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GENDER DIFFERENCES ON LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF MOST
DESIRED CAREER CHOICE AMONG YOUTHS IN SECONDARY
SCHOOL OF KADUNA SOUTH, NIGERIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

This paper titled "Gender Differences in Youth Expression of Most Desired Career and Knowledge Level of Most Desired Career Among the Secondary School Students of Kaduna South" has its design as survey type involving descriptive method. The population of this research consists of 731 youth attending their week programme. Accidental sampling technique or what is technically termed subject pool is used in this study. The sample consists of 73 respondents comprising of twenty eight (28) males and forty five (45) females. The instrument used in this research was Youth Career Aspiration Survey (YCAS) designed by Kolo (2010). The study has two (2) objectives, two (2) research questions and two (2) hypotheses. Frequencies and percentages were used to answer the research questions, while t-test analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to analyse the hypotheses. The findings of this study revealed that there is move towards androgynous approach to career desire among the youth. It also indicated that the youth possess a high level of knowledge in their most desired careers. Also recommendations were given to assist youth to choose careers of their choices for their future adjustment among others.

INTRODUCTION

Career has been defined as "the sequence of occupations, jobs, positions held during the course of a person's life time.:" Further, it is defined as "time extended working out of a purposeful life pattern through work undertaken by the individual" (Shertzer 1985). Because one's career is a life long interaction, and due to the fact that most of one's life style and, people one comes in contact with ambition which is influenced by the career one goes into, the issue of constant re-visitation of youths trying to make career decision becomes important. Essentially, too is the fact that one's personality is often determined partially by social forces and also by the sex, it will be erroneous to ascribe to a particular sex that certain courses on a permanent basis. It will also be equally wrong not to accept that certain careers are best entered into by a particular gender (Eckes, 2002).

The issues of gender stereotyping in career choice has been a historical one. Gender stereotyping has also been observed to have a cultural basis within the society. To Eckes (2002) all cultures within a society specify behaviours and roles to males and females. Such roles or behaviours could be career specific or otherwise. This specification, historically is more dominant in a traditional and closed societies than modern and open societies. The open or modern societies makes gender behaviour more flexible and such flexibility as encouraged by modern societies tend to make each individual more independent with a lower level of fear for success in any given task (Lenny, 2009). It can therefore be inferred that the level of stereotyping of career based on gender one finds in any given society, depicts the level of modernity or traditionality that exists in that society.

Gender stereotyping according to Kolo and Garba (2007) "when used in reference to occupations in the world of work, it implies that certain vocations or concerns tend to be described more to specific gender types (male or females)". In most earlier studies, there tends to be gender stereotyping of preferred careers among youth and adolescents. Such evidences are indicated in the works of Gisende (2009), Onyejakiu (1987).

Additionally, the study by Olayiwola (1995) indicates that there are more females in the choice of nursing than males, while in professions like engineering, agriculture, law, more males tend to choose such than females. Further, the study also revealed that the mother's influence on the female choice of career is more than one the male's choices. This finding is also similar with that of Mowaiye (1995) whose survey in a College of Agriculture indicated that in seven (7) of the departments in the college between 1986 and 1987, females were only found in Home Economics where there was no male at all among the academic staff. This still reveals to a certain extent that gender typing still control the choices, distribution and occupational behaviour of people in Nigeria. The observation was also confirmed by Elegbeleye (2006) when he said that "gender typing still controls the behaviour of both male and female Nigerian undergraduates to a significant degree."

However, contrary information can still be found in literatures that portray a non-determinant position as regards gender stereotyping. For example, Famojuro's (2005) study revealed that about 61.8% of the sampled population exhibited androgynous traits. Also the findings of Kolo and Garba (2007) revealed that :most of the women receiving training in these centres perceived most of the occupations in which they were receiving

training not essential belong to female sex alone. This revelation points to the androgynous nature of even what had traditionally been regarded as female career.

On this trend of revelation from research findings which is an indication of the level and environment in which the investigation took place, the researcher set out to further investigate among the youth, their most desired jobs, and the knowledge level about their desired careers. The investigation is to ascertain the role of gender on these areas of career issues. Based on this objective, the following two (2) objectives, two (2) research questions and two (2) hypotheses were set.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study include the following to:

1. investigate the influence of level of knowledge of youth on their most desired careers.
2. determine the impact of gender on youth most desired careers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are the research questions of the study:

1. Does gender difference has any influence on the youth level of knowledge about their most desired career?
2. What is the pattern of youth most desired career based on gender?

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The hypotheses of the study include the following:

1. There is no significant difference on level of knowledge of most desired career among the youths.

2. There is no significant difference between the youth most desired career and gender.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

Design for the Study

The design for the study is survey type involving descriptive method. Questionnaires were distributed to respondents and the finding used to determine gender difference on youth expression of knowledge level of most desired career.

Population

The population in this survey research are the youth whose age range from 12-19 years totaling 731. To Happner, Kivlinghan and Wampold (1992), target population refers to a set of observation and characteristics of people. To them, to make results generalizable, the population characteristics must be heterogeneous. The present population used in this study conforms to this criterion in terms of age, gender, and educational background.

Sample Size

The sample size of this study are seventy three (73) youth. The sample size is small because it is a captive audience used. The sample size is 10% of the total population thus right for this study in line with Roscoe (1975) recommendation. This is what is called accidental sampling technique or technically termed subject pool. The sample was gotten from the participants in a youth week programme at Kaduna South. where the writer was invited to give a career talk. Therefore all the youth present were used in this study. In the sample size, there were twenty eight (28) males and forty-five (45) females. Also thirty two (32) of the subjects were junior secondary school students,

while forty-one (41) were senior secondary school students. The respondents were from various schools owned by private, institutional, federal and state governmental organizations in the study area.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was designed by Kolo (2010) and was termed Youths Career Aspiration Survey (YCAS). The instrument has two sections namely, personal data, and information of knowledge level sections. Apart from section A which is the personal data section, the other section has a three-scale questionnaire or three scale response mode numbered 1-3. The respondents were instructed to circle which number sincerely fit their situation. The sections on knowledge level had ten items. All these items are factual statements and were compiled from earlier study. This made the instrument to have high content and face-validity. The instrument was personally administered to the respondents by the researcher.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected through use of questionnaire. The analysis of this study is based on frequency and tabulation for answering the research questions. In order to test the significant difference of the hypotheses, t-test statistics and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used at $P \leq 0.05$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysed the results and discussions are described as follows.

Question 1: Does gender difference has influence on the respondents scores on level of knowledge possessed by the respondents concerning their most desired career?

Table 2: Mean level of knowledge possessed by respondents on their most desired career: N = 73

S/No.	Most Desired Career	Low Level		Medium Level		High Level		No. of Responses	
		0-10	M=0	11-20	N=30	21-30	N=37	N = 6	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Law	-	-	-	4(13.3)	2(5.4)	1(2.7)	-	1(16.7)
2	Accounting	-	-	-	2(6.7)	4(10.8)	3(8.1)	-	-
3	Engineering	-	-	1(3.3)	2(6.7)	4(10.8)	2(5.4)	-	-
4	Business	-	-	-	1(3.3)	2(5.4)	-	1(16.7)	-
5	Arts/Design	-	-	-	-	1(2.7)	3(8.1)	-	-
6	Medicine/Nursing/Pharmacy	-	-	4(13.3)	6(20.0)	4(10.8)	7(18.9)	-	2(33.3)
7	Army	-	-	-	-	1(2.7)	-	-	-
8	Social Service-oriented	-	-	3(10.0)	3(10.0)	-	-	-	1(16.7)
9	Computer Science	-	-	-	1(3.3)	-	1(2.7)	-	-
10	Banking	-	-	-	2(6.7)	-	-	-	-
11	Pilot	-	-	-	-	1(2.7)	-	1(16.7)	-
12	Geologist	-	-	1(3.3)	-	-	-	-	-
13	Architect	-	-	-	-	-	1(2.7)	-	-
	TOTAL	0	0	9(30.0)	21(70.0)	19(51.4)	18(48.6)	2(33.3)	4(66.7)

Table 1 is indicating the pattern of knowledge level based on sex and the most desired career of the youth. While in Law, 4 females i.e. 13.3% had a medium level knowledge of the career, 2 males i.e. 5.4% and 1 female i.e. 2.7% had claimed to have a high level knowledge of law as per the statements in the questionnaire. An overall tabulation portrays a picture that only 9 males i.e. 30.0% and 21 females i.e. 70% had medium knowledge of their most desired careers. In the same vein, 19 males out of 28 respondents i.e. 51.4% had claimed to have a high knowledge of their most desired careers. In this same category are 18 females out of 37 respondents i.e. 48.6%. The general conclusion therefore is the fact that females like their male counterparts are forging ahead not only to be androgynous in career desires but also in terms of knowledge seeking to make androgynuity more rational and logical. there is an indication that both sexes had almost equal number and percentage fall in the high level of knowledge about their desired career. A possible explanation for this may be that the youth used in this study are students from various secondary schools either owned by private organizations or institutions of federal government. For this reason, they may have been exposed to a series of career guidance talk, career day, career convention, where many professionals were invited to give talk on their various professions

Question 2: What is the pattern of youth most desired career based on gender difference?

This question is answered by tabulating all the careers desired by the youth used in the study. From their responses thirteen (13) different career options were desired by these youths as indicated and the number per gender opting for such career is also shown. The detail of the result is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Career Most Desired by Youths Based on Gender Differences
N = 73

S/No.	Career Desired	Males – 28	Female (44)	Total
1	Law			7(9.6)
2	Accounting	2(7.1)	5(11.4)	8(10.9)
3	Engineering	2(7.1)	6(13.6)	10(13.7)
4	Business	4(14.3)	6(13.6)	3(4.1)
5	Arts/Design	2(7.1)	1(2.3)	4(5.6)
6	Medicine/Nursing/Chemistry/Pharmacy	1(3.6)	3(6.8)	24(32.9)
7	Army	9(32.4)	15(34.1)	1(1.4)
8	Social Service-oriented	1(3.6)	-(0)	7(9.6)
9	Computer Science	4(14.3)	3(6.8)	3(4.1)
10	Banking	1(3.6)	2(4.5)	2(2.7)
11	Pilot	-(0)	2(4.5)	1(1.4)
12	Geologist	1(3.6)	-(0)	1(1.4)
13	Architect	1(3.6)	-(0)	1(1.4)
14	No desire expressed	-(0)	1(2.3)	1(1.4)
	Total	28(100)	45(100)	73(100)

Table 2 indicates that females most desired careers are mainly in the areas of medicine which includes nursing and pharmacy. Others include accounting, engineering and law. In the case of the males, majority desired mostly medicine, social services-oriented like preaching and engineering. From Table 1, it is revealing that almost equal percentage of females and males are now desiring a career in engineering (male 14.3%, female 13.6%) which used to be a male dominant job. The case is also true of medicine (male 32.4%, female 34.1%). The conclusion therefore is that though gender stereotyping can still be evident, a move towards androgynous career desire is at sight. This finding supports the earlier finding of Kolo and Garba (2007) that most women in their study perceived careers traditionally stereotypic and androgynous. The perception has been demonstrated in the present finding when an almost equal percentage of males and females desired a career in even in engineering traditionally meant for males and in medicine traditionally associated with females most especially nursing.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference on level of knowledge of most desired career among the youths.

To test this hypothesis, the mean scores of youths on level of knowledge on most desired career was used. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics was used. The result is presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: ANOVA statistics Analysis of Difference Between Gender and Level of Knowledge of Youth Most Desired Career.

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	of Df	Mean Squares	F-value	Sig.	Remark
Between Group	146.139	4	36.53	3.676	0.56	NS
Within Group	79.63	6	9.95			
Total	225.678	10				

Table 34 above shows that the F value of 3.67 was observed while F-critical is 4.28 was observed and P-0.56 was observed which is above P 0.05 at degree of freedom of 4.6. Meaning there is no significant difference in the level of knowledge of most desired career among gender of youth. Thus, the null hypothesis which says there is no significant difference between gender difference and level of knowledge of most desired career among the youth was retained.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the youth most desired career and gender.

To test hypothesis two (2) the mean scores of youth most desired careers of males and females was subjected to t-test statistical tool at $P \leq 0.05$. The result is presented in

Table 4.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of Most Desired Career Among Male and Female Youth.

Variables	N	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	P	Remark
Male	28	9.10	12.44	71	2.86	1.90	0.01	Sig.
Female	45	7.31	9.04					

The result in Table 4 revealed that the t-cal was 2.86 which is higher than t-critical 1.90 and also p-value observed is 0.01 which is lower than $P0.05$ at $df = >71$. This means that there is significant difference in the most desired careers of male and female youth in favour of males with a mean score of 9.10. Hence the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the youth most desired career and gender is rejected because it is gender bias.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1: It states that here is no significant difference between gender and level of knowledge of most desired career among the youth. The result was presented in Table 4. The result revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of knowledge and most desired career among gender. Thus the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant difference between gender and the level of knowledge of most desired career is retained. This finding was supported by Kolo (2008) that a systematic career guidance through occupational teaching makes career preferences of adolescents more realistic.

Additionally, the career talk given by the researcher during this youth week programme before the administration of the questionnaire might have played a significant influential role in this high level of knowledge by both sexes. This is an indication of the

fact that, information, if adequately and systematically presented in an organized form and appropriate to the level of the recipients, the tendency for the recipients to learn and absorb that information to their advantage is high. Gender therefore will place no barrier to such learning. This is why Kolo ((2008) suggested that career information to clients through the use of biblio-therapeutic approach should be the level that clients can not only read but also understand what is being read.

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant difference between the youth most desired career and gender. This hypothesis test is answered in Table 3. This hypothesis was rejected. This is because there is a significant difference on the youth most desired career and gender in favour of males. That is the most observed category of youth is gender bias. This trend can be explained not only by the influence of campaign for equal right for women but also with influence of a movement from a traditional oriented society to a modernized society. Such movement entails a loss of the grips of traditional beliefs on individual and a more liberation provided by the information available to individuals to assist in rational decision making.

Another explanation of or this finding may be hinged on the assertion of Mowaiye (1995) that "most gender functions are socially by nature and could be modified positively for both sexes." Additionally, it could be possibly explained that the youth used in this study have gender behavioural flexibility which according to Mowaiye (1995) makes them have more adaptive mechanism. Being equipped with such, possibly makes this group of youth to pursue the non-traditional careers. The present finding negates the earlier conclusion of Elegbeleye (2006) based on the result of his findings

that "gender typing skill controls the behaviour of both male and female Nigerian undergraduates to a significant degree".

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. A functional guidance and Counselling Centers in secondary schools be established where functional services have not taken off.
2. That government should as a matter of policy make all information available to schools as pertaining to the job opportunities and their requirements both in terms of educational, training and learning qualifications.
3. That the Guidance and Counselling Division of Federal Ministry of Education embarks on an outreach guidance coordination of what is happening at the state level in relation to level of student knowledge and career choice.. This can be done with an intensive collaboration with Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) at national and state levels.
4. The association for promoting quality education should also intensify efforts to assist such that services are qualitative enough in the school system to make education more qualitative and related to career guidance in secondary schools..

CONCLUSION

The writer has demonstrated in this paper that the youth as evidenced in this survey are tending towards a more androgynous career desires. It is also established that such a tendency is being stimulated in the youth not by the campaigning on equal rights based on gender, but the move of society towards modernization and the extent of

information being made available to these youth to make decisions in life. The more organized, consistent and guidance-oriented such information are, the more such youth become rational, logical, and sensitive to their own needs and societal expectations of youth in our secondary schools.

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