

The Incentives for Career Choice among Students in the Colleges of Education in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, (Akwacross), Nigeria

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Received: 20.05.2025 | Accepted: 19.06.2024 | Published: 25.06.2025

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.15741194](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15741194)

Abstract

Original Research Article

This piece of research work is designed to assess the incentives influencing career choices among students in Colleges of Education located in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. Specifically, the study focuses on students at Akwa Ibom State College of Education and the College of Education, Akampa, Cross River State. Six (6) research questions and six corresponding null hypotheses are formulated to guide the study. The population of the study consists of all level one hundred students across various departments within these two specified Colleges of Education.. A sample size of 250 students is to be randomly selected from the study population through random sampling techniques. The instrument to be used for data collection is a Questionnaire, which will be developed by the researcher. To ensure validity, the instrument is to be reviewed by a measurement and evaluation expert and two experienced educators representing relevant academic departments from the participating institutions. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (PPMCC) is to be used to measure the reliability of the instrument, with an expected target yield of a reliability coefficient of 0.92. The data collected are to be analysed using mean rating and standard deviation to answer the research Questions. Z-test statistics shall be used to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The study anticipates revealing that factors such as personal interest significantly influence students' career choices within these colleges. Other variables, including innate abilities, acquired skills, and perceived career prospects, may also emerge as key incentives. Based on the findings, recommendations may include: advocating for parents/guardians to consult professional career counsellors to guide students effectively based on interest, skills, abilities, and career prospects; suggesting that relevant academic departments conduct aptitude assessments and organize regular sensitization seminars on career choices; and encouraging the Colleges of Education administration to promote and support the activities of guidance counsellors within their respective institutions.

Keywords: Career Choice, Incentives, Colleges Of Education, Akwa Ibom, Cross River State, Students, Career Counselling, Personal Interest, Skills, Career Prospects, Educational Research.

Citation: Isong, S. I., & Udo, U. H.(2025). The incentives for career choice among students in the colleges of education in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, (Akwacross), Nigeria. *SSR Journal of Economics, Business and Management (SSRJEBM)*, 2(3), 116-131.

INTRODUCTION

Career choice constitutes a cardinal task for every developing individual. This decision is critical because the career path chosen today often dictates an individual's future social status, job prospects, and standard of living. Making an informed career choice requires significant self-reflection and understanding. As Amaewhule (2014) opined, this necessitates an in-depth awareness of oneself, particularly one's abilities, interests, and aptitudes. Ability encompasses not just skill level but also the dedication and orientation needed for success in a future job. Interest often serves as a dominant factor propelling individuals in their life endeavors, while

aptitude reflects natural talents that can be honed for career development.

The complexity of weighing these personal factors against external opportunities means that making a career choice decision is rarely simple, often highlighting the value of guidance counselors. Nonetheless, choosing a career path is a fundamental tool for the realization and actualization of future dreams, expectations, and aspirations. Supporting this view, Ikoyo (2016) posited that the success of future achievements significantly depends on the initial career choice made by an individual.

Colleges of Education in Nigeria, such as those in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, play a vital role in

preparing students for their professional futures. In line with the National Policy on Education, these institutions are primarily designed to train qualified teachers for various levels of schooling and business arenas. However, they also aim to equip graduates with skills that make them employable in diverse roles within both the private and public sectors, potentially fostering entrepreneurship and contributing to various industries.

On the whole, The National Policy on Education in Nigeria emphasizes student-centered education for maximum self-development and self-fulfillment. According to the policy, educational activities should focus on helping students discover their talents and interests. Hence, the General Curriculum for the Colleges of Education allows for

Diversified Curriculum. The policy ensures a diversified curriculum to cater to differences in talents, disposition, opportunities, and future roles of students, particularly in Post-Basic Education and Career Development. Career Development. Tertiary education institutions including Colleges of Education are expected to provide high-quality career counseling and lifelong learning programs to prepare students for self-reliance and the labor market and Skilled Manpower. The policy aims to reduce skill shortages in the country through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the demands of the labor market^{1 2}.

The decision to pursue a specific course of study within these colleges – effectively choosing a career direction – is influenced by a variety of potential incentives. These can include intrinsic factors like an individual's preferences, interests, perceived abilities, skills, and anticipated career prospects, including potential future earnings and societal prestige (Edwards and Quinter, 2011). Simultaneously, external influences such as advice or pressure from parents, peers, religion, and social class expectations, as well as guidance from role models, counselors, and teachers, can significantly shape these choices.

Given the importance of understanding these motivations for effective educational planning and student guidance, this study aims to investigate the specific incentives that drive career choices among students enrolled in the Colleges of Education within Akwa Ibom and Cross River States.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

A lack of clear understanding regarding the primary incentives influencing career choices among students within the Colleges of Education in Akwa Ibom

and Cross River States presents a significant problem. Without insight into why students select particular courses of study, there is a substantial risk that many may make uninformed decisions, leading to a potential mismatch between their acquired skills, interests, aptitudes, and the actual demands of the regional and national labour markets (including the education sector, which these colleges primarily serve). This disconnect not only jeopardizes the individual students' future career success, satisfaction, and employment prospects but also potentially undermines the effectiveness of these Colleges of Education in fulfilling their mandate to produce a competent, motivated, and well-suited workforce for Nigeria's developmental needs.

OBJECTIVE (S) OF THE STUDY:

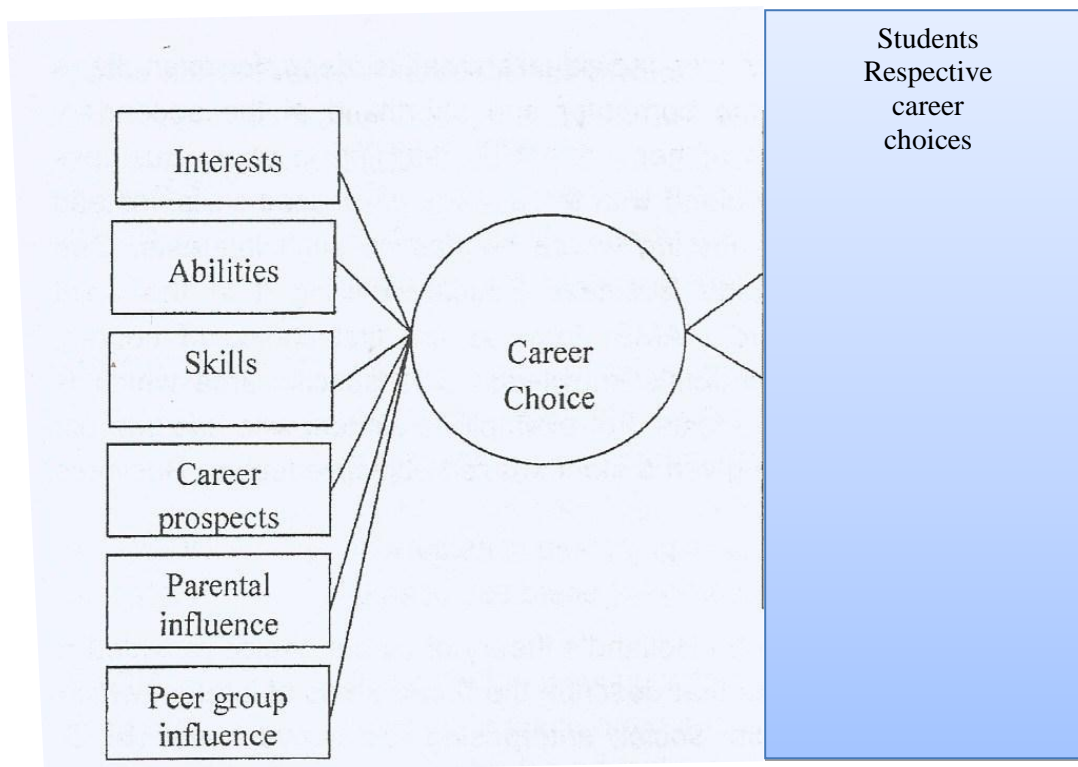
This paper is set to assess the incentives for career choice among students in the College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria. Hence to:

1. determine the role of interest in incentive in career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria
2. determine the role of ability in incentive in career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria
3. determine the role of skill in incentive in career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria
4. determine the role of career prospects in incentive in career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria
5. determine the role of parental influence in incentive in career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria
6. determine the role of peer group influence in incentive in career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework adopted in this study was developed by the researcher subject to the related literature, as it basically illustrates the various variables that are worth considering in the study. This framework clearly gives insight into the determinants or factors that may influence career choice in Economics as follows:



Determinant of Career Choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

Concept of Interest

Career choice made on the basis of interest yields lasting result for the decision maker in terms of career satisfactions. Interest based career choice is therefore a necessity because one would most probably pursue one's career for one's whole or entire life time. Namita (2014) noted that career choice based on interest can lead to employment of a larger part of one's life and a sense of belonging. Interest is therefore the state of satisfaction, feeling and the deep sense of fulfillment which a particular job provides the occupant. Hence when interest plays a great role in a career choice, the world of work in the future becomes a combination of happiness and job satisfaction, productivity and ultimately success, bringing one's personal and professional life into stability. According to Namita (2014), when an individual chooses a course that he/she enjoys, study will be interesting, ideas will flow, concepts would easily be understood, examination fears will be less and grades will be high. In agreement with this idea, Jada (2012) opined that interest based career leads to motivation, dedication or commitments, sharpening of talents, reduction of stress, optimal performance, enjoyment and satisfaction. The Berkeley University of California, BUC, (2017) posited that interests refers to those activities people are

attracted to or enjoy which affords them the opportunities to enhance or develop their skills and abilities.

Eremie (2014) identified three types of interests which are: Expressed interests, Manifest interests and Tested interests. Expressed interests are the ones made orally or verbally by the student. They are direct personal statements or reports made by the student. For example, a student could say: 'I would like to study Economics'. Manifest interests are those interests shown as a result of what individuals derive joy in doing. It involves individual's creative ideas, for example, a student who enjoys typing using the computer and shorthand at the secondary school level, may also manifest his or her interest by deciding to study Economics, where he/she can easily blend with the already possessed skills, instead of deciding to study Electrical engineering where he has no such interests. One could also manifest interest to study Economics filling it in the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) form as the first choice of course. Tested interests are shown in a student's knowledge of a specific area which is determined by standardized objective tests. For example, a student who has interest in short hand and typewriting can be given a standardized objective test on Economics. According to Practitioners (2015), John Holland's theory of career choice provided a framework of six (6) personality types that describe the broad areas of interest which include realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional (BUC, 2017). The frame work of the six (6) personality types that describes the broad areas of interest are explained below:

Framework of Career Choice by John Holland Area of Interest

	Area of Interest
REALISTIC (Doer)	Using and operating machines, tools or equipment, likes to work mainly with hands, fixing, making, putting things together and prefers outdoor work.
INVESTIGATIVE (Thinker)	Likes doing investigations and experiments, likes to observe research, discover in addition to asking questions, solving problems and working with ideas.
(Creator) ARTISTIC	Interested in designing arts, music, drama and words and likes to use these to communicate, perform or create.
(Helper) SOCIAL	Interested in working with people and likes to serve, cure, treat, help teach, train and inform people, derives joy from working for the advantage of people.
ENTERPRISING (Persuader)	Interested in leading, talking to people, meeting people, encouraging people, working in business and encouraging others.
CONVENTIONAL (Organizer)	Likes planning work, working indoors, sticks to laid down procedures and works with accuracy, data and number.

Source: Practitioners (2015)

Based on this framework, it is therefore imperative to state that an individual should know his or her area of interest among the broad areas of interest before choosing a career. In support of this idea, Swan (2011) noted that career choice when influenced by interest can be a gift that x-rays or brings one's talent into full play.

Concept of Abilities

Obviously, when an individual or career decision maker is motivated by his abilities, the career pursuit becomes an easy path. One cannot perform a task successfully without having the capacity and enablement. That is to say that one must have something to give out in terms of strength, proficiency, talents or even the charisma before one can perform a task satisfactorily. Abilities therefore assure an individual that he or she fits into a career path or is able to pursue a career path. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2010) defined abilities as the fact that one is able to do something. On a similar vein, the Collins English Dictionary (2017) defined ability as the capacity to do something or the quality of being able to do something whether physically or mentally, while the Oxford Living (2017) defined ability as having the means to carry out a task or to do something. It conveys the idea of proficiency, enablement, skills and talent to perform a task in a particular way.

Concept of Skills

When individuals carry out specific activities, perform duties or tasks successfully overtime, their practical skills become conspicuously manifest. Such skills are enhanced when put to constant use in an area of interest. Wikipedia (2017) defined skills as practical ability to perform or carry out a task(s) with planned results often within a period of time, putting energy to use. To excel in a diversified economic system in modern

times, skills are needed. These skills include self-motivation, leadership, teamwork, management skills among others. The American Heritage Dictionary of English Language (2011) defined skills as the dexterity, proficiency or the ability that is acquired or nurtured through experience and training. Skills therefore refer to the ability to do something, perform a task or tasks well through practice or study and experiential knowledge. Therefore, it involves things people are good at. The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, PHEAA, (2011) identified some skills people could have or things people could be good at as: computer skills (working with computers), numeric skills (working with numbers), selling skills (selling ideas or skills), teaching skills (teaching people how to do things), problem solving skills (solving problems), writing skills (writing articles, books, etc.), organizing skills (being organized), leadership skills (leading people and projects), speaking skills (speaking fluently or performing before others), and maths skills (solving and studying math). PHEAA (2011) further identified other things people are good at as: working with hands, machines and tools, building and fixing things, learning about history, following a set plan and caring for family members.

Concept of Career Prospects.

Career decision making can be challenging without a proper understanding of the prospects a career offers. Obviously, the prospect of a career is one major determinant of career choice decisions among students. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010) defined prospects as the chances or opportunities of being successful. It refers to future opportunities, placement or roles. Collins English Dictionary (2016) defined prospects as a future chance or the probability of having a successful future as a result of aptitude, and career prospects as the probability, possibility or chance for future success in an occupation or profession.

Career prospects are thereof future opportunities, job designations or roles, available to individuals who have chosen a career, on completion of the career requirements and processes. There are career prospects in various areas. According to Njorbuenu (2010), career prospects in Economics include: teaching in private or public secondary schools (teacher), holding administrative positions (administration officer), establishing and managing business (entrepreneur) and lecturing at the tertiary level (Lecturer) among.

Concept of Parental Influence

It has been observed that one of the major factors that affect the career choice of a student is parental influence. In recent times, there has been a growing interest of parents on the career choices of their children. In support of the idea, Alika (2010) noted that the focus of the parents is to direct, instruct and choose a career for their children. They no doubt exert a powerful influence on the children's career choice. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2010) defined influence as the effect that somebody has on the way one thinks, behaves or works. Alika (2010) opined that parental influence is sometimes used as a strategy to induce a young career decision maker or child into career regardless of the potentials or actual needs of the child. Parental influence is therefore the influence exerted by parents on their children, which eventually affects the children's thoughts, behaviours or shapes their values.

Concept of Peer Group Influence

Among the external influences that affect students' career choice is peers, Nyamwanga (2016) posited that peers among other factors, influence the career choice of students. Uzezi and Deya (2017) posited that peer group is the pursuit of social change which amount to radical changes among individuals of the same age group. It is an agent of socialization and as such the most socializing agent of an individual or an adolescent child. Wikipedia (2017) defined peer group as a group of individuals socially inclined with similar background, age, social status or interests. These group or individuals are likely to influence the behaviour, actions or beliefs of one another which results to changing behaviours, attitudes, and values to conform to those of the influencing group.

Concept of Career Choice

The choice of career is one of the important choices students make. This is because a wrong career choice fashions all individual efforts and resources into a wrong direction. There should therefore be an alignment between an individual's career choice and his or her interests, skills and career prospects. This notion has received the support to Edwards and Quinter (2011), who among other things believe that personal interest, skills, and career prospect influence the career choice of students.

Career refers to the job or occupations of an individual. Ezeani (2013) defined career has the major

life domains which engage individual (s) in different roles. Yet many scholars define career as the series or sequence of occupants, jobs and positions held during the course of life. The Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary (2010) defined career as the series of jobs that an individual has in a particular or specific area, usually involving various responsibilities. Career choice therefore refers to selection of occupation by an individual. According to Amaewhule (2014) career choice requires career determination, self-awareness in alignment with one's ability; Zahedi (2012) posited that career choice involves the acquirement of abilities and skills for a career and determination of career interest and goals. Hence, there should be total commitment to career education and development.

Career education is an educational system that prepares individuals for career, Ezeani (2013) referred to career education as all activities and effort initiate and made by educational agencies and communities in hosting career-oriented activities and experiences for the nursery through adulthood. It provides an avenue for supply the missing link or gap between learning and experience. It is an Educational process which enable individual of all ages includes youths and adult to prepare for world of work by equipping them to acquired adaptable skill as youth necessary for them to survive o earn living. It goes beyond the acquisition of skills as youth socialize with work roles, from elementary school up to university, preparing them to seek and enter their desired and expected career. Career education therefore involves cultural intellectual development for worthwhile goals, it emphasizes on the questions: What is it that one wants to be?

The American Vocational Association (as cited in Amaewhule, 2014) maintained that career education has the following roles; development of attitudes in alignment with personal, psychological, social and economic significance of work; decision making skills relevant for career choice direction; qualities necessary for many choices of career options; abilities to understand oneself, establishing career goals in alignment with individuals' needs or desires; and understanding of all work types.

Undoubtedly, career education has the main aim of preparing an individual for the world of work by providing the requisite skills and social orientation. Invariably, it leads to paid employment as a means of earning a living. According to Amaewhule (2024), career development is a part of educational preparation which emphasizes that students should be equipped with two-dimensional approaches: preparation to seek career in the world of work, including all it takes to succeed in a given position and preparation for self-employment. These approaches deserve extra emphasis in University education as they are important.

Career initiation is also paramount as it equips individuals with the grasp of subject combinations required for each course through the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) brochure. In the Universities, students who gain admission are expected to spend a minimum of four years or more.

Career Choice is influenced by many factors. According to Ezeani (2013), these factors include parents and peer groups, self-knowledge, finance and knowledge of the job: when students are guided by their personal interests, skills, values, aptitudes and capabilities in making career choice, the choice becomes easier to proceed on. The reverse is the case, when students make career choices when influenced by advice, respect them and many want to get where their friends or peers aspire to reach, whether or not they have what it takes. These are wrong steps for career choice; the knowledge of one's dispositions or attitudes should influence once choice of career. For example, if one is aware that one may have to read, write and talk every time or continuously in class every working day, the teaching profession or the business of buying and selling might be avoided. One who has personal health problem such as being allergic to smell, may decide not to study pharmacy for fear of drugs with offensive smell to avoid vomiting and embarrassment or one who has the capability to study medicine and surgery may not stand the site of blood or corpse and hence decide to study Estate Management. It therefore obvious that one's personal attitude is a great influence on one's choice of career even if career training can modify individual attitudes, but to a large extent, inherent factors are indispensable determinants of career choice.

Courses like Medicine and Surgery, Law and Engineering are undertaken for more years and require very expensive books and materials. When government makes scholarships available, it becomes easier for students who succeed to enroll, but without government's intervention, the financial status of parents becomes a determinant of career choice. This may lead to wrong choice of career, which may eventually lead to frustration in the work place or the individual will become a workman quarrels with his working implements. On the other hand, when the career is a relaxed mind. The individuals will no doubt enjoy a sense of self-actualization, personal fulfillment and achievement.

Knowledge of the job has to do with having adequate information about careers or occupations one intends to pursue. It also involves having information about work activities, work prospects, work places, duties and responsibilities of a career path. For example an individual who wants to study law should understand he/she should not be attuned to bribery and corruption but should be transparent and a promoter of justice and equity. One who wants to be a successful teacher should understand that he/she needs to be hardworking, patient and sociable as he/she will deal with different calibers of pupils/students from various backgrounds. Career education is therefore important as it sets the pace for student's interest and prepares them for employment or the job industry providing them with skills and career orientation which subsequently leads them to gainful employment. It involves academic preparation in a given profession and adaption to the system to attain one's career prospects.

In support of this idea, Ezeani (2013) emphasized four areas of career education which are as follows: Career education requires awareness, which starts from Basic 1 to 4, where the pupils are afforded the opportunity to learn about the world of education and gradually get acquainted career exploration, which starts from Basic 5 through 6, where the pupils are afforded the opportunity to exhibit their skills in various career – 9, where the emphasis is on bridging the gap between various careers choices and initial career preparation. Students are thus prepared to go into careers and progress in post-secondary and professional programmes; and career preparation, which starts from classes 1-3 (Senior Secondary School, SSS). At this point, programmes are made available to enable students pursue and succeed in their chosen careers.

Edwin (2015) argued that humanity has been given freewill by our creator, that is that freedom to choose anything one wants in life, but it is unfortunate that many do not make choices for themselves but allow the environment they live to choose them. Friends and family make these choices for most people. Edwin further identified ten (10) factors that should be put into consideration before choosing a career. They are passion, skill, creativity, capacity, market, health, generation, life concepts, health and dedication. Doing what one loves will be easier than doing what one does not have. When one is unnecessarily eager to make cash, one becomes prey to money and sacrifices love for career on the altar of assets, wealth or materialism and loses focus. So one needs to choose a career or profession one must have a longing for or fall in love with, and avoid choosing a career or profession that hides or conceals one's emotions. Productivity can optimally be achieved if the necessary skills are possessed and without these skills undoubtedly, one will only struggle and fail to produce. So, having the skills for career one is interested in is a necessity. One who is interested in a particular career should also possess a measure of knowledge and be able to invent things or ideas offer to a reasonably convincing extent service or even goods in the career area of interest (Edwin, 2015).

Capacity is paramount for a career decision maker. This has to do with the willingness or readiness, inner strength to pursue a career of interest. According to Edwin (2015), ability to cope with the chosen career is a factor here. Doing a research about a career one is determined to pursue is also important. It paves way for experiential knowledge as one surveys how many people and how much benefits come to a career path.

It is a universal truth that without health there is no wealth. One would definitely not choose a creator that will endanger one's life, rather a career that will give good health. Amaewhile (2014) referred to a case of a medical student, who had chosen medicine as a career and had all that was needed to succeed in the medical school but felt endangered health wise, because of the sight of a corpse. This led to factor to be considered. In this respect, one considers skills in different areas (versatile skills) which could include entrepreneurship, sales, marketing, management, office practice, accounting, etc. before deciding to choose a career. One's

life concept can also propel one's decision to choose a career. For instance, one who was excited about commercial schools and eventually attended a commercial secondary school, upon completion of education in the commercial school, decides to teach younger ones in commercial schools shorthand and typewriting and loves holding brief seminars for them at that level such that he derives a lot of joy from it and sees it as a hobby, might choose Economics as a career in the university.

Different life concepts call for different career choices. Therefore, before choosing a career, one needs to examine oneself critically to find out if one can withstand pressure or cope with the demands of the career. For example, one who wants to pursue a career in Economics can sincerely ask: can I carry a Typewriter or a computer along when needed for lectures? Can I withstand the pressure of teaching students in private or public school during my teaching practice (TP), since it is a requirement for Economics undergraduate students before graduation? Can I withstand the pressure students' industrial work experience scheme (SIWES), since it is requirement for Economics student before graduation? One could make inquiries in Economics Department in institutions of Higher learning that offer the programme, by surfing the internet or reading the Economics prospectus and have sufficient information that could influence career choice decisions and this is where career awareness comes in to play. The financial wellbeing also come in a play. This implies that before choosing a career in Business Education, one could ask one's career counselor. 'when I graduate as a Business Educationalist, can my family needs be satisfied with what I would earn? Can my future be secured? Can my personal financial needs be satisfied?'

Population Distribution by Institutions

Colleges	Population
College Of Education Akampa	350
Akwa Ibom State College of Education	255
Total	605

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample size of 150 100 level students of Economics which represents 41% of the population will

METHODOLOGY (SHOULD INCLUDE DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA/SITE/SUBJECTS, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS)

Design of the Study

The survey design will be used for the study. According to Akaninwor (2014) "surveys are employed in educational research using questionnaire.

Area of the Study

The study is to be carried out in College of Education, Akpampa, College of Education, Obudu in Cross River State and Akwa Ibom State College of Education, Akwa Ibom State.

Attention of this researcher is drawn to these College of Education, due to existence of Department of Economics in their respective institutions as well as being able to access 100 level students of these schools who chose the programme for 2020/2021 academic session in the two sister states.

Population of the Study

The population of the study will consist of all 100 level students in the above mentioned College of Education, that are of economics departments in College of Education Akampa and Akwa Ibom State College of Education. The records from these two institutions portray that there is 605 100 level students offering various courses in 2020/2021 academic session. The breakdown is as follows:

be used for the study. The purposive sampling procedure will be used for the sample size.

Sample Distribution

Colleges	Population	Sample size
College Of Education Akampa	350	130
Akwa Ibom State College of Education	255	120
Total	605	250

Sample Distribution by Proportion

Colleges	Population	Proportion	Sample	Male	Female
AKSCOE	255	42.1%	120	55	61
COE Akampa	350	57.9%	130	78	59
Total	605	100	250	130	120

Research Instrument

A researcher-designed students' career choice Questionnaire made up of 30 items tagged Incentives for career choices among students questionnaire (ICCAS Questionnaire instrument will be used as a research instrument) for the study as means of data gathering.

The research Questions proposed for the study will guide the Questionnaire structured as Very High Extent (VHE) = 4 POINTS high Extent (HE) = 3 points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 points and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 point. The Questionnaire is desired to be made up of two parts: letter of introduction and the Questionnaire Instrument.

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument to be used for this study shall be validated by two lecturers from Educational foundation and a measurement and evaluation experts from Akwa Cross Colleges of Education. Necessary corrections and inputs will be given appropriate attention to have a final standardized Questionnaire needed for this research.

Reliability of the Research

The reliability of the instrument was to be determined using the test-retest method for a measure of

its stability. Copies of the instrument are to be administered to the sample size (30) students of Economics in College of Education Obudu, Cross River State. The initial and test-retest scores of the sample shall be correlated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (PPMCC) and a reliability coefficient of 0.92 is expected, then guaranteeing the reliability of the instrument.

Administrated Instrument

This researcher wishes to administered copies of the Questionnaire though face to face contact with the respondents and two research assistants is expected to aid the researcher in distributing the copies of the Questionnaire after being enlightened. Instructions about the filling of the Questionnaire will be made simple and carefully explained to the respondents 250 copies of the Questionnaire is expected to be administered to the respondents.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected will be analyzed using mean rating and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The means rating will be using the boundary limits as shown below.

Response	Rating scale	Boundary limits
Very High Extent	4	3.50-400
High Extent	3	2.50-3.49
Low Extent	2	1.50-2.43
Very Low Extent	1	0.50-1.49

The analysis will be done on an Hem and cluster basis the six null hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance using 2-test statistics. Based on Akaninwor (2014), argument, it is content that z-test statistics can be sued for large samples but in this research work, credent is given on how data of to be manipulated. The decision rule will be to reject the null hypotheses where the calculated value of z is greater than table value of z, (z-

tested). The null hypotheses is on the other hand shall be retained where the calculated values of z is less than the table value.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents in a logical sequence, the data obtained from the research study, the presentation

and the analysis of the data followed the arrangement and sequence of the research questions and hypotheses and was presented under the following sub-headings: Analysis of Data and Results, Summary of Major Findings and discussion of Findings.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND RESULTS

Research Question 1

To what extent does interest influence career in among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria?

Table 4.1.1: Mean Ratings on the influence of interest on career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

S/No	Items	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
i.	You had in business establishment	2.91	1.26	HE
ii.	Interest in the teaching profession motivated You interest.	2.84	1.29	HE
iii.	Education was your first choice of course	2.75	1.29	HE
iv.	You had interest prompted our decided to explore skills in teaching and Education	2.80	1.26	HE
v.	You had interest in schools that offers Professional education	2.63	1.37	HE
Grand mean/SD		2.79	1.29	HE

Data on table 4.1.1 showed that interest influenced studies career choice to a high extent. This is evident in the mean scores of students as shown in items 1.2.3.4 and 5. That is the respondents believed that they had interest in business establishment with a mean set of 2.91, interest in the teaching profession motivated them to study education with a mean of 2.84, interest in Economics was their first choice of course with a mean of 2.76, they had interest in education and decided to explore it through Colleges with the mean of 2.80, and they had interest in the schools that offers their choiced courses with a mean

of 2.63. The grand mean and standard deviation of 2.79 and 1.29 respectively indicate that the respondents believe that interest influence their choice of career in Colleges of Education.

Research Question 2

To what extent do abilities influence career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria?

Table 4.1.2: Meaning Ratings on the Influence of Abilities on Career Choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

S/No	Items	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
vi.	Good performance in secondary school made you choice education .	2.72	1.35	HE
vii.	The ability to manage students behaviour Motivated You to study in the college.	2.72	1.28	HE
viii.	You had innovative abilities in teaching and this motivated you to study education	2.86	1.27	HE
ix.	The abilities control motivated you to study Education	2.83	1.27	HE
x.	The abilities to make sound leadership Decisions motivated you to choose Education	2.94	1.27	HE
Grand mean/SD		2.81	1.29	HE

Table 4.1.2 revealed a grand mean and standard deviation of that 2.81 and 1.29 respectively, indicating that abilities influenced students' choice of career in education to a high extent. As such, the respondents believed that good

performance in Secondary School made them choose Education (mean 2.72), the ability to manage students behaviour motivated them to study Education (mean 2.72), they had innovative abilities in teaching and this

motivated them to study Education (mean 2.86), trading abilities was a sound business decision was the motivation for the choice of Economics(mean 2.94). The mean scores and standard deviation revealed that the responses are closely spread.

Research Question 3

To what extent do skills influence career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria?

Table 4.1.3: Mean Ratings on the influence of Skills in Career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

S/No	Items	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
xi.	You had study skills before you gained admission to study Education	2.85	1.28	HE
xii.	You had reading skills before you gained admission to study Education	2.97	1.17	HE
xiii.	You had computer skills before you gained Admission to study Education	3.01	1.20	HE
xiv.	You had technical skills before you gained admission to study Education	2.86	1.27	HE
xv.	You had organizing skills before you gained admission to study Education	2.73	1.26	HE
Grand mean/SD		2.89	1.24	HE

Data on table 4.1.3 showed that the respondents believed to a high extent with all items (11 to 15) that skills that influence choice of career in Education. As such, the respondents had study, reading, computer, technical and organizing skills to a high extent before they gained admission to the colleges of Education. The respondents' grand mean score and standard deviation of 2.89 and 1.24

respectively indicated that the responses are closely spread and there is no much variations.

Research Question 4

To what extent do career prospects influence career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria?

Table 4.1.4: Mean Ratings on the influence of Skills in Career Prospects on career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

S/No	Items	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
xvi.	You intend to teach in secondary school	3.05	1.13	HE
xvii.	You intend to be employed in an administrative Position	2.78	1.26	HE
xviii.	You intend to lecture in tertiary institution	3.01	1.17	HE
xix.	You intend to render consultancy services	3.10	1.16	HE
xx.	You intend to establish and manage your school	3.17	1.05	HE
Grand mean/SD		3.02	1.15	HE

Table 4.1.4 (items 16 to 20) showed mean rating and standard deviation with insignificant variations. As such,

the respondents believed to a high extent that they intend to teach in

Secondary School (mean 3.05), they intend to be employs in an administrative position (mean 2.78), they intend to lecture in tertiary institutions (mean 3. 01), they intend to own a school (mean 3.17). Their responses are evident in the grand mean score and standard deviation given as 3.02 and 1.15 respectively.

Research Question 5

To what extent does parental influence affect career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria?

Table 4.1.5: Mean Ratings on Parental influence as it affects Career Choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

S/No	Items	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
xxi.	Your parents’ occupation Motivated you to study Education	1.28	1.12	VLE
xxii.	Your parents’ level of income motivated you to study Education	1.54	1.04	LE
xxiii.	You choose Education because your parents preferred the course	1.91	1.20	LE
xxiv.	The level of education attained by your parents motivated you to study Education	1.97	1.36	LE
xxv.	They intend to have you establish and manage a school	1.88	1.45	LE
	Grand mean/SD	1.73	1.23	LE

Table 4.1.5 showed on item 21 (mean 1.28) that the respondents believes that their parents had influence on their career choice in Education to a very low extent. That is, they did not agree that their parents’ occupation was a major motivational factor for their choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria. On the other hand, on items 22 to 25. The respondents believed to a low extent that their parents level of income motivated them to study education, (mean 1.54), that they chose Educational programme because of their parents’ preference of the course (mean 1.91), that the level of education attained by their parents motivated them to

study Education (mean 1.97) and that the social status of their parents influenced their choice of Education (mean 1.88). The grand mean and standard deviation of 1.73 and 1.23 respectively, indicated the respondents’ responses on the influence of parents on career choice to a low extent.

Research Question 6

To what extent does peer group influence as it affect career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria?

Table 4.1.5: Mean Ratings on Parental influence as it affects Career Choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

S/No	Items	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
xxvi.	You chose education because you wish To study the same course with your peers	1.66	1.03	VLE
xxvii.	Your peers chose Ediction programme For you	2.12	1.28	LE
xxviii.	Your peers’ intelligence influence your Career choice in Education	2.36	1.20	LE
xxix.	You peers’ level of exposure influence your Career choice in Education	2.01	1.22	LE
xxx.	You chose Educationa programme Because your peers preferred the course	2.31	1.35	LE
	Grand mean/SD	2.10	1.23	LE

Table 4.1.6 revealed that the respondents believed in all items 26-30, that peer group influence affected their career choice in Education to a low extent that is, the respondents noted to a low extent that they chose Education because they wish to study the same course with their peers (mean 1.66) that their peers chose Education programme for them (mean 2.12), that their peers' intelligence influence their career choice in Education (mean 2.36), that their peers level of exposure influence their career in Education (mean 2.01) and that they chose Education programme because their peers preferred the course (mean 2.31). The grand mean scores

of 2.10 and standard deviation of 1.20 respectively, indicated that peer group influence affect career choice to a low extent.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which their choice of Education is influence by their interest.

Table 4.1.7: Summary of t-test Analysis on the mean Ratings of Students on the Extent to which their career choice in influence by interest

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	p	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Males	120	2.81	1.28	238	0.05	0.29	1.96	Accepted
Females	120	2.76	1.30					

The data in table 4.1.7 showed be t-calculated value of 0.29 at degree of freedom 238 and 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated t-value of 0.29 is less than the t-critical value of 11.96, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that the hypothesis: there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which their choice of students is influenced by their interest was upheld.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which their career choice is influence by their abilities.

Table 4.1.8 summary of t-test Analysis on mean ratings of students on the extent to which their career choice of Influence by their Abilities

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	p	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Males	120	2.82	1.29	238	0.05	0.12	1.96	Accepted
Females	120	2.80	1.28					

Table 4.1.8 revealed the t-calculated value of male and female respondents on how their career choice is influence by their abilities. The table revealed the t-calculated value of 0.12 at degree of freedom 238 and 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the null hypothesis was retained. This means that there is no their career difference in the mean ratings of male and female

students on how their career choice is influenced by their abilities.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant different in the meaning rating of male and female students on the extent to which their career choice is influenced by their skills.

Table 4.1.9 Summary of t-test Analysis on the mean ratings of students on the extent to which their career choice is influenced by skills

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	p	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Males	120	2.91	1.24	238	0.05	0.25	1.96	Accepted
Females	120	2.87	1.24					

Table 4.9 revealed that the t-test analysis of male and female respondents on how their career choice in Economics is influenced by their skills. The table revealed that the t-calculated value of 0.25 at degree of freedom 238 and 0.05 level of significant. This implies that the hypothesis of no significant difference in the response of male and female students on the influence of skills on their career choice was retained

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant in the mean of male and female students on the extent to which their career choice is influenced by their career prospects.

Table 4.1.10: Summary of t- test Analysis on the Mean Rating of Students on the Extent to which their Career Choice is influenced by Career Prospect

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	p	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Males	120	3.04	1.14	238	0.05	0.27	1.96	Accepted
Females	120	3.00	1.24					

Table 4.1.10 showed the t-test analysis of male and female respondents on how their career choice in Economics is influenced by their career prospects. The table revealed the t-calculated value of 0.27 at degree of freedom 238 and 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the hypothesis of no significant difference in the responses of male and female students on the influence of career prospects on their career choice was retained.

Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on extent to which their career choice is affected by parental influence.

Table 4.1.11: Summary of t-test Analysis on men ratings of Students on the Extent to which their Career Choice is affected by parental influence.

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	p	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Males	120	1.79	1.17	238	0.05	0.86	1.96	Accepted
Females	120	1.67	1.29					

Table 4.1.11 revealed the y-calculated value of 0.86 at degree of freedom 238 and 0.05 level of significance, since the calculated t-value of 0.86 is less than the 9-critical value of 1.96, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on how their career choice is affected by parental influence was retained.

Hypothesis 6

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent to which their career choice is affect by peer group influence.

Table 4.1.12 Summary of t-test Analysis on mean ratings of Students on the Extent to which their Career choice is affected by peer Influence

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	p	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Males	120	2.12	1.22	238	0.05	0.36	1.96	Accepted
Females	120	2.07	1.20					

The data in table 4.1.12 showed the t-calculated value of 0.36 at degree of freedom 28 and 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated t-value of 0.36 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96, the null hypothesis was

accepted. This implies that the hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on how their career choice of students is affected by parental influenced was upheld.

Summary of Major Findings

This study was conducted with the aim of assessing the determinants of career choice among students in College of Education in Akwa-Cross, Nigeria

1. Interest influenced the career choice of students to a high extent as shown in the data collated from the research question one. It was found that there was no significant difference in the mean scores of students on how their choice of students is influenced by their interest.
2. Abilities influence the career choice of students, studies as shown in the data collated from the research question two. The male and female students agreed to this fact as revealed in their mean responses. There was no statistically significant difference in mean ratings of students on how their choice of students is influenced by their interest.
3. It was found that skills influenced career choice of students as shown in the data collated from research question three. The mean responses of male and female students showed that they agreed to this fact. From the hypothesis, it was found that the difference in the opinions of male and female students of students were not significant. That is, there were no much variations in their responses on the influence of skills.
4. It was found that career prospects influence the career choice of students as shown in the data collated from research question four. The students agreed to this fact. As such, there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students in how career choice of students is influenced by their career prospects.
5. It was found that parental influence did not affect the career choice of students as shown in the data collated from research question five. That is, the students disagreed that parental influence affected, their career choice of students. There was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students in how parental influence affects their career choice.
6. It was found that peer group influence did not affect the career choice of students as shown in the data collated from research question six. That is, the students disagreed that peer group influence affected their career choice of students. There was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on how peer group influence affects their career choice.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the result presented in the study, it was revealed that interest influenced the career choice of students to a high extent. That is career choice among students in River State was influenced by interest in the

course. This corroborates with the study of Ahmed, Sharif and Ahmed (2017) whose findings on the factors influencing students' career choice revealed that interest was a major determinant. This intrinsic motivating factor makes it possible for career choice decision makers to enjoy their career and perform excellently in their career area. The finding of this study is also supplied by Ikoyo (2016) who identified interest as a motivating factor for choice of students.

It was found in this study that abilities influenced the choice of career among students in Akwa-Cross. This fact was proven in the respondents' responses. As they believed that abilities influenced their career choice in Economics programme. This finding agreed with an earlier assertion by Eremie (2014), who noted that interest is a motivating factor for students' career choice, which could be expressed verbally. Ikoyo (2016) also noted in an earlier study that interest influenced the career choice of Economics students in Delta State. It is therefore noteworthy that the possession of the requisite abilities of students can metamorphoses into an easy career path and the ability to cope with students as a career.

From the results presented in the study, it was revealed the skills influenced the career choice of students in Akwa-Cross. This fact was evident in the respondents' responses, as they agreed that skills are therefore pre-requisites for optimal performance during school years and in the world of work. Amoor and Aliyu (2014) noted that skills are a necessity for career success and career choice decisions. Umar and Amoor (2015) argued that awareness of skills influence students career choice of students. The study has proven that skills are indeed a determinant of career choice of students.

It was found from the result presented in this study, that career prospects influenced students' choice in Education. This is evident in the responses of students, as they believed that their career prospects influence their career choice. This finding corroborates with the finding of Amoor and Umar (2015) who noted that career prospect has a significant influence on Education students' choice of the course. It is therefore evident from this study that career prospects influence the career choice of students in River State.

From the result presented in the study, it was revealed that parental influence does not affect the career choice decision of students studying Education in River State. This is evident in the results which showed parents had an insignificant influence on students' choice of career in Education. This contradicts an earlier finding by Ikoyo (2016), which revealed that parental influence significantly affect career choice of students.

From the results presented in this study, it was revealed that peer group influence did not affect the career choice of students in River State. This is evident in the respondents' responses which showed that students of Education disagreed that their choice of career was significantly affected by peer group influence. This contradicts an earlier assertion of Ezeani (2013), who noted that peer group influence is an indispensable factor that affects students' career choice.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and educational implications of the findings. It also contains recommendations and suggestions for further studies. The presentation is done in relation to the question and hypotheses as shown hereunder.

Summary

Recognizing that career choice is a challenging yet crucial decision for students, with incorrect choices potentially impacting them in both the short and long run, this study was conducted. Its aim was to examine the perceived incentives influencing career choices among students in Colleges of Education within Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, specifically focusing on Akwa Ibom State College of Education and the College of Education, Akampa.

The study population comprised all first-year (level one hundred) students across various departments in these two institutions. A sample of 250 students was selected using random sampling techniques. The study adopted a survey research design, guided by six research questions and six null hypotheses formulated to elicit and test information regarding career choice incentives.

The data collection instrument was a researcher-designed questionnaire focused on student career choices. Its validity was established by relevant experienced educators from the participating colleges and a measurement and evaluation expert. Analysis of the collected data was planned using mean and standard deviation to address the research questions, and Z-test statistics were designated for testing the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

The study anticipated findings that would illuminate the extent to which factors such as personal interest influence career choices among these college students. It was also expected to explore the role of students' perceived abilities, skills, and future career prospects as determinants. Furthermore, the research investigated the potential influence of external factors, such as parents and peer groups, on these decisions and tested the null hypotheses for any statistically significant differences in perceptions.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis conducted, the evidence obtained in this study is expected to show that factors like personal interest, perceived abilities, relevant skills, and anticipated career prospects are significant determinants of career choice among students in the surveyed Colleges of Education in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. That is, the choice of specific courses of study among these students is likely traceable primarily to these intrinsic factors.

Therefore, the study provides evidence suggesting that students are often more motivated or influenced in their career choice decisions by internal considerations than by external factors. The investigation

into parental and peer group influence aimed to clarify the extent to which these external factors play a role in the specific context of these Colleges of Education. The testing of the null hypotheses sought to determine if statistically significant differences exist in these views among the student population studied.

Educational Implications

The findings of this study, focusing on career choice incentives among students in Colleges of Education in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, have several important educational implications:

- 1- There is a demonstrated need for competent educators, administrators, and guidance personnel within these Colleges who can effectively identify and harness the diverse potentials (in terms of interests, skills, abilities, and perceived career prospects) of students across all academic programmes. Tailored coaching and mentorship are crucial to help students align their aspirations with realistic career paths, primarily within the education sector but also in other fields for which their training prepares them.
- 2- Periodic and relevant professional development for lecturers across all departments within these Colleges is vital. This training should go beyond subject-matter updates to include strategies for integrating career awareness into their curriculum and advising students on how their coursework relates to future employment opportunities and skill demands in the world of work.
- 3- The findings underscore the need for government and college administrations to prioritize the provision and improvement of learning facilities, career information resources, and guidance infrastructure within these specific Colleges of Education. Adequate resources are essential for enhancing students' academic performance, skill development, and ability to make informed career decisions, thereby improving the quality of graduates entering the workforce.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors wish to thank the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) for supporting the Research Publication during the 2014 - 2023 (merge) Institution - Based Project intervention with Ref. No: TETF/DRID/CE/AKWA - IBOM/IBR/2023/Vol.1 and TETF/IBR/COE/AFAHA -NSIT/PR/063.

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