Career information processing strategies of secondary school students in Osun State (Nigeria)

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Abstract

This study examined the strategies commonly adopted by Osun state secondary school students in processing career information. It specifically examined the sources of career information available to the students, the uses to which the students put the information collected and how their career decision making skills can be improved, leading to more appropriate career choices. Two hundred students selected by proportionate stratified random sampling from four secondary schools which were randomly selected from the three senatorial district of Osun state participated in the study. Data were collected using a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Questionnaire for exploring career information processing (QEIP)". The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-test, chi-square analysis, Kruskal wallis H test and Analysis of Variance. The results indicated that the largest percentage of the students chose accounting/banking, closely followed by medicine, engineering, law and nursing. The most prevalent means by which the students gather career information is through role models, information they obtain from school and parents. Socio-demographic variables of age and sex did not affect students' patronage of these sources. The study also shows that only information collected from parents and their school counsellor bore any positive relationship with their choice of career. The study recommends career guidance collaboration between school counsellors and parents. It also recommends that more frequent career development programmes like career days and/or talks, job shadowing, role modeling and the like should be included in secondary school curriculum

Keywords: Career information, information processing, career guidance, secondary school students**,** Osun State, Nigeria

Introduction

Well planned and well organised career guidance services are becoming increasingly important in human resource development programmes. In many countries, efforts are focused on implementing lifelong learning strategies, as well as policies to encourage the development of citizens' employability. Such strategies and policies require citizens to have the skills to manage their own education and employment. They require all citizens to have access to high quality information and advice about education, training and work (OECD 2004).

Career decision making is a dynamic and ongoing process in which the knowledge of oneself, one's values, interests, temperament, financial needs, physical work requirements or limitations, the effects of past experiences, new information, and changes in one's life situation and environment all play significant roles. It requires constant review of decisions already made and consideration of decisions yet to be made.

In fact, Crite (1974) asserts that the main goal of facilitating effective career decision is the unifying theme among the major theories of career development. Consequently, Makinde and Alao (1987) have posited that the role of the counsellor in career decision making is that of a facilitator rather than that of a "decision taker". The counsellor does not restrict him/herself to helping solve just a single decision making problem, but rather to assists the client in solving the problem in a manner that is conducive to the client's acquisition of decision making skills that could be productively applied to other decision making issues in the future.

In Nigeria, the major contribution of secondary education to career development of the individual seems to be career exploration, that is, the process of finding a rewarding career path, as well as specific jobs within a particular career path. At this stage the counsellor's role ranges from communicating a broad definition of career, expanding, focusing, or transferring interests, abilities, and/or experience in order to identify a realistic list of occupational alternatives, defining search characteristics that are likely to identify satisfying options, to creating, implementing and updating an action plan that moves toward identified career goals and helping to integrate personal and family concerns into career planning.

Career education is increasingly included in the curriculum at lower secondary school level, either as a separate subject or included in another subject. However, it is included in widely differing ways, and at times these seem designed to suit the organizational needs of the school rather than the career development needs of the student. Often career education has little connection to the wider school curriculum (OECD 2004). It is often assumed that upper secondary

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students have made specific educational and career choices and that they do not need further support. This assumption is especially made for students in vocational education pathways. In many countries they receive significantly less career assistance than students in general education pathways. This takes little account of the increasing flexibility that is included in upper secondary vocational education programmes, or of the wide range of career options and jobs that can flow from broadly designed vocational education and training.

According to Makinde and Alao (1987) most of what goes on in career intervention is largely information gathering, processing, dissemination and management. They claim that career information embodies all information related to the world of work that can be useful in the process of career development, and that such information may encompass educational information, occupational information, career-pattern and psycho-social information. While educational information may include all the valid and usable data about all types of present and future educational and training opportunities and requirements, occupational information may include valid and usable data on such issues as employment prospects, entry qualification, nature of work, conditions of service, training opportunities, labour market trends, etc. Psychosocial information describes the psychological and social environment in a job situation such as data on interaction amongst workers in the job setting, status of workers in various occupations, adjustment patterns and problems in various occupations.

Inadequate information or inappropriate dissemination, processing or at least use of career information may lead to aberrative work practices like job dissatisfaction, career frustration, apathy to work, etc. (Makinde and Alao 1987; Cooper and Marshall 1976).

Processing is a term that is commonly used to describe the practice of converting inputs (tangible or intangible) into output which may also be tangible or intangible. Also, within the cognitive family, there is an important set of goals called information processing (Mohan 2007). Information processing can be thought of as the way people gather and organise information from the environment in order to form a useful pattern that can be used to explain and predict events in their experience (FLT 2010). Information processing goals focus on the acquisition of knowledge through an analysis of information from the world around us. They are aimed at intellectual growth achieved by students' active investigation of their environment rather than emotional or social development of the individual. Joyce and Weil (1972) in Mohan (2007) define information processing as "the way in which people handle stimuli from the environment, organize data, sense problems, generate concepts and solutions to problems and employ verbal and non-verbal symbols".

Most information theories view human beings as information processing systems, which take in information from the environment, process it, and then output information to the environment in the form of movement. The theory is based on the proposition that humans process the information they receive, rather than merely responding to stimuli. Many cognitive processes are involved between the reception of a stimulus and the response of the individual; these include stimulus identification, storage and retrieval of information.

In Nigeria, many youths go into unsuitable careers as a result of ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, advice from friends, parents and teachers or as a result of the prestige attached to certain jobs without adequate vocational guidance and career counselling (Salami 1999). Issa and Nwalo (2010) found that, consequently, many of them are unsuited for their careers as they usually find themselves in jobs where they could not satisfy their value needs, thereby constituting a nuisance to themselves and their employers.

In order to nip this problems in the bud, the need arises to explore how young Nigerians are prepared for their careers, how they obtain career information, the way they put this information into use and how these pieces of information are employed in the course of making decisions with regard to choosing a life-long career. Given the need to explore and study the approaches adopted by Nigerian students to obtain, process and use career information, this study responded to five research questions. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide this study viz:

- What is the pattern of potential career choice among the students in south western Nigeria?
- What are the sources of career information available to students in secondary schools in south western part of Nigeria?
- To what uses do the students put career information gathered?
- How can students' career decision making skills be improved?
- What contribution can a counsellor make to career information provision, processing and decision-making of secondary school students in South western Nigeria?

The hypotheses are as follows:

- There is no significant relationship between the sources of career information and students' choice of career.
- There is no significant difference in the students' approach to gathering career information on the basis of their gender.
- There is no significant difference in the students approach to gathering career information on the basis of their age

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. Two hundred secondary school students participated in the study. Four schools were randomly selected from the secondary schools available in the three senatorial districts of Osun state. Also, fifty students were selected from each of the schools by proportionate stratified random sampling of 10 students from JS II, III SSI, II and III (other categories of secondary school students excluding the freshly admitted ones). The JS I students are fresh secondary school students and were not sampled because it was believed that they were just coming into secondary education and may still exhibit career fantasy.

The instrument used for data collection in this study is a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Questionnaire for exploring career information processing (QEIP)". It consists of two main sections. Section I consists of items designed to obtain socio-demographic information from the respondents such as age, sex, choice of career, and so on. The second part, consisting of four subsections, was designed to obtain information concerning the source of career information available to the respondents (Subsection 2a), the uses s/he puts these pieces of information to (Subsection 2b), how the career decision making of students be improved (Subsection 2c) and what counsellors can do to facilitate their career information processing and decision making (Subsection D).

In subsection 2a, possible sources of career information were presented to the respondents and they were asked to indicate how often they obtain career information from each of them. The alternatives include most of the times, sometimes, rarely, never and don't know. They were scored 3, 2, 1 and 0 (for both never and don't know). In subsection 2b, some possible uses of career information were presented to the respondents and they were asked to indicate their level of agreement ranging across strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagreed. They were scored 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. Filter items were included and their scoring was transposed. Subsection 2c presents different ways by which career decision making processes can be improved and the students were asked to indicate their level of agreement by indicating strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. They were also scored 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. Filter items were also included and their scoring was transposed. Finally Section 2d of the questionnaire suggested areas in which counsellors can contribute to career information processing and decision making among secondary school students including some filter items. The respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement as earlier stated and scored in a similar manner.

In order to validate the instruments, 50 copies of the questionnaire were administered on students in a school that did not actually participate in the study. They were scored as earlier enumerated and the validity was obtained using Cronbach's alpha determination and the scree plot of its factor analysis. These were done to ensure unidimensionality among the items. An instrument is said to be unidimensional and valid if there is a single dominant first factor; this was the case for the instrument. This has been said to be the central determinant of an internally consistent instrument (Santos 1999). To assess reliability, the resulting responses were used to obtain the internal consistency reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha = 0.91 and split-half =0.89).

Data collected for the study were scored and coded into Microsoft Excel and SPSS for appropriate computer analysis. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in regard to the prevalent career choices, sources of career information, uses of career information and how counsellors can help improve career decision making. To determine prevalence in all these cases, the Relative Significance Index (RSI) was utilised as a measure of prevalence earlier used in prevalence studies (e.g. Adebowale and Ojo 2009; Hart, Calver and Dickman 2002; Kometa, Olomolaiye, and Harris 1994)). Furthermore, t-test, chi-square analysis, Kruskal wallis H test and Analysis of Variance were employed to test the hypotheses. Of the two hundred copies of the questionnaire circulated, only 184 copies were used as others were either not returned, defaced or incompletely filled.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the pattern of potential career choice among the students in south western Nigeria? To answer this research question, item 3 of the questionnaire concerning the choice of career the student will like to undertake in future was given a descriptive analysis. The result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Pattern of students' potential career choice N = 184

	Frequency	Percent
No response	13	7.1
Accounting/Accountancy/Banking	57	31.0
Manager/Administrator	4	2.1

Air force	2	1.1
Architecture	2	1.0
Fine art	1	.5
Builder	1	.5
Business	7	3.8
Civil servant	1	.5
Engineering	15	8.0
Geographer	2	1.1
Gospel musician	1	.5
Lawyer	13	7.1
Lecturer	2	1.1
Marketing	3	1.6
Masscom	5	2.7
Medical doctor	33	17.8
Nursing	12	6.5
Phamacy	3	1.6
Police	4	2.2
Shoes maker	1	.5
Surveyor	1	.5
Teacher	1	.5
Total	184	100.0

From Table 1, it can be seen that the most popular career potentially chosen by the secondary students is accounting/ banking. This was chosen by 31% of the respondents; closely following in terms of popularity is medicine (becoming a medical doctor) which was identified by 17.8%, engineering (8%), law (7.1%) and nursing (6.5%). Only 0.5% of the respondents (each) chose teaching, surveyor, fine and creative arts, building and shoemaking. Even teaching at the tertiary level, referred to as "lecturing" attracted only 1.1% of the respondents.

Research Question 2: What are the sources of career information available to students in secondary schools?
To answer this research question, Section A of the questionnaire was given a descriptive analysis and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Sources of career information available to students in secondary schools

	D		**SD**		**I**		**A**		**SA**		**NR**		**RSI**
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Internet	40	21.7	33	17.9	8	4.3	74	40.2	29	15.8	1	0	0.6207
School counsellor	29	15.8	37	20.4	15	8.2	42	22.8	60	32.6	1	0.5	0.6696
Role model	16	8.7	13	7.1	21	11.4	78	42.4	55	29.9	1	0.5	0.7522
Parents	24	13.0	16	8.7	18	9.8	56	30.4	69	37.5	1	0.5	0.7380
Peer group	31	16.8	24	13.0	18	9.8	73	39.7	38	20.7	1	0	0.6685
School	22	12.0	17	9.2	12	6.5	67	36.4	65	35.3	1	0.5	0.7446
Radio & TV	23	12.5	25	13.6	20	10.9	58	31.5	57	31	1	0.5	0.7065
Seminar	21	11.4	29	15.8	22	12.0	68	37.0	43	23.4	1	0.5	0.6870
Youth conference	25	13.6	27	14.7	16	8.7	56	30.4	57	31.0	3	1.6	0.6913
Others	37	20.1	37	20.1	22	12.0	48	26.1	36	19.6	4	2.2	0.5967

Table 2 above shows that the most prevalent means by which the students gather career information is through role models, which has the highest value of RSI (Relative Significant Index) of 0.7522. The table also shows that beside role models, the next prevalent means are school and parents, with the RSI values of 0.7446 and 0.7380 respectively. The least prevalent means is through others (other meaning apart from the ones mentioned in the questionnaire) with the RSI of 0.5967, the Internet and peer group with the RSI of 0.6207 and 0.6685 respectively.

Research Question 3: To what uses do the students commonly put career information gathered?
To answer this research question, section B of the questionnaire was given a descriptive analysis. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Uses of career information by students

	SD		**D**		**I**		**A**		**SA**		**NR**		**RSI**
	F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	
Getting enlightened on the kind of profession to engage in later in life.	9	4.9	11	6.0	12	6.5	72	39.1	79	42.9	1	.5	0.8152
To know the salary level	28	15.2	30	16.3	19	10.3	57	31.0	49	26.9	1	.5	0.6717
To engage in career which is in line with the interest	13	7.1	15	8.2	14	7.6	83	45.1	57	31.0	2	1.1	0.7630
To enlighten them more on the requirements needed for their career choice.	14	7.6	9	4.9	19	10.3	81	44.0	60	32.6	1	.5	0.775
Enable them to be more focus on what is to be achieved.	12	6.5	15	8.2	22	12.0	57	31.0	78	42.4	0	0	0.7891
To determine the condition of service in the career of interest	15	8.2	19	10.3	21	11.4	74	40.2	55	29.9	0	0	0.7467

Table 3 above shows the uses to which students put career information. The most prevalent use is getting enlightened on the kind of profession to engage in later in life; it has an RSI of 0.8152. The next most prevalent is enabling students to be more focused on what is to be achieved, with an RSI of 0.7891. The least prevalent use of career information to students is to know the salary level, which has an RSI of 0.6717. The other less prevalent use is to determine the conditions of service in the career interest, with an RSI of 0.775.

Research Question 4: How can students' career decision making skills be improved?
To answer this research question, Section C of the questionnaire was given a descriptive analysis and the result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Ways of improving students' career decision making skills

	D		SD		I		A		SA		NR		RSI
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Through career talk	8	4.3	8	4.3	10	5.4	65	35.3	93	50.5	0	0	0.8467
By organizing career day in school	13	7.1	9	4.9	24	13.0	87	47.3	50	27.2	1	.5	0.7620
By relating and discussing with people whp have achieved in ones desired line of career	8	4.3	17	9.2	20	10.9	72	39.1	67	36.4	0	0	0.7880
Constantly relating with ones school counselor for career enlightenment	29	15.8	17	9.2	19	10.3	68	37.0	51	27.7	0	0	0.7033
Attending career seminars, conference and career trips	17	9.2	25	13.6	18	9.8	68	37.0	53	28.8	3	1.6	0.7152
By putting students in real life situations which would prompt them to make decision	19	10.3	12	6.5	30	16.3	60	32.6	63	34.2	0	0	0.7478
Being male or female determines the kind of career decision to make	26	14.1	30	16.3	19	10.3	47	25.5	61	33.2	1	.5	0.6913

Decision making ability is affected by age	34	18.5	29	15.8	29	15.8	57	31.0	33	17.9	2	1.1	0.6217
Allowing students to think for themselves	13	7.1	14	7.6	27	14.7	71	38.6	57	31.0	2	1.1	0.7514
Allowing students to make some minor decisions without being influence	28	15.2	15	8.2	23	12.5	63	34.2	54	29.3	1	.5	0.7054

Table 4 above shows the students' suggestions on the ways by which their career decision making can be improved. The most prevalent means identified by the respondents is through career talk which has the RSI value of 0.8467, closely followed by relating and discussing with people who have achieved in ones desired line of career and by organizing career day in schools with the RSI of 0.7880 and 0.7620 respectively.

Research Question 5: What contribution can counsellors make to career information provision, processing and decision-making of secondary school students in South western Nigeria?.

To answer this research question, section D of the questionnaire was given a descriptive analysis and the result is presented in Table 5.

Table 5 The contributions counsellors can make to career information provision, processing and decision-making of secondary school students

	D		**SD**		**indiff**		**A**		**SA**		**NR**		**RSI**
	F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	
Widen the scope of career information which the students are exposed to	16	8.7	13	7.1	14	7.6	60	32.6	79	42.9	2	1.1	0.7815
Providing useful and purposeful information		1.6	11	6.0	17	9.2	79	42.9	73	39.7	1	.5	0.8228
Exposing students to the realities of labour market conditions	23	12.5	27	14.7	22	12.0	62	33.7	48	26.1	2	1.1	0.6859
Enabling students to know what is actually needed in the world of work	7	3.8	9	4.9	20	10.9	77	41.8	69	37.5	2	1.1	0.8022
Confirming their choice of career with its requirements	14	7.6	16	8.7	30	16.3	62	33.7	62	33.7	0	0	0.7843
Help on my choice of career	12	6.5	18	9.8	18	9.8	56	30.4	79	42.9	1	.5	0.7837
Help to develop good study habit	8	4.3	16	8.7	25	13..6	64	34.8	70	38.0	1	.5	0.7837
Help to develop decision making skills	13	7.1	13	7.1	23	12.5	62	33.7	72	39.1	1	.5	0.7848
Dismissing myths like Gender determines the kind of career one chooses	18	9.8	31	16.8	21	11.4	58	31.5	55	29.9	1	.5	0.7065
Making students realize that they would be responsible for their decision	15	8.2	18	9.8	18	9.8	68	37.0	63	34.2	2	1.1	0.7522

Table 5 above shows the contributions counselor can make to career information provision and decision making skills of students, the most prevalent among which is providing useful and purposeful information to make a better decision; this has the highest RSI, 0.8228. The next prevalent means are through enabling the students to know what is actually needed in the world of work and helping them develop effective decision making skills; these have an RSI of 0.8022 and 0.7848 respectively.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the sources of career information and students choice of career.

To test this hypothesis a cross-tabulation of the number of those who reported using each of the sources for obtaining career information and those who do not, were cross-tabulated with their reported choices. The chi-square statistics were also obtained and the result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6 Relationship between the sources of career information and students choice of career

	Internet			**School cousellor**			**Role model**			**Parents**			**Peer groups**			**Subject teachers**			**TV and radio programme**			**Seminar/ workshops**			**Youth conference**		
Vocation	Non-users	Users	Total	Non-users	Users	Total	Non-users	Users	Total	Non-users	Users	Total	Non-users	Users	Total	Non-users	Users	Total	Non-users	Users	Total	Non-users	Users	Total	Non-users	Users	Total
Management & Accounting services	22	42	64	26	38	64	26	38	64	24	40	64	24	40	64	17	47	64	28	36	64	26	38	64	26	38	64
Health services	24	24	48	16	32	48	8	40	48	7	41	48	21	27	48	14	34	48	14	34	48	18	30	48	15	33	48
Business	5	3	8	3	5	8	2	6	8	2	6	8	2	6	8	2	6	8	3	5	8	4	4	8	4	4	8
Force	3	3	6	2	4	6	1	5	6	4	2	6	3	3	6	0	6	6	4	2	6	4	2	6	4	2	6
Construction	0	6	6	4	2	6	2	4	6	4	2	6	1	5	6	0	6	6	1	5	6	2	4	6	1	5	6
Art	5	2	7	5	2	7	2	5	7	3	4	7	4	3	7	4	3	7	5	2	7	4	3	7	5	2	7
Law	8	5	13	11	2	13	4	9	13	4	9	13	6	7	13	4	9	13	5	8	13	6	7	13	4	9	13
Lecturing/ Teaching	1	2	3	3	0	3	0	3	3	3	0	3	3	0	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Civil service	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1
Engineering	8	7	15	5	10	15	4	11	15	4	11	15	3	12	15	3	12	15	4	11	15	4	11	15	4	11	15
Total	77	94	171	75	96	171	49	122	171	55	116	171	67	104	171	45	126	171	65	106	171	69	102	171	65	106	171
Chi-square	14.582			20.237			10.062			21.758			11.572			8.802			10.519			5.229			10.941		
Significance level	0.103			0.016			0.345			0.010			0.239			0.456			0.310			0.814			0.280		

Table 5 shows the test of the relation between the sources reportedly used by students for obtaining career information and their vocational choices. It can be seen from the table that most of these sources are not significantly related (P-values were generally greater than 0.05) to the choices the students make in terms of their career. However, in the case of the use of counsellors as a source of career information, the chi-square value obtained was 20.237 at P = 0.016. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the use of counsellors as a source of career information is related to students' choice of careers. Also in the case of obtaining information from parents, the chi-square value obtained was 21.758 at P = 0.010. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it can be also concluded that the use of parents as a source of career information is related to students' choice of careers

Hypothesis 2A: There is no significant difference in the students approach to gathering career information on the basis of their gender

To test this hypothesis, the number of students who chose/did not choose a career were subjected to non-parametric test of difference (Mann-Whitney U test) on the basis of their gender groups as the differentiating variable. The result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6 Test of difference in the students approach to gathering career information on the basis of their gender

	Sex	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Internet	Male	94	95.79	9004.00		
	Female	87	85.83	7467.00		
	Total	181			3639.000	.182
School counsellor	Male	94	94.19	8853.50		
	Female	87	87.56	7617.50		
	Total	181			3789.500	.381
Role model	Male	94	95.81	9006.00		
	Female	87	85.80	7465.00		
	Total	181			3637.000	.175
Parents	Male	94	91.89	8638.00		
	Female	87	90.03	7833.00		
	Total	181			4005.000	.803
Peers	Male	94	97.44	9159.00		
	Female	87	84.05	7312.00		
	Total	181			3484.000	.074
School	Male	94	93.92	8828.50		
	Female	87	87.84	7642.50		
	Total	181			3814.500	.413
Radio and TV	Male	94	94.40	8873.50		
	Female	87	87.33	7597.50		
	Total	181			3769.500	.348
Seminars	Male	94	92.98	8740.00		
	Female	87	88.86	7731.00		
	Total	181			3903.000	.584
	Male	94	94.99	8929.50		
	Female	87	86.68	7541.50		
Youth conference	Total	181			3713.500	.270

Three of the respondents did not indicate their gender on the questionnaire and hence their responses could not be included in the analysis above. It can be seen from Table 6 that in all cases the p-values were greater than 0.05 which means the hypothesis cannot be rejected in case of any of the sources of information and therefore it can be concluded that male and female students did not differ in the sources they employ in obtaining career information in Ife Area schools.

Hypothesis3: There is no significant difference in the students' approach to gathering career information on the basis of their age

To test this hypothesis, the number of students who chose/did not choose a career were subjected to non-parametric test of difference (Kruskal-Wallis H test) on the basis of their gender groups as the differentiating variable. The result is presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Test of difference in the students' approach to gathering career information on the basis of their ages

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Chi-square	df	Sig.
	1.00	61	89.86			
	2.00	108	89.85			
	3.00	14	117.93			
Internet	Total	183		3.973	2	.137
	1.00	61	85.55			
	2.00	108	92.81			
	3.00	14	113.82			
School counsellors	Total	183		3.516	2	.172
	1.00	61	101.09			
	2.00	108	88.81			
	3.00	14	76.96			
Role models	Total	183		3.712	2	.156
	1.00	61	87.57			
	2.00	108	93.62			
	3.00	14	98.86			
Parents	Total	183		.834	2	.659
	1.00	61	87.95			
	2.00	108	94.25			
	3.00	14	92.32			
Peers	Total	183		.599	2	.741
	1.00	61	79.49			
	2.00	108	99.00			
	3.00	14	92.50			
School	Total	183		5.853	2	.054
	1.00	61	84.57			
	2.00	108	95.84			
	3.00	14	94.75			
Radio and TV	Total	183		1.932	2	.381
	1.00	61	89.46			
	2.00	108	92.50			
	3.00	14	99.25			
Seminars	Total	183		.443	2	.801
	1.00	61	95.02			
	2.00	108	90.43			
	3.00	14	90.96			
Youth conferences	Total	183		.320	2	.852

It can be seen from Table 7 that in all cases the p-values were greater than 0.05, which means the hypothesis cannot be rejected in the case of any of the sources of information; therefore it can be concluded that young and older students did not differ in the sources they employ in obtaining career information in Ife Area schools .

Discussion

Buckland (1991) and Sveiby (1998) have described information as knowledge communicated concerning some particular fact, subject or event; of which one is apprised or told. Information is particularly important in the process of making decisions concerning one's career, not only because it has life-long effect, but also because when such decision is taken it

significantly affects other spheres of one's life. Such information becomes useful only when it is absorbed, integrated into one's cognitive processes and eventually employed in making a decision that leads to a successful endeavor.

However, despite the age-long attempts by counsellors, teachers and parents to guide growing individuals in their effort to make appropriate and rewarding career choices, reports of career misfits, dissatisfaction and apathy are still very common. It is therefore necessary to look into how such growing individuals go about processing career information with a view to locating areas in which counsellors may be able to adjust their involvement or areas that may need improvement.

Consequently, research question one was posed to determine the pattern of potential career choice among secondary school students in South-Western Nigeria. The result indicated that most popular career of interest to secondary students is accountancy/accounting/banking, closely followed by medicine, engineering, law and nursing. This is in agreement with the findings of Okafor (2004) in Salami 2008, who found that most secondary school students selected law, medicine, accountancy, engineering, business administration, teaching, nursing, secretarial work and military service in that order. Although the order found in this study was not the same; in fact, teaching was not one of the preferred careers. Only 0.5% of the respondents (each) chose teaching, surveyor, fine and creative arts, building and shoemaking. Even teaching at the tertiary level, i.e. lecturing, attracted only 1.1% of the respondents. It seems students now consider accountancy more "lucrative/rewarding/prestigious" than the first two (law and medicine) identified by Okafor (2004). This finding is important to school counsellors, as they need to keep abreast with the current career choice trends among students.

The second research question was posed to explore the sources of career information available to students in secondary schools in the south western part of Nigeria. The result of this study shows that the most prevalent means by which the students gather career information is through role models, closely followed by information they obtain from school and parents. The least prevalent sources of career information for the students under study was found to be the Internet and information obtained from their peers.

The study also indicated that socio-demographic variables of age and sex did not affect students' use of these sources. This was obtained when hypothesis 1 and 2 were tested. Hypothesis 3 was tested to see if there is a relationship between students' sources of career information and the career they claimed to be interested in. The result shows that only information collected from parents and their school counsellor bore any positive relation to their choice of career. A plausible reason for this was given by Salami (2007), who stated that the tradition or cultural practice is that the family or the parents know best and as such they dictate the type of occupation that the children will choose regardless of the children's abilities and interests and is usually targeted at the belief that their children should go into well-paid jobs so that family financial problems can be solved (Salami 2010). It therefore follows that parents and school counsellors need to collaborate in guiding the children during this important phase of their lives. In fact, Awujo (2007) warned that family orientation and influence may likely annul the effects of other possible factors in career decision making. School counsellors also need to ensure that every student in secondary school obtain appropriate career guidance before leaving this level of education.

The third research question explores the uses to which the students put career information they gather. The results show that the most prevalent use of such information is getting enlightened on the kind of profession to engage in later life and enabling students to be more focused on what is to be achieved. Uses such as knowing the salary level and to determine the conditions of service in the career were not found to be popular among the students. This may be due to confusion in the course of career decision making earlier noted by Salami (2010) when he said that when high school students think of mass unemployment of the graduates, they might not be motivated to take the matter of career decision-making seriously; instead, they might likely feel frustrated and confused.

The fourth research question was posed to find out how students' career decision making skills can be improved. The study shows that the respondents requested more sessions of career talk, relating and discussing with people who have achieved in one's desired line of career and by organizing career days in schools.

The fifth research question sought to determine the contribution counsellors can make to career information provision, processing and decision-making of secondary school students in South-western Nigeria. The students claimed effective ways by which counsellors can help would include providing useful and purposeful information to make better decisions; enabling the students to know what is actually needed in the world of work and helping to develop effective decision making skills.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study concludes that it appears the trends of career choice among male and female secondary school students are changing from the traditionally held belief in careers which people hold in high esteem and which confer prestige on the practitioners to those which are seen to produce greater income. Students appear to rely more on information obtained

from parents, counsellors and through role models. Consequently, counsellors and parents need to collaborate to guide the students in their quest for a rewarding career. More opportunities should be provided to the young ones to see practitioners of other professions who have proved successful, particularly in the technical and technological areas, in which the nation has really invested its love and resources. It is recommended that more frequent career development programmes like career days and/or talks, job shadowing, role modeling and the like should be included in the secondary school curriculum

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