



## Factors Influencing Career Aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

The study sought to investigate the factors influencing career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. Four research questions guided the study, and four null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The research design adopted for the study is the descriptive survey research design. A sample of two hundred (200) students was drawn from the population of 2,632 using the simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was used in data collection. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was adopted for data analysis to test hypotheses of the study. Findings of the study showed that, gender, family background, and peer pressure respectively, has significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students. Based on these findings, the study recommended amongst others that, parents and guardians should be enlightened on the issue of career choices so that, they don't force their children or wards into any career against their talent and interest as this could lead to frustration and job dissatisfaction in the future.

*Keywords: Factors influencing career aspiration, Christian religious studies, career prospects, and individual career choice and aspirations*

### Introduction

A career is one of the most crucial facets of one's existential spheres. Career aspiration refers to a decision made by an individual regarding his/her future work, occupation, career, or profession. It is what the individual wants or prefers to do in terms of work. It encompasses a set of life chores that an individual is deemed to conduct ranging from educational to career endeavors (Nancy & Teru, 2017). Career aspiration especially among diverse options is usually a heroic task and is very important to the life of junior secondary school students (Osipow, 2013). T

his therefore underscores the need to guide adolescents in planning for careers and making mature decisions. The school system has the responsibility of assisting the youths in making

competent career decisions that are appropriate to their abilities, aptitudes, interests, and other personality characteristics (Animasahun, 2007) According to Osa-Edoh and Alutu (2011), one of the greatest problems of a student is decision making and choice of career. Career aspiration is for young or older adults to either start a new career or enter a new career that they have never done. It is so important that proper sensitization is carried out for our youth who are changing career tracks to go to the career they aspire for more improved career development.

According to Kerka (2010), career choice is influenced by multiple factors which include personality, interest, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role models, social support and available resources such as information and finances. Hewitt (2010) suggested that, most people are influenced by a career that their parents favour. Others follow the career that their educational choice has opened for them, and some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them. Still, there are those who choose the career that gives high income. However, research shows that the choice of career among secondary school students is determined by a combination of personal abilities, personality type and other factors (Okafor, 2012).

For example, some studies have found that the family plays a critical role in the career aspirations of secondary school students (Owoyele & Muraina, 2015; Otto, 2015). There are varying opinions and findings, however, as to which specific family characteristics influence career aspirations. For instance, conflicting data exist regarding the influence of socioeconomic variables. Findings by Mau and Bikos (2020) suggests that both parents' education and income influences career aspirations, while other studies carried out by Hossler and Stage (2018) and Muraina (2018) show that, only parents' education has influence on career aspiration. Other family variables that have been shown to influence career aspiration include parents' occupation (Trice, 2014) and family size (Muraina, 2018). The father's occupational status is highly correlated with his son's occupation (Blau, 2014).

In his study, Spade (2015) also found that gender difference also influences the career path and experience of the learners which starts at pre-school and continues throughout their educational

careers. Teachers like parents are viewed as key players in the career paths that young people eventually pursue especially girls (Barnett, 2017). In her study in Nigeria, Denga (2014) found that sex-role stereotypes exist among children in primary schools. Traditional, religious and cultural background perceptions of being suitable for a particular job also have been found to influence the career aspirations of students. Generally speaking, gender is linked to uneven access to resources, power and choices (Alimi, Ehinola & Alabi, 2012). Realities in history, society, religion, economy and culture have an impact on how men and women are positioned. Findings show that only a few teachers encourage students to take certain subject options that are congruent with the aptitudes, characteristics and abilities that they identify (Falaye & Adams, 2018). Onayase and Onayase (2009) on the other hand, revealed that, environmental factors also play a major role in choosing a career path among secondary school students.

According to Salvy, Haye Bowker, and Hermans (2012), peers are great sources of motivation for one another. Lifelong friendships are formed at school and peers have been known to stand up for one another sometimes even more than siblings. They assist one another with school work and also become mentors to one another in their personal lives. According to Salvy et al (2012), very often, one finds that some students pursue some courses just because their friends are doing same. As a result, such students sometimes find it difficult to perform well because they do not have an interest in the course. However, some adolescents choose friends who have characteristics or talents they admire, which motivates them to achieve and act as their friends do. Interestingly, some peer groups encourage members to study hard in school and can also help them think more creatively (Brown & Barbosa, 2009).

From the foregoing revelations, it is worthy to note the essence of career aspirations amongst students as well as what the students want to do in their lifetime. No matter one's age, the choice of career or desire is an important question for everybody. A lot of students in secondary schools believe that their future is a glorious adventure in which they are bound to succeed (salami & Salami, 2013). Many of them have the idea that they will be able to work in public or private

establishments as soon as they complete their secondary education. Students in secondary schools like many other young adults are always worried about what they will do with their lives and the kind of adult they will become. They are concerned about early entry into the occupational world and finding productive and rewarding places in and out of rapidly fast-changing societies where employment is unlikely to be available on a scale sufficient to absorb a good number of young people when they arrive at the labour market. How the young people of today meet the problem for tomorrow will depend upon the amount of success they make in planning for that tomorrow (Wattles, 2009).

In times past, religion has been a tool for creating and promoting peace, unity and development. But down the line, religious instruction has been misappropriated if given at all. Young ones have been brainwashed with unsound religious instruction. The 21st century is plagued by vices such as corruption, envy, slander, hatred, tribalism, militancy, terrorism, genocide, thuggery, fraud, divorce, prostitution, examination malpractice, cybercrimes, robbery and moral decadence with Nigeria as a major player. In Nigeria today, religious education is considered useless since it does not bring technological development for which the nation is thirsty for. At the moment, the subject is looked down upon by the society, and parents even discourage their children or wards from studying it at tertiary level. The society has ‘de-professionalized’ the course. Hence, the study of religion has lost its place. Student side-line the study of religion for other courses (Kirnin, 2014).

Career decision plays an important role in opening opportunities and placing individuals on a competitive standard. But, the society is gradually becoming dissatisfied with the challenges encountered by individuals in choosing career path. Despite the activities of the guidance counselors posted to secondary schools by both the Federal and State governments in Nigeria, to conduct career, educational and social counseling, most secondary school students still leave secondary schools quite deficient in occupational information (Muraina, Oladimeji & Popoola, 2022). According to Owoyele and Muraina (2015), many Nigerian students leaving secondary

schools have neither the awareness of the diversity of occupation available in each subject nor the one to develop interest in. This results in a problematic future where certain careers become crowded while others struggle to succeed. However, to revitalize and re-engineer a society already troubled with various vices that can be said to have degenerated to a level of amoral society, religious instruction should become our focus and also serve as a guiding principle for career aspirations. It is against this background that the researcher took it upon himself to examine the factors influencing career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Gender and career aspirations**

A lot has been written on gender with regards to career aspirations, especially in the area of construction and architecture, with a focus on the low retention rates of skilled female employees (De Graft-Johnson, Manley & Greed, 2015). There are various reasons for this ugly trend; for example, the society both local and worldwide, perceives construction as a career inappropriate for women. This belief that women should stay at home and take care of the family is deeply ingrained in Nigerian culture and religion (Adogbo, Ibrahim & Ibrahim, 2015). What then is gender? Anderson (2015) defines gender has the social characteristics and possibilities that come with being male or female.

Watts (2017) discloses that female students have shown little interest in important professional fields like pharmacy, technology, engineering, and other subjects that are mathematically connected. One of the variables that can be linked to this phenomenon is likely the gender realities that shape human conduct because human behavior and preferences are influenced by gender both naturally and socially (Green, 2019). In this context, behavior refers to those character traits that are inherited from our parents (gene), which distinguishes us from others by how we act, feel, and view the world. Behaviors reveal qualities like intelligence, proper speech, good eyesight, proper gait, and more. Negative characteristics include fear, timidity, frailty, and low IQ. These qualities are innate. They are not brought on by the environment. They play a significant

role in behavior and differ between the sexes, which has an impact on our choices about what we eat, our careers, our friends, and our life partners, to name a few. The biological activities of man produce human actions. It is possible to view gender statistics in career choice from a societal perspective. For example, in some social contexts, women are not allowed to work and support their families; instead, they only allow men to do so. This prevents women from enrolling in schools and as a result, prevents them from choosing a vocation. This is likely the reason why women are less likely than men to achieve exceptional feats (Tyler, 2005).

It is important to note that sometimes parental involvement is part of the factors that influence a gender's professional decision. Parents frequently have a significant impact on both their male and female children. Young people's job development is often likened to polishing rocks. A lot of different people work on them, but parents are the biggest rocks in the number (Otto, 2019). There is no substitute for parents' impact on their children's job plans (Hines, 2004). Environment, peer group, family, and opportunities are some of the factors that have a varied impact on men and women choices in a certain sector.

Liang (2016) examined the factors affecting career decision-making among young generations in China. The results showed that young generations are affected by preference between international and domestic hotels, perceived external prestige, and career indecision when making career decisions. Furthermore, university students prefer international hotels, while vocational students prefer domestic hotels. The study revealed also that career indecision mediated the relationship between brand preference and perceived external prestige through the career decision-making process. Migunde, Othuon and Mbagaya (2015) sought to determine the moderating role of gender in the association between career readiness and career indecision. A sample of 369 secondary school students was surveyed on career indecision and career readiness. Using multiple regression analysis, the predictor variables were able to account for 25.7% of the variance in career indecision. Career indecision was significantly negatively correlated to career readiness. An increase in career readiness was significantly predictive of a decrease in career indecision. The

interaction term between career readiness and age significantly predicted career indecision because the interaction term was significant. This implies that gender was a significant moderator in the relationship between career readiness and career indecision. The relationship between career maturity and career indecision was found to be stronger in younger female students.

Hellen, Omari and Mong'are (2017) examined the factors influencing the choice of careers among university students in the School of Business and Economics at Kisii University. The specific objectives of the study were to determine whether gender, Age, peer group and parents do influence the students in career choice. The target population for the study was 1998 students in the School of Business and Economics. A sample size of 231 was used. The study adopted a stratified random sampling technique to obtain data from all School of Business and Economics students on the Main Campus. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Data was collected through self a questionnaire. The validity of the questionnaire was determined by the university supervisors and research assistants while in testing for reliability, Cronbach's Alpha Co-efficient was calculated on the piloted questionnaires.

Data was tabulated and the measures of central tendency, weighted mean, and simple regression were used for analysis after which results were summarized in tables, charts and graphs. The results revealed that gender strongly influenced the students' career choice. The findings also showed that gender is one of the key factors in choice-making. The study also found that peer group and parental guidance had a moderate influence on the student's choice of career. The study made the following recommendations: A lot of emphasis on the development of well nurtured career guidance departments should be established in schools to help our students with career guidance. This is due to the discovery that students need information on career prospects that they take.

On their part, Fabunmi and Adedayo (2017) explored issues of gender and adolescent age difference as they relate to the choice of career among secondary school students in south west Nigeria. A total of 100 SS II students responded to the study, which were selected through a multistage random sampling technique. The instrument, tagged Student Career Inventory (SCI) was

constructed by the researchers and validated against two similar instruments namely-the Vocational Interest Inventory (VII) and Career Inventory Survey (CIS) for content and construct validities using factor analysis. This yielded coefficients of 0.58 and 0.63 respectively. The same process of factor analysis was used to test the reliability of the instrument which was found to be reliable with a coefficient of 0.966. The finding of the study showed a significant difference in the choice of career between male and female students, but not as significant as concerning the age difference between 15 and 17 years. Based on this, it was recommended among others that gender issues should be put into consideration when career choice is to be treated. Several other researchers have studied the relationship between age and career indecision and found no significant relationship between the two (Lopez & Ann-Yi, 2009; Schmidt, Miles, & Welsh, 2011).

### **Locality and career aspirations**

Locality is an area or district considered as site where certain activities take place. It can also be referred to as neighborhoods. The finding of Abisola (2017) showed that senior secondary two (SS2) students from urban locations are better in academic performance than those from rural locations. Along that same vein, Eyo (2003) stated that any child who resides in urban area where educated people reside has an opportunity to be shaped by such calibres of people and would be encouraged to place full preference on education which in turn will make the child exhibit better academic performance. Vincent (2008) remarked that children who were born in rural locations feel more local and inferior and would not perform well academically as compared to those in urban locations who are bold and inquisitive which enables them to do well academically. This signifies that the academic performance of secondary school students can be influenced by urban and rural localities.

According to Owoeye and Yara (2011), students in urban locations have a very great advantage of academic performance, despite the apparent disadvantage of having to learn in large classes. Students in urban environments enjoy amenities like electricity, television, computers, and other facilities that can facilitate learning. Such amenities are rare to find in rural environments.



Olamiju and Olujimi (2011) affirmed that most remote communities in developing countries do not have schools due to poor road networks linking the communities. Students in rural communities travel a long distance to reach schools and may not afford to pay for their transportation fares particularly those from poor families (Mhiliwa, 2015). After such a long travel to school, the students may not have enough energy to participate actively in academic activities.

Shyamal (2016) found that urban and rural students differ significantly in their study orientations. Other studies carried out by Stella and Purushothaman (1993) and Ayishabi (1991) showed that there is a difference between urban and rural students concerning their study habits. On the other hand, Sundaram (1989) studied urban and rural differences in achievement and achievement-related factors such as self-concept, manifest anxiety, study habits, intelligence, adjustment problems and achievement motivation among college students. The study revealed that the urban and rural students do not differ significantly in respect of their study habits.

### **Family background and career aspirations**

Families, parents and guardians in particular play significant roles in the occupational aspiration and career goals development of children. Without parental approval or support, students and young adults are often unable to pursue or even explore diverse career possibilities. Wilson and Wilson (2012) had found that college students and young adults cite parents as an important influence on their choice of career. Yet parents may not be aware of the influence they have on the career development and vocational choice of their children.

Warts (2011) used 80,000 first-year college students and compared their fathers' occupations with their sons' career choices to find out whether there was a correlation between the sons' choices and their fathers'. His findings suggest that certain groups of occupations (for example, physical sciences, social sciences medicine) are inherited. Other studies have separately examined the influences of each parent on the career choices of their sons or daughters and have found that mothers tend to have more influence on the career decisions or aspirations of their children than fathers. For instance, Mickelson Velasco (2011) cited their interviews conducted with residents

which they found out that mothers were the most influential and that daughters' occupation aspirations were often similar to their mothers' chosen professions. Jungen (2008) also noted in her research paper that choosing a career is often considered a major turning point in a young adult's life. This decision alone has the potential to open the door to success or close the door of opportunity. While often perceived to be an individual choice, research suggests that a variety of influences such as family, school, community, social and economic factors are likely to manipulate one's ultimate career decision. Among these factors, students report that parents have the greatest influence on which career they choose (Kniveton, 2006).

Most parents believe that they should remain neutral regarding their children's career development. However, studies show that parents have a greater influence than even teachers on students' career choices (Kniveton, 2006). While direct parental career advice may be influential, parents may be unaware that they can also exert a strong career influence simply by serving as examples of good workers to their children. Kniveton revealed that children as young as five years old begin to identify with the occupation of their mother or father as soon as they can pronounce their job title (Jungen, 2008). Even though adolescents actively begin demonstrating their independence from their parents in their high school years, these young adults are still very much dependent on their parents for their career growth (Clutter, 2010). Parents tend to create the strongest impression on their adolescents' vocational choices more than any other group including counselors, teachers, friends, or even people working in the identified desired occupations (Bardick, Berns, Magnusson, & Witko, 2014).

As children begin to transit into adulthood through the formation of their own identity, the more comprehensive view of parental influence regarding their career development is preferred, from a counseling standpoint, as it takes into account the entire context of the adolescents' decision-making (Middleton & Loughead, 1993). Other studies have revealed that parenting does not occur in a unidirectional manner, but rather, parenting occurs as a part of a larger system of daily life (Bryant, Zvonkovic, & Reynolds, 2006). Additionally, even though parents have been typically

thought of as positive influences on their children's career decision-making, it is also possible that parents may be negatively affecting their children's vocational development as well (Clutter, 2010). It is evident from the foregoing that, parental education level, parents' occupation, the family socioeconomic status, values and expectations of the parents and the parent-child relations and interactions are among the parental factors that influences the career choice of students. To Sears and Gordon (2020), additional aspects of one's family background can be influential in career decision-making. In several studies among college students, researchers have found that parents are the most influential career role models for students. Mothers in particular seem to exert greater influence during their children's high school years and fathers seemed more influential in their college-aged children's decision-making. Herbart (2016) also opined that if teenagers are raised in a home with a healthy environment where parents live in harmony, their career aspiration can be influenced by the family environment

### **Peer pressure and career aspirations**

According to Salvy, Haye, Bowker, and Hermans (2012), peers are great sources of motivation for one another. Lifelong friendships are formed at school and peers have been known to stand up for one another sometimes even more than siblings. They assist one another with school work and also become mentors to one another in their personal lives. Very often, one finds that some students pursue some courses just because their friends are doing the same. Such students sometimes find it difficult to perform well because they do not have interest in the course. Adolescents choose friends who have characteristics or talents that they admire, which motivates them to achieve and act as their friends do. Friends encourage one another to study hard at school and can also help them think more creatively (Brown & Barbosa, 2009).

Kiuru indicated further that peer group members resembled each other, not only in their educational expectations but also in their subsequent educational trajectories. In a Nigerian study by Bankole & Ogunsakin (2015), peer relationships were revealed to be significant in helping students choose careers. Feldman and Newcomb (2019) noted that peer groups can also be thought of as

membership groups within such social groups, shared consensual sets of norms developed through interpersonal interaction. The individual then changes under the pressure of direct approval (or disapproval) in the choice of a vocation. This process of peer influence is theoretically distinct from that occurring via reference groups. As a result, how peers act toward one another and how they feel about schools affects their interest in choosing a topic of study.

Ogutu, Odera and Maragia (2017) examined the influence of peer pressure on students' career decision-making. The stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample size of 364 respondents in Kenya. Questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents. Data were analyzed using Spearman's correlation ( $\rho$ ) and Multinomial Logistic Regression (MLR). Peer pressure had a weak positive significant correlation with students' career decision-making ( $\rho(364) = 0.165, p < 0.01$ ). Thus, peer pressure has a positive relationship with career decision-making. The results suggest that as peer pressure increases, career decision-making among students also increases in the same direction. This implied that there is a statistically significant influence of peer pressure on career decision-making among students even though the influence is weak. From the research, it was concluded that peer pressure influenced career decision-making among secondary school students in Busia County. It was recommended that career guidance in schools be enhanced to create awareness of career decision-making without overemphasizing peer pressure. This may be realized with secondary schools conducting regular career activities.

Naz, Saeed, Khan, Khan, Sheikh and Khan (2014) explored the nature, level and extent of peer and friend influence on the career decision-making process of an individual. The data was collected through the library method i.e. searching relevant books, journals, articles, newspapers and even internet sources while field information was obtained through questionnaires from 100 students using a random sampling method. All the collected information was critically analyzed, debated and explained to produce a theory for generalization while the field information was analyzed in the form of frequencies and percentages through a chi-square test. The study initiated

the argument that although family primarily geared and transformed the behavior of children in multiple ways, peer influence was an asset for developing career opportunities and decision-making among youth. In Uganda, Okiror and Otabong (2015) revealed that peer interactions play important roles in career choice. In Kenya, Walaba and Kiboss (2013) indicated that peer interactions influence students in choosing careers. As the students interact, they share information about careers. In his study in China, Yi-Hui (2013) revealed that students' interactions with peers of diversified interests, races and backgrounds have the potential to stimulate reflection, knowledge and beliefs which may lead to new ways of thinking about the world, other peers and eventually themselves. Kiuru (2008) conducted a study in Finland, peer group members who are closely related are likely to end up in similar educational trajectories as they are likely to accept opinions from members who are similar to themselves.

There are controversial findings on the relationship between gender, locality, family background and peer pressure and students' academic performance. However, many researchers ascertained that gender, locality, family background and peer pressure significantly influences students' career aspirations as well as academic performance. Researchers like Kniveton (2006) and Owoeye and Yara (2011) and many others who researched on career aspirations, students' academic performance, and school variables were either done in other regions of Nigeria or abroad thus lacking generalization, paving way for further research work in other regions and fields and thus this study: investigating factors influencing career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

The study sought to investigate factors influencing career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students in Calabar South Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to examine:

1. The relationship between gender and career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.

2. The relationship between locality and career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.
3. The relationship between family background and career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.
4. The relationship between peer pressure and career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. How does gender relate with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students?
2. How does locality relate with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students?
3. How does family background relate with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students?
4. How does peer pressure relate with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students?

### **Hypotheses**

1. Gender has no significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students.
2. Locality has no significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students.
3. Family background has no significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students.
4. Peer pressure has no significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies Students.

### **Research design and methods**

The design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey research design. According to Ofem (2022), it is a design where the researcher collects data from a sample of the study with

which the findings can be used to generalize to the entire population. The design is relevant to this study because, it allows the researcher to describe situations surrounding career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The study area is Calabar South local government area of Cross River State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised of two thousand, six hundred and thirty-two (2,632) SS2 students offering Christian Religious Studies in the nine (9) public secondary schools existing in the study area.

Out of this figure, two hundred (200) Students were drawn from five (5) schools in the area to constitute the sample for the study. The simple random sampling technique was adopted in the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled “Career Aspirations in Christian Religious Studies (CACRS)”. It was divided into two sections A and B. Section A was designed to gather the demographic information of the respondents such as age and sex. Section B contained 20 items and it was developed to measure the sub-variables influencing career aspirations in Christian Religious Studies. The items were constructed on a four-point likert response type scale such as; SA – Strongly Agree, A - Agree, D - Disagree, and SD – Strongly Disagree.

## Results and discussion

### Hypothesis one

Gender has no significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The independent variable in the hypothesis is gender while the dependent variable is career aspirations of students. To test this hypothesis, the Pearson’s product moment correlation analysis was used. The result of the analysis is as shown on table 1.

Table 1: Pearson’s product moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between gender and career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students (N = 200)

Variables	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum xy$	Cal-r
Gender	3294	45627		
Career aspirations	2907	43314	48472	0.462*

\*significant at 0.05; df = 198; Crit-r = 0.138

The result on table 1 shows that the calculated r value of 0.462 is found to be greater than the critical r value of 0.138 at 0.05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis. This implies that, gender has a significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.

The result is in line with the work of Hellen et al (2017) which examined the factors influencing the choice of careers among university students in the School of Business and Economics at Kisii University and found out that, gender strongly influences the students' career choice. The result of this hypothesis is also in line with the work of Watts (2017) which discloses that, female students have shown little interest in important professional fields like pharmacy, technology, engineering, and other subjects that are mathematically connected. Watts stressed further that, one of the variables that can be linked to this phenomenon is likely the gender realities that shape human conduct because human behaviour and preferences are influenced by gender both naturally and socially. Indeed, gender difference influences the career path and experience of the learners which starts at pre-school and continues throughout their educational careers. Teachers like parents are viewed as key players in the career paths that young people eventually pursue, especially girls.

Hypothesis two

Locality has no significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The independent variable in the hypothesis is locality, while the dependent variable is the career aspirations of students. To test this hypothesis, the Pearson's product moment correlation analysis was used. The result of the analysis is as shown on table 2.

Table 2: Pearson's product moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between locality and career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students (N = 200)

Variables	$\sum x$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum xy$	Cal-r
Locality	3560	47284				
Career aspirations	2907	43314			56472	0.338

\*significant at 0.05; df = 198; Crit-r = 0.138



The result on table 2 shows that the calculated  $r$  value of 0.338 is found to be greater than the critical  $r$  value of 0.138 at 0.05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis. This implies that, locality has a significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.

The result agrees with the findings of Vincent (2008) which reveals that, children who were born in rural locations feel more local and inferior and would not perform well academically as compared to those in urban locations who are bold and inquisitive, enabling them to do well academically. Thus, the academic performance of secondary school students can be influenced by urban and rural localities. The result obtained is also in line with the findings of Owoeye and Yara (2011) which reveals that, students in urban locations have a very great advantage by learning in an urban environment, which enriches their academic performance, despite the apparent disadvantage of having to learn in large classes. Students in urban environments enjoy amenities like electricity, television, computers, and other facilities that can facilitate learning. Such amenities are not available in rural environments. Students in rural communities travel a long distance to reach schools and may not afford to pay for their transportation fares particularly those from poor families (Mhiliwa, 2015). After such a long travel to school, the students may not have enough energy to participate actively in academic activities. It is clear therefore that, locality influences the learning habit as well as the career aspirations of students.

### Hypothesis Three

Family background has no significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The independent variable in the hypothesis is family background, while the dependent variable is career aspirations of students. To test this hypothesis, the Pearson's product moment correlation analysis was used. The result of the analysis is as shown on table 3.

The result on table 3 shows that the calculated  $r$  value of 0.530 is found to be greater than the critical  $r$  value of 0.138 at 0.05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis. This implies that, family

background has a significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.

Table 3: Pearson’s product moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between family background and career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students (N = 200)

Variables	$\sum x$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum xy$	Cal-r
	$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$		
Family background	1531	3072		
			36613	0.530*
Career aspirations	1520.5	2631.5		

\*significant at 0.05; df = 198; Crit-r = 0.138

The result agrees with the findings of Wilson and Wilson (2012) which revealed that, college students and young adults cite parents as an important influence on their choices of career. Yet, parents may not be aware of the influence they have on the career development and vocational choice of their children. The result is also in line with the work of Warts (2011) who used 80,000 first-year college students to compare their career choices with their fathers' occupations and found that, certain groups of occupations (for example, physical sciences, social sciences medicine) are inherited. Warts explained further that, mothers tend to have more influence on the career decisions or aspirations of their children than fathers.

**Hypothesis four**

Peer pressure has no significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The independent variable in the hypothesis is peer pressure, while the dependent variable is career aspirations of students. To test this hypothesis, the Pearson’s product moment correlation was used. The result of the analysis is as shown on table 4.

The result on table 4 shows that the calculated r value of 0.510 is found to be greater than the critical r value of. 0.138 at 0.05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis. This implies that, peer pressure has significant relationship with the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.

Table 4: Pearson’s product moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between peer pressure and career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students (N = 200)

Variables	$\sum x$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum y$	$\sum xy$	Cal-r
Peer pressure	1631	3172			
				2731.5	0.510
Career aspirations	1620.5	2731.5			

\*significant at 0.05; df = 198; Crit-r = 0.138

The result agrees with the findings of Salvy et al (2012) that, peers are great sources of motivation for one another. They stressed that, lifelong friendships are formed at school and peers have been known to stand up for one another sometimes even more than siblings. They assist one another with school work and also become mentors to one another in their personal lives. Very often, one finds that some students pursue some courses just because their friends are doing the same. Such students sometimes find it difficult to perform well because they do not have much interest in the course. Adolescents choose friends who have characteristics or talents that they admire, which motivates them to achieve and act as their friends do. So, peer pressure influences the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that, gender, locality, family background and peer pressure are important determinants of career aspirations. It is important to note that the career path of young ones require development. Therefore, parents, teachers, policy makers as well as counselors should intensify effort in determining students’ career choice in line with the child's ability, talent and interest. To achieve this, we must strive and play the needed role to ensure our youths achieve their dreams and secure the future for us all in critical sectors that concerns the economy, education, politics, leadership, community service, health and so on.

### **Educational implications of the study**

The findings of the study have educational implications for students of Christian Religious Studies (in Calabar Municipality) as outlined below:

1. Finding from the study reveals that, there is a significant positive relationship between gender and the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The educational implication here is that, if there is no discrimination in the orientation and attention given to boys and girls as regards career choice, both sexes will have a sense of belonging and would make choices in career that reflects their interest and ability.
2. Finding from the study reveals that, there is a significant positive relationship between locality and the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The educational implication here is that, if the students from rural schools are given proper orientation, it will help change their wrong perception about certain careers and education in general.
3. Finding from the study reveals that, there is a significant positive relationship between family background and the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The educational implication here is that, if parents allow their children to take up careers in line with their interest and ability, it will help guarantee high performance in school as well as job satisfaction in the future.
4. Finding from the study reveals that, there is a significant positive relationship between peer pressure and the career aspirations of Christian Religious Studies students. The educational implication here is that, if the students are adequately guided not just to follow their friends, but to go for careers that match their interest and ability, their performance in school will improve and they will live a fulfilled life in the future.

### **Recommendations for policy directions**

Based on the findings of the study, it is hereby recommended as follows:

1. Necessary career information needed to guide both the male and female students should be made available through different channels within and outside the school.

2. Students in the rural areas need to be given adequate orientation on career choices as well as the need for them to be focused and strive to be educated.
3. Parents and guardians should be enlightened on the issue of career choice so that, they don't force their children or wards into a careers that are against their interest as this could lead to frustration and job dissatisfaction in the future.
4. Students should be advised not to take up a profession or a career just because their friends are in that line.

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