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DEPARTMENT OF DIDACTIC OF  
DISCIPLINE, SCIENCE OF  
EDUCATION, PEDAGOGY AND  
BILINGUAL TRAINING

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OPTION: GUIDANCE COUNSELLING

**DECISION MAKING AND CAREER CHOICE DEVELOPMENT: THE  
CASE OF GOVERNMENT BILINGUAL HIGH SCHOOL EBOLOWA  
SOUTH REGION OF CAMEROON**

A Dissertation Submitted In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirements For The Award Of A Post-Graduate Diploma (DIPCO) In Guidance and Counselling

By

TAMBE NCHONG EYONG Anastasia

Degree in English Common Law

Matricule 19W1335

SUPERVISED BY

Mr. OTYE ELOM Paul Ulrich

Associate professor

AND

Madam MBONTEH Vivian Mbole

Assistant lecturer



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## INTRODUCTION

Career-related choices are among the most important decisions people make during their lifetime. These choices have significant long-term implications for individuals' lifestyles, emotional welfare, economic and social status, as well as their sense of personal productivity and contribution to society.

Career choice is a significant issue in the developmental life of secondary school students because it is reported to be associated with positive as well as harmful psychological, physical and socio-economic inequalities that persist well beyond the young age into an individual's adult life (Bubić & Ivanišević, 2016; Robertson, 2014). It is a crucial decision made by students as they progress in school. While this decision process starts early for some secondary students from enriched environments, the process comes late for some other secondary students who could not come to terms with themselves as a sequel to the inability to identify what they would like to become in the future. Making a career decision is predicated on information at the disposal of the secondary students. Indeed, a multiplicity of internal and external variables could combine to fast track or delay adolescents' career decisions.

According to Alutu (2017), career refers to a person's professional course or occupation which he/she has to follow over many years, affording him/her the opportunity for progress as well as serving as his principal means of earning a living and in which he/she is generally recognised to have become relatively an expert in, through experience (P. 297). On their part, Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2014) see career as a person's progress or general course of action through a phase of life, in some profession or undertaking. Career can be explained as the sum total of life experiences, including paid and unpaid work, community, voluntary and family activities.

The complexities noted above about career choice have compelled many young people to seek assistance from members of the age group in an attempt to resolve the seeming impasse. This refers to the influence a peer group exerts on an individual that encourages the individual to change his or her attitude, values or behaviour to conform to such a group (Kirk, 2000). Apart from parents' influence, some students may want to identify with their friends in the class. Hence, they choose subject combinations which would lead to certain careers simply because a friend belongs to that particular group.

Each individual undergoing the process of making career decision is influenced by such factors as the context in which they live, their personal aptitudes, and educational attainment (Watson *et al.*, 2010). Students in secondary schools have been psychologically disturbed regarding career decision-making in a competitive job market, yet career guidance in secondary schools is less fulfilling (Austin, 2010; Jamali, Araqi & kalantarkousheh, 2015; Despina, Kostas, Argyropoulou, & Tampouri, 2012; Ikediashi, 2010;).

According to Salami (2006), many youths make wrong career choices due to ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, or reputation attached to certain jobs without adequate vocational guidance and career counselling. Regardless of the great effort put forth by families, government agencies and non-governmental organisations, many young people still encounter difficulties in the transition from the world of school to the world of work (Nykanen, Raudaskoski, Nevalainen & Mikkonen, 2010). Perhaps peer pressure of perceived academic self-concept influences their thoughts with regard to career decisions. Career decision-making offers a framework that creates innovative, effective, and sustainable solutions to youth career development challenges (Savickas, 2012). Besides, Carter *et al.* (2009) suggests that career counselling assists students in the career

decision-making process, while McMahon & Watson (2007) point out that the information given to a student about the available careers has a lifetime consequence on the students' career choices.

**Context**

The complexity of career decision-making increases as age increases (Gati & Saka, 2001). Younger children are more likely to offer answers about their ideal career, representing their envisioned utopia and phenomenal perceptions about what they want to do when they grow up (Howard & Walsh, 2011). As children get older, they are more likely to describe their career choice as a dynamic interplay of their developmental stages and the prevailing environmental circumstances (Howard and Walsh, 2011). Secondary school students career decision-making is required to go through a process of understanding by defining what they want to do and exploring various career options with the aid of guidance and planning (Porfeli & Lee, 2012). Proper handling of the process affirms individual identity and fosters wellbeing, job satisfaction and stability (Kunnen, 2013).

The major part of people's life is spent in occupational activities, and these pursuits do more than simply provide income for livelihood (Bandura, 2002). There is a widespread agreement that the high school years are crucial for adolescents to become prepared for the transition from school to work or college (Amoah, Kwofie & Kwofie, 2015; Ombaba, Keraro, Sindabi & Asiengo, 2014; Rowland, 2004). Secondary school years present the transition from the cooperatively sheltered life of the primary school to the freedom and responsibility of either tertiary education or employment (Watts & Kidd, 2000; MaluwaBanda, 1998). Career guidance is widely accepted as a powerful and effective method of bridging the gap between education and the world of work (Ibrahim, Wambiya, Olaka & Raburu, 2014; Ajufo, 2013). Students will

come through high school with knowledge of their preferences and interests because of their interactions with many stakeholders in their environment. Therefore, career guidance programmes are intended to help students understand their potentials and develop them to the full (Ajufu, 2013; Alika, 2010a; Maluwa-Banda, 1998; Ombaba et al., 2014).

The process of making a choice is complex and unique for each individual, depending on cognitive factors and social structures of the individual's milieu (Braza & Guillo, 2015:78; Durosaro & Adebanye, 2012). A career choice is a decision that most human beings make at sometime in their lives; it is a decision that should be carefully considered since it can affect the rest of a person's life (Eyo, 2011). Therefore, career guidance and counselling aim to allow an individual to explore his or her options (Lazarus & Chinwe, 2011).

According to UNESCO (2002), career counselling consists of four elements, a) helping individuals to gain greater self-awareness in areas such as interest, values, abilities and personality style; b) connecting students to resources so that they can become more knowledgeable about jobs and occupations; c) engaging students in the decision making process in order that they can choose a career path that is well suited to their own interests, abilities values and personality style; and d) assisting individuals to be active managers of their career paths (including managing career transitions and balancing various life roles) as well as becoming lifelong learners in the sense of professional development over the life span.

Career guidance comprises a range of processes designed to enable individuals to make informed choices and transitions related to their educational, vocational and personal development (Watts & Kidd, 2000). The goal of guidance and counselling services is to enable each learner in institutions of learning to derive optimal educational benefits to utilise his or her potential (Eyo, Joshua & Esuong, 2010; Ibrahim et al., 2014). It also instils confidence and

positive attitudes, derives fulfilment and inculcates an eagerness for lifelong learning (Ajufu, 2013). Countries need citizens who can make the best use of their talents and make career choices that will help them be motivated and productive (Hiebert, 2009). While subject selection strongly shapes students' choices after they leave high schools (Naude, 2014). Career guidance is aimed at helping students know themselves and is designed to provide specialised help with educational, vocational, emotional and personal social decisions in a complex and changing world (Gbenga & Toyin, 2014; Mabula, 2012; Mahlangu, 2011; Eyo et al., 2010; Maluwa-Banda, 1998). It considers their suitability for different careers and educational opportunities, explores alternatives that they may not have considered previously, and engages in inappropriate decision-making about their future careers (Ajufu, 2013; Hiebert, 2009). In Nigeria, career guidance helped the youth make the right choices in different subject areas (Omoni, 2013). In Malawi, career guidance was introduced with the hope that through counselling, students would be helped to reduce their areas of personal conflict (Maluwa-Banda, 1998). Chireshe (2012b) noted that countries such as Botswana, Malawi, Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe had started career guidance lessons in schools. However, few students are equipped to determine which combination of courses will best prepare them for success after graduation (Naude, 2014). Career-related decisions are complicated and have broad and long-term consequences that are not always obvious (Hiebert, 2009).

The context in which career decisions occur is complex, and therefore many people require assistance in exploring alternatives and weighing the consequences associated with various options (Hiebert, 2009). Gordon (2000) cited that there were 190 000 vacant jobs in the United States, but employers could not find employees with the right qualifications to do them. He argued that people are being educated for the wrong future. He further explained that few

young people imagine themselves working in services, crafts or technical industries even though government predictions were that these sectors would be the leaders in creating new jobs. This implies that students do not get well-informed guidance in terms of the job market. Evidence about the disparity of career guidance services in high schools in the United States has been echoed in a range of national reports. There have been calls for more career guidance services for youths in schools and for school and community cooperation in this process. Parental involvement is required if the career needs of diverse populations of students are to be met (Herr, Cramer & Niles, 2004). In the same way, parents should be involved in career guidance in Cameroon schools.

The Cameroon government has long recognised the need to reform school career guidance and counselling to help students in career decision-making. The objective of the programme was to provide academic, career awareness and personal advice to the students. Career decision making has remained a constant challenge to students in Cameroonian secondary schools. Although schools have guidance counsellors in charge of career counselling, their roles in delivering on career guidance and counselling services are limited by lack of proper infrastructure. The guidance counsellor's primary role is to help students fill out university application forms while very little information is provided regarding available career options for the students upon graduation. The fact that career guidance and counselling is limited mainly to Form second cycle students while filling university forms suggest that there are very few career guidance and counselling in secondary schools. As a result, students select college courses with little knowledge of the work environments to which these courses will lead them (Nyutu, 2007).

**Justification of study**

Several factors motivated the current study. The researcher is a preservice counsellor and her future responsibilities will include assisting students to choose careers. The researcher is currently a student at ENSET Ebolowa and did internship at Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa where she interacts with students from different backgrounds. Having been a student in two different universities, she realised that students who enrol at universities did not always have access to career guidance at the secondary school. There are students who pursue a certain career despite the shortfall in the number of points required for enrolment in that program. Another group comprises students who are not sure of their career choices and move from one programme to another.

The researcher did her internship under the supervision of the school guidance counsellor where she noticed that guidance and counselling is concerned with the confusion that affects students who are unable to make proper career choice and decisions. This is the reason that prompted her to pursue a study in career guidance.

What also motivated the researcher to carry out the study was her broad knowledge of the problem's students face in choosing careers. The researcher carried out the study that investigates decision making and career choice development: the case of Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa South Region because it is close to the researcher's training institution hence its proximity reduced travel expenses.

## CHAPTER ONE : STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Making a decision concerning the selection of a suitable career or occupation is one significant problem facing secondary school students and young adolescents in general. This may be due to a lack of information, understanding, orientation, awareness, training, and opportunities for different careers or vocations. This takes us to the issue of career choice development. Career Choice refers to the process whereby an individual makes up his mind in favour of a particular career or occupation at a given time after thorough consideration of other alternatives. Occupational selection, as a developmental procedure spanning almost throughout a person's life, is one of the most difficult and key decision one has to make in a lifetime. This choice ought to be made with the understanding of the necessary demands or implications of entering into the career area. This is why a student needs to be systematically furnished with relevant career information to enable him/her to make a realistic career decision.

The study's background revealed that high school years are considered critical for adolescents (Amoah et al., 2015; Rowland, 2004; Maluwa-Banda, 1998) because they are a transitional period from school to work. Students' failure to make the right choices may lead to unhappiness and disapproval by society (Maluwa-Banda, 1998). As noted in the study's background, career guidance programmes are intended to help students understand their own potential and develop it fully (Gbenga & Toyin, 2014; Mabula, 2012; Alike, 2010b; Hiebert, 2009; Hodkinson, 1998). They are also used to help students develop themselves (Ajufo, 2013:312; Mahlangu, 2011; Alike, 2010a; Maluwa & Banda, 1998), to explore options that assist them to make the right choices (Lazarus & Chinwe, 2011; Omoni, 2013), to produce

optimal educational benefits (Eyo et al., 2010) and to instil confidence and a positive attitude (Ajufo, 2013). Failure by students to get career guidance at this stage leads to unhappiness (Alika, 2010a).

Most students pass this stage without choosing their careers because most of the students are confused and apply for tertiary education without knowing what they want to pursue (Manuel & Asuquo, 2009). As highlighted in the background to the study, several studies on general career guidance and counselling were carried out in African countries, for example, Chireshe (2012a), Chireshe (2012b) and Mapfumo et al. (2002) in Zimbabwe; Omoni (2013), Ajufo (2013), Eyo (2011), Eyo et al. (2010), Lazarus and Chinwe (2011), Petters and Asuquo (2009), Egbochuku and Akpan (2008) in Nigeria; Mahlangu (2011) in South Africa; Maluwa-Banda (1998) in 6 Malawi; Senyonyi, Ochieng and Sells (2012) in Uganda and Nyutu and Gysbers (2008) in Kenya. None of these studies looked at factors that influence career choices.

In addition, it has been observed that many students encounter a lot of problems while making career choices. This difficulty may arise from making choices in consonance with extraneous influences such as the peer group members rather than consulting the professionally trained guidance counsellor. Fortunately, most secondary schools in Cameroon today have practising guidance counsellors. The presence of guidance counsellor does not stop peer from influencing each other, as many youths have gone into occupations for which they do not have the aptitude or interest. This is the concern of this study. It has become necessary to investigate the role of peer group in career decisions. This study's problem, stated in a question form, is: Could decision making influence be a determinant of secondary school students' career choices in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa South Region of Cameroon?

### **I.1- General Research Questions**

How can decision making influence career choice development among high school students in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa?

### **I.2- Specific research questions**

The study was guided by the following sub-research questions:

1. To what extent can family influence the career choice development of high school students ?
2. How can the school influence the career choice development of high school students ?
3. What impact does gender have on the career choice of high school students ?
4. How does peers influence the career choice of high school students ?

### **I.3- Objectives of the study**

#### **I.3.1- General objectives**

The main objective is to determine how decision making influences career choice development among high school students in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa.

#### **I.3.1- Specific objectives**

Specifically, this study is set to:

1. To investigate how family influences students career choice development.
2. To determine the extent to which gender influences students career choice development.
3. To verify how the school environment influences students' career choice development;
4. To examine the role of peers on students' career choice development;

### **I.5- Research Hypothesis**

Ho1: There is a significant relationship between family influence and career choice development.

Ho2: There is a significant relationship between gender and career choice development.

Ho3: There is a significant relationship between school influence students and career choice development.

Ho4: There is a significant relationship between peer influence on students' and career choice development.

### **I.6- Scope of the Study (Geographical limit of the study)**

The variables being studied are family influence, gender, school influence, peer influence and career development of secondary school students.

Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa in the South Region was chosen for the study because of its proximity and its multi-ethnic nature. Choices and peer group influence male and female students in their career choices in secondary schools.

### **I.7 - Significance of the Study**

The study will, among other things, highlight how career choices are made under peer pressure among secondary school students. It will also help educate adolescents on the appropriate steps to follow to be able to make the right career choices even in the midst of pressure from a group they owe allegiance to.

**Teachers and school administrators** will also find this study very useful because it will bring to light some of the pressure secondary school students go through so that the appropriate referrals to experts can be done on time to help concerned secondary school students. The study will enable school psychologists and school counsellors to highly appreciate the kind of impact peer pressure has on students' career choices so that more developmental guidance programmes and seminars will be geared towards this direction for the benefit of secondary school students.

**Parents** will find this work useful because it will help them realise the need to understand their adolescent's children and maintain a cordial relationship with them so that issues bothering them could be discussed. By so doing adolescents will be encouraged to have more confidence in their parents as people who care about their feelings and spend much time in the home.

Further, the study will add to knowledge in the area of career choices development of adolescents involving peer pressure in Cameroon. Though, a lot of work has been done on career choices in general, there is not enough literature on adolescents' career choices style in Cameroon so I believe the study will contribute to knowledge in this area. This will be made possible through publications and seminars that the researcher will organise after the study.

**Educational researchers** will find this study useful as it is expected that the study's findings will provoke further research into the career choices process of adolescents to understand and help adolescents in their process of development.

### **I.8- Definition of keywords**

**Decision making:** Decision making is defined by Harold Koontz as a selection of a course of action among alternative, it is the core of planning.

**Career:** Career according to Arnold (1997), a career is a sequence of employment related positions, roles, actions and experiences. A career defines how one sees oneself in the context of one's social environment, in terms of one's future plans, one's past accomplishments or failures and one's present competences and attributes (Raynor &Entwin, 1982). UNESCO (2002) defined a career as the interaction of work roles and other life roles over a person's lifespan including both paid and unpaid work. Career is also seen as the progress and actions taken by a

person throughout a lifetime, especially related to that person's occupations (Oloasebikan & Olusakin, 2014). In this study, the term "career" refers to any type of professional engagement students pursue whether paid or unpaid.

**Career choice:** Career choice is the selection of a vocation usually on the basis of parental guidance, Vocational guidance, identification with admired figures, training of opportunities, personal interests and ability tests.

**Career guidance:** Career guidance is defined as a set of multiple processes, techniques or services designed to assist an individual to understand and to act on self-knowledge and knowledge of opportunities in work, education and leisure and to develop the decision-making skills by which to create and manage his or her own career development (Herr, Cramer & Niles, 1996). In this study, career guidance refers to services intended to assist people to make informed career decisions.

**Career counselling:** Career counselling is referred to as helping to bring about self-understanding, understanding of the career concerns involved and behavioural options available (Herr et al., 1996). In this study, career counselling means a verbal process in which a professional counsellor and counsee are in a dynamic collaborative relationship to solve career problems.

**Career Path:** According to Herr et al. (1996), the term is typically used in business and industry to describe a series of positions available in some occupational or specialised work area, ordinarily connoting possibilities for advancement. In this study, career path was used to denote the way that individuals achieve something or the way that their life develops. The term pathway was used interchangeably with career choice in this study.

In a nutshell, this chapter focuses on statement of the problem, general research question, specific research questions, objectives of the study such as the general and specific objectives, the research hypothesis, the scope of the study and some definitions of key terms. In the next chapter, we will look at literature review and theories.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORIES

The aim of this study was to determine how decision making influences career choice development among high school students in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. This chapter examines literature review and theoretical framework. The literature is presented under the sub-headings derived from the researcher's research questions. The sub headings are: School Influence and Career Choice; the influence of peers on career choice; the influence of decision-making and career choice; the influence of self-efficacy and career choice. The gaps filled by the current study are highlighted below.

### II.1- School influence and career choice

Career guidance is offered at institutions of learning such as schools, colleges and universities among others. High schools are a transition to higher institutions of learning and the world of work so they have a critical role in assisting students choose careers (Baloch & Shah, 2014). If students have too many choices of careers or have not made a decision on which career to take, school career guidance is helpful in selecting their study paths and in identifying their potential strengths to enhance their competitiveness for positions (Dodge & Welderndael, 2014; Sun & Yuen, 2012). Krumboltz's theory of Social Learning Theory of career development, which informs this study, emphasises teaching people career development techniques so that they can give career guidance in schools. Similarly, Lapan, Tucker, Kim and Fosciulek (2003) stated that the transition from high school to university or the world of work has been understood as one of the most difficult developmental challenges confronting adolescents and that schools

play a pivotal role in guiding the students towards a career. The current study sought to find out whether career guidance offered in schools influences students' career choices.

Edwards and Quinter (2011) emphasised the influence of Kenyan schools in students' choices of careers when they argue that it is in schools where students learn about and explore various careers before they make career choices. Korrir and Wafula's (2012) study highlighted the influence of the school on choosing a career. It investigated the factors that influence the choice of hospitality careers at Moi University. They concluded that Kenyan students' interest in this career could have been developed at high school. The study was carried out at a university and looked at a particular career. The current study does not look at a particular career but careers in general. Also, the participants in Korrir and Wafula's study are different from the current study which looks at Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. Similarly, Farter and Farter (2013) emphasised that American students were influenced at high school to follow STEM subjects which eventually prepare students for careers that are scientific in nature.

It is the role of the school from early adolescence, to assist learners to find meaning in their present and future lives (Mampane & Bouwer, 2011). American school engagement involves behavioural as well as emotional components that play a mediational role in the association between developmental assets such as careers and academic competence (Li, Lerner & Lerner, 2010). According to Jackson and Nutini (2002), the goal of American school counselling is not to determine a delimited career choice but rather to expand students' learning about potential career and educational interests, abilities, beliefs and options. Nigerian school youths who are ignorant of the nature and requirements of various occupations can find the issue of selecting an occupation difficult and complex (Petters & Asuquo, 2009). As such, schools engage a variety of activities to help students cope with the complexity of career choices. Hence,

career guidance was seen in Nigeria as enabling guidance counsellors to assist individuals to identify and learn the skills for more effective planning and choosing jobs, in making effective transitions and adjustments to work and in managing their own careers and career transitions effectively (Lazarus & Chinwe, 2011:58). The current study sought to establish the extent to which Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa career guidance and counselling services influence the choice of careers among high school students.

Mghweno, Mghweno and Baguma (2014) established that Tanzanian school career guidance teachers play a key role in preparing students to successfully proceed to the next level, whether for further education or a job. The same study also revealed that access to guidance and counselling services influence students' attitude towards studies, which will consequently influence their career choices (Mghweno et al., 2014). The current study sought to establish whether the above results could be obtained in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa.

Due to the difficulties encountered in making career choices in schools, many students in Israel seek guidance from career guidance teachers (Gati, Amir & Landman, 2010:393). This is in line with Krumboltz's (1996) Social Learning Theory, one of the theories informing this study, which purports that career guidance teachers could take a proactive stand in encouraging clients to try out new activities to determine whether new interests can be identified. A Nigerian study confirmed the role of school career guidance teachers when it established that school career guidance counselling has an effective and significant influence in increasing the students' career awareness when compared to a group with no career counselling (Eyo, 2011). The major finding of Eyo's study was that students who are exposed to career guidance are more equipped with career seeking techniques when compared to those who did not get the guidance. Hence, the more in-depth the counselling the students receive, the more proactive they become.

Career guidance teachers in schools have an important role in advocating for broad based career plans that focus on the student's interests and abilities and that will increase future career options (Mghweno et al., 2014). Similarly, Zayas and McGuigan (2006) emphasised the role of career guidance teachers when they stated that American school guidance teachers are uniquely positioned to stimulate students' interest in the health professions. In the same American study, it was revealed that many of the focus group participants felt career guidance teachers were largely helpful.

Bardick et al. (2004) revealed that a proactive career counselling approach that benefits Canadian students would include building trusting relationships with students, encouraging them to closely examine and explore their occupational interests, providing students with information about the stages of decision making involved in career planning and guiding them in their search for information about careers. This could build trust and legitimacy in the counsellor making him or her influential in the students' career choices. Bardick et al. (2004) further purported that counsellors who wish to become more influential in students career planning may need to become more actively involved in students' everyday lives. Career guidance is not only confined to the classroom but could be extended to the external world. The current study sought to establish whether counselling in schools in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa played a pivotal role in students' career choices.

In developed countries, career guidance is not solely the duty of school counsellors and teachers but also includes independent counsellors. Such counselling may require a fee which could deter some students from getting that help. However, Balin and Hirschi (2010) advocate that the students who do not go to independent counsellors to seek help may benefit from classroom career guidance, where they may have the chance to build relationships with school

counsellors and become more comfortable in seeking one-to-one interactions later in the process. School career counselling may be the answer for those who may have problems with attaining professional guidance offered elsewhere. Balin and Hirschi (2010) argued that Swiss school career guidance or group work activities can help students develop career adaptability. School career guidance was seen as influential in preparing Kenyan students for their career choices (Owino & Odundo, 2016:2240; Edwards & Quinter, 2011). The present study sought to find out whether career guidance in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa influenced students' career choices.

Balin and Hirschi's (2010) study was carried out in the German speaking region of Switzerland. They concluded that Swiss students should work on more career guidance activities that will provide awareness, comfort and skills for career exploratory behaviours. This, they believed, would develop career adaptability, such as learning about the educational and vocational system and transitions, the actual opportunities and barriers of the system and individuals, decision-making skills and the importance of seeking help from professionals (Balin & Hirschi, 2010:). It is notable that the participants in this study were predominantly white Europeans however the current study is a clear effort to find how Africans, particularly Zimbabweans, are influenced by career guidance in schools. Balin and Hirschi's results could have been affected by other variables that affect foreigners. The current study used Cameroonians in their country.

The Yorkshire Times (2012) revealed that at Tong High School in England, staff training and development put teachers at the forefront as they discovered that teachers were best placed to inspire the students' career choices and bring out the best in the students. The Yorkshire Times discovered that teachers at their schools had an influence over respondents' career choices.

The same study also confirmed that enthusiastic, knowledgeable and committed teachers lead young people towards careers. Bright, Pryor, Wilkenfeld and Earl (2005) reiterated the importance of teachers in career guidance when they purport that teachers were second most important grouping in helping students choose their careers. The poll by The Yorkshire Times (2012:2) which examined the reasons why respondents picked a certain job, found that 50 percent of the participants made the decision as a result of a particular teacher. According to Kniveton (2004:47), British school teachers can identify aptitudes and abilities and encourage students to take certain subject options, take part in work experience or employment visits.

School subjects were found to play a major role in influencing students to prefer certain careers over others. Studies have revealed the influence of school subjects on students' choices of careers. For instance, in Pakistan (Naz, Saeed, Khan, Sheik & Khan, 2014), and in America (Faiter & Faiter, 2013), school subjects were found to influence students in choosing careers. The quality of teaching, student participation in school activities, school 33 practices and policies and learning materials for the students were found to impact on career choices among learners (Shumba & Naong, 2012). Schools therefore guide students towards certain careers by exposing them to a variety of activities. The current study sought to establish the extent to which Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa influence career choices among high school students.

Mexican American high school students identified school mentors as helpful when they provide verbal encouragement for students' career goals or when the mentors were available for support as students made decisions about their future careers (Walaba & Kiboss, 2013; Durosaro & Nohu, 2012; Flores & Obasi, 2005). Flores and Obasi (2005) further reiterated the importance of a mentoring relationship which could advance learners' career development if mentors

provide the requisite skills to gain entry into and progress in a profession. Mentors can assist mentees in identifying the necessary resources to achieve career goals (Flores & Obasi, 2000). Similarly, Canadian school mentors, in the form of teachers, career guidance teachers and sometimes school heads, were found to be influential in students' career development (Fried & MacCleave, 2009). Furthermore, mentors can provide students with an introductory network of professionals in the field and by introducing students to colleges (Flores & Obasi, 2005). American teachers who act as mentors in schools constitute an individual social support network (Zayas & McGuigan, 2006; Flores & Obasi, 2005). Several other studies, for example, in the Philippines (Aguado et al., 2015), in Pakistan (Abbasi & Sarwat, 2014), in Nigeria (Ogunyewo et al., 2015), in Kenya (Migunde, Agak & Odiwuor, 2012) and in South Africa (Shumba & Naong, 2012) have confirmed the influence of mentors on students' choices of careers.

Mexican American high school students most often identify having role models in schools who lead by example, who are supportive and provide direct career guidance to students as influential in their career decision making (Koech, Bitok, Rutto, Koech, Okoth, Korrir & Ngala, 2016). Similarly, in a study in America, high school students' job satisfaction and career decisions were related to positive experiences with their role models, such as school guidance counsellors, indicating that visiting the school guidance office was effective in achieving job satisfaction (Rowland, 2004). It is also believed that role models help students develop educational and career interests that they might not have considered. The above assertions highlight the need of all stakeholders in career guidance in schools in assisting students to make correct career decisions. This is in line with the Social Cognitive Theory which informs this study that advocates that role models inspire learners.

The type of school also has a significant influence on the careers chosen by students. Studies in the Bahamas (Rowland, 2004) and in Kenya (Chemeli, 2013) showed that the type of school had a bearing on choices of careers. Schools are categorised differently all over the world. There are government schools, mission schools, private schools, boarding and day schools. These schools may have different cultures which influence the careers that are preferred by students.

Another important aspect about schools with regard to career choices was the geographical location of the school (Roy, 2016; Fizer, 2013; Perna, Rowan-Kenyon, Thomas, Bell, Anerson & Chunyan, 2008). The constraints on providing career counselling vary across schools based on the characteristics of the students the school serves and the location of schools, in particular, district or state (Perna et al., 2008). The current study was carried out in Cameroon and included only the urban high school. In contrast, Ko, Lee, Leung, Vikis and Yoshida (2007:486) established that geographical location of the school has no influence on British students' career choices. The reason for these contrasting results could be the participants that were used in the study. The participants in Ko et al.'s (2007) study were foreigners living in Britain.

## **II.2- Peer influence and career choice**

Peer influence cannot be underestimated as it was found to be influential in career choices. Faiter and Faiter (2013) and Alike (2010b) in America, Abbasi and Sarwat (2014), Edwards and Quinter (2011) in Nigeria, Shumba and Naong (2012) in South Africa and Kimiti and Mwova (2012) in Kenya found that students were influenced by their peers in a variety of ways such as peer counselling, peer interaction, peer advice and peer relationships. Peer counselling is a way of relating, responding and helping aimed at exploring feelings, thoughts

and concerns with the hope of reaching a clear understanding (Odirile, 2012). In schools, peer counselling is a phenomenon that was established to help students in schools solve problems (Bett, 2013). The main goal of peer counselling is to enable students to appreciate each other as well as to understand the importance of education (Odirile, 2012:3). Studies in Kenya (Kaaria, Nyaga, Oundo & Mureithi, 2014; Marangu, Bururia & Njunge, 2012) revealed that peer counsellors are important in mentoring students, sharing information and supporting each other.

Bett (2013) purported that the rationale of peer counselling is based on the assumption that people who share similar characteristics and ages tend to influence one another. Similarly, Chireshe (2013) in Zimbabwe reiterated the importance of peer counselling in schools when he argued that information was easily disseminated through peer counselling. Peer counselling is consistent with Social Cognitive Theory which informs this study which purports that social variables, such as peers, may influence earners' career choices.

Peers influence career choice through peer interactions. It was revealed in Uganda (Okafor & Otabong, 2015) and in Kenya (Walaba & Kiboss, 2013) that peer interactions influence students in choosing careers. As the students interact, they share information about careers. This is in line with Krumboltz' Social Learning Theory which emphasises the importance of learners interacting with one another in their environment.

Students' interactions with peers play a central role in how students think about themselves (Yi-Hui, 2006). In his study in China, Yi-Hui (2006) revealed that students' interactions with peers of diversified interests, races and backgrounds have the potential to stimulate reflection, knowledge and beliefs which may lead to new ways of thinking about the world, other peers and eventually themselves. For peers to understand the world of work, their interaction makes it possible for them to venture into careers they were unaware of. Kiuru (2008)

also revealed the importance of peer interaction in Finland when he stated that the academic orientation typical of the peer group to which they belong may potentially have a long-term impact on individual adolescents' vocational careers.

Faiter and Faiter (2013) and Roy (2016) in America, Goethner, Obschonka, Silbereisen and Canter (2009) in Germany, Njeri (2013) in Pakistan, Kimiti and Mwova (2012) in Kenya, Shumba and Naong (2012) in South Africa, and Egunjobi et al. (2013) in Nigeria reiterated the influence of peer advice on career choices. According to Migunde et al. (2012), when Kenyan students interact with their friends, they may take into consideration the career advice they receive. The current study intended to establish whether peer advice had an influence on Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa students in their endeavours to choose careers.

In the absence of proper career guidance and teacher mentorship, students resort to peer mentorship. According to Njeri (2013) and Okiror and Otabong (2015) in Kenya, students turn to peers who have similar experiences for mentorship, information and guidance 44 on career issues especially when other proper avenues like school career guidance are not properly functioning. In Kenya, Koech et al. (2016) emphasise the influence of peer mentorship in students' choices of careers. However, in United Arab Emirates (Ausman, Javed, Ahmed, Samad, Pour, Mathew, Shaikh, Sharbatti & Screedharan, 2013), peer mentorship was found to have little influence on medical students' choices of careers. Ausman et al.'s study (2013) concentrated on a certain group of people who were already training for a particular career while the current study looked at students who are yet to engage in a career.

Peer relationships were also found to be influential in students' choices of careers. Kiuru (2008) purports that, in Finland, peer group members who are closely related are likely to end up in similar educational trajectories as they are likely to accept opinions from members who are

similar to themselves. Kiuru (2008) further states that peer group members resembled each other, not only in their educational expectations, but also their subsequent educational trajectories. In a Nigerian study by Bankole and Ogunsakin (2015), peer relationships were revealed as a significant factor in helping students choose careers. Pakistani students who were close to each other in terms of friendship were likely to influence each other to take certain careers (Naz et al., 2014). The current study sought to establish the influence of peer relationship on Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa students' choices of careers.

Alika (2010b), Ho (2006) and Obwoye and Kibor (2016) espouse that peer encouragement was found to be a critical factor in influencing American students' choice of careers. This is in line with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory which states that realistic encouragement leads to greater effort and eventually to greater success. Since high school students are adolescents, they may rely on people of their own age.

Peers also encourage students to choose entrepreneurship. Malaysian students were influenced by their peers to choose entrepreneurship as their careers (Mustapha & Selvaraju, 2015) Similarly, in America, Kacperczyk (2012) purports that entrepreneurial actions hinge on having access to information about entrepreneurial opportunities and influential peers enhance entrepreneurial rates by providing information to identify such opportunities. Although Kacperczyk's (2012) study was carried out at a university, it established that university peers may facilitate the transfer of entrepreneurial initiatives and attitudes by alleviating the uncertainty associated with these careers. The current study was carried in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa with the intention to find out whether students in high schools were influenced by peers to choose entrepreneurship as career.

Hashim and Embong (2015) agree that the student's peer group is the single most potent source of influence with regard to career choices. Adolescents are easily influenced by their peers because they rely on their friends to provide validation of the choices that they make, including career decisions. The current study sought to find out whether validation of students' choices of careers comes from fellow students.

A number of challenges were raised about the effectiveness of peer counselling in schools. Chireshe (2013), for example, cited lack of training among peer counsellors and Kamore and Tiego (2015) enumerated that failure by Kenyan peer counsellors to resolve their own problems impacted negatively on their duties as peer counsellors.

Contrary to earlier findings, it has been observed in America that there was no significant relationship between peer group influence and career choices in humanities among secondary school adolescents (Alika, 2010b). Peers were found to be less likely to influence high school students in choosing careers. The American study only concentrated on students who were in humanities. The current study did not look only at students specialising in a certain category but all students in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa.

### **II.3- The influence of decision-making and career choice**

Decision making is an important tool in career choice. This is in line with Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory which informs this study that emphasises career decisions. According to Ferreira and Lima (2010), decision making is a complex process which can often be difficult and confusing for many Spaniards. In general, career guidance interventions in American schools are concerned, not with telling students what to do, but with helping them acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them make better career choices and transitions hence ameliorating

the problem of career decisions (Watts & Sultana, 2004). Similarly, Hansen (2006) stated that, in Switzerland, school career exploration and career decision-making activities can be used to broaden students' awareness of their interests and abilities as well as the career opportunities that exist. Decision making is one of the basic tenets of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory which emphasises self-efficacy. According to Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy entails the belief in one's capability to succeed on a given task. Hence, students are likely to choose careers based on whether they have the capacity to do well in their chosen careers. If career guidance enhances the acquisition of self-efficacy, it was critical for the current study to establish its influence in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa.

Kimiti and Mwova (2012:366) reported that Kenyan school career guidance positively influenced career decision-making, understanding of careers and career related adjustments about students' career choices. Moreover, the study revealed that when students are not guided in their choice of careers, they do not know what is good for them or even what they want. Hence, a lack of career guidance may cause students to make wrong choices and enrol for studies they know little or nothing about (Kimiti & Mwova, 2012). This implies that schools play a pivotal role in preparing students for future careers. Similarly, a South African study by Shumba and Naong (2012) found that career choices are decided long before the learners come to universities. The majority of respondents in the above South African study attributed their career choices at universities to subject choices they made whilst they were still in schools.

#### **II.4- Theoretical framework**

Many theoretical models have been proposed to explain the process of career development and decision-making, one of which is the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) by Lent et al. (1994). According to the SCCT, career development behaviours are affected by three social-cognitive processes - self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations and career goals and intentions which interplay with ethnicity, culture, gender, socio-economic status, social

support, and any perceived barriers to shape a person's educational and career trajectories (Blanco, 2011; Lent et al., 2000 ). This emphasises the complex interplay between youths' personal aspirations in their career choices and decision-making and the external influences that act upon them. Carpenter and Foster (1977) postulated that the earlier experiences and influences which individuals are exposed to form the bedrock of how they conceive their career aspirations (Carpenter & Foster, 1977). These authors' assertion lends support to the tenets of SCCT and they have developed a three-dimensional framework to classify the factors that influence career choice. Carpenter and Foster proposed that all career-influencing factors derive from either intrinsic, extrinsic, or interpersonal dimensions.

The present study was informed by Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory and Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory in examining the factors that influence career pathways among secondary school students. The two theories were chosen because of their relevance to career issues, especially career development. They include both social and cognitive factors while being sensitive to cultural aspects. Students live in a social world where they interact with the environment as they seek guidance towards careers. These theories deal with the cognitive aspects of the students by making them aware of their decisions.

### **II.5- Krumboltz's social learning theory**

John Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory, developed in 1979, emphasises the importance of behaviour (actions) and cognition (knowing and thinking) (Sharf, 1997). The essence of Krumboltz's view is that certain generic processes, such as learning experiences, affect the career development of all persons regardless of their cultural affiliations (Lent & Worthington, 2000) hence the need to explore peer pressure and career choice development: The

Case of Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa South Region of Cameroon. This theory differs from other theories of career development in that its focus is on teaching people career decision making techniques and how to use such techniques effectively in selecting career alternatives (Ireh, 2000). The types of learning experiences that affect an individual are dependent on his or her culture (Lent & Worthington, 2000). Krumboltz identified four factors that play important role in the selection of a specific career: genetic endowment, environmental conditions, learning experiences and task approach skills (Beal, 1998; Ireh, 2000). According to the Social Learning Theory, genetic endowment refers to those aspects of the individual that are inherited or innate rather than learned. This may set limits on individual career opportunities. Environmental conditions are those conditions that are generally outside the control of the individual and influence skills development and career preferences.

One of the questions that Krumboltz et al. (1976) sought to answer that led to the development of the social learning theory of career decision making was “how or why is it that they [people] change from one educational program or occupation to another at various points throughout their lives?” (p. 71). The theory “identifies the interactions of genetic factors, environmental conditions, learning experiences, cognitive and emotional responses, and performance skills that produce movement along one career path or another” (p. 71). Feller, Honaker, and Zagzebski (2001) stated that the “development of the Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM) diverged significantly from the predominant model of that time period (trait-and-factor)” (p. 220).

Krumboltz et al. (1976) posited four factors that influence the theory of career decision making as follows:

1. Genetic endowment or special abilities, which consists of “race, sex, physical appearances and characteristics, including physical defects or handicaps that cannot be changed” (p. 71).
2. Environmental conditions and events. These are “factors usually outside the control of any one individual”. They result in “number and nature of job opportunities”, “number and nature of training opportunities”, “social policies and procedures for selecting trainees and workers”, “rate of return for various occupations”, “labour laws and union rules”, “physical events such earthquakes, droughts, floods, and hurricanes”, “availability of and demand for natural resources”, “technological developments”, “changes in social organization”, “family training experiences and resources”, “educational system”, and “neighbourhood and community influences” (pp. 71, 72).
- 3.

Learning experiences, which consists of “instrumental learning experiences” where “the individual acts on the environment in such a way as to produce certain consequences” and “associative learning experiences” which are due to “external stimuli” (p. 72).

4. Task approach skills, which are “set of skills, performance standards and values, work habits, mental sets, and emotional responses” that are “interactions between genetic and environmental influences” (p. 73) as per Krumboltz et al. (1976).

According to Krumboltz, learning experiences include a) one’s career performances as a result of prior learning experiences; b) individuals’ prior learning experiences that eventually influence their career decisions; and c) that individuals’ prior learning experiences have a direct effect on their career choices.

According to Sharf (1997), individuals may make observations about themselves and their environment that they will then use to make career decisions. Observations about the self-include capabilities, interests and work values (Ireh, 2000). Krumboltz emphasised task approach

skills such as goal setting, values clarification, generating alternatives and obtaining occupational information in career decision making. Ireh (2000) explained that the interaction between genetic endowment, environmental conditions and learning experiences lead to the skills required for completing a variety of tasks. The Social Learning Theory by Krumboltz is relevant to this study because it includes environmental factors such as family, the learning environment and gender. Our behaviour is shaped by beliefs about ourselves and how we relate to society (Schonorr & Ware, 2001).

According to Krumboltz (1991), people make assumptions and generalisations about themselves and the world of work based on their limited experiences. In this case, students in secondary schools have limited experiences to choose an appropriate career hence the need for a counsellor and/or a supportive environment. In short, Krumboltz's theory of career decision making and development is based on social learning or environmental conditions, genetic influences and learning experiences. People choose their careers based on what they have learned.

Social Cognitive Theory Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura in 1986, purports that contextual variables such as social support, which includes friends, family and relatives, influence the career choice of an individual (Choo, Norsia & Tan, 2012). Social persuasion also affects an individual's choice of career (Lent, Brown & Hacket, 2002) because there is dialogue between children and their environment. Similarly, Bandura posited that when individuals watch their peers succeeding, they are likely to believe that they can also succeed (Mills, 2009). In this career development model, a person's background (or contextual factors) and individual characteristics influence his/her learning experiences and consequently self-efficacy (Tang, Pan & Newmeyer, 2008).

According to Bandura (1989) and Alexander, Seabi and Bischof (2010), because of the bi-directionality of influence between behaviour and environmental circumstances, people are both products and producers of their environment. They affect the nature of their experienced environment through selection and creation of situations. This is in line with the SCT which states that realistic encouragement that leads people to exert greater effort is likely to bring success in career development (Bandura, 1988). The researcher found this theory provided the framework to examine the environment that promotes development in students' quests for sustainable careers.

The theory recognises both the cognitive and environmental factors although this study concentrates more on environmental factors. Social Cognitive Theory focuses on several cognitive variables (for example, self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals) and on how these variables interact with other aspects of the person and his or her environment (for example, gender, ethnicity, social support and barriers) to shape the course of career development (Lent & Brown, 2000). According to Bandura (2002), the theory distinguishes three modes of agency: a) personal agency exercised individually; b) proxy agency in which people secure desired outcomes by influencing others to act on their behalf; and c) collective agency in which people act in concert to shape their futures. Students in high schools are influenced by these three modes when they choose careers, among many variables, that they feel are appropriate for them. The environment, which imposes itself on them, also impacts their choice of careers. These are the reasons that this particular theory is used in this study to investigate factors that influence career pathways among Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa.

According to Social Cognitive Theory, career development is influenced by both objectives and perceived environmental factors (Lent & Worthington, 2000). Examples of

objective factors include the quality of educational experiences to which a person has been exposed to such as school counselling and the financial support available from family or guardians for pursuing particular training.

People live their lives in socio-cultural milieus that differ in their shared values, customs, social practices and institutional constraints and opportunities (Bandura, 2002). This study allowed the researcher to establish whether the above results can be achieved in Zimbabwe using participants from different backgrounds. The applicability of the SCT to explain career choice behaviour of school students was verified in a similar study by Tang et al. (2008) and was therefore deemed suitable for the current study that looked at career choices among high school students. The theory applied to this study because social factors such as peer and family interactions that affect decision making were considered. In addition to career development, the theory has been extended to domains of behaviour such as educational achievement, affective reactions, and organisational and health maintenance (Lent & Brown, 1996).

To conclude, this chapter focuses on literature review and theories of decision making and career choice. Next chapter will review methodology.

## CHAPTER THREE : METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to determine factors influence the career choice development among high school students in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. The research methodology issues in this chapter includes area of study, research design, sampling, instrumentation, procedure, ethical issues and data analysis.

### III.1- Research design

A research design can be viewed as a plan, structure and strategy of a research to find the tools to solve the problem and to minimise the variance (Creswell, 2013; Kothari & Crag, 2014). Its function therefore is to ensure that the evidence obtained ensures that the initial question is answered as unambiguously as possible.

According to Kothari and Crag (2014), research design facilitates the attainment of the various research operations thereby making research as efficient as possible and yielding maximum information with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money. For the above to be achieved, a suitable paradigm should embrace a scientific approach which is always advocated by the quantitative approach. A quantitative approach which was informed by the positivist paradigm was used in the current study to assess factors that influence high school students to choose careers.

### III.2- The survey designs

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) explained that surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared or determining the relationships

that exist between specific events. The current study used survey design to assess the four factors of Krumboltz's career decision making model and career development among High School Students.

Backed by the successes of surveys across the world, the current study used a survey to collect data since it is impartial and reduces bias (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Because a survey does not expose individuals to invasive techniques or withhold treatment, it is considered more ethical (Mathers et al, 2007). It was the aim of the present study to uphold ethics in order to protect participants from forms of unethical data collection.

The representativeness of a survey is entirely dependent upon the accuracy of the sampling frame used (Glasow, 2005; Mathers et al., 2007). The current study's sample was representative of the population under study since the probability sampling technique was used. Survey research involves the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions. It is an efficient method for systematically collecting data from a broad spectrum of individuals and educational settings (Glasow, 2005).

### **III.3- Area of study**

Government Bilingual School Ebolowa was created in 1963 as General College of Education of Ebolowa. In 1975, it was transformed from General College of Education of Ebolowa to Secondary College of Education Ebolowa. In 1986, Transformation of Secondary College of Education Ebolowa to Secondary College of Bilingual Education Ebolowa. In 1990 it was transformed from Secondary College of Bilingual Education to Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. The school currently has a principal (male), Vice principals (12); Anglophone section (female,3 male=04), Francophone section (03 females, 05males), Eleven General

Discipline Masters; three in Anglophone section (02 females, 01 male), Eight in the francophone section (02 females, 06 male), ten Guidance Counsellors (08 females,02 male); total of francophones.1468 girls ,931 boys Total= 2399, total of Anglophones.625 girls, 689 boys = 1314, General total= 2093 girls, 1620 boys= 3713.

### III.1.3- Population of the study

For the current study, the population included all Anglophones second cycle students of Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. These included students in both the English speaking as well as French speaking section. The total population is approximately 147 students.

### III.1.4- Sample and Sampling Technics

A sample of 109 students were selected from a population of 147 in accordance with Krejcie and Morgan (1970). These were selected through a stratified random sampling technique. This is a sampling frame that is divided into subsections comprising groups that are relatively homogeneous with respect to one or more characteristics and a random sample from each stratum is selected (Colins, Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2007). Breakwell, Hammond, FifeSchaw and Smith (2006) stated that stratified random sampling divides the sample up into separate subgroups and then selects random samples from within each group.

**Table 1: Anglophone section Second circle Population and Sample size**

Class	Girls	Boys	Total	Sample
Upper sixth Art1(A1)	14	10	24	20
Upper sixth Art 2 (A2)	14	23	37	25
Upper sixth Art 3 (A3)	12	2	14	10
Upper sixth Art 4 (A4)	4	7	11	10

Upper sixth Art 5 (A5)	1	1	2	2
Upper sixth Art 6 (A6)	1	3	4	4
Upper sixth science 1 (S1)	5	23	28	20
Upper sixth science 2 (S2)	8	11	19	10
Upper sixth science 3 (S3)	0	3	3	3
Upper sixth science 4 (S4)	1	4	5	5
Total	60	87	147	109

### III.1.5- Instrumentation

This section basically looks at the instrument used in this study. The study used questionnaire to collect the data. The reasons why the researcher preferred questionnaire over other instruments are highlighted below.

### III.1.6- Questionnaire

Cohen et al. (2011) purport that a questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information providing structured, often numerical data that is administered without the presence of the researcher and often comparatively straight forward to analyse. Since the researcher did not intent to engage research assistants, questionnaire were the best instruments since they could be administered without the presence of the researcher and were clear and precise. Siniscalco and Ariat (2005) stated that a questionnaire is a survey instrument used to collect data from individuals about themselves or about a social unit such as household or a school. It is regarded as a valid and reliable way of collecting correct information from the participants.

The questionnaire was used in this study to collect data from high school students regarding the four factors of Krumboltz's career decision making model and career development among High School Students. Ross (2005) concurs with the above when he states that among the type of information that can be collected by means of a questionnaire are facts, opinions, activities, level knowledge, expectations, attitudes and perceptions. The current study sought to collect objective data and also facts, opinions, expectations and level of knowledge with regard to the four factors of Krumboltz's career decision making model and career development among High School Students. However, as pointed by Bird (2009), to produce a valid and reliable questionnaire, the wording of the items should be precise and unambiguous. The wording of the questionnaire in the current study went through a rigorous test exercise through the use of senior academics and other researchers who verified their validity.

The current study chose the questionnaire since it was easy to analyse because every respondent was asked the same question in the same way. The researcher therefore was sure that everyone in the sample answered exactly the same questions which made it a reliable method. The researcher also chose a questionnaire over other instruments to enable collection of information in a standardised manner which, when gathered from a representative sample of a defined population, allows the inference of results to the wider population (Rottrary & Jones, 2007).

The questionnaire consisted of items that sought to, firstly, assess the influence of learners' characteristics on their children's career pathways. Secondly, the questionnaire included items that assessed the impact of schools (environment) on students' career development and, thirdly, the items in the questionnaire assessed the impact of gender on high school students' career choices. Lastly, there were items on the influence of peers on career

choices. A Likert scale was used in most of the closed questions. A five-point Likert scale was used in this study to rate each item on a response scale. The primary reason for using a Likert scale is that the data is easy to code (Colosi, 2006). To ensure that questions were not ambiguous, a pilot study was carried out in an environment with similar characteristics as the one under study.

### **III.1.6.1- The Quantitative Approach**

Quantitative researchers operate under the assumption of objectivity (Johnson & Christensen, 2012) and that there is reality to be observed and that rational observers who look at the same phenomenon will basically agree on its existence (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). In the present study, objective findings validated the results of the study because they were based on the actual findings from the field as the researcher remained distanced from the participants.

A quantitative approach is one in which the investigator primarily uses positivist claims for developing knowledge (Creswell, 2003). The positivist paradigm leads to a scientific and systematic approach to research. A quantitative approach was used in this study as it allowed the researcher to carry out an objective analysis and generate factual knowledge through measurement. Researchers who use quantitative tools and techniques that emphasise measuring and counting are positivists in nature (Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012). The positivist approach depends on quantifiable observations that lead to statistical analysis of data.

Quantitative data is analysed using statistics. It is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena (Tewksbury, 2009). Explaining phenomena using measurements and statistics (Hoy, 2010) was the key to the current study since it allowed the researcher to investigate and explain the four

factors of Krumboltz's career decision making model and career development among High School Students. Quantitative research methods are characterised by the collection of information which can be analysed numerically and presented in tables for easier analysis and interpretation. The present study used tables and percentages to analyse the four factors of Krumboltz's career decision making model and career development among High School Students. Rasinger (2008) agrees that the main characteristic of quantitative data is that it consists of information that is quantifiable. This allowed the researcher to quantify the magnitude and scope of the factors that influence career development among high school students.

In a quantitative approach, a researcher will set aside his or her experiences, perceptions, and biases to ensure reliability in the conducting of the study and the conclusions that are drawn (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The use of questionnaires in the current study upheld the principle of objectivity and removed bias. The strengths of a quantitative approach in this study were that data was presented numerically thereby allowing easier analysis of factors that influence the choice of careers among high school students.

Various topics in Social Sciences and Education have been examined through the quantitative approach, for instance, Gray (2014), Kothari and Carg (2014), Creswell (2007, 2009, 2013), Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013), Somekh and Lewin (2012), Clark (2011) and Tewksbury (2009). The current study used the quantitative approach in similar environments to investigate the four factors of Krumboltz's career decision making model and career development among High School Students.

### III.2- Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are critical elements in research. These two elements were observed in this study.

#### III.2.1- Reliability

Reliability is generally defined as the degree to which a measure of a construct is consistent and dependable. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) further define reliability as the consistency with which a measuring instrument yields certain results when the entity being measured has not changed. Consistency of the instrument was achieved through a number of initiatives. The researcher initially used peers to check for consistence of results. The researcher also approached senior researchers in the field. The supervisor played a pivotal role in ensuring that consistency of the results was enhanced. The instrument was also pilot tested.

**Table 2: Correlations**

		Family Influence	School Influence	Gender Influence	Peer Influence
Family Influence	Pearson Correlation	1	.933**	.724**	.964**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	109	109	109	109
School Influence	Pearson Correlation	.933**	1	.752**	.955**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	109	109	109	109
Gender Influence	Pearson Correlation	.724**	.752**	1	.698**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	109	109	109	109
Peer Influence	Pearson Correlation	.964**	.955**	.698**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	109	109	109	109

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### **III.2.2- Validity**

Validity is a researcher's ability to draw meaningful and justifiable inferences from scores about a sample or population (Creswell, 2005). This is in line with Joppe (2000) who purported that validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure and the truthfulness of the research results. Questionnaire items were developed from the reviewed literature. A large sample which was representative of the population was used in the current study. Objectives of the current study were clearly spelt out to enable credible results.

The researcher designed a questionnaire with items that were clear and used the language that was understood by all the participants. The questionnaires were given to the supervisor to check for errors and vagueness. Other professionals in the area, such as senior career guidance teachers, were consulted and made their comments regarding the ability of the questionnaire to measure what it was designed to measure which were the influence of the four factors of Krumboltz's career decision making model on career development among High School Students.

### **III.2.3- Pilot study**

Before the study was carried out, the items on the questionnaire were tested to avoid ambiguity and to test for validity and reliability. This was done through a pilot study that was carried out prior to the actual collection of the data. A pilot study can be defined as a small-scale version or trial run in preparation for a major study (Polit & Beck, 2004). Such a trial run may have various purposes such as testing study procedures, validity of tools, estimation of the recruitment rate and an estimation of parameters such as the variance of the outcome variable to calculate sample size (Arain, Campbell, Cooper & Lancaster, 2010). The current study tested whether the items in the questionnaire were valid and reliable as recommended by Welman and

Kruger (1999) who stated that a pilot study is needed to detect possible flaws in measurement procedures and is also valuable to identify unclear or ambiguous items in a questionnaire. Polit and Beck (2004) also argued that surveys are pilot tested to avoid misleading, inappropriate or redundant questions. The aim of a pilot study therefore is to detect any flaws in the questioning and correct these prior to the main survey (Burgess, 2001).

After the data in the pilot study was collected, the researcher went through the questions in order to identify those that needed to be amended so that the correct data would be collected for the study. This is in line with Polit and Beck (2004) who stated that pilot testing ensures that a research instrument can be used properly and that information obtained is consistent.

#### III.2.4- Data Collection Procedure

Permission was sought from the principal of Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. Dates to visit the school for questionnaire distribution were put in place in advance. The researcher physically took the instruments to the school. Collection dates of the instruments were set and communicated to both the school authorities and the students. The participants were told that responses and data collected will be stored in a safe place where the researcher alone could access them.

#### III.3- Analysis of data

##### **III.3.1- Statistical analysis**

Descriptive statistics in the form of percentages were used in this study. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 23 was used to analyse the data. Data was converted into percentages and ratios for easier interpretation. Calculation of ratios for each questionnaire item was done to identify items that were positively or negatively rated in terms of their

influence to career development. Ratios were calculated by adding the positive responses (Strongly agreed and Agreed) and divide them by the sum of negative responses (Strongly disagreed and Disagreed).

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Family Influence	3.0677	.46632	109
School Influence	3.1725	.38751	109
Gender Influence	2.9014	.34656	109
Peer Influence	3.1019	.38612	109

### III.3.2- Ethical Considerations

Research ethics are about identifying certain norms and standards of behaviour that researchers are expected to follow (Connolly, 2003). In carrying out this research, the researcher took cognisance of the ethical guidelines in order to protect the participants and the researcher himself. The following ethical issues were addressed:

#### **III.3.3- Informed consent**

According to Taylor, Peplau and Sears (2012), informed consent implies the agreement to participate in research after learning about the study, including possible risks and benefits. This implies that the participants must be aware of what the research entails and how they are going to benefit from the research. The students and school counsellors were given time to consider the risks and benefits of being involved in this research and decide whether to take part without being coerced. Participants were also informed of all the benefits and risks of the study. The school signed the consent forms on behalf of the students. Since the research participants are mostly students, the researcher sought authority from the school management. The

participants were told about the general nature of the study as well as about any potential harm or risk that the study may cause.

### **III.3.4- Confidentiality**

Cohen et al. (2011:92) defined confidentiality as not disclosing information from the participant in any way that might identify that individual or that might enable the individual to be traced. The researcher used coding abstracted data with unique identifiers rather than names and masking features of specific cases, institutions or settings that may make them recognisable even without names (WHO, 2013). The researcher considered the way the data was to be protected from unauthorised persons. Passwords were also used to protect the data on soft copies.

### **III.3.5- Anonymity**

Anonymity means that we do not name the person or research site involved but in research it is usually extended to mean that we do not include information about any individual or research site that will enable that individual or research site to be identified by others (Walford, 2005). In the current study, numbers were used on questionnaires in place of participants and schools' names. The researcher agreed with school authorities to make information public if the participants wished so.

### **III.3.6- Harm to participants**

The balance of protecting respondents from harm by hiding their identity while, at the same time, preventing "loss of ownership" are issues that need to be addressed by each researcher on an individual basis with each respondent (Grinyer, 2002). The researcher in this study made sure that participants were not exposed to physical, psychological and emotional

harm. Sufficient information was provided to the participants so that they could make informed decisions. Data was not disclosed to any other person without the consent of the participants.

**Table 4:** The capitulative table of the hypotheses, variables, indicators, modalities, measurement scale and statistical test.

General Hypothesis	Research hypotheses	Independent variable	Modalities	Indicators	Dependent variable	Indicators	Modalities	Measurement scale	Statistical test
<b>Ha0:</b> There is a significant relationship between decision making and career choice development	<b>Ha1:</b> There is a relationship between family influence and career choice development	Decision making	Family influence	-problem solving -decision -making -career indecision -conceptual organization	Career choice development	Poor identity of information	-strongly disagree(SD) -disagree(D) -Agree(A) -strongly Agree(SA)	Ordinal	Pearson correlation
	<b>Ha2:</b> There is a significant impact between Gender and career choice development		Gender	-individual -imitation -grouping - environment		-- self Efficacy	-strongly disagree(A) -disagree(D) -Agree(A) Strongly Agree(SA)	Ordinal	Pearson correlation

	<p><b>Ha3:</b></p> <p>There is a relationship between school influence and career choice development</p>		<p>School influence</p>	<p>-environment - Team -educational Counseling</p>		<p>Vocational personality</p>	<p>- Strongly disagree(SD) -disagree(D) -Agree(A) -strongly Agree(SA)</p>	<p>Ordinal</p>	<p>Pearson correlation</p>
	<p><b>Ha4:</b></p> <p>There is a relationship between peer influence and career choice development</p>		<p>Peer influence</p>	<p>-self regulation -working adjustment -self Exploitation -self efficacy</p>		<p>-wrong decision making</p>	<p>-strongly disagree(SD) -disagree(D) -Agree(A) -strongly Agree(SA)</p>	<p>Ordinal</p>	<p>Pearson correlation</p>

This chapter discussed the area of study, research design, sampling techniques and instrumentation. Also discussed in this chapter is the procedure in the collection of data, data analysis and ethical considerations. The next chapter presents data presentation, analysis and discussion.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The aim of this study was to determine how decision making influence career choice development among high school students in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. The results of this study are presented in this chapter.

### IV.1- Data source

As previously mentioned in chapter three, a questionnaire was used to collect data from students. A total of 109 students participated in the survey.

#### IV.1.1- Personal Characteristics

First, in this study, descriptive statistics for “personal characteristics,” one of Krumboltz’s four factors were measured by age, and gender. As shown in Table 2 below, the majority of the respondents were female 66% ( $n = 72$ ), and most of the students 82.6% ( $n = 90$ ) were between the ages of 16 and 20 years.

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Personal Characteristics**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
11 – 15	9	8.3
16– 20	90	82.6
21– 25	6	5.5
26 and above	4	3.6
Total	109	100.0

Gender		
Female	72	66
Male	35	34
Total	109	100.0

#### IV.1.2- Family Influence on Career Choices

The following section presents the influence of the family on the students' career choices development. The family aspects include both the nuclear family members which comprise the father, mother and other siblings. The extended family members were also considered. These include aunts, uncles, grandparents and other related family members. Table 4.2 shows how family members influence career choices of high school students.

**Table 6: Students' response on family influence (n=109)**

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		mean	SD
	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%		
1.My father influenced me into the career I want to pursue	20	18.3	46	42.2	43	39.4	0	0	2.79	.73
2.My mother influenced me into the career I want to pursue	33	30.3	22	20.2	54	49.5	0	0	2.81	.88
3. The family business is a factor in my	87	79.8	11	10.2	11	10.2	0	0	3.70	.65

choosing a career		8		1		1				
4.The dominant profession in my family is also my preferred career	55	50.5	33	30.3	21	19.3	0	0	3.31	.78
5. My father's career had an impact on my career choice	22	20.2	65	59.6	22	20.2	0	0	3.00	.64
6.My mother's career had an impact on my career choice	44	40.4	33	30.3	32	29.4	0	0	3.11	.83
7.Older siblings had an influence on my career	33	30.3	44	40.4	32	29.4	0	0	3.01	.78
8.An extended family member was influential in the career that I chose	22	20.2	0	0	76	69.7	11	10.1	2.30	.91

Table 4.2 shows the ratios where parents were quite influential to their children’s career choices. The ratios are on the high side where most of the items are above 2 which implies positive relationship. The family business (80.8%), the dominant profession in the family (80.8%), the siblings (70.7%), the father (60.5%), the mother (50.5%) have a major influence on students’ career choices.

#### IV.1.3- School Influence on Career Choice

In investigating how the school influences high school students’ choices of careers, issues such as career guidance in schools, school career days and trips, teachers, school heads and career guidance teachers were explored. Screening of students, subjects done at schools and

the curriculum, among others, were also assessed to find out whether they influence students' career choices. Table 4.3 on the next page presents students' responses on school influence on career choices.

**Table 7: Students' response on school influence on career choice (n=109)**

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		mean	SD
	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%		
1.Career guidance is comprehensively offered at our school	33	30.3	54	49.5	22	20.2	0	0	3.10	.71
2.School career days influenced my career choice	21	19.3	55	50.5	33	30.3	0	0	2.89	.70
3.Career trips or field trips influenced my career choice	65	59.6	33	30.3	11	10.1	0	0	3.50	.68
4. School career guidance cleared career confusion that I had	33	30.3	76	69.7	0	0	0	0	3.30	.46
5. My class teacher was influential to the career I want to pursue	33	30.3	22	20.2	54	49.5	0	0	2.80	.88
6.The career guidance counsellor was influential to the career I want to do	87	79.8	11	10.1	11	10.1	0	0	3.70	.65
7.The school head was influential to the	55	50.5	33	30.3	21	19.3	0	0	3.31	.78

career I want to do										
8.The subjects I do influenced my career decision	22	20.2	65	59.6	22	20.2	0	0	3.00	.64
9. School career exploration and career decision making activities broaden students' career horizons	44	40.4	33	30.3	32	29.4	0	0	3.11	.83
10.My preferred career is linked to my favourite subjects	33	30.3	44	40.4	32	29.4	0	0	3.01	.77

The ratios in Table 4.3 have positively indicated the influence of the school on students' career choices. Most of the items have ratios above 2 which resembles positive rating in terms of their influence to students' career choices. Student participants perceived the school as influential to students' choices of careers. The students indicated that schools influenced their careers mostly through subjects taken and the screening of students that led them to prefer certain careers over others. Former students' careers and career guidance offered in schools were quite influential to students' choices of career. Also critical in influencing students' choices of careers were school career guidance (89.9%), school career explorations and school career decision making activities (70.7%). Table 4.2 shows that school career trips and career days, class teachers, career guidance teachers and school heads were identified as having major influence by most of the students.

IV.1.4- Gender Influence on Career Choices

The second research question sought to assess the influence of gender on students' career choices development. The following Section presents the findings from the high school students on gender influence on career choices. Table 4.4 on the next page presents students' responses on gender influence on career choice.

**Table 8: Students' response on Gender Influence (n=109)**

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		mean	SD
	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%		
1. There are careers suitable for men and others suitable for women	22	20.2	0	0	76	69.7	11	10.1	2.30	.91
2. Male students have higher career ambitions than girls	33	30.3	54	49.5	0	0	22	20.2	3.10	.71
3. Boys and girls were socialized to choose careers that are gender sensitive	21	19.3	55	50.5	33	30.3	0	0	2.89	.70
4. Women's role is homemaker and male's role is breadwinner	65	59.6	33	30.3	0	0	11	10.1	3.49	.67
5. Boys can use computers more effectively to solve problems than girls	11	10.1	44	40.4	54	49.5	0	0	2.60	.66
6. Male models have influenced me to			77	70.6	32	29.4	0	0	2.70	.45

take the career I want to pursue										
7.Female models have influenced me to choose the career I want to do	33	30.3	76	69.7	0	0	0	0	3.30	.46
8.I value career advice I get from same sex friends	33	30.3	22	20.2	54	49.5	0	0	2.80	.87

The ratios in the table 4.4 above indicates a weak influence of gender issues on career choices among high school students. Most of the items have ratios above 2 which indicates major influence. Students did agree that gender influenced their choices of careers. Students disputed that there were separate careers suitable for men and for women and that male students had higher ambitions than their female counterparts. They also disagreed that they were socialised to choose careers along gender lines. Student participants also denied that a woman’s role was homemaker and a man’s role was breadwinner. Students also disputed that male students use computers earlier than female students. Where gender was seen as influential, female role models were found to be more influential to students’ choice of careers as compared to male role models.

#### IV.1.5- Peer Influence on Career Choice

The fourth research question focused on the influence of peers on students’ choices of careers. This section presents the influence of peers on high school students’ career choices. Factors such as peer career education, peer influence on career choice and the importance of

career advice from peers, among many other peer aspects, are assessed. Table 4.5 presents students' response on peer influence on career choice.

**Table 9: Students' response on peer influence on career choice (n=109)**

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		mean	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
1. Career education comes from other students	87	79.8	11	10.1	11	10.1	0	0	3.69	.64
2. Peer influence regarding career choice is powerful	55	50.5	33	30.3	21	19.3	0	0	3.31	.77
3. My friends have influenced me to choose a career	22	20.2	65	59.6	22	20.2	0	0	3.00	.63
4. Peer advice on career guidance was helpful	44	40.4	33	30.3	32	29.4	0	0	3.11	.83
5. My friends validated the career that I chose	33	30.3	44	40.4	32	29.4	0	0	3.00	.77
6. Information given by my friends is always reliable	22	20.2	0	0	76	69.7	11	10.1	2.30	.907
7. I chose a career that is similar to my friends	33	30.3	54	49.5	22	20.2	0	0	3.10	.70

8. I embrace the advice I get from peers at face value	21	19.3	55	50.5	33	30.3	0	0	2.88	.69
9. My friends give comprehensive and proper advice on careers	65	59.6	33	30.3	11	10.1	0	0	3.49	.67

The ratios in Table 4.5 above show that peers have positive influence on students' career choices as indicated by the ratios which are above 2 which implies positive rating. The influence of peers was noted by students who participated in the study as shown by the ratios in Table 4.5 above. The majority of the students were agreeable that the kind of information they receive from peers influenced them to choose the careers they wish to pursue and that peer influence was powerful in their choice of careers. The students also agreed that friends gave them comprehensive advice. However, student participants denied that they chose careers that were similar to their friends and that information given by peers was always reliable. Students also disputed the fact that they embrace the advice they received from friends at face value.

The preceding chapter presented data collected from high school students on factors that influence career choices development. Data was presented in the form of tables. The next chapter presents discussion, conclusions and recommendations.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study sought to examine how decision making influence career choice among high school students in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. In the present chapter, the conclusions of the study and recommendations for the improvement of career guidance in schools. The chapter ends with the presentation of matters regarding areas for further studies.

### V.1- Discussion of results

The present study sought to establish factors that influence the choice of careers among high school students. In this section, the results of the study are discussed under four subheadings, the family influence on career choices, the school influence on students' career choices gender influence on students' career choices and peer influence on students' choices of careers. The discussion of the results is based on both local and international literature.

#### - **Family influence on career choices**

The study revealed that families influence students' career choices. Most of the students were viewed as coming to school with predetermined careers which may be a result of interacting with the immediate environment and their parents' help in choosing their careers. The result of the current study on the family influence on children's careers is consistent with previous literature. For example, Ching and Keith (2011) in Singapore, Brody et al. (1994:279) in Canada, Marinas et al. (2016) in Romania, Baloch and Shah (2014:546), Saleem et al. (2014),

and Abbasi and Sarwat (2014) in Pakistan, Aguado et al. (2015) in the Philippines, Obiyo and Eze (2015), Egunyewo (2015), Abiola (2014), Bollu-steve and Sanni (2013) and Egunjobi et al. (2013) in Nigeria, and Mokoro et al. (2014), Ebwoye and Kibor (2016), Simiyu (2015), Korriir and Wafula (2012), and Edwards and Quinter (2011) in Kenya, revealed the family as influential on children's career choices. According to Krumboltz' Social Learning Theory that informs this study, the interactions between children and their parents influence and determine children's behaviour, skills and psychological well-being (Krumboltz, 2009).

The current study also revealed that mothers, siblings and fathers are the most influential members of the family as far as students' career choices were concerned. The mother and father's influence was expected as parents are considered models by their children (Van Raden, 2011). Previous studies, for example, Hashim and Embong, (2015) in Malaysia, Brody et al. (1994) in Canada, and Bates (2015) and Ogunyewo et al. (2015) in Nigeria, also confirm that the mother is more influential as compared to the father. Although students may have a say in which schools to attend, parents' contributions towards their children's choices of schools are likely to outweigh the children's.

Parents are more likely to consider their experience and knowledge of careers as a starting point in choosing the appropriate schools that nurture their children towards certain careers. They are also likely to influence their children through discussions which are biased towards certain careers. Results of the study also revealed that parents can create interest of certain careers in their children. It emerged from the study that older siblings influenced students' choices of careers because older siblings' experiences may have an effect on younger siblings. The finding is consistent with Abbasi and Sarwat (2014) in Pakistan and Aguado et al. (2015) in the Philippines who purported that siblings influence students' choices of careers.

The current study revealed that other family members were also likely to be identified as role models by students. This is in line with Bandura's Cognitive Social Learning Theory that emphasises the influence of role models in the development of career choices (Mills, 2009; Bandura 1988). As a child grows in the family, they may identify family members who inspire them even in their choices of careers. This assertion is in line with previous studies such as Amani (2013) in Tanzania and Braza and Guillo (2015), Ogunyewo et al. (2015), and Egunjobi et al. (2013) in Nigeria where relatives were found to influence students' choices of careers. Children hold their parents and other family members in high regard and are likely to see them as role models especially those who are successful. Siblings, as well as other extended family members, may be regarded as role models by adolescents in high school as well (Van Raden, 2011).

It emerged from this study that parental influence also comes in different forms which include parental actions, parental values and beliefs, parental connectedness and expectations. The way the parents talk about careers is likely to have a bearing on how children choose careers. The bias of the language and the emphasis when talking about particular careers over others could lead a child to choose a certain career. This is line with Palos and Drobot (2010) who stated that children's career decisions are modelled by family members through their actions and psychological support. A study in Canada by Brody et al. (1994:279) also found that parental values and beliefs influence children's career choices.

The current study also revealed that parental education has a positive influence on children's choices of careers in several ways. This is consistent with a study carried out by Pfingst (2015) in Australia that purported that parental education has a positive influence on

children's careers and other studies, for example, Dustman (2004) in Germany, Uka (2015) in Albania and Abiola (2014) in Nigeria.

Extended family members had impact on students' choices of careers as revealed by student participants. These members included grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins. The proximity to such people may have a bearing on students' choices of careers. This finding is in line with Araujo and Taveira (2009) who found that other family members influence students' choices of careers. Other studies (Marinas, Igrret&Prioteasa, 2016; Ogunyewo et al., 2015) also reinforced the above findings which revealed the influence of family members on students' choices of careers.

**- School influence on students' career choices**

The study revealed that the school had a bearing on students' career choices development. The school environment has the potential to share career issues through career guidance and other school activities. The results are in line with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory which emphasises the influence of environmental factors such as career counselling (Lent & Worthington, 2000). This finding is also in tandem with early studies such as Naz et al. (2014) in Pakistan, Li et al. (2010) in China, Pendergrass (2008) in America, Amoah et al. (2015) in Ghana, Edwards and Quinter (2011) in Kenya that established the importance of schools in preparing students for careers. Schools instill career knowledge through the career guidance services they offer. The finding on the influence of schools on students' career choices is in line with current studies like Sun and Yuen (2012:204) in China, Mghweno et al. (2014), and Obiunu and Ebinu (2013) in Nigeria, Shumba and Naong (2012) in South Africa, Kimiti and Mwova (2012) and Lazarus and Chinwe (2011) in Kenya where school career guidance was found to influence students' career choices.

Career guidance teacher participants in the present study agreed that career guidance positively widens the horizons of students in high schools, helps in career decision making and the quality of teaching and school policies were critical in influencing career choices. The above observations are consistent with previous literature, for example, Aguado et al. (2015) in the Philippines, Abbasi and Sarwat (2014) in Pakistan, Ferreira and Lima (2010) in Portugal, Gati, Amir and Landman (2010) in Israel, Rowland (2004) in the Bahamas, Flores and Obasi (2005), and Watts and Sultana (2004) in America, Kimiti and Mwova (2012) in Kenya, Shumba and Naong (2012) in South Africa and Petters and Asuquo (2009) in Nigeria, which emphasised that the quality of teaching increases career horizons.

The study also revealed that career guidance in schools helps students understand career issues such as the subjects to do to pursue a certain career. Career guidance in schools has the potential to communicate important career issues. The above finding concurred with previous studies, for example, Faiter and Faiter (2013) in America, Kimiti and Mwova (2012), and Edwards and Quinter (2011) in Kenya, Mghweno et al. (2014) in Tanzania, Gbenga and Toyin (2014) in Nigeria and Shumba and Naong (2012) in South Africa, that have established that career guidance helps students gain knowledge about careers.

The study further revealed that teachers and mentors play a pivotal role in career guidance.

This is in tandem with Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory which emphasises teaching students to make career decisions (Schonorr& Ware, 2001).

Student participants in the current study revealed that field trips had no influence on their choices of careers. Contrary to the above findings, studies by Prokop, Tuncer and Kvasnicak (2007) in Czechoslovakia, Behrandt and Frankline (2014), and Higgins et al. (2012) in the

United Kingdom, Shakil et al. (2011) in Pakistan, Nabors, Edwards and Murray (2006) in America and Amoah et al. (2015) in Ghana found that field trips are critical to the students' choices of careers.

Class teachers and career guidance teachers were cited by student participants as having little influence on their career choices. The next section discusses the influence of gender on high school students' choices of careers

- **Gender influence on career choices**

It emerged from the study that gender had a significant influence on career choices. The above finding is similar to previous literature, for example, Morales et al. (2016) in the Philippines, Mudhovozi and Chireshe (2012) in South Africa, Durosaro and Adebanye (2012) and Igbinedion (2011) in Nigeria, Simiyu (2015), Mishkin et al. (2016), and Njeri (2013) in Kenya that established that gender has a significant influence on students' choices of careers

The study also revealed that female role models influenced students' career choices. According to Social Cognitive Theory, which informs the current study, when role models of the same gender exhibit stylistic behaviours which are different from those shown by other gender role models, children pattern their behaviour after the same gender rather than the other gender models (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Bandura further purported that role models, in the form of teachers, parents, siblings and other people in society, can affect career choices (Mills, 2009).

Student participants in the present study indicated that they were more influenced by female role models than they were influenced by male role models. This confirms the study by Mishkin et al (2016) who purported that female models were more influential than their male counterparts even though the literature points to male role models being more influential than female role models. The shift from male role models to female role models could be as a result

of the emphasis in both academic and social circles on gender equality. This is in line with Bussey and Bandura (1999) who stated that, through modelling and the structuring of social activities, children learn the prototype behaviours associated with each of the sexes. Hence the perception that female role models are influential. However, studies by Koech et al. (2016) and Njeri (2013) in Kenya showed that both male and female role models influenced students' choices of careers.

Student participants in the study rated lowly the influence of gender on their choices of careers. On the contrary, career guidance teachers agreed that girls put a higher value on careers that are concerned with caring for others.

The following section discusses the influence of peers on students' career choices.

- **Peer influence on students' career choices**

It emerged from this study that peers influence students' career choices. This is consistent with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory which purports that peers are sources of social learning as they model and sanction styles of conduct and serve as comparative references for appraisal and validation of personal efficacy (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Other students and friends were seen as providing career education likely to influence their peers. The above assertion is consistent with previous studies such as Hashim and Embong (2015) in Malaysia, and Kimiti and Mwova (2012), Migunde et al. (2012) and Alika (2010b) in Kenya who established that career education emanates from peers.

The current study revealed that career education which comes from peers and friends was influential in students' choices of careers. As students interact with peers and friends, they share important information on career choices. Career guidance teachers were in agreement with student participants as they reinforced that career advice from friends was influential to students'

choices of careers. This finding is consistent with Kiuru (2008) in Finland, Abbasi and Sarwat (2014) and Naz et al. (2014) in Pakistan and Okiror and Otabong (2015) in Uganda who purported that friends and peers influence students' choices of careers.

Student participants in the present study rated lowly the notion that their careers were validated by their peers and that information they got from their friends was always right. This may be because they may not have consulted their colleagues to assess their contribution in validating their careers. Such validations may come through informal discussions. The results of the current study are inconsistent with a study by in South Africa that shows that validation of the students' choices of careers comes from fellow students. The possible explanation of these differences could be caused by the participants in Shumba and Naong's (2012) study which were university students while the current study used high school students.

Student participants in the current study also rated lowly the notion that they chose careers that were similar to their friends' choices. However, career guidance teachers noted that students were likely to choose careers that were similar to those of their friends. The difference in career teachers and students' perceptions in the view that students choose careers that are similar to their peers, may arise as a result of different experiences. Career guidance teachers may have witnessed this over time during their tenure at school. The students may not be aware that their career choices are similar to their colleagues' choices. Previous studies, for instance, Goethner et al. (2009) in Germany, Naz et al. (2014) in Pakistan and Koech et al. (2016) in Kenya are in agreement with career guidance teachers who purported that students choose careers that are similar to their peers. It also emerged from this study that peers influence students' career choices through career behaviour modification. Career guidance teachers rated favourably that students' career behaviours are modified by their peers. Students are likely to

join high school with certain careers in mind but may change careers due to their interaction with their peers who give them comprehensive career information. The result of the current study is consistent with previous studies such as Hashim and Embong (2015:810) in Malaysia, and Edwards and Quinter (2011:255) in Kenya that revealed that career behaviours are likely to be modified by peers.

## V.2- Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study on decision making and the career choices of students, the following recommendations, from both the literature review and the findings from the empirical study, are made as seen below:

### - **Policy and legislation**

There is a need to review the career guidance curriculum to consider factors that influence students' choices of careers. There should be a paradigm shift from the career guidance teacher as the sole provider of career guidance in schools. It is therefore recommended that clear policy on who should teach career guidance and the actual provision of career guidance in schools be put in place. The policy would cover aspect such as:

- a) mandatory training of career guidance teachers,
- b) introducing a compulsory module in teachers training colleges that will assist teachers to effectively guide students towards their careers,
- c) parental involvement in guiding students towards their careers,
- d) consultation with students, parents and industry when designing career guidance syllabus,

- e) availing resources, both financial and material, to enable the schools to implement career guidance activities in schools.

## **Practice**

### **Planning**

Career guidance activities, including field trips which are critical in marrying theory to practice, need to be planned prior to the opening of schools. If field trips are poorly organised, they will not benefit the students. It is therefore recommended that field trips be part of career guidance activities and be planned well in advance for them to be effective.

#### **- School career guidance teachers' training**

It is recommended that career guidance teachers be trained to equip them with necessary skills that enhance teaching in the classroom. Teachers' colleges and universities should comprehensively train their students in career guidance to enable them to be competent when engaging their students in career guidance activities. It is further recommended that staff development of career guidance teachers be prioritised to enhance competitiveness of teachers when executing their duties as career guidance practitioners.

#### **- Training of parents' career guidance skills**

Since parental involvement is inevitable, the current study recommends that parents be trained in career guidance. Special community programmes, initiated by the schools, may be organised to help parents guide their children. Universities and other institutions of tertiary learning may introduce short courses on career guidance.

#### **- Training of peers**

It is important that peers receive training in career guidance. Peer training may be done in schools. As students receive career guidance in schools, activities such as peer training may

be introduced where students are trained to help fellow students in career guidance. Such initiatives may include career guidance and field trip organisation. Libraries should be equipped with literature that helps learners to gain insight in career guidance.

### **V.2.1- Recommendation for further study**

The following are recommendations from the current study as informed by the findings of the study:

The current study was only carried out in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. It is therefore recommended that a further study that includes many schools be carried out. This would enable generalization of the result. It also allows the policy makers to implement the findings at national level rather than acting on findings that are not representative of the whole nation.

The study focused only on four main factors that influence the choice of careers among high school students in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. There are other factors that were not investigated. Other studies can be carried out to establish other factors that may influence high school students in choosing careers.

### **Conclusion of The Results**

The essence of the study was to establish factors that influence the choice of career development among high school students in in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. As reflected by the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the family has a significant role in influencing students' career choices. Parental education and careers, parental encouragement and advice are critical in students' choices of careers.

It can also be concluded that schools play a pivotal role in students' choices of careers. Career guidance, career guidance teachers, class teachers, the subjects' students do at school and the location of the school were found to influence students' choices of careers.

It can also be concluded that gender has influence in students' choices of careers. The findings of the study revealed that both male and female students were interested in the same careers and are equally competent in the subjects they do at school. Both male and female role models are influential in students' choices of careers.

The study further concluded that peers have a significant role in students' choices of careers. Peer advice and encouragement, as reflected by the study, are important in students' choices of careers.

The subsequent section presents the contribution of the study.

Contribution of the study: The current study on factors influencing the choices of careers of high school students may be the first of its kind to be carried out in in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. The study makes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge as it investigated the factors that influence the choices of careers development among high school students in in Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa. Career guidance teachers and teachers in general can benefit from the findings of the current study by enriching their knowledge and skills on implementing career guidance issues.

The study may be used by other researchers in the same field or similar fields as a baseline study or a spring board to their studies. The government of Cameroon may also benefit from the current study when designing a career guidance curriculum for both high and primary schools.

The next section presents recommendations.

## CONCLUSION

Career-related choices are amongst the most important decisions people make during their lifetime. Career choice is an important issue faced in the developmental life of secondary school students. It is a crucial decision made by students as they progress in school. This decision process starts early for some secondary school students from enriched environment, the process comes late for some other secondary students who could not come to terms with what they would like to become in future.

Decision making increases as age increases. Secondary school students career decision making is required to go through a process of understanding what they want to do and exploring various career options with the aid of guidance counselling.

The Cameroon government had long recognised the need to reform school career guidance and counselling to help students in career decision making. The objective of this program was to provide academic, career awareness and personal advice for students. Career decision making has been a constant challenge to students in Cameroon schools. Schools have guidance counselors in charge of career counselling because of the career decision making.

There are several factors that justify this study and this is because the researcher is a student counselor and she realises during her internship in some of the secondary high schools that most students face a lot of challenges in their studies because the choices were made by their parents and imposed on them and so they cause many of them to perform poorly because what they study as their future career subjects are difficult for them to cope.

The student counselor also realises that the career choices of the students are mostly made by their families with no knowledge on the part of the students on what they are going to see in the career choices. The students have no orientation about career choices.

Chapter one talks on the fact that, making a decision concerning the selection of a suitable career or occupation is a significant problem facing secondary school students and young adolescents in general and this may be due to lack of information, understanding, orientation, awareness and training.

It is noted that most secondary schools in camerron today have practising guidance counsellors but the presence of guidance counselors doesnot stop peers from influencing each other.

The general research question is what are the factors that influence career choice development amongst high school students in GBHS Ebolowa ?

The general research question was followed by specific reseach questions and the study was guided by the folowing :

- what is the level of family influence on students career choice development ?
- what is the impact of gender on students career choice development ?
- To what extent does the school inflence students career choice development
- What is the level of peer influence on students careerchoice development ?

There was also the objectives of this study which was made up of general and specific objectives. The general objectives of this study is to determine factors influencing career choice devdevelopment among high school students in GBHS Ebolowa .

The specific objectives of this study is :

- Investigate the level of family influence on the students career choice development
- Determine the impact of gender on student career choice development
- Establishment wehether the school environment influence students career choice development
- Find out wether peers have influence on the students career choice development

The specific Hypythesis were :

- There is a significant relationship between family and careerchoice development
- There is a signicant relationship between students and careerchoice development
- There is a significant relationship between students and careerchoce development
- There is a signant relationship between peer influence on students career choice development

The aim of the second chapter was to determine the factor that influence career choice development among high school students in GBHS Ebolowa. The chapter examined the literature and theoritical framwork to determine decision making and career choice development in GBHS Ebolowa. The sub headings under the literature review are : school influence careerchoice, the decision making and career choice, the influence of self-efficacy and career choice.

In chapter three, it is all about the mothodology of the reseach and these identifies area of study , which is GBHS Ebolowa . The research design was a quantitive appraoch, the survey design which were the four factors of krumbolt career decision making model, the population include lowersixths and uppersixths students in the English Speaking Section and the totalpopulation is 147 students while the sample of 109 students were selected from a population of 147 and this was stratificatified through a random sampling techniques. Questionnaies were used, reliability and validity pilot study and statistical anaysis, ethnical consideration informed consent, confidentiality , anonymity and harmful participants.

The fourth chapter was to determine the factors that influence career choice among high school students in GBHS Ebolowa. This study includes descriptive statistics for personal characteristics, family influence on career choice, school influence on career choice, gender inflence on career choice and peer influence on career choice.

The fifth chapter talkson the discussion of the results and recommrndation for the study.

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APPENDIXES

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

Dear respondent,

I am TAMBE NCHONG EYONG Anastasia, a student of Higher Technical Teachers Training College Ebolowa of the university of Yaoundé I carrying out a research titled “Decision Making and Creer Choice Development, case study of Government Bilingual High School Ebolowa” I humbly request you fill the questionnaire so that i get a reliable and valid data that will enable me earry out this research successfully. I assure you that all your responses will be treated will confidentiality.

Serial Number

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**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Kindly place a tick ( ✓ ) on the box corresponding to the right answer.

- 1. School : G.B.H.S Ebolowa
- 2. Gender: Male  Female
- 3. Class: Lower Sixth  Uppers ixth
- 4. Age Range: 11-15 Years  16-20 Years  21 and above
- 5. Religion: Christian  Islam  Pegan
- 6. Status: Married  Single  Divorced

**Section B: Family influence on career choice**

Statement	Responses				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Statement	Responses				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
My father influenced me into the career I want to pursue					
My mother was influential to the career I want to pursue					
The family business is a factor in my choosing a career					
The dominant profession in my family is also my preferred career					
Information I got from my parents helped me to choose a career					
My father's career had an impact on my choice of career					
My mother's career had an effect					

on my choice of career				
Older siblings had an influence on my career choice				
An extended family member was influential in the career that I chose				

**Section C: School Influence on career choice**

Statement	Responses			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Career guidance is comprehensively offered at our school				
School career days influenced my career choice				
Career trips or field trips influenced my career choice				
School career guidance cleared career confusion that I had				
My class teacher was influential to the career I want to pursue				

The career guidance counsellor was influential to the career I want to do				
The school head was influential to the career I want to do				
The subjects I do influenced my career decision				
Former students' careers had a positive influence on my career choice				
School career exploration and career decision making activities broaden students' career horizons				
My preferred career is linked to my favourite subjects				

**Section D: Gender factors influencing career choice**

Statement	Responses			
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

There are careers suitable for men and others suitable for women				
Male students have higher career ambitions than girls				
Boys and girls were socialised to choose careers that are gender sensitive				
Women's role is homemaker and male's role is breadwinner				
Boys can use computers more effectively to solve problems than girls				
Male models have influenced me to take the career I want to pursue				
Female models have influenced me to choose the career I want to do				
I value career advice I get from same sex friends				

**Section E: Peer influence on career choice**

Statement	Responses			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Career education comes from other students				
Peer influence regarding career choices is powerful				
My friends have influenced me to choose a career				
Peer advice on career guidance was helpful to me				
My friends validated the career that I chose				
Information given by friends is always reliable				
I chose a career that is similar to my friends				
I embrace the advice I get from peers that I value most				
My friends give comprehensive and proper advice on careers				

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**To**

Madam Monica Eneke Takor and Mrs Ayuk Felicitas,

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**ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND FIGURES**

- **ENSET:** Higher Technical Teacher's Training College
- **G.B.H.S:** Government Bilingual High School
- **SCCT:** Social Cognitive Career Theory
- **SLTCDM:** Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making
- **WHO:** World Health Organization.
- **UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- **STEM:** Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

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**ABSTRACT**

This research work entitled "Decision making and career choice development the case study of GBHS Ebolowa was inspired by the fact that many students encounter a lot of problems while making a career choice. The social cognitive Career theory explains that many students face difficulties in choosing a Career due to lack of awareness and orientation in school. This work relies on a quantitative data collected through a questionnaire, administered to 109 students (lowersixth art and science). Thanks to the test of pearson correlation and SPSS version 23 that the general hypothesis was approved, which states that decision making influences career choice development. At the end of this work, the main hypothesis shows that the need for career orientation should be implemented In schools because it is the variable that best explains the concept of lack of Career choice development.

Key words: Decision making and career choice development.

**RESUME**

Ce travail de recherche intitulé «Étude de décision et le développement du choix de carrière de GBHS Ebolowa a été inspiré par le fait que de nombreux étudiants rencontrent beaucoup de problèmes lors de leur choix de carrière. en raison d'un manque de sensibilisation et d'orientation à l'école. Ce travail s'appuie sur des données quantitatives collectées à travers un questionnaire administré à 109 élèves (Littéraires et Scientifiques). Grâce au test de la corrélation de Pearson da la version SPSS 23 que l'hypothèse générale a été approuvée. Au terme de ce travail, l'hypothèse principale montre que le besoin d'orientation professionnelle doit être mis en œuvre dans les écoles car c'est la variable qui explique le mieux la notion de manque de développement des choix de carrière.

Mots clés: Prise de décision et développement des choix de carrière.