

## **STUDENTS' INTEREST AS PREDICTORS OF CAREER CHOICE IN OFFICE EDUCATION IN ERA OF UNCERTAINTY NIGERIA**

**Chinenyenwa Silver Ukaegbu (Sr.)  
Roseline Nkemakolam Azubuike (Ph.D.)**

Department of Business Education  
Faculty of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka.

**&**

**Ugochi Juliet Iwuchukwu**

Department of Business Education  
Faculty of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka.

### **Abstract**

The study investigated students' interest as predictors of career choice in office education in era of uncertainty Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Correlation survey research design was adopted for the study. Population of 5060 senior secondary school students was used for the study. Sample size of 373 senior secondary two was used for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was used for the study. Two questionnaires: students interest inventory (SII), and Career choice questionnaire (CCQ) were used for data collection. Reliability coefficient of 0.87 and 0.91 were obtained using Crobach Alpha method. Regression analysis was used to answer the two research questions and hypotheses. Findings revealed that situational and personal interest positively predict career choice in Office Education in uncertainty era in Nigeria. It was recommended among others that parent and stakeholders should allow students to choose courses based on their interest having given a through guidance.

**Keywords:** *Situational Interest, Personal Interest, Career Choice, Office Education*

### **Introduction**

In the last decade, social and economic crisis have changed people perceptions, interest, and choice of many things in their day to day activities. This has affected industries, labour markets, produced and process, politics, business and education most especially education. Education is one of the most driven economics tools and 21st century skills. Education remains the effective key to unlock human mind in order to focus on their goals. There quite numbers of courses and field of study in education such science education, Art education, vocational and technical educations in which office education and management education training programme emerges.

Career choice is one of the principal gridlocks that pose difficulties in any student's

life. This implies that the process of career choice is not a simple one and involves a difficult process of decision-making. Quadri (2018) stated that most youths were unaware that various career opportunities existed due to a lack of information about such job opportunities. In our day, career choice does not only demand the development of calculated plans but also exhaustive career consultation to fiddle with the ever-budding socio-economic state of affairs. Nearly every one of the students in secondary schools lacks precise information about occupational opportunities to help them navigate their career path; thus, the anticipated life expectations are marred (Ombaba, Keraro, Sindabi, & Asienyo, 2014). To the researcher, career choice is the decision making of an individual student (in-school adolescents) on

particular job or profession practices as source of livelihood due to training and skills acquired through school. In-school adolescents' choice of career could be related to their engagement in academic activities or practice.

Interest has been a consensus term as an interactive relation between the learner and certain aspects of one's environment. According to Krapp, Hidi and Renninger (2015), Interest is the attraction that forces or compels a child to respond to a particular stimulus. It could also be considered as the feeling of an individual towards a particular object or an activity. The degree and the direction of attitude towards, it mean that a child will develop an interest in any object or activity that is found to be attractive or stimulating to him. In a classroom situation, the learner will be attentive during a lesson only if the instruction is of interest to the learner. Therefore, there is a great need for students to be motivated to develop interest which is crucial to achievement in any subject, most importantly Physics. Students' interests could be divided into Situational and individual or personal interests. Situational interest is the spontaneous transitory and environmental activated while personal or individual interest is directly through prior experience and knowledge in the subject matter influenced conceptual change.

Situational interest refers to the appealing effect of characteristics in an activity or object that triggers responses from students at the moment of classroom interaction. Situational interests have been found to have a significant influence on student motivation in learning. According to Ding, Sun, and Chen, (2013) situational interest has been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct take in five dimensions: novelty, challenge, attention demand, exploration intention and instant enjoyment, and including an overall assessment of a task's interest relating to a

'total interest element'. Teachers might design tasks that require not only physical engagement and enjoyment, but also higher-order cognitive processes demanding active exploration (Roure & Pasco, 2018). Roure et al. (2019) instant enjoyment and exploration intention were the two major motivating dimensions, highlighting the universality of students' Situational Interest. Interest tends to affect teaching-learning of a particular subject like physics, salient factors of SI are task environment, students' self-regulation, and textual features such as ease of understanding and clarity. Akhrib and Nedjai, (2021) noted that situational and perceived interest would explain gender differences in reading was not significant to explain gender differences in reading comprehension.

An individual interest refers to an individual' psychological disposition associated with his/her preferences for activities/actions. Individual interest is regarded as enduring traits existing in readers associated with their schemata and opposed to the shortly lasting situational interest. Individual interest, or personal interest, has been described as an association or a deep-seated investment in a specific topic, object or event (a vocational or vocational pursuit (Akhrib & Nedjai, 2021). High individual interest in a particular subject area is associated with high academic achievement and high-level enjoyment. Laine et al (2020) indicated that the relationships between students' individual interest in science and mathematics with learning vary. Shubina et al (2021) revealed that individual interest frequently decreased after collaborative learning tasks. Rotgans & Schmidt (2017) pointed out that individual interest is not a significant predictor of learning but situational interest predicts knowledge acquisition. Interest can influence gender differences in learners.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate students' interest as predictors of career choice in office education in era of uncertainty Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought determine to determine the

1. association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology
2. predictive power of students individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology
3. predictive power of students career choice attributed to their interest in office technology

### **Research Question**

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What is the association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology?
2. What is the Predictive power of students' individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology?
3. What is the Predictive power of students' career choice attributed to their interest in Office Technology?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** Predictive power of students' individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology is not significant.
- H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant Predictive power of students' career choice attributed to their interest in Office Technology.

### **Literature Review**

Nyamwange, J (2016) examined the influence of interest on career choice decisions among first year university students. To address this objective, the study utilised two hundred and ninety six (296) first year students selected from six universities. The Respondents were selected using purposive as well as systematic sampling approaches within the descriptive survey design. They responded to a specially designed questionnaire and the data collected were analyzed descriptively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences as the main tool of analysis. The study concludes that student interest is significant in determining career choice decisions for an individual's career

### **Method**

This study employed a correlation survey research design. The correlation survey research design seeks to establish the relationship that exists between two or more variables. It enables a researcher to find out the proportion of variation in the dependent variable (criterion variable) that is predicted by the independent variable (predictor variable) using regression analyses (Nworgu, 2015). The population of this study was comprised of 4567 SS II Art students in the government owned Senior Secondary Schools in Obollo-Afor Education Zone of Enugu State. (Source: Post Primary School Management Board Obollo-Afor Education Zone). A sample size of three hundred and seventy three (368) SSII Art students was used for this study. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamene formula for determining sample size from finite population. The study adopted proportionate stratified random sampling techniques at percentages (%) in other to arrive at (368) SSII Art students from all the schools.

Two instruments were used for data collection in this study. They include: Student's Interest Inventory (SII) and Career

choice Questionnaire (CCQ) was design by the researcher. SII has two sections A and B. Section A sought information on students' demographic data such as: gender, while section "B" contains twenty one (21) items to assess students' interest. The SII has cluster I and II to elicit situational and individual interest in Office education. Cluster I has fourteen (14) items on situational interest and cluster II has seven (14) items on individual interest. The SII is modeled on a four-point rating scale with options as follow: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree with values ranging from 1 to 4. Career Choice Questionnaire (CCQ) The instrument was developed by the researcher and it consists of five columns; serial number, school code/examination number, Academic Session (2021/2022). The pro forma was used to obtain physics achievement scores for 2021/2022 Academic Section.

### **Validity of the Instrument**

To ascertain the face validity of the instruments, the instruments will be given to three experts in the Department of Science Education; two from Physics Education unit and two from Measurement and Evaluation unit, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The experts will be given copies of the instruments to assess: whether the items are appropriate and in consonance with the purpose of the study, the clarity and simplicity of the language of each item, and whether the statements are ambiguous and vague. Based on the observations and suggestions of the experts,

The reliability of the instruments was ascertained by administering 20 copies of the instruments to twenty (20) Art students in

Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State which is not part of the sampled school but share similar characteristics with the study area. The reason for trial-testing was to determine the internal consistency of the items. Cronbach Alpha method will be used to ascertain the reliability of the instruments. This is because the procedure applies to instruments that are polytomously scored (Nworgu, 2015). The reliability coefficients of 0.89 and 0.87 were obtained for Students' Interest Inventory (SII) and Career Choice Questionnaire (CCQ) respectively. If the reliability coefficients obtained were in line with Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011), who recommended that a correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) of .70 and above should be considered high. Therefore, the instruments will be considered to be highly reliable and suitable for the study.

The data collected for the study were analyzed using regressions analysis to answer research questions while Regression ANOVA was used to test hypotheses. All the hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was thus; Reject the null hypotheses if the exact probability value is less than 0.05 otherwise do not reject. Regression analysis was considered appropriate since the study involves predictor variables (independent variables) and criterion variables (dependent variables).

### **Findings**

#### **Research Question One**

What is the association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology?

**Table 1: Regression Analysis of Association of Students' Situational Interest and Career Choice in Office Technology**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.546 <sup>a</sup>	.298	.296	3.841

The result in Table 1 shows that the association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology was .546. The result indicates that there exists a moderate positive association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology. The result also revealed that the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.740 was .298. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of .0298 implies Students situational interest accounts for 29.8% of career choice.

This shows the proportion of variance in career choice that can be attributed to linear relationship with situational interest. This is also an indication that 70.2% of the variation in career choice in office technology is attributed to other factors other than situational interest in uncertainty in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis One**

There is no significant association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis of Association of Students' Situational Interest and Career Choice in Office Technology**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2296.473	1	2296.473	155.665	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	5399.484	366	14.753		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7695.957</b>	<b>367</b>			

The result on Table 2 shows that an F-ratio (155.665) with associated exact probability value of 0.000 was obtained. This probability value of 0.000 was compared with 0.05 set as level of significance for testing the hypothesis and it was found to be significant because 0.000 is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis of association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology is not statistically significant. The

researcher therefore, concludes that there was significant association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology in uncertainty era in Nigeria.

**Research Question Two**

What is the Predictive power of students' individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology?

**Table 3: Regression Analysis of Predictive Power of Students' Individual or Personal Interest on Career Choice in Office Technology**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.754	.568	.567	3.014

The result in Table 1 shows that the Predictive power of students individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology was .546. The result indicates that there exists a moderate positive Predictive power of students' individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology. The result also revealed that the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.754 was .568. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of .568 implies Students situational interest accounts for 56.8% of career choice.

This shows the proportion of variance in career choice that can be attributed to linear relationship with individual or personal interest. This is also an indication that 43.2% of the variation in career choice in office technology is attributed to other factors other than individual or personal interest in uncertainty in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Two**

Predictive power of students' individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology is not significant.

**Table 4: Regression Analysis of Predictive Power of Students' Individual or Personal Interest on Career Choice in Office Technology**

	<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
1	Regression	4371.202	1	4371.202	481.196	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	3324.755	366	9.084		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7695.957</b>	<b>367</b>			

The result on Table 2 shows that an F-ratio (481.196) with associated exact probability value of 0.000 was obtained. This probability value of 0.000 was compared with 0.05 set as level of significance for testing the hypothesis and it was found to be significant because 0.000 is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis of Predictive power of students' individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology is not

statistically significant. The researcher therefore, concludes that there was significant Predictive power of students' individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology in uncertainty era in Nigeria.

**Research Question Two**

What is the Predictive power of students' career choice attributed to their interest in Office Technology?

**Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis Predictive Power of Students' Career Choice Attributed to their Interest in Office Technology**

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
	.771	.594	.592	2.926

The result in Table 5 shows that the Predictive power of students individual or personal interest on career choice in Office Technology was .771. The result indicates that there exists a moderate positive Predictive power of students' career choice

attributed to their interest in office technology. The result also revealed that the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.754 was .568. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of .594 implies students' interest accounts for 59.4%

of career choice in Office technology. This shows the proportion of variance in career choice that can be attributed to linear relationship with students' interest. This is also an indication that 38.6% of the variation in career choice in office technology is

attributed to other factors other than students' interest in uncertainty in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Three**

There is no significant Predictive power of students' career choice attributed to their interest in office technology

**Table 6: Regression Analysis of Predictive Power of Students' Career Choice attributed to their Interest in Office Technology.**

	<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
1	Regression	4571.353	2	2285.677	267.001	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	3124.603	365	8.561		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7695.957</b>	<b>367</b>			

The result on Table 2 shows that an F-ratio (267.001) with associated exact probability value of 0.000 was obtained. This probability value of 0.000 was compared with 0.05 set as level of significance for testing the hypothesis and it was found to be significant because 0.000 is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis of Predictive power of students' interest on career choice in Office Technology is significant. The researcher therefore, concludes that there was significant Predictive power of students' interest on career choice in Office Technology in uncertainty era in Nigeria.

**Discussion of the Findings**

The findings of the study with respect to research question one and hypotheses one showed there exists a moderate positive association of Students situational interest and career choice in Office Technology era uncertainty Nigeria. Further analysis showed the significant association of situational interest and career choice in office technology in era of uncertainty Nigeria. The findings was in agreement with

The findings of the study with respect to research question two and hypotheses two showed there exists in a moderate positive Predictive power of students' individual or

personal interest on career choice in Office Technology era uncertainty Nigeria. Further analysis showed the significant predictive power of individual or personal interest on career choice in office technology in era of uncertainty Nigeria. The findings was in agreement with Amoor and Aliyu (2014)revealed among others that the society perceives that secretarial profession is still feministic and therefore attracts low prestige among men in the society as compare to other professions.

The findings of the study with respect to research question three and hypotheses three showed there exists in a moderate positive Predictive power of students' interest on career choice in Office Technology era uncertainty Nigeria. Further analysis showed the significant predictive power of interest on career choice in office technology in era of uncertainty Nigeria. The findings was in agreement with Mutanga, Piyose, & Ndovela, (2023) who found out factors of the career preferences of IT students, were motivations, interests, and aspirations that drive their choice of specialization. Additionally, it aims to explore how external factors, such as industry trends, job market demands, and personal experiences, impact their decision-making.

## Conclusion

The study explored the students' interest as a predictor of career choice in office technology. Uncertainty condition of the nation could play a significant role in technological advancements and situational and personal interests also influenced decisions, leading some students to reconsider their careers due to the high un-employment rate in Nigeria. The uncertainty Nigeria could limit students' choice of career in office technology. In conclusion, informed career choices and interest lead to increased students enrollment in office technology and employability.

## Recommendation

The following recommendations were made:

- i. Government should improve on economic that is driven by education
- ii. Students should learn skills that office based in order to be employable

## Reference

- Adekunle, R. F. & Femi-Adeoye, K. O. (2016). Students' Attitude and Interest as Correlates of Students' Academic Performance in Biology in Senior Secondary School. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research* www.ijer.net Vol.4 No-3.
- Akhrib, M. & Nedjai, F. Z. M. (2021). The Effects of Situational and Perceived Interest on EFL Reading Comprehension: A Gender-Based Study at the University of Algiers 2. *Arab World English Journal*, 12 (1) 48 0-497.
- Amoor, S. S. & Aliyu, M. M. (2014). An Empirical Analysis of Factors Influencing the Career Choice of Undergraduates in Secretarial Option of Business Education Programme in Nigeria Universities. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 5(39). ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online).
- Erkka, L., Marjaana, V., Andreas, G. & Koen, V. (2020). Individual Interest and Learning in Secondary School STEM Education. *Frontline Learning Research*, Vol. 8 (2), 90 – 108.
- Krapp, A., Hidi, S. and Renninger, K. A. (2015). *Interest, Learning and Development.* In K. A. Renninger, S. Hidi and A. Krapp (Eds), *The Role of Interest in Learning and Development*. New York: Psychology Press, 2015, pp. 3-26.
- Laine, E., Veermans, M., Gegenfurtner, A. & Veermans, K. (2020). Individual Interest and Learning in Secondary School STEM Education. *Frontline Learning Research*, Vol.8 No.2 (2020) 90 – 108 ISSN 2295-3159.
- Mutanga, M. B, Piyose, P. X. & Ndovela, S. L. (2023). Factors Affecting Career Preferences and Pathways: Insights from IT Students. *Journal of Information Systems and Informatics*, 5(3).
- Nyamwange, J. (2016). Influence of Student's Interest on Career Choice among First Year University Students in Public and Private Universities in Kisii County, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(4). ISSN 2222-288X (Online).
- Rotgans, J. I. & Schmidt, H. G. (2017b). The relation between individual interest and knowledge acquisition. *British Educational Research Journal*, 43(2), 350–371. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3268>.
- Roure, C. & Pasco, D. (2018b). The Impact of Learning Task Design on Students' Situational Interest in Physical Education. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 37, 24–34. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2017-0046>.

Roure, C., et al. (2019). Universality and Uniqueness of Students' Situational Interest in Physical Education: A Comparative Study. *Psychologica Belgica*, 59(1), pp. 1–15. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/pb.446>.

Shubina Tatiana, Järvenoja Hanna, Mänty Kristiina, Peltonen Jouni & Järvelä

Sanna (2021) The Changes in Lower Secondary School Students' Interest During Collaborative Learning, *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, DOI: 10.1080/00313831.2021.1958377