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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between family psychological wellbeing and career development of secondary school students in Anambra State. It specifically examined the influence of family psychological wellbeing, competency/environmental mastery, family emotional wellbeing and family positive social well being on student's career development. The research adopted correlation survey design. The population of the study consists of 36,200 secondary school students, from Anambra State. The

sample size was consisted of 700 secondary school student drawn using multi-purpose sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was a researcher developed profoma consisting of four clusters, the reliability of the instrument was established using test-retest method and found to be 0.74 using cronbach alpha, four research questions guided the study and the data collected was analysed using Pearson Product moment of correlation (PPMC).

Keywords: Relationship, Family, Psychological Wellbeing, Career Development, Secondary School Students.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Family psychological wellbeing is a critical determinant of an individual's overall development, particularly in the area of career development. The family unit serves as the primary social environment where individuals receive foundational values, emotional support, and early guidance that shape their outlook of life, including their career aspirations. Psychological wellbeing within the family encompasses the emotional, mental, and relational stability among family members which significantly impacts both the cognitive and emotional development of children and young adults (Conger et al., 2020). When the family environment is characterized by harmony, love and emotional support, it creates conducive atmosphere for the individuals to develop self-confidence, explore career options, and pursue long-term career goals (Okudo et al., 2023).

On the other hand, families marked by psychological distress – such as conflicts, financial struggles, or mental health issues may inhibit an individual's career aspirations and overall development. According to Taylor et al. (2017). Individuals from families experiencing psychological instability often struggle with self-esteem, decision-making, and future planning, which are essential components of career development. The influence of family psychological wellbeing on career development is particularly evident during adolescence and early adulthood when career decisions are being made. The emotional bond between parents and their children plays a pivotal role in helping young individuals navigate career choices, build self-confidence, and persevere through challenges (McMahon & Watson, 2018). Furthermore, the family serves as a vital social support system, offering encouragement and practical assistance in career related decisions. Positive family psychological wellbeing often translates into supportive parenting, where parents provide guidance, motivation, and financial resources necessary for career advancement (Okudo et al., 2023). However, families facing psychological distress may struggle to provide the emotional support required to foster career development. Spera (2023) highlighted that parental support influences career aspirations and educational attainment. It went further underscoring the importance of family psychological wellbeing in career outcomes.

Despite the growing recognition of the role of family dynamics in career development, limited attention has been paid to the psychological dimension of family wellbeing. While economic and educational factors are often prioritized in career development research, the emotional and educational wellbeing of the family remains a less explored but equally crucial factor.

This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining the influence of family psychological wellbeing on career development, exploring how emotional stability, parental support, and family relationships contribute or hinder career aspirations. Additionally, the global rise in mental health challenges and family dysfunctions highlights the urgency of addressing this issue. Families experiencing high levels of stress, anxiety, or depression may inadvertently pass these burdens onto their children, affecting their capacity to make informed career decisions and pursue professional growth (Amato & Sobolewski, 2021). Understanding the extent to which family psychological wellbeing impacts career development is essential for developing targeted interventions that promote holistic career counseling and support systems.

This study is particularly relevant in contemporary society, where economic instability, changing family structures, and increased mental health challenges are reshaping the traditional family dynamics. By exploring the intersection of family psychological wellbeing and career development, this research aims to provide valuable insights for educators, career counselors, policy makers and mental health professionals in fostering the holistic development of individuals.

Statement of the Problem

Career development is a complex and dynamic processing that involves the acquision of knowledge, skills and experience necessary to pursue and achieve professional goals (Okudo). It is influenced by a range of factors, including educational opportunities, socio-economic backgrounds, and personal interests. However, one critical yet often overlooked factor is the psychological wellbeing of the family. Family psychological wellbeing encompasses the emotional stability, mental health and interpersonal relationship within the family, which can significantly shape an individual's career aspiration and professional trajectory. In many societies, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, the family serves as the primary support system for young people during their formative years. The emotional climate within the family plays a crucial role in shaping the self-concept, confidence, and decision-making abilities of individuals. However, the increasing prevalence of family related psychological challenges such as parental conflicts, financial stress, substance abuse, and mental health disorders raises concern about their impact on the career development of young people.

Several studies have shown that a positive family environment enhances career decision-making and academic performance (Kaplan et al., 2015; Ginevra et al, 2018). Conversely, family psychological distress has been linked to poor academic performance, low self-esteem, and limited career aspirations. Despite these findings, little research has been conducted to systematically explore the direct influence of family psychological wellbeing on career development, particularly in the Nigerian context. The problem is further exacerbated by the lack of awareness and intervention programs that address the psychological wellbeing of families as a critical component of career guidance. Most career counseling programs primarily focus on academic performance and vocational skills without considering the emotional and psychological challenges that young individuals may face within their family environment. This gap in the literature highlights the need to examine how family psychological wellbeing affects career development outcomes.

Moreover, the socio-economic realities of many families in Nigeria, such as poverty, unemployment, and insecurity, place significant psychological strain on parents and guardians. These challenges often trickle down to young people, affecting their mental health and career aspirations. According to the World Health Organization (2021), the rise in mental health issues among young people is closely linked to family dysfunction and economic hardship. This connection suggests that family psychological wellbeing is not only a private issue but also a societal concern that requires urgent attention. Additionally, the limited availability of mental health services and the cultural stigma surrounding psychological wellbeing further compound the problem. Many families in Nigeria are reluctant to seek professional help for psychological issues, leaving young individuals to navigate career decisions without the necessary emotional support. This situation calls for a more comprehensive approach to career counseling that incorporates family psychological wellbeing as a critical component.

Purpose of the Study

The study aims to:

1. Examine the relationship between family psychological wellbeing and career development.
2. Examine the impact of competence/environmental mastery on career choices and aspirations.
3. Assess the extent to which family emotional support contributes to career choice.
4. Examine the relationship between family positive wellbeing and career development.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship existing between family psychological wellbeing and career development?
2. What is the relationship existing between competency/environmental mastery and career development?
3. What relationship exists between emotional support from family members and career development?
4. What is the relationship between family positive social wellbeing and career development?

METHOD

The study adopted a correlation design, which is widely used in social science and educational researches to assess the relationship between variables in a population. The area of the study was Anambra State, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of about 36,206 senior school students, in year (11) in public schools in Anambra State. A total of 700 respondents were selected through multi-purpose sampling technique for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire made up of four clusters. The reliability of the instrument was established using test-retest method and the data collected analysed using Cronbach's alpha which yielded 0.74. four research questions guided the study. The questionnaire was administered through the assistance of three student counsellors and all the administered items were retrieved. The data collected were analysed using Pearson product moment of correlations for research questions 1, 2, 3 and 4.

RESULTS

The results collected were analysed and summarily presented in the tables as follows

Table one: Pearson on relation between family psychological wellbeing and career development (generally)

Sources of variation	N	Family psychological wellbeing	Career Development	Decision
Family psychological well being	700	1.00	0.82	Very high positive relationship
Career development		0.82	1.00	

The data above revealed that a very high positive relationship of (0.82) exist between family psychological wellbeing and career development generally.

Table two: Pearson on the relationship existing between competence/environmental mastery and career development.

Sources of variation	N	Competence/environmental mastery	Career development	Decision
Competence/environmental mastery	700	1.00	0.76	high positive relationship
Career development		0.76	1.00	

The table two above revealed that a high positive relationship of 0.76 exists between the secondary school student competence/environment mastery and their career development.

Table three: Pearson on the relationship between family emotional support and career development.

Sources of variation	N	Family emotional support	Career Development	Decision
Family emotional support	700	1.00	0.71	high positive relationship
Career development		0.71	1.00	

The data collected from table revealed that a high positive relationship of (0.71) exists between family emotional support and career development.

Table four: Pearson on the relationship between family positive social wellbeing and career development.

Sources of variation	N	Self regulations	Socio-cognitive development	Decision
Family positive social wellbeing	700	1.00	0.69	
Career development		0.82	1.00	

The table four above revealed that a positive relationship of 0.69 exist between family positive social wellbeing and career development of the secondary school students.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the relationship existing between family psychological wellbeing and career development of secondary school students from public schools in Anambra State. The discussion was carried in line with the research questions which sought to determine

(1) What relationship exists between family psychological wellbeing and career development generally.
(2) The relationship existing between competence/environmental mastery and career development.
(3) The relationship existing between family emotional support and career development.
(4) The relationship existing between family positive social wellbeing and career development.

On family psychological wellbeing and career development of secondary school students in public schools in Anambra State as was revealed by table one. The (PPMC) Pearsons product moment of correlations revealed that a very high positive relation (0.82) existed between family psychological wellbeing and career development. This implies that family psychological well being is critical towards realizing the career aspirations of students. This is because the family serves as the primary social environment where individuals receives foundational values, emotional support and early guidance that shape their career aspirations. The psychological well being encompasses emotional support (3.02), harmony (2.98), love showered (2.96), relational stability (2.94). Cognitive provisions (3.02), encouraging mental alertness (2.84). The above provisions creates conducive atmosphere for the individual to develop career goals and pursue them Conger et al (2020), Okudo et al (2023) noted that positive family psychological wellbeing often translate into supportive parenting, where parents provide guidance, motivation and financial resources necessary for career advancement.

The relationship existing between psychological competence/environmental mastery and career development was revealed by table two. According to the table, a high positive relationship of 0.76 was found to exist between secondary school students competence/environmental mastery and their career development. This is because, competencies, refers to the knowledge/skills or abilities individuals posses to effectively navigate psychological demands and environmental challenges. It therefore affirms that students that exhibit great mastery and have high level competencies excels very well in their academic career. Furthermore the item statement from the questionnaire which sought to determine the extent of environmental mastery/competence on career development revealed the adolescents rating of their level of knowledge (2.92), quality of skills (2.87), general abilities (2.86), level of interpersonal skills (2.94). The above findings collaborates the findings of Conger et al (2020) and Okudo et al (2023) who noted that the above provisions creates conducive atmosphere for the individual to develop career goals and pursue them.

The data found in table three revealed that very high positive relationship of 0.71 exists between family emotional wellbeing and career development. The findings show that emotional support from the family members such as encourages me (2.92), gives me reassurance in difficult moment (2.89), sense of belonging (2.98), supportive (2.79), affirmative (2.93) etc, play very crucial roles in enhancing careers aspirations and decision-making among youths. The above findings aligns with the study of Taylor et al (2017) which stated that emotional support from family members significantly influences adolescents' career motivation and goal-setting. Similarly Adedoyin and Okechukwu (2020) found that youths who experience emotional security within the families tend to have higher self-confidence and are more willing to explore career opportunities. Furthermore, emotional wellbeing has been known to create a sense of psychological safety. That helps individuals navigate career challenges with greater resilience.

The result found in table four revealed that a positive relationship of 0.69 exists between family positive social wellbeing and career development. This also indicates that families that provide social support, guidance and encouragement through such items as discusses with me (2.98), give useful advice (2.89), encourages mentorship (2.96), dialogues with me (2.87), encourages visitation of counsellors (2.87), makes available family provision (2.90) etc. significantly enhance the career development of their children this result is consistent with the findings of Okudo et al (2023) who observed that strong positive family social wellbeing impacts positively on career development and aspirations among Nigerian youths. This view was collaborated by Odejide (2020) who noted that young people who receive consistent social support from family members are more likely to make informed career decisions and pursue long-term career goals. Also, family social well-being helps youths gain valuable career information and other useful vocational development values.

CONCLUSION

The discussion of findings highlights that family psychological wellbeing significantly influences career development among youths. Family social wellbeing emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by emotional and financial wellbeing. These findings emphasize the need for families to provide emotional encouragement, social mentorship, and financial resources to enhance their children's career aspirations and long-term professional success.
By fostering supportive home environments, families can play a pivotal role in helping youths explore, plan, and achieve their career goals, ultimately contributing to a more empowered and productive society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) Career development programs should adopt a family-centered approach, involving both parents and children in career counselling sessions.
(2) Schools and community organizations should sensitize families on the importance of emotional and social support in fostering career aspirations.
(3) Policymakers should prioritize family empowerment programs that provide financial assistance to low-income families, thereby enhancing their ability to support their children's career goals.

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