Career Preparation of Primary School Pupils in Tanzania

Jaquiline Amani
Mkwawa University College of Education (MUCE)-Tanzania
E-mail: jacque.amani@gmail.com

Abstract

This study employed a survey design under quantitative research approach, to explore subject preferences, career aspirations, and sources of career information of 287 primary school pupils. A questionnaire with open-ended and closed questions was employed to collect data. The study found that out of ten taught subjects, pupils ranked Kiswahili as their most preferred subject and English as the least preferred subject. In terms of career paths, a total of nine careers were listed for pupils to select the most preferred one. It was revealed that most of the pupils aspired to become medical doctors, teachers, soldiers, and engineers. These pupils' career aspirations emerged to be gender-stereotyped, with only a few girls showing a keen interest in science and engineering fields. Moreover, the pupils identified their parents as the most trusted sources of information on careers. Based on these findings, career preferences appear to unfold during childhood with a range of factors such as parents, teachers and the quality of career information received through socialisation nurturing and shaping these choices.

Keywords: *career aspirations, primary pupils subject preferences, sources of career information.*

Introduction

Preparing for one's career is one of momentous life events that begin in the early years of people's lives (Azean, 2013; Chambers et al., 2018; Maree, 2018). This life lifelong process involves career exploration, career awareness, vocational expectations and aspirations, and vocational interests (Hartung et al., 2008). Empirical literature affirms that students globally usually contend with a career choice dilemma (Amani, 2016; Chambers et al., 2018). In particular, the choice of careers, subjects and associated fields of study tend to pose challenge to students both in school and college due to lack of career education and orientation (Amani, 2016; Amani, 2018 Mabula, 2012). Moreover, factors such as educational

attainment, aptitude, self-concept, context in which they live, significant others such as parents and relatives, career knowledge, economic factors, and attitudes tend to influence individuals preparing for their future careers (Chambers et al., 2018 ;Wang & Degoll, 2017;).

In fact, research consistently shows that the formation and development of children's attitudes emerge during their early years (Chambers et al., 2018; Hughes, Mann, Barnes, Baldauf & Mc Keown, 2016). Consequently, these formative experiences shape their future behaviour and intentions in diverse contexts (Ajzein, 1991). Specifically, studies have shown that children's interest and ability to study either arts or science-based subjects in the early schooling years might impact their choice of majors in higher education (Su et al., 2009; Wang & Degol. 2017). Impliedly, young children with unfavourable attitude towards either arts or science subjects tend to be less inclined to pursue one or the other when they grow up. Su et al. (2009) and Wang and Degol (2017) further contended that when individuals are keen on and confident in studying maths and science, they can pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) occupations.

The formation of career-orienting attitudes also depends on information and/or support and approval one receives from significant others and knowledge gained from experiencing objects, products or behaviours (Ajzein, 1991). According to Baloch and Shah (2014), most information students use in deciding on a career path stems from their childhood socialising with their parents or guardians, friends and teachers, and from the mass media in their later life stages. In other words, children's positive or negative evaluation of jobs available also depend on the value their parents, significant others and the community attach to particular jobs. In essence, young people's evaluation of a reasonable career to pursue (or not for 'people like me') is based on perceived rewards such as salary and prestige (Chambers et al., 2018.*p*.3). Implicitly, the decisions young people make at school are informed by the occupational information arising from social interactions, which impact significantly not only on their lives but also on their further education and training.

In Tanzania, the current formal education and training comprises pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary education (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training [MoEVT], 2014). The first two years of pre-primary education usually requires no promotion examination. Thereafter, pupils progress to the primary education cycle (Standard I-VII) where they sit for the terminal national examinations. At the end of this cycle, they can qualify to secondary education, vocational training or the world of work depending on their performance in these examinations. As such, primary school pupils ought to be aware of their interests and abilities for informed career preparations to materialise. In fact, primary education cultivates foundational skills that prepare children for a smooth transition from basic to higher education

for them to acquire life-skills and, eventually, move into a desired career. Attaining this goal requires a relevant curriculum that gives children an opportunity to assess their ability in addition to identifying and developing their talents and interests. In this regard, Schultheiss and Stead (2004) argue that elementary school covers developmental tasks associated with career development. At this level, children develop concepts regarding occupations and gain a meaningful understanding of potential career paths (Schultheiss & Stead, 2004).

When children go to school, they develop some assumptions about themselves and the world of work, which emerge through their day-to-day experiences and socialisation. Some assumptions about jobs are stereotypically along gender lines (Fabes et al., 2014). Thus, the school should expose any biased beliefs and stereotypes to help students evaluate their educational strengths and weaknesses and make informed choices regarding what the world of work can offer them. Since the perceived assumptions are usually transitional, students' self-awareness in their early years matters as it can enable them to define and focus on a career they want to pursue. After all, the motivation for students to learn is usually when they are confident and have a clear understanding of how their education might help them in their post-school lives (Chambers et al., 2018). On the other hand, helping young children to develop a keen interest in certain jobs does not necessarily mean they must choose a specific career; what such cultivated interest does is give them an understanding of what type of opportunities are available in the world of work.

In 1997, the Tanzania government through the then Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) issued guidelines that integrated both career guidance and counselling services for schools through counselling units. These directives came into being because exploring career opportunities depends on getting valid and relevant career information, which requires emphasis on counselling and career development in schools. These guidelines made it mandatory for all secondary schools and colleges to establish counselling units as essential components of their education provision (MoEC, 1997). The goal was to help students in solving both psychological and educational related issues, including subject choice and career aspirations (MoEC, 1997). Paradoxically, the government directive was silent on a similar arrangement for primary schools. This gap in career guidance and counselling at lower levels of Tanzania's education deprived children of opportunities for building a foundation for their aspirations on subject and career choice for future career development. In fact, primary school pupils also need guidance, for example, on career choice to develop their self-knowledge, attitudes, decision-making skills, self-confidence and lifelong learning, and help them identify a suitable career (Schultheiss & Stead, 2004). This study which focuses on career preparation among primary school pupils was conducted with a view to recommending practical and policy actions that could foster career awareness from childhood.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws on Linda Gottfredson's (1981) Theory of Circumscription and Compromise. The theory posits that the process of occupational aspirations begins at the pre-school and continues through college level. It outlines career development process from childhood and emphasises how children narrow their career exploratory behaviour through perceived internal and external factors and cultural expectations related to gender roles. The theory also describes the process through which occupational aspirations get sacrificed when they are unimplementable as desired. According to Gottfredson's theory, individuals build a mental map of different occupations through stereotypes, especially with significant others around them. Although people manage to form a detailed image of occupations, they tend to consider their similarities and differences based on three main dimensions: gender, level of work, and field of work (Gottfredson, 1981). These dimensions help to organise and unify people's image of various occupations. Gottfredson (1981) asserts that occupational choice starts when children at early ages eliminate some occupations that conflict with their self-concept. Children assess how compatible these occupations are with their image of whom they would like to be and how much effort they can invest in entering them. Usually, they will highly value occupations that are compatible with their sense of self and dislike those failing such a fit. As such, career exploration entails both elimination and retention of occupational choices. This circumscription process suggests four developmental stages for explaining career choice: Orientation to size and power; orientation to gender roles; orientation to social roles; and orientation to internal, unique self. The first stage of *orientation to size and power* occurs at ages 3 – 5 (Gottfredson, 1981). Children become aware that adults have roles in the world. They realise that eventually they would become adults and assume the adult roles. What shapes choices at this stage are magical and egocentric thinking with little distinction between the past, present and future (Gottfredson, 1981, p. 588). The second stage of *Orientation to gender roles* occurs at ages 6-8 when children become concerned about fitting into the existing career-related gender stereotypes (Gottfredson, 1981). They become aware of job roles and begin to assign them to particular gender. At this stage, children believe that men and women are different based on their socialisation and begin differentiating occupations along gender lines—either male or female occupational roles (Gottfredson, 1981). As such, they would start treating jobs not matching with their gender identity as unacceptable.

The third stage of *orientation to social values* occurs at ages 9-13 when children are increasingly concerned about external expectations and the definition of the self (Gottfredson, 1981). At this stage, they pay greater attention to societal valuation and judgment as well as the prestige attached to a career. Having already encountered a wide range of job roles and having developed a capacity capable of making more abstract distinctions, the children can classify jobs based on social

status (income, education level, lifestyle and gender). At this stage, they will have begun to identify their place in the social world, which helps them narrow down their career preference relative to their perceived status (Gottfredson, 1981).

The definitive stage of *orientation to internal, unique self* occurs at age 14+. At this stage, young people have recourse to more complex factors, such as personality, interests, values, ability and gender, which also allow them to exclude career options failing to fit their self-image and identify an appropriate field of work (Gottfredson, 1981). In fact, children can evaluate accurately the extent to which their mental abilities can constrain or support their occupational aspirations and ambitions. Ideally, this theory presumes that the elimination of occupations occurs when a career choice is incongruent with one's gender, ability, interests and values. As explained earlier, the *circumscription* process describes the images people develop of certain occupations and themselves, and how they combine them to determine acceptable occupational alternatives through the four stages. In reality, however, the jobs people desire might sometimes differ significantly from those jobs readily available to them. The theory presents a mechanism through which people can sacrifice roles they find to be more compatible with their self-concept in favour of jobs that are easily accessible based on their reality and prevailing circumstances. This *compromise* or *changing of one's goals to accommodate uncontrollable circumstances* is a crucial process (Gottfredson, 1981). Indeed, this process allows people to adjust accordingly their career aspirations or preferences based on job accessibility (Gottfredson, 1981). As a result, people can sacrifice occupational compatibility based on interests, job level, or the femininity/masculinity of the job (Gottfredson, 1981). Gottfredson (1981, p.549) further contends that the typical pattern of compromise can entail sacrificing vocational interests first, job level second, and gender third and last because the latter is central to one's self-concept and constitutes an important cue regarding one's social identity. These compromises continue until most people end up in careers they wanted. This theory is relevant to this study since pupils' career aspirations at the primary school level tend to be determined by how interested they are in a career, what values they attach to it based on societal evaluation of the career (how significant others appraise various occupations), and what gender beliefs pupils hold regarding occupational roles. These factors can shape pupils' career preferences. However, the application of the compromise process was not relevant to this study, as it only explains the change in career preference based on the three dimensions of interests, job level and gender, which was not the focus of this inquiry and is not particularly relevant at the primary education.

Justification for this Study
Apparently, literature affirms that career choice is a crucial but complex process

whose seeds start germinating from childhood and matures and stabilises as a person grows up. Indeed, for pupils to make informed career decisions they need proper career guidance, education and information from their early schooling years. Even though this was evident in literature, not much research has been conducted in the context of Tanzania on what careers pupils at the primary school are keen on pursuing and what influences their choices. Part of this neglect appears to be attributable to the society generally being dismissive of this education level as inconsequential in determining one's career choice. This oversight could also partly explain why in 1997, the country issued guidelines that integrated both career guidance and counselling services for schools through counselling units but at the secondary and higher level. Paradoxically, for many Tanzanian children primary education was the terminal level. Even empirical studies surveyed are more informative about career development in secondary and higher education than about the lower levels. Studies by Amani and Mkumbo (2014) and Amani (2016, 2018) dealt with factors such as parental expectations, occupation, education and socio-economic status, self-interest, attitude, career knowledge, and career self-efficacy that influence the career preferences and intentions of university students. Other studies have been on the influence of gender stereotype on career choice (Lugumira, 2010); personality and career choice (Cosmas, 2012); effect of gender and parental education on career choice (Matoo, 2013); and on self-efficacy and contextual factors affecting the selection of Arts and Science streams (Kinyota, 2013). Thus, a paucity of knowledge on what primary school pupils want to do in the future, how their gender might influence their career aspirations, and what constitutes their sources of career information in the context of Tanzania inspired the design of this study. The study was guided by three objectives, which were to:

  i. identify subject preference and career aspirations of Standard VII pupils,
 ii. examine the differences in career aspirations between girls and boys, and
iii. determine the most trusted source of career information for Standard VII pupils.

Methodology
The study adopted a survey design to investigate the career aspirations of primary school children in Tanzania and sources of occupation information for them. The survey provided an opportunity to establish the degree of confidence obtained from generalising the findings due to randomisation of the sample (Cohen, Manion, & Morison, 2011). The sample of this research constituted Standard VII pupils drawn from 10 surveyed primary schools which were randomly selected from five districts in the urban settings of Kibaha (Coast Zone), Moshi Urban (North Zone), Lindi (South Zone), Dodoma (Central Zone), and Kigoma Ujiji (West Zone). The districts were purposively selected from five administrative zones to

ensure representativeness. The urban setting provided greater socialisation for the pupils' knowledge of various careers than in rural settings, hence their selection over the rural areas. Standard VII pupils were selected because they were in the final year of primary education in Tanzania. Based on their terminal examination performance, pupils would progress to either secondary or vocational education. As pupils move from primary school to the next level of education, they need to be aware of the careers available for them to explore suitable ones and make an informed decision.

Super's (1957) career development theory stipulates that the growth stage (0-14 years) is characterised by the development of children's self-concept, interests and attitudes towards the world of work. Moreover, according to Schultheiss and Stead (2004), elementary school years encompass tasks associated with career development as pupils gain a greater understanding of occupations and what career to pursue. Both Super (1957) and Schultheiss and Stead (2004) provide a basis and justification for studying the career aspirations of primary school children in the context of Tanzania.

Prior to conducting the study, research clearance was sought from the Vice Chancellor of the University of Dar es Salaam, who is legally mandated to provide research permits for members of academic staff and students. The research clearance letter introduced the researcher to the Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) who permitted the researcher to proceed to the District Administrative Secretary who further permitted the researcher to access primary schools which were sampled for the study. After establishing the sample size, a written informed consent was sought from the parents of pupils who participated in the study. The pupils whose parents gave such consent were further orally requested to participate in the study. Subsequently, 287 out of 300 pupils participated in the study by filling out the questionnaire. Prior to administering the questionnaire, the respondents were informed of the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was written in Kiswahili language and contained both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The research tool was developed based on the existing literature and career development theories. The questionnaire gathered background information such as age and gender of the respondents, district and school where the respondent attended. It also collected data on subject preferences, future career aspirations, and justifications, sources of career information and the most trusted source of career information. Data were analysed descriptively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 21), with frequencies and percentages presented in charts and tables. The answers in the completed questionnaire were entered into SPSS, coded using numbers, which ensured that no-one would know the identity of a respondent. Prior to data analysis, the questions were translated into English by the researcher.

Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the data collection and writing up process.

Findings and Discussion

Subject Preferences of Primary School Pupils

About 287 out of 300 Standard VII pupils (Male=133; Female =154) participated in the survey by filling out the questionnaire with both closed – and open-ended questions. Thirteen incomplete questionnaires were omitted during data cleaning, which still resulted in a high response rate of 95.7 percent. Their age range was 11-16 years. The first objective of the study was to identify pupils' most favourite subject from among a list of subjects taught in their class. Out of 10 listed subjects taught in Standard VII, the pupils showed interest in eight subjects in the following order: Kiswahili, Geography, Civics, Sports and Personality, Science, Mathematics, Vocational skills, and English. Science emerged as the 5th most popular subject whereas Mathematics was ranked 6th and English ranked last. The low rating for English as a subject could be attributable to the study having conducted in Kiswahili medium schools that teach English language just as a subject from Standard III onwards. Less than 25 percent of the pupils liked History, ICT and Vocational skills. In other words, the pupils were not motivated enough to learn these subjects despite their being part of the primary education curriculum.

Regarding gender, the results indicate that the number of girls who rated Kiswahili as their most favourite subject was nine times more than that of boys. The results in Figure 1 show that three-quarters of the boys liked studying Science, Vocational skills and Mathematics as opposed to only half the number of girls. The results further show that both girls (66%) and boys (65.3%) almost equally liked Civics and English. These results have three major implications. First, most of the pupils preferred Arts subjects to Science subjects. Second, most of them were less interested in the English Language than other subjects. Third, pupils' interest in subjects varied in terms of gender, with more boys being more interested in studying Science, Mathematics and Vocational skills than girls. Open-ended questions indicated five related reasons which account for the pupils' preferences for Kiswahili, Civics, and Sports and Personality. These reasons included*: "Because it is my national language;" Kiswahili is simple."* Other two extracts from open questions read: "*Because I want to play soccer;" "My teacher teaches well."* Another extract read*: Because I like Civics.* Based on the circumscription theory which guided this study, pupils appeared to attach their preferences to different subjects because of what they strongly believed they would become in future (career goals), perceived simplicity of the subject, interest in the subject matter and the level of their understanding

in that subject (ability to learn). Specifically, based on the *orientation to internal, unique self* (age 14+) stage, children develop the ability to not only define their personality, interests and ability but also exclude options that do not fit their self-image and interest and identify an appropriate field of work (Gottfredson, 1981). In this regard, it emerged that pupils' preference for certain subjects has been associated with various internal and external factors.
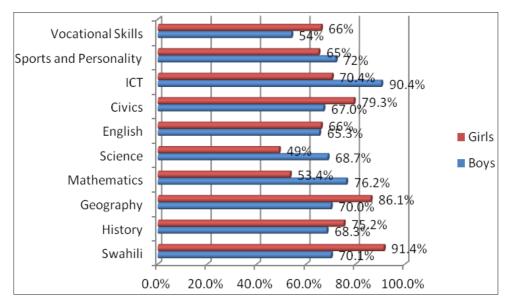

Figure 1: Pupils' Interest in School Subject

The findings show further that pupils ranked Kiswahili as their most preferred subject. Particular interest in the Kiswahili subject could partly be explained by its being the medium of instruction and the national language in Tanzania. Yet, Kihwele (2014) also found that secondary school students enjoyed studying Kiswahili compared to other subjects even though at this level the language of instruction shifts to English across the board. In the Kihwele's study, the students ranked Mathematics as the most difficult subject, followed by Physics and Chemistry whereas arts subjects were the least in terms of level of difficulty. Other studies demonstrated that individual and school-based factors can significantly influence students to develop an interest in studying a certain subject. For example, Kinyota (2013) reported that pupils' self-efficacy, their career knowledge, academic performance, gender and school contextual factors affect the selection of subjects in Tanzania's secondary schools. Evidence from empirical literature shows that students strive to learn different subjects, which are taught differently by teachers with varied pedagogical competences and in different school learning environment. As such, learning interest largely depends on the quality of the teaching and learning environment. The pupils provided explanations for ranking some subjects higher than others,

which can be clustered under four factors, namely: Perceived simplicity of the subject (*Because Kiswahili is simple); *future career goals (*Because I like playing soccer when I grow up); ability to understand the subject matter (My teacher teaches well); and interest in the subject (I like Civics).*

Career Aspirations of Standard VII Pupils
To examine the career aspirations of Standard VII pupils, the respondents were asked to tick from several career options pertaining to what they wanted to be when they grew up. The results in Figure 2 show that most of the pupils aspired to become medical doctors (44.6%), followed by teachers (17.4%), soldiers (12.5%) and engineers (10.1%). Less than 10 percent of the respondents wanted to be bankers, entrepreneurs, soccer players or lawyers. Furthermore, the results indicate that 1.4 percent of the respondents were uncertain about what they wanted to be when they grew up. In other words, they were still undecided about their future career interest and prospects. The analysis of the open-ended questions reveals three more careers were preferred by the pupils: being a police officer, judge, or journalist. Knowledge of school subject preference and career aspirations is vital for three practical reasons. First, it influences students' educational goals, academic performance, and future career planning (Linderman, 2010). Second, it helps counsellors and educators to plan for individualised and age-appropriate instructional and motivational programmes that are responsive to specific developmental needs of the pupils (Linderman, 2010). Third, it informs policymakers and educators on how best to support and facilitate smooth transition from school to further education and the labour market (Despina et al., 2013). As such, it is vital to motivate pupils to learn and build interest in varied subjects effectively for wider choices and plans of their future education and careers.
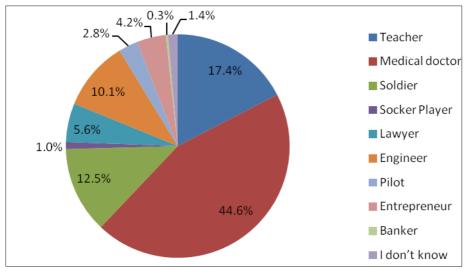

Figure 2: Career aspirations of standard VII pupils

Career Aspirations by Gender

Career aspirations by gender were analysed to determine gender differences in career interest and implications. The results in Figure 3 show that more female pupils aspire to become teachers (82%), medical doctors (60.9%), lawyers (87.5%) and bankers (100%) than their male counterparts. Moreover, Figure 3 illustrates that most of male pupils showed more interest in a science-based career paths than their female counterparts. Most boys desired to be engineers (74.2%) and pilots (87.5%) whereas less than 30 percent of the girls preferred those careers. Impliedly, the career preferences of Standard VII pupils are gender-based, with few females who particularly desire to enter the fields of science and engineering. Several explanations emerge from this study and supported by previous literature which provide an understanding of the factors accounting for gendered career preferences. For example, results from open-ended items show that girls desired more to become doctors: "*I like to help people who are sick, have better health*"; "*I like to be like my mother*"; "*I like to be like other doctors in the hospitals*"; "*Because doctors are good people they help us get out of diseases*". On the other hand, boys explained why they aspired to engage in engineering field: "*I like driving an aeroplane*"; "*I like to learn how to build roads and big houses*". From these anecdotes from both genders, one could surmise that girls were more inclined towards people-oriented or caring professions and were inspired by their mothers whereas boys' preferences were determined by role models in the field and desire to work with things.

In this regard, the study findings corroborate the research of Wang and Degol (2017), and Chambers et al. (2018), who reported that many women preferred careers in medicine and social sciences than in STEM. The study findings are also consistent with the circumscription theory particularly on the aspect of o*rientation to gender roles stage,* which asserts that children in early years (ages 6-8) begin to form several beliefs about men and women, including awareness of their socially-engineered gender roles and the likelihood that they would start treating occupations in terms of stereotypical appropriateness for their respective gender. These acquired beliefs tend to affect their career aspirations as children begin to identify with either a male or a female occupational role (Gottfredson, 1981).

Other explanations for variations in genderised career preferences between boys and girls, which are most cited in the literature include socio-cultural factors, interactions with peers and innate ability (see, for example, Mutekwe, Modiba, & Mophaso, 2011; Wang & Degol, 2017). For example, Mutekwe et al. (2011) found that cultural beliefs about gender tended to bias individuals' perceptions of their ability to perform various tasks, including career-related ones. Zacharia (2008) also found that longstanding and die-hard stereotypes and prejudices among Kurya clans shaped their children's career choices and those of young people generally

in their community in Tanzania. In fact, historical stereotypical expectations regarding work have a more negative impact on female than male pupils because their career expectations tend to be lower than those of the latter (Mutekwe et al., 2011). Consequently, this gender orientation might lead to differences between female and male pupils in terms of their self-judgement and confidence, which ultimately tend to affect varyingly their career preferences and attainment.
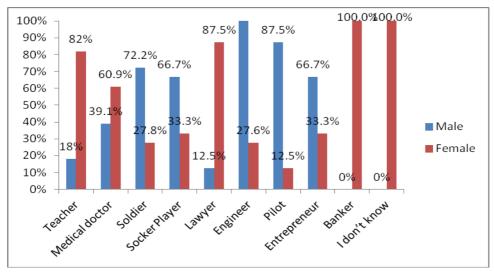

Figure 3: Career aspirations by gender

Sources of Career Information

The study also identified the sources of career information for the pupils, which they indicated from several options. The leading source of career information emerged to be the television (38.7%), followed by teachers (19.5%), parents (15.7%), the radio (15%) and guardians (8.4%). The least sources for career-based information indicated by pupils were newspapers and books (3%), as Figure 4 illustrates:
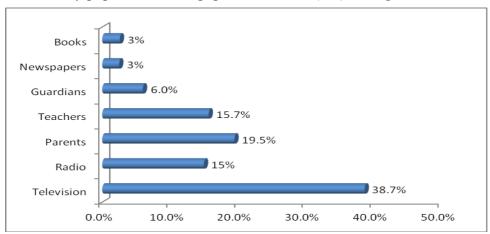

Figure 4: Sources of career information

Similarly, further analysis across districts (see Table 1) revealed that television was the foremost source of career information based on the primary school pupils' ranking. Television bombarded them with information relating to jobs. Television allowed them to learn about and inspired them with various role models depicted in diverse types of work. Next to television were parents and teachers. The results indicate that except for Lindi district, a respectable number of pupils in all the districts indicated that their parents were their primary source of career-based information. In addition, except for Kigoma district (3%), most of the pupils in all the districts indicated that teachers played a critical role in giving them career-related information. Also, 3% of pupils from Moshi district reported books to be sources of career-based information. This analysis renders credence to three implications. First, little has been documented about career information in Tanzania. Second, children do not have a culture of reading. Third, there were variations across districts regarding the roles perceived by teachers and parents in terms of disseminating career information to the students. A further analysis to determine the degree of trust in the listed sources of career information revealed that, out of the seven sources of career information, parents were the most trusted source (73.8%), followed by teachers (20.6%), relatives (4.2%) and the radio (1.4%).

Table1: *Sources of Career Information across Districts*

Districts	Radio	Television	Newspaper	Relatives	Parents	Teachers	Books	Total
Moshi DC	12.0%	42.4%	0%	14.0%	15.0%	13.6%	3%	100%
Kigoma Urban	23.1%	46.2%	1%	9.6%	17.3%	3%	0%	100%
Kibaha DC	11.7%	45.0%	3.3%	8.3%	19%	12.7%	0%	100%
Dodoma Urban	18.8%	27.1%	6.2%	0.0%	27.1%	20.8%	0%	100%
Lindi DC	20.5%	48.1%	4.9%	4.9%	10.9%	10.7%	0%	100%

Literature has consistently shown that for people to make an informed career decision, the availability of proper career information is critical (Chambers et al., 2018; Mabula, 2012; Zacharia, 2008). Relevant career information helps learners to make long-term study plans to prepare themselves for their future careers. The findings of this research corroborate with Chambers et al. (2018) whose multi-country survey found that parents and extended family members were the most

influential sources of career information. Other sources influencing children's career knowledge, according to Chambers et al.'s (2018) study, were television and the radio. Zacharia's (2008) study supports this study's findings on the roles the mass media and significant others, including parents and teachers, play in influencing Kuria males' intention to join the army in Tanzania. In this regard, Mabula (2012) also revealed that career knowledge contributed to the choice of subjects among A-level students in Tanzania. Mabula's analysis was based on information from focus group discussion which further revealed that the career knowledge of pupils in government schools, particularly when selecting their A-level subjects, had been influenced by social factors and parental advice as well as that of significant others. Thus, the role of parents in shaping students' career decisions and educational attainment is largely underpinned by various researchers. Families do not only have a significant role to play in children's career decision-making, but also in supporting their learning to ensure they realise their educational and career aspirations. Due to the significant role they play coupled with the trust children have in them, parents should value their role by supporting fully and caring for their children in addition to providing them with relevant career information to enlighten them further on the world of work.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In congruence with Gottfredson's theory, it is apparent that individuals' career aspirations start germinating from childhood with various sources of influences and knowledge accounting for such development. Also, consistent with the orientation and social valuation stage of the Gottfredson's theory, the Standard VII pupils' subject preferences and future career aspirations were gender-based, suggesting that the pupils from their young ages developed gender-based type of work and subject preferences. Furthermore, the theory used in this study is supportive of how the pupils' self-interest and beliefs in their ability to study and or succeed in a specific career path shaped their school subject preference and career aspirations. Through interest and perceived ability, the pupils are positioned to begin considering careers worth pursuing based on their life prospects. This orientation is in line with the internal unique self-stage under the Compromise and Circumscription theory which proffers that learners start developing a greater sense of self, hence develop a higher-level awareness of their abilities and interests as they relate to career aspirations. In other words, proper career and educational guidance at lower levels of education is crucial in enabling pupils to define their long-term education and career plans. Even though career education remains imperative, the role of parents and teachers in educating children on matters relating to careers cannot be over-emphasized.

The study findings and conclusion support the following recommendations. First, parents and teachers should develop strategies for cultivating children's

self-confidence and positive self-evaluation from childhood to ensure that both boys and girls maximise their potential in terms of tapping into career prospects regardless of their socio-economic status, gender and background. Doing so would enable them to feel confident enough to pursue careers of their interest. Second, teachers should adopt a gender-responsive approach to gender stereotyping effect on career aspirations and gender-biased beliefs of boys and girls. Third, drawing on successful role models, teachers and counsellors should disseminate proper career information to enable pupils explore careers thoroughly and make informed choices. Indeed, pupils need to see a clear connection between what they study in primary school and possible careers available to them when they grow up to influence their choice of subjects in secondary school that, in turn, have implications for further education and career prospects. At the policy level, there is a need to ensure that the school curriculum tallies with real life demands of the world of work.

References

Amani. J (2018). Career Decision Making Self-efficacy of Higher Education Students. Does Age, Gender and Year of Study Matter? *Papers in Education and Development,38,*55- 73.

Amani, J. (2016). Do Tanzanian undergraduate students choose or hunt for their degree programmes? *International Journal of Higher Education*, *5* (2), 74-81.

Amani, J., & Mkumbo, K. A. K. (2014). Influence of family on career choice among undergraduate students. *Papers in Education and Development, 32,* 167-180.

Ajzen, I. (1991). Theory of planned behaviour: *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes, 50*, 179-211.

Azean, S.N. (2013). Career choice: A basic issue in Primary and Secondary school level. Arabian *Journal of Business and Management Review*, *1*(2), 18-28.

Baloch, R., & Shah, N. (2014). The significance of awareness about selection and recruitment process in students career decision-making. *European Scientific Journal,10* (14), 536-552.

Chambers, N., Kashefpakdel, T.E., Rehill, J., & Percy, C. (2018). Exploring Career Aspirations of Primary School Children from around the World: Drawing the Future. Retrieved from https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Drawing-the- Future-FINAL-REPORT.pdf

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education* (6th ed.). London: Francis and Taylor:

Cosmas.V. J. (2010). *Relationship between personality traits and career choice among secondary school students in Tanzania*. Unpublished (Master's Thesis). University of Dar es Salaam.

Fabes, R. A. Hayford, S., Pahlke, E., Santos, C., Zosuls, K., Martin, C.L., & Hanish, L.D. (2014). Peer influences on gender difference in educational aspirations and attainment. In S. Ingrid & E.S Jacquelynne (Eds.). *Gender differences in aspirations and attainment: A life course perspective*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Gottfredson, L.S. (1981). Circumscription and compromise. A developmental theory of occupational aspirations. *Journal of Counselling Psychology Monographs, 28* (6), 549-579.

Hartung, P. J., Porfeli, E. J., & Vondracek, F. W. (2008). Career adaptability in childhood. *The Career Development Quarterly, 57*(1), 63–74.

Hughes, D., Mann, A., Barnes, S., Baldauf, B., & Mc Keown, R. (2016). Career Education: International Literature Review. New York: Warwick Institute for Employment Research.

Zacharia, H. (2008). *Psychosocial determinants of career choice among young people in Kuria community.* Unpublished (M.A.ASP) Dissertation, University of Dar es Salaam

Kihwele, J.E. (2014). Students' perceptions of science subjects and their attitudes in Tanzanian secondary schools, *World Journal of Educational Research, 1* (*1*), 1-8.

Kinyota, M. (2013). Students' Perceptions of Factors Influencing Choice of Science Streams in Tanzania Secondary Schools, Master's Capstone Projects. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cie_capstones/166

Linderman, A. J. (2010). *Seventh grade student career aspirations and academic achievement. Counselor Education Master's Theses*. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/edc_theses/67.

Lugumila, U.(2010). *The influence of gender stereotyping on career choice among secondary school students.* Unpublished M.A (ASP) Dissertation, University of Dar es Salaam.

Mabula, N. (2012). Career services provision to secondary school students in Tanzania: Is it a dream or reality? *International Journal of Learning and Development, 2* (2), 243-257.

Maree, J.G. (2018). Perspective: promoting career development in the early years of people's

lives through self – and career construction counselling to promote their career resilience

and career adaptability, *Early Child Development and Care, 188* (40), 421-424, DOI:

10.1080/03004430.2018.1438748

Matoo, M.I. (2013). Career choice of secondary school students with special reference to gender, type of stream, and parental education. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences, 3* (20), 55-61

Mutekwe, E., Modiba, M., & Maphosa, C. (2011). Factors affecting female students' career choices and aspirations: A Zimbabwean example. *Journal of Social Science, 29* (2). 133- 141.

MOEC. (1997). *Kiongozi cha Mkuu wa Shule ya Secondary Tanzania*. Dar es Salaam: Ministry of Education and Culture, Tanzania.

MoEVT (2014). Education and training policy. Dar es Salaam: MoEVT, Tanzania.

Super, D. (1957). *The Psychology of Careers.* New York: Harper and Brothers.

Su, R., Rounds, J., & Armstrong, P.I. (2009). Men and things, women and people: a meta-analysis of sex differences in interests. *Psychological Bulletin*, *135,* 859–884. doi:10.1037/a0017364.

Schultheiss, D. E. P., & Stead, G. B. (2004). Childhood Career Development Scale: Construction and psychometric properties. *Journal of Career Assessment*, *12*, 113-134.

Wang, M., & Degol, J. (2017). Gender gaps in Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM): Current knowledge, implications for practice, policy and future directions. *Education Psychological Review*, 29 (*1*), 119-140. doi: 10.1007/s10648-015-9355.