

The Effects of Gender Stereotyping on Career Choice among Secondary School Students in Tanzania

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Abstract—This study sought to explore the influence of gender stereotyping on career choices among secondary school students in Moshi rural district. Specifically, the study sought to examine the knowledge of career requirements among secondary school students, assess gender differences in career choice among secondary school students and examine the extent to which gender stereotyping beliefs influence career choices among secondary school students Moshi rural district. A total number of 299 students participated in the study. Data were collected using questionnaire. Data were analyzed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and percentage were used to determine the level of career information and knowledge. Chi square was used in determining the association among the variables of the study. (T-test) was conducted to compare means scores of stereotyping of career of sex and subject specialization. The study revealed that students had better knowledge on different types of careers available in the world of work. It was revealed that, teachers, parents, relatives, books, television, career role models, radio and the internet were sources of career information among secondary school students. In addition, the results showed a significant difference between re-categorized career and sex with a large effect size of, $\chi^2 (1, n = 299) = 36.821, p = < .005, \phi = -.351$). Similarly, there was a statistical significant difference between re categorized career and subject specialization with a large effects size of; $\chi^2 (1, n = 299) = 17.753, p = < .005, \phi = -.255$). In addition to that, findings revealed that there was significant difference between re categorized career and school with a large effect size of; $\chi^2 (4, n = 299) = 23.812, p = < .005, \text{cramer's } v = .282$). it was also revealed that, there is statistically significant difference between males ($M = 39.22, SD = 5.79$) and females ($M = 36.4, SD = 5.82; t (297) = 4.17, p = < .005$) in career preference. However, it was established that there

was no relationship between beliefs towards gender stereotyping and career path.

Keywords— Gender stereotyping, Gender, Career choice, traditional beliefs.

I. INTRODUCTION

Gender stereotyping are broad categories that reflect our impression and beliefs about females and males. All stereotypes (whether gender, ethnicity, or other groupings based) refer to the image of a typical member of a particular social category. Gender stereotyping is divided into four dimensions that are in form of traits, physical characterization, behaviour and occupations. Stereotypes results to labels such as soft or hard. Women may be labeled “soft” and men “hard” However, once labels are assigned, they are remarkably difficult to abandon. Many stereotypes are however so general and ambiguous (Almiskry et al., 2009).

Gender stereotypes originate from gender roles which define the responsibilities of females and males. The roles are categorized as masculine for males and feminine for females. Females and males are expected to perform certain duties in a particular society. These roles are basically constructed by the society or culture in which an individual lives. These roles are tied to the sex of the individual. Roles such as taking care of children, cooking and engaging in food production are attached to females, while males are identified with roles such as protecting families, building houses, as well as engaging in paid employment, cash crops production and business (Archer & Lloyd 2002).

The process through which the individual learns and accepts roles is called socialization. Socialization works by encouraging wanted and discouraging unwanted behavior. In societies, the agencies of socialization such as family, schools, peer group and the media make it clear to the child what behavioral norms the child is expected to follow, and once someone has accepted a set of behavioral norms, they

are typically very important to the individual. Hence, the internalization of these behaviors and beliefs, based on society's awareness and expectations lead to special interest which impact on vocational choices (Bender, 1994).

In all societies whether western or non western, women or men appear to have been brought up to believe in and adhere to gender roles which are conveyed to them on a daily basis. These beliefs are so ingrained into the females or males that they are extended to vocational choices (Otunga, 1996). As Nasania (2004) denotes, the greater the consistency, duration and intensity with which a definition is promoted by others about an actor, the greater is the likelihood, that the actor will embrace that definition as truly applicable to himself/herself (324). This seems to be the case with the young females or males in societies. For example the Jacobs (2005) argues along this line when it points out that it is not only overt socialization or covert prejudicial attitudes held by the society that keeps the females from entry into skilled jobs but the women themselves lack the courage to enter the field because they see the requirements for successful performance in such areas, as incongruent with the way they see themselves.

Hansen (2009) reports that external influences that helps to shape an individuals' career choice are also influenced by significant others through social support from peers. Young (1999) denotes that young adults through interaction with the context of family, school and community learn about and explore careers which ultimately lead to their career choice. Zacharia (2008) suggest that adolescents' own aspirations are influenced by their parent's aspirations or expectations. Parental support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to influence career choice. Children may choose what their parents desire simply to please them (Sounders, (1999).

According to Zacharia (2008) and Nasania (2004), in Tanzania rural students tend to seek help from parents than urban students and that parent more than teachers play a major role in the career choice of students. Generally, the choice of a career is influenced by traditional gender stereotyping parents and friends among other factors; however variations occur from one population to the other.

In Tanzania, every year form four secondary school students make their career choices before sitting for their final Tanzania Certificate of Secondary Examination. The result of this final examination determines who joins A-level or joining other tertiary level education since admissions into various careers are determined by grades obtained from the Tanzania Certificate of Secondary Education. Before making their career choices, students are

often provided with a list of careers from which they are supposed to make choices. Most of the students lack adequate information regarding various careers hence the choices that they make are embedded on traditional gender stereotyping and the subjects they study in secondary school. The only support students get within the school if from career masters or counselors as they are mostly refereed to and the teachers who are expected to support students in their career choice. When the final examination results are released by the Ministry of Education, and depending on the grades, students are then admitted to the A-level and other tertiary education level based on the career choices that they had made while in school. When these students graduate from the tertiary educational level or universities, some of them enter into occupations that are totally different from the ones they had chosen and trained for. The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of gender stereotyping on career choice among adolescents.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Most of students who are secondary schools do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice as a result some of them relied on traditional gender stereotyping beliefs. It was a common practice in the old days to find feudalism converting it into a family affair where the son of a blacksmith was destined to become a blacksmith and a feudal was born a leader. But industrialization and post industrialization has made it possible for a common person to be richer as long as she or he has due skills and knowledge (Tomlinson, & Evans 1999). Today, one has not only to make due career planning but also exhaustive career research before making a career choice so as to adjust with the evolving socio-economic conditions (Tomlinson, & Evans 1999).

Influence of gender stereotyping in career choice among secondary school students is among the serious challenges in public schools in Tanzania. Cultural beliefs among adolescents and community at large on gender roles has been one of the factors that may affect correct choice of career path for many secondary school students in Tanzania today. The current study sought to explore effects of traditional gender stereotyping beliefs on career choice among secondary school students, specifically basing on, knowledge of career requirements, relationship between students' beliefs in traditional gender roles and their career choice, career availability and aspiration, portray career by gender and relationship between social class and career

choice. This becomes pertinent in view of the fact that much has not been really achieved in this area in Tanzania.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to explore the effects of gender stereotyping on career choice among secondary school students in Tanzania. Specifically, the study sought to examine the knowledge of career requirements among secondary school students, assess gender differences in career choice among secondary school students and examine the extent to which gender stereotyping beliefs influence career choices among secondary school students Moshi rural.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- (i) Do secondary school students have sufficient knowledge of career requirements basis?
- (ii) What is gender difference in career choices among secondary school students?
- (iii) To what extent do gender stereotyping beliefs influence career choice among secondary school students?

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The information generated from this study is expected to be the basis for designing a career counselling intervention programme that will alleviate gender stereotyping among secondary school students. More importantly, the findings of this study are expected to help the secondary school students in making rational choices in their careers, independent of stereotyped perceptions. Furthermore, the findings are expected to form the basis for further research on gender stereotyping and student career choice in Tanzania. The study findings are also expected to add new knowledge to the field of social psychology as well as in existing literature on career choice in Tanzania.

VI. METHODOLOGY

This study set to examine the influence of gender stereotyping in career choice among secondary school students in Dar es salaam city. The study used quantitative approach in gathering direct opinions of respondents. The quantitative approach was used because, the researcher want to gather objective information from many respondents for making generalization (Best and Khan, 2006). This study used a case study design. A case study design has being selected on the basis that it provides an opportunity for a specific aspect to be studied in depth

within a limited time. Secondly, a case study gives a fair and accurate account of the case in such a way that readers are allowed to penetrate the superficial record and check the researcher's interpretations by examining evidence on which the case study is built. Thirdly, a case study provides suggestions for intelligent interpretation of other similar cases (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). This case study therefore, focused on a detailed analysis of individuals' experiences, on influence of gender stereotyping on career choice. As Omari (2011: 114) insists, "In a case study all parameters in time and space are studied in great depth." The sample size of this study comprised a total of 299 (26%) students from five secondary schools in Moshi rural District. The sample size was determined by using the statistical table developed by Israel (2003). The author proposes that for the population size between 1000 and 2000, the sample size may be between 286 and 333 at precision level of 5%, when the level of confidence is 95% and $p=5$.

This study constituted three government schools and three private secondary schools. Stratified sampling was used to ensure representation of all two categories. The choice considered the criteria of ownership to ensure a representation from each category of schools. Class attendance registers and enrolment particulars were used to obtain from offices of school heads and were used by the researcher to get lists of actual students available in form three and four in each sampled school. In all six selected secondary school all form three and four classes was included in the sample by the researcher in getting proportional percentage representation of respondents by school, grade and gender. After the calculations of proportions, simple random sampling was employed by the researcher to get participants of the study. Pieces of paper were written, "Yes" and "No" and put in a box. Every student was asked to pick only one piece of paper. Those with pieces of paper written "yes" were declared participants of the study while those who picked pieces with "no" were excluded. The students' rating scales elicited information from form three and four students. There were three students rating scales one for each objective. The instrument was used because of its effectiveness in keeping respondents concerns due to its objectivity as well as its effectiveness in collecting adequate information from a large number of subjects within a relatively short period of time. In order to test validity and reliability of instruments, pilot studies were conducted at Perfect version (Dar es Salaam) as taken as private secondary schools and Makongo secondary school (Dar es Salaam) representing public secondary schools. The aim was to test the validit of

instruments in generating necessary information before embarking in data collection. However, the coefficient alpha measure of reliability (Kinnear & Gray 1999) was 0.73 high in the 12 items test that explore gender stereotyping of career. The 10 items that examine beliefs in traditional gender role yielded reliability (cronbach alpha=0.70) the level which is acceptable (Pallant, 2005). Data from the field were subjected to statistical analysis using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. Inferential and descriptive statistics, consisting frequency and percentages were employed in analysing the data. In order to quantify the influence of gender stereotyping in career choice, responses were coded and total scores of the major sections or items representing various clustered were computed.

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of findings is in both descriptive and inferential statistics. These results are presented and discussed hereunder in respect of research questions

7.1. Knowledge about Different Types of Careers

In this section, the objective was to find out secondary school students level of knowledge about different types of careers. Students were asked indicate their knowledge about different types of careers by putting a tick on career which they know or they have information about it. Table 1 summarises secondary school students’ knowledge about types of careers in the world of work.

1.Students’ Knowledge about Different Types of Career.

Career	Frequency	Percentage %
Teaching	272	91
Accountancy	187	62.5
Social Worker	186	62.3
Medicine	239	79.9
Carpentry	208	69.6
Army	190	63.5
Police	265	88.6
Farming	241	80.6
Banking	212	70.9
Nursing	253	84.6
Journalism	182	60.9
Engeneering	200	25.8

Students were asked to indicate familiarity of various careers. Teaching was identified by 272 (91 %), followed by Security (policing) which was identified by 265 (88.6 %), nursing 253 (84.6%), medicine by 239 (79.9%) and

farming which was mentioned by 241 (80.6 %) respectively. Most of the students were knowledgeable about various careers in the world of work. The students who chose teaching and nursing said that they did so because teachers and nurses are found almost everywhere compared to other careers which are mostly found in towns. So, teachers and nurses acted as role models for students. It was also observed that students had contacts with teachers in various levels of education such as nursery, primary and secondary schools. Through such institutions, teachers exposed students to other careers, at the same time becoming students’ models. However, some careers identified at low rates by the secondary school students such as accounting 187 (62.5%), social work 186 (62.3%) and journalism 182 (60.9%). This can be explained by several factors such as; lack of adequate exposure and information about accounting, social work and journalism. Regarding this, arguments Biswalo (1996), Ndimbuki and Mutie (1999) emphasizes that occupational information such as career knowledge, entrance conditions, duties and advancement pattern are very crucial to individual career development.

In the follow up question, students were asked to indicate their sources of career information and if they had access to them. According to the findings, the major sources of career information among secondary school students in Moshi rural District are books, teachers, friends/ peers, relatives, journals, newspapers and career role models. Results indicate that students have more access to teachers, parents, relatives, books, career role models and peers than the internet, radio newspapers. See Table 2.

Table2: Students Sources of Career Information (N=299)

Sources of career information	Frequency	Percent %
Books	202	67.6
Journals	136	45.5
Internet	119	39.8
Friends/Peers	155	51.8
Teachers	230	76.9
Relatives	203	67.9
Television	198	66.2
Radio	167	56.2
Newspapers	136	45.4
Career role model	169	56.4
Parents	213	71.5

The findings reveal that the major sources of career information among secondary school students in Moshi rural district were teachers, parents, relatives, books,

television, career role model, radio and peers. Likewise, the internet, radio newspaper, journals were among the sources of career information. Results indicate that some students had no access to journals, newspapers and the internet hence relied on teachers and parents. Teachers are people who interact most with students in school environment, i.e. Students spend most of their time with teachers. In Tanzania teachers have the role of preparing students to fit in the world of work by providing vocational guidance and counselling services (Biwsalo, 1996).

Table 3: Career Aspirations among Females and Males

Career Aspiration	M	% within career Aspiration	F	% within career Aspiration	Total % careers.	Total Frequency.
1. Teaching	28	34.6	53	65.4	100	81
2. Security(Army and police)	27	69.2	17	30.8	100	44
3.Engeneering	17	70.8	7	29.2	100	34
4.Nursing	8	21.6	29	78.4	100	37
5. Medicine	26	68.4	12	31.6	100	38
6. Journalism	8	42.1	11	57.9	100	19
7.Tourism	4	26.7	11	73.3	100	15
8.Banking	21	58.3	15	41.7	100	36
9. Lawyer	2	50	2	50	100	4
10. Pilot	5	83.3	1	16.7	100	6
Total					299	

The findings revealed that, female respondents scored high in nursing (73.3%), tourism (73.3%), teaching (65%), and journalism (57.9%). However, they scored low in security 30.8%, engineering (29.2%) and pilot (16.7%). Furthermore, males respondents scored high in the following jobs: pilot (83.3%), engineering (70.8%), security (69.2%) and medicine (68.4%). On the contrary, male

7.2 Gender Difference in Career Choice

To obtain relevant information participants were provided with the list of ten careers and were then asked to tick only one career they preferred or the one they aspired to do. Then careers were re-categorized into two parts: those perceived as feminine careers (teaching, nursing, journalism and tourism) as well as those perceived masculine careers such as security (army and police), engineering, banking, lawyer and pilot). Table 3 summarizes the study findings.

respondents scored low in teaching (34.6%), nursing (26.7%) and tourism (26.2%).

Chi square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correlation) was used to test the difference between re-categorized careers and gender, subject specialization and school. Table 4 presents the results

Table 4: Gender Differences in Career Choices among Females and Males.

S/N	Gender differences in career choices	Re categorised careers				Chi-square test					
		Male		Female		Frequency		χ^2	df	p	Phi
N	%	N	%	Total	%						
1	Perceive masculine	98	66.6	49	33.3	147	49	17.7	1	.000	-
2	Perceive feminine	48	31.5	104	64.4	152	50.8	53			.244

The results from Table 4 indicate that there was significant statistical difference between re-categorized career and gender' with a large effect size of $\chi^2 (1, n = 299) = 36.821, p < .005, phi = -.351$). Similarly, there was significant

statistical difference between re categorized career and subject specialization; with a large effects size of; $\chi^2 (1, n = 299) = 17.753, p < .005, phi = -.255$). In addition to that, findings revealed that there was significant difference

between re categorized career and school with a large effect size of; $\chi^2 (4, n = 299) = 23.812, p < .005, \text{cramer's } v = .282$.

The findings revealed gender differences in career choices among secondary school students. A large percent of females were aspiring for teaching, nursing, journalism and tourism which are perceived as feminine careers. However, few of them were aspiring for careers like engineering, security (police and army), and medicine. On the other hand, more males were concentrating on the perceived masculine careers. This difference can be attributed to gender stereotyping persisting in the society; whereby some careers are perceived suitable for specific gender. As supported by Holland theory (1987) which revealed that females tend to score in artistic, social and conventional while males score high in realistic, investigative and enterprising. The findings collaborated with Adams and Walkerdine (1999); Best 1999 and Spender, (1999) as cited in Almiskry, Baker and Mohamed, (2009), who revealed that girls tend to opt for a very narrow range of stereotypically feminine occupations. They preferred social type of occupation (Betz and Hackett, 1981). Similarly, Tomlinson and Evans (1991) found out that male students scored significantly higher than females' students in realistic and investigative.

7.3 Gender stereotyping preferences

With questionnaire, students were asked to judge their willingness to work in different careers. They were provided with a list of statements assessing stereotyping perceptions towards various careers. Their responses were recorded on five points basis from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. Before scoring, all negatively worded statements were reversed. Independent test was conducted to compare means score of gender stereotyping of careers between male and females. See Table 5.

Table 5: Gender Stereotyping of Careers.

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	T	df	Sig.(p)
Male	144	39.22	5.79			
				4.17	297	.005
Females	153	36.4	5.52			

*Significant at $p < .05$

Table 5 reveals that, there is statistically significant difference between males (M= 39.22, SD= 5.79) and females (M= 36.4, SD=5.82; $t (297) = 4.17, p = <.005$ in career preference. The magnitude of difference in the means was moderate effect ($\eta^2 = .06$). The finding implies that there is stereotyping of careers among females and males. The findings revealed that both sexes were more likely to choose careers consonant with stereotyping perceptions. Males were more likely to do jobs perceived masculine jobs. They chose to work as: engineer, scientist, mechanics and so forth. On the other hand, many girls did not choose such career. The findings also revealed that more males had negative attitudes to do jobs perceived feminine. That is, males did not choose to be nurses or office secretaries. On the contrary, many females were likely to work on those jobs perceived feminine. Most of them chose to work as teachers, nurses, beauticians, airhostess and social workers. Moreover, more girls were likely to work as secretaries. The finding support results from study conducted by Mc Quid (2004) in Scotland. The study found that over 80% of both female and male pupils felt like working as waiters/ waitress, teacher, shop keeper, police officer and medical doctor. Other jobs remained persistently gender stereotyped: including perceived males' jobs like long truck driving, mechanics, engineering, electrician and armed forces as well as perceived females' jobs like nursing and care assistance. This is also consonant with Social Role Theory which maintains that men tend to be found in masculine perceived tasks and feminine in feminine perceived tasks (Eagly, 1999).

7.4 There is relationship between gender stereotyping beliefs and career choice among secondary school students

A chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) was used to explore the differences in career path choices between respondents who did not believe on influence of gender stereotyping roles on career choice and those who strongly believed on relationship between gender stereotyping and career choice across 10 statements. Table 5 present the results.

Table 5: Student's views on influence of gender stereotyping roles on career choice

S/N	Gender stereotyping	Career path choice						Chi-square test			
		Female		Male		Frequency		(χ^2)	df	p	Phi
N	%	N	%	Total	%						
1	No belief	79	49.7	80	50.3	159		2.96	1	0.86	0.04

Findings from the Table 5 indicate no significant association between beliefs on gender stereotyping roles and career path choice, $\chi^2(1, n = 298) = 2.96, p = 0.09, phi = 0.04$. This means that the proportion of respondents who did not believe on influence of gender stereotyping on career choice does not show significant statistical difference from the proportion of respondents who strongly believed in influence of gender stereotyping on career choice. The magnitude of difference was only small at the effect size of $phi = 0.04$. This means that, a belief gender stereotyping role does not influence career choice. This can be attributed to students' awareness of their choice and ability to various careers. It seems that they were able to differentiate gender roles and ability of someone to perform a specific career. This is because most of careers require the academic qualifications. The findings contradict with findings by Hensley (2003) in UK, who found out that there was a strong correlation between traditional gender roles and career choices. The author found that gender roles and stereotypes influenced career choices. Overall, the contradiction can be attributed to methodological aspect. For example, his study used only 21 students through experimental design. However, this study used about 299 students through cross sectional design. Moreover, the differences also might be attributed to difference in culture, context, and topic of the study as well as nature of the sample population.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The study found out the persistent influence of gender stereotyping of careers as well as gender differences in career choices among secondary students. However, the study found no association between students' beliefs on gender stereotyping roles and career choice. The study found out that parents, teachers, career role models and books were the main sources of career information. In addition, students had better knowledge on the identification of different types of careers in Tanzania. Basing on the findings it can be concluded that, there is influence of gender stereotyping on career choice among secondary school students in Moshi district in Tanzania.

IX. BASED ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS, THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS ARE MADE

i). There is need to educate students that regardless of gender, people can perform all role within the society.

Initiatives should be put forward to parents on how to raise their children and change community perceptions that male or female is able to do any work. They should also be taught to differentiate biological and gender roles through seminars.

ii). The study also found gender stereotyping of careers among secondary school students. This implies that males and females have different patterns of gender stereotyping of jobs. Therefore, initiatives should be made by gender activism to reduce gender stereotyping of careers by addressing reasons why females and males continue to stereotype females and males in general, and careers in particular. It is recommended that both female and males be motivated to study all subjects in secondary schools to enable them have a wide choice of their career regarding of interest and ability.

iii). The study found gender difference in career choices. This implies that males and females have different choices regarding what is perceived for specific gender. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVIT) is needed to train school counsellor who will take initiatives to eliminate gender difference in career choice. Brock - Utne and Possi (1991), stress the need for career guidance services in school. Tanzania needs doctors, forest experts, engineers, technical expert, scientist and managers, for that case, both women and men needed to fill in these in jobs too.

iv). This study found out that books, parents, teachers, career role models and relatives were major sources of career information among secondary school students in Moshi rural district. This implies that schools do not have career counsellors and career information centre where students can have easy access to various sources of career information. It is recommended that schools should have formal career education centres for counseling sessions and advice to students. Therefore to be well informed about careers, parents should be educated to integrate various sources of career information.

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