

**THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS  
ON CHOICE OF CAREER AMONG SECONDARY  
SCHOOL STUDENTS' IN NIGERIA**

**BY**

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# THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON CHOICE OF CAREER AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' IN NIGERIA

## ABSTRACT

This study was carried out mainly on the environmental factors that influence students' choice of career in secondary school. Questionnaire was used to obtain data. The sample consisted of 100 students from four schools in Ijebu Ode local Government area of Ogun State. Data collected was analyzed using Pearson moment correlation co-efficient. This was used purposely to test the relationship that exists between the variables. The result revealed that factors such as family background, peer group pressure, societal valued jobs and the school environment directly influence students' choice of career. By implication, secondary school students need adequate guidance from their parents and school counsellors to avail them the chance of making the right career choice.

*Keywords: Environmental Factors, Choice of Career, Students*

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Research on the choice of career among secondary school students has for long being of interest to educational psychologists and professional counselors. Although, some studies have been carried out on the factors that influenced the choice of career among secondary schools students (See, Holland, 1985, Engwuchukwu, 1997; and Nworah, 1997), they did not investigate thoroughly the influence of environmental factors on students choice of career instead, emphasis were placed on factors such as personality type, prestige and economic rewards.

However, research evidence shows that the choice of career among secondary school students is determined by a combination of personal abilities, personality type and certain environmental factors. This is why Onayase and Onayase (2009) suggested an investigation into environmental factors such as:

- Family background
- School environment
- Religious institutions and
- Even peer group and their influence on students' choice of career.

Career, according to Cambridge Advance Learners' Dictionary (2005) refers to "job or series of job that you do during your working life". Thus, choosing a career simply means you are choosing a life job.

However, all careers have their subjects requirements, personality characteristics and personal abilities which are supposed to be fully assessed before individual can be deemed to be qualified to go into specific careers (Onayase and Onayase, 2009).

In this study, attention will be placed on environmental influence on the choice of career among secondary school students in Ijebu ode Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Environment is a term which has many connotations – it has physical, economic, social and cultural dimensions. From an environmentalist point of view, it is defined as the sum total of all social,



biological, chemical and physical factors which compose the surroundings of man (Southwick, 1976).

Olatunji, (2003) argues that we have three types of environment viz:

1. The Natural Environment
2. The Biological Environment
3. The Social Environment

He claimed that the Natural Environment is made up of man's surroundings which is the product of natural processes. It consists of such natural phenomenon as air, water, land, mountains, rivers as well as climate and its element. Thus, the natural environment has some influence on man as determined by weather condition, source of income and mode of living.

The Biological Environment includes all living things, plants, animals including man himself and micro-organisms that surround man in an area. These living things are interdependent on each other and they ultimately depend on the natural environment for survival.

The Social Environment refers to all effects of man's interaction with man in the process of his living in the natural environment. Social environment includes all the patterns of social relationships and groupings as well as the educational, recreational, religion, technological, cultural and economic opportunities created by man in the environment for the use of mankind.

From the foregoing, the elaborate research conducted by Olatunji (2003) indicates that the social environment has functionally Since it looks into social concepts such as the family, religion, education, peer group and even political group. Therefore, it will be more appropriate to carry out this research in light of Olatunji's (2003) definition of social environment

The influence of the environment on the choice of career among secondary school students in Ijebu Ode will therefore be examined in the context of Olatunji's (2003) social environment. The aim of this study is to look at how the family, peer group, society and school environment influences the choice of career among secondary school students

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Nigeria is rapidly developing her technological education, which has made the society more complex than it was in the past. The number of occupation has increased greatly and also there are many careers within one occupation. For instance, farming which was a simple occupation some years ago is now a very complex occupation within many careers to choose from. These included poultry, farming, vegetable farming, fruitful farming etc. the implication of this is specialization. This is why the family, peer group, school environment and even the larger society influences the decision any student might make in choosing a life career.

This constitutes a problem as students often make wrong choices. But presently, there is scanty research on the influence of environmental factors on choice of career among secondary school students.

## **1.3 Research Question/Hypotheses**

1. Is there any relationship between family background and the choice of career among secondary school students?

2. Is there any relationship between peer group pressure and the choice of career among secondary school students?
3. Is there any relationship between societal valued jobs and the choice of career among secondary school student?
4. Is there any relationship between school environment and the choice of career among secondary school students?

#### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant relationship between family background and the choice of career among secondary school students

Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant relationship between peer group pressure and the choice of career among secondary school students

Ho<sub>3</sub> There is no significant relationship between societal valued jobs and the choice of career among secondary school students

Ho<sub>4</sub> There is no significant relationship between the school environment and the choice of career among secondary school students.

## **1.5 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research work is to:

1. Find out the influence of environmental factors on choice of career among secondary school students in Ijebu Ode.
2. Find out if student choice of career depends on such factors as family, peer group pressure, societal valued jobs and the school environment.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The importance of the study is that:

1. It will provide valuable information on the influence of environmental factors on the choice of career among secondary school students.
2. It will provoke further research into the influences of environmental factors among secondary school students.
3. It will serve as resource materials for others who want to carry out research in emerging areas in the influence of environmental factors among secondary school students.

## **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study centers on the influence of environmental factors on students choice of career among secondary school students. It is aimed at all secondary school students in Ijebu Ode Local Government Area of Ogun state but because of time, money and other factors, it will be limited to only four schools in Ijebu Ode.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

This study adopts the descriptive survey design. The target population for the study consists of one hundred secondary school students from four selected secondary schools in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State. The data was analyzed using Pearson Moment Correlation Co-efficient to test for the relationship between the variables. The instrument reliability level was determined by the adoption of test-re-test method.

## **1.9 Operational Definition of Terms**

**CAREER:** Career is a term defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as an individual's "course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life)".

It's usually considered to pertain to remunerative work and sometimes also formal education).

**ENVIRONMENT:** Psychologists see environment as the physical and non-physical space in which we start our lives, mature, grow and develop and eventually die. They could be physical, mental, emotional or social environment (Orji and Anikweze, 1998)

**SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT:** this deals with the human interaction which goes on among fellow men. One who does not satisfy his physical needs lacks social environment. Social environment greatly influences the decision an adolescent makes. The social environment houses the family, peer group, religious institution and the larger society (Sandstrom, C.I., 1972)

**STUDENTS:** Secondary school students are often regarded as In-school adolescents that are under guidance of their parents and the school. (Medinnus and Johnson (1976).

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