

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

NURTURE EXPERIENCES AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF JUNIOR
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BEREKUM MUNICIPALITY

MATTHEW TAKYI

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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BEREKUM MUNICIPALITY

BY

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Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for award of Master of Education Degree in Guidance and
Counselling

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation 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: Matthew Takyi

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Mr. Kwarteng Ofosehene-Mensah

ABSTRACT

The study was to find out the nurture experiences that influence JHS Students career aspirations, where students seek career information, the levels of students' knowledge on career alternatives and measures students adopt to achieve their career aspirations in Berekum Municipality.

The study covered a sample of 303 respondents randomly selected from students of five Junior High Schools in Berekum Municipality. Descriptive survey method was used for the research design. Questionnaires were used to collect the data. It was used to examine how parents, teachers, friends, peers, counsellors, siblings and extended family members influence students' career aspiration decisions in Berekum Municipality. The data were analyzed by using research questions based on percentages, frequencies and mode.

The study reveals that most Junior High School (JHS) students in Berekum Municipality have clear idea about their future career aspirations. The main sources of career information to JHS in the municipality are teachers, parents and the mass media. The major influence of JHS students in the Municipality are parents, teachers, peers and siblings, but parents are the most influential factor. Majority of the students discuss their future career aspiration decisions with parents and friends. Nursing is the career most JHS students in the Municipality aspire to. The study clearly recognizes that counsellors have very insignificant influence on JHS students' future career aspirations in all aspects.

There is an urgent need for policy makers, especially GES to provide regular in-service training and workshops on career related issues to all teachers.

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DEDICATION

To my family.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Career is defined as a pattern of work related experiences, such as job positions, job duties or activities, work related decisions; and subjective interpretations of work related events such as work aspirations, expectations, values, needs and feelings about a particular work experiences that spans the course of a person's life (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000). Gutek and Larwood (1987) also viewed career as "a series of related jobs within an organization or different jobs within various companies" (p.9).

Career aspirations represent an individual's orientation toward a desired career goal under ideal conditions. Career aspirations "provide information about an individual's interests and hopes unfettered by reality" (Hellenga, Aber & Rhodes, 2002, p. 200; Rojewski, 1996). For this study, career aspirations are the jobs or professions that a person or a student has a strong desire and hope to achieve in his/her life time. These career aspirations or plans are not a single event but series of events or processes that a person engages in throughout his or her life. According to Super, Savickas and Super (1996) initial career decision making is a cultural developmental task that adolescents are expected to have accomplished by the end of their high school year. For most people, to develop

your career is a life-long process of engaging in the world of work through choosing among employment opportunities made available to you. Herr (2001) stated that in the emerging world of the present and the future, the practices of career development are being challenged to find new paradigms and new scientific bases. Young people who leave school early, without alternative career paths, face long-term disadvantages in terms of higher levels of unemployment, more part time and casual work, a shorter working life, lower incomes and an increased likelihood of ending up in jobs with poor conditions and few opportunities for advancement (MacIntyre, Freeland & Melville, 1999; Chapman & Gray, 2002; Long, 2005).

In this case, students' career aspirations should be geared towards meeting these career challenges. It is therefore imperative for guidance counsellors to provide quality and adequate career and its related information to teachers, parents and other stakeholders who directly and indirectly influence JHS students' career aspiration decisions. Each individual undertaking the process is influenced by many factors, including the context in which they live, their personal aptitudes and educational attainment (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 2001).

In relation to this, early adolescents begin to explore various career and educational opportunities, and they begin to consider seriously targets for the future (Anderman, Anderman & Griesinger, 1999). Their choice of future career and educational opportunities relate to the construction of prospective self representation in terms of their hopes and fears regarding different life domains thus providing a basis for setting goals, planning, exploring options, making

commitments which ultimately guides the person's developmental course (Nurmi, 1991). At this time, the role of parents and the home environment continue to strongly impact on their educational goal setting and thus their career paths (Slaughter-Defoe, 2001). Career Tec (2000) asserts that the preliminary career education skills serve as foundations for future skills. The Ohio State Department of Education (2000) also explained that Individual Career Plans (ICP) are essential for the development of self-awareness, employability skills, decision making and goal setting, community involvement, economics, and the reduction of bias. As the students progress, previous skills are reinforced, developed, and expanded (2, 4, 11).

According to the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Service (AGCAS, 2007), United Kingdom, some students have clear ideas about which career paths to take that are reinforced while at the university. Some students' ideas change the older they get while others are unsure of what they will do but choose instead to study something for pure enjoyment. Farrar (2007) argues that the important part of any careers advice is to help individual students to construct ideas for themselves about which industry and workplace they would be best suited to. These statements are also essential to Junior High School (JHS) students in Ghana, because their career aspirations at this level play a major role in their future career choice and job satisfaction. The career aspiration goals of students open as well as close greater opportunities in their career paths. In order to achieve excellence in one's career life, his/her potentials have to be shaped, directed and guided into deliberate, purposeful and relatively organized force.

In some parts of Europe and the United States of America (USA) where there are many professional career counsellors, students are normally given appropriate guidance in their career paths. That is, they are made aware of various career options, their prospects and other related issues even at the primary school level. In view of that, the American School Counsellor Association national model (ASCA, 2003) provides extra impetus for school counsellors to become involved in the career development of elementary-aged children. The ASCA national model describes a comprehensive school counselling programmes as addressing the needs of children in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade in three domains: academic, career and personal/social. In the career domain, the national model outlines student competencies such as developing skills to locate, evaluate and interpret career information and demonstrating how interests, abilities and achievement relate to achieving personal, social, educational and career goals (ASCA, 2003). If students at elementary level are making choices (failing to make choices) that influence their career goals and plans, then the national model clearly suggests that elementary school counsellors need to become involved in assisting their students in the process of career development. In so doing, many students are able to achieve their career aspiration goals in their later or adult life.

In Africa, most students do not have enough access to career information from career counsellors or professional counsellors in their career paths as compared to their counterparts in the developed countries. Research evidence shows that even parents and teachers do not have adequate career information; the worst victim is the JHS students on the continent. This has led to frequent changes and

terminations of careers in most countries within the continent. Until governments invest enormously in career development, information and its related issues in schools, unemployment will continue to rise. The inability of most Junior High School students in Africa to make informed decisions on their career aspirations is mainly due to insufficient information they receive on career issues from teachers or counsellors. This has led to the increasingly school dropouts and unemployment situations in Africa. Owing to the lack of accurate career information to most students, JoAnn Harris-Bowlsbey (as cited in Hayes, 1997, p.2) stressed the importance of student awareness of options and alternatives. She noted, ‘No one can choose an alternative if they don’t know that it exists’ (p.2). In view of this she believes that high school counsellors need to be ‘proactive in developing programmes’ (p.2) that assess students needs and provide them with options. Additionally, high school students are “greatly influenced by external forces but differ in that they believe those forces send overt or subtle messages regarding expectations and create uncertainty and a possible lack of ownership in career direction” (Gray & Herr, 1995, p.116).

The external forces stipulated by Gray and Herr may affect the JHS students’ career aspiration decisions through friends, parents, siblings, peers, relatives or teachers. In Ghana, the situation is similar or almost the same as that of the whole continent. Though, present and past governments have invested much in education in the areas of infrastructure, textbooks, school uniforms, free feeding, teachers’ training and Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), much has not been done on career education and counselling. The attempts by

governments and the Ghana Education Service (GES) to provide holistic curriculum to help school leavers, especially JHS leavers to acquire vocational and technical skills and training cannot be over-emphasized. Thus, the Junior Secondary School, now Junior High School (JHS) was introduced in the whole country in 1987 by the then government to produce students with employable skills after leaving school. In 2007, a new curriculum was designed and the JSS was changed to JHS still reinforcing science, vocational and technical education.

Even though the 2007 educational reforms stipulated the need for guidance and counselling to students at the JHS to enable them to choose the right programme to suit their interest and skills, there was no or less pragmatic effort to achieve it. In most of the Junior High Schools in the country, there are no career counsellors as well as counselling centres. Even where there are counsellors, majority are not professional counsellors.

The number of JHS students who have been neglected in terms of career awareness and initial career decision making is enormous. Majority of the JHS students do not have access to much career information in order to inform them on their career aspiration goals. This state of affairs in the country's Junior High Schools is not accidental but the inability of the government and GES to train many professional career counsellors to occupy the schools. Apart from this, teachers, parents, relatives and friends do not have adequate knowledge on career issues to help their students make wise and right career decisions. However, career aspiration decisions of the JHS students are influenced by home, school and societal experiences since students alone cannot make this decision.

Normally, parents, relatives, peers, friends and teachers take undue advantage to impose their ideal careers path on these students. They usually do not consider their interests and skills in making initial career decisions to them. This goes a long way to affect their future career choice in terms of stability and satisfaction.

On the other hand, parents, teachers, family members, peers who direct and guide students properly to make right and desirable informed career decisions help them to achieve their aspirations and goals. There is the need for the government to train more professional career counsellors for them to educate the general public, especially, the teachers and parents to get enough career information. When this is done, their involvement will positively complement the effort of the counsellors to prepare students to achieve their desirable career goals.

At the JHS level, the most important career decision is choosing desirable academic programmes and schools to enter Senior High School (SHS). The decisions that the students make at this very level go a long way to influence their future careers. What you choose to study should be determined by your BECE results, interests and desirable career goals. For instance, when you aspire to be a medical doctor you have to choose a science programme and work hard to get very good results in order to gain admission to a SHS of your choice. At this stage, one needs to be very tactful and critical in his or her quest to make initial career decision since this level is the foundation for all future career decisions. Such decisions will not only affect their SHS programme but also go a long way to affect their university or tertiary level programmes and their future careers in general. Without middle school career education, students failed to build a

foundation of connection between high school academic subjects, potential careers, world of work and post-secondary training (Kerka, 1994; Wells & Gaus, 1991; Finch & Mooney, 1997; Johnson, 2000). It therefore behoves parents, family members, teachers and counsellors to give the students proper guidance and help in order to assist them make their own decisions.

The problem is more glaring in Berekum Municipality where there is very low level of education and knowledge on career issues. Some of the seventy-four (74) Junior High Schools in the Municipality have no counsellors and those that have do not have professional counsellors. This shows clearly that the students do not have adequate access to career information; in the same way, parents, family members, peers and teachers have little career information. Whatever the situation, JHS students have to make career decision before entering SHS. Most of the students depend on their parents, peers, siblings and teachers' ideal career decisions to choose programmes and schools when entering SHS. Orndoff and Herr (1996) stated that up to 75% of college students change their major at least once and that the problem of uncertainty can linger after the first year as students change colleges, majors or drop out before making a decision. Titley, Titley, Hartman and Fuqua's (cited in Orndoff & Herr, 1996) also indicated that uncertainty about career goals has been linked to attrition and suggested that uncertain students are anxious and confused as to their identity, which becomes a barrier to self-actualization.

An interview with the municipal guidance and counselling coordinator of the GES, Berekum revealed that most of the JHS schools in the Municipality had

appointed teachers who were not professional counsellors as guidance and counselling coordinators. According to her, sometimes other officials from the GES and her outfit visit the schools to provide them with career information. She further stated that this is normally done when students are about to fill admission forms to SHS. These practices do not provide students with enough career information. It is therefore necessary for the GES, teachers and other stakeholders to take career issues serious in order to help train more career counsellors to fill the gap. The GES should also help career counsellors to provide adequate career information to students at this level in order to make right career decisions.

With regard to inadequate career information, most students are not properly decided on their career aspiration paths. Due to the indecision of most of the JHS students in the Municipality, their career aspirations are normally based on imposition from nurture experiences such as parents, teachers, family members and peers. This has led most of them to aspire to careers they are not interested in but they do so with fear. It is therefore imperative to find out how nurture experiences influence JHS students' careers aspirations. It would not be a mistake to identify which nurture experiences influence their career aspirations and also discover the career aspirations of students in the Municipality.

Statement of the Problem

The initial career decision and aspirations are the main pillars for future career stability, satisfaction and informed career choices. The career aspirations also guide, direct and motivate students to achieve their future careers. Before JHS students make the choice to enter SHS, students are given the opportunity to

decide with their parents, family members, friends and teachers. In most cases, they impose career decisions on the students and influence their choice without considering their interests and abilities. This is mainly due to insufficient knowledge on career issues in the Berekum Municipality. Normally, there are few career programmes on the radio and also no professional career counsellors in most of the schools in the Municipality.

Guidance and Counselling Co-ordinators occasionally visit some schools, especially when they are about to choose the schools and programmes for SHS. In some schools, students are given short orientation before filling the admission forms into SHS so they do not get adequate career information that is why they are influenced by others decisions. Despite these efforts by parents, family members, friends and teachers to influence their career decisions, they are not able to make the right career aspiration decisions. This is normally shown by numerous terminations of programmes, school dropouts (about 2.3%) and mass failure in the final examinations at the SHS level in the Municipality (Source: <http://berekum.ghanadistricts.gov.gh>). Available information from the GES office of Berekum shows that most of the JHS students in the Municipality do not have any control and clear directions on their career aspiration paths. It is for this reason that I decided to undertake the study in order to ascertain concerns of students on how nurture experiences affect their career aspiration decisions.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to examine the career guidance services available in JHS in the Berekum Municipality. The specific objectives are to;

1. Explore nurture experiences that influence students career aspirations;
2. Find out where students seek career information;
3. Discuss the levels of students' knowledge on career alternatives;
4. Identify the measures students have put in place to achieve their career aspirations.

Research Questions

1. Do JHS students in the Berekum Municipality have clear idea of their future career aspirations?
2. What are the main sources of JHS students' career information?
3. To what extent are JHS students in the Municipality aware of career alternatives and issues?
4. Which nurture experiences influence JHS students' career aspirations in the Berekum Municipality?
5. To what extent do nurture experiences influence the career aspirations of JHS students in Berekum Municipality?
6. Which nurture experiences do JHS students in Berekum Municipality willingly discuss their career alternatives and aspirations with?
7. What are the measures put in place by JHS students in the Berekum Municipality to achieve their career aspirations?

Significance of the Study

The study will enable policy makers in the Berekum Municipality, especially the GES to develop appropriate strategies in order to provide the needed career information to JHS students to aspire to the right career.

The study will also inform the government on the urgent need to motivate counsellors and establish counselling centres in all schools, especially, Junior High Schools and also train more career counsellors to work at the centres.

The findings will help stakeholders in education to make guidance and counselling a specialized area (major subject) in some of the colleges of education's curriculum so that student teachers will take it more serious and acquire substantial knowledge. This will enable teachers at the basic level to assist students to make informed and appropriate career decisions.

The findings will enable the few career counsellors to educate the general public on career issues in order to reduce the imposition of parents, relatives, peers and teachers ideal careers on students.

The findings will prompt the government on the urgent need to introduce career activities such as career fairs and career week to create awareness on career issues. The findings of the research will stimulate other researchers to conduct further research into this area.

Delimitation of the Study

Nurture experiences are vague and diverse; this study therefore intended to cover school experiences, home experiences, parental level of education and how they affect JHS students' career aspirations. Geographically, the study covers

Berekum Municipality, thus Berekum Township and some selected towns in Berekum municipality in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana.

The towns included in the study are Berekum, Kato, and Nsapor. The study would also cover students in the Municipality who are in JHS only. The research will be made up of students from JHS 1 to 3 in the above-mentioned towns.

Limitations of the Study

The time for data collection was a mock period for the JHS 3 students which might influence their responses and affect the results of the study due to anxiety and stress during examination.

There was no attempt to control outside influence like parental orientations, peer pressure, parental pressure, students' mood and teachers' pressure on the responses. These factors could have effect on the JHS students' career aspirations and the entire results.

The survey items provided on parents' occupation were restricted so some student could not find both their mothers' and fathers' occupations in the responses.

Definition of Terms

- (a) **Aspiration:** A strong hope and desire to achieve something.
- (b) **Career:** It is the sequence and variety occupations (paid and unpaid) which one undertakes throughout a life time. It includes life roles, leisure activities, learning, etc.

- (c) Career aspiration: The jobs/occupation or professions that a person or student has a strong desire to achieve in his/her life time.
- (d) Career counsellor: A Person (professional) who assists individuals to make informed career decision by helping them to understand themselves and the world of work.
- (e) Career development: The process of managing life, learning and work over the lifespan.
- (f) Career education : The development of knowledge, skills and attitudes through a planned program of learning experiences that will assist students to make informed decisions about their study and or work options and enable effective participation in working life.
- (g) Career guidance: It describes a range of interventions including career education and counselling that help people to move from a general understanding of life and work to a specific understanding of the realistic life, learning and work options that are open to them.
- (h) Career paths: The directions and mechanisms students go through in their quest to achieve their career aspiration goals.
- (i) Experiences: Knowledge and skills individuals acquire in their interaction with other people.
- (j) Home experiences: They are the major factors in the home environment that influence students' career decisions (Parents, siblings, friends, mass media and extended family members).

- (k) Job: A paid position requiring a group of specific attributes and skills that enable a person to perform tasks in an organization either part-time or full-time for a short long duration.
- (l) Nurture: The environment in which students find themselves.
- (m) Nurture experiences: They are environmental or external factors that influence students' career choice and aspirations.
- (n) Occupation: A group of similar jobs found in different industries or organisations.
- (o) School experiences: They are environmental factors in a school (teachers, guidance counsellors, school administrators and peers) that influence students' career aspirations.
- (p) Work: The occupation for which an individual is paid.

Organisation of the Study

The study consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction and it is made up of background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, limitations of the study and definition of terms.

The second chapter considers the review of literature. That is, what has already been written on the study, in terms of theoretical and empirical review.

Methodology is the heading of the third chapter. It describes the research design and procedures employed in obtaining data for the study. The sub-sections under this chapter include introduction, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation and data collection.

The fourth chapter presents analysis and discussion of data, the results of the study, the findings of the study constitute the results of the analysis of the data.

The fifth chapter which is the last chapter of the study gives the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter discusses the review of relevant related literature based on the theoretical framework and empirical studies on nurture experiences and career aspirations of students. That is, it looks at how nurture experiences (family members, parents, siblings, peers, teachers, counsellors and socioeconomic) influence the career choice and aspirations of JHS students. The review also covers the influence of some demographic information as well as knowledge and awareness of career choice and aspirations in general.

Theoretical Review of Career Choice and Development

The study focuses on some important career choice and development theories relevant to the topic. These include Super's Life Span, Holland's personality type and Decision Making theories of career choice and development.

Super's Life Span Theory of Career Choice and Development

Super expanded the work of Ginzberg and associates. Super's theory of career choice and development has four key concepts (Makinde & Alao, 1987). These are vocational life stages, vocational self concepts, concept of vocational maturity and the concept of career pattern.

Vocational life stages: Super (1957) extended Ginsberg's three life stages to five, with slightly different sub-stages. These are growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and decline stages.

Growth Stage: This stage lasts from birth to age fourteen (14). This stage is made up of three sub-stages, which are fantasy, interest and capacity. Fantasy sub stage (aged 4 – 10) is characterized by fantasy and role playing. Interest sub-stage (age 11-12) stresses on likes to make career choice and aspirations. Capacity sub-stage also emphasizes the adolescent or the students' abilities in a particular area before he/she chooses a career. The most important developmental task at this stage is creating of self concept and establishing an orientation towards the world of work.

Exploration stage (ages 15 to 24). The sub stages include tentative, transitional and trial. Tentative sub stage (15-17): there is limited choice of possibilities due to uncertainty about ability, availability of training and access to employment opportunities. Transitional sub stage (18-21 years): During this period the adolescent enters the world of work or the labour market and limits it to attainable occupations. Trial sub stage (22-24 years), here is the beginning of work. At the exploration stage, the basic developmental tasks are crystallized a vocational preference, specified the preference and implement the preference.

Establishment stage (25-44 years): At this stage, there is the awareness of the need for stabilization when the suitable or appropriate work field is found. This stage consists of two sub stages, namely, trial and stabilization. Trial sub stage (25-30 years): This period may see a change of occupation, especially when the

job is unsatisfactory and insecure. Stabilization sub stage (31 – 44 years): Here, the individual makes conscience effort to settle down in his job.

Maintenance stage (45 - 66 years): At this stage, the individual holds on to the job. Here, the most important developmental task is preserving achieved status and gains.

Decline stage (65 +) is the last stage of the vocational part of life stages. At this stage, there are two sub stages, deceleration and retirement. Deceleration (65 – 70 years) is the beginning of retreat from work. Retirement (71 +): Here, the individual moves out of the career. This theory covers one's life time but most of his works focus on the exploration stage.

Vocational self concept: Super believes that self concept is the determining factor in career choice and preference. Whatever be the nature of an individual's self concept, he/she seeks to implement it in his/her career preferences. Work and life satisfaction is function of the congruence between self concept and career choice. However, lack of well crystallized concept may lead to career indecision.

The concept of career maturity is another major component. This concept means that specific behaviours are indicative of an individual's mastery of various developmental tasks. The basic assumption in Super's developmental stages approach is that the individual must master the tasks at one life stage before moving into the next life stage. Accordingly, measurement of career maturity is vital because it allows inference about an individual's vocational/developmental stage (Super, 1969).

Super and Thompson (1979) identified six factors in vocational maturity. These are; awareness of the need to plan ahead, decision making skills, knowledge and use of information resources, general career information, general world of work information and detailed information about occupations of preference.

Holland's Theory of Personality Types of Career Choice and Development

Holland's (1966, 1985 & 1997) view was the refinement of trait and factory theory. He has stated that his theory is a theory of personality structure as well as occupational/career choice. The theory explains work related behaviour such as, which career choices are likely to lead to job success and satisfaction. It also explains other human actions, like success and satisfaction in school and training programmes. It is the best known and most widely researched theory on career choice and is used by most career counsellors. Understanding Holland's theory will help you make good choices- decisions about which occupations, careers, majors or training programmes best fit you. He developed Self Directed Search (SDS) and Vocational Interest Preferences (VIP).

Holland's theory can be summarized into six statements:

1. In our culture, most people are one of the six personality types: Realistic, investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional.
2. People of the same personality type working together in a job create a work environment that fits their type. For example, when Artistic persons are together on the job, they create a work environment that rewards creative thinking and behaviour- An Artistic environment.

3. There are six basic types of work environments: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional.
4. People search for environment where they can use their skills and abilities and express their values and attitudes. For instance, Investigative types search for Investigative environments; Artistic types look for Artistic environment, etc.
5. People who choose to work in an environment similar to their personality type are more likely to be successful and satisfied.
6. How you can act and feel at work depends to a large extent on your workplace (or school) environment. If one is working with people who have a personality type like his/hers, he/she would be able to do many of the things he/she could do and the person would feel most comfortable with them. According to Holland's theory, a person wants to choose an occupation whose personality type is the same as or similar to yours. This is more likely to lead to your job satisfaction and success.

A good match-up is called "congruent" (meaning "compatible in agreement or harmony"). For instance, when your highest score on the career key is for Realistic type, you can see that the most compatible job environment is realistic as shown in the table below. It is a congruent match. This implies that you choose a job in the Realistic group. Or you might choose from the jobs that fall in the Investigative or conventional group.

Table 1: Compatible Work Environments

Your Personality Type	Most Compatible	Compatible
Realistic	Realistic	Investigative & Conventional
Investigative	Investigative	Realistic & Artistic
Artistic	Artistic	Investigative & Social
Social	Social	Artistic & Enterprising
Enterprising	Enterprising	Social & Conventional
Conventional	Conventional	Enterprising & Realistic

Source: (http://www.careerkey.org/asp/your_personality/hollands_theory_of_career_choice.html)

Table 1 shows that most people in reality are a combination of types, like Realistic – Investigative, or Artistic – Social – as in the table above. Therefore, you will probably want to consider occupations in more than one category. In summary, you are most likely to choose a satisfying job or career if you choose that fits your personality type.

John Holland also made a hexagonal model as shown in Fig.1 that shows the relationship between the personality types and work environments. The shorter the distance between their corners in the hexagon, the more closely they are related.

Figure 1 shows Holland Hexagonal Model of Personality Types and Work Environments.

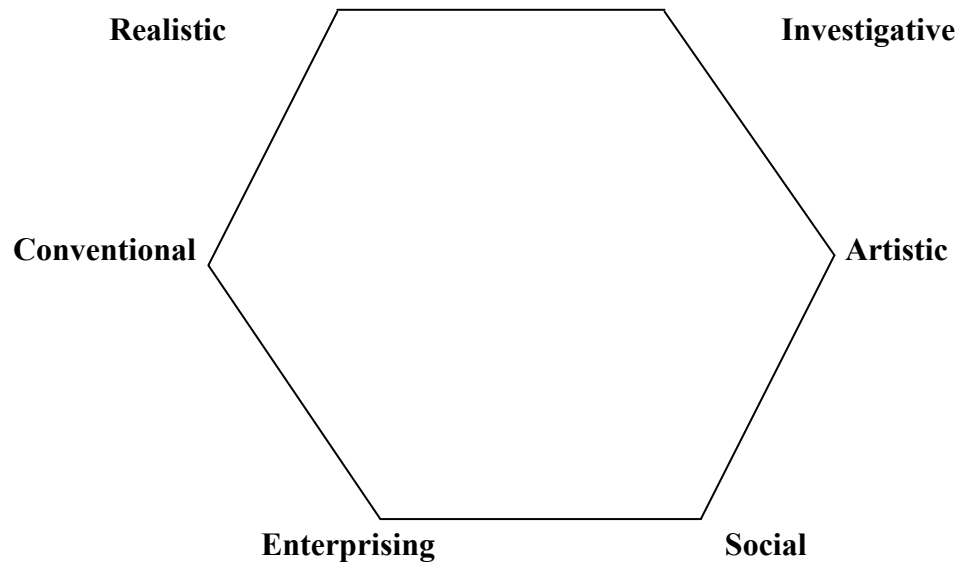


Figure 1: Holland's Hexagonal Model

Source: (http://www.careerkey.org/asp/your_personality/hollands_theory_of_career_choice.html)

From Figure 1, you found out that the personality types closest to each other are more alike than those farther away. It is clearer when you compare the personalities opposite each other on the hexagon. The same holds true for the work environment.

Six Personality and Work Environment Types (RIASEC)

- 1. Realistic type(R):** This type of person likes working with the hands, tools, machines and things that are practical, physical and mechanical.

Realistic person likes careers such as engineering, driving, agriculture and computer science.

2. **Investigative type (I):** This type of person makes use of cognitive domain rather than affective, such person is analytical, critical, rational, cautious, precise, scientific and works with theory and information. Examples of investigative occupations are law, pharmacy, statistics, psychology and medicine.
3. **Artistic type (A):** This type of person values cultural activities, creative and aesthetics and may develop competencies in drama, art, music, painting and writing.
4. **Social type(S):** This type of person is highly skilled at dealing with other people that is co-operative and supportive. Examples of such vocations are teaching, social worker, pastor, nurse and counselling.
5. **Enterprising type (E):** This type of person prefers activities that require the manipulation of others to attain a goal. Such people like leading, persuading, selling, dominating and promoting. Examples of such occupations are communications, journalism, politics, marketing and law.
6. **Conventional type (C):** This type of person prefers activities that are routine, structured, orderly and practical such as keeping records, filing materials organizing, writing and numerical data. Examples of conventional vocations are clerk, accountants, banker, book-keeper and librarian.

Decision Making Theory of Career Choice and Development

John D. Krumboltz (1996) developed a theory of career decision making and development based on Albert Bandura Social learning theory. Career decisions are the product of an uncountable number of learning experiences made possible by encounters with the people, institutions and events in a person's particular environment. His theory is made up of three parts. These are; Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM), Learning Theory of Careers Choice and Counselling(LTCC) and Happenstance in Vocational and Educational Guidance.

Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM)

The theory focuses on teaching clients career decision making alternatives using the concept of the “triadic reciprocal interaction” (Learning as the interaction with environment and genetic endowment) and emphasizes the role of instrumental and associative learning. Because of this, the key concepts/tools for the practitioner are reinforcement and modelling. The application of the theory to practice involves the practitioner attempting to identify and correct any incorrect beliefs held by the client about the decision making process. The SLTCDM was formed to address the following questions:

1. Why people enter particular educational course or jobs;
2. Why they may change direction during their lives;
3. Why they may express various preferences for different activities at different points in their lives.

Krumboltz identified four main influential factors in the career decision making process. These are genetic endowment and special abilities, environmental conditions and events, learning experiences and task approach skills.

1. Genetic endowment and special abilities: A person's race, gender, physical appearance and characteristics may limit his/her educational and occupational preferences and skills. This is because individuals differ in both their ability to benefit from learning experiences and to get access to different learning experiences.
2. Environmental conditions and events: These include social, cultural, political, economic forces, natural forces and natural resources. According to Krumboltz these factors are generally outside the control of any one individual, because their influence can be planned or unplanned.
3. Learning Experiences: Each individual has a unique history of learning experiences that result in their occupational choice. The individual's learning experiences are determined by observation and their interaction with the environment, especially, teachers, parents, friends, siblings and family members (Associative). The experiences can be positive or negative learning. People also learn by preceding circumstances, behavioural responses and consequences (Instrumental learning).
4. Task approach skills: The interactions among learning experiences, genetic characteristics, environmental influences, and results in the development of task approach skills. These include personal standards of performance; work habits, and emotional responses.

Krumboltz and Hamel (1977) proposed a seven stage career decision making model (DECIDES), for task approach skills and decision making.

1. Define the problem: Recognizing the decision;
2. Establish the action plan: refining the decision;
3. Clarify the values: examining self-observations and world view generalizations;
4. Identify alternatives: generating alternatives;
5. Discover probable outcomes: gathering information;
6. Eliminate alternatives: assessing information;
7. Start action: Planning and executing this six-(6)-step sequence of decision-making behaviours.

The use of this model depends on relevant learning. The most effective career development requires individuals to be exposed to the widest possible range of learning experiences, regardless of race, gender, physical appearances, etc.

Learning Theory of Careers Choice and Counselling (LTCC)

In 1996, Krumboltz developed the Learning Theory of Careers Choice and Counselling (LTCC). Mitchell and Krumboltz (1996, p.250) stated that the SLTCDM provides a coherent explanation of a person's career path, after it happens but it does not explain what a career's counsellor can do to help people shape their own paths. So, the LTCC was developed to provide a guide to practising career counsellors who want to know what they can do now to help people troubled with a variety of career-related concerns. Mitchell and Krumboltz (1996) identify four fundamental trends with which people must cope when

making career choices in modern society and with which career practitioners must help. They are:

1. First, people need to expand their capabilities and interests: practitioners should assist clients to explore new activities, rather than routinely directing them on the basis of measured interests that reflect limited past experiences.
2. Second, people need to prepare for changing work tasks: Learning new skills for the changing labour market can be very stressful for clients. Career practitioners have a role to play in helping them to cope with stress as they learn to develop new skills on an on-going basis.
3. Third, people need to be empowered to take action: Many issues relevant to career decisions are often overlooked in guidance practice (for example, a family's reaction to taking a particular job). This could cause a fear of the decision making process referred to by Krumboltz as Zeteophobia or cause delay in making a decision. Practitioners need to help them.
4. Fourth, career practitioners need to play an extended role. Career and personal counselling should be integrated. Issues such as burnouts, career change, peer relationships, obstacles to career development and the work role, itself together with its effect on other life roles are potential problems that should attract the support of the career practitioners.

Happenstance in Vocational and Educational Guidance

Happenstance means chance or accident occurrence. Most recently, Krumboltz has been developing his ideas around supporting (even encouraging) career

indecision (Mitchell, Levin & Krumboltz, 1999; Krumboltz & Levin, 2004). He promoted the idea that not only is indecision sensible and desirable, but that clients can create and benefit from unplanned events. The key concepts from these new developments of the theory are: The ultimate goal of career counselling is creating satisfying lives, not just making decision; Tests should be used to stimulate learning, not just to match, practitioners should get clients to engage in exploratory action, open-minded should be celebrated, not discouraged. Benefits should be maximized from unplanned events, and lifelong learning is essential.

Implications of Happenstance in Vocational and Educational Guidance

Theory

1. Career counselling should be a lifelong process, not one-off event;
2. The distinction between career counselling and personal counselling should disappear;
3. Transitional counselling is more appropriate than career counselling;
4. Professional training should be expanded to ensure practitioners' properly supported in this extended role.

Empirical Basis of Nurture Experiences and Career Aspirations of JHS

Students

Knowledge and Awareness on Career Issues

Poole (1983), after studying almost 800 Australian 14 year-old youths, declared that “parents today are no longer adequately equipped to assist their children in making job choices, e.g. in terms of information about the range of

jobs available and in understanding what certain jobs entail” (p.23). This situation exists even though “studies assessing the relative influence of home and school-related sources of advice have invariably placed family influences ahead of the formal school structures set up to provide vocational guidance” (p.24). Poole also indicated that while parental influence is strongly evident in any decision students make, one must ask whether parents can provide adequate career advice (in terms of information, training prerequisite labour market forecasts ,etc). There is also the question of whether parents possess the skills to obtain career resources (Poole, 1983).

Palmer and Cochran (1988) found that although research had shown that children’s career development and choices were influenced by parents and that parents wanted to assist their children in these areas, there was nothing in the way as empirical data to support the success of programmes that were already in existence.

Throughout the last decade, researchers have recommended that career exploration and awareness begin before high school, when students have already made major decisions about courses (Castellano, Stringfield & Stone, 2002; Fouad, 1995: O’Brien, Dukstein, Jackson, Tomlinson & Kamatuka, 1999; Toepfer, 1994). In many cases, students passively follow career paths simply by not choosing from their high school classes the courses needed for technical or other careers. Fouad (1995) stated that to encourage students to make informed decisions, middle schools must introduce career awareness, such as the concept that success in most careers requires education and training. As the National

Alliance of Business recommended in its 1999 publication preparing young people for tomorrow's workplace, middle school is an ideal age at which to expose students to the challenging world of work" (p.5).

In their article *Broadening Career Horizons for students in At-Risk Environments*, O'Brien et al. (1999) point out that few middle schools adequately address the career development of students in at-risk environment despite evidence to indicate that interventions can enhance academic performance, facilitate high school completion, and encourage post-secondary education, p.215). Because students who drop-out of high school often begin to disconnect in middle school or earlier, interventions that give the school experience focus and meaning are critical (Castellano et al., 2002).

Elements of successful career awareness programmes have been described in numerous publications (Kerka, 2000; Maddy-Bernstein, 1997; Toepfer, 1997; Toepfer, 1994). Hogan (1995) discovered that interest inventories and aptitude tests, field trips, career days and community partnerships are among the tools that can increase students' awareness of their own interests and help them learn about a wide variety of occupations. As students gain understanding of the preparation needed for specific careers, they may begin to consider the role that post-secondary education and training could play in their futures.

Despite increased attention to prevention (Heppner, 2000) and a growing involvement in school to work initiatives (e.g. Fouad, 1997; Worthington & Juntunen, 1997), research and developmentally based efforts aimed at elementary youth are seriously lacking (Lenhardt & Young, 2001; Whiston & Sexton, 1998).

Research suggests that students who drop out of school at age 16 have psychologically disengaged from school as early as Grade 3 (McWhirter, McWhirter, McWhirter, & McWhirter, 1998). Besides, sixth-through-ninth-grade children have demonstrated very little understanding of how school relates to real world and seem to have little to no awareness of the skills and knowledge needed for success in the future (Johnson, 2000).

Gender Differences and Career Aspirations

With regard to gender differences in other career development aspects, studies have shown that females have different career patterns from males. Gadassi and Gati (2009) asserted that women still find their occupational choices limited, in comparison to men's choices. Krakauer and Chen (2003) asserted that females have been found to have higher scores on career commitment than males (Chung, 2002). Mau (1995) found females to have higher educational and career aspirations than males while Trusty and Niles (2004) noticed that women were more likely to complete a bachelor's degree than men.

Creed and Patton (2003) discovered that, among adolescents, females matured earlier than boys in their career attitudes. They also found females' reaction to early working experiences was more mature than that of males. Spitze and Logan (1990) found that with girls, career choice can be influenced by many aspects of family life, often involving caring responsibilities, which do not impact so much on boys. Wilgosh (2002) reported on the impact in certain subjects and how popular images in the media influenced career choice. Adolescent girls, for

example, became focused on appearance and popularity, and tended to avoid science-related careers.

Miller, Lietz and Kotte (2002) noted that females were far less likely to enter science-based occupations than males, and emphasized the need for teachers to direct their attention towards changing the attitude of girls. Heckert et al. (2002) found that female college students, more than males in their criterion for choice of career put more emphasis on factors such as working conditions, facilities for child rearing, career certainty and working hours.

Small and MacCLean (2002) also reported a gender difference in career choice, with males more likely to want to run their own business than females. In addition, Noon and Blyton (1997) argue that females are more than males, desire intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards from their employment. Bailyn (2003) asserted that, there is ample evidence that, despite employment law, organizations are more responsive to males than females.

A Royal Society report (2004) of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) practitioners found that some branches of science are seen as male only domains, and the top of the mind view of scientists is a stereotype; they are seen as white, male and eccentric. Smart (2008) discovered in interviewing Bangladeshi girls that words associated with science and Maths included 'masculine', difficult, restricted; and risky'- reflecting findings within the Morris (2006) and ETB (2005) reports and reiterating the work between present feeding, perception of future usefulness and eventual subject drop.

Smart (2008) also points out that technology was seen to be an especially male subject among the Bangladeshi girls interviewed. The girls were found to have more positive feelings about biology and chemistry due to the links between those subjects and the medical professions, a profession found in many reports to be the exception to the rule that girls stay away from science (Roberts, 2002). In addition, Smart (2008) found that the girls interviewed saw Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects as “linked to careers in restricted fields”. Millward, Houston, Brown, and Barrett (2006) noted, “young people hold very strong stereotypes about the types of jobs that are appropriate for men and women” (p.80).

The media was shown to be a pervasive influence on the take up of STEM subjects; particularly in relation to the entrenchment of gendered views. Millward et al. (2006) noted that, job adverts and college prospectuses may perpetuate gender segregation in the implicit gender messages they convey. Moreover, the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) reports (2007) of SET practitioners looked retrospectively at factors which had influenced their career paths and found the media highly influential on their choices.

In another study of second-through eighth-grade boys, Cook et al. (1996) found that older boys tend to be more realistic about occupational aspirations and expectations than younger boys. Helwig (2001) reported that boys consistently had more fantasy jobs in their aspirations than girls did. In another study, Tracey and Ward (1998) investigated the structure of fourth-through eighth grade children’s interests and found that girls were more likely than boys to report

Artistic, social and conventional interests, but boys were more likely to report realistic and investigative interests.

Galbraith (1992) and Chusmir (1990) stated that women pursue male careers because they offer prestige, higher pay and opportunities for advancement. The advantages for men in what are generally seen as “women’s jobs” are less clear out, involving as they do probable sacrifices in terms of pay and status as well as raising questions over their masculinity and suitability for the job (Bradley, 1993; Williams, 1993).

In spite of the widespread changes in the occupational structure over the past decade, occupational segregation remains stubbornly intact, forming a potential contributory factor toward gender inequality in the workplace (Williams & Villemez, 1993). In addition, McMahon and Patton (1997) pointed out that boys demonstrated a greater awareness of jobs and industry and were more interested in work task and work conditions than were girls, who appeared to be more concerned with work environment. Combining career and family life also has been found to be an influencing factor in adolescent girls’ career aspirations (McMahon & Patton, 1997). It is essential to involve them in this process.

Parental Level of Education and Career Aspirations

Montgomery (1992) suggests that females talented in Maths viewed their career choices as reflective of interests that stemmed from early family influence and educational opportunities. Besides, Marso and Pigge (1994) discovered that the presence of teachers in the family was a significant factor influencing teacher candidates’ decisions to teach. On the contrary, De-Ridder (1990) points out that

those lower levels of parent education can retard adolescents' career development. "Being born to parents with limited education and income reduces the likelihood of going to college or achieving a professional occupational goal which essentially predetermines the child's likely vocational choice" (p.4).

Socio-economic Influences and Career Aspirations

In terms of socio-economic status (SES), Valadez (1998) discovered that the significance of SES in the decision to pursue college outweighs that of both race and gender, with individuals of lower SES having lower aspirations toward college. SES has been found to be the most powerful and consistent predictor of achievement and career aspirations (Duncan, 1994; Schulenberg, Vondracek & Crouter, 1984). Reynolds (1991) found that low income parents often have barriers to participating in their children's schooling, including a lack of resources and social support and increased stress associated with a lack of financial resources.

Family SES may also affect parents' perceived efficacy and academic aspirations, which then may affect their children engagement in occupational activities (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 2001). Adolescents from lower socio-economic backgrounds may not have access to career resources and may not efficiently utilize available sources as those from higher socio-economic background (Valadez, 1998). As a result, students may have the ability to achieve their career aspirations, but may not aspire to high expectations because they may not have the perceived efficacy nor may they have the adequate resources to achieve them.

Danziger (1983) discovered that socio-economic background and parental expectations tended to influence adolescent girls' career expectations, while ability, academic achievement and opportunity tended to influence adolescent boys' career expectations.

Home Experiences and Career Aspirations

Small and McClean (2002) reported on the very strong influence parents can have by providing an example. They also offer appropriate support for certain occupational choices which tend to follow their own. Dunn, Slomkowski and Bearsall (1994) highlighted the impact of siblings, who can have an influence in competition with that of parents and teachers. They said, this can last until, as young adults, the siblings adopt their separate lives. Spraggs (2002) also asserted that, wealthy families' primogeniture traditionally provided for the eldest son to inherit the family estate. The second son would often join a church and the third, may be in the military. Wall (1996) found evidence that in some occupations the eldest rather than a younger son would be more likely to follow the occupation of the father. There is no similar effect with girls. Lee (1984) reported that the occupational orientations of parents familiarize children with occupational roles, while the value orientation of parents provides the learning environment that motivates the aspirations of children. The Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Taskforce, Australia (2001) noticed that parents guide many of the decisions taken by young people in their transition pathways and that supporting families is one of the best ways to help young people through career transition.

Dawkins (1989) found that the aspirations of African American parents specifically provide powerful influences over their children's career choices. Evans (1976) and Fields (1981) claimed furthermore that the perceptions of African American parental expectations exert greater influences on the career aspirations of their children than to individuals of other cultures.

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, 1992; Dawkins, 1989; Fields, 1981; Simpson, 1996). In early childhood, many African American children, especially, African American females (Bracey, 1992; King, 1993; Simpson, 1996) are influenced by the aspirations of their mothers. Bracey (1992) 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 mid-western 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.

In relation to that, Simpson (1996) 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 (Schulenberg, Vondracek & Crouter, 1984). 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.

Parents tend to act as career role models (Schulenberg & colleagues, 1984). Trice and Knapp (1992) stressed that children tend to relate to parental occupations, especially, the mothers.' Mullis, Mullis and Gerwhels (1998) 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., 1998).

Poole (1983) indicated that those students who spoke frequently with their parents have far more definite ideas on both job choice and educational plans. Conversely, those who never talked to parents were most undecided about the future (p.25). She also stated that those students who have good relationship with their parents were more willing to seek guidance from various other sources. This data suggests that at age 14, a major influence on students' occupational aspirations and expectations are parents. Poole cautions that this reliance on parents may partly reflect the inadequacy of guidance facilities offered by schools and other organizations.

Gool and Patton (1999) took up the issues of family support in their study on career aspirations of young Aboriginal women, as did Nasir (1996) in her report on northern territory Aboriginal and Islander tertiary Aspirations Programme. Both programmes reported the importance of families to the career aspirations of

students, and the heavy reliance that was placed on them by students to provide primary influence in regards to career decision making. Lester (2000) identified similar influences of parents on student knowledge of career options. Lester (2000) further stated that while Aboriginal parents had clear aspirations for their children, their expectations were often very limited. He stated that parents looked to local employment programmes such as Community Development Employment Programmes (CDEP) as being desirable long-term career aspirations for students.

Astin (1984) pointed out that parents are “expectancy socializers” who greatly influence their children’s perceptions of being academically and vocationally competent. Young (1994) also described parents as the primary providers of encouragement for their adolescents to reach vocational goals through both the modelling of career-related, goal-directed behaviour and by actively providing career-related learning experiences. McWhirter, Hackett and Bandalos (1998) found perceived support from fathers to be related to the education plans and career expectations of Mexican American High School girls. Similarly, parental encouragement was found to have significant direct effects on learning experiences (grades in Mathematics and Science), efficacy, and outcome expectancies among undergraduate college students (Ferry, Fouad, & Smith, 2000).

Parent academic involvement may ensure that adolescents obtain academic skills and knowledge that prepare them for a considering higher level occupations (Young & Friesen, 1992). In fact, school performance and career aspirations in adolescence are often correlated (Abu-Hilal, 2000; Mau, 1995; Trusty, Robinson,

Plata & Ng, 2000), and supportive parents are associated with the development of career aspirations (Hill, Ramirez & Dunka, 2003; McDonald & Jessell, 1992).

For Middle and High School students, parents' discussion with teachers and school administrators and discussions between parents and adolescents about school and plans for the future are often included in definitions of parents' academic involvement (Hill & Taylor, 2004). In the same way, Epstein, Sanders (2002) and Yonezawa (2000), found that among middle and high school students, discussions among parents, teachers, and school administrators, and discussing schooling and future plans with adolescents have the strongest relations with academic outcomes.

In another development, girls in engineering perceive that they receive more parental support than their peers in any other discipline (Adelman, 1998; Hansen, Walker & Flom, 1995; Burgard, 1999; Ciccocioppo, 2002; Houser & Garvey, 1985). Parents' expectations for their daughters' values, grades and work ethics are higher when their daughters choose engineering (Mau, 2003; Wise, 1985; Stallings, 1985). Updegraff (1996) found that girls from egalitarian families are more likely to maintain their science and maths achievements as they age than girls whose families adhere more closely to traditional gender roles.

Setting loftier family norms is particularly important for girls because parental influences are more prominent for women than men (Hanson, 2000; Xiaoxia, 2002 & Seymour, 1997). Seymour (1997) added that this applied especially to norms relating to opinions and preferences. Not only do parents encourage

achievements through their expectations, but they influence what type of career their children choose (Houser, 1985; Graham, 1997).

Communication between parents and children is believed to be very powerful because of the kinship relationship that parents have with their children. If parents discuss the norms of the family, it is likely to move children to have higher expectations for them (McNeal, 1999). Wilson and Wilson (1992) also added that regular family discussions pertaining to school issues can indicate to children how important education is to the family. In Graham's study (1997), female engineers reported that their parents were supportive because they openly communicated with their daughter. Parents' attitudes and expectations have a substantial effect on the Maths and Science achievement of their daughters (Mau, 2003; Armstrong, 1985; Valian, 1998), which in turn affects their vocational interests (Mau, 2003). Armstrong (1985) and Wilson (1992) found that it is important for parents to set a positive tone for their children regarding Maths, even if they have limited abilities themselves. Stallings (1985) also pointed out that encouraging daughters to take advanced maths courses not only heightens their self-confidence but exposes them to more career options.

Assessing Women in Engineering (AWE) project 2005 family influence AWE research overviews studies show that parents have a lead role to their children career planning (Amatea & Cross, 1980). Many students find the influence of parental factors to be extremely pervasive. Millward et al. (2006) in their study of 14-19 year olds discovered that "parental advice was the most frequently sought and useful sources for making job, careers and course decisions than advice

obtain by teachers and friend” (p.92). Pollard, Jagger, Perryman, Van Gent and Mann (2003) also indicated that “parental influences appear often to be more important than teachers or other influences” (p.125).

A study conducted by Cochran and Kush (1993, p.434) in the US to involve parents in their child’s career planning, found that ‘through career planning with a parent, adolescents in Grade 12 showed greater career certainty, less indecision, more career salience, and stronger ego identity’. These findings are affirmed by Taylor, Harris and Taylor (2004, p.1) who suggest that ‘without parental approval or support, students and young adults are often reluctant to pursue or even explore diverse career possibilities’.

School Experiences and Career Aspirations

Alberts, Mbalo and Ackermann (2003) found that choice of career is one of the major areas of concern for young people nearing the end of their schooling. Lupton (2006) added that schools have shown to account for between 8-15% of differences in attainment. Johnson (2000) discovered that although there is little urgency for children to make immediate occupational choices, there are benefits to developing a meaningful understanding of the experience of the relevance of school-based learning to their future careers.

Kosteck-Bunch (2000) 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 (1996) 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 (Lapan, Gysbers, Multon & Pike, 1997; O'Brien et al., 1999).

The Roberts review (2002) noted that; teachers' subjects' knowledge and teaching style are vital factors, but it is often their enthusiasm that captured pupil's interest and motivated them to study a subject. Roberts (2002) 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. Austin, Best, Quail, Ryder and Dawes (2001) 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.

The report, 'choosing science at 16: The influences of science teachers and careers advisers on pupils decisions (Munro & Elsom, 2000) showed that pupils'

experiences of science in the classroom was the main factor affecting their decisions to take science further or not. Nevertheless, within time table constraints, lesson time and teacher input was often found to be insufficient to deliver all the necessary information and guidance on careers that STEM options facilitate. Also, however, Munro and Elsom (2000) discovered that, 'Science teachers did not see themselves as a source of information or advice about careers in science and technology' (p.126).

In another development, early school experiences also may influence students' occupational aspirations. Wall, Covell and MacIntyre (1999) noted that students' future educational and career aspirations may be affected by the attention they receive from teachers. For instance, girls at single sex schools were found to have higher career aspirations than did girls and boys at co-educational schools, primarily due to receiving a greater amount of individual attention from teachers (Watson, Quitman, & Elder, 2002). Additionally, Danziger (1983) stressed that adolescent girls who had higher academic achievement were found to contemplate a wider variety of career aspirations.

In analysing a data from national education longitudinal study of 1988, Tai, Liu, Maltese and Fan (2006) noted that approximately 50% of students who indicated they would pursue a science-related degree when asked in elementary school did so and a third of students who reported non-science career expectations eventually switched to science. What is unclear in the research is the extent to which students become strongly predisposed to science as a possible career in their early years of school and are subsequently swayed by influential teachers or

are discouraged by poor teachers. In the area of physics, Tai & Sadler (2001) asserted that high school teachers who had the patience and gift of approaching problems and topics from many viewpoints appeared was highly appreciated.

Peer Influence and Career Aspirations

Wall (1996) viewed adolescent career development as arising from the actions and meanings that are often co-constructed by peer group members. Asmussen, Corlyon, Hauri and la Placa (2007) discovered that friends and peers become increasingly important during the teenage years, peaking influence at around the age of 15 years. Nurmi (2004) discovered that within their peer groups, young people experiment with, and develop their sense of identity, mirroring their friends' behaviours and attitudes, both positive and negative.

Summary

The broad aim of the study was to investigate how nurture experiences influence Junior High School Students' career aspiration decision in the Berekum Municipality. The chapter presented both theoretical and empirical review of the factors that influence career aspirations of students in general. Three theories were used to guide the study; Super Life Span Theory of Career Choice, Holland Theory of Personality Types of Career Choice and Krumboltz Decision Making Theory of Career Choice and Development. An attempt was made to review recent literature on nurture factors that influenced students' career aspirations in various countries that are relevant to the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research strategy and the techniques applied. The methodology included in this study are research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures.

Research Design

The design that was used in the study was descriptive survey, specifically simple survey. The survey was made up of questionnaire in order to save time and ensure very high response rate. In the survey, 303 students from the Junior High School (JHS) in the Municipality were selected and administered comprehensively. Descriptive survey was used in order to generalize the result of the larger student population in the Municipality. It also covered a wide range of characteristics to make the results more representative and reliable, no other method can provide this general capacity. Other advantages of surveys are as follows: They are relatively inexpensive, especially self administered survey. Many questions were asked about a given topic giving considerable flexibility to the analysis. Self-made questions were designed to cover the topic to help answer the research questions. However, surveys have limitations, some of which are; it may be hard for participants to recall information or to tell the truth about a

controversial question. As opposed to direct observation, survey research (excluding some interview approaches) can seldom deal with “context”.

Population

In order to obtain reflective, reliable and meaningful data to generalize the results to the whole Berekum Municipality, sizeable sample was selected. The target population was students in the Berekum Municipality with special emphasis on JHS students. The participating schools were selected from five Junior High Schools from different towns in the Berekum Municipality with each school having equal representative. In all, the schools that were selected for the study students included both males (boys) and females (girls) from JHS One to three. There were 303 JHS students, 145 boys and 158 girls. The respondents had very good command of the English Language so they could read and understand the questions.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Three hundred and three (303) JHS students were used for the study. The sample was made up of 145 boys and 158 girls of different ages. Five schools were randomly selected from three different towns in the Municipality. This provided representative of the population to cover all characteristics of the target group. The participating schools were Akab Complex JHS, Demonstration JHS, World of Friends JHS, Kato M/A JHS and Nsapor Methodist JHS. There were sixty one (61) respondents each from three schools while other sixty (60) respondents each from two schools each based on classes (JHS One to three) and

sex. In all the schools selected, out of the 303 respondents which were randomly selected, 100, 104 and 99 respondents participated from JHS 1, JHS 2 and JHS 3 respectively.

Probability Sample Technique was used to administer the questionnaire. Stratified Sampling procedure was used due to the impractical nature to sample individual elements from the population as a whole. Stratified Random sampling was also more practical and economical, especially when the population is large and widely spread as seen in this study. Respondents were randomly selected based on class level and gender of students in each school by using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Each student from the classes selected was given equal opportunity to be selected for the study. In this case, each class was divided into males and females proportionately. The selection of the respondents was done by using the lotto method. The names of the students were written on a paper and put in an enclosed bowl to be selected randomly. When a name was picked that name was recorded and put back in the bowl, the process continued till the required respondents were selected.

Instruments

The instrument that was used for the study is questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to collect the data because the respondents were JHS students who could read, write and understand. And also, the questionnaire promotes reliability and offer greater assurance of anonymity. The questionnaire was made up of 28 closed-ended items and two open-ended items. The questionnaire has two sections namely, demographic information and issues relating to nurture experiences and

career aspirations. The demographic information included; class level, age, gender, parents' occupation and parents' level of education. The second part covered questions on wider area of career awareness, nurture experiences, mechanisms for achieving career aspiration goals and information on career aspiration of JHS students.

Data Collection Procedure

The study was pretested before the actual data collection. A letter was collected from the department for the study. The head teachers and form teachers of the selected schools were given prior information through personal contacts three weeks before the data collection. Upon further deliberations through telephone calls and personal contacts specific dates were agreed on for the administration of the questionnaires. The dates were 9th, 10th, 24th and 28th February, 2011. On the day of the administration of the questionnaire the head teacher informed the form teachers to organize the students for the study. Respondents were given short explanation on the questionnaire items and also assured them of confidentiality and anonymity before they filled the questionnaire. In each of the schools, the questionnaires were retrieved the same day they were administered. To a large extent, there was a high return or recovery rate which might be due to the co-operation between the students and the staff. And, also, the personal delivery of the questionnaires to the respondents helped the students to complete the questionnaires with ease. The students were given the opportunity to respond to the questions more objectively and independently due to the interesting nature of the topic.

Data Analysis

The data collected were imputed into computer software, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to make description and analysis easy. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentages and mode were used to present and summarise the data in the form of tables to facilitate interpretation and analysis.

Summary

A descriptive survey (research design) was used in the study to investigate the influence of nurture experiences on JHS students' career aspiration in the Berekum Municipality. A total of 303 respondents from five Junior High Schools participated in the study. Self- made questionnaire was used to gather the data. Stratified sampling technique was used to administer the questionnaire. The data collection took four days. The data were analysed using frequency and percentages.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the analysis, results, and discussion of the data collected. The study focused on nurture experiences and career aspirations of J.H.S students in the Berekum Municipality. The main purpose of this study was to find out how nurture experiences (parents, friends, teachers, counsellors, peers and siblings) influence career aspirations and the level of career awareness of JHS students in the Berekum Municipality. Frequencies, percentages and mode were used in the analysis of the results. In addition, the research questions set for the study were also used for the analysis. The analysis covered seven main areas:

Background information;

General career aspiration issues;

Sources of career information;

Knowledge/Awareness on career alternatives and issues;

The influences of nurture experiences;

Discussion of career alternatives and aspirations;

Measures for achieving career aspiration goals.

Background Information

It was analysed in terms of age, sex, class, father’s level of education, mother’s level of education, father’s occupation and mother’s occupation.

Table 2 shows the results of the background characteristics of the respondents.

Table 2: Background Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentages
Age	11 - 12	18	5.9
	13 - 14	119	39.3
	15 - 17	166	54.8
Sex	Male	145	47.9
	Female	158	52.1
Class Level	JHS 1	100	33.0
	JHS 2	104	34.3
	JHS 3	99	32.7
Father's Level of Education	Basic	92	30.3
	Secondary	116	38.3
	Tertiary	67	22.1
	No Formal Education	16	5.3
	Others	12	4.0
Mother's Level of Education	Basic	115	38.0
	Secondary	93	30.7
	Tertiary	44	14.5
	No Formal Education	38	12.5
	Others	13	4.3
Father's Occupation	Teaching	54	17.8
	Nursing	14	4.6

Table 2 continued

	Banking	33	10.9
	Trading	74	24.4
	Farming	76	25.1
	Others	52	17.2
Mother's Occupation	Teaching	39	12.9
	Nursing	16	5.3
	Banking	9	3.0
	Trading	153	50.4
	Farming	60	19.8
	Others	26	8.6

Age: This variable was used to find out the age distribution of JHS students in the Berekum Municipality. As indicated in Table 2, 166 (54.8%) of the respondents were between 15 and 17 years while 119 (39.3%) were found between ages 13 and 14. However, those who fell within 11 to 12 years were only 5.9% of the respondents.

The results clearly show that more than half of the JHS students in the Municipality are found between 15 and 17 years. This means that most JHS students in the municipality were in the tentative sub-stage of the exploration stage of Super theory of career choice.

Sex Composition: This aspect was used to ascertain the sex composition of the participants. In the survey 303 respondents were selected. As indicated in Table 2, more than half of the respondents were females, about 52.1% while the remaining 47.9% were males. This explains why most of the respondents in the

municipality aspired to Nursing and Teaching which are female-dominated careers in Ghana.

Class: This variable indicates students' level of educational attainment. Table 2 shows that about 100 (33.0%), 104 (34.3%) and 99 (32.7%) of the respondents were in JHS 1, JHS 2, and JHS 3 respectively. The results indicate that the mode of the distribution was JHS 2.

Father's Level of Education: This variable was used to find out the level of father's education of the respondents and how it would influence their children access to career information. As shown in Table 2, only 22.1% of the fathers have attained tertiary education. Most of the fathers' level of education jointly fell between basic and secondary, they constitute, 208 (68.6%) of the respondents. On the other hand, 16 (5.3%) had no formal education.

The results show that majority of the fathers have low level of education, this means that they might not have access to adequate and accurate career information to give their wards the needed career information to aspire to their future career choice. The few fathers attaining tertiary education also means that minority of the students could have access to enough and accurate career information through their fathers.

Mothers' Level of Education: This item explained the level of mother's education and how it affects students' access to career information in order to influence their career aspirations. Table 2 presents the responses of mother's level of education.

As shown in Table 2, like father's educational level, most of the mothers attained basic and secondary education, which jointly represent 68.7% of the respondents. The mode of the distribution is basic education because it had the highest frequency of 115 of the total respondents. Conversely, few mothers have attained tertiary education, about 44 (14.5%) of the respondents. In addition to that, 12.5% of the mothers had no formal education.

The large number of mothers having attained basic and secondary education could mean that most students in the Municipality may not have access to adequate and accurate career information through their mothers to aspire to their future careers. Similarly, students whose mothers had no formal education may be extremely limited in their quest to receive career information and its related issues through their mothers. On the other hand, few fathers having attained tertiary education could imply that small number of the students in the municipality would get access to adequate and accurate career information through their mothers.

Father's Occupation: This item was used to find out various occupations students' fathers belong to and whether they influence students' career aspirations.

Table 2 shows that 251 students find their father's occupation in the options given. However, some of the students who did not find theirs indicated that their fathers are police, drivers, engineers and soldiers ('others', 52 (17.2%)). Table 2 indicates that 76 (25.1%), 74 (24.4%), 54 (17.8%) of the respondents were farmers, traders, and teachers, respectively. However, 4.6% of the parents were

nurses. The mode of father's occupation of JHS students in Berekum Municipality is farming.

The results show that very few fathers were nurses, but most of the fathers influenced their wards to aspire to nursing career. Again, many of the JHS students in Berekum Municipality may have limited access to career information in their attempt to aspire to their dream careers. This is because most fathers are traders and may not have enough time and access to quality career information to explain career opportunities to their wards so they may seek career information elsewhere other than their fathers. Many parents may not encourage their wards to aspire to read medicine.

Mother's Main Occupation: This item was used to ascertain the type of occupation mothers' of respondents belong to and how it influenced their career aspirations. Table 8 shows that 153(50.4%) were traders while 60 (19.8%) of the respondents were teachers. Also, nurses and bankers were 5.3% and 3.0% respectively. Trading is the mode of mother's occupation because it received the highest frequency.

The results clearly indicate that majority of the mothers are traders, meaning most mothers are in the informal sector. On the contrary, very few mothers were bankers and nurses; meanwhile many students aspire to these careers as compared to others. Like father's main occupation, many students may not have the opportunity to aspire to their right careers due to limited and low quality career information through their mothers.

Research Question 1

Do J.H.S students in the Berekum Municipality have clear idea of their future career aspirations?

The respondents were requested to indicate whether they have clear idea of their future career. Table 3 displays the results of the responses.

Table 3: JHS Students' Level of Future Career Idea

Level of idea	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Clear Idea	241	79.0
Some Idea	54	18.0
No idea	8	3.0
Total	303	100.0

The results from Table 3 show that 241 (79%) of the respondents had clear idea of their future career while 54 (18%) had some idea of their future career. Also, the rest of the respondents had no idea of their future career. The mode of the distribution is clear idea.

In view of the results shown in Table 3, the answer to research question 1 is that vast majority of the JHS students in the Berekum Municipality have clear idea of their future career aspirations. However, some of the students in the municipality are not still sure of their future career aspirations. It could mean that those students do not have adequate career information. Career counsellors and teachers should provide them with the needed career information in order to help them to have clear career aspiration as early as possible.

Table 4 shows the results of the careers that J.H.S students have planned to pursue in future.

Table 4: JHS Students' Career Aspirations

Careers	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Nursing	107	35.3
Teaching	26	8.6
Engineering	29	9.6
Banking	50	16.5
Construction	2	0.7
Medicine	22	7.2
Law	41	13.5
Others	26	8.6
Total	303	100.0

As indicated in Table 4, 107 (35.3%) of the respondents have planned to pursue Nursing. Fifty (16.5%) showed that their future career was Banking. Again, 41(13.5%), 26(8.6%), and 22 (7.2%) aspired to Law, Teaching and Medicine respectively. As low as 2 respondents, less than 1% chose construction. Furthermore, 26 (8.6%) of the respondents who chose others indicated soldier, police and sports as their future careers.

The results in table 4 show that nursing is a popular career among JHS students in the municipality because nursing had the highest frequency. Again, from the results one could say that majority of the students in the Berekum

Municipality have clear idea of career alternatives and what careers they want to aspire to. This also gives an answer to research question 1, “Do J.H.S students in the Berekum Municipality have clear idea of their future career aspirations?” Finally, very few students choosing construction as their future career might mean that most students in the municipality do not aspire to traditional careers or careers in the informal sector.

Research Question 2

What are the main sources of J.H.S students’ career information?

The respondents were asked to indicate their main sources of information on career alternatives. Here, students were allowed to choose as many responses as applicable to them. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Main Sources of Information of JHS Students’ Career Alternatives

Main Sources of Information	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Parents	170	26.1
Peers	37	5.7
Siblings	43	6.6
Teachers	200	30.8
Counsellors	41	6.0
TV & Radio (Mass media)	161	24.8
Total	649	100.0

Table 5 indicates that teachers, parents and the mass media were the major sources of career information to JHS students as they jointly represented 81.7% of the responses. This to a large extent gives an answer to research question, “What are the main sources of JHS students’ career information?”

Regrettably, counsellors who are supposed to offer quality career information to students accounted for only 6.0%. This could mean that there are few counsellors in the municipality or the counsellors do not provide adequate career information to the students. As found in Table 5, one could also conclude that as more than half of the students receive career information from parents, mass media, peers and siblings they might not receive proper guidance and quality information to make informed career decisions. This is because they themselves are not aware of much career issues due to professional incompetence.

Table 6 displays the responses of career agencies from which career information have been sought. Respondents were requested to tick as many as applicable to them.

Table 6: Agencies that Provide Career Information to JHS Students

Agencies	Frequency	Percentages (%)
School	242	51.7
Home	59	12.6
Mass media	63	13.5
Church	32	6.8
GES	72	15.4
Total	468	100.0

Table 6 reveals that school alone provides 51.7% of the career information JHS students received from the agencies. On the other, GES, mass media, home and the church jointly accounted for 48.3% of the information JHS students received on career issues.

The results clearly indicate that vast majority of the JHS students access much of their career information from agencies such as the school, GES, mass media and the home. This to a large extent gives an answer to the research question which states “What are the main sources of J.H.S students’ career information?” More than half of the JHS students accessing career information from the school could mean that some of the teachers and the headmasters usually provide career information to students either formally or informally. Again, the results indicate that the church did very little in terms of providing career information to students.

Table 7 highlights specific career information JHS students receive from major career sources and agencies in the municipality. The respondents gave multiple responses.

Table 7: Specific Career Information for JHS Students

Specific Information	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Admission requirements to SHS	104	26.2
Academic Programmes at the SHS	91	23.0
Academic Programmes and their prospective Careers	201	50.8
Total	396	100.0

The results from Table 7 indicate that 50.8% of the students receive career information on academic programmes and their respective careers. Meanwhile 26.2% and 23% of the students receive career information on admission requirements and academic programmes to SHS respectively.

The results clearly suggest that JHS students in Berekum municipality mainly receive career information on admission requirements to SHS, academic programmes at the SHS and finally on academic programmes and their respective careers when making career decisions. This information could assist the JHS students to get enough career information to make informed future career decision.

Research Question 3

To what extent are JHS students in the Berekum Municipality aware of career alternatives and issues?

The respondents were asked to demonstrate their level of understanding on career issues. Table 8 stipulates the results of the responses of elective programmes offered in SHS in multiple responses.

Table 8: JHS Students’ Knowledge on SHS Elective Programmes

Elective Programmes	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Visual Arts	275	37.7
General Arts	239	32.8
Home Economics	214	29.4
Engineering	01	0.1
Total	729	100.0

Table 8 reveals that 99.9% of the respondents were aware that Visual Arts, General Arts and Home Economics are offered in the SHS. Visual Arts had the greatest of about 37.7%. On the contrary, less than 1%, about 0.1% indicated that Engineering is offered in the SHS.

The results clearly suggest that almost all the JHS students in the municipality are aware of the elective programmes offered in the SHS. This could mean JHS students in the municipality have received adequate knowledge on career issues in terms of SHS elective programmes.

Table 9 highlights the results of the responses on major career opportunities for SHS science students. It is based on a multiple response.

Table 9: Major Career Opportunities for SHS Elective Science Programme

Career opportunities	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Banking	30	5.0
Engineering	118	19.4
Medicine	259	42.7
Pharmacy	187	30.8
Secretarial Work	13	2.1
Total	607	100.0

As shown in Table 9, 92.9% of the respondents jointly reported that Medicine, Pharmacy and Engineering are the major career opportunities for SHS Science

students. Medicine was the popular career opportunity which singly recorded 42.7%. On the other hand, Banking and Secretarial Work had 7.1%.

The results in Table 9 to a large extent indicate that almost all the JHS students in the municipality have adequate knowledge on major career opportunities for SHS science students. However, there are some students in the municipality who still are unaware of major career opportunities for SHS Science students and need career guidance.

Table 10 shows the results of JHS students' knowledge on career opportunities that are open to SHS General Arts students.

Table 10: Major Career Opportunities for SHS General Arts Students

Career opportunities	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Banking	44	8.9
Social Work	159	32.3
Economics	105	21.3
Medicine	42	8.5
Teaching	143	29.0
Total	493	100.0

Table 10 indicates that 82.6% of the respondents were aware that Social Work, Teaching and Economics are the major career opportunities for SHS General Arts students. Social Work had the greatest of about 32.3%. Conversely, 17.4% of the students indicated that Banking and Medicine are major career opportunities for SHS General Arts students.

The results categorically suggest that majority of the JHS students are aware of some of the major career opportunities for General Arts SHS students. And this shows adequate career knowledge in terms of career opportunities. Even though many JHS students have adequate knowledge on career opportunities for General Arts quite a number of them have low knowledge on career issues. This is because some JHS students in the Berekum Municipality reported that banking and medicine are major career opportunities for SHS General Arts students.

Generally, JHS students in Berekum Municipality have demonstrated that relatively they have substantial knowledge and awareness on career alternatives and issues. This opposes the view of Johnson (2000) that indicated that sixth-through-ninth-grade children have demonstrated very little understanding of how school relates to real world and seem to have little to no awareness of the skills and knowledge needed for success in the future.

Research Question 4

Which nurture experiences influence J.H.S students' career aspirations in Berekum Municipality?

The respondents were requested to state whether their future career aspirations are influenced by others. Table 11 indicates the responses of the students.

Table 11: The Influence of Others on JHS Students' Future Career

Career influence	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	232	77.3
No	68	22.7
Total	300	100.0

Table 11 shows that 232 (77.3%) of the respondents' future career aspirations are influenced by others while the rest indicated that their future careers are not influenced by others.

The results clearly suggest vast majority of the JHS students in the municipality are influenced by others in making their future career decision. These influences could either be positive or negative. This would assist in finding an answer to research question 4. However, those students whose future careers are not influenced by others might find it very difficult in making career decisions.

Table 12 shows the results of nurture experiences which influence JHS students' career aspiration decision on a multiple response base.

Table 12: The Influence of JHS Students' career Aspiration Decisions

Nurture Influence	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Parents	241	35.0
Siblings	81	12.3
Peers	89	12.9
Teachers	175	25.4
Counsellors	41	6.0
Extended family members	58	8.4
Total	689	100.0

Table 12 vividly reveals that 85.6% of the JHS students jointly indicated that parents, teachers, peers and siblings influenced their career aspiration decisions,

with parents having the strongest influence (about 35%). This to a large extent answers the research question 4. Unfortunately, counsellors who should have much influence on students' career aspiration decision had only 6%. Parents, siblings and peers might not have enough career information so they could influence students to aspire to their future careers without considering their abilities and interest. This could lead to frequent career changes in their quest to aspire to their future career. Again, these people might influence students to aspire to their own dream or ideal careers. This is because they are usually with them and might have personal direct and greater influence on their career aspiration decisions. Small and MacClean (2002) reported the strong influence parents can have by providing an example in terms of occupational choices. Houser (1985) and Graham (1997) asserted that parents do not only encourage achievements through expectations, but they influence what type of career their children choose.

Research Question 5

To what extent do nurture experiences influence the career aspirations of JHS students in Berekum Municipality?

The respondents were asked to indicate nurture experiences that influence their career aspiration decision most. The results of the responses are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: The Extent to which Nurture Experiences Influence JHS Students' Career Aspirations

Nurture Experiences	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Parents	187	64.0
Siblings	14	4.8
Peers	10	3.4
Extended family	4	1.4
Teachers	72	24.7
Counsellors	5	1.7
Total	292	100.0

The results in Table 13 show that parents alone influenced students' career aspiration by 64% followed by teachers who had 24.7%. On the contrary, counsellors and extended family members had very low influence of about 1.7% and 1.4% respectively.

The results clearly suggest that parents in Berekum Municipality had the most powerful influence on JHS students' career aspirations. This could mean that most JHS students would not have adequate and accurate career information, especially when majority of the parents have attained low level of education and also being traders. Apart from parents, teachers also have some level of influence on students' career aspirations. In similar studies, Dawkins (1989) also found that the aspirations of African American parents specifically provide powerful influences over their children career choices.

Table 14 highlights the responses of what careers nurture experiences influenced JHS students to pursue in future.

Table 14: Careers that Nurture Experiences Influence JHS Students to Pursue in Future

Careers	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Teaching	45	16.2
Nursing	94	33.8
Engineering	18	6.5
Medicine	37	13.3
Banking	51	18.3
Law	33	11.9
Total	278	100.0

As shown in Table 14, 94 (33.8%) of the respondents indicated that nurture experiences influenced them to pursue Nursing, while 18.3% and 16.2% were influenced to pursue Banking and Teaching respectively. However, only 6.5% were influenced to pursue Engineering.

The results suggest that JHS students in the municipality are influenced to aspire to various careers such as nursing, banking, teaching, medicine, law and engineering. Nursing was the most popular career that nurture factors (parents, teachers, peers, siblings, extended family members and counsellors) influenced the students to pursue. It is concluded in an answer to the research question 5 that

states the extent nurture experiences influence the career aspirations of JHS students in Berekum Municipality.

Table 15 shows the results of the responses on how nurture experiences influence students' career aspiration decision.

Table 15: How Nurture Experiences Influence JHS Students' Career Decision

Level of Influence	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Compulsion	13	4.4
Explanation of available Career Opportunities	192	64.9
Encouragement by providing support	91	30.7
Total	296	100.0

Table 15 reveals that 192 (64.9%) of respondents indicated that nurture experiences explained the opportunities available to the career to them. Meanwhile, about 4.4% said they were forced to aspire to a particular career.

The results vividly depict that most JHS students in the municipality had the advantage of getting explanations on career opportunities from nurture experiences before they make future career decision. This could help JHS students to aspire to careers they are more aware of their opportunities. Conversely, few students who were forced to aspire to careers that they might not be aware and capable of and could lead to frequent change in their courses and careers. Again,

some students had aspired to certain careers unwillingly or out of fear in order to get the needed support from parents, teachers, peers and other nurture factors. This clearly gives an answer to the research question 5 which states that to what extent nurture experiences influence the career aspirations of J.H.S students in Berekum municipality.

Research Question 6

Which nurture experiences do J.H.S. students in Berekum Municipality willingly discuss their career alternatives and aspirations with?

The students were requested to indicate whether they willingly discuss their career alternatives with others. Table 16 shows the results of the responses.

Table 16: Discussion of Future Career with Others

Discussion with Others	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	238	78.8
No	64	21.2
Total	302	100.0

As shown in Table 16, 238 (78.8%) of the respondents willingly discuss their future career with others, while only 21.2% indicated that they did not discuss their future career alternatives with others.

In view of the results shown in Table 16, the answer to the research question is that greater number of JHS students in Berekum Municipality willingly discussed their future career with other people. Those students who discuss their future

career with other people could be affected either positively or negatively in terms of adequate and quality career information. On the contrary, even though some JHS students in the municipality aspire to certain careers they did not discuss or consult other people but did it independently. When this happens these students might not get enough access to quality and adequate career information to make informed career decisions.

Table 17 displays the results of the responses of those JHS students who discussed their future career decisions with nurture factors on a multiple response basis.

Table 17: Discussion of Future Career Decisions with Nurture Factors

Nurture Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Parents	258	39.1
Friends	145	22.0
Peers	42	6.4
Siblings	84	12.7
Teachers	105	15.9
Counsellors	26	3.9
Total	660	100.0

The results presented in Table 17, indicate that 39.1% of the respondents discussed their future career with parents. In addition to that, 41.1% of the students jointly discussed their future career decisions with friends, siblings and

peers. Conversely, only 3.9% of the respondents reported that they discussed their future career decision with counsellors.

The results from Table 17 concluded that a large majority of JHS students in Berekum Municipality chiefly discussed their career alternatives and aspirations with parents, friends, teachers and siblings. This suggests that most of the students discussed their future career alternatives decisions with people who might not have adequate and quality career information. This could lead to wrong career decision which might lead to regret and frequent career changes in later life. On the other hand, the insignificant number of JHS students who discussed their future career with counsellors also could mean either the municipality did not have enough counsellors or the counsellors did not avail themselves to students. Epstein and Sanders (2002) and Yonezawa (2000) support the view that among middle and high school students, discussion among parents, teachers, and school administrators, and discussing schooling and future plans have the strongest relations with academic outcomes.

Things JHS Students Discuss when Considering their Future Career Plans

This item was an open-ended one so students had the opportunity to talk about the things they discuss concerning their future career plans.

Some students reported that they mainly discuss the benefits and prospects of the career. Here, they emphasize the benefits of nursing, banking, teaching, medicine, law and engineering, for example some students cited higher salary in nursing, law, medicine and banking while others said in teaching you have enough time for your own business.

Some students also said they talk about the working conditions of the career, especially rules and regulations and also protection and security. Other students reported that they consider salary level or financial aspect of a career before they choose. Examples of such careers are Military, Banking, Pilot and Nursing. In the same way some students talked about their interest in the job or career.

Again, some students revealed that they normally discuss about the prestige or respect that a particular career or job attracts. They cited the nice appearance and dressing of nurses, bankers, military men who command prestige and respect from the general public to aspire to those careers.

Furthermore, some JHS students indicated that when they discuss their future career plans they talked about career requirements, preparation and opportunities. Students reiterated this by saying that we want to pursue medicine so they talk about how best they can improve their studies, especially in science and mathematics in order to pursue elective science in SHS. Added to this, other students again reported that they discuss SHS subjects and their corresponding courses at the university vis-a-vis their career prospects.

Considering the various responses one could conclude that JHS students in Berekem municipality talked extensively about variety of career issues when they discuss their future career plans. This answers the research question, “Do JHS students freely discuss their career alternatives and aspiration with others?”

Table 18 presents the results of the responses of students’ elective programmes to be offered at the SHS in order to achieve their career aspirations.

Table 18: JHS Elective Programmes to Pursue at SHS

Elective programmes	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Science	130	43.3
General arts	85	28.3
Business	44	14.7
Visual arts	8	2.7
Home economics	9	9.7
Technical	4	1.3
Total	300	100.0

As indicated in Table 18, 130 (43.3%) of the respondents reported that they would pursue elective Science programme at the SHS level. Meanwhile, 43% jointly reported that they would pursue both General Arts and Business. On the contrary, Visual Arts and Technical programmes recorded as low as 2.7% and 1.3% respectively.

The results is an indication that JHS students in the municipality are interested in pursuing Science, General Arts and Business elective programmes at the SHS but the most popular elective programme is Science. This justifies why most of the students have chosen careers related to those elective programmes. Unfortunately, insignificant number of students in the municipality is interested to pursue Visual and Technical subjects. This might be due to low awareness on these programmes in the area.

Research Question 7

What are the measures put in place by JHS students in Berekum Municipality to achieve their career aspirations?

The participants were demanded to indicate the various practical measures they are putting in place to achieve their career aspirations. The results of the responses are shown in Table 19.

Table 19: JHS Students Entrance into SHS

Entrance into SHS	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	297	99.0
No	3	1.0
Total	300	100.0

As represented in Table 19, 297 (99.0%) reported that they would enter SHS after successful completion of JHS. Only 3 (1%) indicated that they would not attend SHS.

From the results, it is concluded that almost all the JHS students in the municipality would further their education after the completion of JHS as one of the means of reaching their career ambitions. This suggests that they are preparing for their future career.

Table 20 offers the results of students' responses on tertiary institutions they want to enter after a successful completion of SHS.

Table 20: JHS Preferences of Entrance into Tertiary Institutions

Tertiary Institutions	Frequency	Percentages (%)
University	150	51.0
Col. of Education	25	8.5
Nursing Tr. College	99	33.7
Polytechnic	8	2.7
School of Journalism	8	2.7
Agricultural College	4	1.4
Total	294	100.0

As indicated in Table 20, a little more than half of the respondents (about 51%) reported that they would enter university after completion of SHS. Also, 33.7% of the respondents indicated they would enter Nursing Training College. Conversely, few students reported that they would enter into polytechnic, School of Journalism and Agricultural College (they jointly recorded about 6.8%).

The results visibly indicate that most of the students in the municipality are more interested to attend university and Nursing Training College. Even though there is college of Education in Berekum Municipality only few of the JHS students are interested in entering college of Education. The results also suggest that most of the JHS students in the municipality are not interested in pursuing a career in vocational, visual arts and technical programmes.

Table 21 presents the results of the responses on programmes JHS students prefer to study at the postsecondary (tertiary) level.

Table 21: The Preferences of Students' Study Programmes at the Tertiary Level

Programmes	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Nursing	111	37.0
Education	25	8.0
Social Sciences	29	10.0
Business	54	18.0
Medicine	39	13.0
Fine Art	8	3.0
Languages	12	4.0
Journalism	20	7.0
Total	298	100.0

As presented in Table 21, about 111 (37%) of the participants indicated that they would pursue nursing at the tertiary level. Business had 18%, while 13% of the participants indicated they would pursue medicine at the tertiary level. Meanwhile, fine art had the least, about 3% of the respondents. Again, very few of the participants reported that they would pursue languages at the tertiary level.

The results clearly show more than two-thirds of the JHS students in Berekum Municipality have planned to pursue nursing, business, medicine, social sciences and education at the tertiary level in order to achieve their career dreams. Most of these programmes are in congruence with or related to students' future career aspirations indicated earlier in Table 4 (nursing, banking, medicine and teaching). By so doing they are preparing to achieve their career aspiration goals. This to a

large extent answers research question 7, “What are the measures put in place by JHS students in Berekum Municipality to achieve their career aspirations?” Nevertheless, insignificant number of JHS students in the municipality desired to pursue Fine art, Journalism and Languages at the tertiary level; this is also in agreement with their future career preferences.

Practical Measures Put in Place by JHS Students to Achieve their Career Dreams

This item sought to find out the practical measures students have put in place or are putting in place to achieve their career aspirations. The question was open-ended which gave students the opportunity to express themselves freely.

Most JHS students reported that they would study hard to get better grades in order to attend SHS to study programmes of their choice to prepare for their dream careers. The respondents demonstrated this by saying that they will read their books regularly, do their home work and class work, visit the library and also seek extra tuition from peers and teachers.

Also, some students reported that regular school attendance and punctuality were practical measures put in place to achieve their career aspirations. They indicated that they would be attentive and active in class and also take their lessons serious. They talked about the need to be disciplined, respectful and obedient to their teachers, parents, school authorities and other adults. Some students linked self discipline to abstinence from premarital sex, drug abuse, alcoholism and other bad behaviours that will distract their studies.

Again, some students indicated that they looked up to their role models and the same time sought advice from experts. Some of the participants showed that their role models were medical doctors, engineers, judges, lawyers and nurses so they usually went to them for explanations about the profession and directions to follow to aspire to those careers. Though, no student chose teachers as role models they went to them for advice.

Furthermore, some respondents reported that they normally visited the workplace. Most respondents cited the hospital and the law court as the principal places they usually visited to seek for information about their dream careers. Others respondents indicated that they observed parliamentary and court proceedings.

It is clear that JHS students in Berekum municipality have put numerous practical measures to achieve their career aspiration goals. Such measures are to study hard, be regular in school, be disciplined and respectful, abstinence from premarital sex and drug abuse, seek advice from experts, looking up to role models and visiting the workplace. This answers research question 7, “What are the measures put in place by JHS students in Berekum Municipality to achieve their career aspirations?”

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the Study

This chapter presents the summary of the main findings, conclusion and recommendation of what should be done. The study mainly sought to find out the influence of nurture experiences on JHS students' career aspirations in Berekum municipality. The major objectives were to find out nurture experiences that influence students' career aspirations, where students seek career information, level of students' knowledge on career alternatives and measures students adopt to achieve their career aspirations.

The study considered 303 respondents drawn from five basic schools in three towns in the municipality. Stratified Sampling procedure and questionnaire were used for the study. Descriptive statistical tools that were used for the study are frequencies, percentages and mode.

Summary of the main Findings

1. Majority (79%) of the JHS students in Berekum Municipality have clear idea about their future career aspirations.
2. The JHS students in the municipality aspire to variety of careers which are in congruence with what nurture experiences influence them to pursue, with Nursing being the most preferred.

3. The main sources of career information to JHS students in the municipality are teachers, parents and the mass media (81.7%), with teachers being the principal source.
4. Counsellors have very small (3.9%) influence on JHS students' career aspirations in terms of discussion and provision of career information.
5. About 92.8% and 82.6% of the JHS students have adequate career knowledge on career opportunities of SHS elective Science and General Arts programmes respectively.
6. The main influence of JHS students' career aspirations in Berekum Municipality are parents, teachers, peers and siblings (85.6%), with parents having the strongest influence (35%).
7. Most nurture experiences (64.9%) explain available career opportunities to students as a way of influencing their career aspiration decisions.
8. About 61.1% of the students discuss their future career decisions with parents and friends, parents are the most discussion point (39.1%).
9. Many (96%) students are not interested in pursuing a career in technical and visual arts.
10. Most of the JHS students in the municipality have put proper measures in place and are seriously preparing hard to achieve their career dreams.

Conclusions

Nurture experiences and career aspirations of JHS students is an essential issue to investigate, especially when most studies reveal that students' career aspirations are influenced by significant others.

1. The findings reveal that parents are the most influential factor on JHS students' career aspiration decisions in all aspects except source of knowledge. Though, parental influence is strongly evident in most of the career decisions students made, one must ask whether parents can provide adequate and quality career advice in terms of career opportunities and training prerequisite.
2. Based on the research findings counsellors have very insignificant influence on all aspects of students' career aspiration decisions. This is unfortunate because students do not either discuss or receive most of their career information from counsellors, and this may lead to inaccurate career information. This implies that there are either few counsellors in the municipality or the guidance counsellors in the municipality are not doing effective work.
3. Even though the findings reveal that 79% of the students have clear idea about their future career aspiration decision, some are still confused and undecided about their career aspiration paths. This presumes that these students lack appropriate information and direction on career alternatives.
4. The study also reveals that most JHS students discuss their career aspiration plans with their parents than with teachers. In my opinion most parents in the municipality may not provide precise career information to students since most of the parents are farmers and traders coupled with low level of education. They are more likely not to assist students to have alternative career or job options. Parents are also more likely to influence

their wards to pursue careers of their own interest and neglect students' interests and capabilities.

5. The findings show that students' future career aspirations are consistent with the aspirations of what nurture experiences have influenced them to choose. In all the decisions concerning future career aspiration, nursing is the most prominent career JHS students in the municipality aspire to. Also, most students' choice of SHS elective programmes corresponds to their career aspirations.
6. Even though students' knowledge and awareness on career opportunities and its related issues is high, some still perceive medicine and banking as career opportunities for SHS General Arts students. The study did not cover wide range of issues concerning world of work, thus students' knowledge and awareness was limited.

Recommendations

1. To ensure quality information to JHS students in the municipality, there is the need for policy makers, especially GES to provide regular in-service training and workshops on career related issues to all teachers. This is very crucial since teachers are the principal source of students' career information. This will enable students to make informed career decisions.
2. To ensure accurate and adequate career information to students, there is the need for guidance counsellors, teachers, and other professionals in the field of counselling to create awareness on career issues on radio, television, PTA meetings, in churches and symposiums. This will enable

parents and students to receive quality and enough career information in order to make proper career aspiration decisions since parents are the main focal point for discussion and direct influence on career related issues.

3. The Ministry of Education through the Curriculum Research Development Division should design a comprehensive career plan for students at all levels to meet their career development needs. This will inculcate in the students the need to take early career aspiration decision.
4. Since most students in the municipality have clear idea about their future career, there is an urgent need for the municipal guidance and counselling coordinators, teachers and other counsellors to organize more career programmes like career conferences and career fairs to students. This will enable students to gain accurate and adequate information to make informed career decision.
5. Ghana as a country should incorporate career awareness programmes into the national calendar of events. This can be done through career days, career week celebrations and career fairs at the local, regional and national levels. This will provide enough career information to students, teachers, parents and the general public.
6. The student bodies such as Brong Ahafo Students' Union, Students' Representative Council and National Union of Ghana Students should provide regular career information to students at both primary and JHS levels.

Areas for Further Research

1. The level of parents' knowledge on career alternatives and issues.
2. The impact of parental occupation and education on students' career aspirations.
3. Relationship of children's career aspirations to parent's occupations.
4. The influence of religious leaders on career aspiration of adolescents.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR JHS STUDENTS

Nurture Experiences and Career Aspirations of Junior High School (JHS) Students in Berekum Municipality

The questionnaire is designed to collect data on the above topic. Please read the items carefully and supply your candid responses. Your responses are considered confidential. Thank you for taking the time to read and complete the following questionnaire. Your contribution will help to examine the career guidance services available in JHS in the Berekum municipality.

General Issues

(Tick one in the box)

1. Do you have a clear idea of what future career you want to be in?
 - a. Clear idea []
 - b. Some idea []
 - c. No idea []

2. Which of these careers have you planned to pursue in future?
 - a) Nursing []
 - b) Teaching []
 - c) Engineering []
 - d) Banking []
 - e) Construction []
 - f) Medicine []
 - g) Law []

h) Others (specify) []

3. What motivates and encourages you most to be in that career in future?

a) Prestige and respect []

b) Salary level []

c) Interest []

d) Abilities and achievement []

e) Parents []

f) Teachers []

g) Others (specify) []

Sources of Career Information

(Tick as many as applicable)

4. What are your main sources of information on career alternatives?

a) Parents []

b) Peers []

c) Siblings []

d) Teachers []

e) Counsellors []

f) Television and radio []

5. Which of the following agencies have ever given you information on career issues?

a) School []

b) Home []

c) Mass media []

- d) Church []
- e) Ghana Education Service (GES) []
- f) Others (specify) []

Knowledge and Awareness on Career Issues

6. What specific career information do they normally provide you?

- a) Admission requirements to SHS []
- b) Academic programmes at the SHS []
- c) Academic programmes and their respective career alternatives []
- d) Others (specify) []

7. Which of the following elective programmes are offered in Senior High Schools?

- a) Visual arts []
- b) General arts []
- c) Home economics []
- d) Engineering []

8. What are the major career opportunities for SHS science students?

- a) Banking []
- b) Engineering []
- c) Medicine []
- d) Pharmacy []
- e) Secretary []

9. Which of these career opportunities are open to SHS General Arts student?

- a) Banking []

- b) Social work []
- c) Economics []
- d) Medicine []
- e) Teaching []

The Influences of Nurture Experiences

10. Do others influence you to pursue a particular career in future?

(Tick one in the box)

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

11. Who influences your career aspiration decision?

(Tick as many as applicable)

- a) Parents []
- b) Siblings []
- c) Peers []
- d) Teachers []
- e) Counsellors []
- f) Extended family members []

12. Which of these influences your career aspiration decision most?

(Tick one in the box)

- a) Parents []
- b) Siblings []
- c) Peers []
- d) Extended family members []

- e) Teachers []
- f) Counsellors []

13. Which of the following careers do they want you to pursue in future?

(Tick one in the box)

- a) Teaching []
- b) Nursing []
- c) Engineering []
- d) Medicine []
- e) Banking []
- f) Law []
- g) Others (specify) []

14. How do they influence your decision to aspire to a particular career?

(Tick one in the box)

- a) They forced me to choose a career of their choice []
- b) They explained the opportunities available to the career []
- c) They encouraged me by promising to provide the needed support
[]

Discussion of Career Alternatives and Aspirations

15. Do you discuss your future career with others?

(Tick one in the box)

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

16. Which of the following do you discuss your future career decision with?

(Tick as many as applicable)

- a) Parents []
- b) Friends []
- c) Peers []
- d) Siblings []
- e) Teachers []
- f) Counsellors []

17. When you discuss your future career plans, what are some of the things you talk about?

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Mechanisms/Measures for Achieving Career Aspiration Goals

(Tick one in the box, from Q.18 to 22)

18. Do you want to attend Senior High School (SHS) after the completion of JHS?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

19. If your answer to question Q.18 is yes, what elective programme do you like to pursue at the SHS level to achieve your career aspiration?

- a) Science []
- b) General arts []
- c) Business []
- d) Visual arts []
- e) Home economics []
- f) Technical []

20. If your answer to Q.18 is no, then what kind of trade do you want to learn in order to achieve your career ambition?

- a) Driving []
- b) Carpentry []
- c) Hair-dressing []
- d) Sewing []
- e) Painting []
- f) Fitting []
- g) Farming []

21. Which of the following institutions do you want to enter after a successful completion of your SHS?

- a) University []
- b) College of education (Teacher training college) []
- c) Nursing training college []
- d) Polytechnic []
- e) School of journalism []
- f) Agricultural college []

g) Others (specify) []

22. What programme do you prefer to study at the postsecondary (tertiary) level?

a) Nursing []

b) Education []

c) Social science []

d) Business []

e) Medicine []

f) Fine art []

g) Languages []

h) Journalism []

23. What practical measures are you putting in place to achieve your career dream?

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Demographic Information

(Tick one in the box)

24. Which age group do you belong to?

a) Under 11years []

b) 11 to 12 years []

c) 13 to 14 years []

d) 15 to 17 years []

e) 18 years and above []

25. What is your gender?

a) Male []

b) Female []

26. What is your current class?

a) JHS one []

b) JHS two []

c) JHS three []

27. What is the highest level of your father's education?

a) Basic []

b) Secondary []

c) Tertiary []

d) No formal education []

e) Others (specify) []

28. What is the highest level of your mother's education?

a) Basic []

b) Secondary []

c) Tertiary []

d) No formal education []

e) Others (specify) []

29. What is your father's main occupation?

a) Teaching []

b) Nursing []

c) Banking []

d) Trading []

e) Farming []

f) Others []

30. What is your mother's main occupation?

a) Teaching []

b) Nursing []

c) Banking []

d) Trading []

e) Farming []

f) Others []