



Career Planning Strategies and Skills of Ho Polytechnic Students, Ghana

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. Author JT designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors JT and EKK managed the analyses of the study. Author MKD managed the literature searches. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine how important career planning is to students, to determine sources of information use in making future career decisions, determine career planning activities being employed by students and to determine the factors students consider the most in choosing a career. A descriptive, cross-sectional survey was conducted among 350 randomly selected students of Ho Polytechnic. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were computed during the analysis of the data using both SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Results show that 89% of the respondents indicated that career planning is very important to them while the rest 11% of them also indicated that career planning is quite important to them. Also, majority of the respondents indicated that the "Media", "Parent/guardian", "Mentor", "Relatives and peers", and "Lecturers" were the sources of information for their career planning process. Furthermore, it was found that "Undertaking strategic industrial attachment", "Talking to people in the job", and "Undertaking industry career research" were the main career planning activities adopted by most students.

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Finally, it was revealed that respondents were unanimous on “Pay and working conditions”, “Good working environment”, and “Personal skills and interest” as a factors they consider the most in choosing a career with about 92%, 59%, and 79% agreement respectively. Therefore, since career planning is of much importance to students, management should endeavor to develop a curriculum on career planning in all tertiary institution in the country. It is also recommended that the media, parents, mentors, relatives and peers should make available as much information to their wards to help in one’s career plan. Furthermore, management should thus increase the duration of industrial attachment since it provides students with career planning activities.

Keywords: Career planning; strategies; polytechnic; students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tertiary (polytechnic) education in general prepares an individual for self-reliance. This type of education is among key essential tools an individual can use to develop him or herself as well as the community. It therefore provides educational training for useful employment in almost every field. Basically, tertiary programs in higher education focused on supplying companies, and related businesses with a source of professionally trained employees and potential managers. However, choice of a career is probably one of the most important decisions every student make in determining future plans because this decision will impact them throughout their lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what the student wants to do with their life-long work. It is important for student to be independent during the college years development, researchers, [1,2,3,4] indicated that autonomy exemplifies the ability for students to make capable, independent decisions about their own lives while taking responsibility for their own behavior within the context of an appropriately strong, loving, and consultative connection with parents. Agreeing to [5], students feel their parents play a vital role by serving as advisors in their academic and career decisions but in order for parents to successfully manage their parenting role with college students they need to develop listening skills and the ability to provide constructive communication and, especially, assist their children in developing “independent decision-making, problem solving, and critical thinking skill”. The results of research conducted by [1], also revealed that over-parenting is distinct from parental involvement with respect to the demographic variables associated with them; namely, over-parenting is related to students with fewer siblings and students who live at home. The researchers [1], stated specifically, although parental involvement is related to more positive student outcomes such as higher social self-

efficacy and graduate school intentions, over-parenting is related to more negative consequences such as lower self-efficacy. Another intriguing finding is that over-parenting relates to maladaptive job search and work behavior among college students. Hall (1976) career is the individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviors associated with work-related experiences and activities over the span of the person's life. Researcher, Splaver (1977) point out that personality plays an important role in the choosing of the right career. A student's personality must be a self-motivated type, as to investigate career possibilities from early on in their lives, and not the procrastinating type that waits until they are compelled to decide. Students must take seriously the role grades play in limiting opportunities in the future. Splaver went on to say, “it is important for you to have a good understanding of yourself, your personality, if you are to make intelligent career plans”.

Career planning according to Scholars such as [6] is the process through which students come to make career-related decisions. They indicated that career planning generally involves formal career planning such a taking a mandatory career and life management course and seeking information regarding post-secondary education and financial assistance from a school guidance counsellor; and informal means such as considering a number of different occupations based on interests and skills and discussing one's career plans with a variety of individuals, parents, friends, teachers, people working in the field, etc.

A study by [7] suggests that career planning becomes significant during late adolescence and early adulthood. During this time, students enter a time in their lives when seeking career information and skills and becoming aware of their vocational interests is a major developmental task [8], Luzzo, (1993). Researchers Hiebert, B., Kemeny, K., & Kurchak,

W. (1998) conducted a study that examined junior high school students' reports of their guidance counselling needs and found that three of the students' top five needs pertained to career concerns. Hutchinson & Bottorff (1986) also established in her paper that almost 89% (135 out of 152 respondents) of high school students (Total school population of 320) reported career counseling to be a priority. In their paper it also appeared that there is a variation from one student to the other in terms of readiness to engage in career exploration. Some factors that may account for this variability include self-esteem; ego strength, openness [8] and decision-making style [9]. Individuals who are more cognitively oriented and systematic in making decisions may be more likely to engage in career exploration [9].

Research also suggests that adolescents are capable of making responsible and effective career-related decisions and that this ability improves over time. According to [10] there is a positive relationship between adolescents' age and decision-making capabilities, such as an increased awareness of the risks and implications involved in making a decision, a tendency to seek more advice from adults or peers, and an increased awareness of the implications of receiving advice from someone with vested interests. A more recent study by Bregman & Killen (1999) reported that adolescents and young adults support responsible vocational decisions that nurture personal growth and that they disapprove of self-indulgent choices concerned with short-range goals.

Information used by adolescents in making decisions about their future career includes attitudes and beliefs acquired during childhood, including specific information provided by a number of sources, including parents, siblings, other family members, family friends, peers, guidance counsellors, teachers, school and public library resources, the mass media and government career centres [11]. Adolescents appear to approach certain individuals such as friends, teachers and family members more frequently because of their availability rather than because the adolescents believe that these individuals will be of most help in their career exploration (Taviera M. D. et al, 1998).

Not long ago [11] conducted a study on 399 students in two Canadian secondary schools. Students faced significant barriers to career

planning, including 40% of students not knowing where to go for help with career decision making, 39.7% believing they needed to go to too many different places for the information they required, 59.7% finding it difficult to locate all the information they needed to make a career decision, and 37.6% not knowing where to get the answers to questions about their future. Students also reported not knowing what grades (38.3%) or courses (38%) they needed to achieve their career goals, and over half (57%) of the students required more information about financial assistance for further education. It also appeared that this lack of career information was not for a lack of trying on the part of the adolescents: 76.6% of these students reported that they had tried to get their questions answered, and of those that did not, 18% stated their reason for not doing so was because 'it was too difficult, or that there was insufficient information available. Julien pointed out that a potential reason for such feelings of anxiety was that many of the adolescents did not understand the process of career decision making. Thus, it appears students may have a variety of career planning needs that may not be met by current career planning systems.

However, the gap for this study is situated in the fact that there is no clear work referencing the career planning strategies and skills of Polytechnic students in Ghana. Thus this study is aimed towards finding out the career planning strategies and skills of Polytechnic students in Ho Polytechnic. Specifically, to examine how important career planning is to students, to determine sources of information use in making future career decisions, determine career planning activities being employed by students and to determine the factors students consider the most in choosing a career.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Career Development

According to [12] career development is an ongoing process by which individuals progress through a series of stages, each of which is characterized by a relatively unique set of issues, themes and tasks. In their contention, [13] state that career development is a lifelong process and add that within this process the individual finds himself facing different work-related tasks which follow one another in a predetermined way, and can only move to the next stage of development once these tasks have been mastered. [14] on

the other hand agrees that an individual's successful adaptation to each of the identified development stages allows for more effective functioning as a student, employee or retiree as well as laying the foundation for mastering any preceding tasks. Skipping tasks in the sequence, however, is ill-advised as it may result in the individual experiencing difficulty in later stages [14].

Super and Hall (1978) and [15] identified five developmental stages that an individual goes through, namely growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and decline. It also highlights the various career stages and tasks that accompany each of the development stages. As the individual moves between the different life stages, he or she may also be faced with various choices that need to be made as the core focus alters throughout the process. [15] explains that, for example, if an individual goes full circle through the various stages, during the growth stage he or she may become aware of the need to make a career choice. In the exploration stage the individual will formulate questions, identify facts, seek data, evaluate and compare old and new data, and identify alternatives, potential actions and outcomes. The alternatives will then be measured in terms of values and objectives, and he or she will then, in the establishment stage, select a preferred action plan. In both the exploration and establishment stages there is a need to continuously collect data as well as to evaluate outcomes with the modification of plans [15]. In the maintenance stage individuals concentrate on maintaining what they have established, and would most likely reevaluate their work experiences and their career self-concept [14]. This may lead to their changing organizations, careers or fields. The last stage is the decline stage; here the individual is involved in deceleration of the developmental tasks, and he or she is most likely to focus on retirement planning and retirement living [14].

Several research findings including [16] show that new students all over the world are usually faced with a dilemma in making a career choice decision in their lives. In his paper of career choice of Nigerian youths, [17] found that many youths make wrong career choices due to ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, advice from friends, parents and teachers, or as a result of prestige attached to certain jobs without adequate guidance and career counseling. One factor that play important role in one's career choice is the school where one is educated [18].

A study by [19] identified that schools are social institutions that reinforce gender-appropriate behavior, interests and occupations. Other researchers also concluded that it is important for students to have a good understanding of themselves (personality), if they are to make intelligent career plans [20,21].

Career development also examines the degree of career maturity which relates to the extent to which individuals are prepared to make career-related decisions, and whether these decisions are made rationally and with adequate knowledge. It also examines the extent to which the individual is able to master particular career developmental tasks which are applicable to their stage of life. Career guidance is vital to establish the individual's stage of career maturity in order to estimate which tasks relating to career development need more attention in order that career planning can [13]. As indicated by [22] during the development and the incorporation of the physical, cognitive, moral and psychological domains of individuals, they must obtain certain developmental competencies which are related to learning, work and career choices. These tasks arise during specific periods of individuals' lives, and if successfully achieved, can lead to happiness and success. Failure to achieve these tasks may lead to unhappiness; they might experience difficulty with tasks later on, and may be subject to disapproval within society [22]. The acquisition of certain competencies and abilities can enable individuals to distinguish between tasks that they like and those that they dislike, to accept responsibility to do tasks and to complete these tasks within a specified time. This will enable them to make initial career choices and to select suitable subjects, study directions or jobs [22]. An observation made by [23] was that career maturity in the explorative and establishment phases varied significantly between individuals in the South African Air Force and the South African Navy; this could be attributed to the training programmes offered by these entities. For new recruits the South African Air Force provides a broader variety of specialized training which is more applicable to careers outside the military than training provided by the South African Navy [23].

[22] describe and summaries career developmental tasks as those that an individual has to master prior to career entry or even before embarking on tertiary education. The following developmental tasks include the need to acquire

certain competencies to make career choices and decisions, and the development of certain attitudes:

- Career orientation: Describes the degree of the individual's active involvement and commitment in the process of career choices, for example, using information and abilities to solve career-choice problems that may occur.
- Career information and career planning: Will require the ability to explore and gather relevant information to plan and decide upon a career.
- Consistency of career preferences: Relates to consistency of career choice over time, and choices within career directions.
- The individual has certainty of concepts and attitudes of work and career.
- Wisdom of vocational choices: Evaluates how realistic the individual's choice is, employing an assessment of abilities and interests compared to the demands of the job or career. This is especially important in the transition stage (18 to 21 years of age) when the young adult has to decide on a study field and career direction, or even when starting a job.

2.2 Concept of Career Decision Making

Decision making can be defined as "an act of choice by which an executive selects one particular course of action from among possible alternatives for the attainment of a desired end or as a solution to a specific problem" [24]. It involves conscious or unconscious attempt at making a choice out of competing alternatives. It implies selecting from alternative policies, procedures, and programmes.

Career decision making is vital as the country is faced with the problem of unemployment which is the result of poverty and other social vices in the country. For a person to make a better decision about choice of career, he must be helped in the areas below; self-awareness, educational awareness, career awareness, career exploration, and career planning and decision making [25].

2.2.1 Self-awareness

Identifying the right career choice involves many factors but a crucial part of the process is developing your own self-awareness. Knowledge

about one's aptitude, interest, values, personality traits and abilities helps you understand your occupational fit by analyzing your strength, weakness and preferences. [26] posit that for one to make good choices he needs career counselling or guidance, needs to be aware of him or herself and to have knowledge of occupations and options available.

2.2.2 Educational awareness

It is very essential in career planning for one to be aware of the relationship between self, educational opportunities and the world of work.

2.2.3 Career awareness

Students at all levels of education should be assisted to have a continuous expansion of knowledge and awareness about the world of work. At each level students should be assisted to develop recognition of the relationships between values, life styles and careers through career days and interest inventory. They must be aware of relationships between desirable school habit, positive human relationships and good worker traits.

2.2.4 Career exploration

This represents, learning about oneself and the world of work, identifying and exploring potentially satisfying occupations and develop an effective strategy to realize your goal. Comparisons, reality testing, and standardized testing, and computerized programmes may be useful.

2.2.5 Career planning and decision making

Students are to be helped to take control of their life and become an active agent for shaping their own future. They need to narrow down their career possibility and then move on to examine and test these options as critically as possible. Students need to be aware of the process of decision making and choosing between competitive alternatives, examining the consequences of specific choices, the value of compromise, and implementing a decision. Students are to recognize the impact of their current plan and decision making on their future.

Students at this level are influenced by what they see around them; family, friends, neighbours, televisions or in movies. That is why experts suggest that students need to be aware of

themselves and the world around them in order to fully understand and make use of information about their individual interests and what exist beyond their immediate world. It is helping them to explore their likes and dislikes, expand their understanding of the world at large, and enhance their knowledge of how business works.

2.2.5.1 Career development theories

In addition to the above, the following theories will also help the individual to be equipped with personality factors, environmental factors and other factors that influences choice of career;

- Trait and Factor Theory
- Anne Roe's Personality Theory
- Social – Cognitive Theory

2.3 Trait and Factor Theory of Career Development

It is also called matching or actuarial approach. It is referred to as the oldest theoretical approach to career development and Parsons as the originator [27]. It is based on the measurement of individual talent and the attributes required in a particular Job. The basic purpose of trait and factor approach to career counseling was to match the characteristics of client to jobs which required those characteristics and in so doing, identify the jobs which were, theoretically, the most appropriate for that client. Herr and Cramer (1984) identified ten (10) major types of matching information usually sought by professional counselors. The matching types were abilities, needs and interest, stereotypes and expectations, significant others, values, residence, family, adjustment, risk-taking and aspiration.

The trait aspect of the trait and factor theory refers to characteristics typical of the individual overtime relatively stable, consistent in situations and provide a basis for measuring, describing and predicting behaviour. The factor aspect refers to a construct which represent a group of traits that correlate with each other.

This theory is used by many career practitioners in one form or another. Many of the aptitude, personality and interest tests and information materials that emerged from this approach have involved and remain in use up to now. Examples are, General Aptitude Test Battery, Occupational Profiles and ever expanding Computer-based career guidance programmes.

Trait and factor theory is criticized as not able to produce a perfect match between people and jobs [28] and became increasingly unpopular in the 1970s, describe as going into 'incipient decline' [29]. In essence, the trait and factor approach is far too narrow in scope to be considered as a major theory of career development. However, we should recognize that standardized assessment and occupational analysis procedures stressed in trait and factor approaches are used in career counseling [30].

In addition to the above, trait and factor theory focuses on personality factors without considering the influence of environmental factors like availability of jobs to match individuals' trait and interpersonal factors in career choice. And cannot provide enough bases for the current studies.

2.4 Anne Roe's Personality/Need Theory

Researchers [31] posit that this theory sees one's need as the main determinant of the nature of an individual's interests including vocational interest. This theorist was of the view that career choice is based on childhood orientation or experience at home to satisfy needs and that people choose occupation that satisfies important needs. This theory attempt to understand, make meaning of and utilize individual motives, purposes and drives to support career development.

Anne Roe's theory was based on Abraham Maslow's theory that human needs could be described as a hierarchy of low order and high order. According to Maslow, people must fulfill lower order needs before they can strive to fulfill higher order needs. [32] used Maslow's conceptualizations to suggest that vocational behaviour is the individuals attempt to fulfill certain needs. That particular level of need, for which gratification is sought, in part determines the nature of the behaviours used. Roe emphasized the importance of using the child-rearing practices to which the individual had exposed, to help explain the individual's vocational behaviours. Roe described three general type of practices;

1. Emotional concentration on the child which might include overprotection and over-demand on the child. Children raised under these conditions tend to have their lower order needs met such as belonging and self-esteem. Therefore, the prediction

- would be that they would seek this fulfillment through their occupation.
2. Avoidance of the child where neither the physiological nor emotional needs were fulfilled. Therefore, individuals seek things and limit contact with other people in their occupation.
 3. Acceptance of the child in a democratic family unit where most needs are met. The prediction would be that the individual would seek fulfillment of the highest needs in an occupation.

Another component of Roe's approach was that specific vocational behaviours exhibited by an individual were influenced by the individual's genetic endowment such as intelligence or physical ability (Herr, 1984).

[32] also developed a field and levels occupational classification scheme to facilitate understanding of her approach. The fields are classified by degrees of responsibility, capacity and skills. [33] in reviewing Roe's approach commented that the theory attends to every important aspect of vocational selection.

Roe's theory may be appropriate in developed countries, however, the current researcher feels, it may not be relevant in Ghana where job opportunities are limited, movement from one job to the other not easy and one has to secure a job for a survival

2.5 Social Cognitive Theory

This theory says that behaviour, environment and person or cognitive factors are important in understanding development [34]. According to researcher [35] the Social Cognitive philosophy also suggests that individuals do not simply respond to environmental influences, but rather they actively seek and interpret information. It is believed to be developed by Bandura in 1986. He postulates a triadic reciprocal causation that involves cognitive, behaviour and environmental factors. All the three operate interactively as determinants of one another.

Thus, people do not simply react to environmental events, they create their own environment and do well to change them. Cognitive events determine which environmental events will be perceived and how they will be interpreted, organized and acted on. Either positive or negative feedback from behaviour in

turn, influences people's thinking and the ways in which they act to change the environment [36].

Adolescents observe themselves and note how well their skills, interest and values match the requirements of the situation. These observations have consequences for the type of work they might be good at. They are also related to what they are interested in and what they value. People attempt to understand the consequences of their actions and use this understanding in ways that change their environments to better meet their needs.

However, this theory fails to acknowledge emotion as an important component of personality and has little to say about developmental origins of adult personality [37]. Despite its weakness it is the most appropriate theory to serve the basis for this research because it focuses on behaviour, thinking, environment and interaction between these factors.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design and Setting

This study used descriptive, cross-sectional study design. The setting was the Ho Polytechnic in Volta Region, Ghana. This polytechnic was established in 1986 and has only one campus. The four specialties offered within the faculties are Applied Science, Business & Management, Engineering, and the Art & Design.

3.2 Study Population

The study was conducted on registered students studying tertiary courses in Ho Polytechnic. The total number of registered tertiary students was 4,159 which comprise 2,676 males and 1,483 females (Planning & Quality Assurance Unit Ho Polytechnic, 2015). The population of the study is heterogeneous in nature with respect to males and female students.

3.3 Sample Size and Techniques

A total sample of 350 was taken from the target population. Since the respondents appear to be in strata or departments, the selection of the 350 response units from each stratum was determined by applying proportional allocation formula, $n_h = \frac{N_h}{N} \times 350$, where n_h denote the number of samples to be selected from stratum

h ; N_h denote the total number of elements (students) in stratum h ; and N , the total population. The Table 1 is the summary of the sampling results.

Table 1. Stratified random sample allocation

Academic department	Number of elements	Proportional allocation
Statistics	35	3
Hospitality & tourism management	938	79
I. C. T.	28	2
Computer science	11	1
Agro-enterprise development	23	2
Industrial art	23	2
Fashion design & modelling	451	38
Banking & finance	166	14
Purchasing & supply	178	15
Accountancy	962	81
Marketing	641	54
Secretaryship	617	52
Agriculture	23	2
Civil engineering	3	0
Building technology	11	1
Electrical/ Electronic engineering	35	3
Automobile engineering	11	1
Production engineering	3	0
Total	4159	350

Data collection was conducted solely by the researchers themselves. Simple random sampling technique was used to identify the research participants in each stratum. To arrive at the sample, a sampling frame was obtained from a list of female students provided by each course representative. A list of random numbers was then assigned to all units in the sampling frame. Numbers were then picked randomly from the random table designed. This process continued until the required number of respondents was achieved in all departments.

3.4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criterion

The respondents were all the registered, full-time students from all years/level studying tertiary courses in Ho Polytechnic. Tertiary students that were willing to participate in the study were included in the study. All part-time and students studying non-tertiary courses were all excluded from the study.

3.5 Ethical Consideration

An introductory letter was obtained from the Head of Statistics Department, Ho Polytechnic to seek permission and consent of school authorities and respondents respectively. Again, respondents were assured of the researcher's absolute adherence to the tenets of ethics which include respect for respondents' dignity, confidentiality, anonymity among others.

3.6 Research Instrument

Data for the study was obtained using questionnaire. The questionnaire had two sections. The first section consisted of demographic information such as age, and marital status. The second section consisted of general knowledge on career planning of students.

3.7 Data Analysis

From the data compiled, both descriptive and inferential statistics were computed during the analysis of the data using both SPSS and Microsoft Excel. The descriptive aspect employed frequency tables; pie and bar charts whilst the inferential aspect of the analysis employed binomial test to categorize the proportion of success and the proportion of failure and Mann-Whitney Test which is used to compare differences between two independent groups when the dependent variable is either ordinal or continuous, but not normally distributed.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This subsection looks at the summary statistics of the respondents. A total of 350 students completed the questionnaire. Table 1 summarizes the socio-demographic information of the respondents. 169 of the respondents which represent 48.3% were males and 181 of them which represent 51.7% were female students. Also 59.7% were between the ages of 18 and 25, 32.3% were between 25-35 years, 6.6% were between 26-45 years and 1.4% were between 46-55 years; finally, 74% were never married whiles 26% were married.

From Fig. 1, out of the 350 respondents, 338 of them which represent 97% indicated that the course they are pursuing is helpful in making a career whiles the rest 12 of them which represent

3% indicated that the course they are pursuing is not helpful in making a career.

Table 2. Demographic information of the participants (n=350)

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Gender		
Male	169	48.3
Female	181	51.7
Age		
18-25	209	59.7
26-35	113	32.3
36-45	23	6.6
46-55	5	1.4
Marital Status		
Never Married	259	74.0
Married	91	26.0

Source: Field data (2016)

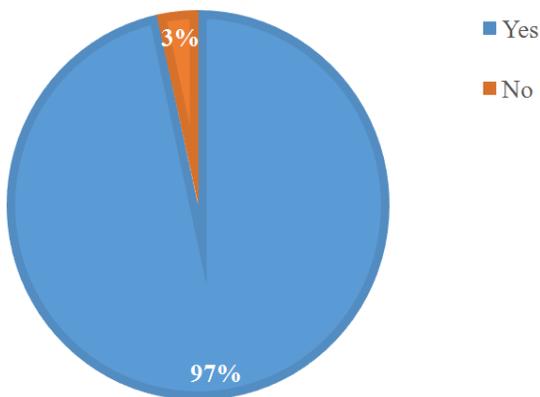


Fig. 1. A Pie chart showing respondents view on whether course of study is helpful in making a career

From Fig. 2 out of the 350 respondents, majority of the respondent which represent 68% indicated that they preferred salaried job as a career while the rest 112 of them which represent 32% also indicated that they preferred self-employment as a career.

Fig. 3 also revealed that majority of the respondents which represent 89% indicated that career planning is very important to them while the rest 11% of them also indicated that career planning is quite important to them.

Table 3 indicates that there were 1305 responses to the series of questions on sources of career information to students. The highest responses came from five factors "Media", "Parent/guardian", "Mentor", "Relatives and

peers", and "Lecturers" with the above factors having about 25.3%, 20.4%, 19.3%, 15.8% and 13.6% of the total responses respectively.

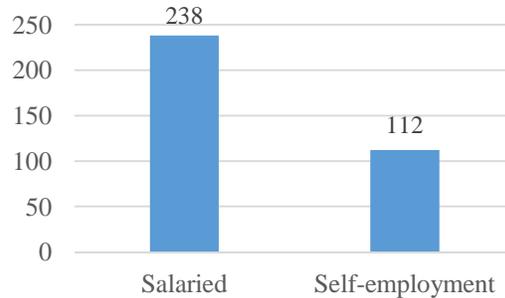


Fig. 2. A bar chart showing proportion of respondent by type of career/job

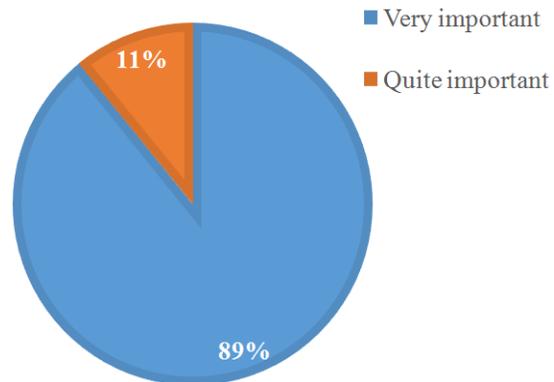


Fig. 3. Proportion of respondents by how important career planning is to respondents

Table 3. Source of career information

	Responses		Percent of cases
	N	Percent	
Parent/guardian	266	20.4%	76.0%
Mentor	252	19.3%	72.0%
Lecturers	178	13.6%	50.9%
Relatives and peers	206	15.8%	58.9%
School guidance counsellor	73	5.6%	20.9%
Media	330	25.3%	94.3%
Total	1305	100.0%	372.9%

Source: Field Data, 2016

However, factors like school guidance counsellor is not highly rated by the respondents with about 5.6% of the total responses.

Table 4 indicates that there were 729 responses to the series of questions on career planning activities of students. The highest responses came from all the three factors "Undertaking

strategic industrial attachment”, “Talking to people in the job”, and “Undertaking industry career research”, with the above factors having about 40.9%, 33.7%, and 25.4% of the total responses respectively.

Table 4. Career planning activities

	Responses		Percent of cases
	N	Percent	
Undertaking strategic industrial attachment	298	40.9%	85.1%
Undertaking industry career research	185	25.4%	52.9%
Talking to people in the job	246	33.7%	70.3%
Total	729	100.0%	208.3%

Source: Field Data, 2016

The variables in the Table 5 are indicators of the factors respondents consider the most in choosing a career. From the table above, group 1 (≤ 3) are those who strongly disagree or disagreed to the variables indicating the factors respondents consider the most in choosing a career; group 2 (> 3) are those who strongly agreed and agreed. At a significant value of 0.05; it appears that three exact significant values except one is less than 0.05, suggesting that the respondents are unanimous on them as a factors they consider the most in choosing a career. The significant variables are “Pay and working conditions”, “Good working environment”, and

“Personal skills and interest” with 92%, 59%, and 79% agreement respectively.

However, those that has a significant value greater than 0.05 is “Flexible working hours”. The implication of this is that the respondents are divided on the effectiveness of that statement as a factors they consider the most in choosing a career.

From Table 6, at a significant value of $\alpha = 0.05$, it appears that none of the asymptotic is less than 0.05. It therefore suggests that there is no significant difference between the male and female respondents rating of the four variables describing the factors respondents consider the most in choosing a career; and that there are no significant difference between the responses of males and that of females. The findings are thus supported by the next output table which shows the mean rank for samples from male and female populations.

It could be seen from Table 7 that the mean ranks don't show any significant difference. Therefore, it could be said that both sexes perceive factors considered the most in choosing a career the same way with respect to pay and working conditions, good working environment, and flexible working hours. Both sexes also perceive factors considered the most in choosing a career in the same way regarding the personal skills and interest of students.

Table 5. Factors respondents consider the most in choosing a career

	Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Pay and working conditions	Group 1 ≤ 3	28	0.08	0.50	0.000
	Group 2 > 3	322	0.92		
	Total	350	1.00		
Good working environment	Group 1 ≤ 3	142	0.41	0.50	0.000
	Group 2 > 3	208	0.59		
	Total	350	1.00		
Flexible working hours	Group 1 ≤ 3	166	0.47	0.50	0.364
	Group 2 > 3	184	0.53		
	Total	350	1.00		
Personal skills and interest	Group 1 ≤ 3	75	0.21	0.50	0.000
	Group 2 > 3	275	0.79		
	Total	350	1.00		

Source: Field Data, 2016

Table 6. Significance test for samples from male and female populations

	Pay and working conditions	Good working environment	Flexible working hours	Personal skills and interest
Mann-Whitney U	14653.500	14979.000	14488.500	14615.000
Wilcoxon W	31124.500	29344.000	28853.500	31086.000
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.448	0.730	0.376	0.438

Source: Field Data, 2016

Table 7. Mean rank for samples from male and female populations

	Gender	N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks
Pay and working conditions	Male	169	179.29	30300.50
	Female	181	171.96	31124.50
	Total	350		
Good working environment	Male	169	173.63	29344.00
	Female	181	177.24	32081.00
	Total	350		
Flexible working hours	Male	169	170.73	28853.50
	Female	181	179.95	32571.50
	Total	350		
Personal skills and interest	Male	169	179.52	30339.00
	Female	181	171.75	31086.00
	Total	350		

Source: Field Data, 2016

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study reported here confirms existing knowledge by [7] that suggested that career planning becomes significant during late adolescence and early adulthood. During this time, students enter a time in their lives when seeking career information and becoming aware of their vocational interests is a major developmental task (Erickson 1966, cited in [8]). The study's finding of how important career planning is to students has a relation with the findings of Chen (1997) which indicated that career choice that adolescents make is a decision that is influenced not only by their development but also by the context in which they live.

Concerning the sources of information use in making future career decisions found in this study is in contrary to the findings of Wilson (2000) which noted that in the course of information seeking, individuals may interact with manual information systems such as a newspaper or a library or with computer-based systems (such as the World Wide Web). This is however, consistent with a study by revealed that students are more aware of parents, teachers and churches as sources of career information. It is also in support with the findings of Olayinka (1993) and McKnight (2009) whose studies found out that high school students acquire career information mainly from parents and teachers. Moreover, Witko, Bernes, Magnusson & Bardick (2005) who found out that majority students feel most comfortable approaching their parents and friends for help with career planning. The finding also follows the conclusion of [21]; most people are influenced by careers that their parents

favour. Also [38] in their work found the mother as the that most influential person adolescents talk to concerning their career choice. The proximity of the respondents to those individuals may, however, account for the extent to which they are used as career information sources. [1] stated specifically, although parental involvement is related to more positive student outcomes such as higher social self-efficacy and graduate school intentions, over-parenting is related to more negative consequences such as lower self-efficacy.

Also, findings of this study on career planning activities being employed by students are in support of a study done by Matamande et al (2013) which indicated that industrial attachment is a very important component in the learning system particularly for tertiary and higher education as it relates to those who are pursuing a career. They stated that industrial attachment has increasingly become an important element of training as employers continue to demand for fully trained students. According to [39] industrial attachment helps in the acquisition of practical knowledge that would assist in getting employment.

Furthermore, result of the study is consistent with findings of [40] that every individual student has their potential interests, and is surrounded by their individual unique environment. Hence their career development is influenced by, among many, the different contexts in which they live and their personal aptitudes. Another research by Goldacre et al. (2005) on factors that are rated as important in influencing career choice of graduates indicated that enthusiasm or commitment, the anticipated hours and working conditions, self-appraisal of own skills or aptitudes, experience of chosen subject as a student, influence of a particular teacher.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusively, it was established that majority of the respondents which represent 89% indicated that career planning is very important to them whiles the rest 11% of them also indicated that career planning is quite important to them.

On the sources of information for career planning, majority of the respondents indicated that the "Media", "Parent/guardian", "Mentor", "Relatives and peers", and "Lecturers" were the sources of information for their career planning

process. Also, it was found that “Undertaking strategic industrial attachment”, “Talking to people in the job”, and “Undertaking industry career research” were the main career planning activities adopted by most students. Finally, on the factors considered the most in choosing a career, it was revealed that respondents were unanimous on “Pay and working conditions”, “Good working environment”, and “Personal skills and interest” as a factors they consider the most in choosing a career with about 92%, 59%, and 79% agreement respectively.

Therefore, since career planning is of much importance to students, management should endeavor to develop a curriculum on career planning in all tertiary institution in the country. It is also recommended that the media, parents, mentors, relatives and peers should make available as much information to their wards to help in one’s career plan. Parents should not over protect their children but should serve as counselors to their children in the university and colleges. Furthermore, management should thus increase the duration of industrial attachment to a minimum of two months after every academic year ends since it provides students with career planning activities. Effort should also be made to supervise attachment students, give marks for their performance, and these marks should appear on their transcripts or detailed results.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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