

MJE RESOURCES WEEKLY BULLETIN 2(6)

From the office of the:
Vocational/Occupational/Career Guidance Counsellor,
NDU Admissions and UTME,
Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State

To: Our Parents, Guardians, Sponsors and Benefactors

Career Choice Assistance: Pit holes from our Parents

Abstract

This article is aimed at addressing our parents on the role they play in selecting a career for their children. Over the years, as witnesses, observers, and victims of career imposition, we have come to the realization that our parents, even the educated and highly educated ones lack the technicalities and nitty gritty surrounding career selection process. Hence, their approach most times may be wrong. Too many times, children suffer from wrong career choices imposed on them by their parents. What happens is that when they come to school, some of them who could not study the course imposed on them, tend to engage in inappropriate activities because they do not want to go back home and tell their father that they could not meet up. Hence, the parents, who caused the predicament in the first place, keep on paying school fees for a programme that his/her child do not attend. Therefore, this paper serves as a guide to our parents in assisting their children to choose their course of study. Doing so, not through imposition, but in consideration of what is obtainable in terms of student's capacity.

Introduction

Hello Mum and Dad, it feels nice writing an episode to you today. The major purpose of writing to you was due to the challenges we as educators and counsellors faced here in school seeing children who do not understand a thing about what they do. The fact is that students are always misguided by their very own thoughts. This is even more so when people around them, like you (parents) and their peers tend to compound this issue by further pushing them into an area of study that they do not like. As parents however, you are the prime career counsellor to your child. Being the prime career counsellor gives you the very advantage of guiding your child properly in selecting a career.

In line with the above assertion, I held the view that most of our parents have misused this opportunity to favour our own gain/opinion. This material has become very important because most of our parents knows very little about career selection techniques and processes, hence their lack of knowledge in this direction has made even the most educated to falter in the process of their children's career choice process. The result of this is that your child now come to school and battle to achieve what is expected of him/her. A child who is supposed to be a first class product now battling to be in second class. It is not as if the child is not intelligent, but because he/she is in the wrong place. It is my appeal therefore, that all parents should take this very seriously because

it is alarming to us here, reports we get about parents who would not allow their children to take independent but guided career choices.

And so, you keep on choosing careers for your children year in year out, and you are never tired. You chose for your first child, you never bothered to check on his/her success whether he/she is doing well or not in the course he/she is studying for you. Yes, for you. Because you own the course, not your child. It is now time for the second kid, Daddy, you have come again. Are you not tired? You wanted Medicine for your kid, meanwhile, your kid wanted theatre arts. She loves dancing and singing. You won't let her be. Over your dead body you said, will she read theatre arts. She doesn't even know Physics, Chemistry nor Biology, but you are not bothered. If others are doing it, you have said to yourself, my child too will do it. And so, you gave an order – if you fail to read Medicine, I will not sponsor you to school – Daddy but why? Do you want the child to die before you rest? Do you know the anxiety you are causing these children? To the extent that some of my clients here who gave us testimonies have to directly disobey their parents' orders to take what they wanted study. But how many students have that strong will to disobey their parents in this direction to be able to study what they really want.

Choosing a course for your child is never a bad idea. But it becomes a bad idea because you know little or nothing about the process. It has become a bad idea because you do not seek the child's opinion before concluding what he/she should study. You were supposed to take records of what he/she likes, compare them with what he/she knows before telling him/her that you see? This course is better of the two opinion because of this, this, and that. You give tangible reasons why he/she should take the one you prefer with the perception that you know better. Sometimes, the course some parents impose may fortunately be the course the child wants, or the child may later grow to like and apply for the course without any breach of interest. But in cases where the child knows nothing about the imposed course, the parents have to make career reconsiderations.

Theoretical Background

In the bid to understand students' vocational/career/occupational needs, educators and counsellors have expounded theories in furtherance of career guidance processes. These theories include;

1. Michael Jules' theory of career choice dependence,
2. Frank Parson's Trait and Factor Theory,
3. Ann Roe's theory of career choice,
4. Holland's career theory of vocational behaviour,
5. Ginzbergs theory of psychoanalytic concept of vocational development, and
6. Super's developmental self-concept theory of vocational behaviour.

However, for the purpose of this paper, the author wish to focus on Michael's theory of career choice dependence. The theory of career choice dependence holds that children will wait for their parents or peers to guide them through the career selection process. This is because most students have not been able to articulate what they will be in the future, hence, it behooves on the parents to help/assist the students in adjusting themselves to a particular career. This theory is selected for this paper because it explains the connection or link between the parent and the child in the career selection process.

Problems of Misguided Career Choice

Parents who are often good in choosing career for their children are always blind to the problems they are causing. Even when they see the problem, they are unaware of the extent such problem will last. Although some career imposition cases later turned to be successful, in many other cases, it has caused lifelong career blunders. The problems are enumerated below:

1. Students for whom their careers were selected are more likely to perform poorly in class.
2. Lack of understanding of the course chosen for a student may drive the child to engage in nefarious activities inimical to the University and the host community.
3. It may lead to dissatisfaction in the workplace environment.
4. May lead to defrauding the parents who continue to pay for school fees for a programme not attended in school.
5. May truncate the future career prospect of the child.

However, according to Inborn Talent (online), the disadvantages of choosing the wrong career choice include:

6. Dissatisfaction – this is the most unsettling disadvantage of choosing the wrong career. The constant sensation of being in the wrong place will eat away all your piece of mind and won't let you sleep till you make some life changing decisions.
7. Failure – This will be the most disappointing outcome of choosing a wrong career. Success does not come easy in the jobs that do not suit you. Most of us fail to notice that success lies where your heart is. If you are dragging your feet to office every day, you are definitely not their star performer.
8. Monday Morning Blues – When doing the wrong job, nothing will be scarier than the thought of going to work on a Monday morning. Monday mornings will give you nightmares.
9. Slow Growth – You don't have to be a hot shot scientist to realize that a job you don't love, won't give you much of name and fame.
10. Depression – Depression is the common outcome of dissatisfaction, failure and all things negative in life. If you are not doing good career-wise, you will end up being depressed and this will start affecting the other aspects of your life as well.

Enejeta (2015) however, noted that the ills of wrong career choice are rooted in the following problems:

1. **Lack of passion:** When you first took up the job, the initial orientation is to be able to pay the bills, feed yourself, and survive the harsh economic condition in the country. All these were just a short term consideration with very little long term coloration. Although your immediate needs may be fulfilled but on the long run the passion you once had on the job declines because the job has little to do with your passion, you took up the job simply to survive and now you want more than that, you want that fulfilment and satisfaction but it would have been more easy to achieve if it were a job or a career you love.
2. **Lack of interest:** At a point when the passion for the job diminishes, the next thing that suffers is the interest. Nothing is more boring than doing a routine we have lost interest on. With the job becoming uninteresting, efficiency and effectiveness on the job suffers.
3. **Your potentials may not be in use:** it hurts when you are a footballer or a computer scientist and find yourself doing a job as an office administrator where your routine is

carrying files from one office to the other. Deep inside you a memory flashes on how much you wanted to be one thing or the other in the hey days, but now you can't even do just that. You feel the first zeal and energy in you, at that point it is only regret and anguish seeing a great potential not being put to proper use.

4. **The job gets tiring and boring:** On the long run when your short term goals would have been fulfilled, another need sets in. If your job is not the right one for you it becomes very difficult to fulfil the desire. This is where the job gets tiring and boring.
5. **Low productivity:** The primary need your employer wants to fulfil is productivity. They want you to add value and increase overall productivity. But with lack of passion, interest and value, your productivity decreases. Low productivity will put you in difficult situation with your employers and the work environment will become unsafe. When this happens one needs to go back to the drawing board and retrace the footsteps putting into consideration if the job is still on course with long term goals.
6. **May lead to loss of job:** Low productivity comes with an unsafe work environment. An unsafe work environment comes with endless queries, memos, suspension from work and may lead to loss of job. An employer may tolerate insubordination some few lapses but never an unproductive employee.
7. **It can set one back in life:** Having lost your job either through resignation or outright dismissal, it brings one back to square one. It could be a setback in life if not properly handled. Assuming all your plans depend on the earnings from the job, losing it may mean postponing some of your plans in life like marriage, building your own house, or acquiring a higher degree. Choosing a wrong job or career can result in time wasting, especially when it has gone bad.

The Way forward

As educators, the primary factors we look into before selecting a career are students' inbuilt capacity and interest. For how can a parent who loved mathematics also want his child to take up a mathematical course? For persons like us who never liked mathematics, my grade alone in mathematics will not only disgrace you my parents, but also the whole of his ancestors. It will be so poor that you see me, you have already seen disgrace. For me? Someone who has pondered over the years how I managed to pass mathematics from primary one to University? Failure is inevitable. But you see? I am still the same person who wrote this intelligent piece. Because I am not good in mathematics does not mean that I am not intelligent. It is just a matter of area of strength. Therefore, to ensure that your children succeed, look into their activities carefully, you will see what they are good at.

Upon a careful examination, you will find that some of your children, even as young as they are, are good in settling disputes among their ranks – the judge; others liars – maybe lawyers; - still, others are good in repairs of electrical appliances when they have not even applied as an apprentice to learn electrical repairs – the engineers; some are good in gossiping – the media bloggers; some will change your car oil for you, fix any bad bulb in the car and even work on the engine to put some minor problems in order – the mechanical engineers. These are what we as educators look into when assisting youngsters in selecting a career path.

On the other hand, from the academic perspective, to select courses for the student, we also look at the subject area that the child is good at. A child who does not know mathematics should not go

into computer science just because he likes it or because that is where his/her interest lies. His interest may just be ephemeral and transient and is informed from a rose-colored sunglass view. If he/she goes into it, his interest may change along the line when he finally meets the course contents like html coding and other mathematical aspects of the course. Therefore, the onus lies on the parents to guide the child properly.

The problem we as educators and career counsellors face here in the university is that before we get to know these students, their course of study has already been chosen and admission has been granted. It becomes more difficult to change although it is possible at that stage. It is our appeal therefore that parents learn from this material, seek more career assistance in putting their children through. Do not make your children be one of them here in the university who after 7-9 years are still here causing trouble for the university community. Some have been blacklisted over and over again that the university have no choice than to send them out. Yet, they cannot come home. They stay around, keep on collecting fees from their parents and causing more harm than good. To avoid all these, parents must sit up and assist their children make the right choice.

Conclusion

From the above explanation, we sincerely hope that our parents will do what is expected of them as the prime career counsellors for their children. Doing this will bring so much benefit and fulfillment for your children. The feeling of success is as sweet as honey that only the bearer can explain. From now on, please, do not say, "it is only the course I want for my child that he will study, else, nothing". Such perception and act have consequences. Although as stated earlier, not all career imposition have really gone wrong. We have many students here for whom their parents choose their careers for them. They are still doing well, others are managing the situation and doing what we call career adjustments. Nevertheless, you as a parent must determine the aptitude and interest of your child before choosing a career for him/her.

References

- Inborn Talent, (Online). *Disadvantages of choosing the wrong career*. Retrieved March 25, 2018 from <https://Inborntalent.Wordpress.Com/2014/01/28/Disadvantages-Of-Choosing-The-Wrong-Career/>
- Onojeta, E. (2015). *The dangers of choosing a wrong career*. Retrieved March 25, 2018 from <https://www.financialwatchngr.com/2015/12/16/dangers-choosing-wrong-career/>

To our Parents, Guardians, Sponsors and Benefactors
Jambites' Guide

The author is:

Michael O. Jules

(M.Ed. Inv.)

Vocational/Occupational/Career Guidance Counsellor,
NDU Admissions and UTME,
Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State.

Lead Researcher,

MJE Resources

Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State.

+2348060699054

+2348050706635

www.nduadmissionsandutme.com

admissionsandutme@gmail.com²

miklestheory@gmail.com¹

michaeljules42@yahoo.com³