

COMPARISON OF CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES OF SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENT-TEACHERS IN UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, NIGERIA

By

Yusuf, Hamdallat Taiwo (Ph.D.)

Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria

Abstract

Career Aspiration is a professional path of intent to follow and maintain, a lifelong process that demands accurate perception of ability, potential, and achievement. In this vein, this study compared the career aspirations and learning outcomes of student-teachers in University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Proforma with 0.83 reliability index was used to elicit information. Frequency and percentage were used to answer the research questions while chi-square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The study found out that majority of social studies education graduating students who aspired for education programme at their entrance level bagged 2nd-Class Lower in University of Ilorin. Also, there was no statistically significant difference in the learning outcomes of Social Studies student-teachers that aspired and those that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin. It was recommended that Government should make teaching profession profitable and rewarding for teachers by revisiting their conditions of service.

Keywords: *Career Aspirations, Learning Outcome, Student-Teachers, Teacher Education*

Introduction

Teacher education is a programme linked to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would aid and permit the teacher to meet the profession's requirements and face the challenges therein. Teacher education is a planned programme of specialised education for producing teachers with the skill and competence of teaching in schools and colleges (Sanni, 2017). After their training at the teacher training institutions, such individuals are professional teachers. Such individuals should educate the learners to make them responsible citizens in society (Olusegun, 2011). A teacher education programme requires that a prospective teacher exhibit a desire for the teaching profession, known as a career aspiration.

Career aspiration is a long-term career goal, plan, or dream far away in the future. Aspiration is an individual's ideas of their possible selves, what they would like to become, what they might become, and what they do not wish to become. Career aspirations are the desires, dreams, ambitions, and career thoughts by young individuals that motivate what they anticipate to study and take on in the world of work (Mwaura, 2020). It is the professional path one wishes to follow and maintain, a lifelong process that demands accurate perceptions of ability, potential, and achievement (Agbo et al., 2015). It can also be viewed as a long-term individual work-related goal (Hafsyah, 2015). It is a path that you want your career to follow. Career aspirations orbit around the ambitions and inspirations of students. Better

career aspirations can be shaped at the school level, the better the performance and likelihood of achieving the same aspirations. It plays a noteworthy role in shaping an individual's study behaviour in any higher education setting because it motivates the individual to achieve academic excellence.

Learning outcome is the students' product and is usually expressed through school grades. It involves meeting goals, achievements, and objectives set in the program or course that a student attends. They are expressed through grades resulting from an appraisal that involves passing a course or subject. Academic performance is the level of knowledge exposed in a subject compared to the standard, and it is generally calculated using the grade point average (Willcox, 2011). The learning outcome for students is one of the key goals of the schools' system, for it strongly links students to positive outcomes in fulfilling productive future life. Learning outcome plays an important role in producing the best quality graduates responsible for a country's economic and social development (Jibeen & Khan, 2016).

Career aspiration plays a significant role in shaping an individual's study behavior. Career aspirations, therefore, boost students' academic motivation leading to improved student's academic excellence. Furthermore, career plans are good predictors of higher school achievement because they help students demonstrate greater interest in their coursework (Willcoxson & Wynder, 2010). In addition, students with superior clarity about why they opted for their programme and whether the chosen programme has a direct path to their preferred career have better outcomes in terms of academic performance (Adekun & Opoko, 2015).

Therefore, students' attitude towards achievement situations explains the type of goal they set for themselves at the onset. Persons with positive career aspirations have high learning goal orientation because their characteristics of seeking to master new skills, complete tasks, and overcome difficulties will be in line with their career pursuits (Mesa, 2012). Students need to realise that the core skills learned in class are directly linked to their career interests, increasing their motivation to perform well. In addition, the value a student places on self-worth affects their academic achievement (Bhat & Khandai, 2016). Career aspiration, consequently, occupies a very important place in education. A career journey is a complex, non-linear pathway that takes many turns over a person's lifetime. One needs to understand better the role of unpredictability in career decisions and what tools might help manage this (Horne, 2010).

Students' academic achievement is dependent on their study behavior. Student study behaviors refer to study habits that lead to achieving a learner's goal through a prescribed pattern of study practices (Crede & Kuncel, 2008). Behaviour is an external factor: good or poor, that aids the study process as a course of action. Good study behaviours embrace taking notes in class, engaging in study sessions, reviewing course materials, and rehearsal. Poor study behaviours include playing truancy, not doing assignments, often watching television (Bhat & Khandai, 2016), and mobile phone over-usage. Without good study behaviour, a student is unlikely to succeed. Having a better understanding of students' motivations related to their academic performance can greatly assist in implementing strategies to enhance their performance (Linderman, 2010).

Social Studies focus on society, and social studies professionals may understand how people are shaped and influenced by peer groups, their culture, or other societal factors. The primary purpose of Social Studies Education is to prepare secondary or primary Social Studies teachers for secondary and primary schools, respectively. In the same vein, social studies would help promote the sensitive approval of diversity and interdependence among people of all races. The stated social studies objectives are to develop in students the love of one's country and positive attitudes to citizenship, and a desire to lead others to a similar self-awareness as teachers. Also, to promote the sympathetic appreciation of the diversity and interdependence among peoples of all races, colours, and creeds. To also use such an opportunity to awaken students' intellectual curiosity in identifying human problems of survival and trying to solve such problems positively. Also, to develop in students opportunities for inter-group actions in which people work for the common good of all, to build a healthy nation and world at large (FRN, 2014).

The development of occupational aspirations comprises two processes: compromise and circumscription, from the perspective of the developmentalists. Compromise is the process of letting go of unreachable and unfeasible occupational goals for more realistic and attainable occupation by reflecting on one's occupational self-concept. On the other hand, circumscription is a situation whereby an individual eliminates insupportable occupational alternatives by equating self-concept with perceptions of feasible occupations and ascertaining the level of sympathy between the two. Thus, career aspirations is a reflection of the nonstop interaction between a person's valuation of occupation congruity and apparent accessibility. Status attainment theory highlights the momentous role of social stratification in creating and developing occupational aspirations and attainment, as well as the substantial relationship between educational and occupational aspirations (Gottfredson, 2005).

Abdullah, Suad, Yousef and Bakkar (2020) studied career aspiration and related contextual variables. Their study reported that students might perform well despite not having it as a preferred course of study. Bindu (2016) carried out a study to investigate career aspiration among high secondary school students in Kerala. It was reported that students' career aspirations were determined by their desire to excel and societal influences. Mettol and Ksilu (2016) researched on the influence of career preference on academic performance and graduation of students. Their study revealed that there had been no major improvement in the performance of graduates for the past a decade as high proportion of graduates still fall within the second class lower category.

On the other hand, Jan-Ardies, Maeyer and Gijbels (2015) with first and second grade of the first cycle in general secondary education in the North region of Belgium, Flanders, did not find any significant difference in career aspiration between boys and girls. Makarova & Herzog (2015) found that in comparison to males, female students had more diverse career aspirations though more inclined toward care giving careers. It is also argued that girls tend to have lower perceived self-efficacy for careers with a strong masculine gender construct orientation, like science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers due to gender stereotypes which has played a role of associating men with science and women with humanities. While, Nadeem and Khalid (2018) examined the relationship of gender role attitudes with career aspirations and career choices among young adults. The findings indicated social oriented career types were more popular with females than males at 86.84%. Artistic and conventional career types were preferred more by females than males while Realistic career types were chosen by more males at 81.8% followed by investigate and enterprising career types.

The university is an institution where students pursue higher degrees in their chosen field of study to gather more knowledge and experience. Teachers education programmes are one of such degrees that students can study in tertiary institutions. However, most pre-service teachers are indisposed students who are not concerned with teaching but decided on a degree in education because no other faculty will accept them (Yusuf, 2010). Students who end up in various teacher education programmes exhibit little or no interest in the field. Consequently, there creates an adverse effect (inadequate content knowledge or pedagogical skills, or both) on the objectives of teacher education programmes. Therefore, this study compared student-teachers career aspirations and learning outcomes in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Specifically, this study found out

1. the learning outcome of Social Studies graduands that aspired for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin;
2. learning outcome of social studies graduands that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin; and
3. difference in the learning outcome of Social Studies graduands concerning career aspiration disparity in University of Ilorin based on gender

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide this study

INTED2022 16th International Technology, Education and Development Conference

1. What is the learning outcome of Social Studies graduands that aspired for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin?
2. What is the learning outcome of social studies graduands that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated for this study

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the learning outcome of Social Studies graduates concerning career aspiration disparity in University of Ilorin.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the learning outcome of Social Studies graduands concerning career aspiration disparity in University of Ilorin based on gender.

Methodology

A longitudinal design was used in this study. This is a correlational research study that involves looking at variables over an extended period. This design was well-thought-out to be most appropriate for this study because of the respondents' changes that occurred over time. The population for this study covered all student-teachers in the University of Ilorin, while the target population comprised all graduating Social Studies student-teachers. This study commenced in 2016 with an initial 120 social studies students. Then, 15 additional respondents joined through the direct entry, and the number of respondents increased to 135. Thus, 107 social studies students eventually served as the population for the study as the reduction in respondents was due to attrition (voluntary and involuntary), while eighty (80) student-teachers served as the final sample for this study as the outstanding 27 respondents didn't meet the graduation requirements. Therefore, a pro forma of the performance of the Social Studies student-teachers from 100L through to the graduation year (400L) serves as the learning outcome which took cognisance of the career aspiration disparity at the pre-admission process into the University of Ilorin. Hence, the Pro forma of the performance is the data used for analysis. Data collected were analysed using frequency and percentage to answer the research questions, while chi-square was used to analyse the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Out of eighty student-teachers sampled, 61 (76%) did not aspire for Social Studies Education at their entrance level, while 19 (24%) aspired for Social Studies Education. Thus, most student-teachers did not aspire for Social Studies Education at their entrance level in the University of Ilorin. Also, 41 (51%) of the student-teachers were males, while 39 (49%) were females.

Question One: What is the learning outcome of Social Studies graduands that aspired for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin?

Cumulative grades of Social Studies student-teachers who aspired to receive education at their entrance level at the University of Ilorin were collated and subjected to percentage analysis. The summary statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Learning outcome of Social Studies graduands that aspired for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin

	Learning Outcome			Total
	Pass	2 nd -Class Lower	2 nd -Class Upper	
Frequency	3	12	4	19
Percentage	16%	63%	21%	100%

As revealed in Table 1, out of 19 social studies education graduating students who aspired for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin, 16% of them had pass, 63% had 2nd-Class Lower, and 21% had 2nd-Class upper. Thus, the majority of social studies education graduating students who aspired for education at their entrance level bagged 2nd-Class Lower in University of Ilorin

Question Two: What is the learning outcome of social studies graduands that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin?

Cumulative grades of social studies graduands who did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin were collated and subjected to percentage analysis. The summary statistics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Learning outcome of graduands that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin

	Learning Outcome			Total
	Pass	2 nd -Class Lower	2 nd -Class Upper	
Frequency	4	39	18	61
Percentage	7%	64%	29%	100%

Table 2 shows that out of 61 social studies education graduating students who did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin, 7% had pass, 64% had 2nd-Class Lower and 29% had 2nd-Class upper. Thus, most social studies education graduating students who did not aspire for education at their entrance level bagged 2nd-Class Lower in University of Ilorin, which can be described as average learning outcomes.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses were tested with the use of chi-square at 0.05 level of significance

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in learning outcome of Social Studies graduands in relation to career aspiration disparity in University of Ilorin

Table 3. Chi-Square showing the difference in the learning outcomes of Social Studies student-teachers that aspired and those that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin

Learning Outcome		Career Aspiration		Total	df	χ^2	Sig
		Non-Social Studies Option	Social Studies Option				
Pass	Count	4	3	7			
	Expected	5.3	1.7	7.0			
2nd-Class Lower	Count	39	12	51	2	1.789 ^a	.409
	Expected	38.9	12.1	51.0			
2nd Class Upper	Count	18	4	22			
	Expected	16.8	5.2	22.0			
Total		61	19	80			

As revealed in Table 3, the χ^2 -value 1.789 was obtained with a p-value 0.409 when computed at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value 0.409 is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus, there was no statistically significant difference in the learning outcomes

of Social Studies student-teachers that aspired and those that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in the University of Ilorin ($\chi^2 (2) = 1.789$; $p > 0.05$).

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the learning outcome of Social Studies graduands concerning career aspiration disparity in University of Ilorin based on gender

Table 4. Chi-Square showing the difference in the learning outcomes of Social Studies student-teachers that aspired and those that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in the University of Ilorin based on gender

Gender	LearningOutcome		Career Aspiration		Total	df	χ^2	Sig
			Non-Social Studies Option	Social Studies Option				
Male	Pass	Count	3	2	5			
		Expecte d	3.7	1.3	5.0			
	2nd-Class Lower	Count	20	7	27			
		Expecte d	19.8	7.2	27.0	2	.550 ^b	.759
	2nd Class Upper	Count	7	2	9			
		Expecte d	6.6	2.4	9.0			
		Total	30	11	41			
Female	Pass	Count	1	1	2			
		Expecte d	1.6	.4	2.0			
	2nd-Class Lower	Count	19	5	24			
		Expecte d	19.1	4.9	24.0	2	1.278 ^c	.528
	2nd Class Upper	Count	11	2	13			
		Expecte d	10.3	2.7	13.0			
		Total	31	8	39			

As revealed in Table 4, concerning males, the χ^2 -value 0.550 was obtained with a p-value 0.759 when computed at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value 0.759 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, no significant difference existed in the learning outcomes of graduating male Social Studies student-teachers that aspired and those that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin in University of Ilorin ($\chi^2 (2) = 0.550$; $p > 0.05$).

In the same vein, concerning female, the χ^2 -value 1.278 was obtained with a p-value 0.528 when computed at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value 0.528 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, no significant difference existed in the learning outcomes of graduating female Social Studies student-teachers that aspired and those that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in University of Ilorin ($\chi^2 (2) = 1.278$; $p > 0.05$).

Discussion

This study revealed that most social studies education graduating students -teachers who aspired and those who did not aspire for education at their entrance level bagged 2nd-Class Lower in the University of Ilorin. The result further shows the ability level of students who didn't aspire was high. They were only by chance not to be admitted to their aspired course of study. However, students who aspire for

an education degree probably did so because their ability level wasn't high enough. These results substantiate Mettol and Ksilu (2016), and Abdullah, Suad, Yousef and Bakkar (2020) whose study revealed that there had been no major improvement in the performance of graduates for the past a decade as high proportion of graduates still fall within the second class lower category. However, the findings of Bindu (2016) was contrary to the findings of this study when they reported that students career aspirations were determined by their desire to excel and societal influences.

In the same vein, the findings of this study indicated that an insignificant difference existed in the learning outcomes of male and female social studies education graduating students that aspired and those that did not aspire for education at their entrance level in the University of Ilorin. This implies the learning outcome of male and female student-teachers, regardless of career aspirations, are similar. The findings of this study corroborates that of Jan-Ardies, Maeyer and Gijbels (2015) study with first and second grade of the first cycle in general secondary education in the North region of Belgium, Flanders, did not find any significant difference in career aspiration between boys and girls. However, this outcome negates the findings of Makarova & Herzog (2015) found that in comparison to males, female students had more diverse career aspirations though more inclined toward care giving careers. Also, Nadeem, F., & Khalid, R. (2018) reported that social oriented career types were more popular with females than males at 86.84%. Artistic and conventional career types were preferred more by females than males while Realistic career types were chosen by more males at 81.8% followed by investigate and enterprising career types.

Conclusion

Concerning the findings of this study, it could be concluded that student-teachers (esp. who did not aspire for education at their entrance level) did not allow their career aspiration to distort their dispositions to Social Studies Education as a course of study in the university given the similarities existing in student-teachers learning outcomes regardless of their career aspirations.

Recommendations

As a result of the outcomes of this study, it was therefore recommended that:

1. Government should make the teaching profession profitable and rewarding for teachers by revisiting their conditions of service.
2. Teacher education institutions should endeavour to properly implement the programme's objectives as stated in the policy to encourage students to show interest in the profession.
3. Guardians and parents should also encourage and support their wards who aspire to become teachers.

References

- [1] T. A. Sanni, "Effectiveness of Ado-Ekiti study centre in the implementation of the National Open University teacher education programme," *Unpublished M.Ed. Dissertation*, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, 2017.
 - [2] O. O. Olusegun, "Needs assessment of introducing Peace education into the school curriculum," *Akungba Journal of Research in Education*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 113-126, 2011.
 - [3] M. N. Mwaura, "The relationship between career aspiration and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Publications (IJMRAP)*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 68-73, 2020.
 - [4] B., Agbo, I., Ojobor & C. Ezinwa, *Issues in development communication*, Enugu: John Jacobs Classic Publishers Limited, 2015.
 - [5] A.S. Hafsyhan, "Educational and Career Aspirations of University Honors and Non-Honors Students. *Doctoral Dissertations*, Connecticut Graduate School of University of Connecticut, 2015.
 - [6] M. R. Willcox, "Factores de riesgo y protección para el rendimiento académico: Un estudio descriptivo en estudiantes de Psicología de una universidad privada," *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 1-9, 2011.
- INTED2022 16th International Technology, Education and Development Conference*

- [7] T. Jibeen & M. A. Khan, "Development of an Academic Achievement Risk Assessment Scale for Undergraduates: Low, Medium and High Achievers," *Multidisciplinary Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 23-50, 2016.
- [8] L. Willcoxson & M. Wynder, "The relationship between choice of major and career, experience of university and attrition," *Australian Journal of Education*, vol. 54, no. 2, pp. 175-189, 2010.
- [9] C. O. Adeokun & P. A. Opoko, "Exploring the Link between motivation for course-choice and retention in the architectural profession Students' perspectives," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 6, no. 6, pp 191-201, 2015.
- [10] V. Mesa, "Achievement goal orientations of community college mathematics students and the misalignment of instructor perceptions," *Community College Review*, vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 46-74, 2012.
- [11] Y. I., Bhat & H. Khandai, "Social intelligence, study habits and academic achievements of college students of district Pulwama," *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 7, no. 6, pp. 35-41, 2016.
- [12] M. Horne, "A new role for CTE. Techniques," *Connecting Education and Careers*, vol. 85, no. 4, pp. 10-15, 2010.
- [13] M. Crede & N. R. Kuncel, "Study habits, skills, and attitudes: The third pillar supporting collegiate academic performance," *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, vol. 3, no. 6, 425-453, 2008.
- [14] A. J. Linderman, "Seventh grade student career aspirations and academic achievement. Counselor Education Master's Theses 67". Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/edc_theses/67
- [15] Federal Republic of Nigeria, *National Policy on Education*. Yaba, Lagos: NERDC Press, 2014.
- [16] L. S. Gottfredson, Applying Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise in career guidance and counseling. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work*, pp. 71-100, New York, NY: Wiley, 2005.
- [17] A. Abdullah, M. Suad, A. A. Yousef & S. B. Bakkar, "Career aspiration and related contextual variables," *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 703-711, 2020.
- [18] V. K. Bindu, "Career aspiration among high secondary school students in Kerala," *Journal of Social Welfare and Management*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 5-9, 2016.
- [19] J. M. Mettol & K. Ksilu, "Influence of career preference on academic performance and graduation of students: A case study of a University in Western Region of Kenya," *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 4, no. 8, pp. 9-20, 2016.
- [20] J. Jan-Ardies, D. Maeyer & D. Gijbels, "Longitudinal study on boys' and girls' career aspirations and interest in technology," *Research in Science & Technological Education*, vol. 33 no. 3, pp. 366-386, 2015.
- [21] E. Makarova & W. Herzog, "Trapped in the gender stereotype? The image of science among secondary school students and teachers," *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion: An International Journal*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 106-123, 2015.
- [22] F. Nadeem & R. Khalid, "The relationship of gender role attitudes with career aspirations and career choices among young adults," *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 455-471, 2018.

- [23] H. T. Yusuf, An evaluation of concurrent and consecutive university-based teacher-education curricula in Kwara, Oyo and Osun states, Nigeria, *Unpublished Ph. D. thesis*, Faculty of education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria, 2010.