

# Parental Pressure and Career Aspirations Of Secondary School Students In Delta Central Senatorial District

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**Abstract:** This study examined the relationship between parental pressure and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated and tested. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of this study consisted of 19,555 Senior Secondary School Three (SSS3) students in Delta Central Senatorial District of Delta State. The sample consists of 384 SSS 3 students. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Parental Pressure and Career Aspiration of Secondary School Students (PPCAS)". The face validity of the instrument was determined by Experts in Guidance and Counselling Department. The reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistical procedures. The reliability coefficient value of Parental Pressure Rating Scale = 0.81 and Career Aspirations Rating Scale = 0.81. The instrument was distributed to the students in the sampled schools. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Coefficient of Determination while the hypotheses were tested using linear and multiple regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance. From the analysis the following findings were obtained; there was significant relationship between parental pressure and career aspirations; there was no significant moderating impact of sex on career aspirations of Secondary school students in Delta central senatorial district, there was significant relationship between parental education background and career aspirations of Secondary school students in Delta central senatorial district. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that parents should be discouraged from projecting their ambitions into the life/career of their children; rather the students should be allowed to make career aspirations within their personal interests, aptitude and abilities

**Keywords:** Parental Pressure, Career Aspirations, Sex

## INTRODUCTION

The aspirations of career is one of the most difficult decisions in a person's life and yet one of the most important decisions which every student in secondary school irrespective of his or her class must make in accordance with their academic pursuits. A person's career encompasses all of the many jobs, vocations, and professions they have during their life. According to Kinance (2019), a person's career is the culmination of their whole profession, employment, or body of labour. In light of this, a career is a dynamic vocation or a work that a person finds fulfilling and for which they feel they are qualified. This implies that an individual's aspirations of career should be in line with the area of interest where he/she has a focus on.

The aspirations of career is one of many difficult task students are faced with as this determines their future plans. The decision usually affects them throughout their future lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around the students' future ambition. The job one engages in, most often is influenced by the training the person receives from the school. Zotorvie (2016) posits that most people, especially the youth have their secondary school days and even beyond characterized by major career decision making. Career does not only determine the individual's pattern of income but it also affects their personality and concepts in life (Zotorvie, 2016). According to Adeyinka (2017), the individual's career could either make or mar his/her joy and happiness. He further contended that true joy, happiness and satisfaction are linked to proper aspirations of profession. Thus the aspirations of career is a delicate issue and therefore requires caution and serious considerations. It became necessary that aspirations of career should be made at the secondary level, particularly at the senior secondary school level. This is to enable the students prepare adequately for what is needed to excel in such career, in the area of subject mastery and attitude.

Career selection seems to be one of many important aspirations students make in determining future plans. All of their lives, this choice will affect them. The focus of a student's identity is centred on their lifelong career aspirations. According to high school kids in Nigeria, job goals seem to be a major issue, according to Nigerian high school students. A crucial issue for everyone, regardless of age, is what their job or life objectives are. Many secondary school students think that they will have amazing experiences in the future, where they will undoubtedly excel. A significant portion of them believe that after completing their secondary schooling, they will be able to find employment in either public or private settings. There are others who have aspirations of becoming attorneys, engineers, physicians, accountants, and more. Secondary school students, like many other young people, worry a lot about what they will do with their lives and what sort of adults they will become in the future. They are concerned about finding fulfilling jobs in our rapidly evolving society and making an early entrance into the workforce. The degree to which today's youth are able to successfully prepare for tomorrow will determine how they handle its issues. Essentially, parents, teachers, and school counsellors are in charge of organising tomorrow's activities. The program provides students with a broad introduction to the working world. Professional goals are a sensitive matter that requires careful thought and thoughtful analysis. Young people's employment choices have a wide range of effects on their lives. It may decide the person's residence and the kind of friends they should maintain, for instance. Both one's educational attainment and income level may be predicted by it. The goals that individuals

have for their careers vary; some want to earn a lot of money, while others want to travel and help others improve the world. The distinct prior experiences that each kid has shape their worldview.

A person's career encompasses all of their many life activities (Omeje, 2017). It comprises a sequence of related professions, careers, and employment roles that a person pursues from birth to death, or from one educational level to another, throughout the course of his life (Omeje, 2017). This shows a career that is forward-thinking. A career is an intersection of vocations, including tasks that a person does for pay or no pay at all, according to Sear (2019). The author went on to say that people create career patterns when they make choices about their education, careers, homes, and other responsibilities throughout their lives. A career is defined as a person's lifelong pursuit of achievement that includes important jobs held throughout their lives, according to Maxwell and Okwulehie (2019). Consequently, an individual's true identity will mostly be determined by their career goals. Operationally, a person's career is defined as the life attitudes and experiences they exhibit throughout their lifespan. Nonetheless, a person's sensible job goals are what ultimately determine their level of fulfilment and life pleasure. Career goals are described by Hewitt (2019) as open employment options that are accessible for a long-term lifestyle. Furthermore, as Michael (2020) pointed out, job ambitions are a process that enables the investigation of professional, scholarly, and social endeavors to satisfy personal, monetary, and educational goals. According to the author, these careers are chosen in a way that makes it possible to achieve individual objectives. Aspirations for a job include those related to optional courses, specialisations, and future professions (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). Job goals are a process that involves choosing a career path from a variety of options. Professional objectives inform decisions about work-life balance.

One of the most important functions of education in our society today is to assist the learners make different career aspirations including subject selection by the students that will match their individual interest, abilities, personalities etc. needed for their development. It is a known fact that most young students have challenges of selecting subject at the secondary schools.

Adesehinwa and Aremu, (2020) asserted that different variables do interact to influence students' aspirations of career. These variables among others include socio-economic status, school environment, peer group and gender. However, the researcher believed that psychological factors such as parental pressure could also be factor affecting students' career aspirations.

Parental pressure is a situation where parents enforce their desires on their children against their wish. According to Ukaegbu in Mohammed (2021) most parents pressure that children toward a particular career just for the purpose of ensuring that the child purposes his/her career intentions. According to Okpurhe (2019), parents often impose their own job ambitions on their children because they think they are more knowledgeable than the students and that the career path they choose would be better for them. Furthermore, parents see certain jobs as more prestigious than others out of self-serving pride, and they would want to be identified as the parents of a kid pursuing that field. Parents who have successfully built a job in a specialised sector, such as medical, law, pharmacy, etc., would prefer for their children to pursue the same career path in order to pass it on to them, even if the children lack the necessary skills for it (Ogundele 2021). There are also situations when parents who were unable to pursue a certain vocation in their lifetime attempt to transfer their unfulfilled dream to their kids by requiring them to pursue that career. In other cases, parents worry that the occupations their children have chosen are unrealistic and won't provide them with a stable future. This occurs when a young person believes they don't need to go to school because they want to be an entertainer, comedian, singer, artist, dancer, actor or actress, model, football player, hair stylist, or tailor.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Problems relating to career aspirations among students appear to be increasing every day particularly in secondary schools. The decision on what career aspirations to make is very important in one's life as an individual, this is because, if not adequately done, wrong career aspirations would lead to frustration, which could mar one's happiness for life. Personal observations have shown that many students in their school years choose subjects leading to various career aspirations, which they do not qualify for in terms of ability, skills while others choose those that are not relevant to any career. This probably may be due to lack of knowledge. Inadequate awareness in the selection of right career or subjects has ruined the educational career of most students. It is disturbing to note that most students lack the ability to comprehend properly the kind of course to study at tertiary institutions, a situation where many students still choose wrong subject combinations, many do not know the course to study, where to study it, and the required subject combination.

A case in point is during the practicum experience of the researcher in one of the public secondary schools in Warri. The researcher observed that most of the students were having problems choosing the right career. Some of them were choosing career based on their parents' suggestions, which were not in line with their personal interests and abilities. Others were choosing career similar to the ones chosen by their friends. This problem could result in increase in school drop-out, failure in examination, examination malpractice and lack of interest in study and host of other problems, which at the end may truncate the primary purpose of education especially at the secondary level. Even when they are admitted into tertiary institutions, they end up with low grades, thus, waste precious time and resources and in most cases result in frustration. Numerous factors have been identified to be responsible for the career aspirations of students. The problem of this study put in question form: What is the relationship between parental pressure and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between parental pressure and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District. Specifically, the study examined

1. the relationship between parental pressure and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?
2. the relationship between sex and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?
3. the relationship between Parental educational background and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the relationship between parental pressure and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?
2. What is the relationship between sex and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?
3. What is the relationship between Parental educational background and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between parental pressure and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?
2. There is no significant relationship between sex and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?
3. There is no significant relationship between Parental educational background and career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study will be of immense benefit to guidance counsellors, parents, curriculum planner, school administrators, students, and researchers.

The finding will be of benefit to the school guidance counsellors will also benefit from the findings of this study, it will provide them with knowledge as to the role of parental pressure on the career aspirations of the students and how the children can be helped to resist parental pressure.

The findings of the study will be useful to parents. They will be informed on how their role in the career aspirations of their children and how they can guide the children rather forcing them into choosing career they don't have the aptitude for.

This knowledge will also help the curriculum planner and school administrators to provide appropriate intervention package for the students in the schools. It will also be great benefit to them, as they will know the benefit of early career, which will help the students into choosing the right career path.

The findings of the study will benefit the students in that it will expose to the role of self-concept in their career aspirations. Armed with such information, they will be able to change how they see themselves, especially those who have low self-concept. It will also show them the danger of submitting to parental pressure and how it can affect their career life.

Finally, this study will provide handy reference material for other researchers who may find the study relevant for use in future.

### **Research Method**

#### **Research Design**

This study adopted the correlational survey research design. The correlational survey research design was adopted because the researcher studied the relationship between self-concept, parental pressure and career aspiration of secondary school students.

#### **Population of the Study**

The study's population consisted of all of the Delta Central Senatorial District's public Senior Secondary School Two (SSS II) students. In the eight local government areas that make up the Delta Central Senatorial District, there are 179 public secondary schools and 19,555 Senior Secondary School Two (SSS II) students.

#### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The sample of this study consists of 374 senior secondary school students drawn from the entire population with statistical table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Krejcie and Morgan (1970) suggest that for a population of about 20,000-40,000 a sample size of 374 is adequate for a 95% confidence level. The statistical table of Krejcie & Morgan was used to ensure that a manageable sample was obtained from the population.

Multi-stage sampling procedures was employed in selecting the sample for the study. First, simple random sampling technique was used to select 24 secondary schools from a total of 179 public secondary schools across the eight local government areas in Delta Central Senatorial District. At the second stage, Simple random sampling technique by ballot method was also employed to select eighteen (15) SS II from each of the secondary schools that were selected, making a total of 374 SS II students, 187 males and 188 female students.

### **Research Instrument**

The instrument for data collection consisted of a 51-item questionnaire titled “Parental Pressure and Career Aspiration of Secondary School Students (PPCAS). The questionnaire contains two sections: Section A comprises the demographic data of the respondents, while Section B comprises two scales, which include the Parental Pressure Rating Scale (PPRS) and the Career Aspiration Rating Scale (CCRS). The Parental Pressure Rating Scale (PPRS) was self-constructed, while the Career Aspiration Rating Scale (CCRS) was adapted from the Student Career Aspirations Questionnaire (SCAQ), developed by Obiyo and Eze (2015). The PPRS contains 10 items, while the CCRS contains 10 items each. The scales were structured on a 4-point scale of strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1).

### **Validity of the Instrument**

Expert judgement was used to assess the instrument's face validity, and component analysis using the principal component analysis technique was used to estimate the instrument's content and construct validity. A copy of the questionnaire was sent for revision to the supervisor of the researcher and two additional specialists in the Department of Guidance and Counselling at Delta State University, Abraka, in order to assess the face validity of the instrument. To better reflect the respondents' opinions, several of the questions were changed. Following the face validity test, 50 students and teachers from the Delta North Senatorial District were given copies of the questionnaire, and factor analysis was used to analyse the collected data. The instrument's content validity was estimated using the main component analysis of the extraction process. It produced the values shown below. The ratings for parental pressure and career aspirations are, respectively, 61.27% and 53.88%. The rotating factor loading of the varimax technique was used to measure the construct validity of the instrument. The results showed that the Parental Pressure Rating Scale had a value of 0.5–1.89 and the Career Aspiration Rating Scale had a value of 0.6–0.78.

### **Reliability of the Research Instrument**

Thirty copies of the instrument were given to secondary school pupils in Delta State's Warri North Local Government Area who were not included in the research in order to determine the instrument's reliability. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient was used to examine the data and assess the internal consistency of the instruments. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was chosen based on its ability to guarantee an instrument's internal consistency, particularly when working with scales and attempting to ascertain internal consistency. Following analysis, the following Cronbach coefficients were found: 0.81 for the career ambition rating scale and 0.81 for the parental pressure rating scale.

### **Method of Data Collection**

The questionnaire was administered to the students directly by the researcher with the help of 3 research Assistants who helped to sensitise the students on the purpose of the study. The researcher and the research Assistants visited the schools to administer the instrument to the students. The purpose of the study was explained to the principals of the schools, thereafter permission was sought from them before being introduced to the students who responded to the items in the questionnaire. Copies of the questionnaires were retrieved immediately to avoid loss. However, 374 copies of the questionnaire were administered and 374 were retrieved which is above 95% percentage of the administered questionnaire.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data obtained in the field were collated, scored, coded, and entered into the computer system with the aid of statistical packages for the computer system (SPSS) version 26. The research questions were answered using the Pearson coefficient of determination, while the hypotheses were tested using linear and multiple regression analyses. For the research questions, a Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient that is closed to  $r = +1.00$  or greater than  $r = +.50$  means a strong positive relationship, and a Pearson

Product Moment correlation coefficient that is closed to  $r = -1.00$  or greater than  $r = -.50$  means a strong negative relationship. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

## Results and Discussion

**Research Questions 1:** What is the relationship between parental pressure and career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?

**Table 1: Correlation (r) Analysis of parental pressure and career aspiration of secondary school Students in Delta Central Senatorial District**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	r <sup>2</sup>	r <sup>2</sup> %	Remark
Parental pressure	374	39.1408	6.54790				
				.777	.603	60.3	Positive relationship
Career aspiration	374	57.6222	9.56150				

Independent Variable: self-concept, Dependent Variable: Career aspiration

Table 1 shows the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) value of .777 as the amount of the relationship between parental pressure and the career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District. The positive relationship indicates that parental pressure affects the career aspirations of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District, which also increases. The coefficient of determination (r<sup>2</sup>) value of .603 indicated that parental pressure contributed 60.3% to the variation in secondary school students' career aspirations in Delta Central Senatorial District.

**Research Question Two:** What is the relationship between sex and career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?

**Table 2: Correlation (R) Analysis of sex and career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District?**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> %	Remark
Sex	374	1.6111	.4818				
				.920	.846	84.6	Positive relationship
Career aspiration	374	57.6222	9.56150				

Table 2 showed that the multiple correlation of sex parental pressure and career aspiration was  $R = .920$ . This value indicates that the moderating impact of sex, parental pressure, and career aspiration is positive. The coefficient of determination (r<sup>2</sup>) value of .846 indicated that sex parental pressure jointly contributed 84.6% to the variation in career aspiration of Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

**Research Question 3:** What is the relationship between Parental educational background and career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?

**Table 3: Correlation (R) Analysis of Parental educational background and career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District?**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> %	Remark
Educational background	374	1.6111	.4818				
				.922			



Career aspiration	374	57.622 2	9.5615 0	.850	85.0	Positive relationship
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Table 3 showed the moderating impact of parental background and career aspiration was  $R = .922$ . This value indicates that the relationship parental background and career aspiration is positive. The coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) value of .850 indicated that parental background contributed 85% to the variation in career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta central Senatorial District.

### Testing of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between parental pressure and career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District

**Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between parental pressure and Career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3814.945	1	3814.945	47.086	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	29005.678	372	81.021		
	Total	32820.622	374			

a. Dependent Variable: career aspiration

b. Predictors: (Constant), parental pressure

Table 4 showed a linear regression analysis of the relationship between self-concept and career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District. The computed F-value of 47.086 has a p-value of 0.000. Testing the null hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value of 0.000 was less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicated that there was significant relationship between parental pressure and career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District.

#### Hypotheses 2

There is no significant relationship between sex and career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District

**Table 6: Linear Regression Analysis of Moderating Impact of Sex on Career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta central Senatorial District**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27777.092	2	6944.273	488.788	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	5043.530	372	14.207		
	Total	32820.622	374			

a. Dependent Variable: career aspiration

b. Predictors: (Constant), sex

Table 6 shows linear regression analysis of the moderating impact of sex on career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta central Senatorial District. The computed F-value of 488.788 has a p-value of 0.000. Testing the null hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value of 0.000 was less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis accepted. This indicated that there is no significant moderating impact of sex on career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta central Senatorial District.

#### Hypotheses 3

There is no significant relationship between Parental educational background and career aspiration of secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District.

**Table 6: Linear Regression Analysis of parental education and Career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta central Senatorial District.**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
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	Regression	27909.058	2	5581.812	402.308	.000 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	4911.564	372	13.874		
	Total	32820.622	374			

a. Dependent Variable: career aspiration

b. Predictors: (Constant), parental education ,

Table 6 shows linear regression analysis of the relationship between parental education background and career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta central Senatorial District. The computed F-value of 402.308 has a p-value of 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicated that there was significant relationship between parental education background and career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta central Senatorial District.

## Discussion of Findings

### Parental pressure and career aspiration of Secondary school students

Analysis of research question one and hypothesis one indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between parental pressure and career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District. The first finding revealed that parental pressure is capable of influencing the career aspiration of secondary school students. This is because, students who face pressure from their parents in relation to their career aspiration, will likely cave into their demands this finding is consistent with finding of Alika and Audu (2020), which showed that parental pressure significantly influenced career aspiration of student especially with regards to the choice of medicine as a career. This finding agrees with Alutu, (2017) who asserted that parental pressure has a direct influence on students. This finding is in line with Amini (2020) who showed that there was a positive relationship between academic parental pressure and career aspiration of students. The finding also corroborated that of Akinleke (2017) who found a positive relationship between academic parental pressure and career aspiration of students. This finding however disagreed with that Birjandi and Alemi (2019) who found out that parental pressure does not directly predict students' career aspiration.

### Sex and Career aspiration of Secondary School Students

The second study question and hypothesis analysis revealed that there is no discernible moderating effect of sex on secondary school students' career aspirations in the Delta Central Senatorial District. The second finding demonstrates that a person's sexual orientation is not a determining factor in the kind of employment they choose. This is most likely due to the fact that women are now pursuing the majority of careers that were previously thought to be exclusively for men. For example, women are increasingly entering the fields of engineering, architecture, the military, and even driving. Men have also pursued careers in fields traditionally associated with women, such as nursing, teaching, hair styling, and tailoring. These results are in line with those of Otta and Njoku (2020), who discovered no discernible relationship between students' sex and their interests or aspirations for their careers. The results, however, contradict those of Onyejiaku (2017), who pointed out that while women are currently fighting for equal rights with men in a variety of spheres of life (career choice being one), not much progress has been made in bridging the gap in occupational sex stereotypes and roles because it is an undeniable aspect of our society that discrimination against women still exists. This result was consistent with that of Hembree (2018), who found no discernible difference between male and female students' overall career aspirations.

### Parental Educational Background and Career Aspiration and Secondary School Students

Analysis of research question three and hypothesis three indicated that there was a significant relationship between parental education background and career aspiration of Secondary school students in Delta central Senatorial District. The sixth finding concluded that parents' educational background has a lot to determine the career aspiration of secondary school students. This is because some parent might felt such career might not be favourable to their children or they might even felt they don't have the financial capability to sponsor such career. Due to lack of education of parent they might decide for their children the kind of career they need to go in for and this might go a long way in affecting their decision on the kind of their career. This finding is in consistent with Ukaegbu (2017) who investigated that parents' socio demographic factors such as age, educational qualification, type of education and parental educational background influenced career aspiration conflict of senior secondary school students. In this same view, Ezenibe, (2019) who explained that children from high- income families go to the best schools leading to better exposure and high aspirations while children from low income or poor families attend public schools characterized with strikes and dilapidated infrastructures and so may not aspire for even higher education.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that parental pressure predicts career aspiration among secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District. Sexual relations are nonexistent. In the Delta Central Senatorial District, secondary school students career aspirations are influenced by their choice of desire and their parents' educational status.

## Recommendations

The following suggestions were offered in light of the study's findings:

1. That parents should be discouraged from projecting their ambitions into the life/career of their children; rather the students should be allowed to make career aspiration within their personal interests, aptitude and abilities
2. .
3. That both male and female students should understand that there is no specific career for men and specific for women.
4. That parents irrespective of their educational background should provide the necessary support to their children for better career aspiration by having positive expectation and being involved in decision process on their career.

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