

# Effect of Parents' Socio-Economic Background on Secondary School Students Career Choice in Kebbi State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

Careers are the reality of life that needs to be considered important in today's modern societies. Choosing a career is a complex decision-making process that coincides with so many environmental, cultural, social and economic variables, which creates psycho-social stress for students especially those in secondary school. The study adopted a mixed-method approach. A sample of 250 senior secondary two (SS2) students was purposively drawn from 130 senior secondary schools in Kebbi State. A standardised Family Influence Scale (FIS) was adopted for this study. The scale was modified to have two sub scales: parents' occupation and family income. The face and content validity of FIS was carried out using experts in the field of guidance and counselling from Adamu Augie College of Education, Argungu. FIS was further subjected to pilot testing, and a reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained using the Cronbach Alpha formula. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while inferential statistics of t-test were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The outcome of this study revealed the grand mean scores of 2.8 and 2.7 which are greater than the decision mean score of 2.5 to imply that parents' occupational backgrounds and income levels from secondary school students' career choice significantly. Equally, significant differences were found ( $t = .19$ ,  $df = 248$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.03$ ) regarding the influence of parents' gender on the career choices of male and female students in secondary schools in Kebbi State. Considering the influence of parents on the career choice of their children, it was recommended that parents should seek the help of professional career counsellors to guide their children in making intelligent career decisions.

**Key Words:** Career, Career Choice, Parent Occupation, Parents Income Levels, Secondary School Students

## INTRODUCTION

It is a fact that education is the bedrock upon which a quality career is founded. The choice of a career is greatly determined by the choice of educational specialization. A career is a profession upon which one

trains and pursues consecutive progressive achievement, especially in public, professional or other works of life. Career choice is a process that starts early in childhood as soon as his/her aspirations and perceptions begin to be shaped. It is the process of decision-making about what occupation one should pursue amid several other alternatives.

The effect of career choice has a long-lasting impact on an individual. It is arguably a predictor and determinant of one's prospective level of income, and nature of job and thus leaves a mark on the personality and overall outlook of an individual (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). Hence, one wrong career decision can change the dream of an individual. As much as it remains difficult for everyone to make a decision regarding career choice, choosing a career should never be a trial-and-error exercise. Rather, it should be a conscious and deliberate decision-making process involving all the stakeholders.

In Nigeria, preparing for a career begins at the junior secondary education level, and proceeds up to the tertiary level. Decision-making concerning the appropriate choice of career or job to take is the most critical problem area facing students in secondary school systems and young school leavers (Egbo, 2017). It is becoming a complex task for students in the face of ever-advancing technology and the information world (Emerie & Okwulehie, 2018). Career choice is indeed something very hard to decide, especially as secondary school students lack basic information regarding occupational opportunities to help them in selecting their career (Ombaba *et al.*, 2014). Hence, guiding students to choose a career has always been the concern of principal stakeholders in education, including parents, teachers, administrators, as well as guidance and counselling officers. Chukwu *et al.* (2022) opined that during secondary education, adolescents go through a period of growth and maturity, contributing to a change in the vocational goals they once held in junior school. Career exploration helps them to clarify their interest, values and skills in a particular occupation (Ghosh & Chang, 2015). These occupational opportunities include careers such as teaching, physician, lawyer, engineer, and accountant among others.

Every student at a certain level of education has to choose a career. However, career choice tends to be a persistent problem for the students in the contemporary society. It is one of the biggest dilemmas and challenges in any student's life. Career choice involves the interplay of many variables, which are intricately intertwined (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). It is not a simple direct task. It involves a difficult process of decision-making to avoid poor career choices.

Poor career choices not only affect students' performance but also reduce their quality of life accompanied by unemployment, underemployment and maladjustment in various fields of endeavour (Datar & Ahmad, 2019). Poor career choices push students into occupations that are not suitable to their abilities. Sometimes, students enter the work completely they know nothing about or they are not interested in. The effect is job dissatisfaction, and consequently, delusion and depression, which leads to frustration, malfunction and inefficiency in work (Chukwu *et al.*, 2022). Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) maintained that individuals who are misfits in their workplace would also be less productive, and largely are unable to attain their goals. All of these translate in the long run to the National economic crisis (Emerie & Okwulehie, 2018). Hence it is necessary to channel students into suitable careers (Capuzzi & Stauffer, 2012).

Many factors operate to decide which occupation students choose. Some of these variables are social and economic, while others are biologically and psychologically pinned (Udoh & Sanni, 2012). Notwithstanding, it is quite clear that some of these variables tend to impact more than others. Specifically, the influence of socio-economic variables on the career choice of secondary school students has been critical. Research shows that among all the socioeconomic variables shaping the career pattern of students, the parent's income and social exposure stand out as the most influential (James, 2000). Being the first agent of socialization, the home provides exposure at the earliest stage, which lays the foundation for a child's personality.

Udoh and Sanni (2012) put forward that even before the advent of formal education in Nigeria, traditionally, the family as the first agent of socialization used to have total control over the occupational decisions of its members. Oladele, (2004) in Egbo (2017), expressed that the child is born knowing nothing of his society. However, the home provides the biological traits, qualities and natural endowments which direct human characteristics upon which all other attributes are built (Egbo, 2017). Directly or indirectly the parents influence the vocational interests of people by exposing them to skills, attitudes, feelings, and value systems which shape their personality. As the child grows, he learns, internalizes and concretizes the behaviour patterns and skills to which he is exposed. Udoh and Sanni (2012) maintained further that the behaviour patterns and training which the child learns from the parents often determine his job perception and subsequent occupational decision. This highlights the fact that parents occupy the most important position in the child's education.

Several studies revealed that most secondary school students lack basic information about career opportunities to help them make their choices (Ombaba *et al.*, 2014). Those, who come from educated family backgrounds, tend to be more influenced by family expectations regarding their career decisions. Parents' support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to affect career choice (Eremie & Okwulehie, 2018). Nwoka *et al.* (2022) reported that students from poor families often made wrong career decisions, and chose professions which required a short duration of training and minimal cost, primarily due to financial constraints. The opposite is the case of students who came from influential families. Additionally, secondary school students often choose a career their parents desire just to please them (Taylor *et al.*, 2004). Parents hardly make independent consultations regarding the career they think is most suitable for their children (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). Students' preferences are never a matter of concern for them. Parental attitude towards work, parent occupation and education also impact strongly on the occupational choice of their children. Parents usually set high standards from the very onset, and then pave the way for their children to follow that path. Students coming from a home dominated by a particular profession are most likely to be influenced to choose that profession (Udoh & Sanni, 2012). A student whose parents, siblings and other relatives are bankers or physicians will hardly choose a other profession than that which the family is known for. At most, the student may be compelled to choose any other prestigious and lucrative positions to maintain the family status quo. Because of the mother-to-child attachment, children largely discuss their plans and choices with their mothers more as compared to the fathers (Muthukrishna & Sokoya, 2008; Cheung *et al.*, 2013). Students acquire interests through discussion with their parents and this in turn affects the reasoning and choices they make, especially career choices (Hewitt, 2010). The issue of career choice among secondary school students is underreported in Kebbi State as there are no available pieces of literature explaining this occupational challenge. Hence, this study is directed at investigating the influence of parents' socioeconomic background on secondary school students' career choices in Kebbi State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

A quality workforce with job satisfaction is paramount to the overall economic development of any nation. The high rate of unemployment and underemployment experienced in Nigeria cannot be disassociated with poor career choices. Lack of knowledge of what career to choose is some Nigerians choose careers that not suitable to their abilities and skills or that they have little knowledge and interest.

Empirical evidence has shown that many secondary school students are faced with the problem of choosing a suitable career that matches their abilities, skills, competencies and interests. Majority of these students lack basic information about career opportunities to help them make their choices. This is no doubt as several factors interplay to influence the choice of career among secondary school students. However, the parents' socioeconomic background tends to be one most influential factors in students' career choices. More often, parents owing to their education, occupation, income level, social status and other personal

preferences, pressure their children into taking up family occupations and other careers even when they do not possess the requisite abilities, skills, competencies, and interests, which are very important determinant career choice variables that should be considered.

Consequently, students are usually compelled to pick up careers that pleased their parents' desire. Thus, most students may find it difficult to adjust positively towards the parents' desired careers, which in tin long run will result to jin dissatisfaction, frustration, malfunction, inefficiency at work and resignation.

Career choice might quite be a silent issue among secondary school students in Kebbi State as it is underreported. Nevertheless, that does not mean that there are no such issues in secondary schools across the state. Thus, this study is undertaken to find out the influence of parents' socioeconomic background on the career choice of secondary school students in Kebbi State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of the study was to assess the influence of parents' socioeconomic background on secondary school students' career choices in Kebbi State. Specifically, the study:

1. examined the extent to which parents' occupation background influences the career choice of secondary school students Kebbi State in Kebbi State
2. investigated the extent to which parents' income influences the career choice of secondary school students in Kebbi State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. To what extent do parents' occupational backgrounds influence the career choice of students in secondary school Kebbi in the State?
2. To what extent do parents' income levels influence the career choice of students in secondary school in Kebbi State?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between male and female students regarding the influence of parents' gender on the choice of career in secondary schools in Kebbi State.

## **LITERATURE**

### **Career Choice**

Career choice is the process of decision-making about what occupation one should pursue amid several other alternatives. A career decision is one of many important choices students will make in determining their plans and these decisions will impact them throughout their lives (Borchert, 2002). It is the open work alternatives available for a lasting lifestyle (Hewitt, 2010). In addition, Michael (2002) noted that career choice is a process that allows for the exploration of vocational, academic, and sociological endeavours to gratify individual, financial, and educational goals. It has to do with the selection of vocations in a manner that enables one to meet personal goals. Career choice involves the choice of elective subjects, courses of specialization and subsequent careers (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017).

Operationally, Career choice is a process of selection about what career to pursue among other alternatives. Decisions relating to work–leisure are in the process of career choice. Career choice is one of the principal gridlocks which pose difficulties in any student’s life. Many factors which are intricately knotted play out in this process (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). This implies that the process of career choice is not simple and involves a difficult process of decision-making. In our day, career choice does not only demand the development of calculated plans but also exhaustive career consultation to fiddle with the ever-budding socio-economic state of affairs. Nearly every one of the students in secondary schools lacks precise information about occupational opportunities to help them in navigating their career path thus, the anticipated life expectations marred (Ombaba *et al.*, 2014). The dearth of occupational information makes these students vulnerable to environmental influences.

### **Factors Influencing Choice of Career**

Career choice is one of the biggest dilemmas and challenges in any student’s life. It involves the interplay of many factors which are intricately intertwined. It is not a straightforward task and involves a difficult process of decision-making. The following are some of the factors affecting career choice:

#### **Socio-Economic Status**

The parent’s social and economic background has some bearing on the family’s resources. According to Collins (2014), you at one point inherit from your parents certain financial and other resources that, to some extent, influence your career choices. Family financial status determines things like where one lives and which school he does attend. In turn, these can affect one’s values, occupational expectations, opportunities, and gender role expectations. For example, students who have lived in a hospital environment may choose a career dealing with medicine. On the other hand, they may hate the hospital environment and consequently not choose a career that has anything to do with a hospital.

Financial prospects influence the career choice of men as they have to meet household expenses, whereas women show more concern for social values and utility (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). Suutari (2003), reports that several studies have indicated a positive relationship between parents’ socioeconomic status and the career choice of their children. Herbart (2005) opines that a child coming from an environment where he/she receives parental support and lives harmoniously is more likely to be dictated by them. In such a scenario, a child’s occupational aspiration is most likely to be influenced by the parents’ profession. In their analysis, Amani and Mkumbo (2015) concluded that in developing countries in Tanzania, parents direct their students to choose careers based on their financial capabilities.

As the family is the social group with which the child has direct contact, it determines not only the individual’s personality but also his vocational interests, at least to some appreciable extent (Udoh & Sanni, 2012). Herbart (2005) opines that a child coming from an environment where he/she receives parental support and lives harmoniously is more likely to be dictated by them. In such a scenario, a child’s occupational aspiration is most likely to be influenced by the parents’ profession. Equally, studies have shown that the career decision-making process is positively affected by an increase in the level of social support perceived by parents (Orhan *et al.*, 2021).

According to (Akosah-Twumasi *et al.*, 2018), children from these categories of the home will have differing attitudes towards work assuming that other influential variables are kept constant. Again, children from the third and fourth categories would mature vocationally earlier than children from the first and second categories. In addition to parental attitude towards work, parental occupation and education also impact strongly on the occupational choice of children. Children raised in a home dominated by a certain occupation are likely to be influenced by that occupation. Some families are noted for maintaining certain

occupations across several generations. A boy whose father and grandfathers, uncles and brothers are physicians or lawyers will invariably have different vocational interests from a boy raised in a family noted over the years as farmers, teachers, accountants, or labourers (Onyejiaku, 2001).

Hooley, (2012) remarks that “usually, social status is passed down from generation to generation, nevertheless one may not benefit by being exposed to many opportunities or on the other hand may not have the opportunity to recognize all the career options open to him/her”. He further explained that, even though one’s socio-economic status may have affected his career decision, many career-related decisions lie ahead. High aspiration and motivation to achieve will help one reach his/her goals.

## Gender

In discussing the issue of factors influencing career choice, the students’ and parents’ gender cannot be overruled. Gender is defined as roles, behaviours; and activities socially constructed which define the features that a particular society considers for men and women (Dewan, 2021). In addition, Shumbal & Naong (2012) defined gender as personality traits and manners a given society deems fitting for both sexes. Individuals of different sex in each society have work stereotypes in which they do not need to be engaged. This implies that the student’s gender can make for relative differences in the influence of these environmental factors (Fouad *et al.*, 2016).

In most parts of Nigeria, the cultural role expectations of men and women are known to be clearly defined. In an average Nigerian society, boys and girls often undergo different socialization experiences and they tend to learn different gender roles and behaviour patterns and hence develop different interests (Esuabana & Ekpang, 2016). These roles and interests later become the dominant factors in career choice. Each individual undertakes the process which is influenced by many factors, including the context in which they live, their personal aptitudes and educational attainment (Bandura *et al.*, 2001).

Correspondingly, Cheung *et al* (2013) reported that parents and teachers have more influence on girls than boys in terms of career choice. However, a study by Cheung and Arnold (2014) shows that mothers’ have a stronger influence on their children as compared to their fathers. Another fact proven by research is that children prefer to discuss their plans and choices with their mothers more as compared to their fathers (Muthukrishna & Sokoya, 2008).

## Parents’ Education

According to Akosah-Twumasi, *et al.* (2018), education plays a key part in how people make a career choice. Although some professions do not require formal education, opportunities are limited without the proper education. If one wishes to know which profession best fits his education, one has to look at some of the job adverts which will show all the educational background one needs to have to meet the requirements (Hewitt, 2010).

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

Similarly, parents’ education has been proven as a factor influencing career choice (Grissmer, 2003). The level of parental formal education is another factor that influences the vocational interests of children. Parental education level determines the amenities and the cultural level of the home. Research supports the position that parents’ education is linked with the student’s career choice. Literature reports that parents’

educational level is the most important factor in students' career decisions (Grissmer, 2003). The results uphold that parents are a child's first teacher, and thus they have the role of a guide, advisor and counsellor in their lives. Nyarko-Sampson (2013) explains that parents exert emotional pressure on their wards regarding their choice of careers. Parents armed with adequate education often make independent consultations regarding the career they think is most suitable for their children. Thus, with their level of income and exposure, they are better disposed to procure educational materials for their children and discuss job opportunities with them. Without a doubt, a child surrounded by good magazines, books, as well as intelligent discussions could be expected to develop different, and perhaps better, vocational interests than a child not exposed to those things

Sociologists like Sayickas (2002) believe that the level of parents, guardians and role models' education affects the student's career choice. They believe that the level of education for instance of one's parent will affect the type of career choice he makes. If parents and guardians are not well educated, then this will eventually limit the career choices of their children. Education background according to Hooley (2012) determines the socialization of an individual. The well-cultured and socialized class you are in, the well-informed and informed career choice you are likely to make (Sayickas, 2002).

### **Interests**

Suutari (2003), reports that several studies have indicated a positive relationship between interests and career choice. Interests are a person's likes and dislikes which are characterized by the Person's intensity of feelings about a subject or thing (Hooley, 2012). Interests are learned from parents, in schools, from friends, and lifelong experiences. For instance, when one engages in various activities he reacts with specific feelings or attitudes. Students continue to acquire interests throughout their lives and this in turn affects the reasoning and choices one makes including career choices (Hewitt, 2010).

Interest can change, as students experience life and meet more people; they become interested in new things and discard some of their old interests. They also develop more complex thinking and understanding processes, and may even seek new interests and activities with the hope of improving themselves and making life more exciting (Hewitt, 2010). As interest changes so does the career choice of a person change. Students seek a career that meets their interest at a particular time hence the career that they may have wished to take when they were younger is not what they eventually do.

According to Hewitt (2010), interest has become the most important determinant factor and measure of occupational choices. According to Sayickas (2002), interest inventories have been developed to help identify interests and relate them to careers and occupations. By measuring the interests of successful and satisfied people in an occupation, researchers have developed scales that compare the interests of individuals to the interests of people who are certain about what they want to do. It is believed that these occupational scales are effective in predicting career and occupational satisfaction. The next aspect of the factors that play a role in students' career choices is the values that are deeply rooted in their lives.

### **Anne Roe's Theory of Career Development**

Anne Roe's theory of career development was a needs approach in which genetics, childhood experiences, and the relationship with parents were considered significant in determining one's occupational choice (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996). Roe's view was that an individual needs to determine his/her level of interest and that occupation choice is a primary means of career satisfaction. Thus, her theory focuses on the relationship between occupation choice and personality. She emphasized that early childhood rearing practices in homes largely influence later career choices.

Anne Roe inspired by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, incorporated the psychological needs that develop out

of parent-child interactions in her conceptualization of personality. Anne Roe states that a person chooses their career based on their interaction with their parents (Roe, 1956). Roe believed that the way a child interacts with their parents and environment would lead them to pursue either personal-oriented or non-personal-oriented jobs (Roe & Lunneborg, 1990). Personal-oriented jobs have a high amount of interaction with other people. Non-personal-oriented jobs are more independent. The theory revealed that there is no single situation that is potentially so capable of giving some satisfaction to all levels of basic needs as the occupation. Roe suggested a personality approach to career choice based on the premise that a job satisfies an unconscious need (Roe, 1957). Thus, theory can be separated into two key areas: *theoretical aspects of personality* and *classification of occupations*. Inspired by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Roe incorporated the psychological needs that develop out of parent-child interactions in her conceptualization of personality (Roe, 1956). Roe (1956) classified parent-child interaction patterns into three categories, each with two subcategories: (a) Emotional concentration on the child, further classified as being overprotective or over-demanding; (b) Avoidance of the child, further classified as emotional rejection or neglect; and (c) Acceptance of the child, further classified as casual or loving.

Roe's interest in parent-child interactions led to the development of the Parent-Child Relations Questionnaire and its revision as a means of accurately assessing such interactions. Out of parent-child interactions, Roe thought that children went on to develop an orientation either toward or not toward people. Hence, Roe was dissatisfied with existing classification systems for occupations, including the benchmark Dictionary of Occupational Titles (Tinsley, 1997). To compare the individual to a full spectrum of occupations, Roe developed a comprehensive classification system that would allow her to engage her inquiry. The result was a two-dimensional, eight-by-six classification system with eight categories of occupations (service, business contact, organization, technology, outdoor, science, general culture, and arts and entertainment) and six levels (professional and managerial, levels 1 and 2; semi-professional and small business, level 3; skilled, level 4; semiskilled, level 5; and unskilled, level 6) within each category.

The eight occupational groups were propounded by Roe (1957) when she saw that occupations could be arranged along a continuum based on the intensity and nature of the interpersonal relationships involved in the occupational activities and in an order that would have contiguous groups more alike than non-contiguous ones.

**Service:** These occupations are primarily concerned with serving and attending to the needs and welfare of other persons. This group includes occupations such as social work, guidance, domestic and protective services. The important element is a situation in which one person is doing something for the other (examples, Counsellor, Social Workers, and Police Personnel).

**Business Contact:** These occupations are primarily concerned with the face-to-face sale of commodities, investments, real estate and services. The person to person relation is important, but it is focused on persuasion to a course of action, rather than on helping. The persuader will profit if his or her advice is followed (Salesman, Public Relations Officers, Brokers, and Insurance Agent).

**Organization:** These are the managerial and white-collar jobs in business, industry and government. The occupation is concerned primarily with the organization and efficient functioning of commercial enterprises and of Govt. activities. The quality of person to person interaction is very formal (Industrialists, Bankers, Financial Executives, and Cashiers).

**Technology:** This group includes occupations concerned with the production, maintenance and transportation of commodities and utilities. Hence there are occupations in engineering, crafts, and the machine trades, as well as in transportation and communication. Interpersonal relations are of relatively little importance and the focus is on dealing with things (Ship Captains, Chief Engineers, Applied Scientists



among other).

**Outdoor:** This group includes the occupations primarily concerned with the cultivation, preservation and gathering of crops, marine or inland water resources, mineral resources, forest products and other natural resources and with animal husbandry. Interpersonal relations are largely irrelevant. Because of the increasing mechanization of some of these occupations a number of jobs previously classified in this group have moved to group-4. For example: Consulting Specialists, Architects, Scientists, and Forest Rangers.

**Science:** These are the occupations primarily concerned with scientific theory and its application under specified circumstances other than technology (Research Scientists, Medical Specialists, and Medical Technicians).

**General Culture:** Some occupations are primarily concerned with the preservation and transmission of the general cultural heritage. Hence, interest is in human activities rather than in individual persons. Most elementary and high school teachers are placed in this group. At higher levels, teachers are placed in groups by subject matter e.g. teachers of science or of art or of humanities (Justice of Supreme and High court, Lawyers, and Teachers, among others (Tinsley, 1997).

**Arts and entertainment:** These occupations are primarily concerned with the use of special skills in the creative arts and in the field of entertainment. Both creators and performers are included here (Roe, 1956).

Roe pioneered that the use of a two dimensional occupational classification using fields and levels (Roe & Lunneborg, 1990). A student is then classified into eight categories and six levels based on the interaction they had with their parents as a child. The impact of Roe's theory has been realized across the various facets of activities of career development professionals such as teaching, counselling, placement, and research. Roe's classification system has proven particularly useful to career counsellors in the influence it has had in the development of career assessment instruments and in its overall contribution to the mapping of the world of work. Also, the theory helps career counsellors in assisting students from disturbed families on career choice. Additionally, it helps the career counsellor to make parents understand the effects of their behaviour toward their children and the kind of environment they create at home on their children's career choices and success.

## METHODOLOGY

The study used a mixed-methods approach (Quantitative and Qualitative) to generate its data. The use of more than a single method in this study is to gain a comprehensive and deeper insights into the mechanisms through which parents influence student career choices and to explore the possible consequences that may not be reported through quantitative means alone..

### Participants

A sample of 500 senior secondary school two (SSII) students drawn from 130 senior secondary schools during the 2022/2023 academic session were purposively selected as participants for the study. The selection of senior secondary school two (SSII) students was based on the fact that it is a most stable class with well-equipped career knowledge and the most likely stage of career decision making.

### Instrument

The study adopted standardised Family Influence Scale (FIS) developed by Fouad et al. (2010) to assess individuals' perceptions of the level of influences their families had on their career decision making. The scale was modified to have two subscales: parents' occupation and family income. It was titled "Home

Background Career Choice Influence Scale” (HBCCIS). Additionally, the study equally employed in-depth interview schedule to supplement the HBCCIS. It was structured in open ended questions with probes to substantiate the responses from the students. The HBCCIS was validated by two experts of guidance and counseling from Adamu Augie College of Education, Argungu, Kebbi State. These experts checked the face and content validity of the instrument. Observations and suggestions raised were incorporated for improvement during the final draft of the instrument. The instrument was subjected to a pilot study in order to determine its reliability, and a co-efficient value of 0.82 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha formula.

### Data Collection and Analysis

“HBCCIS” and in-depth interview were administered to students in each of the sampled schools after relevant orientations were conducted for students based on how to respond to the questions. A total of 250 students responded through HBCCIS and another 250 students responded through the interview. The data collected through the application of HBCCIS was analysed using the descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation while the qualitative data generated through the in-depth interviews were analysed through descriptive analysis and the data were organised according to themes as it was structured in the interview schedules.

in order to provide answers to the research questions, while inferential statistics of t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

1. To what extent do parents’ occupational backgrounds influence the career choice of students in secondary school Kebbi in State?

Table 1: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Students’ Responses on the Influence of Parents’ Occupational Background on their Career Choices

S/N	ITEMS	N		SD	Decision
1	My parents’ success in their career helped me choose my career	250	2.9	1.15	Agree
2	I chose my career after my parents’ occupation because they shared their occupation information with me	250	2.5	1.09	Agree
3	My family’s occupational preference affects my choice of career	250	2.7	1.91	Agree
4	My parents expects me to make a career choice that favours’ my family occupation trend	250	2.5	1.06	Agree
5	My parent occupation does not interfere with my choice of career	250	3.2	1.00	Agree
	<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.8</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Decision Mean = 2.5

In line with research question one, table 1 shows the mean scores and standard deviation of students’ responses on the influence of parents’ occupational background on their career choices. From table 1, students’ responses on all the item statements revealed mean scores of between 2.5 and above indicating that their parents’ occupation does interfere with their choice of career. Generally, table 1 reveals the grand mean score of 2.8 which is greater than the decision mean score of 2.5. This implies that majority of the sampled secondary school students in Kebbi State have agreed that their parents’ occupational backgrounds influences students’ career choice significantly.

2. To what extent do parents' income levels influence the career choice of students in secondary school in Kebbi State?

Table 2: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Students' Responses on the Influence of Parents' Income Level on their Career Choices

S/N	ITEMS	N		SD	Decision
1	My family would like me to avoid certain careers because they do not have the needed financial support	250	2.5	1.19	Agree
2	I would not get additional education that will match my career choice after high school, because my family would not provide financial support	250	2.7	1.07	Agree
3	My family income level negatively influenced my choice of career	250	2.5	1.06	Agree
4	My parents income level positively affects my choice of career	250	2.9	1.12	Agree
5	My family income status does not influence my occupational choice	250	3.0	1.07	Agree
	<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.7</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Decision Mean = 2.5

With reference to research question two, table 2 shows the mean scores and standard deviation of students' responses on the influence of parents' income levels on their career choices. From table 2, students' responses on all the item statements revealed mean scores of between 2.5 and above indicating that their parents' income level does influence with their choice of career. Summarily, table 2 reveals a grand mean score of 2.7 which is greater than the decision mean score of 2.5. This implies that majority of the sampled secondary school students in Kebbi State have agreed that their parents' income levels has significant influences their career choice.

**H<sub>01</sub>**: There is no significant difference between male and female students regarding the influence of parents' gender on the choice of career in secondary schools in Kebbi State.

Table 3: t-test Result of Male and Female Students on the Influence of Parents' Gender on their Choice of Career

Gender	N	df	SD	t-value	P-value	Decision
Male	137		63.35	1.08		
		248		0.19	0.03 <sup>S</sup>	Rejected
Female	111		48.29	.91		

Table 3 shows the independent sampled t-test result of male and female students in secondary schools in Kebbi State on the influence of parents' gender on their choice of career. From Table 3,  $t = 0.19$  and  $p\text{-value} = 0.03$ , and since  $p < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference in the mean scores of male and female students regarding the influence of parents' gender on secondary schools students' career choice in Kebbi State.

## **THEME: OPINIONS OF STUDENTS REGARDING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN PARENTS' OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUNDS AND CAREER CHOICE IN KEBBI STATE**

### **How Parents Occupation Information Influences Students Career Choices**

When students were asked if parents' occupation information influences their career choices, they responded yes. When the students were further asked to explain how parents occupation information influences their choice of career. 243 out of the 250 students interviewed strongly linked their career choices to the discussion they had with their parents about their practicing careers. A respondent from Government Girls Comprehensive Secondary School Aliero had explained further that:

*She wish to attend a college of nursing science and become a nurse after her secondary education. She further expressed that her ambition of becoming a nurse was conceived via discussions with her mom who also is a serving nurse. This motivated her to enrol in science class. That her mother do tell her good things about nursing job and she always encouraged her to give attention to her studies, pass her senior secondary exams, get the needed requirement and enrol in the college of nursing science. In fact, it was through several career interactions with my mom that I decided to pursue a nursing career (Student, 18 years old, Female, SS II Class).*

### **How Parents Influenced Students to Take-Up a Career in Line with the Family Occupation Trend**

When students were asked if their parents want them to pick up a career in line with a particular family occupation trend, they responded yes. When students were asked to explain how this parents wish has influenced their choice of career. 247 out of the 250 students interviewed attested to the fact that their would have wish them to pick up a career that is largely practiced in their respective families. According to a respondent from Nagari College Birnin Kebbi:

*The career he is pursuing currently was imposed on him by his parents. That it was not the career of his interest. That, the parents mounted pressure until he sucome to their demand which ended up with him picking up a career within the few career opportunities practiced by his family. He expressed further that, although this is against his wish of becoming a pilot, he was enrolled in art class so that he will acquire the needed requirements for a profession in Law, the profession that is significantly practiced among his family. He wishes that his parent will allow him the opportunity to pursue his dream career, which is becoming a pilot (Student, 17 years old, Male, SS II Class).*

### **How Family Occupational Preferences Affects Students Choices of Career**

When students were asked if parents occupational preferences influences their career choices, a greater number of them responded with a yes. When asked further to explain how parents occupational preferences influences their choice of career. 213 out of the 250 students interviewed revealed that the occupational preferences of parents significantly influence students career choices. One of students who responded to this question from Abarshi Day Secondary School Yauri had expressed that:

*As a young adult he has never taken a decision by himself, his parents and senior siblings does on his behalf. Since it has been his parents deciding for him, he is sure that his parents might have decided the career for him to pursue. The parent enrolled him in school and insisted that the school should place him in a science class. Although his parents are yet to inform him about their career decision, however he presumed that the parents would have wish he pursue medical line. Nevertheless, his dream career is teaching at the university level, and by all indications he may not accomplish his dream career (Student, 17 years old, Male, SS II Class).*

Based on the responses received from the students interviewed it was established that parents occupational background largely influences secondary school student career choices in Kebbi State

## **THEME: OPINIONS OF STUDENTS REGARDING THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' INCOME LEVELS ON THE CAREER CHOICE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KEBBI STATE**

### **How Parents' Income Level Influenced Secondary School Students Career**

When students were asked if parents' income levels has any influence on their career choices, the students unanimously attested and responded with a yes. When they were asked to describe further how their parents income affects their respective career choices, the students have indicated that it is affecting them both negatively and positively. A student from Government Girls Secondary School Bunza had explained that:

*Her parents specifically told her to avoid certain careers because they do not have the needed financial capacity to support her. As a result of which she had to forget pursuing her dream career because of her parent's financial limitations (Student, 16 years old, Female, SS II Class).*

Another respondent from Mama Arziiki Government Secondary School Senchi lamented that:

*He will not be able to pursue his dream career because his family would not be able to provide the needed financial support. As a result, he has resolved to pursue other profession which requires minimal cost, primarily due to financial constraint of his family (Student, 17 years old, Male, SS II Class).*

However, one of the students interviewed from Sama Secondary School Argungu has expressed his delight with the level of support he is receives from his family so far. This has given him the courage to pursue his dream career in architech (Student, 18 years old, Male, SS II Class).

Base on the response received, it is clear to affirm that the career choice of most secondary school students is influenced either negatively or positively by the income level of their parents. Students who come from a well to do families are most likely to accomplish their dreams due to family support than students from a low income families. Most of students from low income homes forcefully switches career due to financial constraints of their parents, who could not be able to support their children career expectations.

## **DISCUSSION**

The result of research question one, which assessed the influence of parents' occupational backgrounds on the career choice of secondary schools students in Kebbi State. The finding is in agreement with the finding of Udoh and Sanni (2012), which discovered that parents' occupations have significant influence on the career choice of secondary school students in Uyo LGA. That is to say, students who came from a certain job-oriented family were more likely to follow the occupation of their Parents, especially as fathers were found to have more influence on students' career choice than other family members. The finding also agreed with the submission of Amani and Mkumbo (2015), which maintained that parents' occupation is a catalyst for most undergraduate students' career choice in Tanzania. On the contrary, this finding is not in consonance with Egbo (2012), which indicated that perceptions of parental occupational satisfaction will not have effects on the career aspiration of adolescents based on certain intervening variables such as sex and type of school. This is possibly the reason for the usual mismatch between what students are interested in and the family expectation.

The result of research question two revealed that parents income levels has significant influence on the career choice of secondary school students in Kebbi State. In agreement with this finding, Amani and

Mkumbo (2015) had reported that parents' socio-economic status and level of income have a significant effect on career choice of their children. This is evident in countries like Nigeria where students who wish to further their education may need to be economically stable at the family level to be able to finance their higher education. It is also in line with the finding of Sharma (2016) discovered that career choices are often parents' choice based and not individual choice based. Equally, Chukwu *et al.* (2022) reported that Parents with a good income have every opportunity to enrol their children in high quality schools which has effect on their career choices. Hence, it can be said that parents' income level influences career-related decisions of secondary school students in Kebbi State.

The outcome of hypothesis one shows that there is significant difference in the mean scores of male and female students regarding the influence of parents' gender on secondary schools students' career choice in Kebbi State. This finding differs with Chukwu *et al.* (2022) whose study discovered that there is no significant difference regarding the influence of parents' gender on career choice between male and female students in secondary schools in Aba North, Abia State. On the contrary Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) discovered that girls are more inclined towards their mothers' career choices and so are boys taking career after their fathers' occupations too. In the same way, the finding is in consonance with Eremie & Okwulehie (2018) which maintained that mothers usually exert greater influence during their children's high school years and fathers seem influential in college aged children's decision making. Amani and Mkumbo (2015) found out that fathers have more influence on students' career choice than other family members.

## CONCLUSION

From the child's development to character formation and career processes, parents are much more likely play a part. Based on the finding of the study, it is clear to affirm that the influence of parents' socioeconomic variables especially parents' occupation as well as their income levels on secondary school students' career choice is significant. In light of this, the researcher thus conclude that parents influence is very effective on secondary school students career choice since the parents transfer their occupational experiences, give financial support and give help during tough times in terms of career and other issues to their children. Hence, parents' socio-economic status is key factors in career-related decisions of students in secondary schools in Kebbi State.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were given:

1. Considering the influence of parents on career choice of their children, parents are encourage to seek the help of professional career counsellors in order to guide their children to making intelligent career decisions.
2. Considering the dynamics nature of jobs and the economic systems, there is need for school guardian and counselling officers to guide students in secondary school to make positive and realistic career choices in line with parents' income levels for sustainability.
3. Parents should be equipped with adequate vocational information so that they may be free of sentiments and able to sensitively guide their children in making a well informed decision about their future careers.

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