articles the student has seen in local papers or on the television. The student's support system made up of parents, relatives, siblings, peers, teachers and counsellors may be the most environmental factor. As we can see, there are many opportunities or paths to be explored by secondary school students. Secondary school senior students will have accomplished choosing a career if a complete, thoughtful, education decision was made, evaluating all of the factors possible in career choice process (Splaver, 2016).

According to Davis (2014), career choice should be initiated as early as the nursery school years through the primary, secondary and to the tertiary school levels. Individual social status, income, lifestyle, choice of friends, mental and physical health is influenced by the type of work he or she does. In other words, a person's career choice plays an important role in his or her entire life. Career choice decision making is not an easy task, yet at one time or the other, individuals are faced with the task of making choice in career, preparing for it, starting it and making progress in it. This choice point is undoubtedly the most critical stage. This is because making a wrong career decision can mar one's happiness in life as this could result to career maladjustment. Inappropriate career decision made may spell doom not only for the individual

but also the entire society. In view of the foregoing, the need to equip our students with appropriate Career decision skills becomes highly imperative.

Parents tend to act as career role models (Schulenber, 2005). Trice and Knapp (1992) stressed that children tend to relate to parental occupations, especially, the mothers.' Mullis, Mullis and Gerwhels (2012) reported that students' career aspirations tended to match their parents' occupations. For example, students whose parents were in unskilled occupations tended to be more interested in realistic occupations, while students whose parents were in professional or skilled occupations tended to be more interested in artistic, social or conventional occupations (Mullis et al., 2012).

Similarly, Nyamwenge (2016) revealed that German families influence students' career choices. All these studies were carried out in completely different environments from the current study. Parents influence career choices in a number of ways, for example, parental support and encouragement. A study carried in Kenya reflects that when adolescents require information on topics such as career planning, they consult their parents (Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012). Although the study was similar to the current study in terms of focus and objectives, the study used a qualitative approach which limits the objectivity and generalisability of results. Another study in Kenya also examined the influence of parental support in their children's careers (Nyamwenge, 2016), however, the study was carried out to examine the factors that influence the choice of careers in the hospitality industry in Kenya.

A study was conducted to investigate the influence of family background on the academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria. It was found that supportive parents are important for their children's

career decision making and for the success of their careers (Barker, 2010; Clutter, 2010). Bollu-Steve and Sanni (2013) established that Nigerian parents influenced students' performance and eventual career choices. Despite the differences in the aims of these studies, they acknowledged the importance of parental support of their children's education and career choices. The current study particularly focused on family influences on career choices.

African studies, for example, in Kenya (Barker, 2010) and in Nigeria (Holland, 2015; Abiola, 2014), have highlighted that many of the settings in which children and youth participate are dependent on the choices of their parents. Thus, parents' decisions, choices of where to live, what to provide materially and relationally in the home and how to structure out-of-school time for children, impacts children's development in ways that are meaningful for later success in the world of work (Abiola, 2014). Beggs, Bsutham and Taylor (2008) refer to "helicopter parents" who have a tendency to intervene in their children's college life from choosing a university to helping them choose individual courses. In this case, parents are seen as inseparable from their children's career choices. This parental/child attachment has been raised in the social learning theory that informs this study when it emphasises the impact of the environment on learners.

Families do not always influence students' choice of careers. For instance, in South Africa, Clutter (2010) and Hoyt (2014) found that families do not influence career choices. Igbinedion (2011) established that Chinese-American youths' parental values were not a significant predictor of career aspirations, plans and vocational outcome expectations. Their study also reflected that, as children grow older, the desire to find fulfilment in a career

versus pleasing the family can influence adolescents' decisions about their career choices. The family's interference with their children's career decisions may have a negative influence on the career choices in later stages. Similarly, in Nigeria, parents and relatives played insignificant roles in the choice of library and information science careers (Holland, 2015). Brucey (2013) also revealed that Nigerian parents did influence their children's nursing careers.

Although, Brucey (2013) study could be affected by bias as the researcher used purposive sampling and also focused on a particular career, these revelations are still relevant. The downside of non-probability sampling techniques in general and purposive sampling in particular is that an unknown proportion of the entire population will not be sampled. The sample may or may not represent the entire population accurately therefore the results of the research cannot be generalised. Over and above purposive sampling, Brucey (2013) study used participants from nursing colleges and only focused on nursing careers which makes it different from the current study which looks at secondary school students' career choices. Moreover, the current study used stratified random sampling which gives it an edge and also looked at careers in general not a specific career as did Brucey (2013) study. Stratified random sampling captures key population characteristics in the sample therefore the results can be generalised (Brucey, 2013).

Lastly, Gostein (2003) sees parental influence in choice of career showing in direct order. That is parents insist on the choice of school and even the courses their words should concentrate on. This is in itself a setting off on a predetermined career. Most often this happens regardless of the child's talents, interests and desires. Where the youth have no strong objection to the choice

being made for him/her, he/she gets condemned to a life's work to which he is 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). Thus parents live vicandously through their children. Gostein (2000) asserted that 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).

School Influence on Career Choices

Career guidance is offered schools, colleges and universities among others. High schools are a transition to higher institutions of learning and the world of work so they have a critical role in assisting students choose careers (Baloch & Shah, 2014). If students have too many choices of careers or have not made a decision on which career to take, school career guidance is helpful in selecting their study paths and in identifying their potential strengths to enhance their competitiveness for positions (Hoyt (2014). Krumboltz's theory of Social Learning Theory of career development, which informs this study, emphasises teaching people career development techniques so that they can give career guidance in schools. Similarly Senyonyi, Ochieng and Sells (2012) stated that the transition from high school to university or the world of work has been understood as one of the most difficult developmental challenges confronting adolescents and that schools play a pivotal role in guiding the students towards a career. The current study seeks to find out whether career guidance offered in schools influences students' career choices especially in the Sunyani West Municipality.

Field trips and school career days were found to have a significant influence on students' choices of careers. For example, in the United Kingdom, field trips were found to have an impact on students' choices of careers (Higgins, Dewhurst & Walkins, 2014). Similar studies in America also found that field trips and career days influence students' career choices (Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012; Behrandt & Frankline, 2014), in Czechoslovakia (Palos & Drobot, 2010). Similar findings were obtained in Pakistan (Shakil, Faizi & Hafeez, 2011), in Ireland (Higgins et al., 2014) and in Ghana (Amoah et al., 2015) where the importance of field trips in influencing students' choices of careers was revealed. The current study sought to establish whether Ghanaian school field trips and career days influenced students' career choices especially in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana.

Decision making is an important tool in career choice. This is in line with Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory which informs this study that emphasises career decisions. According to Ogunyewo, Afemikhe, Ajio and Olanlesi-alui (2015), decision making is a complex process which can often be difficult and confusing for many Spaniards. In general, career guidance interventions in American schools are concerned, not with telling students what to do, but with helping them acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them make better career choices and transitions hence ameliorating the problem of career decisions (Obura & Ajowi, 2012).

Similarly, Hansen (2006) stated that, in Switzerland, school career exploration and career decision-making activities can be used to broaden students' awareness of their interests and abilities as well as the career opportunities that exist. Decision making is one of the basic tenets of Bandura's

Social Cognitive Theory which emphasises self-efficacy. According to Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy entails the belief in one's capability to succeed on a given task. Hence, students are likely to choose careers based on whether they have the capacity to do well in their chosen careers. If career guidance enhances the acquisition of self-efficacy, it was critical for the current study to establish its influence in Ghana.

It is the role of the school from early adolescence, to assist learners to find meaning in their present and future lives (Obiyo & Eze, 2015). American school engagement involves behavioural as well as emotional components that play a mediational role in the association between developmental assets such as careers and academic competence (Obiyo & Eze, 2015). According to Ntshoe and Selesho (2015), the goal of American school counselling is not to determine a delimited career choice but rather to expand students' learning about potential career and educational interests, abilities, beliefs and options.

Nigerian school youths who are ignorant of the nature and requirements of various occupations can find the issue of selecting an occupation difficult and complex (Obiyo & Eze, 2015). As such, schools engage a variety of activities to help students cope with the complexity of career choices. Hence, career guidance was seen in Nigeria as enabling guidance counsellors to assist individuals to identify and learn the skills for more effective planning and choosing jobs, in making effective transitions and adjustments to work and in managing their own careers and career transitions effectively (Lazarus & Chinwe, 2015).

Bardick (2004) revealed that a proactive career counselling approach that benefits Canadian students would include building trusting relationships

with students, encouraging them to closely examine and explore their occupational interests, providing students with information about the stages of decision making involved in career planning and guiding them in their search for information about careers. This could build trust and legitimacy in the counsellor making him or her influential in the students' career choices. Bardick (2004) further purported that counsellors who wish to become more influential in students career planning may need to become more actively involved in students' everyday lives. Career guidance is not only confined to the classroom but could be extended to the external world.

Kosteck-Bunch (2004) stated that school guidance programmes have an underlying purpose to assist students in making informed education and career decisions and to provide the resources and materials to ensure that this process unfolds in a systematic and comprehensive manner. Guidance and counselling are integral parts of each school's total educational programme, which is designed to support, facilitate and encourage classroom instruction and students' achievement.

Kobylarz (2008) established The National Career Development Guidelines in consultation with leading career development experts, recommended that professional school counsellors attempt to establish student competencies around several broad areas that include career planning and occupational exploration. Middle school students who develop competency in their career plan and exploration gain confidence in such career development tasks as understanding the relationship between learning and work, understanding how to gain the information necessary to seek and obtain various jobs, and understanding the process of career planning (Senyonyi, Ochieng, &

Sells, 2012).; Shakil, Faizi, & Hafeez, 2011)). The Roberts review (2011) noted that; teachers' subjects' knowledge and teaching style are vital factors, but it is often their enthusiasm that capture pupil's interest and motivated them to study a subject. Roberts (2011) found that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) generally among teachers was found to be lacking; it is worrying that few teachers develop their subject knowledge through CPD. Perna, Rowan-Kenyon, Thomas, Bell, Anerson and Chunyan (2008) highlighted the relative difficulty of teaching certain aspects of engineering within "technology" options subjects, exacerbated by lack of communication between science and technology departments on aspects of the curriculum.

Teachers' Influence on Career Choice

The Yorkshire Times (2012) revealed that at Tong High School in England, staff training and development put teachers at the forefront as they discovered that teachers were best placed to inspire the students' career choices and bring out the best in the students. The Yorkshire Times discovered that teachers at their schools had an influence over respondents' career choices. The same study also confirmed that enthusiastic, knowledgeable and committed teachers lead young people towards careers. Bright, Pryor, Wilkenfeld and Earl (2005) reiterated the importance of teachers in career guidance when they purport that teachers were second most important grouping in helping students choose their careers. The poll by The Yorkshire Times (2012) which examined the reasons why respondents picked a certain job, found that 50 percent of the participants made the decision as a result of a particular teacher. According to Senyonyi, Ochieng and Sells (2012), British school teachers can identify

aptitudes and abilities and encourage students to take certain subject options, take part in work experience or employment visits.

Mudhovozi and Chireshe (2012) identified the characteristics of teachers that Australian learners identified as supportive of their career pathways. They include: connecting pedagogical practices with students' interests, being passionate about their subject matter, having good content knowledge, making learning experiences relevant, setting high expectations of students, being a good explainer of complex ideas and being a good classroom manager. This is consistent with Social Cognitive Theory which emphasises the development of career guidance for learners. In other words, the day-to-day activities of the teacher are crucial in motivating students towards a career.

In developed countries, career guidance is not solely the duty of school counsellors and teachers but also includes independent counsellors. Such counselling may require a fee which could deter some students from getting that help. However, Balin and Hirschi (2010) advocate that the students who do not go to independent counsellors to seek help may benefit from classroom career guidance, where they may have the chance to build relationships with school counsellors and become more comfortable in seeking one-to-one interactions later in the process. School career counselling may be the answer for those who may have problems with attaining professional guidance offered elsewhere. Balin and Hirschi (2010) argued that Swiss school career guidance or group work activities can help students develop career adaptability. School career guidance was seen as influential in preparing Kenyan students for their career choices (Owino & Odundo, 2016; Edwards & Quinter, 2011).

Career guidance teachers in schools have an important role in advocating for broad based career plans that focus on the student's interests and abilities and that will increase future career options (Hoyt, 2014). Similarly, Obiyo and Eze (2015) emphasised the role of career guidance teachers when they stated that American school guidance teachers are uniquely positioned to stimulate students' interest in the health professions. In the same American study, it was revealed that many of the focus group participants felt career guidance teachers were largely helpful.

Students Influence and Career Choice

Keshishian (2010) provided a study on factors influencing college students' choice of academic majors. The study showed that the University does not address the unique needs and concerns of under represented groups when taking in students. The study further showed that learners who finished their first year of study were less satisfied. The only students who proved to have greater satisfaction in their careers were those students who studied pharmacy. An interesting factor was that those learners who did pharmacy were not influenced by other people to enter into that field of study but it was their own decision to do pharmacy.

These results showed that students who had an idea of their career path, such as the ones who chose pharmacy, showed satisfaction in their degrees and those who had no clue on the career path they wanted to follow, showed less satisfaction in the choices they made in their field of study. Amino and Timothy (2014) further explains that the type of choice made by students influences their academic performance. Therefore students' satisfaction in their chosen career has positive influence on their academic performance.

Fizer (2013) adds that many students choose their careers based on their academic ability. However, some students work habits do not match the field of study they have chosen. These students may experience low satisfaction with the field of study they have chosen. Such students may find their chosen field to be challenging and uninteresting. Therefore career guidance plays an important part with such students in assisting them to choose a field of study.

Agarwala (2008) continues to show other aspects that influence career choice amongst students. These aspects include interest, life ambition, challenging nature of the career, intellectual ability and prospects of job opportunity. The study noted that learners were not getting proper career guidance and learners make uninformed choices. Therefore, the study recommended that high schools should be provided with professional school counsellors. Agwarla (2008) indicated that having a skill or being competent in a particular field of work influences a person's career choice. Gottfredson (2014) argued that young people choose careers in accordance with their circumstances at hand.

Hoyt (2014) mention that preparedness is an important element in making a career choice, learners could benefit from extra interventions in assisting them to be prepared for life after high school. A study that focused on interventions for assisting learners to be prepared for career choice indicated that learners proved to be better equipped to make a career choice, after attending a workshop. Furthermore, the study indicates that through interventions learners are equipped in planning for their careers which assists them in their career preparedness. It is also said that there are cost effective ways to assist learners to make appropriate career choices, such as workshops.

Career Choice and Gender

Ferrington, Gray and Gary (2012) mention that attitude toward a certain career is the reason for the vast difference of careers chosen by females, males and the different ethnic groups. However, this attitude comes about due to the type of influence a person has received throughout his/her development. Gottfredson (2014) pointed out that learners make their career choice in accordance with their gender type and the prestige the career comes with. Kerr and Colangelo (2015) further expand on this point by reporting that certain careers which are perceived to be good for females are usually preferred by females, and those perceived to be good for males are usually undertaken by males. Gedde, Budenz, Haft, Tielsch, Lee and Quigley (2015) further report that women are affected more by family factors when making career choices, therefore, their choices are based on putting their families first, whereas men chose careers in accordance with the prestige attached to them.

Kerr and Colangelo (2015) explain that males and females have different reasons for following their chosen careers. Their reasons were around factors such as personal ambition and the need to help patients. The study showed that, as students grew in the field of study, a change in career direction came about. An example provided was that when learners started attending medical school most of them wanted to specialise, but when they grew in the field they changed and wanted to be general practitioners. Fouad and Byars-Winston (2005) reported that race and ethnicity do not affect career choice. However, it is the perception of the opportunity offered by different vocations that influences career choice. Ferrington et.al (2012) further elaborate by mentioning that in South Africa the White race are more likely to enter the field of

entrepreneurship, whereas other ethnic groups find it difficult. They further explain that there seems to be a barrier to entry in some career fields, such as entrepreneurship. However, this barrier is only caused by the different perceptions that each ethnic group has.

Career Choice and Age

Adolescents are generally influenced by social expectations with regards to the type of careers male and females pursue. Sanders (2003) in Maryland, United States of America found that in spite of the gains of sex equalization efforts, women still outnumber men 1.7 to 1 in-service careers, 3 to 1 in clerical careers and 5 to 1 in elementary school teaching. Sanders (2003) in Maryland, United States of America again found that, 80% of librarians are women while 61% of social and recreational workers are women. Yet only 10% of lawyers and judges and 12% of medical doctors were women. By 1985, 79% of males were in the labour force while only 44% of women were in the labour force.

Sands (2011) studied the influences of career choice among different age groups. The study showed that an influence towards career choices differs across the different age groups. Adults make use of their life experiences to be influenced by a certain career, whereas the younger generation are influenced by the type of perception they have towards a certain career. Furthermore, the media seem to be one of the greatest factors that influence young people into a certain career.

Teachers' influence gender stereotyping of roles and choices through their interaction with students. Studies have found that teachers often give students the impression that boys are inherently better at working with computers than girls (Sanders & Stone, 1986). Culley (1988) found that teachers

in primary schools often considered boys to be more interested in computers and these teachers tended to enjoy teaching computer-related subjects to boys more than girls. Teachers in such situations often attribute certain expertise to boys and let them have priority over girls in computer use (Volman & van Eck, 2001). This often holds true for both male and female teachers. Possibly the enthusiasm of boys, their spontaneous questions and responses, and their overwhelming presence in computer labs discourages girls (Lipinsk, 1986; Lockheed, 1986).

Chapter Summary

The literature has highlighted factors that influence career pathways. The role of school on career guidance and the influence of the family were cited as factors influencing career pathways among high school students. Gender issues and peer influences were also discussed with regards to their influence on students' career choices. The following chapter discusses the research methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The main purpose of the study was to assess the determinants that influence the career choice among Senior High School students in the Brong Ahafo Region. It is generally accepted that, the quality of any research project hinges on gathering relevant information that would be used to solve a stated problem. The quality of these processes determine the validity and reliability of data collection and the results obtained (Willington, 2000). This chapter outlines the methods to be used in the research work. The research methods and procedures to be used in the study are described under the following sub-headings: research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrument, data collection procedure and data processing and analysis.

Research Design

A research design can be viewed as a plan, structure and strategy of a research to find the tools to solve the problem and to minimise the variance (Kothari, 2014; Creswell, 2013). Its function, therefore, is to ensure that the evidence obtained ensures that the initial question is answered as unambiguously as possible. A research design is a plan of a study (Polit & Hunglar, 1995). This means a research design is a programme that guides the researcher to collect, analyse and interpret data. According to Creswell (2013), research studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena.

Descriptive research design was used for the study. Polit and Hunglar (1995) described descriptive design as the study of existing condition, prevailing view points, attitudes, ongoing processes and developing trends in order to obtain information that can be analysed and interpreted to come up with a report of the present status of subject or phenomenon under study. This design is found suitable because it gives an in-depth description of the phenomena in their existing setting and also economical in collecting data from a large sample with high data turn over (Kothari, 2004)

Dawson (2002) posits that a research design is the conceptual structure within which research would be conducted. In this regard, this study adopted the descriptive research design. Descriptive survey was employed based on the assumptions that it helped the researcher gather the needed information on determinants that influence the career choice among Senior High School students in the Brong Ahafo Region. Descriptive research was deemed most appropriate for the study because it involved the collection of data in order to answer questions concerning current status of the subject matter under study. Also, this survey provided insight into the research problem that described the variables of interest. Descriptive research survey is meant to determine and reveal the way things are. The survey method of descriptive research was used to determine and search for information about the situation at hand and included data from questionnaire and the researcher's own observations.

Study Area

Geographically, the Sunyani West District lies between latitudes 7° 19'N and 7° 35'N and longitudes 2° 08' W and 2° 31' W and shares boundaries with Wenchi Municipal to the North, Offinso North to the East, Sunyani

Municipal to the South, Berekum Municipal to the West, Dormaa Municipal, Dormaa East to the South-West and Tain District to the North-West (figure 1.1). With a total land area of 1,059.33square kilometres, the District occupies 4.2 percent of the total land area of the region. A total of 32, 975 of the District population are currently attending school with 45.7 percent in primary school, JHS/JSS (16.8%), kindergarten (14.1%), SSS/SHS (10.1%) and the tertiary (3.8%). There are more females (46.7) than males (44.8%) currently attending primary school. On the other hand a total of 31,335 of the District total population attended school in the past with majority of the past students from the JHS/JSS (30.3%), middle school (26.3%), primary school (16%) and SSS/SHS (13.3%). The proportion of population who attended school in the past is higher for both SSS/SHS and tertiary than for the population currently attending school. A similar trend can also be observed for those who attended vocational/technical/commercial schools. The information gathered in the District suggest that career guidance is needed among Senior High School students to streamline the future careers to assist the district.

Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) defined population as an entire group of individuals, events or objects with some observable characteristics. Best and Khan (1993) similarly referred to population as “a group of individuals or people that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher” (p.13). The target population was made up of all public Senior High School Students in in the Sunyani West District. The accessible population of the study was 1,271 comprising all form three public Senior High School Students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana.

Table 1-*Distribution of the Population by School and Gender*

Schools	Number of students
Chiraa SHS	240
Fiapre Notre Dame Girls	354
Nsoatre Sacred Heart	255
Odomanseman	422
Total	1,271

Source: Sunyani West District Education Directorate-Odomase, 2018/19

Sample Sampling and Procedure

The quality of any research not only stands or falls by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that is adopted (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The sample was chosen from the study population that is commonly referred to as the ‘target population or accessible population’ (Murphy & Schulz, 2006, p.23). In using the disproportionate sampling technique across the schools, the sample size for the study was 297. The study employed a multistage sampling technique in sampling the respondents. These multistage sampling stages included stratified, quota sampling (disproportionate) and simple random sampling. At the first stage, all the Senior High Schools in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana was stratified (according to their characteristics).

At the second stage, a disproportionate sub-sample was allocated for each schools drawn. At the final stage, simple random (lottery method) sampling was used to select the respondents from each of the schools. Contacting the school heads in all the schools, the class register was obtained

and of the lottery method was used randomly to select the students till the required number was obtained. Thus, simple random sampling was used to select students for the study. The choice of this technique was influenced by the fact that it allowed me to employ different sampling techniques that ensure representativeness of the study participants.

Table 2-*Distribution of Sample Selection/Sampling Frame*

Name of Schools	Number of students	Sample selected
Chiraa SHS	240	56
Fiapre Notre Dame Girls	354	83
Nsoatre Sacred Heart	255	59
Odomanseman	422	99
Total	1,271	297

Source: Sunyani West District Education Directorate-Odomase, 2018/19

Data Collection Instrument

The questionnaire was the source of collecting data for the study. The instrument was developed by the researcher from the literature. A thorough literature review on research related to determinants that influence the career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region was performed prior to the development of the questionnaire. This instrument was used as the tool for data collection as it affords greater assurance of confidentiality and anonymity to respondents (Sarantakos, 2005).

Cohen et al. (2011) purport that a questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information providing structured, often numerical data that is administered without the presence of the researcher and

often comparatively straight forward to analyse. Since the researcher did intend to engage research assistants, questionnaires were the best instruments since they could be administered without the presence of the researcher and was clear and precise. Johnson and Christensen (2014) stated that a questionnaire is a survey instrument used to collect data from individuals about themselves or about a social unit such as household or a school. It is regarded as a valid and reliable way of collecting correct information from the participants.

It is very effective for securing factual information about practices and conditions of which the respondents are presumed to have knowledge. It is also used for enquiring into the opinions, views, feelings and behaviours of subjects (Ogah, 2013). This notwithstanding, questionnaire has some weaknesses. The use of questionnaire does not allow probing, prompting and clarification of questions.

Also, in using a questionnaire, the identity of the respondent and the conditions under which the questionnaire answered were not known. Thus, researchers are not sure whether the right person has answered the questions. Finally, due to lack of supervision, partial response is quite possible (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The use of questionnaires also guarantees easy data collection and also makes it efficient for collecting statistically quantifiable data in social science research (Amedahe, 2000).

The questionnaires were made up of five main sections. Section A was made up of the background characteristics of respondents, Section B looked at school factors that influence the choice of career. Section C considered on the parental factors that influence choice of career. Section D was on student factors that influence choice of career. Section E finally looked at teacher factors that

influence the choice of career. Apart from question in Section A, the rest of the Sections contained questions measured using the four-point Likert scaled items. All the items were positive and were scored as Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity is the exactness and precision of deductions based on the findings from the research (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The validation of the instrument was carried out to check correctness of the data collection instruments during the pilot study. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) emphasizes that pre-testing of study instruments, before the actual study support criterion and construct validation of the tools. Criterion and construct validation was established through pre-testing the instruments used in the study. This checks the appropriateness of the data collection instruments.

In order to enhance the validity of the study, the questionnaire was given to my supervisors and some lecturers in the Department of Guidance and Counselling in the Faculty of Educational Foundations for expert assessment. This ensured both face and content related evidence to the items and examine whether the items related to the research questions and also comprehensively cover the details of the study. Content validity was ensured by effectively indicating the interests of the study (Kothari, & Carg, 2014). Comments were made on the language, clarity, relevance of the items, format, structure and content of the research instruments in order to deem it acceptable. Suggestions were made on rewording questions, adding questions, and deleting some irrelevant questions.

Therefore, amendments were made on the format of the questionnaire and the content in general. Items that were found to be unclear were reframed. This was done in order to make sure that the items in the questionnaire would target the information required by a given objective. The instrument was examined to ensure that the presentation, structure and form of the items within the instruments were suitable. Therefore, face validity and construct was ensured for the study.

Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability is generally defined as the degree to which a measure of a construct is consistent and dependable. Petters, Asuquo and Eyo (2015) further define reliability as the consistency with which a measuring instrument yields certain results when the entity being measured has not changed. Consistency of the instrument was achieved through a number of initiatives. Reliability reveals that when procedures of the study are repeated, the exact same results are expected (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). A reliability test was carried out with the purpose of testing the consistency of the research instrument. The research instruments was improved by revising or deleting items. For reliability of the instruments, a pre-test of the instrument was carried out at SDA Senior High school in the Sunyani East Municipal in Brong-Ahafo to check the reliability of the instrument. This was based on the assumption that, the school had similar characteristics. The aim of the pre-testing was to improve the reliability of the instrument.

The respondents were given draft copies of the questionnaire. The respondents were told to discuss verbally and frankly with me any ambiguity, incoherence or incomprehension that they would experience about any aspect

of the draft questionnaire. The necessary corrections were effected after the trial testing. The pre-test results were used to determine the reliability of the instruments with the Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency. The Statistical Product for Service Solution (Version 25.0) was used for the computations. The obtained reliability coefficient was .827 (see Appendix B) indicating that the instrument was reliable.

Ethical Considerations

Ary, Jacobs and Winston (2013) points out that there are four stages in research ethics, namely: planning, data gathering, processing and interpretation of data as well as the dissemination of results. At the data collection stage, in conducting administering questionnaires, due honesty was exercised. The students had the opportunity to fill their questionnaires privately, in order to ensure confidentiality. In the dissemination of results, measures were taken to ensure privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of all participants. This means that the names of the participants were not used or revealed throughout the research project (Maree, 2007). The discussion of the findings were based on the trends that emerged from the data and not from any preconceived ideas. A letter of consent to participate in the study was given to students. This letter was to show courtesy to them and also a means of ensuring their informed consent to participate in the study. Again, the questions on this survey instrument went through a thorough review by professionals at the University of Cape Coast, and have been declared ethical for educational research (See Appendix D).

Informed consent

According to Baloch and Shah (2014), informed consent implies the agreement to participate in research after learning about the study, including

possible risks and benefits. This implies that the participants must be aware of what the research entails and how they are going to benefit from the research. The students were given time to consider the risks and benefits of being involved in this research and decide whether to take part without being coerced. Participants were also informed of all the benefits and risks of the study. The schools signed the consent forms on behalf of the students. Since the research participants are mostly students, the researcher sought authority from the school management. The participants were told about the general nature of the study as well as about any potential harm or risk that the study may cause.

Confidentiality

Cohen et al. (2011) defined confidentiality as not disclosing information from the participant in any way that might identify that individual or that might enable the individual to be traced. The researcher used coding abstracted data with unique identifiers rather than names and masking features of specific cases, institutions or settings that may make them recognisable even without names (WHO, 2013). The researcher considered the way the data was protected from unauthorised persons. Passwords were also used to protect the data on soft copies.

Anonymity

Anonymity means that we do not name the person or research site involved but in research it is usually extended to mean that I did not include information about any individual or research site that enabled that individual or research site to be identified by others (Walford, 2005). In the current study, numbers were used on questionnaires in place of participants and schools' names.

Harm to participants

The balance of protecting respondents from harm by hiding their identity while, at the same time, preventing “loss of ownership” are issues that need to be addressed by each researcher on an individual basis with each respondent (Grinyer, 2002). The researcher in this study made sure that participants were not exposed to physical, psychological and emotional harm. Sufficient information was provided to the participants so that they could make informed decisions. Data was not disclosed to any other person without the consent of the participants. The researcher carried out a thorough risk/benefit analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

Before administering the questionnaires, an introductory letter from the Department of Guidance and Counselling in the Faculty of Educational Foundations was obtained (See Appendix C). This allowed the researcher to be introduced to the selected schools in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The researcher trained some research assistants that assisted in data collection. These assistants were trained on how to talk to respondents to elicit the right information for the study. Administering the questionnaire personally and with the research assistance offered the researcher the opportunity to explain to the respondents into details how to respond to the items on the questionnaire. The questionnaire were administered to the students without any undue influence. Students were allowed ample time to complete the questionnaire.

Data Processing and Analysis

The completed questionnaires were serially edited, numbered and coded into the SPSS software (Version 25.0). The analysis involved coding,

organizing, describing, interpreting, cross tabulating and drawing conclusions. The analysis was done in two stages. The first stage of analysis focused on descriptive statistics that involved computing of frequency counts and percentages, means and standard deviations. The data was synthesized and transformed into tabular form to illustrate the relative proportions where applicable.

The second stage involved inferential statistics. Inferential statistics whereby the multiple regression were used. A significant level of 0.05 was used to test the observed prediction that was significant to the dependent variable. This was adopted for presenting and analysing the data in this thesis. In using multiple regression. The multiple linear regression was utilized to show the direction and magnitude of the effect and relationship between the variables. F-tests are used to compute the significance of each added variable or set of variables to the explanation reflected in R-squared. This approach allowed the researcher to identify the unique contribution of each predictor to the outcome variable.

Research hypothesis 1 was analysed using independent samples t-test. Independent samples t-test determines whether there is statistically significant difference between the means in two unrelated groups. The dependent variables here are Career choice and the independent variable is gender (male and female).

Research hypothesis 2 was analysed using one-way ANOVA. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to determine whether there are any statistical significant differences between the means of three or more independent (unrelated) groups (age range). ANOVA is used to test general

rather than specific differences among means. Table 2 shows the data analysis tools used for each of the objectives. For each objective, specified statistical tools were used, which involved either descriptive or inferential statistics.

Table 3-*Summary of How the Research Questions and Hypotheses were Analysed*

Research Questions	Statistical Tool employed
1. What school factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?	means and standard deviations
2. What parental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?	means and standard deviations
3. What students' factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?	means and standard deviations
4. Which of the factors best predict the career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?	Multiple regression
Research Hypotheses	Statistical Tool employed
1. H ₀₁ : There is no statistically significant difference between male and female students with respect to the factors that influence their career choice	independent samples t-test
2. H ₀₂ : There is statistically significant difference among the ages of the students with respect to the factors that influence their career choice.	one-way analysis of Variance- ANOVA

Chapter Summary

The research design was a descriptive survey involving quantitative techniques. The study involved Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The sampling techniques used was multi-stage sampling technique involving (stratified, quota sampling and simple random sampling). The research instrument used in the study was mainly questionnaire. The pre-test was conducted and validity and reliability were ensured in the study. The next chapter presents the results and discussions based on the research questions and hypotheses.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the questionnaire data based on the purpose of the study. The purpose of the study was to explore the determinants that influence the career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The analysis and interpretation of data were carried out based on the results of the five (5) research questions and two (2) research hypotheses set for the study. The analysis was based on the 96% return rate data obtained from 297 Senior High School students selected from the select Senior High School Students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana, for the study. This implies that out of 297 students, 285 were available to respond to the questionnaire. The quantitative data were analysed using inferential statistics (Linear Multiple Regression-LMR, independent sample t-test, and one-way analysis of Variance- ANOVA) and descriptive statistics (Means-M, Standard Deviations-Std.D, Frequencies-F, and Percentages -%). The first part of this chapter describes the demographic characteristics of the students selected for the study. In the second part, the research findings are presented based on the research questions formulated for the study.

Demographics Characteristics

This section discusses the background information of the respondents. These include the respondents' gender, age and courses. Table 3 shows the demographics characteristics of the respondents.

Table 4-*Demographic Characteristics of the Students*

Variables	Subscale	Freq.	Percent %
Gender	Male	99	34.7
	Female	186	65.3
Courses	Vocational Skill (Home Economics)	72	25.3
	Science	45	15.8
	Agricultural	24	8.42
	General Art	91	31.9
	Business	32	11.2
	Visual Art	21	7.36
Age Range	Below 15	68	23.9
	16-18	189	66.3
	19 and above	28	9.82

Source: Field Data (2019)

n=285

Table 4 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The results indicate that majority of the students were males (n=186, 65.3%). The females were the least (n=99, 34.7%). In relation to their courses, those offering General Art were the majority (n=91, 31.9%). With respect to the age ranges, the results showed that most of the students were within 16-18 years the majority (n=189, 66.3%).

Analysis of the Research Questions (Q1-Q4)

To gather evidence for the study, the selected SHS students from the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region were made to rate their

responses using Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagrees. Using means, the scales were scored as (Strongly Agree =4, Agree =3, Disagree= 2 and Strongly Disagree =1). The criterion value of 2.50 was established for the scale. To obtain the criterion value (CV=2.50), the scores were added together and divided by the number scale ($4+3+2+1= 10/4=2.50$). To understand the mean scores, items/statements on the factors that scored a mean of **0.00 to 2.49** was regarded as low factor contributing to career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Those items/statements that scored mean from **2.50 to 4.00** was regarded as high factor contributing to career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. This interpretation is applicable to only the research questions 1-4.

Research Question One: What school factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?

This research question sought to find out the school factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5-Means and Standard Deviations of School Factors that Influence the Choice of Career

School Factors (SF)	M Statistic	SD Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	MR
Career trips or field trips influence my career choice	3.81	.674	.688	1st
My preferred career is linked to my favourite subjects	3.80	.924	.840	2nd
School career days influence my career choice	3.72	.234	.101	3 rd
The subjects I do influence my career decision	3.69	.235	.327	4th
The school head was influential to the career I want to do	3.42	.564	.189	5th
The career guidance counsellor is influential to the career I want to do	3.38	.501	.620	6th
School career guidance cleared career confusion that I had	3.32	.249	.588	7th
School career exploration and career decision making activities broaden students' career horizons	3.19	.364	.473	8th
Former students' careers had a positive influence on my career choice	2.98	.345	.120	9th
Career guidance is comprehensively offered at our school	1.54	.433	.147	10 th
Mean of Means/StD	3.29	.452	.409	

Source: Field Data (2019) (n=285)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, N=Sample Size

Table 5 presents results on school factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The results show that the variables follows a normal

distribution this is based on the reason that the kurtosis values were within the acceptable limit for normal distribution of ± 2 (George & Mallery, 2011) indicating that the data was normal. Table 4 gives evidence to believe that generally, most school factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. This was evident after the students responses scored an average mean ($MM=3.29$) greater than the Test Value of 2.50.

Some of the key factors are espoused in the interpretation. For example, most of the students indicated that the career trips or field trips influence their career choice ($M=3.81 > TV(2.50)$, $SD=.674$, $K=.688$, $n=285$) and this explains that career trips or field trips is one of the school factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

In a similar results, the students' their preferred career is linked to their favourite subjects ($M=3.80 > TV(2.50)$, $SD=.924$, $K=.840$, $n=285$) and this explains that courses mount in the schools are one of the school factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

Similarly, the students indicated that career days influence their career choice ($M=3.72 > TV(2.50)$, $SD=.234$, $K=.101$, $n=285$) and this elucidates that career days in the schools is one of the school factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

The influence of school heads were not left out as the student indicated that school head is influential to the career they want to do ($M=3.42 > TV(2.50)$,

$SD=.564$, $K=.189$, $n=285$). The results implies that school head is one of the key school factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

The results lends support to the assertions that field trips and school career days were found to have a significant influence on students' choices of careers. For example, in the United Kingdom, field trips were found to have an impact on students' choices of careers (Higgins, et al, 2014). Similar studies in America also found that field trips and career days influence students' career choices (Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012; Behrandt & Frankline, 2014), in Czechoslovakia (Palos & Drobot, 2010). Similar findings were obtained in Pakistan (Shakil, Faizi & Hafeez, 2011), in Ireland (Higgins et al., 2014) and in Ghana (Amoah et al., 2015) where the importance of field trips in influencing students' choices of careers was revealed.

Similarly, Hansen (2006) stated that, in Switzerland, school career exploration and career decision-making activities can be used to broaden students' awareness of their interests and abilities as well as the career opportunities that exist. Decision-making is one of the basic tenets of Bandura's Social Cognitive theory which emphasises self-efficacy. According to Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy entails the belief in one's capability to succeed on a given task. Hence, students are likely to choose careers based on whether they have the capacity to do well in their chosen careers. If career guidance enhances the acquisition of self-efficacy, it was critical for the current study to establish its influence in Ghana.

Bardick (2004) revealed that a proactive career counselling approach that benefits Canadian students would include building trusting relationships

with students, encouraging them to closely examine and explore their occupational interests, providing students with information about the stages of decision making involved in career planning and guiding them in their search for information about careers. This could build trust and legitimacy in the counsellor making him or her influential in the students' career choices. Bardick (2004) further purported that counsellors who wish to become more influential in students career planning may need to become more actively involved in students' everyday lives. Career guidance is not only confined to the classroom but could be extended to the external world.

The Robert's review (2011) noted that, teachers' subject knowledge and teaching style are vital factors, but it is often their enthusiasm that capture pupil's interest and motivated them to study a subject. Roberts (2011) found that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) generally among teachers was found to be lacking; it is worrying that few teachers develop their subject knowledge through CPD. Perna, Rowan-Kenyon, Thomas, Bell, Anerson and Chunyan (2008) highlighted the relative difficulty of teaching certain aspects of engineering within "technology" options subjects, exacerbated by lack of communication between science and technology departments on aspects of the curriculum.

Research Question Two: What parental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?

This research question sought to find the parental factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6-Means and Standard Deviations of Parental factors that Influence the Choice of Career

Parental Factors (PF)	M Statistic	SD Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	MR
My mother is influential to the career I want to pursue	3.92	.924	.740	1st
The family business is a factor in my choosing a career	3.83	.234	.181	2 nd
My father influenced me into the career I want to pursue	3.79	.674	.049	3rd
The dominant profession in my family is also my preferred career	3.73	.235	.327	4th
Information I got from my parents helped me to choose a career	3.70	.564	.189	5th
My father’s career had an impact on my choice of career	3.67	.501	.620	6th
Older siblings had an influence on my career choice	3.45	.364	.045	7th
My mother’s career had an effect on my choice of career	3.32	.249	.384	8th
An extended family member is influential in the career that I chose	3.18	.345	.039	9th
Mean of Means/StD	3.62	.454	.286	

Source: Field Data (2019)

(n=285)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, N=Sample Size

Table 5 depicts results on parental factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. As suggested by George and Mallery (2011), the results show that the variables follows a normal distribution this is based on the reason that the kurtosis values were within the acceptable limit for normal distribution of ± 2 indicating that the data was normal. The results in Table 5 give evidence

to suggest that largely enough, some parental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. This was evident after the students responses scored an average mean ($MM=3.62$) larger than the Test Value of 2.50.

For instance, most of the students indicated their mothers are influential to the career they want to pursue ($M=3.92 >TV (2.50)$, $SD=.924$, $K=.740$, $n=285$) and this implies that most mothers Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region serves as one of the parental factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

Furthermore, family business was also identified as one of that parental factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region ($M=3.83 >TV (2.50)$, $SD=.234$, $K=.181$, $n=285$). Most of the students further indicated their fathers is influential to the career they want to pursue ($M=3.79 >TV (2.50)$, $SD=.674$, $K=.049$, $n=285$) and implies that most fathers Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region is one of that parental factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

The dominant profession in their family was also classified as one of the parental factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region ($M=3.73 >TV (2.50)$, $SD=.235$, $K=.327$, $n=285$). In a similar results, information they got from their parents helps them to choose a career ($M=3.70 >TV (2.50)$, $SD=.564$, $K=.189$, $n=285$).

The results support the claims that, In America, Abbasi and Sarwat (2014) purported that the career process of young people can be compared to rocks in a rock polisher. All kinds of people grind away at them but parents are the big rocks in the tumbler.

Similarly, other American studies also reveal that, even if schools had the resources with which to meet young people's career needs, neither teachers nor counsellors can replace the influence parents have on their children (Baloch & Shah, 2014; Abbasi & Sarwat, 2014). Besides parents, other American family members are viewed as influential in their children's career choices (Tillman, 2015; Hutchins & Meese, 2011; Ojeda & Flores, 2008).

The results further support the work of Bracey (2008) and Wortman, Loftus and Marshall (2014). According to their study, by using the specific roles of parents in influencing their children's career aspirations, the literature clearly identified mothers as the most influential parents (In early childhood, many African American children, especially, African American females (Bracey, 2008; Wortman, Loftus & Marshall, 2014) are influenced by the aspirations of their mothers.

Bracey (2008) also found that the employment status of mothers, as well as the mother-child relationship, influence the vocational outcomes of African American children. In a study of students from two schools in a Midwestern city in the USA, Paa and McWhirter (2000) discovered that 'both girls and boys identify their parents as important influences on their career expectations' and that both boys and girls indicated that they considered their parents influence to be positive

Again, Mullis, Mullis and Gerwhels (2012) reported that students' career aspirations tended to match their parents' occupations. For example, students whose parents were in unskilled occupational tended to be more interested in Realistic occupations, while students whose parents were in professional or skilled occupations tended to be more interested in Artistic, Social or Conventional occupations (Mullis et al., 2012).

Equally, Nyamwenge (2016) revealed that German families influence students' career choices. All these studies were carried out in completely different environments from the current study. Parents influence career choices in a number of ways, for example, parental support and encouragement. A study carried in Kenya reflects that when adolescents require information on topics such as career planning, they consult their parents (Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012). Although the study was similar to the current study in terms of focus and objectives, the study used a qualitative approach which limits the objectivity and generalisability of results.

Research Question Three: What teacher factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?

This research question sought to assess the teacher factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The accrued results were analysed using means and standard deviations. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7-Means and Standard Deviations of Teacher Factors that Influence the Choice of Career

Teacher Factors (TF)	M Statistic	SD Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	MR
Entrepreneurship information is more influential if it comes from teachers	3.99	.234	.766	1st
My class teacher is influential to the career I want to pursue	3.92	.294	.543	2 nd
Validation of careers is provided by teachers	3.82	.453	.079	3rd
Career behaviour modification comes from my teachers	3.48	.324	.627	4th
Teachers influence regarding career choices is powerful	3.34	.113	.178	5th
Teachers advice on career guidance was helpful to me	3.27	.224	.520	6th
Career Information given by teachers is always reliable	3.26	.364	.465	7th
My teachers give comprehensive and proper advice on careers	3.22	.249	.764	8th
Mean of Means/StD	3.48	.282	.493	

Source: Field Data (2019)

(n=285)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, N=Sample Size

Table 7 illustrates results on teacher factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. As proposed by George and Mallery (2011), the results show that the variables follows a normal distribution this is based on the reason that the kurtosis values were within the acceptable limit for normal distribution of ± 2 indicating that the data was normal.

Comparing the means values to the test value in Table 6 show that teacher factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. This was obvious after the students responses recorded an average mean ($MM=3.48$) greater than the Test Value of 2.50.

Some of the teacher factors include the fact that, entrepreneurship information is more influential if it comes from teachers ($M=3.99 > TV (2.50)$, $SD=.234$, $K=.766$, $n=285$) and this implies that most teachers in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region serves as one of factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

The students further asserted that their class teacher is influential to the career they want to pursue ($M=3.92 > TV (2.50)$, $SD=.294$, $K=.543$, $n=285$) and this show that most teachers in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region serves as one of that influential factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region.

It was further recounted by the students that validation of careers is provided by teachers ($M=3.82 > TV (2.50)$, $SD=.453$, $K=.079$, $n=285$). Also, career behaviour modification comes from their teachers ($M=3.48 > TV (2.50)$, $SD=.324$, $K=.627$, $n=285$).

In a similar study, Bright, Pryor, Wilkenfeld and Earl (2005) reiterated the importance of teachers in career guidance when they purport that teachers were second most important group in helping students choose their careers. The poll by The Yorkshire Times (2012) which examined the reasons why

respondents picked a certain job, found that 50% of the participants made the decision as a result of a particular teacher. According to Senyonyi, Ochieng and Sells (2012), British school teachers can identify aptitudes and abilities and encourage students to take certain subject options, take part in work experience or employment visits.

The results from the current study support the assertion that, in developed countries, career guidance is not solely the duty of school counsellors and teachers but also includes independent counsellors. Such counselling may require a fee which could deter some students from getting that help. However, Balin and Hirschi (2010) advocate that the students who do not go to independent counsellors to seek help may benefit from classroom career guidance, where they may have the chance to build relationships with school counsellors and become more comfortable in seeking one-to-one interactions later in the process. School career counselling may be the answer for those who may have problems with attaining professional guidance offered elsewhere.

Coupled with the above, it was evident elsewhere that career guidance teachers in schools have an important role in advocating for broad based career plans that focus on the student's interests and abilities and that will increase future career options (Hoyt, 2014). Similarly, Obiyo and Eze (2015) emphasised the role of career guidance teachers when they stated that American school guidance teachers are uniquely positioned to stimulate students' interest in the health professions. In the same American study, it was revealed that many of the focus group participants felt career guidance teachers were largely helpful

Research Question Four: What student factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?

This research question sought to assess the student factors that influence the career choice of students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8-*Means and Standard Deviations of student factors that influence the choice of career*

Student Factors (SF)	M Statistic	SD Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	MR
				Test Value=2.50
I have ability in that career	3.85	.564	.456	1st
It will give me the opportunity to use my talent.	3.82	.513	.458	2nd
I embrace the advice I get from peers that I value most	3.78	.729	.737	3rd
It will help me to be original and be me	3.62	.483	.349	4th
I have personal interest in choice of career.	3.56	.234	.766	5th
Peer advice on careers is essential to fellow students	3.53	.924	.557	6th
It fits my gender	3.38	.543	.429	7th
Career education comes from other students	3.37	.493	.048	8th
I rely on encouragement from students of their age	3.35	.355	.563	9th
Mean of Means/StD	3.58	.537	.484	

Source: Field Data (2019)

(n=285)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, n=Sample Size

Table 8 shows results on student factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. As submitted by George and Mallery (2011), the results indicate that the variables track a normal distribution this is based on the reason that the kurtosis values were within the acceptable limit for normal distribution of ± 2 indicating that the data was normal.

Equating the means values to the test value in Table 7, the results show that student factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. This was palpable after the students responses recorded an average mean ($MM=3.58$) greater than the Test Value of 2.50.

Some of the identified student factors include their ability in the career they choose ($M=3.85 > TV (2.50)$, $SD=.564$, $K=.079$, $n=456$). Opportunity to use their talent was not left out as the student agreed that career choice will give them the opportunity to use their talent ($M=3.82 > TV (2.50)$, $SD=.513$, $K=.458$, $n=285$). It was further averred by most of the students that they embrace the advice they get from peers that they value most ($M=3.78 > TV (2.50)$, $SD=.729$, $K=.737$, $n=285$). Another key factor was that most students have personal interest in choice of career ($M=3.56 > TV (2.50)$, $SD=.234$, $K=.766$, $n=285$).

The results support the work of Fizer (2013) who also found that many students choose their careers based on their academic ability. However, some students work habits do not match the field of study they have chosen. These students may experience low satisfaction with the field of study they have chosen. Such students may find their chosen field to be challenging and

uninteresting. Therefore, career guidance plays an important part with such students in assisting them to choose a field of study.

The results further support the work of Hoyt (2014) who mention that preparedness is an important element in making a career choice, learners could benefit from extra interventions in assisting them to be prepared for life after high school. A study that focused on interventions for assisting learners to be prepared for career choice indicated that learners proved to be better equipped to make a career choice, after attending a workshop. Furthermore, the study indicates that through interventions learners are equipped in planning for their careers which assists them in their career preparedness. It is also said that there are cost effective ways to assist learners to make appropriate career choices, such as workshops.

Research Question Five: Which of the factors best predict career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region?

The purpose of this research question was to find out the factors best predict career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. To answer this research question, multiple regression was deemed appropriate for the analysis. Linear Multiple Regression (LMR) in this analysis was utilized to show the direction and magnitude of the effect and relationship between the predicted variables on the career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. This approach allowed me to identify the unique contribution of each of the predictors to the outcome variable (career choice). The analysis was performed at $p\text{-value} = 0.05$ (two-tailed) level of significant. However, prior to

conducting regression analysis test, assumptions were checked. These assumptions were normality, linearity and multicollinearity. Figure 1 presents the normality and linearity test of the study variables and Table 9 presents the results of the multicollinearity test.

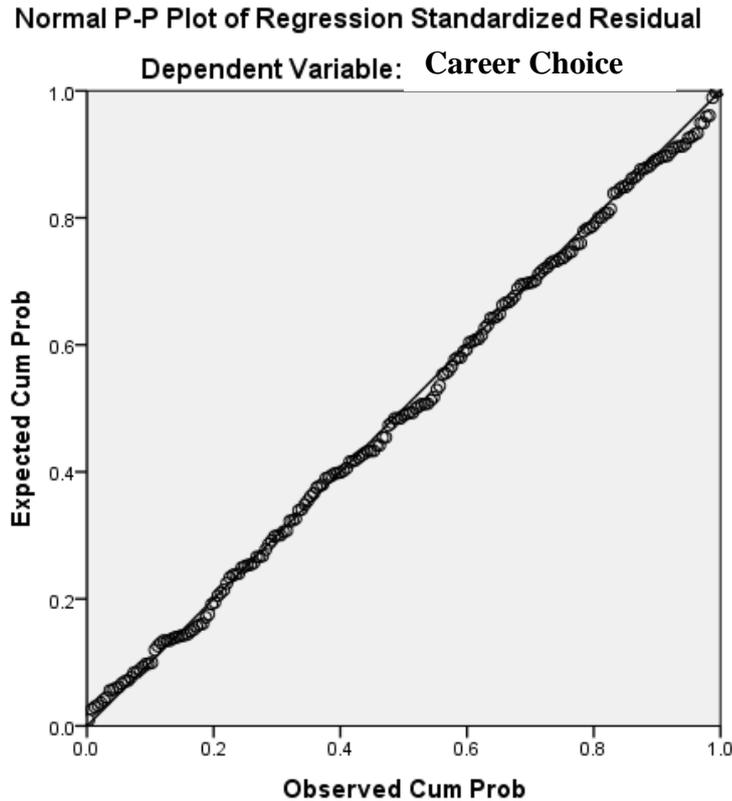


Figure 1-Diagnostic Test of Normality and Linearity

Source: Field survey (2019)

According to Pallant (2007), a straight normal probability plot is an indication of normality and linearity. Pallant noted that when multiple regression assumptions are met, it produces a reliable result. From Figure 1, a reasonable straight line could be seen from the plot demonstrating normality and linearity of the data. This therefore, means that conducting multiple regression test was justified. Figure 2 also presents histogram test of normality and linearity.

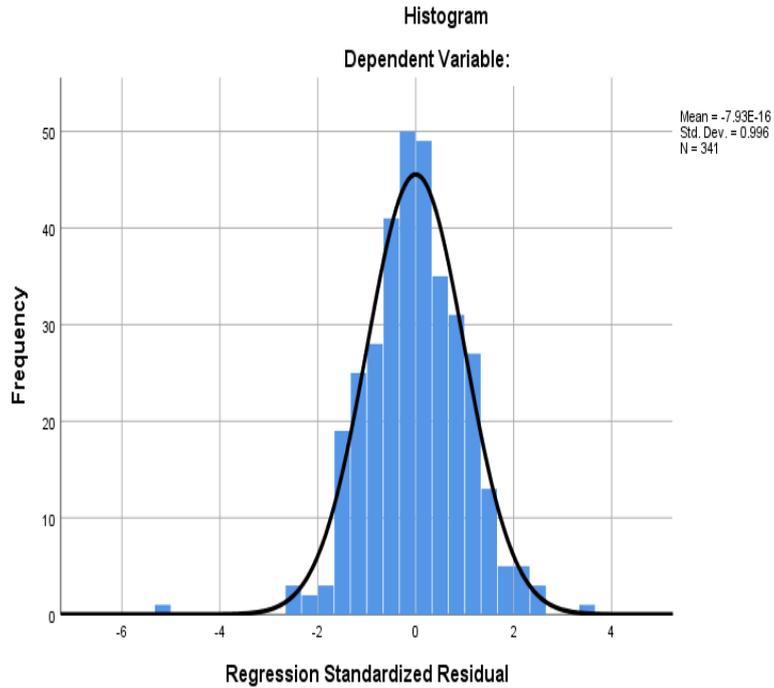


Figure 2-Histogram Test of Normality and Linearity

Source: Field survey (2019)

The Histogram plot of standardised predicted values versus standardised residuals, showed that the data met the assumptions of normality of variance and linearity and the residuals were approximately normally distributed. Table 9 presents the multicollinearity diagnostic test results to support the normality and linearity test.

Table 9-Results of Multicollinearity Diagnostic Test of the Study Variables

Study Variables	SF	PF	TF	SF
School Factors	1.00	.504	.075	.434
Parental Factors		1.00	.076	.145
Teacher Factors			1.00	.455
Student Factors				1.00

Source: Field survey (2019)

(n=285)

Table 9 indicates the results of multicollinearity diagnostic test of the variables. The problem of multicollinearity is said to exist when independent variables used in the study (School, Parental, Teacher and Students factors) are highly correlated with each other. The study followed literature to test this assumption. It is assumed that correlation coefficient of 0.70 or more between independent variables is assumed to demonstrate evidence of multicollinearity problem (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). From Table 9, the highest correlation coefficient was .504 which is less than 0.70. This gives evidence that there was no the problem of multicollenearity. Having tested for the assumptions, running multiple regression was deemed appropriate. Table 10 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis.

Table 10-Results of Multiple Regression Analysis on the Coefficients of the Factors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	-60.083	11.047		-5.654	.000
School Factors	1.543	.067	.875	2.378	.000
Parental Factors	1.236	.534	.639	13.59	.012
Teacher Factors	2.577	.456	.758	3.421	.000
Student Factors	.654	.072	.234	3.382	.018

a. Dependent Variable: Career choice *Significant at $p < 0.05$

b. Independent Variable: Predictors

Source: Field survey (2019)

Table 10 presents the coefficients model for the factors and how they predicted and contributed to career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. It can be seen from

Table 9 that all the four factors serving as the independent variables were statistically significant at 0.05 level of confidence. For example, school factors produced a significant result (p -value = .000), Parental factors also produced a significant result (p -value = .012). The result on the teacher factors was not different (p -value = .000). Lastly, student factors also gave a significant result (p -value = .018). However, when evaluating the Standardized Coefficients Beta (β) values, among the factors, it was revealed that their contribution was in magnitude. The greatest predictor upon the dependent variable (career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region) is in the following order: school factors ($\beta = .875$), teacher factors ($\beta = .758$), parental factors ($\beta = .639$) and lastly students factors ($\beta = .234$).

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested for the study.

Research Hypothesis One

H₀1: There is no statistically significant difference between male and female students with respect to their knowledge in career choice.

H₁A: There is statistically significant difference between male and female students with respect to their knowledge in career choice.

The researcher sought to examine the difference between the male and female students with respect to their career choice. To realise this hypothesis, independent samples t-test was deemed appropriate for the analysis. The independent samples t-test was utilised in the analysis based on the assumptions that independent samples t-test determines whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means in two unrelated groups. The

dependent variable here was career choice (CC) and the independent variable is gender (male and female). The results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11-Results of independent sample t-test on male and female students' career choice

Variables	N	M	SD	SEM	Cal.t-value	Df	p-value
Males	99	27.830	3.953	.6453	.5643	283	.077*(s)
Females	186	26.299	2.993	.5955			
Total	285						

Source: Field Data (2019) Computed using alpha value of =0.05 (p=0.05 level of confidence)

***Key= df= degrees of freedom, M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, SEM= Standard Error Mean, N=Sample Size, sig. =Significant**

Results on the independent samples t-test results that compares difference between the male and female students with respect to the factors that influence their career choice is presented in Table 11. As indicated in Table 11, the descriptive results (means and standard deviations) portrays that there were some differences in means scores of the independent variables (male and female students) with respect to their career choice.

The descriptive results the males ($M=27.830$, $SD=3.953$, $SEM=.6453$, $n=99$) were found to be knowledgeable in career choice than females students ($M=26.299$, $SD=2.993$, $SEM=.5955$, $n=186$). However, from the *t-test* and *p-values*, the results show that the mean differences (between male and female students) were not significant [$t(df=283) = .5643$, $p = .077$, $p < 0.05$, $n=285$, 2-tailed]. Hence, null hypothesis which states that, “There will be no statistical significant difference between male and female students with respect to their knowledge in career choice” was upheld. Since the results was no significant

showing that both the male and female students had the same or similar knowledge in career choice.

The accrued results from the current study contradicts that Gottfredson (2014) who pointed out that learners make their career choice in accordance with their gender type and the prestige the career comes with. Kerr and Colangelo (2015) further expand on this point by reporting that certain careers which are perceived to be good for females are usually preferred by females, and those perceived to be good for males are usually undertaken by males. Arp, Holmerg and Littrel (2015) further report that women are affected more by family factors when making career choices. Therefore, their choices are based on putting their families first, whereas men chose careers in accordance with the prestige attached to them.

The results further disagree with the work of Kerr and Colangelo (2015) who explain that males and females have different reasons for following their chosen careers. Their reasons were around factors such as personal ambition and the need to help patients. The study showed that, as students grew in the field of study, a change in career direction came about. An example provided was that when learners started attending medical school most of them wanted to specialise, but when they grew in the field they changed and wanted to be general practitioners.

Hypothesis Two

H₀1: There is no statistically significant difference among the age range of the students respect to the factors that influence their career choice

H₁A: There is statistically significant difference among the age range of the students respect to the factors that influence their career choice.

At 0.05 level significance, I tested hypothesis to find out whether ages of students could differ in their career choice. To achieve this, one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for the analysis. To obtain the scores, the responses on students on career choice were transformed using the SPSS Software, Version 25. The data were made up of independent variables that is ages of the students which is categorical and dependent variables (career choice) which was continuous. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether there are any statistical significant differences between the means of three or more independent (unrelated) groups (career choice). Hence, per ANOVA assumptions, it was deemed appropriate for the analysis. However, statistical ANOVA assumption were tested using normality test results. Table 12 presents the results.

Table 12-*Normality Test Results of the Variables (AS *CC)*

Ages of the Students	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
AS* Below 15	.072	68	.006	.968	68	.635
CC 16-18	.083	189	.200*	.929	189	.607
Above 19 years	.124	28	.058	.945	28	.422

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Source: Field Survey, 2019

*Significant difference exist at $p \leq 0.05$,

AS**=Age of Students, CC**=Career Choice

Table 12 offers results of the normality test of the data. The Shapiro-Wilk was reported because according to Pallant (2001), Shapiro-Wilk it is appropriate for data with larger sample size ($n \geq 50$). The Shapiro-Wilk

produced a value of .968 ($p > 0.05$, Sig. = .635, $df = 45$) for students below 15 years a Shapiro-Wilk value of .929 ($p > .05$, Sig. = .607, $df = 295$) for students within 16-18 years. Those who from 19 years and above produced a Shapiro-Wilk value of .945 ($p > 0.05$, Sig. = .422, $df = 21$). From the Shapiro-Wilk results, all the levels produced a significant value greater than the p-value of 0.05 suggesting that the data distribution was normal. Having tested for the normality, I proceeded to check for the homogeneity of variances of the data distribution. The results are presented in Table 12. Figure 3 also confirms the graphical way to compare to check the Normality Test Results of the Variables

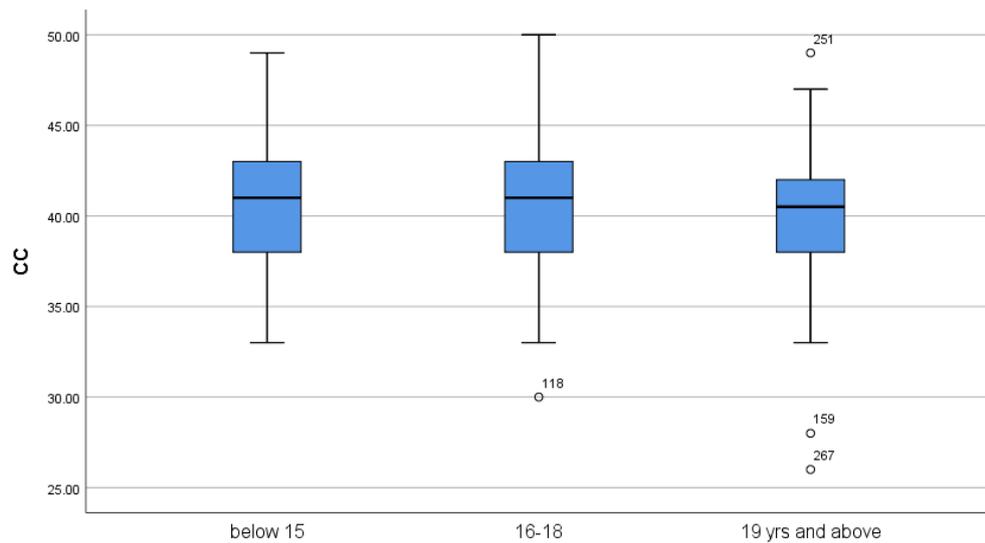


Figure 3-Normality of Test of the Study Variables

Table 13-Results of Homogeneity of Variances Test (AS*CC)

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.	Remarks
.383	2	283	.741	Not significant

Source: Field Data, 2019 *Significant difference exists at $P \leq 0.05$, $n = 285$

Key: AS**=Age of Students, CC**=Career Choice

Table 13 depicts the test of homogeneity of variances of the study variables (AS**=Age of Students, CC**=Career Choice). From the table, the homogeneity of variances test results indicated that, assumption of homogeneity has not been violated. [t (df1=2, df2=359) = .383, p<0.05, Sig. = .741, 2-tailed)]. Performing of ANOVA test was therefore acceptable. Table 13 presents results on the descriptive statistics of the test (AS**=Age of Students, CC**=Career Choice)

Table 13-Descriptive Statistics of the Test (Age of Students**Career Choice)

(AS*CC)	N	Mean	Std. D	Mean Rank
Below 15	68	45.32	4.784	3rd
16-18	189	53.43	3.832	1st
Above 19 years	28	47.21	4.411	2nd
Total (n=285)		AM=48.65	ASD=4.34	

Source: Field Data (2019) (n=285)

Key= AS=Age of Students, CC**=Career Choice, AM=Average Mean, ASD=Average Standard Deviation**

The descriptive statistics as in Table 13 shows that students within 16-18 years (M= 53.43, SD= 3.832, n=295) has more knowledge on career choice. This was followed by those from 19 years and above (M=47.21, SD= 4.411, n=21). The descriptive statistics indicated that those from 15 years and below had the least knowledge in career choice (M= 45.32, SD= 45.32, n=45). Nevertheless, one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to gain more statistical evidence. Table 14 presents summary of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results.

Table 14-*Summary of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results (AS*CC)*

Sources	Sum of		Mean		Rks
	Squares	df	Square	F	
Between Groups	26.923	2	13.461	.543	.058 No Diff.
Within Groups	4462.544	283	15.965		
Total	4489.467	285			

Source: Field Data (2019) *Significant difference exists at $P \leq 0.05$, $n=285$

Key= AS=Age of Students, CC**=Career Choice**

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare mean scores of the study variable (Age of Students ** Career Choice). From Table 14, the results show that there was no statistically significant difference in the variables. The F-ratio, $F (df1=2, df2=359) = .543$, $p < .05$, $n=285$, Sig. = .058, 2-tailed) gives statistical evidence to fact that there was no differences in mean scores of the tested variable. The testing of hypothesis revealed no significant result existed among the age range of the students respect to the factors that influence their career choice. Hence, null hypothesis which states that, “There will be no statistical significant difference among the age range of the students respect to the factors that influence their career choice” was upheld. Since the results was no significant, post-hoc test/follow up test was not applicable.

The results disconfirmed a similar study by Sands (2011) who studied the influences of career choice among different age groups. The study showed that an influence towards career choices differs across the different age groups. Adults make use of their life experiences to be influenced by a certain career, whereas the younger generation are influenced by the type of perception they have towards a certain career.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The present study sought to find out the determinants that influence the career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. In the present chapter, the context of the problem presented in Chapter two is reiterated; the summary of literature, research methodology and the findings on each research question are presented. This chapter also presents the conclusions of the study and recommendations for the policy and practice. It further presents a proposed model for career guidance of students in high schools. The chapter ends with the presentation of matters regarding areas for further studies.

Summary of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influence the career choice of Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region, Ghana. The study was guided by five research questions and two hypotheses. Descriptive survey design involving the quantitative approach was used for the study. The target population of the study was all public Senior High School Students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. Therefore, the accessible population of the study was 1,271 comprising all form three public Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. A sample size of 297 (96% return rate of 285) students were selected for the study using

multistage sampling stages. A self-developed questionnaire was used for the data collection. Pre-testing of the instrument was done and reliability and validity were ensured. Ethical consideration was also ensured before the actual data collection. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (linear multiple regression- LMR, independent samples t-test, and one-way analysis of Variance- ANOVA).

Key Findings

The under listed findings were established:

1. It was established that generally, some school factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Some of the key school factors included career trips or field trips influence career choice for example students visiting factories, industries etc., preferred career is linked to the students' favourite subjects and school career days influence my career choice.
2. Again, some parental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Some of the parental factors identified were that their mother is influential to the career they want to pursue, their family business is a factor in choosing a career, and their father influence them into the career they want to pursue.
3. The study further revealed that teacher factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Some of the teacher factors were

entrepreneurship information, teachers' influential role, Validation of careers, teachers Career behaviour modification.

4. On student factors, the results showed that the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region was influenced by the actions of the students themselves. Some of the student factors were their personal interest, having ability in that career and opportunity to use their talent.
5. Results from the study further show that even though all the factors influence career choice, their contribution varied in terms of degree. The greatest predictor upon the dependent variable (career choice) is in the following order: school factors predicted first ($\beta = .875$), teacher factors predicted second ($\beta = .758$), parental factors predicted third ($\beta = .639$) and student factors predicted least ($\beta = .234$).
6. From hypothesis one, it was evident that the mean differences (between male and female students) were not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that, "There is no statistically significant difference between male and female students with respect to their knowledge in career choice" was upheld.
7. From hypothesis two, no significant result existed among the age range of the students respect to the factors that influence their career choice. Hence, null hypothesis which states that, "There is no statistically significant difference among the age range of the students respect to the factors that influence their career choice" was upheld.

Conclusions

Career choice in Ghana was perceived to have been influenced by parents and great or significant others in the lives of the students and the study revealed similar results. Again, the findings make it clear that the school is the bigger picture when it comes to the factors that influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Furthermore, since the student have similar influences in the school, no differences existed between male and female students with respect to their knowledge in career choice. It was recounted similarly that, since the student have similar influences in the school, no differences existed among the age range of the students respect to the factors that influence their career choice.

Counselling Implications

From the study, school factors were one of the most important factors that influence Senior High Students in the choosing their career in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Therefore, counsellors in the schools should organize career fairs where students would be made to know the best factors that most influence them in their choice of career.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

1. Career choice guidance should be inculcated in the school curriculum so that right from the start students would know what should go into their choice of careers. Thus, it is recommended that career guidance teachers be trained to equip them with necessary skills that enhance teaching in the classroom. Teachers in the Senior High Schools in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region should

comprehensively train their students in career guidance to enable them to be competent when engaging their students in career guidance activities. It is further recommended that staff development of career guidance teachers be prioritised to enhance competitiveness of teachers when executing their duties as career guidance practitioners.

2. Again, it is recommended that more career guidance seminars should be organised for students in the Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region by counsellors so as to help Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region to know the right factors to consider when choosing a career.
3. Further, seeing a counsellor on one's career choice should be a compulsory thing every student must do and it should be monitored by counsellors. This would help most students who would not have looked for help in career choice seek help because it is compulsory.
4. Career choice should be added to the compulsory courses in the Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region so that students would have in depth knowledge about career choice.
5. Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region should consider interest in their choice of career. Interest makes an individual put in so much in whatever he/she does becomes the urge is there. When interest is considered, it brings career satisfaction.

6. Parents should not choose careers for their wards but allow them to look within them and choose a career that best fits them. For this to get to parents, education by counsellors of career choice can educate parents through the mass media on the importance of allowing their wards to choose their careers themselves.
7. Finally, the current study recommends that parents should be trained in career guidance. Special community programmes, initiated by the schools, may be organised to help parents guide their children. Universities and other institutions of tertiary learning may introduce short courses on career guidance.

Suggestion for Further Research

The following suggestions are made for further research.

1. The present study focused on factors that influence the career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region in Ghana. Further studies are required from other Districts in the country to collaborate the findings of the present study and to ensure their generalisability.
2. The current study focused on factors that influence the career choice of students. Further studies would be required from the working class to find out what influenced their choice of career.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

Dear Respondent

The study seeks to find out determinants that influence the career choice among Senior High School students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong Ahafo Region. Your full input will help make informed decisions about determinants that influence the career choice. It would therefore be appreciated if you could provide responses to all items on the questionnaire, and do it honestly. You are assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity of all information provided. Nothing will ever be published or reported that will associate your name and/or school with your responses to the survey questions. Therefore, you should not write your name, and/or school name on any part of the instrument. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Again, questions on this survey instrument have gone through a thorough review by professionals at the University of Cape Coast, and have been declared ethical for educational research. You hereby consent to voluntarily participate in this study by providing responses to items of the various sections of this instrument.

Thank You.

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. Gender:

- a) Male []
- b) Female []

2. Course:

- a) Vocational Skill []
- b) Science []
- c) Agricultural []
- d) Home Economics []
- e) General Art []
- f) Business []
- g) Visual Art []

3. Age

- a) Below 15 []
- b) 16-18 []
- c) 19 and above []

SECTION B

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: SCHOOL FACTORS

Please respond to the following statements on **your knowledge on school factors that influence the choice of career**. Indicate the extent to which you Strongly Agree-SA, Agree-A, Disagree-D and Strongly Disagree-SD to the statements below

Directions: Indicate with a circle [O] on how school factors that influence the choice of career. Where: *SA = Strongly Agree, (4), A = Agree, (3) D = Disagree, (2) and SD = Strongly Disagree (1)*

	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
3	Career guidance is comprehensively offered at our school	4	3	2	1
4	School career days influenced my career choice	4	3	2	1
5	Career trips or field trips influenced my career choice	4	3	2	1
6	School career guidance cleared career confusion that I had	4	3	2	1
7	The career guidance counsellor was influential to the career I want to do	4	3	2	1
8	The school head was influential to the career I want to do	4	3	2	1
9	The subjects I do influenced my career decision	4	3	2	1
10	Former students' careers had a positive influence on my career choice	4	3	2	1
11	School career exploration and career decision making activities broaden students' career horizons	4	3	2	1
12	My preferred career is linked to my favourite subjects	4	3	2	1

SECTION C

RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: PARENTAL FACTORS

Please respond to the following statements on your knowledge on **parental factors that influence the choice of career**. Indicate the extent to which you Strongly Agree-SA, Agree-A, Disagree-D and Strongly Disagree-SD to the statements below

Directions: Indicate with a circle [O] on how parental factors that influence the choice of career. Where: *SA = Strongly Agree, (4), A = Agree, (3) D = Disagree, (2) and SD = Strongly Disagree (1)*

	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
13	My father influenced me into the career I want to pursue	4	3	2	1
14	My mother was influential to the career I want to pursue	4	3	2	1
15	The family business is a factor in my choosing a career	4	3	2	1
16	The dominant profession in my family is also my preferred career	4	3	2	1
17	Information I got from my parents helped me to choose a career	4	3	2	1
18	My father's career had an impact on my choice of career	4	3	2	1
19	My mother's career had an effect on my choice of career	4	3	2	1
20	Older siblings had an influence on my career choice	4	3	2	1
21	An extended family member was influential in the career that I chose	4	3	2	1

SECTION C

RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: TEACHER FACTORS

Please respond to the following statements on your knowledge on **teacher factors that influence the choice of career**. Indicate the extent to which you Strongly Agree-SA, Agree-A, Disagree-D and Strongly Disagree-SD to the statements below

Directions: Indicate with a circle [O] on how teacher factors that influence the choice of career. Where: *SA = Strongly Agree, (4), A = Agree, (3) D = Disagree, (2) and SD = Strongly Disagree (1)*

	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
22	Entrepreneurship information is more influential if it comes from teachers	4	3	2	1
23	My class teacher was influential to the career I want to pursue	4	3	2	1
25	Validation of careers is provided by teachers	4	3	2	1
26	Career behaviour modification comes from my teachers	4	3	2	1
27	Teachers influence regarding career choices is powerful	4	3	2	1
28	Teachers advice on career guidance was helpful to me	4	3	2	1
29	Career Information given by teachers is always reliable	4	3	2	1
30	My teachers give comprehensive and proper advice on careers	4	3	2	1

SECTION C

RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: STUDENT FACTORS

Please respond to the following statements on your **knowledge on student factors that influence the choice of career**. Indicate the extent to which you Strongly Agree-SA, Agree-A, Disagree-D and Strongly Disagree-SD to the statements below

Directions: Indicate with a circle [O] on how student factors that influence the choice of career. Where: *SA = Strongly Agree, (4), A = Agree, (3) D = Disagree, (2) and SD = Strongly Disagree (1)*

	I chose my career because	SA	A	D	SD
31	I have personal interest in it.	4	3	2	1
32	I have ability in that career	4	3	2	1
33	It will help me to be original and be me	4	3	2	1
34	It fits my gender	4	3	2	1
35	It will give me the opportunity to use my talent.	4	3	2	1
36	Peer advice on careers is essential to fellow students	4	3	2	1
37	I rely on encouragement from students of their age	4	3	2	1
38	Career education comes from other students	4	3	2	1
39	I embrace the advice I get from peers that I value most	4	3	2	1

APPENDIX B

**RELIABILITY TEST RESULTS OF THE SECTIONS OF THE
INSTRUMENTS**

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.827	39

RELIABILITY TEST RESULTS OF THE INSTRUMENT

SCHOOL FACTORS

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.745	10

RELIABILITY TEST RESULTS OF THE INSTRUMENT

TEACHER FACTORS

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.728	11

RELIABILITY TEST RESULTS OF THE INSTRUMENT

STUDENT FACTORS

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.785	10

RELIABILITY TEST RESULTS OF THE INSTRUMENT

PARENTAL FACTORS

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.798	11

APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Telephone: 0332091854
Email: dgc@ucc.edu.gh

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA



Our Ref: DGC/L.2/VOL.1/ 79
Your Ref:

February 20, 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

We introduce to you, Grace Ama Asantewaa a student pursuing an M.Phil Programme in Guidance and Counselling at the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the University of Cape Coast. As a requirement, she is to submit a Thesis on the topic: *"Career Choice Determinants Among Senior High School Students in the Sunyani West District in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana"*. We are by this letter affirming that, the information she will obtain from your institution will be solely used for academic purposes.

We would be most grateful if you could provide him the necessary assistance.

Thank you.

Rev. Fr. Dr. Anthony K. Nkyi
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX D

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES-ERB/ucc.edu/V3/19-50



Date: March 4, 2019

Your Ref:

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omotosho
jomotosho@ucc.edu.gh
0243784739

Vice-Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. K. Edjah
kedjah@ucc.edu.gh
0244742357

Secretary, CES-ERB
Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
lforde@ucc.edu.gh
0244786680

The bearer, Gale Ama Asankwa, Reg. No. EF/GCT/18/0005 is an M.Phil. / ~~Ph.D.~~ student in the Department of Guidance and Counselling in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. ~~He~~ She wishes to undertake a research study on the topic:

Career choice determinants among Senior High School students in The Sunyani West District of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana

The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies (CES) has assessed ~~his~~ her proposal and confirm that the proposal satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the study.

In view of the above, the researcher has been cleared and given approval to commence ~~his~~ her study. The ERB would be grateful if you would give ~~him~~ her the necessary assistance to facilitate the conduct of the said research.

Thank you.
Yours faithfully,

Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)