

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE

BALOGUN, A. O., JACOB, O. A. & ADEGBOYEGA, L. O.

Abstract

The main aim of this study was to find out the relationship among emotional intelligence, parental involvement and career aspiration. A descriptive survey was adopted for the research. A total of 500 students participated in the study. Two research questions were answered and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Percentage and Multiple Regressions Analysis were the statistical tools employed to answer research questions and testing hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed that the emotional intelligence of the students was moderate, while the parental involvement in the students' career aspiration was high. Also, the finding revealed that there was a significant relationship among emotional intelligence, parental involvement and career aspiration of the students. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that school administrators should ensure that they set up a conducive learning environment for their students as this would in turn, enhance better academic performance and they would be able to achieve their career aspirations. Also, there is need for parents to pay more attention to the development of emotional intelligence of their children. Public school teachers and administrators should pay more attention to their students' emotional intelligence.

Introduction

Nigeria has a need to develop and maximize the use of her human and material resources. Being a developing country, the production of competent manpower is very significant. Napier (1972) (cited in Balogun, 2010) referred to the functional role of education in developing nations and stressed its importance as a means of optimizing nations' most valuable resources – that of manpower. If the training of

competent manpower is significant, of equal importance is the training of the right people for the right profession. Many scholars are of the opinion that if developing nations can place each of their manpower unit into most useful roles in their economic machinery, growth and more efficient productivity would result (Napier, 1972). Durojaiye (1972) also stressed the importance of guiding manpower to its right channel when he maintained that every country needs to invest in its youths because the youths are the future human resources. Therefore correct orientation on the part of those who guide the child is of great importance since a misguided approach or lack of guidance will result in a waste of investment and of human resources.

Nigeria's economy is observably fast expanding and this will lead to the expansion of job opportunities (Chukwu, 2009). Also, people's career aspiration and expectations are also increasing and becoming diversified. Daramola (2007) identified increasing educational and job opportunities as social mobility in Nigeria. He went further to say that an individual whose ambition to move up bears little relation to their capabilities. No doubt, in Nigeria, there is the need to maximize productivity, generate and maintain a high economic growth rate. This is possible only when there is career guidance and opportunities for career development (Edun, 2009).

In line with this, Giddens (2001) opined that, the importance of occupation in human and societal development is enormous. One's occupation can, indeed, determine the person one interacts with and where one spends one's leisure time. This is why this literature identified making occupational choices as crucial and fundamental in all choices one makes in life. Choice of an occupation has been known to determine one's success or failure on a job. Although, success on a job, sometimes, depends on one's luck, but a chosen occupation can enrich such luck and make it fruitful and lucrative. Choosing an occupation by oneself relates positively with having interest in and committing one's energy to performing the tasks in that career; career choice are better made personally than being made for one.

The choice of an occupation also determines what economic reward one can derive from one's society. Some have expressed the view that, choice of occupation is the beginning of one's economic worth and relevance in the society. Though, no choice of an occupation

gives perfect satisfaction, but a well-chosen career could go a long way in satisfying an individual emotionally, economically and socially (Giddens, 2001).

Choice of an occupation is known to influence almost every other aspects of one's life. Patterson (2002) stated that, a man's occupation moulds his life; determines his social class, his place of living, his dress, his hours of work and thus his hours at home. Indirectly, it affects his attitudes and opinion, his goals and values including the way he feels about education and his outlook in life. In most cases, life expectancy has been related to one's occupation. Theorists in this school of thought argue that educators, lawyers and business executives are among those with long life spans, while doctors fall in the middle whereas poets have lowest life-span. In addition to this, mental disorders also appear to bear some relationship to occupational class level (Badejo, 2008).

If work affects so much of a person's personality and life expectancy as indicated by Patterson (2002) then, it is no exaggeration therefore to state that the choice of an occupation is an expressive act that may reflect on an individual's motivation, knowledge, personality and ability. Also, occupational choices are human decisions dictated largely by the personality and emotional needs of an individual (Patterson, 2002). Confirming this, Hoppock (1990) in the theory of Occupational Choice stressed that occupational choice largely depends on need satisfaction. In his proposition, he argued that occupations are chosen to meet one's needs and values.

It has been observed that family influence is an important factor in preparing youths for their roles in life. Young people form many of their attitudes about work and careers as a result of their interactions with their families. It is a known fact that family structure, values, norms, child-rearing practices and socio-economic status influence occupational aspirations. Some families may prefer certain kinds of occupation for their first sons or daughters. In a polygamous family, the first son of all the wives may enter upon one occupation favoured by the family. Of course, it is well known that Nigerian children from poor families often had to take to occupations which would not require a long period of education and a lot of money for training.

More so, a child's family may be his only reference group, as a result, it may have tremendous influence on his formation of

motivational traits and behavioural tendencies. Some of them are: family marital status (intact or broken home), family socio-economic status, residence and parental educational status. Many of these family variables are crucial as they form part of a child's development, they are found to be associated with the various aspects of a child's development. Many have argued that parental socio-economic status (SES), parental educational level, and biogenetic factors such as physical size, gender, ability and temperament tend to shape a child's attitude to life (Penick and Jepen 1992).

In the Nigerian system of education, secondary school students are expected to have developed some sense of occupational choice before getting to the higher institutions where they are expected to be developed on a specific occupation. However, a lot of factors may hinder their making such choices, even when in the secondary schools. The factors sometimes may be home grown or sometimes, a reflection of the school experiences. In most cases, it may be a factor related to the age of the students at the time of making the career decision or their gender.

In the research reports on adolescents' vocational development by Mortimer (1992), parental educational level was found to have significant influence on student's occupational aspirations. Mortimer further argued that parents with post-secondary education tend to pass along the importance of their profession to their children. Linking occupational choice, academic performance and students' family background variables. Montgomery (1992) noted that female students that are talented in Mathematics viewed their career choices as reflective of interests that stemmed from early family influence and educational opportunities.

As previously stated, emotional intelligence positively relates to less dysfunctional career thinking greater career decision-making self-efficacy and a higher level of willingness to explore a variety of career preferences and to commit to attractive career options (Puffer 2011). Salovey and Mayer's (1990) original model of emotional intelligence is relevant to the present study. According to these authors, emotional intelligence subsumes Gardner's (1983) interpersonal intelligence (the ability to understand other people and what motivates them) and intrapersonal intelligence (the capacity to form an accurate

model and understanding of oneself and to use the model to operate effectively in life). Based on the assumption that emotional intelligence is a sub-aspect of social intelligence, Salovey and Mayer's (1990) model proposes that emotional intelligence consists of a set of four conceptually related mental processes: (1) efficiently handling psychological and social problems, (2) accurately appraising and expressing emotion in the self and others, (3) regulating emotion in the self and others, and (4) using emotions adaptively in order to solve problems and achieve one's goals. The ability to monitor one's own emotional landscape is thought to lead to greater insight and self-knowledge (Goleman, 1998), and guides individuals' thinking and actions in the career exploration and decision making process (Brown, 2003).

The role of parents in influencing career choice of students cannot be over emphasized. Evidences have shown that the two constructs are positively related. Daramola (2012) opined that parent's involvement in their children's career choice has been found to be of immense benefit to both the parents and children. He concluded that for parents to be doing this invariably laying solid foundation for the career success of their children. Thus, it is strongly believed that parents encouragement, motivation and presence of nurturing environment play significant roles in shaping the career choice and aspirations of their children. More so, just as parents involvement in the career aspirations of their children so also MacMilan (2000) noted that parental presence has a long way to go in effecting their school performance. No wonder Oyesoji, Adeyinka and Adedeji (1997) averred that parental involvement becomes obvious when the exactness of the parental pressure is come to play on the children's academic performance.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship among emotional intelligence, parental involvement and career aspirations of secondary school students in Ilorin South, Kwara State. Specifically, the study examined:

- a. the level of emotional intelligence of secondary school students in Ilorin South.

- b. The level of parents' involvement in the career aspirations of secondary school students in Ilorin South.
- c. Relationship among emotional intelligence, parental involvement in career aspirations of secondary school students in Ilorin South.

Research Questions

- a. What is the level of emotional intelligence of secondary school students in Ilorin South?
- b. What is the level of parents' involvement in the career aspirations of secondary school students in Ilorin South?
- c. What is the relationship among emotional intelligence, parental involvement and career aspirations of secondary school students in Ilorin South?

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: Emotional intelligence and parental involvement cannot be used to predict career aspiration of secondary school students in Ilorin South.

Methodology

The research design for this study was a correlation study. The population for the study comprised all public Senior Secondary School students located in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State, while the target population was all SSS 1 students. Record available at the Kwara State Ministry of Education and Human Capital Development (2013) indicates that there are 20 public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State. Out of these, ten public secondary schools were selected using simple random sampling technique. Fifty students were selected from each of the sampled schools totaling 500 students for this study. The instrument used in this study was a self-developed questionnaire which consisted of three sections (A, B and C). Section A elicited information on the biographical data. Section B elicited information on the Emotional Intelligence of the students. The items in the section were 25 which were adapted from David Goleman Emotional Intelligence Scale. Section C of the questionnaire provided information on the career

aspirations of the students. The section C contained 25 items to elicit information about parental involvement. The questionnaire used was structure on four point Likert scale type. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using test re-test method and obtained Alpha Cronbach reliability coefficient of 0.63. This shows that the instrument was reliable and can be used for this study.

Table 1: secondary School Students' Level of Emotional Intelligence

Level of EI	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	264	52.8
Low	236	47.2
Total	500	100

Table 1 revealed that 264 (52.8%) of the sampled students had high emotional intelligence and 236 (47.2%) had low Emotional Intelligence.

Research Question Two: What is the level of parents' involvement in career aspirations secondary school students in Ilorin South?

Table 2: Parents' Level of Involvement in Secondary school Students Career aspirations

Level of Parental Involvement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	321	64.2
Low	179	35.8
Total	500	100

Table 2 revealed that 321 (64.2%) of the sampled students had high parental involvement in career aspirations while 179 (35.8%) had low parental involvement. This signifies that parents are not much involved in the career aspirations of their children.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: Emotional intelligence and parental involvement cannot be used to predict career aspiration of secondary school students in Ilorin South.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Showing Relationship Among Emotional Intelligence, Parental Involvement and Career Aspiration of Secondary School Students in Ilorin South

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Regression	4836.054	2	2418.027	72.99*	0.000	Rejected
Residual	16465.610	497	33.130			
Total	21301.664	499				

*P<0.05

Table 3 indicates that the calculated F-value is 72.99 while its significance value is 0.000 at alpha level of 0.05. This means that there was significant relationship among emotional intelligence, parental involvement and career aspiration of Senior Secondary School students in Ilorin South. Therefore, null hypothesis one was rejected.

To examine the contributions of the independent variables (emotional intelligence and parental involvement) together, R-square was computed and the output reveals thus:

Table 4: Model Summary Showing the Contributions of Emotional Intelligence and Parental Involvement to Career Aspiration to Secondary School Students in Ilorin South

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.476	0.227	0.224	5.756

Table 4 shows that R-square is (22.7%) which is the contribution of two independent variables (emotional intelligence and parental involvement) to the academic performance of Senior Secondary School students in Ilorin in Kwara State.

Furthermore, to investigate the contributions of each of the independent variables (emotional intelligence and parental involvement) to the model (career aspiration), Beta weight and t-values were computed and the output is shown on table 5.

Table 5: Contributions of the Independent Variables to Career Aspiration

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	Calculated t-value	Sig.
Constant	18.221	1.644		11.080	.000
Emotional Intelligence	0.021	0.029	0.029	0.723	0.470
Parental Aspiration	0.462	0.038	0.475	12.053	0.000

Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence and Parental Involvement

Dependent Variable: Career Aspiration

Table 5 shows the Beta weight and the t-value of each of the independent variables. The Beta weight of Emotional Intelligence was 0.029, while that of the Parental Aspiration was 0.475. This implies that emotional intelligence contributed less than parental involvement to the career aspiration of the students. The t-value further confirmed the contributions of the independent variables to the career aspiration. Emotional Intelligence contributed t-value of 0.723, while Parental Involvement contributed a t-value of 12.053, which also implies that Emotional Intelligence contributed less than the parental involvement to the career aspiration of the students.

Discussion

Based on the research questions answered and hypothesis tested, it revealed that the Emotional Intelligence of the students sampled was moderate. This finding supported the finding of Oke (2013) who studied the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and academic performance in Ado-Ekiti and found out that the Emotional Intelligence of the students were moderate.

The study also revealed that parental involvement in students' career aspiration was high. This finding is in consistent with the finding of Obakachi (2013) who study the relationship between family involvement and school variables as correlates of secondary school students' career aspirations and find out that family involvement in students' career choice is very high.

Analysis of the relationship among Emotional Intelligence, Parental Involvement and Career Aspiration in this study revealed that

there is a positive and significant relationship among the variable involved. This invariably signifies that Emotional Intelligence and Parental Involvement can possibly be predictor of career aspirations of the students in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

This finding is consistent with the finding of Obakachi (2013) who found that there was a significant positive relationship between parental support and career aspirations of secondary school students. Kolkhorst, Yazedjian, and Toews (2010) examined college student perceptions of parental involvement and found that students reported seeking various forms of parental support and that these interactions were positive in nature. Most students felt that their parents supported them but also facilitated their independence by trusting them to make their own decisions. The minority of students who reported dissatisfaction with parental support actually expressed a desire for more involvement on the part of their parents.

Pizzolato and Hicklen (2011) specifically examined parental involvement in college students' decision making. They found that when students were asked to report an important decision that they made in their lives, more than half of the students did not solicit parental help in their decision making. When students did consult with parents, the majority did so to gain a different perspective on the issue rather than asking their parents to make the decision for them. Mau and Bikos (2000) have found that college students and young adults cite parents as important influence on their choice of career.

These findings support Mullis, Mullis, and Gerwhels (1998) found that students' career aspirations tended to match their parents' occupation. For example, students whose parents were in unskilled occupations tended to be more interested in realistic occupations, while students whose parents were in professional or skilled occupations tended to be more interested in artistic, social or conventional occupations (Mullis et al., 1998). Also, Kelley (2001) found that parental involvement, support, and expectations have a tremendous influence on a child's educational success and career aspirations. Parents that are involved and attend school and career activities have children with higher educational expectations and career aspiration than children whose parents rarely attend school activities.

Conclusion

This study revealed that emotional intelligence level was moderate and parental involvement in students' career aspiration was high. Also, parental involvements predict the career aspiration of the students' more than emotional intelligence. In view of the findings of this study, it can be concluded that parental involvement has a lot to do with the choice of career of the students.

Recommendations

The problem of career choice has implications for national development. In every society, the quality of students/graduates as well as their level of job satisfaction contributes directly or indirectly to the economic stability and the smooth running of the affairs of the nation. If students/graduates are unable to derive satisfaction from their careers/jobs, frustration sets in with accompanying decline in productivity and civil unrest due to the workers thwarted goals.

Hence, (i) it is recommended that the school administrators ensure that set up a conducive learning environment for their students as this would in turn, enhance better academic performance and they would be able to achieve their career aspirations. (ii) There is need for parents to pay more attentions to the development of their children's emotional intelligence. (iii) Public school teachers and administrators should pay more attention to their students' emotional intelligence.

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