

**PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS AS PREDICTORS OF CAREER DECISION-MAKING IN POST COVID-19 ERA AMONG SCHOOL-ADOLESCENTS IN OGUN STATE****BY****Adebayo, Olalekan Rahman: Department of Counselling Psychology and Educational Foundation, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State. [olalekanabdulrahman001@gmail.com](mailto:olalekanabdulrahman001@gmail.com)****Abstract**

*This study investigated psychosocial variables as predictors of career decision-making in post covid-19 era. The design for the study was ex-post facto, the population for the study consisted adolescents in Ogun State secondary schools with 300 sample size, multi-stage sampling procedure and simple random sampling techniques were employed. The instruments for data collection were: Akinade Vocational Interest Survey; Parental influence scale was adapted from Nancy and Teru (1997); Peer influence and Self-concept scales were researcher designed with reliability indexes of 0.80, 0.79 and 0.81 respectively, all instruments were validated by experts in counselling psychology field. The study indicated significant relationship, composite and relative significant contribution of psychosocial factors as predictors of career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State. It was recommended among others that Students should be helped to choose career that matches their interest, abilities resources and opportunities in life.*

**Keywords:** Career Decision-making, Covid-19, Parental influence, Peer influence, Self-concept.

**Introduction**

Making decisions has been a difficult task since the creation of man especially after the covid-19 pandemic. Individuals always face the challenge of making decisions. Making decision is synonymous to choice which is too easier said than done. One often faces the problems of choice in all aspects of life concerning where to live, what to eat, schools to attend and including career to pursue (Adedokun, 2013). Looking at the human life, there is need for every individual to engage in one career or the other. Choosing a career is a very crucial and compulsory decision in the human life as everyone tries to get the best out of life. Career is as important as the human life itself because it determines most of other aspects of a person's life. It should be noted that these choices, paths and directions affect the totality of one's life such as residence, marital life, relationships, income, greatness, quality of life and living, life satisfaction and self-actualization (Awoyemi, 2019). According to human growth and development, humans get to a certain stage in life when it will be necessary to make decision for a career. According to Oluwatimilehin and Mogbojuri (2015) the need to choose a career is indispensable at certain stage of human development; every normal person realizes and makes sporadic efforts to make the best choice. Regardless of one's age, what we want to become in life is of utmost importance for everyone including secondary school students.

Career decision making is a very confusing thing among senior secondary school students especially in the post covid-19 era. Owoyele and Muraina (2015) posited that career selection is one of the many important choices students will make in determining future plan. This decision will impact them throughout their lives and the essence of who the student is will revolve around what the students want to do with their life-long work (Owoyele & Muraina, 2015). The call to make career decision is important but very difficult for students entering newly into senior secondary school. Awoyemi (2019) submitted that the need for career choices is paramount and mandatory to these students. The important stage and decision making period in the students' lives becomes more challenging most especially at this critical period of changing world of science and technology, entertainment among other prominent careers school-adolescents hear or learn about mainly after the incidence of covid-19. Making career decision allows individuals to determine life goals and produce focus on finding life purpose which creates opportunities and jobs that gives a person adolescence to know channel for his or her demand for future. According to Awoyemi (2019) it was a common practice in

the old days to find feudalism converting it into a family affair where the son of blacksmith was destined to become a blacksmith and a feudal was born a leader as a career choice.

Career decision making simply means picking one's choice among all other jobs available. Since this choice affects the rest of a person's life, it is therefore imperative to understand the individual and the social factors that influence the process of career decision making. Considering personality attributes such as interest, abilities aptitude, capabilities and environmental factors can bring about making a desirable decision towards career. The school guidance and counselling department where the guidelines are provided to the students to help them understand the various disciplines and select the one that matches their aspirations, interest and personality type as the success of the students' career endeavours depends on the alignment of their career decision with their interest and personal preferences (Ali, 2022).

Every student at a certain point in his development needs to make a career decision. The influence of career decision made has lasting impact on an individual. It serves as a predictor and determinant of their prospective income, nature of work and consequently leaves a mark on the personality, behaviour and outlook of an individual. Majority of students do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities and related challenges nevertheless are tempted or forced to make decision based on popularity of the field, pressure from parents, peer pressure among others (Oluwatimilehin & Mogbojuri, 2015). All mentioned are factors influencing career decision-making which can be categorized as personality, psychological or social. A combination of psychological and social factors is referred to as psychosocial factors. The psychosocial factors include self-concept, parental influence and peer influence which may affect career decision-making. Career decision-making cannot be done without considering the individual involved as it is centred on the self. The self-constitutes the inner world of the person and can also be said to be the distinctive centre of experience and significance. According to Adedokun (2013) a number of contemporary writers use more or less synonymously the term, 'Self-structure' or 'Self-concept'. He further said this refer to the fact that as a result of socialization, an individual comes to take a partly conscious and partly unconscious view of his own totality. Once the self-concept is formed, it is very resistant to change and comes to constitute the basis on which future psychological development is likely to take place. Many attempts by sociologists to understand deviance have relied on the concept of the self as an integral explanatory construct.

Low self-concept may be taken as a sign of maladjustment in adults but it is a common and moral condition among adolescents whose self-concept often becomes temporarily disorganized by making the transition from the role of child to the role of adult (Adedokun, 2013). Maslow and Rogers (1943) posits that when an individual has good mentality, good self-esteem, prestige, a feeling of love and belonging in relation to other and is satisfied with his work and everyday life, then, that person can be said to be self-actualizing. Holland in Awoyemi (2019) posited that the choice of an occupation is an expression of one's personality; furthermore members in same occupation have similar personality characteristics. Self-actualization involves the ability to accept the nature, the ability to engage in interpersonal relations, efficient perception of reality and a comfortable relation to it, continued freshness of appreciation of people and objects, autonomy and independence of thoughts, creativeness, a democratic character of structure, willingness to continue to grow as a person. Adeoye (2015) submitted that self-concept has to do with social competence, since it influences how the person feels, how an individual thinks, learns, values himself, relate to others and ultimately how he/she behaves. Students also possess self-concept which may affect the way they relate, feels, think, learn, values themselves which has effect on most of their decisions including the one they make towards their career. The self is referred to as the individual and every individual is born by parents.

Parents have roles to play as far as career decision-making is concerned, some parents always want their school-adolescents to take over their career, and some want them to venture into very lucrative jobs due to their interest in the career. Parents are to educate adolescents on how to get on in life and how to avoid dangers (Clutter, 2010). Consistent positive and emotional connection with caring adult help young people to feel safe and secure; allowing them to develop the resiliency needed to manage the challenge in their lives and cope with the challenges of making realistic career decision (Oluwatimilehin & Mogbojuri, 2015).

Family is the first agent of socialization where the child learns basic things before being exposed to the outside world. To perform the functions of transferring appropriate behaviour, knowledge and values from birth on to the child, parents serve as role models of behaviour and they make their expectations known through punishing and rewarding children (Oluwatimilehin & Mogbojuri, 2015).

Owoyele and Muraina (2015) posited that families have constantly played vital roles in the upbringing of their children. These roles transcend the provision of material and financial needs and are met through varying approaches (Owoyele & Muraina, 2015). Therefore, parents as the leaders of the house directly or indirectly influence the career decision-making of school adolescents. Most adolescents tend to aspire after parents; boys' occupational preference tends to correlate with those of their fathers while girls relate to their vocation likewise (Oluwatimilehin & Mogbojuri, 2015). Clutter (2010) stressed that common insight of parents about their children's education is to earn more respect and money rather than as a source to bring about positive change in the society. Parents also contribute in no small measure to career guidance as they discuss, provide encouragement and providing opportunities for work within the home and community with the possibility of accepting responsibility (Cutter, 2010). As school adolescents interact within their communities and schools, it is certain that they also interact with their peers. Adolescents communicate, play and share ideas with each other which can make them view things from the angle of their friends and classmates when they meet during class or while at home or during sport. They influence each other during these interactions consciously, unconsciously, overtly or covertly. Most young people are keenly sensitive to peers opinion especially among older adolescents and perceptions of what is acceptable to their peers often have greater influence on their career aspirations than the opinions of parents and other adults (Oluwatimilehin & Mogbojuri, 2015). Peer influence cannot be underestimated as it was found to be influential in career choices. The influence of peer group in adolescents' career choice cannot be ruled out. According to Eweniyi and Usman (2013) barring other constraints, two or more adolescents can decide to become professional in the same field they are all in and can afford.

Studies of Owoyele and Muraina (2015) established a significant composite and relative contribution of parenting style and socio-economic of parents on adolescents' career choice in Southwest, Nigeria. Oluwatimilehin and Mogbojuri (2015) also submitted that peer influence, parental influence and social media have effect on career choice of school adolescents in Ogun state and Ali (2022) reported significant influence of parents and peers on career choice of students. The study of Adedokun (2013) reveals self-concept to be a very important factor on career choice.

Career decision-making in secondary schools provide students (who are mostly adolescents) with the competencies they need to advance in their occupations because when professional school counsellors provide occupational and educational guidance to their students, they influence the future by helping clarify developmental decisions that often last a life time (Oluwatimilehin, 2021). Oluwatimilehin (2021) stressed that it is on entering Senior Secondary School (SS1) a student is asked to make a choice of subjects from an array of school subjects to which the individual has never been exposed. It is obvious that the secondary school period also coincides with the adolescence stage. It is the most fascinating and complex transitions in an individual's life span which career decision is to be made. Post covid-19 era is another kind of period different from pre-covid-19 and during the covid-19 which has made people's perception to be different, initial likes to become dislikes and even dislikes becoming likes. Therefore, there is need to examine the psychosocial factors that can predict career decision-making of adolescents in Ogun state in post covid-19 Era.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is a necessity to make career decision but it is very difficult due to the fact that any decision made about career affects one throughout life. School-adolescents face several problems including career decision-making. The emergence of covid-19 made it more difficult to make career decision as many opportunities were identified after the covid-19 wave. The issue of yahoo-yahoo and yahoo-plus can also mislead school adolescents to concentrate on making career decisions for only lucrative and highly paying jobs as they see

their colleagues driving exotic cars among other high standards of living. It is true that wrong subject combination leads to wrong career decision-making and vice-versa. Secondary school adolescents find it difficult to merge their abilities, interest, aptitude, academic achievement with their environment as they make career decision. Despite the presence and activities of professional counsellors in most schools, adolescents still do not find it easy to make career decision. This necessitates investigation into the predictive influence of psychosocial factors on career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the predictive influence of psychosocial factors on career decision-making of school-going adolescents in Ogun State. Specifically the study examined the:

1. relationship among psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) and career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State.
2. composite relationship among psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) and career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State.
3. relative relationship among psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) and career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State.

### **Research questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. Is there relationship among psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) and career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State.
2. What is the composite effect among psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) and career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State.
3. What is the relative contribution of psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) and career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State.

### **Methodology**

Ex-post facto research design will be employed as no treatment will be administered or manipulated. Furthermore, observations from respondents will only be recorded in its natural form. The population for the study comprised all senior secondary school students in Ogun State. 75 adolescents were selected in each school from the four educational divisions of Remo, Ijebu, Yewa and Egba to make up 300 sample size using multi stage sampling procedure and simple random sampling technique. Research advisor 2006 table was used to determine the sample size according to the population that was gotten from Ogun State ministry of education. The researcher and research assistants ensure proper administration and retrieval of tools abiding by the rules and regulations of the school authority and data collection lasted for three weeks. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer research question 1; 2 and 3 were analysed using multiple regression analysis.

### **Instrumentation**

**Parental influence scale:** The parenting style scale of Nancy and Teru (1997) was adapted. It contains 25 items which was validated via face and content validity by experts in counselling psychology field. The instrument was on a four adapted likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree with 0.80 reliability index.

### **Peer Influence Scale**

The researcher designed an instrument to measure peer-influence. The instrument contains 15 items which were validated by four experts in counselling psychology and the reliability yielded 0.79 on a four point adapted likert-scale.

### **Self-concept Scale**

The researcher designed an instrument to measure peer-influence tagged Adolescents. The instrument contains 15 items which were validated by four experts in counselling psychology and the reliability yielded 0.81 on a four point adapted likert-scale.

**Career Decision-making Scale**

For career decision making of the students to be measured, Akinade Vocational Interest Survey was adapted and was validated by experts in the field of guidance and counselling.

**Results**

**Research Question One:** Is there relationship among the psychosocial variables on career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State?

**Table 1: Description and Inter-correlation among psychosocial variables**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Career Decision-making	Parental Influence	Peer Influence	Self-concept
Career Decision-making	300	54.5	27.93	1.00			
Parental Influence	300	42.87	18.89	.772**	1.00		
Peer Influence	300	43.86	20.48	.793**	.741	1.00	
Self-concept	300	42.78	19.56	.664**	.662	.761*	1.00

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 1 shows that there is significant relationship among the variables. This means adolescent's career decision-making is significantly correlated with: (1) Parental influence ( $r = .772; p < .05$ ) (2) Peer influence ( $r = .793; p < .05$ ) (3) Self-concept ( $r = .664; p < .05$ ). There was also significant correlation among the independent variables.

**Research Question Two:** What is the composite effect of psychosocial variables on career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State?

**Table 2: Multiple regression Analysis on Career Decision-making of Adolescents**

ANOVA				
	Sum of squares (SS)	DF	Mean square	F
Regression	56654.89	3	28884.50	72.68
Residual	7498.76	1487	4.85	
Total	64153.65	1490		

Table 2 shows that the combination of independent variables has significant effect on the career decision making of adolescents. The value of R (adjusted) = 469 and R<sup>2</sup> (adjusted) = 322 with an F-ratio value of 72.68 at 0.05 level of significance. The analysis of variance

**Research Question Three:** What is the relative contribution of psychosocial variables on career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State?

**Table 3: Relative contribution of psychosocial factors to the prediction**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients		T	Sig	P
	B	Standard error	Beta			
Constant	16.58	3.212		3.113	0.00	P<0.05
Parental influence	.526	.136	.418	2.114	0.03	P<0.05
Peer influence	.523	.126	.312	3.113	0.02	P<0.05
Self-concept	.481	.112	.238	4.134	0.01	P<0.05

Table 3 shows that each of the independent variables made a significant contribution of adolescents' career decision-making. Parental influence made most significant contribution (Beta=.418;t=2.114; p<0.05) to the

prediction next by peer influence ( $\text{Beta}=.312; t=3.113; p<0.05$ ) then self-concept ( $\text{Beta}=.238; t=4.134; p<0.05$ ).

### **Discussion**

Research question one examined the relationship among psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) and career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State. The finding indicates that relationship exists among the independent variables. This finding is in line with the findings of Owoyele and Muraina (2015) who found parenting style and peer influence having significant correlation, it also corroborates the findings of Oluwatimilehin and Mobojuri (2015) who asserted that parenting style and peer influence having significant correlation. Adedokun (2013) reveals self-concept to be a very important factor on career choice.

Research question two examined the composite relationship within psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) on career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State. The finding revealed significant composite contribution of independent variables (parental influence, peer influence and self-concept). This agrees with the submission of Oluwatimilwhin and Mobojuri (2015), Owoyele and Muraina (2015) who had similar findings in their studies. Adedokun (2013) also reveals self-concept to be a very important factor on career choice.

Research question three examined the relative relationship between psychosocial factors (self-concept, parental influence and peer influence) and career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State. This finding is in congruence with the finding of Adedokun (2013) which reveals self-concept to be a very important factor on career choice. It also agrees with the submission of Oluwatimilwhin and Mobojuri (2015), Owoyele and Muraina (2015) who had similar findings in their studies. Ali (2022) stressed that peer and parents should not force adolescents into any career which means they are important factors in determining choice of career. Adedokun (2013) also reveals self-concept to be a very important factor on career choice.

### **Conclusion**

This study was concluded that psychosocial factors like parental influence, peer influence and self-concept affect career decision-making in post covid-19 era among school-adolescents in Ogun State. In order to ensure appropriate career decision-making, these factors must be put into accurate viewpoint. It is therefore important for parents to be careful in guiding adolescents towards a particular career decision.

### **Recommendations**

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following can enhance career decision-making.

1. Students should be helped to choose career that matches their interest, abilities resources and opportunities in life.
2. School-counsellors should intensify career counselling.
3. Parents guide their wards democratically.
4. Adolescents should move with peers with positive mind set.

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