

The Relationship between Personality Types and Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Federal Government Colleges in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The study was carried out to investigate the Relationship between Personality Types and Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Federal Government Colleges in Nigeria. The researchers formulated one hypothesis to guide the study. The researchers employed random sampling method to draw a sample size of six hundred and sixteen (616) senior secondary two students. The two instruments used for the study were Students' Personality Questionnaire (SPQ) and Students' Career Choice Questionnaire (SCCQ). The first instrument has a coefficient of .89 while the second has a coefficient of .81. Both have content validity and language appropriateness. The chi-square statistical analysis was used to analyze the data. The hypothesis was tested at 0.5 level of significance. The results showed that there were significant relationships between the Artistic, Social, Enterprising and investigative personality types on one hand and career choice on the other. However, no significant relationships were found between the realistic and conventional personality types and career choice. Based on the findings it was recommended, among others, that practising counsellors should give priority to career guidance in schools so as to enable students align their personality types with intended careers and also that emphasis should be placed on the importance of psychological testing in counsellor-training programmes in Nigeria's institutions.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of secondary schools in Nigeria is traceable to various missionary bodies. The Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) took the lead and was followed by other missions in the establishment of most post-primary schools in various parts of the country. Fafunwa (1974) opined that there was common curriculum among the missions and the subjects were mainly the four RS: Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Religion. Oroka (1998) pointed out that with gradual government involvement in education since 1882, the curriculum content was expanded to accommodate subjects like Latin, Greek, European History, Economic History and English Literature. These subjects were meant to promote the British culture.

In fact, this was the curriculum that Nigeria inherited from the colonial masters. University graduates at this period were held in high esteem. The situation has changed and the number of occupations has increased immensely and the current trend is for students to specialize in a particular field. This was one of the factors that prompted a change from the 6-5-4 system of education to the 6-3-3-4 system of education that emphasized technological education.

However, all careers have their subject combination requirements, personality characteristics and personal abilities which are supposed to be fully assessed before individuals can be deemed to be qualified to go into specific careers. It has to be stressed that every individual is unique. No person is exactly the same as the other, including identical twins that may differ in certain respects. These differences which affect all aspects of the individual's life can be attributed to hereditary and environmental factors. The problem of individual differences was what prompted psychologists of the old to find out whether personalities are of various types. Actually, these theories came up with different classifications of personality types.

In this study, Holland's theory was chosen because it is more embracing as it has six personality types as compared to those of Sheldon and Allport. It may be necessary therefore to examine Holland's grouping of personality types. Holland (1985) contended that people are most productive when there is a good fit between their personality types and their career. He proposed six personality types and these are as follows:

- The Realistic personality types possess manual skills but he is aggressive and unsociable. Farming, Forestry, Engineering

and Architecture are examples of careers this personality type can fit into.

- The Investigative personality makes extensive use of his intelligence. Thus, he is always thinking, organizing ideas and trying to understand things. Medicine, Geology, Mathematics and Physics fit very well into this occupational environment.
- The social personality type who detests physical activities is endowed with skills for inter-personal relationship. He is friendly, caring and enjoys imparting knowledge to others. Environments that match this personality type are Foreign Service, Social Welfare, Lecturing and Guidance and Counselling.
- The Artistic personality type is highly interested in creative activities where he can express his emotions. Thus, he prefers individual work to group work. Occupational environment where this personality can thrive well are Fine Art, Music, Mass Communication and Theatre Arts.
- The Enterprising personality type possesses verbal skills with which he influences others and also obtains power and status. Examples of occupational environments where this personality type can thrive well are Law, Catering, Political Science, Public Administration and Estate Management.
- The Conventional personality type is opposed to change: He is rule-regulated and enjoys ordered and systematic activities. Environments that match this type of personality are Accounting, banking, Library Science and Secretarial Work.

Fred (1985) investigated the Relationship between Personalities

Characteristics and Vocational Choice using Holland's theory. The result from the study shows that:

- (a) 70% of the subjects had personality types that were congruent with their career choice; and
- (b) The relationship between career choice and sex membership was not significant.

Engwuchukwu (1997) investigated the Correlates of job Aspirations of

Senior Secondary School students in Anambra State. The main aim of this study was to ascertain the jobs that appealed most to senior secondary school students in the state and also find out the factors that influence their job

aspirations. The results indicate that:

- (a) students aspired most to Medicine, Accounting, Law, Pharmacy and Engineering in descending order of preference;
- (b) the subjects (students') aspired to these top five jobs mainly because of their high economic rewards, social value and high prestige;
- (c) the respondents (students) aspired least to Artistry, Architecture and Soldering in descending order of preference;
- (d) The respondents (students) aspired least to those jobs for religious, psychosocial and counselling because of peer group influence. Bellamy (1997) carried out a study on Career Aspiration, Expectations and

Beliefs of African-American White and Hispanic Male adolescents with Holland Social Personality Types. Participants were 22 African-Americans, 38 white and 28 Hispanic Males, ninth graders from a Suburban High School. The results of the investigation showed that:

- (a) there were no differences in career aspirations and expectations either by race or by Holland's social personality type;
- (b) the only difference in career beliefs by race was that African-Americans scored higher than Whites and Hispanics in their beliefs that approval of others was not important in choosing a career; and
- (c) Differences in career beliefs by Holland social personality type were noted on four scales. High social personality types scored higher than low social personality types on all four scales, indicating the following beliefs:
 - (i) a willingness to work harder despite facing uncertain futures;
 - (ii) a greater inclination to persevere even in the face of failure; and
 - (iii) Envisioning greater capacity to pursue job satisfaction even if it meant changing job in the process.

Peng (1996) investigated the Impact of Career Education courses on Career Beliefs and Career decision making among Business College Students in Taiwan. The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of career education on career beliefs and decision-making of students. A total of 495 students comprising of 417 females and 78 males were administered the Career Decision Scale (CDS), the check list (CBC) and a demographic sheet. This study provided a partial

support for the assumption that taking a career education course influence students' career belief and career decision making. The results also underscore the relevance of planning career education course content that reflects how the influence of gender and college years status affect career decision making.

Nworah (1997) researched on the Factors that influenced Career Choice among Secondary School Students in Onitsha zone. The aim of the study was to find out the factors that students considered before picking careers. The study which was a survey had a population of 4,729 S.S. II students from which a sample of 400 students was selected. Three null hypotheses were generated for the study. The Motivation for Occupational Preference Scale (MOPS) was the questionnaire used to collect data. The data was subjected to statistical treatment using the mean and t-test analysis. The results showed:

that 76% of the boys preferred professional courses like Law, Medicine and Geology. 98% of the girls preferred people-oriented courses such as Banking, Broadcasting and Teaching.

Those students chose careers without considering the factors that influenced career choice such as interest, intellectual ability, personality of the individual and aptitudes.

In the study, personality types refer to individuals' behaviours patterns which should be compatible with their intended careers. These include the Realistic, Investigative, Social, Artistic, Enterprising and Conventional individuals (Holland, 1985).

From the foregoing, it is vividly clear that students need appropriate, usable and adequate information about their personality types and the world of work before they can make the right choice.

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 occupations has increased greatly and also, there are many careers within one occupation. For example, farming which was a simple occupation some decades ago is now a very complex occupation with many careers to choose from. These included poultry farming, vegetable farming, and fruitful farming to name but a few. The implication of this is specialization.

With little or no knowledge about self and job options in the world of work, students face a lot of problems in the choice of subjects that would lead them to their future careers. Many young persons have indicated their interest to read prestigious courses such as Medicine, Engineering, Law and Pharmacy without a single thought of the necessary subject combinations, lack of knowledge of career decision making skills and incongruent personality types. Consequently, when these individuals gain admission into Universities, they study courses other than which they applied for.

The researches have already published an article each on the Relationship Between Students' subject combinations and career choice. The present study is an attempt to go further by investigating the relationship between Personality Types and Career Choice of Secondary School Students. One hypothesis was formulated to guide the study.

Hypothesis

- (1) There is no significant relationship between personality types and career choice.

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURE

The research design adopted for this study is the ex-post facto research design. Asika (2002) maintained that ex post facto is a systematic empirical study in which the researcher does not in any way control or manipulate independent variables because the situation for the study already exists or has taken place. The two instruments used for the study were adopted from John Holland's Self-Directed Search (SDS) constructed in 1973. The instruments were tagged "Students' Personality Questionnaire" (SPQ) and "Students Career Choice Questionnaire" (SCCQ). The instruments were used by the researchers to determine whether the personality types of students are congruent with their career choice. Both instruments were modified to suit the Nigerian environment. This was done by removing some activities and career titles that are not common in the Nigerian society and replacing them with familiar ones. For instance, in the activities of the realistic Personality, "take shop course" and "take auto mechanics course" were removed and replaced with "repair furniture" and "make simple plumbing repairs". Some of the career titles

that were discarded were "Tree Surgery" and "Juvenile Delinquency Work" and these were replaced with "Forestry" and "Social Welfare".

Section one of the instrument contains the demographic information about the student such as name of school, name of town, gender and present class. Section two consists of personality questionnaire and section three is made up of students' career choice. The students' personality questionnaire is made up of fifty-four items of preferred activities of the six personality types and below is the breakdown of the items:

<i>Personality type</i>	<i>Number of items</i>
Realistic	9
Investigative	9
Artistic	9
Social	9
Enterprising	9
Conventional	9
Total	54

The students' career choice questionnaire contains thirty-eight (38) careers which have been grouped according to the six personality types. The occupations were further classified into Science-oriented, Social Science-oriented and Arts-oriented occupations. The Science-oriented occupations (which embrace the realistic and Investigative personality type) are made up of Technical and Medical careers. The Social, Enterprising and Conventional personality types fit into Social Science-oriented occupations. The Social Science oriented occupations include the Helping, Persuasive and Rule-regulated careers. While the Arts oriented occupations have to do with Artistic career and this is where the Artistic personality type belongs. Twenty percent (20%) of the occupations in each of the six (6) occupational areas were randomly selected because the occupations are numerous.

Students were made to tick only the preferred activities and occupations. Concerning the scoring of the preferred activities, the total number of ticks for each personality type was added and the highest score obtained for the respondent. For example, a student who got the highest mark under the realistic personality is regarded as a Realistic personality type. The same method of scoring was used for the occupations.

The instruments were subjected to thorough screening in order to determine their validity. The instruments have content validity and language appropriateness for the senior secondary two students. The test-re-test reliability estimates of Holland's Self-Directed Search (SDS) (1997) ranged from .78 to .89. The present researchers (2004) used the test-re-test method to determine the reliability of the instruments. The "Students' Personality Questionnaire" (SPQ) has a coefficient of .89 while the "Students Career Choice Questionnaire" (SCCQ) produced a coefficient of .81. These showed that the instruments were highly reliable and suitable for the collection of data.

The population of this study consisted of all the fifteen thousand, two hundred and ninety eight (15,298) Senior Secondary Two (SSII) Students distributed over the one hundred and two (102) Federal Government Colleges in Nigeria at the time of the study. The SSII Students have been selected for this study because; this is the class where students make the choice of subjects they would offer for the Senior School Certificate Examination.

The Investigators randomly selected twenty two percent (22%) of the Federal Government Colleges that participated in the Study. There were three thousand and eighty-seven (3,087) Senior Secondary Two (SSII) Students in the twenty-two (22) Federal Government Colleges. Twenty percent (20%) of the SSII Students were randomly selected from each of the twenty two (22) Federal Government Colleges, totalling up to six hundred and sixteen (616) Students. The researchers then administered the six hundred and sixteen (616) copies of the questionnaire on all the respondents. The investigators made use of research Assistants to administer copies of the questionnaire on the respondents in some of the institutions selected for the study. All the six hundred and sixteen (616) copies of the questionnaire administered were retrieved showing one hundred percent (100%) return rate.

The data collected from the administration of the questionnaire were first categorized into Sciences, Social Sciences and Arts. The data, were also grouped into the six personality types and then into right and wrong combinations. The researchers used the chi-square contingency and Goodness of Fit and then converted the data to contingency coefficient so as to determine the relationship that exists between personality types and career choice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected through the administration of questionnaire were presented, analyzed and used in testing the hypothesis propounded.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between personality types and career choices.

The chi-square Goodness of fit was employed to test this hypothesis. The data were then converted using the contingency coefficient statistics.

The analysis based on the realistic personality type yielded a calculated contingency coefficient value of 0.15. This was found not to be significant when compared with the critical r value of 0.30. There was therefore, no significant relationship between the realistic personality type and career choices. This implied that there was no concentration of scores, on either side (that is, right or wrong career). This is very obvious because the difference between the value of right and wrong career was very slim. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between the realistic and personality type and career choice was accepted.

Out of a total of 78 students who belong to the investigative personality type, 41 chose career that are congruent with their type while 37 students had a mismatch. The computed χ^2 value was 0.20, the contingency coefficient obtained was 0.05 while the critical r value was 0.22. The contingency of 0.05 was not significant because it was less than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the investigative personality type and career choice was accepted. In other words, one cannot categorically say that there is a fit between this personality type and career choice.

On the Artistic personality type, the calculated contingency coefficient value of 0.61 was more than the critical r value of 0.29. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the Artistic personality type and career choice was rejected. There is significant relationship between the wrong career and the Artistic personality. This is because majority of the students took to wrong subjects that are not in anyway related to their prospective career in the Arts.

The calculated contingency coefficient on the social personality type was 0.65. This was found to be greater than the table value of 0.20. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the social personality type and career choice was rejected. This meant that there is a significant relationship between this personality type and the wrong career. Out of a total of 331 students who are of this personality type, 307 took to career that do not match their type.

The data on Enterprising personality type showed that 57 out of a total of 79 students who belong to this personality type chose careers that are not in consonance with their type. The computed χ^2 value was 15.5 with 0.04 as the contingency coefficient and 0.22 as critical r value. Since the contingency coefficient value was more than the table value, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between Enterprising personality type and career choice was rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between the enterprising personality type and career choice. But the relationship is between the wrong career and the enterprising personality type.

On the conventional personality type, the data revealed that majority of the students (38) out of 45 chose careers that do not match their personality type. The calculated χ^2 was 21.34 with 0.57 as contingency coefficient and 0.29 as the

Table 1: The relationship between personality types and career choice

Personality Types	Right career	Wrong Career	Total	χ^2	Contingency Coefficient	Critical R
Realistic	2219	1619	3838	0.94	0.15	0.30
Investigative	4139	3739	7878	0.20	0.05	0.22
Artistic	522.5	4022.5	4545	27.2	0.61*	0.29
Social	24165.5	307165.5	331331	241.96	0.65*	0.20
Enterprises	2239.5	5739.5	7979	15.5	0.40*	0.22
Conventional	722.5	3822.5	4545	21.34	0.57*	0.29

Source: Field Work

*p< .05 Level of significance

critical r value. The contingency coefficient value was significant because it was more than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the conventional personality type and career choice was rejected. There is significant relationship between this personality type and the wrong career. Put in another way, there is a fit between the wrong career and this personality type.

DISCUSSION

From this study, it was observed that there is no significant relationship between the Realistic personality type and career choice. Though, some students have chosen careers that tally with their personality type, scores are not concentrated on either side (that is right or wrong career). Therefore, one can not categorically say that there is a fit between this personality type and career choice.

Another revelation made by this study is that there is no significant relationship between the investigative personality type and career choice. Though many students chose careers that are congruent with their personality type, a good number of them picked careers that do not match their personality type. It then suggests that scores are not concentrated on either side (that is right or wrong career). This result is at variance with the work of Fred (1985) which revealed that there was significant relationship between the investigative personality type and career choice.

Furthermore, this study showed that there is significant relationship between the Artistic personality type and choice of career. This significant relationship is between the wrong combination and personality type, for almost all the students took to careers that are not in consonance with their personality type. In fact, many of the students picked science related careers. This finding agrees with the work of Egwuchukwu (1997) which stated that students aspired least to Artistic and Soldiering careers. The explanation one could offer is that these students do not want to be looked down upon.

Another finding worthy of discussion is that there is significant relationship between the social personality type and career choice. This significant relationship is between the wrong career choice and the social personality type. A great number of students who are of this personality type indicated their interest for

prestigious career like Medicine and Engineering instead of those that match their personality type. This mismatch may have stemmed out of societal value; for the society respects those studying such prestigious courses. This finding is not different from that of Egwuchukwu (1997) which indicates that students aspired most to Medicine, Pharmacy and Engineering and the reasons for this are social value and high prestige.

One important result of this study is that there is significant relationship between the enterprising personality type and career choice. But this relationship is between the wrong career and this personality type. In other words, many students have chosen careers that are not congruent with their personality type. The study conducted by Nworah (1997) lends credence to this finding. She discovered that students chose career without considering the factors that influenced career choice such as intellectual ability, personality type and self concept.

From this study, it was observed that there is significant relationship between the conventional personality type and career choice. But this significant relationship is between the wrong career and the conventional personality type. Majority of the students in this category have a mismatch.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion that may be drawn is that many students are still ignorant of not only subject combinations that lead to their career, but also the type of personality that fits their career, probably, this was why almost all the students took prestigious careers that are mismatch for their personality types. The ignorance about personality type and the relevance to students intended career may also be due to the absence of Guidance Counsellors in the Federal Government Colleges who are supposed to provide career guidance to the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings and the conclusion reached, the researchers made the following recommendations:

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria should step up effort towards the training and posting of Guidance Counsellors to the federal Government Colleges to provide

- services to the students on career guidance.
2. On a regular basis the Guidance Counsellors should organize Career Day for the students. The Career Day should focus on subject combinations that lead to different careers and the types of personality that fit different careers. The School Administrators should provide necessary financial support to organize the Career day.
3. The Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) on a regular basis should organize seminar, workshop and symposia for practising counsellors to furnish them with information on how to administer, score and interpret personality tests.
4. Counsellors should be provided with personality test batteries.
5. The training of guidance Counsellors should emphasize the importance of psychological testing.

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