UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PARENTS' AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AS CAREER CHOICE IN THE SEKONDI TAKORADI METROPOLIS

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BY

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Thesis submitted to the Department of Guidance and Counselling, College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of Master of Philosophy degree in Guidance and Counselling

MARCH 2022

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature…… Date……

Name: ……

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature…… Date……

Name: ……

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate parents' and senior high school (SHS) students' attitude towards VTE as a career choice in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis in the Western Region of Ghana. The sample for the study was 337, made up of final year students in SHS in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis as well as 10 parents of students. The sample was selected using a multistage sampling technique. Data was collected from the students using a questionnaire whereas data was collected from the parents using an interview guide. Quantitative data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was analysed using thematic analyses. The study revealed that most of the students were not willing to enroll in VTE after their general secondary education. The study, revealed also that, the students generally had positive views that TVET can make students more employable. Further, the study revealed that all the parents viewed vocational and technical education positively. However, some few parents did not like the idea of their children pursuing VTE mainly because of the perception of society about TVET. The results showed also that male students had a better attitude towards vocational and technical education than female students. It was recommended that the Ghana Education Service together with Ministry of Education educate SHS students on the importance of TVET.

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DEDICATION

To my children and husband as well as my father Mr. Emmanuel Doe Sogbokey.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of parents and students of senior high school towards vocational and technical education as career choice in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis in the Western Region of Ghana. This chapter introduces the study and gives insight to the background of the study. It also presents the statement of the problem at hand, purpose of the study, research questions, hypotheses and significance of the study. The delimitation, limitation, definition of the terms employed in the study as well as the organisation of the study are discussed as well.

Background to the Study

Education catalyzes the enhancement of human resources for the socio-economic transformation of nations (Kusi, Antwi, & Bampo, 2018). This explains why education is recognised as a basic human right as well as an instrument to fight poverty and to promote economic advancement for developed and developing countries. Article 25 (1a) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana highlights the right to education as a universal human right and the Children's Act, 1998, affirms it. Also, countries all over the world depend largely on well qualified and educated people and therefore the international community of nations recognizes education as a fundamental human right (Global Monitoring Report, 2014/2015). As a result of education being a human right issue, Lee (2015) posited that learners must have the chance to develop their capacity to have a meaningful and gratifying life. In line with this, the full potentials of learners must be developed through education to enable them fit into society.

One of the most important tools a person can use for personal development is Vocational and Technical Education(VTE). This is because it provides an avenue for gainful employment in industry, business, trade, agriculture among others. Williams (2014) posited that, the emphasis of Vocational education(VTE), is to help an individual become self-sufficient. Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) is viewed as a central facet of a nation's growth (Oseni, Ehikioya & Ali-Momoh, 2011). This is because VTE helps to reduce unemployment and underemployment issues being confronted by many developing countries including Ghana. The financial growth of and how employable a person is, can decrease the level of unemployment; however, without any employable skills, individuals with low economic status will find difficulty in getting employed. According to Oseni et al. (2011), this challenge can be mitigated by turning out workers who have skills that are on demand through Vocational and Technical Education.

A critical look at the various curricular of countries that are developing and those that are already developed all over the world shows that significant emphasis has been placed on VTE and it is in this sense, from the Ghanaian perspective, that VTE is getting considerable attention in recent years (UNESCO, 2018). Looking at the present employment rate of Ghana, it is obvious that when individuals have the skills and abilities regarding a chosen vocation, they would be employed and even have the capacity to employ others.

Looking at the relevance of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE), several research have pointed out that students' and parents' attitudes affect the choice of VTE careers. Onyango, Adhiambo and Ntabo (2017)

stipulated that parents' attitudes indicate how supportive a family can be in the education of their children. These attitudes could be undesirable or desirable consequently, if parents' attitudes towards education and schooling are negative their children's education can be hindered (Williams, 2014). Williams further indicated that positive attitudes of parents could however be helpful to their children in numerous circumstances and could be mirrored through creation of interest to learn among children, progress in class performance, and greater accomplishment scores in writing and reading.

In recent times, the increasing consciousness with regards to education has made several families place importance on their children's education as well as behave positively towards their children's schooling. Families try their best to become involved in the academic work of their children and take decisions in relation to higher education of their children. The view of some parents on TVET is that vocational and technical skills are not competitive enough for more well-paid occupations in the world of work (Adewale, Adisa, Ndububa, Olawoyin, & Adedokun, 2017). According to Adewale et al., policy makers have been concerned with how there has been a drive recently in parents' involvement in their wards education and career choice. Further, they posited that, family prestige, relationship between parent and child as well as cultural environment are the main factors that determine success in education and choice of profession.

Other factors that affect vocational and technical education and its choice as a career, are students' attitudes. Williams (2014) opined that a national attitude that suggests that vocational and technical subjects are intended to be studied by children of people who are not so well to do is at the

core of society's economic problem. This same attitude he posited, which is shared by some students as well, creates lack of interest in the students to study vocational and technical courses, especially home economics in relation to choice of career.

According to Al-Sa'd (2007), TVET's low status in society affects attitudes of students towards it. Specifically, when individuals in society have low respect for the study and practice of TVET, students will not be attracted meaningfully and consequently choose courses in TVET as a choice of career. Other factors from students include their self-esteem, interest in TVET, motivation and labelling (Al-Sa'd, 2007). According to Alavi, Sail and Awang (2013), factors that attract students include equating of TVET to general education, TVET's societal status and applicability of course content.

According to Azubuike (2011), gender, socio-economic standing of parents, inadequate career counsellors in schools influence students' attitudes toward Vocational and Technical education (VTE). Similarly, Ohiwerie and Nwose (2009) establised that the financial and political state of a country, well-paid careers and pressure from peers are the factors which affect students' attitudes towards VTE. Gleaning from the case of Ghana, a large number of educated youths who graduate from formal education without any practical training or skill is generally unemployed. It should be pointed out that in Ghana, the view on TVET is to some extent negative; and jobs relating to it are considered as low-status jobs. Kumuthavalli (2016) examined the possible factors determining the enhancement of student's attitude in an attempt to heighten college student's attitude for learning Vocational education(VE) and Technical programmes(TP). Study findings revealed that

students had low knowledge on the existence of Vocational and Technical institutions. However, societal factors, qualification and socio-economic status were found to influence students' attitude towards the choice of VTE. According to Polesel (2007), learners from poor family/educational background are more interested in VTE programmes as compared to those with higher background level with respect to educational qualification, housing prices, and income (Anlezark et al., 2006). Daniel (2012) revealed a link between societal culture and learner's career choice and attitude towards VET. In Nigeria, people usually select a job due to their social standards in their society as well as looking to satisfy their friends (Okorie, 2011; Odu & Biose, 2003). Sociological effects tend to worsen the issues surrounding vocational education in a country according to Okorie et al., (2017).

Adewale, Amgbari, Erebo, Tipili and Ejiga (2017), examined parental roles in Vocational Education (VE) and its practicality in a declining economy like Nigeria using a descriptive survey and 100 parents as a sample size. Findings showed that parents desired courses with better respect and acceptance. Recommendation suggested that, parents should be educated on the prospect of VE, specifically its capacity to aid employment. Also, VE should be better integrated into tertiary curriculum (Zhi & Atan, 2021). Wong (1977) posited that majority of families believed that jobs which soil the hand cannot be compared to the ones which do not. Wong added that most parents still perceive or hold academic education in high esteem even with the premise that there is little job opportunities for individuals who have only gained academic qualification. He reiterated that more and more job vacancies are in the global world for those who have attained or gained technical education.

It seems young people also consider white- collar jobs to be more prestigious but feel embarrassed in jobs which are more associated with hands-on work. This might have contributed to the increase in the rate of joblessness in the country thus, the need for VTE which has the main objective of providing a skilled labour force. The need to prioritize vocational and technical training might not have been entirely understood by parents and the society as a whole therefore the need to critically investigate the parents' and students' attitudes towards VTE as a career choice.

Statement of the Problem

Research has shown that students and parents have varied attitudes regarding TVET and that determines students' choice of entering into vocational and technical education (Adewale et al., 2017; Khamis & Alnaqbi 2015; Ngogo, 2014). As indicated in the background, VTE is important because it exposes students to practical skills and knowhow which when practised, can reduce the rate of unemployment and underemployment in any county.

Considering the concept of education in the technical and vocational environment in relation to the development of a country which includes Ghana, it appears that some attitudes that are exhibited by both parents and students toward VTE affect students' choice of career in VTE. Prominent among these attitudes are that some of the parents and students feel that those students who enter into VTE are dull, some feel VTE is expensive, there is little information on VTE career choice, and little information can be obtained when it comes to the TVET programme, others also feel it is only the poor who venture into TVET (Ngogo, 2014). The presence of these and other

factors as demonstrated by parents and students affect students' career options regarding TVET.

It must be stressed that parents' and students' attitudes affect VTE but it appears limited studies in Ghana have been conducted to assess the combining effects of the attitudes of both parents and students toward VTE as a career choice. Even with the studies that have been conducted in the western world, the variables were treated in isolation (Ngogo, 2014; Adewale et al., 2017). In particular, the study conducted to form the international perspective either looked at only parental attitudes or students' attitudes.

As at now, it is unclear which of parents or students' attitudes affect students' choice of career in VTE. There is, therefore, the need to conduct a study of this nature to serve as a piece of empirical evidence as it attempts to examine the attitudes of both students and parents regarding career options in VTE. Considering the significance of VTE in the lives of students as well as the gaps that have been created in the literature on the topic, the present study is important. The study in an effort to fill in the gaps as well as help increase the awareness of VTE and how it can help solve the unemployment challenge in Ghana is important, since it seeks to combine both parents' and students' attitude with regards to technical and vocational education as career choice of students particularly at the SHS level in Ghana. This study seeks to investigate attitude of parents and SHS students toward VTE as career choice in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis in the Western Region. This would in a way help manage the increasing unemployment rate of youth in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate attitudes of parents and SHS learners towards VTE as a career choice in Senior High Schools in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis in the Western Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. determine the willingness of students within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis to pursue Vocational and Technical education.
2. determine the attitudes of SHS students within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis to pursue Vocational and Technical education.
3. determine the attitudes of parents and SHS students within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis to pursue Vocational and Technical education as a career.
4. find out the difference between the attitudes of students towards Vocational and Technical education on the basis of gender.
5. find out the difference between the attitudes of students towards Vocational and Technical education on the basis of age.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of willingness of SHS students in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis to pursue Vocational and Technical education?
2. What are the attitudes of SHS students within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis toward Vocational and Technical education?

3. What are the attitudes of parents towards Vocational and Technical education as a career choice for students in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis?
4. Find out the significant difference between the attitudes of female and male students in Sekondi-Takoradi towards Vocational and Technical education.
5. Find out the significant difference in the attitudes of students towards Vocational and Technical education on the basis of age.

Hypotheses

The study was guided by these hypotheses:

1. $H_1$1: There is a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of female and male students towards vocational and technical education.

   $H_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference between the attitudes of female and male students towards technical and vocational education
2. $H_1$2: There is a statistically significant difference in the attitudes of students towards vocational and technical education on the basis of age.

   $H_0$2: There is no statistically significant difference in the attitudes of students towards technical and vocational education on the basis of age.

Significance of the Study

The study findings would help Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) policymakers, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

(NaCCA) to find the dynamics that affect the attitudes of Senior High School learners regarding vocational and technical subjects. This study would be valuable to stakeholders in TVET in Ghana to comprehend how the attitude of parents and SHS students toward TVET influence career choice of students. Furthermore, study findings would contribute to the body of knowledge that exists already. It is also anticipated that this study would help future researchers to identify priority areas to carry out further investigation on TVET institutions regarding skills acquisition. The findings of the study would also add to existing literature.

Delimitations

The study was restricted to variables such as parents' and SHS students' attitudes towards VTE as a career choice in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis of the Western Region of Ghana. The scope of the study covered only four selected schools in the study area. The study was carried out in public Senior High Schools in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis but not Senior High Schools that are privately owned. Also only form three students were used because they have had more exposure to the academic system. Both male and female students were used in the study.

Limitations

The use of questionnaire in collecting data from the students was a major limitation to the study. This is because the use of a questionnaire in that regard did not allow for an in-depth description of respondents' responses. Secondly, the respondents might not have been honest in answering questionnaires administered to them. To deal with that, participants were educated on the fact that their responses were purely for academic work and

that their responses will not be traced to them. Furthermore, the use of a semi-structured interview guide demanded a lot of time. This is because it was difficult to meet the parents due to their tight schedules. Some of the parents also gave excuses and requested for rescheduling of time for the interview. In order to have authentic and reliable results, I persisted in my efforts to get all the parents involved in the study to collect the data although it was time consuming.

Definition of Terms

This section presents the key terms used in the study.

Career Choice: Career choice refers to the selection of a vocation based on several factors such as parental influence, ability, career counseling, casual jobs among others.

Vocational and Technical Education(VTE): refers to parts of the educational system that includes the study of science and technologies, acquisition of hands-on skills, having to understand and exhibiting understanding linking to professions in several aspects of economic life tallying to general education.

Attitude: This is used to refer to a mentality or a propensity to behave in a certain way owing to a person's temperament and experience.

Parental Attitude: This is used to imply the mind-set or a tendency of a person from whom one is immediately biologically descended; a mother or father to behave in a certain way as a results of their experience.

Students' attitudes: This is referred to as the tendency of a person who studies or learns about a particular academic subject to behave in a certain way due to the nature and experience of that person.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training(TVET): refers to all forms of education and training which provide knowledge and skills related to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life through formal, nonformal and informal learning methods.

Organisation of the Study

This study is captured into five chapters. The introduction of the study, which looks at the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the background to the study, the research questions as well as the significance of the study is captured in the first chapter. It also covered the delimitation and limitations of the study, operational terms and the organisation of the study.

The review of literature related to the study is tackled in the second chapter. It involved the conceptual review, theoretical framework and the review of related empirical studies.

Further, chapter three which is the research methods for the study involved the research design, study area, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instrument(s) and procedures, and data processing and its analysis.

Chapter four of the study presented the outcomes as well as its discussion in line with the study. Finally, the final chapter of the study dealt with the summary, conclusions and some recommendations of the study. It also mentioned some areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter review literature related to the study. It covered the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, conceptual review and the empirical review.

Theoretical Framework

Three key theories are reviewed in this section. Holland's Theory of Career Types, Theory of Reasoned Action and Krumboltz' Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making.

Holland's Theory of Career Types

The theory of career types was propounded by John Holland (1966). The theory is founded on the view that career options are true reflections of an individuals overall uniqueness, and that individuals find an operative milieu that aids their personality type. Holland holds the opinion that an extension of an individual's personality is a representation of their career choice. He believes that through experience people express themselves, their values and interest. Holland (1973) gave the following basic assumptions of the theory:

1) Based on interest of individuals, they can be grouped as social, conventional, realistic, enterprising, artistic and investigative.
2) Working milieu can be categorised into the same six types and tend to be subjugated by well-matched personalities.
3) In order for individuals to exercise their capabilities, values, attitude, and interest they look for pathways to fully utilize and integrate their personality.

4) An individuals relationship between features of operative milieu and his personality predicts their workplace behavior and level of satisfaction.

John Holland's Theory of Career types stresses that satisfaction in a job is high when an individuals personality type matched with a compatible work environment. Based on this, it is of great consideration that individuals have adequate knowledge of who they are and the characteristics of different career types so they can make the right career choices (Holland, 1973). In his theory, Holland gave six different types of personalities and career types which can be matched with each other. These personality and career types are presented in what he termed the hexagon of career types. He adds that each type has specific characteristics that describe people who fit the type. The hexagon of personality and career types given by Holland is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Holland's Hexagonal Career Types

Source: Brown and Lent (2005)

The categories of careers by Holland are explained below:

Realistic

This personality type includes individuals who like to use machines or tools to work. They are the most practical people and so may have little appreciation for abstract or theoretical career issues. In terms of career choices, they are likely to pursue careers such as roofing, farming, plumbing, automotive and electrical repair, and other disciplines that are technical in nature. In terms of problem-solving, they mostly prefer to approach issues from a personal or practical point of view (Brown & Lent, 2005).

Investigative

The investigative personality type involves people who love to study. They have confidence in their ability to solve mathematical and scientific problems. Such individuals often like to read about science and discuss issues relating to science. Individuals with this type of personality strive to work independently to find solutions to problems and have a high tendency to enjoy subjects such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geology, and other physical or biological sciences. They may love to analyze or search for solutions to problems however may not be suitable for jobs involving supervision of other people or dealing directly with people (Holland, 1973). People with this type of personality are more likely to be journalists, security personnel and other investigative kinds of jobs.

Artistic

The artistic personality type refers to people who express themselves in a free and unsystematic way in their actions (Arnold, 2004). They are original and creative in expression. People who are artistic are likely to be involved in

more in music, art, or writing. The probability of improving their skill in writing, language, music and art is high for them. People with this type of personality usually end up in careers in the creative art field (Holland, 1973).

Social

People with the social personality type focus on helping people through their actions. They are 'people-persons' since they enjoy working along with people instead of working with machines and artefacts. Individuals with this personality type enjoy using dialogue and collaboration to solve problems instead of using delegation (Brown & Lent, 2005). In terms of career choice, social people may prefer careers that involve the use of oral and social skills (Holland, 1973).

Enterprising

Individuals with the enterprising personality type like to always be with other people. They enjoy using their verbal skills to persuade others, lead or sell. They are those who prefer to be in leadership positions and so tend to be assertive and popular (Holland, 1973). Holland further posits that, even though they love to work with other persons, their motives are not to offer help but to convince and manage and such people usually end up in politics or managerial roles .

Conventional

The conventional people are those who place value on money. They love to be reliable, and place premium on the ability to follow laid down rules and procedures. Conventional people do not like to deal with ambitious requests but prefer to be in control of situations. They love workplaces where they can exhibit their standards in relation to abiding by rules, regulations, and

guidelines (Arnold, 2004). They have high capacity in dealing with clerical and numerical issues and prefer working in environments where they are directed toward accomplishing tasks in systematic ways. They usually become clerks and office managers (Holland, 1973).

Holland argues that people need to be conscious of parts of their personality (self-knowledge) so that they can identify careers they will be suitable for. Holland thus asserted that success in career is mostly dependent on the congruity between the work environment and the person's personality (Holland, 1973). This theory expects that people will decide on careers which coincide with their individualities, nevertheless, the lack of self-knowledge on careers might obstruct decision–making concerning career options. The outcome of this is wrong choice of career outside a person's dominant personality domains which will result in personality or occupational mismatch.

The theory is applicable to how current career-development specialists think of promotion of career goals and the world of work. It is part of the most extensively researched and applied theories in the choice of vocation. The prolonged existence and appeal of this theory likely relate to its frugality, thereby making it appropriate for consideration in the current study (Brown & Lent, 2005). Even though his theory has stood the test of time over the years for its view on how specific personalities can be matched with specific careers, currently failure of research to establish a firm link between congruence and outcome such as satisfaction and performance has been a major setback to the theory's applicability (Vulcan, 2017).

This theory is considered important in the present study because it speaks to what may be considered by students in choosing to pursue careers

related to vocational and technical education. Thus, when a student realizes that he or she prefers to work with machines and being physical or practical then that person may have a preference for a career choice in vocational and technical education.

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The TRA developed by Fishbein (1967) underpins this study. This theory suggests that individuals behave based on their pre-existing attitudes and behavioural intentions.That is, the quest for individuals' engagement in a specific behaviour is contingent on the individuals' expectation as a result of performing the behaviour. It was derived from social psychology reserach (attitude theories and persuasion models) to bring out the link between attitudes and behaviours of human action.

The fundamental objective of this theory have more knowledge on voluntary behaviour of individuals and the fundamental motivation that affect these action (Fishbein 1967). In sum, the normative component (for instance, the social norm surrounding the act) predicts whether an individual will perform the behaviour. As per the theory, behavioural intentions precedes the actual behaviour.

One major determinant of behavioural intentions which refer to how individuals feel towards specific behaviour is attitude. According to Fishbein, these attitudes can be positive, neutral, or negative. The theory stresses on the link between attitude and outcomes. For example, one is likely to have a positive attitude towards a behaviour if he/she foresees a desirable outcome . On the other hand, a person is likely to have a negative attitude towards a behaviour if he/she foresees an undesirable outcome.

According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993) the TRA doesn't factor particular conditions that enhance the performance of a behavior. That is, the theory is limited with respect to predicting behaviours that demands gateway to particular conditions, opportunities, and resources.

Notwithstanding, several works have used this theory as a framework for examining specific types of behaviour. Doswell, Braxter, Cha, and Kim (2011) applied the TRA as a framework in trying to fish-out African American girls sexual behaviour. Study findings shown that, TRA predicted early behaviour in career choice. A positive correlation was found between subjective norms and attitude towards VTE with an earlier motive of choosing a choice path.

The TRA is therefore ideal for this study because it explains the behaviours of the youths by assessing their attitudes. Students' attitudes in this context could be positive or negative dispositions towards VTE behaviour. Subjective norms are the factors that drive the youth to choose a career path. TRA suggests that SHS students will choose VTE as career choice as a result of their attitudes towards behaviour and the subjective norms that influence the behaviour.

Krumboltz' Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM)

Krumboltz, Mitchell, and Jones (1976), propounded the Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making. This theory seeks to explain how professional and educational skills are necessary for selecting career (Krumboltz et al., 1976). It also explains how factors such as conditions of the environment, educational experiences, societal status, emotional and genetic

factors, and skills become reasons for individuals to change careers. This theory is therefore founded on the belief that a combination of factors influences individuals to choose career options that best suit them. It is argued that development of the Social Learning Theory of SLTCDM was a move away from the common theoretical views at the time which were mostly based on matching traits and factors (Feller, Honaker & Zagzebski ,2001).

According to Krumboltz et al. (1976), there are four factors that inform the Career Decision Making(CDM)of individuals. They are:

1. Genetic endowment: This comprises sex, race, physical appearances and other features that cannot be changed.
2. Ecological circumstances and events: They are factors that are usually outside the control of any one person and may lead to a number of career opportunities. The conditions can be from human and social policies and can also be the result of natural disasters.
3. Learning experiences: These cover the learning that individuals have made in terms of association and operation in the environment.
4. Task approach skills: Are mental sets, work habits, and performance standards which comes about as a results of milieu and genetic.

According to Arsalan (2018), both external and internal factors influence the availability of career avenue to an individual which encourage or discourage the individual by changing or shaping their available opportunities. This is because sometimes many choices may be accessible but the person may not have the capacity or power to make an informed choice.

The application of this social learning to career decision making follows three parts. These are antecedents, cognitive mediators, and

consequence (Arsalan, 2018). The antecedents are the factors which influence individuals. The influence can be from models as well as social factors. Cognitive meditation implies the ways in which individuals think and make sense of their influence on them. Lastly, self-evaluation of these abilities alongside strengthening from consequence enables the individual to make career decisions (Krumboltz et al., 1976).

Social learning is related to factors seen critical in selecting career because of other issues such as self-efficacy. An individual's conviction in his or her ability to pursue a particular career field will influence his or her career choices. This is an important consideration because certain professions generate different self-efficacy avenue for everyone., i.e., should a career be a novel, majority of individuals would have fear of failure and may consider other alternatives.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework upon which the study is based is shown in Figure 2.

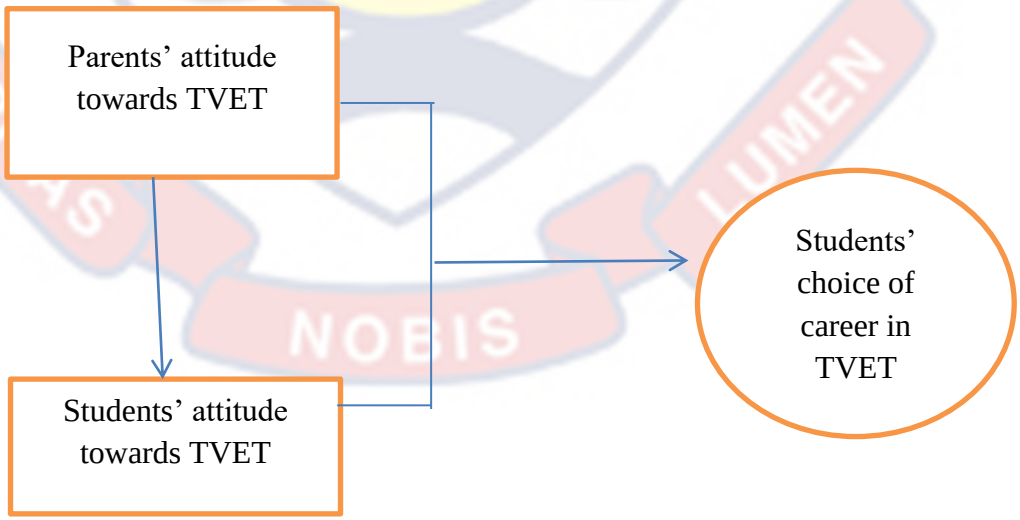

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of Parents' and Students' towards TVET
Source: Researcher's Construct

It could be seen in Figure 1 that the choice of students regarding TVET can be influenced by two main factors. These are the attitudes of parents and the attitudes of students. One significance observed in the literature also had to do with the connection between parental attitude and student' attitude. For instance, some students may not choose vocational and technical education courses in school because parents may be strongly against TVE. Overall, it is evident from the framework that the attitudes of parents and students are the main factors that affect the choice of learners in pursuing TVE.

Conceptual Review

Key concepts used in the study are presented in this section:

Concept of Career and Career Choice

According to Zunker (2006), career can be defined as the totality of work an individual experiences in a lifetime. It is also viewed as a chosen quest, life work and success in one's occupation (Oladele, 2000). Career in summary comprises diverse non-work and work situations which mostly span throughout a person lifetime. Career is also related to an array of choices, transactions as well as changes which have effects on a person's leisure, work role, community development , family and education.

Career choice is a significant component of adult life and thus needs carefulness and thoughtful deliberations (Salami & Salami, 2013). This is as a result of the effect it has on the lives of young people when it comes to career choices. The choice in career can influence the level and direction of education of young people. Career choice is regarded multifaceted and thus needs a lot of efforts, preparation and counsel (Kochung & Migunde, 2011). Young people across the world are therefore put in a situation of fix to make

the right career choices (Wattles, 2009). This presents significant challenges to young people, particularly students.

Career choices are mostly made by students during their adolescent and young adult ages. In these times, students have to do due diligence when planning their careers and also do in-depth career investigation before choosing a career in order to fit into the forever changing socio-economic situations in society (Wattles, 2009). In summary, one core component of career choice is information. Salami and Salami (2013) mentiones that, students therefore have to think about career choices while in senior high school. The students must apparently have an idea about what they intend to do.

From the forgoing, it is obvious that choosing a career is not a laidback task, yet these young ones have to deal with this task particularly at the time when they are less equipped and prepared (Salami & Salami, 2013). This is more critical because career choice is undoubtedly very important since the wrong choice of career can lead to unhappiness in life and also affect the whole life of the person. Unfortunately, majority of SHS learners do not have precise statistics on occupational opportunities which could aid in making appropriate career choices (Kochung & Migunde, 2011). Such lack of information may affect the perceptions and attitudes of students about which career choices are the best. Based on this, the perceptions and attitudes of students towards technical aand vocational education can affect their choice to pursue TVE. This is because career aspirations and choices are influenced by the perceptions and attitudes of students towards specific careers (Dudovitz, Chung, Nelson, & Wong, 2017).

Concepts of Attitudes and Career Choice

According to Deeksha (2016), the concept of attitude is probably the foremost crucial and distinctive idea in modern psychology. The study of the concept of attitude is very significant to psychologists especially social psychologists and sociologists. With regards to the relationship between a person and society, some principles, views, values, standards, customs and traditions peculiar to that society must be conformed to by the individual. Through the method of socialization, an individual conforms to societal norms and laid-down values. Socialization develops primarily through attitude and conforming behaviour.

Psychologists describe attitude as a learned tendency to assess things in a particular manner (Cherry, 2021). This comprises assessment of persons, problems, objects, or happenings which could either be affirmative or negative, as well tentative most times. An individual having varied feelings about a certain person or issue is an example. Cherry further states that people, most of the time, tend to make assumptions that individuals behave based on their attitudes. However, a person's attitude is a combination of psychological factors such as ideas, values, beliefs, perception, and so on and so forth which have a multifaceted role in shaping the attitude of that person. According to Maio and Olson (1998) values are the standards or guiding principles in an individual's life, or the main goals that people struggle to attain. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) describe beliefs as cognitions about the world that is biased likelihoods that an object has a specific characteristic or that an action will lead to a certain result and also beliefs can be clearly and explicitly false.

Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) explained the components of attitude as including cognitive, affective and behavioural. The cognitive dimension comprises an individual's belief systems, opinions and typecasts about the attitudinal object. The opinion is mostly used in place of the cognitive component. Schiffman and Kanuk, further indicated that, the affective component deals with the emotional aspect of attitude and shows the direction and power of a person's assessment. It involves words such as love or hatred, like or dislike. The behavioural component deals with the tendency to react towards the object of attitude in certain specific ways(Schiffman and Kanuk 2004).

According to Borchert (2002), numerous factors have effect on career choices of SHS students. He posits that recognizing these factors offers educators, parents and other stakeholders an idea concerning where learners channel most of their trust in the CSP. Borchert (2002), categorized the factors into environmental, personality, and opportunity. The environmental factors include family, school, peer pressure etc. Lankard (1995), observed that family factors linked with the development of career include the parents' socio-economic status (SES) and the educational background, and other biogenetic factors such as bodily size, temperament, ability and gender. Consequently, it can be concluded that parental influence is among the elements that affect career students' choice.

Ryeetey, Doh and Andoh (2011), state that, in Ghana, the opinion of parents on VTE is that these skills are not competitive enough in the job market in relation to high income. Countless previous studies have all shown that individuals have less positive attitudes towards the VTE and also VE is

not accepted easily whilst vocational schools also have gained standing in society.

Concept of Vocational and Technical Education

The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) (2002) suggested a list of terminology which can be used interchangeably to refer to Vocational and Technical Training(VTT) globally. They are TVET, VTET, TVE, further education and training (FET), and VTE. In Ghana, TVET is widely used. Nsiah-Gyabaah (2009) argues that VTE is a key component in development as it enables individuals to discover potentials, expand their worldviews as well as well as adapt to changes in the world.

TVET denotes an instructional process which includes the study of science and technology as well as acquisition of knowledge and practical skills aimed at discovering and enhancing the learner for employment in diverse branches of his or her social life (Gyimah, 2020, p.4). It can be inferred from this definition that TVET is a form of education which is centered on hands-on training. Rashid (2019) posits that vocational education is regarded as 'basically a life and need-based education which can transform an un-skilled 'raw' and uneducated population into vibrant human resource. This goes to suggest that vocational education targets people who have not received formal education. I do not agree with this assertion as people with formal education can decide to undertake vocational and technical training. 'Vocational training is structured to train and prepare learners in specialized agriculture, skills, abilities, and trade which is linked with practical and manual skills that does not involve academic capacities' (Adewale, et al., 2017, p. 1).

From the definitions above, it is noticed that VTE is specially designed to give practical training or skills to people and in some cases to people without formal education so as to equip or give them skills that will enable them to be productive or become valuable human resource. This form of training is usually job specific as it trains the learner to specialize in a specific field or career and the kind of training does not really allow for movement within fields as it gives specialized training for a specialized field. This means that if a trainee wants to move to another field, they require new training which will enable them to be productive and relevant to the new field.

Historical Background of TVET in Ghana

Oppong (2017) asserts that TVET in Ghana can be categorised into four key eras. They are pre-colonial era, missionary era, colonial era and post-independence period. Prior to the arrival of Europeans to the coast, the people of the Land of Ghana were involved in apprenticeship which involved hands-on training and mentorship. The missionaries promoted TVET through the establishment of schools. The Accra Technical Institute was founded by Governor Rogers between 1900 – 1909.

Governor Guggisberg from 1919 - 1927 founded four multifaceted vocational schools in Asuansi, Kibi, Asante Mampong and Yendi. Dr Kwame Nkrumah's launching of the ADPE in 1951 aimed to be a central instrument for national development and reconstruction. The fourth period as categorised by Oppong (2017) is the post-Independence period. Governor Hill iin 1952 approved the first ordinance to regulate TVET.

Boateng (2012) posited that the colonial government of Gold Coast tried to give young people training in skills such as; embroidery, cookery, carpentry, masonry, blacksmithing etc. to make them productive citizenry. TVE is organised at all levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary) in the country. The three categories of VTE include the pre-vocational, vocational and technical. According to Boateng , basic school learners are to partake in pre-technical and pre-vocational training or education. Young people from the basic schools can either move into the Technical Institutes or the SHS. According to Baiden (1996), VTE has an objective of providing boys and girls at the secondary level, with pertinent training that will allow them meet the nation's human resource needs in the area of technology, industry, business, and agriculture.

Aims of VTE

Vocationalization can be defined as modification of a formerly liberal arts curriculum of the high school to comprise an enlarged quantity of technicaland vocational areas (Akyeampong, 2002). Vocationalization is regarded a policy issue as training for various trades progressed from just commerce, trade, and field agriculture to a complex educational system. According to Chin-Aleong, (1993) in other to achieve this one must adopt a core curriculum and diverse clusters of elective courses. This has been used in Ghanaian Senior High School. Though vocationalisation can be complicated it is also simple to comprehend its aims and objectivies.

In Ghana, the general goal of VTE can be fragmented into 9 objectives (Akyeampong, 2002).

1. Exposure of basic school learners to a variety of hands-on activities in the technical and vocational fields to rouse their awareness in vocational courses as well as become familiar with it. This can provide learners with equal chance to select a career in either fields.
2. Prepare Junior High School graduates with industrial skills that will assist them to be gainfully employed in trade.
3. Training of learners with vital entrepreneurial and operative skills for self-employment.
4. Make available human resources that are trained in science and technology as well as trade, the aim of linking demand to skilled labour of supply;
5. Make available TVE required for industrial, economic and agricultural growth to personnel whilst not taking attention away from issues relating to the environment;
6. Offer training as well as impact the essential knowledge to train manpower in other to improve skilled workers, craftsmen, technicians, and artisans;
7. Enabling learners with intellectual knowledge of improving diversity of science through procedural disclosure to contemporary machinery;
8. Encouraging surged women involvement in employment, education and training;
9. Provision of sound basis for further training for learners who might desire continuing their education (Baiden, 1996, p.93).

The above aims presented guiding principles for the plan and growth of the VTE programme at the Senior High School level in Ghana. The first two

goals explicitly related with Basic Education (Junior High School level) relate to exploration, exposure, and selection of career, as well entry into lucrative employment. In Ghana, at the Senior High School, a learner must study four compulsory subjects in addition to three or four selected elective subjects. Furthermore, in the mainstream of Ghana's educational system, the term "vocational" comprise visual arts (mostly, handcrafts) and home economics courses. The particular courses that are branded as such are made up of management in living, sculpture, food and nutrition, basketry, graphic design, and leatherwork (Ghana Education Service, 1999). The label 'technical' on the other hand comprises industrial, trade, and engineering-related subjects such as auto mechanics, technical drawing, woodwork, metalwork, and applied electricity. VTE at the SHS level, targets at furnishing young men and women with pertinent industrious skill training that will empower them to achieve the country's manpower needs in the field of finance, industry, technology, and agriculture (Williams, 2014).

Further, Amedorme and Fiagbe (2013) presented that over the past year, three types of vocational and technical training have developed in Ghana namely; formal system, non-formal system and 1informal system. The formal system provides largely a time-bound, institution-based, rated, and certified training. This type of training is given by bodies such as the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI), GES technical institutes, youth training institutions and a variety of private vocational training schools. Non-formal technical and vocational training generally has organized learning goals, learning schedules and learning aid but may not issue any form of certification. Workshops, short courses and seminars can be considered as

non-formal learning. The informal system comprises an extensive variety of flexible programmes and procedures that help persons acquire skills and knowledge from selected training institutions out of home and, in some instances, at home. Traditional apprenticeships largely form a part of the informal sector. TVE gives a person the opportunity to gain practical knowledge as well as the necessary skill training required in the job-market or for instant self-employment (Amedorme & Fiagbe, 2013). Ansah and Ernest (2013) also posit that technical and vocational education includes institution-based formal and non-formal education offered by TVI. This only varies slightly from the assertion by Amedorme and Fiagbe (2013).

As per Tsang (1997), VTT is regarded a type of job-related training that improves a person's efficiency. This comprises learning in formal TVET school programmes, available in training centres. In the Ghanaian context, TVET is designed to groom the youth and improve employment for them. The subjects taught in these centres may include tailoring, plumbing, electrical installation, motor vehicle mechanics, carpentry and masonry (Lawal, 2012).

Vocational education and vocational training both involve the stages that prepare an individual for a specific job. In totality, the teaching and learning of a particular occupation is known as vocational education whilst vocational training comprises the stage of learning the needed skill for work (Hornby, 2008). For the purpose of this study, VTE will operationally be taken as a single concept. It is the hub of knowledge, skills and abilities a person has, that inflluences his or her willingness to undertake fecund work. Human resources can devalue when skills, knowledge and competences become outdated, as a results of technological advancement (Cedefop, 2013).

Empirical Review

In this section, some selected studies conducted years ago and relating to this study have been reviewed. This was done and classified into sub-headings.

Willingness of Students to Pursue Vocational and Technical Education

Studies concerning the willingness of learners to pursue VTE have been conducted in various parts of the world. Peoples (1998) revealed that in Secondary Schools, there has historically been a longstanding cultural stigma toward vocational education, which has resulted, in marked disinclination among students to pursue career paths in TVE. In contrast, Alavi, Sail and Awang (2013) revealed that the negative image associated with VTE is such that most students avoided choosing career paths in technical and vocational education. Sometimes, students may hold positive views about TVET, but, because of how society views TVET, the students may prefer to stay away from such career paths.

Dalton and Smith (2004) sought to find out the degree to which learners pursue TVE in eight Australian secondary schools. It was revealed that more and more students were willing to pursue VTE in spite of the obvious negative perceptions about technical and vocational education.

Safarmamad (2019) scrutinized the factors influencing the decisions and willingness of students to enroll in VTE in Tajikistan. As a descriptive research, questionnaire was used in collecting data from 541 students. The results revealed that learners who pursued vocational and technical education were mainly males from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds. Findings revealed a solid link between gender and program enrollment. It was also

found that parental influence was the major factor affecting decision to pursue vocational and technical education.

Suaphan (2015) investigated the impact on student decisions between SHS and vocational education using a descriptive survey research design with a sample of 3,783 learners in Thailand. A logistic regression was used to analyze them. It was found that a significant high school and vocational determinant is not the net monetary gain of schooling. Instead, estimated family support, cognitive capacity, occupational preference, gratification delay gender, ability,and socio-economic status are important factors affecting the choices of the students.

Haney (2002) examined the link between race, career awareness, gender, academic performance, socio economic factors and perception of SHS learners on VE. The study revealed that demographic factors were linked to learners' acuities of VE, with socio-economic status being the most substantial among the numerous predictors. The implication is that the perception, attitude and willingness to pursue vocational and technical education were influenced by their backgrounds.

Attitudes of Students towards Vocational and Technical Education

Empirical literature relating to students' attitudes towards VTE have been reviewed in this section. Sarıçoban (2014) investigated the attitudes of Technical and Vocational students towards TVET at Turkish Universities. Sarıçoban established that learners displayed almost positive attitudes towards TVE. Specifically, the students in the study of Sarıçoban reported that technical and vocational education is significant since it offers them with the opportunity to be creative in both their academic and daily lives. Brunello and

Rocco (2017) in a PIAAC survey and data comparability across countries revealed that students who pursue VTE had the higher probability of being employed in well-paid jobs. They argued that as the times keep changing, much attention is paid to practical skills and ability to demonstrate creativity and as such students with vocational and technical knowledge may have an upper hand in the job marker.

In addition, Bishop and Mane (2004) found that learners had positive attitude towards vocational education because learners who take a certain percentage of vocational courses during high school are more likely to receive higher salaries and exhibit higher rates of involvement relative to students in academic education. Along this same line of finding, Meer (2007) in a longitudinal survey in United States of America, revealed that high school students positively perceived vocational and technical education because of the wage benefits.

Alnaqbi (2016), investigated students and parental attitude towards the intention to enter Vocational Education(VE) and the impact of organizational, demographic, individual and social factors on the attitude of students and parents in United Arab Emirates. The study's scope was limited to students who received vocational and non-vocational education. In the literature, many theories have suggested an association between the Theory of Reasoned Action(TRA) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). In the analysis of the data, SPSS software was used. Independent samples t-test, scheffe' test, one-Way ANOVA test, and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Instrument used in measuring parents attitude towards VE comprised of three sections, namely, Social perception of VE, VE future, and VE importance.

Also, instrument used in measuring students' attitudes towards VE comprised of four subdivisions namely: social perception of VE, VE future, attitude towards VE, and VE significance. The study revealed that parents and learners had a relatively positive attitude towards VE. Though, attitude towards VE was positive students had a more positive attitude towards VE as compared to their parents. However, demographic, individual and social factors were seen to influence attitude of students towards VE.

Aderonmu, Fulani and Babalola (2018) assessed societal views on VTE in line with providing universal structure of formal education using a cross-sectional survey involving 100 prospective university students and parents in Ota and Ifo LGAs of Ogun State, Nigeria. Study findings revealed that, despite respondents' knowledge on the relevance of VE, they still perceived or held academic education in high esteem, even though there are little job opportunities for individuals who have gained only academic qualification without practical skills. They recommended that since VTT is already inculcated in the curriculum of Nigerian SHS, they should let learners have a practical feel of vocational and technical subject. However, tertiary institutions should participate in entrepreneurial development studies and also award second certificate to VE.

Rahman (1986), determined students' and parents' attitudes towards VE in the district of Rembau, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia using sample of 120 students. The study also comprised of two academic schools and three vocational secondary schools. The Likert-type scale was used in measuring parents and student's attitude towards VE. In ascertaining respondent's

perception on VE, the interview schedule was used. Study findings revealed that students and parents had a positive attitude towards VE.

Rathidevi and Sudhakaran (2019) explored high school students' attitudes regarding VE in Chennai district of Tamil Nādu India using a sample of 158 students. The results made it clear that learners attitude towards vocational education was uncertain. Also, a significant link was found between male and female attitude. Males had a more positive attitude towards vocational education as compared to females. The results further showed that family type, number of siblings, maternal employment, birth order and parents' educational status do not influence students' attitude towards vocational education. However, learners' knowledge on vocational course, opportunities, scholarships and its scope was relatively low.

Azubuike (2011) sought to seek the variables which influence the attitudes of learners' learning vocational or technical courses in high schools using a structured questionnaire. Study findings revealed that attitude of learners towards vocational education was predictered by guidance and counselling coordinators, interest, socio-economic status, gender and teacher's qualification.

Most learners had very great positive attitudes towards technical education, according to a study by Lawal (2011). In his questionnaire, they showed a positive attitude to almost all the items. Most learners thought that certain technical aspects and areas were challenging. They also accepted that practical elements are strenuous, complicated and costly. It was found that majority of the tutors lacked content mastery. Majority were pursuing technical education because of their wish for self-sustainable future career.

Lawal's study findings, however showed that both female and male students exhibited positive outlook towards the programme. However, a closer look at his work showed that rural school students showed more positive disposition.

Attitudes of Parents towards VTE as Career Choice for Students

The attitudes of parents towards Vocational and Technical Education have also been explored in the literature.

Stanwick (2006) examined results from different levels of VET and revealed that the outcome of jobs six months after preparation depends on the level(whether associate professional or professional level) of VET undertaken. Stanwick concluded that vocational and technical education provided practical skills that can help increase the extent of employability among students. Sherman (2006) also revealed that there are still some parents who hold positive views about vocational and technical education. Sherman claimed that such parents believe that VTE can equip young individuals with relevant and practical skills for life.

Annor (1997) also showed that individuals who enrolled to pursue technical education were not respected and that they were hired at the low or middle work force and so some parents may not want their children to enter technical education.

Okocha (2009) examined parental attitudes towards vocational education using a sample size of 200 parents in Nigeria. The results of the investigation clearly indicated that, even though parents recognized the employment opportunities available in VE, they are still ready to consent to the dominance of generally respectable and white-collar occupations over similar skilled profession. Ayub (2017) investigated the influence of parents

and attitude of students towards TVET in Pakistan usimg a descriptive survey and a questionnaire. In the analysis of data, multivariate regression was used. The findings of this study revealed that influence of parents had a statistically significant effect on decision of students towards TVET.

Okae-Adjei (2017) investigated the opinion of the public on vocational and technical education in Ghanaian Technical Universities using a descriptive survey. Questionnaires were used to collect data. It was revealed in the study that, some of the parents had the perception that TVET was designed for the less privileged in society, individuals who were not intelligent, school drop-outs and low achievers thus TVET provides jobs that are not lucrative. Also, employers regarded TVET graduates as being unprepared to be independent.

Kissim, Omolade & Rachael (2011) findings revealed that parents have the view that girls who study VTE do not get married. Parents however stressed on the need for early counselling and a technical instructor for girls about their career choice and specifically VTE. They also called on the attention of women associations, agencies, and government institutions to promote public education on the job opportunities available for females being enrolled on the VTE programme. It can be concluded that the gap between industrial and Technical education cant be filled by parents, girls and teachers.

Maria (2009) revealed that though parents are status conscious of professions like Accounting etc., they are still aware of the active value in vocational education. This reveals deeper societal prejudice against manual labour. Recommendations for policy and practice were made. Maria recommended that there should be the provision of counselling centres to provide clear understanding of this programme to clients.

According to Polesel (2007), on socioeconomic standards of family as a factor that influences attitudes of learners towards VET, study findings revealed that learners from poor family/educational background are more interested in VET programs as compared to those with higher background level with respect to educational qualification, housing prices, and income. Societal acknowledgement about vocational programs will be a minor discipline (Kennedy, 2012; Freire & Giang, 2011).

Parents of students enrolled in vocational and technical courses felt that, a vocational school serving a number of high school students, was a practical way to provide high school with educational opportunities (Polesel, 2007). These parents indicated they were more willing to share in an increased financial responsibility to expand and improve vocational opportunities for students. These parents also felt that attending vocational classes at central location, rather than taking courses at a student's home school would be the best method of providing vocational education programs. Parents of students pursuing vocational education programmes tended to have more positive perceptions towards vocational education than parents with children who were not in vocational educational programme (Polesel).

Fafunwa (1974) conducted a study to investigate parents' attitude about sending their daughters to get higher education, using a sample of 500 girls living in the hostels of Punjab University, Lahore. Study findings showed that parents educate their daughters in order to enhance their economic wellbeing, to be part of the educated society, and acquire intellectual skills. Results showed that parents often think no serious type of fear related to their education but sometimes they think that their daughters can be less responsive

to family matters. Findings of the study will help in appreciating parental attitude towards their daughter's education which eventually influences daughter's career choice decisions and education.

Adewale, Amgbari, Erebo, Tipili and Ejiga (2017) examined parental roles in VE and its practicality in a declining economy like Nigeria using a descriptive survey with a sample size of 100 parents. Findings proved that parents preferred courses with better recognition and acceptance. Recommendation suggested that, parents should be educated on the prospect of VE, specifically its capacity to aid employment. Also, VE should be better integrated into tertiary curriculum. (Zhi & Atan, 2021). Reagor and Rehm, (1995), opined that parents tend to have a more positive attitude towards about VE when they have some colleagues or friends who have gone through vocational education.

Ayub (2017), is of the view that technologies and knowledge are advancing at a quickening pace. However, issues with unemployment and underemployment which has been a topic of concern and a global worry necessitated the investigation of learner's attitude and parental influence towards TE and VT using a questionnaire. A statistically significant impact was found between parental influence and student's attitude towards the choice of the study of TE and VT. Okocha (2009) conducted a study on societal attitude towards VE. Frequencies and simple percentages were used in the analysis of the data. Study findings revealed that parents preferred white-collar and socially prestigious profession to VE though they are aware of the employment values inherent in VE.

Evans (1972) indicated that though parents exhibited a negative attitude towards VE, learner's attained satisfaction as a results of the experience gained from VE. Parental attitude towards VE was linked to their knowledge on the relevance and job opportunities of VE.

Factors that affects students attitude towards the choice of VTE

Azubuike (2011) determined factors that influence learner's attitude towards vocational and technical subjects (VTS) (Home Economics) in some selected SHS with a structured questionnaire and a sample size of 100 SHS learners.The study specifically looked into the influence of parent's socio-economic status and gender on learner's choice of the study of VTS. The mean and frequency distribution were used for data analysis. Study findings revealed that gender, teacher's qualification, interest, socio-economic status, and guidance from professional counsellors or instructors were the factors influencing the attitude of learners towards the choice of the study of VTS.

Kumuthavalli (2016) examined the possible factors determining the enhancement of student's attitude in an attempt to heighten college student's attitude for learning VE and TP using a descriptive survey design with a sample size of 100 college learners. The main instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. With reference to students' knowledge on VTE, study findings revealed that students had low knowledge on the existence VE and Technical institutions. However, societal factors, qualification and socio-economic status was found to influence student's attitude towards the choice of VTE.

Harun and Rahim, (2019), found that learners who get enrolled in TVI have weak academic performance and cannot study at the college. However,

Awang, Sail, Alavi & Ismail (2011) revealed that learners have a positive attitude towards VTE. It is clear that in this type of programme, youngsters find gratification in learning. This surges learner's eagerness and readiness to study and focus their energies on the critical domestic issues of enhancement. In workplaces, VE provides workers with the needed rehabilitation. Datuk and Idris (2019), recommended the enhancement and promotion of TVET courses.

Daniel-White (2002) revealed a link between societal culture and learner's career choice and attitude towards VET. In Nigeria, people usually select a job based on friends perception and societal standards (Okorie, 2011; Odu & Biose, 2003).

Studies have shown that the general public have a poor perception towards TVET programmes (Awang et al. 2011; Okorie, 2011; Odu & Biose, 2003; Evans, 1972). However, results from Awang et al. (2011) showed that though opinions about TVET programmes being (problematic, designed for learners with low academic background, criminals, and possessing little interest in the advancement of tertiary education) was debunked but SHS learners still demonstrated little interest in furthering their education in TVET schools. Mansor (1981) suggested that learners were more receptive to VE as reflected in the substantial surge in the enrollment of learners VS.

Alnaqbi (2016) posited that peer influence is one of the factors that influence learner's attitude towards VE. He added that some learners chose their subjects based on what their close friends selected. Findings of Alnaqi concurs with a study conducted by Benson (2013) who opined that peer influence contributes fifty percent of learner's choice of career path. Ayub

(2017) is inconsistent with previous findings. Study findings revealed no significant impact of peers on learner's attitude towards TVET.

The society trusts that VET is for students who are academically weak. Aside societal attitude, the trainers burdened with the duty of teaching learners in schools lack knowledge on the relevance of the subject, and for that reason, cannot encourage learners to pursue careers in vocational studies.

Difference in Attitude towards VTE on the basis of Gender of Students

VTE has been found to have some connection to the demographic background of students. The most common demographic characteristic in the literature are gender and age. According to Hodges (2000), there is extreme gender discrimination in terms of the attitude towards VTE in Nigeria. Hodges stressed that most males held positive views about vocational and technical education and so enrolled in such programmes more of the time than females. Sarıçoban (2014) also investigated the attitudes of Technical and Vocational School (TVS) students' towards the TVE at Turkish Universities and found that gender differences existed in how students viewed vocational and technical education. Specifically, Sarıçoban also confirmed that males are more likely to have 'soft-spot' for VTE compared to females.

According to Sherman (2006) initial outcomes by gender of VET learners were also considered. It was found that males had positive and favourable attitudes toward VTE and this resulted in a smoother transition to work, achieving better job performance compared to women six months after training. Najoli (2019) examined Africa's extent of women's access to technical education using a sample size of 120 trainees and trainers. Data were obtained using both the questionnaire and the structured interview guide.

Tables were used to present both descriptive and inferential statistics. The Pearson correlation of -0.023 shows a weak Women in Technical Education and Development (WITED) program in TVET institutions. This demonstrates that gender inequality exists in terms of TVET enrolment, access, retention and completion rates. Cultural stereotypes and absence of role models are the key barriers to female enrolment and outstanding success in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses. According to Gupta (2019), girls' education has gained the attention of the Ghanaian government, the public, educationists, and parents. The statistics of the census of Ghana reveals a low percentage of educated women in the country. Real development, therefore, would dawn on Ghana only with the emancipation of women and awakening of the masses. It is a global problem to awaken the people towards, "gender equality." Changes in a demographic profile of a nation depends largely on attitude and behaviour of individuals in respect of the status of women, gender equality, job differences and developmental issues according to Gupta (2019).

Ayonmike (2014) examined the factors influencing female involvement in Delta State University, Abraka's undergraduate standard technical education programs. Among other factors, the study revealed that the factors influencing the females' involvement included: government factors; school factors such as insufficient infrastructural facilities and social factors.

Bello, Danjuma and Adamu (2007) explored and described the vocational training needs of out-of-school youths between the ages of 15-25 in Bauchi Metropolis of Bauchi State, Nigeria. Precisely, the researchers aimed to explain their demographic characteristics, analyze their needs for VT,

the effect of gender on vocational needs, and also recognize issues relevant to their needs for VET. The design for the study was survey that involved a total number of 128 young ones who were out of school and were between the ages of 15-25. A 16-item questionnaire, developed by the researchers and validated by experts from the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Vocational and Technology Education Program, was the instrument used for the study. Using frequency and percentage statistical methods, the data obtained was analysed. The study revealed among oher things that more males preferred vocational programs as compared to the females.

Research have shown the viewpoints of learners on gender-related difference (Benson, 2013; Henderson & Fisher, 2007; Rajput, 1988; Wibisana, 1996). According to Üstün and Savas, (2010), female students in vocational high schools are more equipped with the skills given in enterprise. They emphasized that the implementation of these skills help learners face the world of work and aids the improvisation of workforce quality. As per Walters (1989), with reference to VTP, males have more positive attitude as compared to the female (Bergh, 1997). Nevertheless, boys hold more negative concepts towards VET programs whilst females tends to have positive perception towards VE (Rojewskiand & Sheng, 1993). Relationship or association was found between negative perception and males from higher socioeconomic standard (Rossetti, 1990). Study findings clearly shows that education is the vital force which can only ensure social freedom of the women. Women should be made aware of their rights in the society, at home, at work place etc. With the help of education the confidence of women should be developed. Education must be more meaningful so that women can use it for their rights.

Difference in Attitude towards VTE on the basis of Age of Students

Based on the findings of the survey, young individuals face a lot of challenges with their vocational training needs such as career guidance, absence of moral support and adult abuse. Akubudike (2003) found that students across all ages held similar views about vocational and technical education. This suggests that age is not of important consideration in the attitudes of students towards vocational and technical education.

Relevance of VTE

Owen and Vinarsky (1983) revealed that learners enrolled in vocational programmes noted developments in particular dimensions of their children's performance. Willingness to explore and learn new things and ability to working to meet acceptable standards was one of the greatest improvements. They asserted that the degree to which graduates from these vocational and technical institutions succeed in the world of work is one of the major or influential factor that affects public attitudes towards VTE. Wong (1977) posited that majority of families believed that jobs which soils the hand cant be compared to the ones which does not. Wong added that most parents still perceive or hold academic education in high esteem even with the premise that there is little job opportunities for individual who have only gained academic qualification. Wong also revealed the nature of job opportunites available to persons who enroll on the VTE programme. He reiterated that more and more job vacancies are in the global world for those who have attained or gained technical education. Several studies have shown that generally people have less positive attitudes towards VTE and VE. This is because vocational school have bad societal reputation (McKenna & Ferrero,

1991; Rossetti, 1990; Saavedra, 1970). The emergence of vocational studies in the educational curriculum has powerfully aided those who have applied it.

Suggestions to Improve VTE

There are many aspects (curriculum, personal view point, future employment, parents, campus facilities, the education fees and teachers) with reference to decision making with VE which give an impact on the decision based on diverse societies. Studies suggest that the government should make known the good status of VE to the society (Okocha, 2009; Edward, et al, 2008; Pimpa, 2007). According to Dave and Palmer, (2005), study centers should be environmentally friendly with more opportunity to socialize. Several scholars stressed on the fact that in order to support learners' career choice, there is the need for career guidance in VET schools and instates (Noncolela, 1999; Edward, et al. 2008). Sube (1981), looked at the impact of environment factors on decision-making in career choice. Study findings revealed that friends and parents contributed to 50% in young people decision-making in career choice (Safarmamad, 2019; Ayub, 2017; Ahmed & Khamis, 2015). This suggests that parents must be more involved in career choice of their children.

Teachers should try to discover the hidden qualities of both male and female students with the help of which they can change their own attitude towards life. Values such as respect, honesty and responsibility should be inculcated in learners for life satisfaction.

Chapter Summary

Literature regarding to the study was reviewed in this chapter. The review considered the theoretical framework, conceptual framework,

conceptual review and the empirical review. It can be gatthered from the review that, there remains an absence of agreement in the literature on the attitudes of students and parents toward vocational and technical education. This is because some studies have found that there are positive attitudes towards vocational and technical education whereas other studies have revealed contrary findings.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

The study sought to investigate the attitudes of parents and senior high school students towards VTE as a career choice in the STMA in the Western Region. This section focuses on the research methodology that was used for the study. Specifically, the section describes the research design, study area, population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, data collection procedures, data processing and analysis.

Research Design

The design for the study was the mixed-methods approach. Specifically, the study used mixed methods with the concurrent mixed method approach where quantitative data was triangulated with the qualitative data at the data analysis stage. Mixed methods research design involves the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data in response to research questions and hypotheses (Creswell, 2014). This study design is a scientific enquiry, according to Creswell, which includes the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data and the combination of the two types of data by means of diverse designs that may include philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. This method of scientific enquiry is premised on the fact that the qualitative and quantitative combination of data allows a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

Looking at the nature of this study, the use of mixed methods design made it possible to get detailed and comprehensive information to help describe, interpret and make an informed judgement concerning the impact of

attitudes of parents and students towards vocational and technical education on students' career choice. In addition, the use of the qualitative methodology in a broad framework of a quantitative methodology helped to gather further data from a smaller sample in addition to the data collected using measurement-oriented instrument (questionnaires). It is however worth noting there are some pitfalls in the use of the mixed methods in that the two methods (quantitative and qualitative methods) are based on different theoretical and philosophical assumptions. The mixed methods design was used to obtain diversified information to attain a higher degree of validity and reliability of data and overcome the deficits of a single method study.

Study Area

Sekondi Takoradi Metropolis is among the 260 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana. It is one of the 14 MMDAs in the Western Region and is situated at the south-eastern part of the Western Region. Although it is the smallest, it is greatly developed and the third-largest Metropolis in the whole of Ghana. Sekondi-Takoradi is the administrative Capital of the Metropolitan. Kansaworado which is close to Takoradi Polytechnic, flows towards the Buthia lagoon, creating a widespread, beautiful marshland. The Essei lagoon which is situated on the coast, about 200km west of Accra lies between Ekuase and Takoradi.

STMA is bordered to the west by Ahanta West Municipal and to the east by Shama District. Atlantic Ocean is at the south of the Metropolis whilst Wassa East District is at the northern part. It takes up land size of 191.7 km2 and has a population of 559,548 with 273,436 males and 286,112 females, according to 2010 population and housing census. STMA can boast of several

basic schools, senior high schools and tertiary institutions all aimed at providing quality education. Tertiary institutions found in the metropolis include Holy Child College of education and Takoradi Technical University. There are nine public SHS and numerous private and public basic schools. Among the SHSs found in STMA include Sekondi College, Archbishop Porter Girls' and Ghana Secondary/Technical School.

Population

According to Gorard (2001) population can defined as a group of subjects from which a sample is selected so as to obtain study results.

The target population of the study were all Senior High School(SHS) students in public schools and parents in the STMA in the Western Region of Ghana. There are nine SHSs in the Metropolis out of which two are boys' SHSs, two are girls' SHSs and five are mixed sex SHSs. A total number of four schools were selected out of the nine Senior High Schools in the Metropolis. The schools from which the students were selected were Ahantaman Girls SHS, Adiembra SHS, St. John's SHS and Fijai SHS. I chose form three students since their long stay on campus might have exposed them to several attitudes and perceptions towards VTE as a career choice. In all, the accessible population of students for the study was 2195. The population and sample distribution for the various schools are shown in Table 1. (See page 56)

Sampling Procedures

According to Creswell (2014), sample refers to the studying of a population's sub-group in order to make generalization. Fowler (2009) he admonishes that the need for sampling in research is to choose from an array a

best representative of the populations' portion. The multi-stage sampling procedures were used to select the sample and is described below:

Stage1

In the selection of the study area, that is Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, a purposive sampling, non-probability sampling was used. The metropolis was of interest because of lack of employment in the area and also it has all categories of SHS that is, 2 boys, 2 girls and 4 mixed sex public SHSs.

Stage 2

In the selecton of schools for the study, the proportional stratified random sampling procedure was adopted. In doing this, all the public SHS were put into strata. Specifically, all the categories of schools were put into different stratum. Each of the strata represented a group of of students with similar characteristics. I selected Senior High School from each stratum by using the lottery method of simple random sampling was used. In doing this, the names of each of the schools were written on pieces of paper and put in a bowl. It was thoroughly stirred and without looking into the bowl, a school was selected at a time and the name of the school selected was recorded on a different sheet of paper. The same process was repeated four times until all the four schools were selected. It must be indicated that the picking was done with replacement. In simple random sampling, units to be sampled apart from having an equal chance of being choosen are also independent of each other (Creswell, 2014). The simple random sampling was used because each of the schools possesses similar characteristics. Thus 1 boys' school, 1 girls' school and 2 mixed sex schools ensured that there was no bias in the representation of

gender in the study and the four schools were adequate for the generalization of the results.

Stage 3

After the schools were selected, in accordance with the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination and a known accessible population, the sample was chosen. The formula given by Krejcie and Morgan is shown below:

$s = X^2NP(1\text{-}P) \div d^2 (N - 1) + X^2P(1\text{-}P)$.

s = required sample size.

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841).

N = the population size.

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

Therefore, in getting the sample for the study, the calculation was done as shown:

$s=3.841 \times 2195 \times .50 \div .05^2 (2195 - 1) + 3.841 \times .50 (1 - .50)$

$s=327.02$

$s=327.$

The sample for the study was therefore 327 for the students. Proportionate sampling was used to distribute the chosen sample across the four schools that were selected. After this stage, the simple random sampling was used again to select each of the proportion from each of the schools with the class register of each school as the sampling frame. Convenience sampling

was used to select the parents. A total number of ten parents were selected whether their child participated in the research or not. Parents were selected from each of the four schools used for the study. Ten parents was appropriate since it will provide quality and rich data as well as prevent saturation. Permission was sought from parents that attended Parent Teacher Association meetings organized by headteachers of each of the four schools during which I scheduled meetings with the parents involved for the interview to conduct the interview.

The population and the sample distribution of the students are shown in Table Table 1: Population for the students

School	Population	Sample
Ahantaman Girls SHS	520	77
Adiembra SHS	650	97
St. John's SHS	515	77
Fijai SHS	510	76
Total	2195	327

Source: Regional Education Office and Personal Calculations

Data Collection Instrument

The questionnaire was adapted from the instrument of Safarmamad (2019) who examined the factors influencing students' decisions and willingness to enroll in vocational and technical education in Tajikistan. A questionnaire effectively provides a way of assessing the behaviour, opinions, attitudes, preferences and intentions of moderately large numbers of respondents and is quicker and less expensive compared to other methods (Paralov, 2006). I used the questionnaire since the focus of the study was on students' attitudes, preferences, opinions and intentions they have regarding vocational and technical education when it comes to career choice career.

Though questionnaires do not encourage probing they are fast to score, easy to administer and not time consuming (Payne & Payne, 2004).

The questionnaires had four sections. Section A addressed demographic information of the students, while section B was based on students' willingness to enroll on VTE programmes. Section C addressed the general attitudes of adolescents towards VTE. With each item in the questionnaire, a student was required to tick in the space provided whether he or she strongly disagreed- SD - 1, disagreed – D - 2, Agreed- A - 3, or strongly agreed– SA - 4. Section B, which addressed the students' willingness to enroll on VTE programmes, had 15 items. Section C, which looked at the the general attitudes of adolescent towards students towards VTE, consisted of 15 items.

Pilot Testng/Pretesting of Instrument

In order to clear ambiguities and further refine the research instrument, the questionnaire was pre-tested at the Methodist Senior High School in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis in the Western Region. Methodist Senior High School was used because it has a similar administrative structure and offers same programmes like the study area and is within the geographical area. A critical examination of each item and its meaning is known as pre-testing (Kumar, 2011). It also assists the researcher in gaining a balanced understanding of the frame of reference pertaining to the questions and wording. Pilot testing aids in determining the effectiveness of the research organization. It also aids in the evaluation of the suitability of the research methods and design. Pilot testing aids in determining the effectiveness of the research organization. It also aids in the evaluation of the suitability of the research methods and design. The researcher becomes acquainted with the

research environment through pilot testing. It will allow the researcher to identify potential flaws and ambiguities in the research instruments and correct them immediately before data collection begins (Kumar, 2011). A reliability test was performed on the pre-tested questionnaire using the Bland and Altman (1997) alpha score, which states that an alpha score closer to 1 indicates a greater correlation between items and that 0.7 or 0.8 is adequate for most social science applications.

For the qualitative data, a structured interview guide was utilized in collecting data from the parents for the study. The use of an interview guide helped to obtain in-depth information from the parents.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Before the pre-testing was done, the instrument was subjected to face and content validity. The content validity of the self-developed questionnaire and the structured interview guide of parents' and students' attitudes towards vocational and technical education as a career choice was evaluated by my supervisor who is a professional and well-grounded in her field and again by experts in the field of measurement and evaluation. First, to ensure face validity, the questionnaire was given to colleagues of high research credentials after it had been designed for relevant comments and suggestions. Second, to ascertain content validity, expert opinion, necessary corrections, and judgment of the supervisor and experts from the field of guidance and counselling was relied on for approval.

In ensuring reliability, the corrected instrument was pilot tested on respondents with similar characteristics to check the consistency of the individual items in measuring the construct under consideration and that

Cronbach's Alpha, a reliability coefficient was used to check how reliable items on the instrument were. This was done after conducting a pilot test of the instrument at Takoradi SHS using 50 students. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.82. As indicated by Pallant (2010) a reliability coefficient of 0.60 or higher is considered moderately appropriate.The coefficient 0.82 obtained implied that the instrument was reliable for the study.

Data Trustworthiness of Interview Data

In ensuring the trustworthiness of the interview data, four main issues were considered. In the first place, the credibility of the data was ensured. This involves the confidence that the researcher has in the truth of the study's findings Korstjensa and Moser (2018). By triangulating sources, this was established. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton, 1990). I ensured that data were collected from different parents at different times and points. After this, transferability which demonstrates that the research study's findings apply to other contexts was ensured. Transferability, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. The researcher facilitates the transferability judgment by a potential user through thick description. This was done by giving descriptions of the implications and applications of the findings.

Conformability as indicated by Lincoln and Guba(1985) shows whether the findings are a reflection of the respondents' views was also ensured. In doing this, I made clear every step in the data collection period to

give confidence in the result. Finally, dependability which according to Lincoln and Guba refers to showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated was established. This was done by ensuring that the study was reported in such a way that other researchers can replicate the study.

Ethical Considerations

The consent of all the respondents was appropriately sought before their involvement in the study. Participants were briefed on the purpose of the study in order to ensure informed consent and participation in the recruitment processes. Respondents were given a written consent form to read and sign or thumb print if they wish to participate in the study. This was accomplished through the signing of appropriately designed consent forms. Throughout the data collection process, confidentiality and anonymity were strictly enforced. Finally, respondents were assured that their responses would be kept private.

Data Collection Procedures

Approval was given by my supervisor for data collection after the questionnaire had been vetted. Ethical clearance was obtained from the College of Education Review Board in the University of Cape Coast after which a letter of introduction was taken from the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the University of Cape Coast and delivered to the various schools involved to seek permission from parents from whom data were gathered for the study. The heads of various schools were consulted for approval. I corresponded with the heads of the different schools to obtain permission to perform the survey with students during school hours. The introductory letter was submitted to each of the four Assistant Heads of the public Senior High Schools, (i.e., Adiembra Senior High School, St. John's

Senior High School, Ahantaman Senior High School and Fijai Senior High School) to let them know the intentions of the exercise and further scheduled time and date for the exercise. When time and date were due, I asked for help from two teachers to gather the participants at one place. I provided a brief overview of the importance of the research to the participants and the teachers who helped me to distribute questionnaires and supervise participants. The participants were assured of confidentiality, and voluntary participation was elicited. The questionnaires were distributed at random to participants in the study. Participants and the teachers involved were motivated to ensure their full participation and attention. The questionnaires took approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The return rate of questionnaire administered to students was 327 which represented 100%. The data collection process took about 3 weeks. A structured interview guide was used to collect data from parents. I intervewed the parents at different conveniently chosen venues and scheduled times given by the parents. The interview was done based on the preferred language choice of the parents and recorded using a smart phone. All 10 parents were interviewed and each interview lasted approximately 10 to 15 minutes. The recorded information was then transferred from the smart phone to my personal laptop computer for safe keeping.

Data Processing and Analysis

The data collected were edited, cleaned, serially ordered, coded and subjected to statistical computations. With the aid of Statistical Products of Service Solutions (SPSS), the data obtained were analysed. The demographic data were analysed using mean and standard deviation. Data for research question one was analysed using percentages and frequencies while the mean

and standard deviation was used for analyzing data for research question two. Thematic analysis was used for analyzing data for research question three. Hypothesis one was tested using independent samples t-test while hypothesis two was tested using one-way ANOVA.

Chapter Summary

This chapter sort to outline the methods and procedures involved in carrying out the study. As mentioned, a descriptive survey design and a sample of 327 students and 10 parents was used for the study through multistage sampling and purposive sampling respectively. The sample was drawn from four SHS in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. Ethical issues of confidentiality, autonomy, anonymity and informed consent were considered. Analysis of data used both descriptive and inferential statistics in accordance with the research questions and hypotheses of the study as well as thematic analysis for the interview data.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate parents' and students' attitude towards VTE as a career choice in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis in the Western Region of Ghana. This chapter presents the findiings or results and subsequently the discussion of the study.

Demographic Characteristics of Students

This section looks at demographic characteristics of the respondents. A summary of the responses of the students on the demographic characteristics is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Background Data of Respondents (n=327)

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	174	53.2
Female	153	46.8
Age		
11-15	74	22.6
16-20	229	70.0
21-25	24	7.4
School		
Adiembra SHS	97	29.7
Ahantaman Girls SHS	77	23.5
Fijai SHS	76	23.3
St. John's SHS	77	23.5

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Table 2 shows that the demographic characteristics of respondents. Among the students, 174 representing 53.2% were males whereas 153 which represents 46.8% were females. This shows more male respondents as compared to females. Also, 22.5% of the respondents were within the ages 11 to 15 years. Most of the respondents (70.0%) indicated that they were within 16 to 20 years. However, 7.4% of the respondents were within the ages of 21 to 25 years.

With respect to the school respondents attend, about (29.7%) of the respondents were from Adiembra SHS. Approximately, (23.5%) of the respondents were from Ahantaman SHS. Respondents (23.3%) were from Fijai SHS. However, 23.5% of the respondents were from St. John's SHS. Results from table two shows that majority of the respondents were from Adiembra SHS because 97 which represented about 30% of respondents were from Adiembra SHS. The background data of the respondents are relevant in the study because there is the likelihood that the attitude of students towards VTE may be influenced by their gender, age and even the school they attend. For example, it is more likely that male would have a favourable attitude towards purely technical education compared to purely vocational education.

The educational data of the parents and guardians of the students were also obtained. These are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Educational Data of Parents and Guardians of Respondents

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Fathers		
Basic	64	20.6
Secondary	136	43.9
Tertiary	59	19.0
Non-formal	51	16.5
Total	310	100.0
Mothers		
Basic	52	16.8
Secondary	126	40.6
Tertiary	64	20.6
Non-formal	68	22.0
Total	310	100.0
Guardians		
Basic	5	29.4
Secondary	6	35.3
Tertiary	6	35.3
Total	17	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Results from Table 3 indicate that 310 of the respondents indicated the educational backgrounds of their fathers and mothers. However, 17 respondents were living with guardians and so indicated that the educational levels of their guardians. It is seen that most of the respondents indicated that their fathers had secondary level education (n=136, 43.9%). Concerning the mothers of the respondents, majority of the respondents that their mothers had secondary level education (n=126, 40.6%). Finally, it is shown by the respondents living with guardians that their guardians had secondary and tertiary level education (n=6, 35.3%). From the educational data of parents and guardians of respondents, it is clear that most of the respondents have parents

who have some level of education. The educational data of the parents and guardians were considered relevant in this study because the attitude of parents and guardians towards VTE could be informed by their own level of education. This is because education can enlighten parents and give them a more open mind about vocational and technical education.

The data obtained from the respondents on the occupation of their parents and guardians have been presented in Table 4. From the data, it can be seen that more than half of the respondents (n=185, 59.7%) indicated that their fathers were self-employed. Similarly, 175 respondents corresponding to 56.5% indicated that their mothers were self-employed. Finally, it can be seen in Table 4 that (n=10 58.8%) of the respondents indicated that their guardians were self-employed. It is clear from majority of the respondents that their parents or guardians were self-employed.

Table 4: Occupational Data of Parents and Guardians

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Fathers		
Education	37	11.9
Health	22	7.1
Corporate	18	5.8
Self-employed	185	59.7
Others	48	15.5
Total	310	100.0
Mothers		
Education	42	13.5
Health	28	9.1
Self-employed	175	56.5
Others	65	20.9
Total	310	100.0
Guardians		
Education	4	23.6
Health	3	17.6
Self-employed/trader	10	58.8
Total	17	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Results from Table 4 shows the occupational data of parents and guardians. Wth reference to the occupational data of fathers, about (11.9%) of the respondents indicated that they were into education. Also, 7.1% of the respondents posited that they were into health. Aproximately (5.8%) of the respondents opined that they were into cooperate business. However, 59.7% of the respondents showed that they were self-employed. Again, 15.5% of the respondents showed that they were into other businesses.

Wth respect to the occupational data of mothers, about 13.5% of the respondents indicated that they were into education. Also, 9.1% of the respondents posited that they were into health. Aproximately 56.5% of the respondents showed that they were self-employed. Again, 20.9% of the respondents showed that they were into other businesses

Wth regards to the occupational data of guardians, about 23.6% of the respondents indicated that they were into education. Also, 17.6% of the respondents posited that they were into health. However, 58.8% of the respondents showed that they were self-employed.

The educational data of the parents and guardians were considered relevant in this study because the attitude of parents and guardians towards VTE could be informed by their own level of education. This is because education can enlighten parents and give them a more open mind about vocational and technical education.

Demographic Characteristics of Parents in the Study

The demographic characteristics of the parents interviewed in the study were also obtained. In terms of gender, the 10 parents interviewed comprised five males and five females. In terms of educational background, 5 out of the

10 interviewees had secondary level education. Three out of the 10 parents had tertiary level education while the remaining two parents had basic level education. Finally, in terms of occupation, four out of the 10 interviewees indicated that they were traders. Three out of the 10 interviewees were teachers while the remaining three were either self-employed or doing other jobs like mechanical engineering.

Main Analysis

This part presents the results of the main analysis. The results are presented in the order of the research questions. The study employed a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 – 4 (1= strongly agree, 2= agree, 3=disagree and 4= strongly disagree) for the data collected. Mean score of 2.5 was used as a criterion based on the responses. That is: (1+2+3+4)/4. Items with mean scores above 2.5 depict disagreement to the item, whereas items with mean scores below 2.5 depict agreement to the item.

Research Question One: What is the level of willingness of students in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis to pursue Vocational and Technical education?

This research question was meant to identify the level of willingness of students in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis to pursue Vocational and Technical education. The respondents were asked a series of questions to find out their willingness to pursue Vocational and Technical education. The results are presented in Tables 5 below.

Table 5: Preferred Career after General Secondary Education

Career	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Teaching and education	88	26.9
Banking	47	14.4
Health	50	15.3
Designer / Artist	22	6.7
Self-employed	100	30.6
Others	20	6.1
Total	327	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Table 5 shows the views of the respondents when they were asked to indicate their preferred career choices. It can be seen from the Table that the main careers preferred by the respondents were being self-employed (30.6%), teaching and education (26.9%), health (15.3%) and banking (14.4%). These were the career areas indicated by most of the respondents. For those who indicated other careers, the common ones indicated were journalists, actors, musicians and caterers.

The respondents were asked on their desire to enroll in VTE after their SHS education. The responses given are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Willingness to Enroll in VTE

Extent	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Totally Agree	17	5.2
Agree as Last Resort	48	14.7
Tend to Disagree	95	29.1
Totally Disagree	138	42.2
Don't Know	29	8.9
Total	327	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2020)

From Table 6, it is shown that majority of the respondents (42.2%) totally disagree with being willing to enroll in VTE. About 29% of the

respondents also tend to disagree with enrolling in VTE. Only 5% of the respondents totally agreed to being willing to enroll in VTE with about 15% agreeing as a last resort. Based on the results, it can be asserted that the majority of the learners were not willing to enroll in vocational and technical education after their general secondary education. The few who were willing to enroll in vocational and technical indicated that they will do so as a last resort.

Further, the respondents were asked to rank vocational and technical education if they were to choose to pursue vocational and technical education. the results obtained are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Ranking for Vocational and Technical Education

Extent	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
First Choice	10	3.1
Second Choice	62	19.0
Third Choice	161	49.2
Fourth Choice	63	19.3
Don't Know	31	9.4
Total	327	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2020)

From the results in Table 7, it can be seen that majority of the respondents (49.2%) ranked VTE as their third choice if they were to pursue VTE. Only 3% of the respondents ranked VTE as their first choice with 19% of the respondents ranking VTE as their second choice. From the results, the accumulated percentage of respondents who ranked VTE as a third choice or more is higher (78%) than those who ranked vocational and technical education as first or second choice (22%).

Finally, in response to research question one, the students were asked to indicate the extent to which they will consider the personal interest and future employment opportunities in deciding to pursue vocational and technical education. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Considerations in Choosing Vocational and Technical Education

Considerations	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Personal Interest		
Don't Know	26	8.0
Not Very Important	42	12.8
Fairly Important	139	42.5
Very Important	120	36.7
Total	327	100.0
Future Employment Opportunities		
Don't Know	21	6.4
Not Very Important	34	10.4
Fairly Important	121	37.0
Very Important	151	46.2
Total	327	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2020)

From Table 8, 42.5% of the respondents considered personal interest to be fairly important in deciding to pursue vocational and technical education. About 37% of the respondents also considered personal interest to be very important in deciding to pursue vocational and technical education. About 46% of the respondents considered future employment opportunities as very important in deciding to pursue vocational and technical education. This was higher than the 37% of the respondents who considered future employment opportunities as fairly important in deciding to pursue vocational and technical education.

Overall, it is evident that future employment opportunities were considered as very important in deciding to pursue vocational and technical education compared to personal interest. This implies that for most of the respondents if they decide to choose a career in vocational and technical education, future employment opportunities will be a major consideration.

The parents who were interviewed were asked to indicate whether their wards were willing to pursue TVET as career choice options. Generally, the parents had divided views. However, most of them expressed the view that their children were not willing to pursue TVET as career choice options. Only a few indicated that their children were willing. Some of the statements made by the parents are shown below:

> *For me, my children said they won't do TVET. They have been saying that society views people who do TVET as unintelligent*. – PA 8
>
> *I am not sure my children would want to choose vocational careers. The way people talk about those who choose vocational careers is not good at all*. – PA 1
>
> *One of my children said she would choose a vocational course. She said she really likes it and she would want to be a caterer and a designer*. – PA 7

Research Question two: What are the attitudes of students in senior high schools in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis towards Vocational and Technical education?

This research question sort to find out the attitudes of students in senior high schools in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis towards Vocational and Technical education. The respondents were provided with a list of statements

to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statements. The data were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Attitudes of Students towards Vocational and Technical education

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
Graduates of TVET are more likely to find a job than those who completed general secondary education	4.04	1.12
TVET is for men only	2.31	0.66
TVET is for industrial employees only	2.52	0.85
TVET does not prepare people to set up their own business	2.51	0.85
I believe TVET is for those who do not perform well academically	2.52	0.85
TVET leads to jobs which are well paid	3.25	1.08
TVET training leads to jobs which are not well regarded in society	2.55	0.79
TVET does not offer good career opportunities	2.55	0.98
TVET is for school dropouts	2.36	0.77
TVET is for Students who did not get the chance to pursue senior high education	2.46	0.85
TVET is only for those who have financial challenges	2.47	0.99
TVET is for anyone interested in pursuing it	3.64	1.07
Mean of Means and Standard Deviation	2.77	0.91

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 9 presents results on attitude of students towards VTE. Items used were measured on a five-point likert scale. A base line of 3.0 was used as a basis for comparison. That is, mean scores above 3.0 meant agreement to the statement. Mean scores below 3.0 meant disagreement to the statement. Respondents concurred that graduates of TVET were more likely to find a job than those who completed general secondary education (M=4.04, SD=1.12). Respondents disagreed to the statement that "TVET is for men only" (M=2.31, SD=0.66). Respondents opined that TVET is not for industrial employees only (M=2.52, SD=0.85). Most of the respondents believed that TVET does

prepare people to set up their own business (M=2.51, SD=0.85). Respondents debunked the statement "I believe TVET is for those who do not perform well academically" (M=2.52, SD=0.85). Respondents asserted that TVET leads to jobs which are well paid (M=3.25, SD=1.08). Majority of the respondents disagreed to the statement that "TVET training leads to jobs which are not well regarded in society" (M=2.55, SD=0.79). Majority of the respondents disagreed to the statement that "TVET does not offer good career opportunities" (M=2.55, SD=0.98). Respondents debunked that "TVET is for school dropouts" (M=2.36, SD=0.77). Most of the respondents averred that TVET is for anyone interested in pursuing it (M=3.64, SD=1.07). However, respondents disagreed that "TVET is for Students who did not get the chance to pursue senior high education and TVET is only for those who have financial challenges" that is, (M=2.46, SD=0.85) and (M=2.47, SD=0.99) respectively.

Results from Table 9 revealed that students had a positive attitude towards VTE because they indicated that TVET is for anyone interested in pursuing it, TVET is not only for those who have financial challenges, TVET is not for Students who did not get the chance to pursue senior high education, TVET is not for school dropouts, TVET does offer good career opportunities, TVET training leads to jobs which are well regarded in society, TVET leads to jobs which are well paid, TVET training leads to jobs which are well regarded in society, TVET leads to jobs which are well paid, TVET is for those who do perform well academically, TVET does prepare people to set up their own business, TVET is for industrial employees only, TVET is not for men only

and graduates of TVET are more likely to find a job than those who completed general secondary education.

The parents were also asked to indicate the attitude of their children towards TVET as career choice options. Most of the parents indicated that their children had positive things to say about TVET. Some of their comments are quoted below:

> *I think so far, my children say only positive things about TVET. They usually say that you can easily get a job to do after school*. – PA 3
>
> *Even though my children didn't want to do TVET, they viewed TVET in a positive way*. – PA 4
>
> *I think if it was not society that views people who choose TVET careers negatively, my child would have pursued some. She likes it but she thinks people will think she is not intelligent*. – PA 2

Research Question three: What are the attitudes of parents towards VTE as a career choice for students in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis?

This research question sought to find out the attitudes of parents towards VTE as a career choice for students in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. The data for this question was obtained from the interviewed parents. Specifically, the parents were asked a series of questions to establish their attitudes towards VTE.

In the first place, the respondents were asked to indicate what they knew and thought about vocational and technical education. All the respondents were knowledgeable about vocational and technical education. They knew what it entailed and had positive views about it. Specifically, the parents indicated that vocational and technical education included technical

skills, building and construction, plumbing, vocational skills, electronics, visual arts, and home economics. All the respondents were of the view that VTE gave students practical and employable skills and so was beneficial to all manner of students. Some of the specific statements of the respondents are quoted below:

> *Yes, I know about vocational and technical education. It entails practical training for students and I think practical nature helps increase the employability of students after school*. – PA 3
>
> *Vocational and technical education equips students with technical skills, building and construction, plumbing and other vocational skills that can make them self-employed*. – PA 1
>
> *In my view, VTE is very good since it helps students to be creative and also encourages self-employment. This can help to gradually fade out the idea that white coloured jobs are the best*. – PA 2

Secondly, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they had children already pursuing vocational and technical education and whether they would encourage other people to pursue vocational and technical education. From the data obtained, four out of the 10 respondents had their children already in vocational and technical courses. Three of the respondents also indicated that they would encourage people they know to pursue vocational and technical courses. However, the remaining three respondents indicated they would not want their children to pursue VTE. Some of the direct quotes of the respondents are cited:

> *Yes, my daughter is actually in vocational education. She had the interest and I liked it too because I know it will help her gain skills that*

will make her self-employed. This will be useful since there is a high rate of unemployment in the country. – PA 4

My son is doing a technical course. He liked it and we agreed that he can do it because it can help to get a secured work in the future. – PA 7

I don't have any child in a vocational or technical course and I don't really like it as a career path because society usually disrespects people who are into vocational and technical education. – PA 8

Finally, in response to research question three, the parents were asked to indicate who they thought was eligible to enroll in TVET programme. They were also asked to indicate whether TVET was for academically poor students and whether TVET was expensive.

All the parents indicated that every student is eligible for VTE as long as the person has an interest. As to whether TVET is for academically poor students, there were two opposing views. Specifically, seven of the respondents were of the view that VTE was for all students and not for only academically poor students. However, three of the respondents supported the view that VTE was for academically poor students. They argued that this is a common perception in society. Some of the specific statements of the respondents are quoted:

VTE is for everyone, regardless of the academic background. I think it all depends on the interest of the student. – PA 10

Well, for most people in society, the opinion is that those who choose vocational and technical courses are usually academically poor. So that's how I see it sometimes. When a person is not academically

strong for general education, then the person can enter vocational and technical education. – PA 8

Since vocational and technical education equips students with practical skills, I think everyone can pursue it. I personally think it is a good career path to choose. – PA 1

From the views expressed by the parents who were interviewed, it is clear that all the parents viewed vocational and technical education positively. They saw it as a means to provide practical and employable skills to students. Despite all the parents holding this view, few parents did not like the idea of their children pursuing VTE mainly because of society's perception about TVET. However, the majority of the parents in the study were willing to encourage young people to pursue vocational and technical education.

Hypothesis One:

$H_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference between the attitudes of male and female students towards vocational and technical education.

$H_1$1: There is a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of male and female students towards vocational and technical education.

This hypothesis sought to find out the significant difference in the attitudes of male and female students towards vocational and technical education. The independent samples t-test was used in analysing the data at 0.05 level of significance. The results are shown in Tables 10 and 12.

The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was done first to test the homogeneity of variances. The results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

	F	Sig
Equal variances assumed	0.009	.984
Equal variances not assumed		

Source: Field Survey (2022)

From Table 10, it can be seen that the significant value of .984 is greater than .05 the significant level. This implies that equal variances can be assumed.

Table 11: Difference in Attitudes of Male and Female Students

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
Male	174	33.35	5.86	325	1.982	.034
Female	153	32.01	8.44			

Source: Field survey 2020 p<.05

From Table 11, there is a significant difference in the attitude of male and female students [t (325) = 1.982, p<.05]. The mean score of the males was 33.35 while that of females was 32.01. Based on the results in Table 11, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, male and female students differ in their attitude towards vocational and technical education. Since the mean score of the males was higher than that of the females, it can be said that male students had a positive attitude towards VTE than female students.

Hypothesis Two:

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference in the attitudes of students towards VTE on the basis of age.

$H_1$2: There is a significant difference in the attitudes of students towards VTE on the basis of age.

This hypothesis sought to find out the significant difference in the attitudes of students towards vocational and technical education on the basis of age. Since there were three different age groups involved in the study, the One-Way ANOVA was used in analysing the data at 0.05 level of significance. The results are shown in Tables 12 and 13

Table 12: Descriptive Results for Different Age Groups

Age Groups	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
12-15	74	33.32	3.72
16-20	229	33.16	2.94
21-25	24	33.04	3.89
Total	327	33.19	3.19

Source: Field Survey 2020

Table 12 shows the mean and standard deviations of the various age groups. It can be seen that students within the age group of 12 to 15 years had a mean score of 33.32 and standard deviation of 3.72. The students within the age group of 16 to 20 years had a mean score of 33.16 and a standard deviation of 2.94. The last age group (21-25) had a mean score of 33.04 and a standard deviation of 3.89. From the mean scores, there is no big difference among the groups.

The results of the ANOVA test to reveal the significance of the little difference observed among the groups are presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Difference in Attitudes of Students on the Basis of Age

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.994	2	.997	.097	.908
Within Groups	3330.869	324	10.280		
Total	3332.862	326			

Source: Field survey 2020 p>.05

From Table 13, it is clear that there is no significant difference in the attitude of students towards vocational and technical education on the basis of age [F (326) = 0.9, p>.05]. The probability value (p-value) of 0.908 is greater than the .05 significant level. This implies that the difference in the mean scores of the three different age groups was not statistically significant. Thus I failed to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, students do not differ in their attitude towards VTE on the basis of age.

Discussion

Willingness to Pursue Vocational and Technical Education

Study findings showed that most of the students were not willing to enroll in VTE after their general secondary education. The few who were willing to enroll in vocational and technical indicated that they will do so as a last resort. In terms of ranking VTE, most of the respondents ranked as third choice or fourth choice in their list of educational paths. Finally, the respondents indicated that if they were to choose vocational and technical education, future employment opportunities will be the most important consideration compared to personal interest. From the results, it is clear that most of the respondents were not willing to enroll in vocational and technical education after school. The results could probably be because most of the respondents have already decided to pursue general education and so do not feel the need to divert into vocational and technical education.

The results confirm the findings of Peoples (1998) who revealed a historical-cultural bias against VE within SHS, which has, among other things, resulted in reluctance among students to pursue career paths in VTE. Similarly, Alavi, Sail and Awang (2013) revealed that the negative image

associated with VTE is such that most students avoided choosing career paths in VTE. This implies that sometimes, students may hold positive views about TVET, but, because of how society views TVET, the students may prefer to stay away from such career paths.

Furthermore, Azubuike (2011) study findings revealed that gender, teacher's qualification, interest, socio-economic status, and guidance for professional counsellors or instructor were the factors influencing the attitude and willingness of students towards the choice of the study of VTS. This implies that although students may be willing to pursue VTE, other external factors could influence them negatively. The study finding that only a few of the students were willing to pursue VTE as a last resort could be due to low knowledge of VTE as supported by Kumuthavalli (2016) study findings which revealed that students had low knowledge on the existence VE and Technical institutions even though societal factors, qualification and socio-economic status was found to influence student's attitude towards the choice of VTE. The study findings confirms the findings of Awang et al. (2011), who revealed that learners still demonstrated little interest in furthering their education in TVET schools. This can be attributed to the fact that, society trusts that VTE is for students who are academically weak.

In contrast to this study's finding where students asserted that VTE is not for those who are academically weak, Harun and Rahim (2019), found that learners who get enrolled in TVI have weak academic performance and cannot study at the college.

Further the study findings concurs with that of Owen and Vinarsky (1983) study which revealed that learners were only willing to enrol in

vocational programmes if they see that graduates from these vocational and technical institutions succeed in the world of work. The results of the current study can also be explained on the basis of some theories, particularly in the light of Holland's theory. This is because Holland indicated that an individual will choose a career on the basis of the things he or she prefers to work with. In this study, the respondents indicated that if they were to choose careers in VTE, they would do so on the basis of their interests and things they like to do. In the context of the study, therefore, Holland's theory explains that when a student realizes that he or she prefers to work with machines and being physical or practical then that person may have a preference for a career choice in vocational and technical education.

In Ghana, there are views in the society that makes some students not prefer to enter VTE. Based on this, it is not surprising that most of the students in the current study were not willing to enter VTE.

Attitude of Students towards VTE

Overall, the study revealed that the respondents had positive views and attitudes towards VTE. Specifically, the learners viewed TVET as making students more employable in well-paid jobs. The students were also of the view that anyone can pursue VTE as long as they are interested in doing it. Despite the earlier views of the students that they would not choose VTE, the students held positive views about VTE. Results from the study revealed that students had a positive attitude towards VTE because they indicated that TVET is for anyone interested in pursuing it, TVET is not only for those who have financial challenges, TVET is not for school dropouts, TVET does offer good career opportunities, TVET leads to jobs which are well paid, well paid

jobs, TVET is for those who do perform well academically, abililty to set up businesses, TVET is for industrial employees only, TVET is not for men only and a higher probability of getting jobs after completion of school.

These study findings buttress Rahman (1986) study where he opined that students and parents had a positive attitude towards VE. Similarly, Alnaqbi (2016), in his study revealed that parents and students had a relatively positive attitude towards VE. Alnaqbi further revealed that though, attitude towards VTE was positive, students had a more positive attitude towards VTE as compared to their parents. The study finding that students had positive views about VTE is in line with Bishop and Mane (2004) who found that learners had positive attitude towards vocational education because learners who take a certain percentage of vocational courses during high school are more likely to receive higher salaries and exhibit higher rates of involvement relative to students in academic education. Along this same line of finding, Meer (2007) revealed that students positively perceived vocational and technical education because of the wage benefits. The similarity among the different studies implies that generally, most students perceive vocational education positively, particularly in terms of the job prospects.

The findings about positive attitude towards VTE in the current study are also in line with those of Sarıçoban (2014) who established that learners displayed almost positive attitudes towards VTE. Specifically, the students in the study of Sarıçoban reported that technical and vocational education is significant since it offers them with the opportunity to be creative in both their academic and daily lives. These views were also expressed in the current study.

The views expressed by the students in the current study are similar to the findings of Brunello and Rocco (2017) who revealed that students who pursue vocational and technical education had a higher probability of being employed in well-paid jobs. They argued that as the times keep changing, much attention is paid to practical skills and ability to demonstrate creativity and as such students with vocational and technical knowledge may have an upper hand in the job market.

Findings in the current study which revealed positive attitude towards VTE contradict a study done by Evans (1972) who indicated that though parents exhibited a negative attitude towards VE, learner's attained satisfaction as a result of the experience gained from VE.

A point to note from the findings is that most of the students indicated earlier that they were not willing to enroll in vocational and technical education. However, it appears most of the students perceive VTE positively. This lack of congruence could be due to several reasons. Firstly, it is possible the students in the study wanted to appear socially desirable and so answered the questionnaire in a way that showed positive attitudes. However, it is also possible that the students did not want to enroll in vocational and technical education despite their positive attitudes because they are already in the general secondary education and as such may not want to leave to enter into vocational and technical education. Finally, it is possible that people can have a positive attitude towards something and not really have the interest or skill to engage in it. This could have been the case in this study.

The results of the study which showed that the students had positive attitude towards TVET and that they would encourage anyone who is willing to pursue

TVET can be explained using social learning theory. In social learning theory, an individual's conviction in his or her ability to pursue a particular career field will influence his or her career choices. Krumboltz, Mitchell and Jones (1976) acknowledged the role that cognition and convictions play in people deciding to pursue a particular activity. In this sense, choosing to pursue TVET would be based on the views and attitudes that individuals hold about TVET. If the attitude is positive then it is likely that the individual would choose TVET but if the attitude is negative then it is likely that the individual would not choose TVET.

Also, the results of the study can be explained from the point of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). Fishbein (1967) recognized the role that attitude plays in people pursuing specific activities. In this sense, it can be said that when students have positive attitude towards TVET like they do in this study, then it is possible they would encourage everyone who is willing to pursue TVET related careers.

Attitude of Parents towards VTE

The study revealed that all the parents viewed VTE positively. They saw it as a means to provide practical and employable skills to students. This buttresses Stanwick (2006) that vocational and technical education provided practical skills that can help increase the extent of employability among students. Despite all the parents holding this view, few parents did not like the idea of their children pursuing VTE mainly because of the perception of society about TVET. This finding corroborates a study conducted by Alavi, Sail and Awang (2013) which revealed that the negative image associated with VTE is such that most students avoided choosing career paths in VTE.

However, majority of the parents in the study were willing to encourage young people to pursue vocational and technical education.

This finding concurs with that of Okoro (1993) who indicated that parents and other individuals perceived vocational education as helping to provide skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for effective employment in specific occupations.

Freire, (2011), also opined that parents of students enrolled in vocational and technical courses indicated that they were more willing to share in an increased financial responsibility to expand and improve vocational opportunities for students. Furthermore, the finding that all parents had positive attitude towards VTE concurs with Sherman (2006) study which also revealed that there are still some parents who hold positive views about vocational and technical education and that such parents believe that vocational and technical education can equip young people with relevant and practical skills for life.

In contradiction to the study finding, Reagor and Rehm (1995) in their study, opined that parents tend to have a more positive attitude towards VTE only when they have some colleagues or friends who have gone through vocational education. This implies that parents will have a positive disposition towards VTE if they get positive feedbacks from colleagues whose children have enrolled in VTE.

However Yangben and Seniwoliba (2014) who revealed that despite the long-held view that TVE in Africa is a career path for the less intellectually gifted, the participants in their study disproved the claim that VTE is for those who are academically less-endowed and pointed out that

students who pursue VTE have bright employment future. However, the finding in the current study where a few parents did not want their children to pursue VTE support the finding of Annor (1999) that people who enrolled onto TE were not respected and employed at the low or middle workforce and so some parents may not want their children to enter technical education.

The finding in the current study where parents generally had positive attitude towards VTE, contradict a study conducted by Kissim et al. (2011) who revealed that parents had the view that girls who study Industrial and Technical Education do not get married. Similarly, Maria (2009) revealed that though parents are status conscious of professions like Accounting etc., they are still aware of the active value in vocational education.

Furthermore, the finding in the current study where parents indicated that VTE is for everyone and not only people from poor background, contradicts Polesel (2007) study which revealed that learners from poor family or educational background are more interested in VET programmes as compared to those with higher background level. It also counters Wong (1977) study, which revealed that majority of families believed that jobs which soils the hand can not be compared to the ones which do not.

Difference in Attitude of Male and Female Students towards VTE.

Results showed a significant difference in the attitude of male and female learners. Male learners had positive attitude towards VTE than female learners. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female students towards VTE was rejected.

The results are in line with the results of Hodges (2000) who revealed that there is serious gender bias in terms of the attitude towards VTE in

Nigeria. Hodges stressed that most males held positive views about vocational and technical education and so enrolled in such programmes most of the time than females. In addition, Sarıçoban (2014) study, also confirmed that males are more likely to have 'soft-spot' for VTE compared to females.

The finding also buttresses Sherman (2006) study initial outcomes by gender of VTE learners is that males had positive and favourable attitudes toward VTE and this resulted in a smoother transition to work, achieving better job performance compared to women six months after training. The findings that males had more positive attitude towards VTE than females could also be due to the absence of female role models in the TVET industry. In support of this Najoli (2019) found that gender inequality exists in terms of TVET enrolment, access, retention and completion rates. Cultural stereotypes and absence of role models are the key barriers to female enrolment and outstanding success in STEM courses. The finding that males had more positive attitude towards VTE than females contradicts Rojewski and Sheng(1993) that boys hold more negative concepts towards VET programmes whilst females tends to have positive perception towards VET.

It is made clear that gender difference exists in how students perceive and behave toward vocational and technical education. Males have more positive attitudes toward vocational and technical education probably because most careers within the vocational and technical scope are stereotyped to be male-dominated.

Difference in Attitude of Students towards VTE on the basis of Age

Finally, the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the attitude of students towards VTE on the basis of age. This implies that the

difference in the mean scores of the three different age groups was not statistically significant. In essence, students do not differ in their attitude towards VTE on the basis of age.

The findings confirm the findings of Bello, Danjuma and Adamu (2007) who found that regardless of the ages of young people, most of them want to pursue VTE. Bello et al. added that the ages of young people did not matter and that they had similar attitudes toward vocational and technical education. In a similar vein, Akubudike (2003) found that students across all ages held similar views about vocational and technical education. This implies that age is not of significant consideration in the attitudes of students towards VTE.

Chapter Summary

Study findings showed that students generally had positive attitudes towards VTE. Despite the positive attitudes, most of the students were not willing to pursue VTE. Also, it was found in the study that the parents in the study had a positive attitude towards VTE. Finally, a significant gender difference was found in the attitude of students towards VTE while no significant difference was found in the attitude of students towards VTE on the basis of age.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Implications for counselling as well as suggestions for further research are given in this chapter.

Summary of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate parents' and students' attitude towards Vocational and Technical Education as a career choice in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis in the Western Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to answer three research questions and test two hypotheses. That is, learners willingness to pursue VTE, parental and students attitude towards VTE and between the attitudes of male and female students towards VTE. Literature relating to the study were reviewed. Mixed methods approach was adopted for the study. The population comprised final year students in Senior High Shools in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis as well as parents of students in the senior high schools. The sample for the study was 337 (composed of 327 students and 10 parents). The sample was selected using a multistage sampling technique. Data were collected from the students using a questionnaire while data were collected from the parents using an interview guide. Quantitative data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was analysed using thematic analyses.

Major Findings

The findings of the study showed that most of the students were not willing to enroll in vocational and technical education after their general

secondary education. The few who were willing to enroll in vocational and technical indicated that they will do so as a last resort. In terms of ranking vocational and technical education, most of the respondents ranked as third choice or fourth choice in their list of educational paths. The students, however, indicated that if they were to choose vocational and technical education, future employment opportunities will be the most important consideration compared to personal interest.

The study also found that the students generally had positive views and attitude towards vocational and technical education because they indicated that TVET is for anyone interested in pursuing it, it is not only for those who have financial challenges and not for school dropouts. In addition, TVET offers good career opportunities, leads to jobs which are well paid and is meant for those who do perform well academically. Also, TVET provides the opportunity to set up businesses, TVET is not for men only.

Further, the study revealed that all the parents viewed vocational and technical education positively. They saw it as a means to provide practical and employable skills to students. Despite all the parents holding this view, some few parents did not like the idea of their children pursuing VTE mainly because of the perception of society about TVET. However, most of the parents were willing to encourage young people to pursue vocational and technical education.

The results showed also that there was a significant difference in the attitude of male and female students. Specifically, male students had a positive attitude towards VTE than female students. Finally, the study found that there was no significant difference in the attitude of students towards vocational and

technical education on the basis of age. In essence, students did not differ in their attitude towards VTE on the basis of age.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that most of the SHS learners in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis did not have the willingness to enroll in VTE. Regardless of the lack of willingness to enroll in VTE, most of the students in Senior High Schools in the Sekondi-Takoradi generally had positive views and attitude towards VTE. The students perceived TVET as making students more employable in well-paid jobs and so argued that anyone can pursue VTE as long as they are interested in doing it.

It is also concluded that parents of students in senior high schools viewed vocational and technical education positively. They saw it as a means to provide practical and employable skills to students and so were willing to inspire individuals to pursue VTE. It can be seen from the foregoing that the willingness of the parents to allow their children choose VTE paths is in contradiction to the lack of willingness of the students in the study to choose VTE paths.

It is concluded that attitudes of students can vary on the basis of their gender. Male students are most likely to be more positive in their attitude towards vocational and technical education compared to female students. However, attitude towards vocational and technical education does not vary on the basis of age. People of different ages can have similar attitudes toward vocational and technical education.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. Teachers should encourage Senior High School students to maintain a positive attitude towards VTE since some of the students seem to have negative attitude towards it.
2. School authorities should encourage parents to consider vocational and technical education career paths when assisting their children in the choice of their careers.
3. In planning career seminars on TVET, the gender of students should be taken into consideration by school guidance and counselling coordinators looking at the fact that males seem to have more positive attitude towards TVET that females.
4. In order to improve the image of VTE, more and better publicity should be done on it on traditional media and also social media.
5. To encourage females to have positive attitudes toward VTE will require that stereotypes be done away with.
6. Teachers should try to discover the hidden qualities of girl students with the help of which they can change their own attitude towards life. Values should be inculcated for life satisfaction, adjustment and cooperation.

Implications for Career Counselling

The following implications are given for career counselling:

1. Counsellors in Senior High schools should assist students who may want to pursue vocational and technical education but may be

struggling with negative public perceptions about vocational and technical education by providing counselling services.

2. Counsellors in schools can encourage parents to assist their children who would want to pursue vocational and technical education.
3. Guidance and counselling coordinators in Senior High Schools should enhance career counselling to help the students weigh career options opened to them in VTE and choose pathways that are relevant to them and meet their desires and interests.
4. School counsellors should be able to advise parents on how to prepare students at an earlier stage by choosing the right career(positively) during Parent Association meeting.
5. School counsellors should be able to advise students not to be forced to select career by their parents but be guided by the career path they wish to pursue.

Suggestions for Further Research

The following suggestions for further research:

1. Future studies can focus on the perceptions of students already pursuing vocational and technical education. This can help policymakers develop strategies to make vocational and technical education better.
2. Future researchers can investigate into the views of students in basic schools about VTE. This can help make recommendations to help boost the enrolment of students in VTE after the Basic Education Certificate Examination.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Questionnaire for individual students

This questionnaire represents part of the data gathering process for a "master of philosophy degree. The research has taken the form of a survey and is examining Parents' and students' attitudes towards Vocational and Technical Education as a career choice among Senior High School students in Sekondi - Takoradi.

The identities of participants will remain completely confidential, as will the name of the school Item responses will be used for research purposes only. Please respond to every statement by making sure you indicate your level of agreement/disagreement in the box provided.

Please check to make sure you only indicate one response per statement.

PART A:

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Please tick (√) where appropriate

1. Class Form one Form two Form three

2. Sex a. Male b. Female

3. Age a.12-15 b.16-20 c.20-25

4. Educational level of Father (equivalent):

a .Basic b. Secondary c.Tertiary

d. Non formal education

5. Educational level of Mother:

a. Basic b. Secondary c.Tertiary

d. Non formal education

6. Educational level of guardian.(if applicable)

a.Basic b. Secondary c.Tertiary

d. Non formal education

7. Father's occupation.....

8. Mother's occupation.....

9. Guardian's occupation (if applicable)……

PART B:

Students Willingness to Enrol in Technical and Vocational Education and Training

1. What career would you like to undertake after you complete general secondary education?……

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements:

2. Would you like to enroll in vocational education and training after Senior high education? Please ***circle*** the appropriate one
   (a) Totally agree
   (b) Agree as a last resort
   (c) Tend to disagree
   (d) Totally disagree
   (e) Don't know
3. Please indicate to what rank would you put Vocational education and training as a choice for career opportunities.
   (a) First choice
   (b) Second choice
   (c) Third choice
   (d) Fourth choice
   (e) Don't know
4. If vocational education and training is your first choice please explain the reason(s)

……

5. In choosing TVET my Personal interest in the subject is considered
   (a) Very important
   (b) Fairly important
   (c) Not very important
   (d) Don't know
6. In choosing TVET my future employment opportunities is considered
   (a) Very important
   (b) Fairly important
   (c) Not very important

(d) Don't know

PART C:

Students Attitudes towards Vocational Education and Training

Please tick (√) the appropriate option applicable to the statement using the following responses:

SA=Strongly agree A= Agree

SD=Strongly Disagree

D= Disagree UD=Undecided

Statements	**SA**	**A**	**SD**	**D**	**UD**
1.Graduates of TVET are more likely to find a job than those who completed their general secondary or higher education					
2. Technical and Vocational education and training are for men only.					
3.TVET is for industrial employees only					
4. TVET does not prepare people to set up their own business.					
5. I believe TVET is for those who do not perform well academically					
6. TVET leads to jobs which are well paid					
7. TVET training leads to jobs which are not well regarded in society.					
8.TVET does not offer good career					
9.TVET is for school dropouts					
10. TVET is for Students who did not get the chance to pursue senior high education					
11. TVET is only for those who have financial challenges					
12. TVET is for anyone who are interested in pursuing it.					

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS ON THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

PART ONE

Background Information

1 .Gender

2. Educational background

3. Occupation

PART TWO

4. Do you know anything about TVET program?

5. What does it entail?

6. What do you think the about the TVET program?

7. Do you have any children enrolled in any TVET program. Give reasons for your answer

8. Will you allow your ward or any member of your family enroll in the TVET program? Give reasons for your answer

9. Will you encourage your ward or any member of your family in the TVET program

10. Who in your view is eligible to enroll in the TVET program?

11. Is it for those who are academically poor?

12. Do you think it is expensive to enroll in the TVET program

13. In your view do you think TVET can guarantee future jobs for students who enroll in the program?

APPENDIX C

RELIABILITY OUTPUT

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.821	18

APPENDIX D

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES/ERB/ucc.edu/04/20-45 Date: 3rd February, 2020.

Your Ref: .....

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omotosho
jaomotosho@ucc.edu.gh
0243784739

Vice Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. K. Edjah
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Secretary, CES-ERB
Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
ldforde@ucc.edu.gh
0244526683

The bearer, Abigail Sagbo Key ....., Reg. No. ED/ERP/17/10078
M.Phil. / Ph.D. student in the Department of Guidance and Counselling ..... in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana, ~~He~~ / She wishes to undertake a research study on the topic.

Parents and Senior High School students' attitudes toward vocational and technical education as career choice in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis

The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies (CES) has reviewed his/her proposal and confirm that the proposal satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the study.

In view of the above, the researcher has been cleared and given approval to commence ~~his~~/her study. The ERB would be grateful if you would give ~~him~~/her the necessary assistance to facilitate the conduct of the said research.

Thank you.
Yours faithfully,

Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)

APPENDIX E

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Telephone: 0332091854
E-mail: dgc@ucc.edu.gh

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: DGC/L.2/VOL.1/102

Your Ref:

22nd January, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

We introduce to you, Abigail Sogbokey a student pursuing an M.Phil Programme in Guidance and Counselling at the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the University of Cape Coast. As a requirement, she is to submit a Thesis on the topic: ***"Parents' and Senior High School Students' towards Vocational and Technical Education as Career Choice in the Sekondi Takoradi Methropolis".*** We are by this letter affirming that, the information she will obtain from your Institution will be solely used for academic purposes.

We would be most grateful if you could provide her the necessary assistance.

Thank you.

Dr. Stephen Doh Fia
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT