

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CAREER CHOICE AMONG HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS: THE CASE OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I, Afimaa Amiteye, declare that this dissertation, except for quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

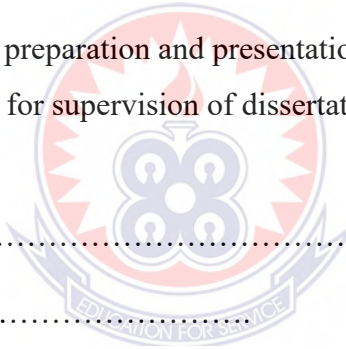
### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work were supervised following the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name: .....

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## ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influence high school students' career choices at International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1. The study employed a quantitative approach using a descriptive survey design. The International Community School (ICS)'s Year 12 and 13 Advanced Level high school students made up the target population. The study's total accessible population is 122. The study used the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table to determine the sample size which was 92 out of 122. The study employed stratified random sampling. Data were gathered using a self-made questionnaire. The validity and reliability of the instrument were checked. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected (means, percentages, frequencies, and standard deviations). Study showed that school factors of career guidance programme offered, teachers, media reporting, or writing about famous people have a significant positive influence on the high school students making informed career choices. On the contrary, parental factors were not a significant influence in making career choices among high school students of ICS. The study recommended career guidance programme be organized to equip all stakeholders to make career choice-making for high school students efficient and purposeful.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

In the past, it was common practice to find feudalism and make it a family affair, with a feudal-born leader and the son of a blacksmith destined to become blacksmiths. If a person has the appropriate skills and information, industrialization and post-industrialization have made it possible for the typical individual to become affluent. Before choosing a professional option, one must not only execute careful career planning but also conduct in-depth career research to stay up with changing socio-economic situations (Eremie & Chiamaka, 2019).

Making a selection about a student's career is significant since it will define their life and affect them for the rest of their lives. A person's career plays a crucial role in their life because it determines their pattern of income and shapes their personality and outlook on the world (Eremie & Chiamaka, 2019). According to Alberts, Mbalo and Ackermann (2003), a person's choice of profession has a significant impact on his or her social and economic circumstances. They suggest that institutional rules, parental guidance, peer pressure, and personal preferences all have an impact on students' decisions in their careers. Students who choose their professional subjects improperly frequently struggle both during and after their studies (Owino & Odundo, 2016). As a result, a career is a lifelong quest for achievement. It is the sequence of key positions held by a person throughout his life. The term "career" is used to refer to all related

roles that people play to support their families, including those of students, parents, workers, retirees, and employers (Eremie & Chiamaka, 2019).

According to Owino and Odundo (2016), families and schools have critical roles in giving information and direction to students as they choose career decisions, either directly or indirectly. Teachers can observe their pupils' strengths and aptitudes and encourage them to pursue specific disciplines, participate in work experience, or conduct job interviews. They also provide great support for specific job choices, which are often similar to their own.

From studies by Asantewaa (2020), the choice of career has been noted to be a serious problem among Senior High School Students in Ghana. The decision regarding a career or passion is crucial for everyone, regardless of age. Many senior high school students think that life will be a grand experience in which they will undoubtedly succeed. Many of them believe that once they finish their senior high school education, they would be able to get employment in either public or private organizations. Further, Asantewaa since making professional decisions is complex, many people want support in exploring options and considering the repercussions of various choices. There is a broad consensus that adolescents must complete high school to prepare for the transition from school to career or college. (Amoah, Kwofie & Kwofie, 2015). Another aspect worth emphasizing is that professional choice is important since it allows students to learn about the job market and the opportunities available to them. This is because, while students may be aware of particular occupations, they have little knowledge of the labor market. Students can receive firsthand information on the nature of careers, educational and professional

qualifications, and other academic prerequisites for the career through career choice and career counseling (Asantewaa).

Owino and Odundo (2016) said “personality” plays an important role in choosing the right career. Individuals' attitudes influence whether they respond positively or negatively to items, circumstances, or ideas. Two key causes of attitudes were found by Owino and Odundo to be the external influence that is the first source, and it commonly comes from parents, friends, and relatives. The second source is personal influence, which occurs when an individual decides on multiple possibilities. A student must have the self-motivated personality to research job options early in life rather than the procrastinating personality type that waits until they are forced to make a choice. Students need to be aware of how grades can affect their future chances. Furthermore, Owino and Odundo (2016) contend that to make wise job decisions, one must have a solid grasp of themselves and personality. The issue of poverty has played an important determining role in the opportunities available to all (Asantewaa, 2020). Making a career decision is difficult, especially when one's livelihood is at stake. It is evident among students who are facing ever-changing technology and the information sector. All careers, however, have their own set of curriculum requirements, personality traits, and personal qualities. Before an individual can be recognized as qualified for a given vocation, all of these must be thoroughly evaluated (Eremie & Chiamaka, 2019). When these children graduate from high school, however, some of them go into careers that are completely unrelated to the one they chose and trained for. As a result, the importance of a guidance counselor in schools cannot be overstated. The purpose of this study is to look into the factors that influence career

choice among senior high school students in Ghana, with a focus on International Community School (ICS).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Several factors influenced high school students' career decisions. Identifying these determinants would provide parents, educators, and industries with insight into where adolescents place the most faith in the career-choosing process (Eremie & Chiamaka, 2019). As a result of the difficulty in making career choices among high school students, one bad decision might alter a person's destiny. Deciding on one's career is challenging for everyone. This individual action is reflected in a nation's economic prosperity on a broader scale (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017).

According to Asantewaa (2020), research studies have shown that many Ghanaian teenagers make poor career choices due to a lack of vocational guidance and career counseling, as well as ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, recommendations from friends, parents, and teachers, or the prestige associated with specific jobs. Could these factors be the same in the case of International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1? As a result, many of them may pursue jobs that are inappropriate for their personalities. They become a nuisance to themselves and their employers when this happens. They are frequently unable to make a meaningful contribution to society, and as a result, they become liabilities to the country. Furthermore, those who are misfits at work are less effective and efficient, and as a result, they are unable to attain their career objectives (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017).

Some difficult factor that may influence career choice is the lack of awareness regarding professions. Students have misconceptions about professions due to a lack of information,

which prevents them from choosing them (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). Regrettably, career decisions are made with little regard for reality. Students make critical decisions at a time when they may not be completely educated about their options or when unforeseen events hinder them from achieving their objectives. As a result, counselors can play an important role in assisting them in making educated decisions (Kazi & Akhlaq).

According to the available literature, most earlier studies that were based on careers concentrated on the profession choice of university students and without few case studies on the career choice of Senior High Schools, particularly in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1. In the case of International Community School (ICS), it appears that most students are unsure when it comes to choosing their future careers when the time comes in their senior years and are about to complete high school. Most students have not interacted with working environments through internships associated with their career aspirations to affirm their interest, ability, or personality within a career field well enough to influence their career choices. Experienced some of these career challenges as a teacher at the school when students don't know why they are studying courses for. Given the aforementioned issues with career choice and the gaps left by earlier studies, empirical data is required in the case of International Community School (ICS). To address a vacuum in the literature, this study seeks to research to raise awareness about the factors that influence professional choice in high school students in the case of International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1.

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to find out the factors that influence career choices among High School students in the International Community School (ICS). However,

specifically, the study sought to Identify school factors i.e., (Guidance and Counselling), Parental factors i.e., (career backgrounds, economic status), and Environmental factors i.e., (Teacher, Student-Peers, Media) that influence the choice of career among SHS students in the International Community School (ICS).

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What school factors influence the choice of career among SHS students in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1?
2. What parental factors influence the choice of career among SHS students in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1?
3. What environmental factors influence the choice of career among SHS students in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

It is envisaged that the study's findings will be of great assistance to those involved in career guidance in the country. Senior high students, educational institutions, and counselors from international school systems, government senior high schools, and beyond are among the stakeholders. Students would benefit from the study because they would understand the significance of job choice and also understand the importance of taking into account their abilities, interests, and aptitude while selecting a professional decision.



The findings could aid schools in developing or improving the quality of career guidance and counseling they provide to their students by taking into account characteristics that influence career path selection and future career trends. School heads and educators in Senior High Schools may be made to value the importance of career guidance in schools, and school counselors will benefit from this study because it will help them provide well-thought-out career guidance to students by allowing them to understand the factors that influence their career choices. The research could also aid national curriculum planners in making educated decisions on career guidance and counseling. The study could also be used as a benchmark to motivate other scholars to conduct comparative research in other Ghanaian provinces, as well as in other African countries and the world beyond.

### **1.6 Delimitations**

The study did not look into all of the factors that influence the career choices of International Community School (ICS) Senior High School students. In this study, the school, parents, students, teachers, and environmental factors were used. The study was also limited to only students taking the Advanced Level (A-Level) qualification in the secondary senior year levels in the International Community School (ICS)'s Year 12 (Lower sixth entry year) and Year 13 (Upper sixth final year).

### **1.7 Limitations**

The goal of the study was to learn more about the factors that influence students' career choices in Senior High School at the International Community School (ICS). As a result, the findings cannot be applied to all Ghanaian students. The study was limited in population, and sample sampling size considering the Amansie West district and

Ashanti Region population of Senior High Schools that were not included in the study. Also, some respondents submitted uncompleted questionnaires and others keep postponing the filling of the questionnaires which delayed the data collection process. It could be also that some respondents were not genuine in their responses to the questionnaire items. The study is limited considering facts like students that were not part of the sampling size that could have added more to the results of the study. The input of data into the computing system on the Google form could have the possibility of entering an error which can limit the interpretation of the study. Despite all these limitations, steps were taken to ensure the study was valid and reliable data to limit some of the weaknesses in the findings.

### **1.8 Definition of Terms**

The following terms are conceptually or operationally defined to enhance the understanding of the readers of this work.

**Career:** The career in this study refers to the work that one conducts to support themselves.

**Choice:** The word "career choice" in the study refers to the factors that influence a student's decision to pursue a certain career, including family, friends, personal values, interests, and school guidance counselors.

**Career Path:** In this study, the term "career path" was used to describe how people attain goals or how their lives progress. In this study, the terms "route" and "career choice" were used interchangeably.

**Environmental Factor:** Factors in the field of society that have the potential of influencing an individual's career choice.

**Educational factors:** Learning-related aspects that may have an impact on a person's job decision.

**School Guidance Counsellor:** A person with expertise in guiding students in making career decisions and resolving academic issues in educational institutions.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

The study's background, the statement of the problem, the study's purpose, and the research questions were all included in the first chapter. The chapter included delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, definition of terms as well as the organization of the study. The conceptual review, theoretical framework, and empirical review that led the project were discussed in Chapter Two. The research strategy and methodologies used in the study were addressed in the third chapter. The sample and instruments were also thoroughly detailed in this chapter as well as analysis and evaluation of data were discussed in Chapter 4. In Chapter Five is summary, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The study's goal is to determine the factors influencing students' career choices in Ghana, particularly at International Community School (ICS). This chapter focuses on

the study's literature review. It focused on the work of numerous authors on the factors that influence senior high school students' career choices. The goal of this review is to give a framework for comparing and contrasting this study with those of other authors, as well as to suggest areas that need more research. The literature was organized into subheadings depending on the study's goals to make it easier to reference.

## **2.1 Expectancy-Value Theory of Achievement Motivation**

Wigfield (1994) and Atkinson (1957) originally defined expectancies as individuals' anticipations that their performance will be followed by either success or failure, and defined value as the relative attractiveness of succeeding or failing on a task. Wigfield (as cited in Rokeach 1973, 1979) to have broadly construed values as beliefs about desired end states. He identified a set of values that he believed were fundamental to human experience; some of these values concerned achievement. In the achievement motivation literature, subjective task values have been defined more specifically as how a task meets the different needs of individuals. The four major components of subjective values: are attainment value or importance, intrinsic value, utility value or usefulness of the task, and cost. Building on defining attainment value as the importance of doing well on a given task. The enjoyment one experiences while performing a task is intrinsic value; this element is comparable to ideas of intrinsic motivation in some ways (Wigfield, 1994). How an activity fits into a person's future intentions is referred to as its utility value or usefulness. For instance, taking a math class to satisfy a need for a science degree. Cost is what a person has to give up in order to complete a task (e.g., should I call my friend or finish my math homework?), as well as the anticipated effort that will be required (Wigfield, 1994). Different job

alternatives are associated with certain values. According to Kazi and Akhlaq (2017), these principles are derived from students' life experiences, educational backgrounds, and environment. Values are often tied to the stability that comes with a certain profession.

Children's assessments of their skill levels in various domains are referred to as beliefs about ability. Ability beliefs have a prominent place in several theoretical models of achievement, including the self-worth approach, attribution theory, and the self-concept models (Wigfield, as cited in Covington & Weiner, 1984, 1979).

Failure is more incapacitating when one views capacity as opposed to ability. Some children holding this view will believe they have little chance of ever doing well because their ability cannot be improved. The perception of oneself as lacking a particular skill would, presumably, be more unpleasant and make it appear more implausible that we could perform well on tasks requiring this sort of ability when an ability is perceived as capacity (Wigfield, 1994). In contrast, the believing effort can improve performance in important ways should mean that children will continue to try even if they are not doing well on a given task.

Competence beliefs and expectancies for success should be positively related. As a result, children who believe they are competent at a given task believe that mastering other activities of a similar nature in the future is very likely; conversely, children who have poor views in their own competence have reduced expectations for success (Wigfield, 1994). Achievement goals as defined by Wigfield (as cited in Eccles et al., 1983) are the broad purposes children have for learning or doing different activities. Goals such as career plans and desires to act by certain behavior standards

as important goals guiding achievement behavior. One important distinction between achievement goals and subjective values in this model is that values refer to more task-specific purposes for engaging in a task, while objectives have a wider impact on values and later on behavior related to achievement. Wigfield (1994) in discussing specific goals for success defined two major kinds of goals that children have: ego-involved goals and task-involved goals. People who embrace ego-centered goals aim to increase positive assessments of their ability and reduce negative assessments. Questions like "Will I look smart?" and "Can I outperform others?" reflect ego-involved goals. In contrast, with task-involved goals, individuals focus on mastering tasks and increasing competence in different tasks. Questions such as "How can I do this task?" and "What will I learn?" reflect task-involved goals. Further, Wigfield (1994) called ego-involved goals performance goals, and task-involved goals learning goals. Ames (1992) employs the phrases mastery and performance goals. These researchers have discussed how these kinds of goals influence individuals' performance in achievement settings and the choice of different tasks. Children who have ego-centered goals strive to outperform others and are more likely to complete things they are confident they can do. Task-involved children choose challenging tasks and are more concerned with their progress than with outperforming others.

## **2.2 The Developmental Theory of Career Choice**

According to Asantewaa (2020), this theory was propounded by Ginzberg, Axelrad, and Herma in 1939. The theory sees career choice as an irreversible process that occurs in reasonably clearly marked periods of a person's development. The process is characterized by a series of compromises the individual makes between his wishes and

his possibilities. As kids become mature, they learn more and are exposed to more options. They, thus, understand themselves and their environment and are better able to make rational choices (Asantewaa, as cited in Ginzberg & et al, 1939; Thornburg, 1975).

The career life of the individual then is viewed as a developmental process that involves different periods, and phases of life which when taken cumulatively results in his or her career development (Asantewaa, 2020). Thus, when properly motivated, prepared, and adequate encouragement is given to make the needed effort the individual will succeed equally well in any given career on this ability level. Ginzberg and colleagues employed case studies and interviewing methodologies to build their theory, which can be summed up as follows:

1. Career choice is not a single decision. It is a developmental process that takes place over some time;
2. The process is largely irreversible as a decision made cannot be erased and time could not be reversed.
3. The final choice of career comprises interests, capacities, values, opportunities, and limitations in the real world.

Their theory identifies three phases of the career decision-making process. These are fantasy, tentative and realistic stages. The fantasy stage occurs up to age 11. The period reflects the idealized career choice of the individual influenced by what is observed in the immediate environment. Thus, the students want to be teachers, nurses, doctors, truck drivers, and so forth. The “choices” are without regard to needs,

ability, training, or any other realistic considerations. The tentative stage (11-18 years) is further subdivided into four: interest, capacity, value, and transition periods.

Children start thinking about their careers throughout this time by identifying their hobbies and ideal careers. The first of these sub-stages is around ages 11 and 12 years. This is the age entry point to our Junior High School; it is the time when children begin to recognize the need to indicate the direction of their career decision. As liked and disliked activities are noted, a display of worry takes place. Career choices are made based on that career's potential for intrinsic enjoyment. It has been observed that, often, career choices are reflections of strong identification with the mother even though this identification shows signs of ambivalence (Asantewaa, 2020).

At the second stage (12-15 years), individuals begin to introduce the notion of ability into their career considerations. After concentrating on their hobbies, they start to doubt their capacity to excel in those fields. Identification with the father decreases while the influence of significant others increases. This occurs when individuals realize that there are things about the father's work not suitable for them.

The third stage (value stage) occurs at the age of 15 to 16 years. A new concept enters the student's career considerations – that of service to society (Asantewaa, 2020).

People appear to be becoming more conscious of the fact that "work offers more than the opportunity for satisfying their personal needs, and for the first time shows evidence of choosing vocations like medicine for humanitarian reasons rather than because of its status or intrinsic job activities" (Asantewaa, 2020). A few things become clear to the individual at this stage. For example, a clearer picture of the lifestyle offered by different careers emerges. Also emerging is the ability to take into



consideration how best to utilize one's special ability. As the conclusion of the school year approaches, people start to feel a sense of urgency about decisions related to their career.

The last sub-stage which closes the tentative period occurs at about age 17 or 18. This is when in the Ghanaian context; the adolescent is the Senior High School (SHS) (Asantewaa, 2020). In this sub-stage, the person is under increasing pressure to face the need to make judgments about their future job that are specific and realistic. The understanding of the externals of work, such as the level of training required for various jobs, the diverse financial rewards, and the various life circumstances, also occurs at this period. In effect, as they grow older, they discover their skills at certain tasks, that some activities have more intrinsic value than others and therefore begin to integrate the four periods of this stage and hold tentatively to choose (Asantewaa, 2020).

The realistic stage (age 18+) years also has sub-divisions which are exploration, crystallizations, and specification. This stage involves career entry or early years in the University. Individuals tend to evaluate career-related experiences realistically. From their studies up to the theory formulation, the authors of the theory concluded that four important ingredients contributed to the adequacy of an individual's career choice process during early adulthood. These are a reality of the ability to defer gratifications and the ability to accept and implement compromises in their career plans (Asantewaa, 2020).

According to Asantewaa (2020) Super proclaimed that occupational choice should be seen as an unfolding process, not a point-in-the-time decision. He then went on to

establish a comprehensive career theory as a supplement to the trait-and-factor method, in which (a) career development is viewed as a lifelong process unfolding in a succession of developmental stages and (b) career selection is not a one-shot decision but a cumulative outcome of a series decisions (Asantewaa, 2020; Antwi, Amos & Amoako, 2019).

Further, Asantewaa (2020) stated that Super incorporated in his developmental perspective the idea that people base their career decision on beliefs about their abilities and other self-attributes. He viewed job selection as the process of putting one's self-concepts into action, the work position as a manifestation of one's self, and career growth as an active process of strengthening the fit between one's self-concept and the occupational environment. The way a person sees himself or herself is referred to as self-concept. For example, a young woman might believe that she is bright and creative, self-confident, spontaneous in behavior unwilling to assume responsibility. Her self-concept is made up of a composite of the things she believes about her skills, character qualities, and values. This viewpoint is frequently referred to as phenomenological because the self-concept is a personal phenomenon or appearance in experience (Asantewaa, 2020; Antwi et al., 2019). Furthermore, Super believed that a young person should be mature enough to benefit from career assessment and counseling. In adults, where recycling through career stages is less dependent on age, Super suggested that readiness for career decision-making should be referred to as career adaptability (Asantewaa, 2020). This shows that a high school student must be guided to see the decision-making towards a career as an exploratory process and not an end in itself.

Super notions that career choice constitutes an implementation of self-concept formation where the person recognizes his or her uniqueness and also acknowledges the similarities between him or herself and others. These notions could be an influencing factor in High school students as they take up roles in their academic journeys to discover their potential and make decisions about their career paths.

### **2.3 Phenomenological Perspective: The Notion of Occupational Self-Concept**

The developmental stages of a super's career development process the life-stage series are the growth stage (birth to 14), exploration stage (15-24), establishment stage (25-44), maintenance stage (45-64) and decline stage (65-death) (Antwi et al., 2019).

Most high school students find themselves in the exploration stage (15-24) in Super's career developmental process. Individuals during this stage self-examine, and engage in a general exploration of work that places at school such as club activities, part-work, service and leadership roles among others. Through these explorations, the individual can assess his interest, value, and abilities which constitutes the self-concept and is informed or directed in making career choices (Antwi et al., 2019).

In his account of vocational behavior, Super incorporated in his developmental perspective the idea that people base their career decision on beliefs about their abilities and other self-attributes. He viewed job selection as the process of putting one's self-concepts into action, the work position as a manifestation of one's self, and career growth as an active process of strengthening the fit between one's self-concept and the occupational environment. The way a person views himself or themselves is known as their self-concept. For instance, a teenager can think she is intelligent and

creative, self-assured, impulsive, and unwilling to take charge. Her self-concept is made up of a composite of her ideas about her skills, personality qualities, and morals. This viewpoint is frequently referred to as phenomenological since the self-concept is a subjective phenomenon or a manifestation in experience (Asantewaa, 2020).

Super agreed that a person's self-concept is essential to comprehending their actions. It is the product of the interaction of a person's inherited characteristics, neural and endocrine makeup, the opportunity to play various roles, and the resulting outcomes of role-playing success (Antwi et al., 2019).

The formation of self-concept begins in infancy when a sense of identity is developed. As they grow, individuals develop a personal image of their abilities, personality traits, values, and roles. According to Antwi et al. (2019), they then compare this subjective picture of themselves with what they get to know about the world's occupations, and they then try to translate their self-concept into an occupational perspective. The outcome is the occupational self-concept, defined by Super as a constellation of self-attributes that are vocationally relevant to the individual. The occupational self-concept eventually may transform into a vocational preference (Asantewaa, 2020). This makes career choice and adjustment a continuous process (Antwi et al., 2019).

#### **2.4 Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory**

Asantewaa (2020) mentions John Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory, developed in 1979, which emphasizes the importance of behavior (actions) and cognition (knowing and thinking). The core of Krumboltz's claim is that certain generic processes, such as learning experiences, influence the professional development of all people,

independent of their cultural connections, necessitating research into the elements that influence career paths among high school students. This theory is distinct from other career development theories in that it focuses on educating people on career decision-making skills and how to apply them successfully when evaluating job options. The types of learning experiences that have an impact on a person are influenced by his or her culture (Asantewaa, 2020).

According to Asantewaa (2020), Krumboltz identified four factors that play important role in the selection of a specific career: genetic endowment, environmental conditions, learning experiences and task approach skills. Further, Asantewaa (2020) refers to the Social Learning Theory, that genetic endowment refers to those aspects of the individual that are inherited or innate rather than learned. This might restrict people's options for careers. Environmental conditions are those conditions that are generally outside the control of the individual and influence skills development and career preferences. Learning experiences include one's career performances as a result of prior learning experiences; individuals' prior learning experiences that eventually influence their career decisions, and individuals' prior learning experiences have a direct effect on their career choices (Asantewaa, 2020). It can then be stated that individuals may make observations about themselves and their environment that they will then use that information to make career decisions. Observations about the self-include capabilities, interests, and work values (Asantewaa, 2020). A high school student can then make career decisions based on how well they see themselves or others succeed both in academics and extracurricular activities.

## **2.5 Social Cognitive Theory**

Asantewaa (2020) refers to Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura in 1986, as a contextual variable such as social support, which includes friends, family, and relatives, that influence the career choice of an individual. Social influence or expectations also affects an individual's choice of career because there is a dialogue between children and their environment. Similarly, Bandura notes that when individuals watch their peers succeeding, they are likely to believe that they can also succeed. According to this professional development paradigm, an individual's background (or contextual factors) and personal traits affect their learning experiences, which in turn affect their self-efficacy. With the bi-directionality of influence, behavior and environmental circumstances, people are both products and producers of their environment (Asantewaa, 2020).

Furthermore, Asantewaa (2020) referred to Bandura's theory that distinguishes three modes of agency: a) personal agency exercised individually; b) collective agency, in which individuals work together to shape their futures; c) proxy agency, in which people secure desired results by persuading others to act on their behalf. When high school students choose occupations, they believe are suitable for them, among many other factors, they are impacted by these three modes. Their career choices are also influenced by the environment, which forces itself on them. These are the reasons that this particular theory is used in this study to investigate factors that influence career pathways among high school students in Ghana.

According to Asantewaa (2020), Social Cognitive Theory link to career development is influenced by both objectives and perceived environmental factors. Examples of objective factors include the quality of educational experiences to which a person has been exposed such as school counseling and the financial support available from family or guardians for

pursuing particular training. People live in socio-cultural environments that vary in their common values, traditions, social norms, institutional opportunities, and social practices. This study allowed the researcher to establish whether the above results can be achieved in Ghana using participants from different backgrounds.

## **2.6 Trait and Factor Theory**

According to Asantewaa (2020), this theory deemed the oldest of career development theories began with the history of guidance with Frank Parsons. Parsons formulated a three-step process that would lead to the best career fit (Asantewaa, 2020; Antwi et al., 2019). The three steps are:

1. Self-understanding aptitudes, abilities, interests, limitations, and resources.
2. Knowledge of the requirements and conditions for success, advantages and disadvantages of compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work.
3. True analysis of the relationships between the two categories of above-mentioned components. The trait and factor theory of career choice stresses the fact that choices made about a career are an attempt by an individual to find a career environment that is conducive to his personality. For instance, an artistic person gravitates around musical and dramatic careers - careers that are creative (Antwi et al., 2019). The degree of success, however, is dependent on the degree of compatibility between the career and the person. As it were, though persons seek careers, careers look for people. Asantewaa (as cited in Parsons, 1909) therefore, believed that where individuals were employed in the line of work which they could best fit because of compatibility both the individual and the career and society at large benefit. This makes it very important

for high school students to be given the necessary information for making career choices so that they get the satisfaction they deserve from them and also make profitable contributions to society through their careers.

## **2.7 Decision Making Theories**

Asantewaa (2020) identifies custodians of this theory as Bergland, Kalder and Zytowski. These theories focus on how the individual makes use of information and knowledge about self and work opportunity structures in his society to make a career decision. It, therefore, means that the individual has several possible alternatives to choose from and these alternatives have identifiable consequences (Asantewaa, 2020). The consequences have their values which the individual weighs and finally makes his decision and choice of a particular career. However, Asantewaa (2020), then outlines Bergland's identified sequence of events that occur in decision making, which are stated below:

1. Defining the problem
2. Generating alternatives
3. Gathering information
4. Processing information
5. Making plans and selecting goals
6. Implementing and evaluating plans (Asantewaa, 2020).

Another view on decision-making from Dubuque (2022) is that "A decision can be defined as the act of choosing. Whether you realize it or not, a decision is an answer to



a query, concern, or issue. Appropriate career decisions can be further defined as the ongoing lifelong process of making choices that complement your attributes and help you to realize your basic life values. Indeed, a career decision should be made with great care, for they will significantly influence your direction, personal satisfaction, and fulfillment in life”.

A well-read person has more information about employment options and reads more to make the best choices. As a result, their choices are more likely to be sensible and correct (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017).

### **2.8.0 Conceptual Review**

This helps the study to review relevant concepts and theories.

#### **2.8.1 The Concept of Career**

According to Dubuque (2022), many people’s assumption of a career means the part of life that is concerned with employment. From the perspective of your occupation, it refers to the total number of positions you may occupy throughout the course of your lifetime. However, these definitions do not fully capture the meaning of a career. We would like you to think of a career in a broader, more life-encompassing way.

Consider your decisions regarding a job or a college major as important steps in a lifelong process. When viewed in this manner, a career can be defined as the total of decisions that direct your educational, social, economic, political, and spiritual endeavors and reflect your unique personality characteristics and basic life values.

However, Dubuque (2022) shares a view on career success as it depends on the individual. For some people, accumulating wealth and material goods is a sign of

career success. Others measure career success by their fame and notoriety. Others, however, hold that genuine professional success can only be attained by giving back to the community or society.

When you acquire inner fulfillment through continuing to realize the following, you can succeed in your career:

- Your deepest and most beloved life principles in every significant undertaking (i.e., home, work, school, and leisure).
- A chance and motivation for you to put your existing and desired abilities to use.
- Your enthusiasm for your recent, ongoing, and upcoming successes. A career is defined in the dictionary as “A career is the job or profession that someone does for a long period of their life” (Collins, 2022).

Further defined by Team (2020) career has two definitions. "A career is a term that is frequently used to describe a profession, occupation, trade, or vocation. What you do for a living is defined by your job, which can range from occupations requiring substantial education and training to ones that can be performed with just a high school diploma and a willingness to learn. Work as a doctor, lawyer, teacher, carpenter, veterinary assistant, electrician, cashier, instructor, or hairstylist is an example of a career. Furthermore, in differentiating the definition of career and job, Anglia (2022) states that “The main difference between a career and a job is that a job is just something you do for money, whereas a career is a long-term endeavor, something you build towards and work upon every day. A career is the culmination of your roles, experiences, education, and pathways toward your goals; in contrast, a job

is only a position. The important justification for the above definition is that a job may give you a steady pay cheque which is in the short term, but a career gives you long-term financial security, as it encourages you to build on your skills and continue learning to move up the career ladder (Anglia, 2022).

### **2.8.2 The Concept of Choice**

The Collins dictionary defines choice to be the act of choosing or the act of picking or deciding between two or more possibilities (Collins, 2022). In addition to understanding choice; Choice theory is an explanation of human behavior developed by Dr. William Glasser. Further Ganti (2021) refers to rational choice theory as when an individual relies on rational calculations to make rational choices that result in outcomes aligned with his or her own best interests. The individual has to consciously attempt or estimate to match his or her strengths and weaknesses, values, and preferred lifestyle with the requirements and advantages of a range of different occupations (Asantewaa, 2020).

However, if a reference to career choice is made, the availability of career choices and the dynamics of choosing a career should be examined. Hence for career choice to take place, there should be alternative career routes available and there should be an individual preference between these career options (Asantewaa, 2020).

### **2.8.3 Career Choice as a Concept**

According to Asantewaa (2020), career choice should be initiated as early as the nursery school years through the primary, secondary and tertiary school levels. The kind of employment a person undertakes affects their social position, income, way of life, friends they choose to hang out with, and their mental and physical health. In

other words, a person's career decision affects every aspect of their life. Career choice decision-making is not an easy task, yet at one time or the other, individuals are faced with the task of choosing a career, preparing for it, starting it and making progress in it. The most crucial phase is unquestionably this point of decision. This is because making a wrong career decision can deter one's happiness in life as this could result in career maladjustment. Inappropriate career decisions made may cost not only the individual but also the entire society. Given the aforementioned, it is imperative that we provide our students with the necessary career decision-making skills.

#### **2.8.4 Factors that Influence Career Development and Choice**

According to Antwi et al. (2019), career choice is made in the context of many factors which include the following:

1. Value: it's a belief people perceive to be important and worthwhile which gives direction to what career choice they will follow.
2. Intellectual ability: this is a major factor when it comes to career choice. This considers the preparatory and educational process of an individual in readiness for a career.
3. Aptitude or skills: This factor considers one's ability or skill in doing a certain task easily and quickly. For instance, if a student does well in mathematics and science easily, this student may likely be considering a career choice in the fields of engineering or any medical-related courses.
4. The school or educational attainment: Schooling is believed to play a major factor in career choice in an individual's life. The ability to attain a high level of education is required in the decision-making towards a career choice. This

career choice could be further influenced by elements such as geographical location, finances dependent on family's ability (which can either boost or retard one's schooling attainment), family background, social status, prejudicial discrimination and personal talent.

5. The Family: A child's upbringing and socioeconomic level of the family play a major influence on career choice in that studies suggest a certain group of careers such as physical sciences, social sciences, lawyers, medicine, and engineering among others is inherited. However, nurture may be more important than an individual's ultimate choice of career.
6. Self-concept or Belief or Attitude: This factor considers the total life experience of an individual which reflects the wisdom gained from past experiences. Career satisfaction can be enhanced if the choice is based on one's self-concept.
7. Interest: A child's interest or fantasy in being a professional athlete or musician can result from witnessing performances on television or in person and may lead him or her to pursue that career path.
8. Sex differences: Sex differences relative to masculine or feminine in attitude, interest and intellectual patterning are considered factors that influence career choices. Some fields in career are male-dominated and vice versa.
9. Conflict with significant others: These are people who have more influence in an individual's life than others. They are parents, responsible family members, teachers, counselors, opinion leaders, and role models/mentors among others. They are considered significant in the sense that whatever decision they make

is difficult to turn down. This could affect a student's choice of career when the child in pretense to please and not disappoint these people go in for careers they would otherwise not have chosen.

### **2.9.0 Empirical Review**

This section provides related works on the factors that influence career choice.

#### **2.9.1 Factors in Student Career Choice**

When it comes to a career choice in the life of a high school student; personnel in person such as parents, school heads, teachers and school counselors play a major role in the student making career choices (Antwi et al., 2019).

#### **2.9.2 The Role of the Parent in Student Career Choice:**

There is undeniable evidence that parents are the strongest influence on their children's choice of career. There are histories of parents disapproving of a career path or courses of study for their children. Parental influence on the career choice of a student can be an obstacle student's choice of career. These influences are felt when decisions such as university courses are being considered for student placement (Antwi et al., 2019).

Further, Asantewaa (2020) states that research on family influence has increased rapidly during the last couple of years, yet an understanding of family influences on career choices remains sparse. Much of the research on family influence focuses on individual parents' careers, for instance, mothers or fathers influencing children to take up a certain career. This study takes into account the impact of parents, siblings, and other family members on professional decisions. Furthermore, Asantewaa (2020)

points out that several studies bear testimony that parental involvement influences high school students' career choices, for example in Romania, Pakistan, America, Albania, and the Philippines among others. In America, it is purported that the career process of young people can be compared to rocks in a rock polisher. People of all kinds work on them, but parents are the large rocks in the tumbler. Other American studies also reveal that, even if schools had the resources with which to meet young people's career needs, neither teachers nor counselors can replace the influence parents have on their children. Besides parents, other American family members are viewed as influential in their children's career choices (Asantewaa, 2020).

A research study according to Asantewaa (2020) stated that students from two schools in a Midwestern city in the USA, it was discovered that parents were cited as significant impacts on children's job expectations, and both boys and girls reported that they thought their parents' influence was beneficial. In connection to the above parental influence on student career choice is the income level of secondary school families which may determine what career a student makes decisions at a particular point in their lives; decisions that will greatly influence their future. Some students will have to budget education according to their income (Asantewaa, 2020).

African studies, for example, in Kenya and Nigeria according to Asantewaa (2020) have highlighted that many of the settings in which children and youth participants are dependent on the choices of their parents. Thus, parents' decisions, choices of where to live, what to provide materially and relationally in the home and how to structure out-of-school time for children impact development in ways that matter for future success in the workplace. Similarly, it is interesting to note that according to Uleanya,

Uleanya, Naidoo and Rugbeer (2021) a related study conducted in Kenya, rural students are more likely than urban students to ask their parents for assistance. Additionally, it was found that parents, more so than teachers, have a significant impact on students' career decisions. Parents contribute to the creation of challenging and encouraging environments in which they let their children to explore their own interests and hear their thoughts without passing judgment. Parents must be well guided and counseled on matters relating to career choices so that they give the right attitudes towards career choice which supports and encourage the students to have the right attitude in mind towards their career choice development (Antwi et al., 2019). In essence, parents have to know their wards well enough and help them manage conflicts properly to be good partners for the latter when faced with important decisions about their career choices (Fenu, Amponsah & Nkum, 2021).

### **2.9.3 The Role of the School and Leadership in Student Career Choice:**

A student's job decision is influenced by a variety of curriculum selections, hidden curricula, and school culture. The role of the school is to provide proper guidance while also encouraging pupils to stay in school and not drop out (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). The head of school also plays a major role in the career choice influence of the students. He ensures a well-planned programme that the school counselors run with the students in the school. He encourages the teachers to be sensitive to student needs, and encourage students to understand themselves, and their strengths or weakness among others which helps the students to make the right career choices (Antwi et al., 2019).



It is the role of the school from early adolescence, to assist learners to find meaning in their present and future lives. Self-efficacy, according to Social Cognitive Theory, is the conviction that one can do a task. Hence, students are likely to choose careers based on whether they can do well in their chosen careers. If career guidance enhances the acquisition of self-efficacy, it was critical for the current study to establish its influence in Ghana (Asantewaa, 2020). A similar study according to Ahmed, Sharif and Ahmad (2017) relate to research papers based on answers from the Makerere University in Uganda, students choosing to pursue careers in agriculture are mostly interested in this area. A career in agriculture was chosen by about 30.3% of respondents, who also agreed that their interest and prior work experience in the subject were factors. The overarching goal of school guidance programme is to help students make educated decisions about their education and careers and to give the tools and resources necessary to make sure that this process proceeds methodically and thoroughly. Guidance and counseling are integral parts of each school's total education programme, which is designed to support, facilitate and encourage classroom instruction and students' achievement (Asantewaa, 2020).

#### **2.9.4 The Role of the Teacher in Student Career Choice:**

The teacher serves as a key professional in the school instructional setting and his or her support in the career choice process of a student is crucial. Through the continuous assessment, the teacher can discuss with the student his/her progress, socio-personal behavior, limitations, attitudes and values, among others which can determine the suitability of a career decision a student can make (Antwi et al., 2019).

The teacher's role exposes students' minds to specific professions and this helps students to cultivate a mindset about some career choices. These exposures give them insight into the qualification and entry requirements that serves as a guide in their decision-making toward a career (Antwi et al., 2019).

Notably, they are trusted adults who have made career decisions, built a career, and had networks of friends and colleagues who have done the same. Hence, they exert some form of influence on the students under their tutelage (Fenu, Amponsah & Nkum, 2021). However, Hooley, Watts and Andrews (2015) point out that inevitably young people within the school system bring questions about career choices to their school. They might ask their educators for assistance in comprehending the world they live in and considering how they might fit within it. These questions regularly cross over into curriculum areas, and the responses to them are frequently dependent on teachers' knowledge of their pupils and their potential. They are also bound up with teachers' knowledge and experience of the labour market, which in many cases may be very limited outside the education sector. This may pose difficulties for teachers in terms of their abilities and knowledge. Should, for example, an enthusiastic biology student be encouraged to pursue an interest in forensic science? A teacher who refuses to tackle a topic like this could demotivate a student whose interest in the subject is linked to enthusiasm for a future career path. Discussing a topic like these demands understanding of the labor market, which not all teachers have. Similarly, a previous study on factors that influence the career decision of STEM students at a university in South Africa according to Abe and Chikoko (2020) noted student response; "Well, during my high school days, I taught myself, but influence from my teacher made me

more interested in STEM," said one of the 30 (20%) participants who acknowledged the important influence of their teachers in their career decision-making. My family, on the other hand, had no idea what I was doing; all they wanted was for me to succeed.

### **2.9.5 The Role of the School Counsellor in Student Career Choice:**

The school counselor conducts career conferences by inviting career resource role practitioners, field trips among others for students to prepare their minds for career choices and subject selection (Antwi et al., 2019). Again, the counselor assists parents to interpret the test results of their students as they discuss the student's placement in a career path by critically analyzing their abilities and capabilities to make the right choices (Antwi et al., 2019). Similarly, a previous study's goal according to Hanimoglu (2018) was to find out how the students felt about the counselors' influence on choosing a job. The researcher employed a case study approach and concentrated on the situation of three schools in Adana, Turkey. The findings indicated all of the students concurred that school counselors help them choose their careers with friendliness approach, objective guidance, in-depth understanding of varied learner views and prompt response to request regarding career selections. Further notes from Owusu, Owusu, Fiorgbor and Atakora (2021) on the role of teachers in career counseling in Senior High Schools in Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan. The key findings showed that teachers voluntarily act as informal counselors guiding students in their choices of subjects and career paths. They added that students see their teachers as role models and attach high value to their advice and guidance related to career selection.

According to Hooley et al. (2015), there are several opportunities for hybrid professionalism in the teaching profession and the career guidance profession. They argue that there should now be a common professional framework and programme of training and professional development for career guidance professionals and careers leaders (including teachers) within schools to recognize this overlap.

### **2.9.6 Environmental Factors**

According to Eremie and Chiamaka (2019) environment has a momentous role in the career choices students make and the position the student attains in various ways. The environment is a that has many connotations – it has physical, economic, social and cultural dimensions. The environment being referred to here is a factor that is used to foster decisions in career choices. Further stated by Eremie and Chiamaka (2019), sociologists have explored how career decision-making is affected by the social environment. Some of these components of social environment factors include; family, social economic status, general economic conditions, society's stereotypes about specific occupations, and peer groups, all influencing career choice.

Furthermore, Other environmental determinants would include recreational facilities and articles the student has seen in local papers or on the television (Asantewaa, 2020). The media displays the splendor of a culture and the sparkle of the commercial world while highlighting social ills, global challenges, trends, and styles. Moreover, talk shows, documentaries, movies and dramas portray careers such as law, media and advertising as very glamorous and appealing, thus drawing students towards them (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017). The greatest environmental component may be the student's support network, which includes parents, relatives, siblings, peers, instructors, and

counselors. As we can see, there are many opportunities or paths to be explored by secondary school students. Secondary school senior students will have accomplished choosing a career if a complete, thoughtful, education decision was made, evaluating all of the factors possible in the career choice process (Asantewaa, 2020).

Peer influence on career choice cannot be overlooked. According to Owusu, Owusu, Fiorgbor and Atakora (2021) a study to examine the influence of peers on students' career decision-making found that peer influence had a positive relationship with career decision-making. The nature, level and extent of peers and friends' influence in the career decision-making process of an individual was an asset for developing career opportunities and decision-making among youth.

Similarly, a study in Kenya, indicated that peer interactions influence students in choosing careers. As the students interacted, they shared information about careers. In China, it is revealed that students' interaction with peers of diversified interests, races and backgrounds has the potential to stimulate reflection, knowledge and beliefs which may lead to new ways of thinking about the world, other peers and eventually themselves (Owusu et al., 2021).

### **2.9.7 Students Influence and Career Choice**

A student's profession choice may be influenced by how they perceive themselves in a situation where personality is a deciding factor. Some occupations require that your personality mesh with those requirements. For example, salespeople have to be outgoing, this shows that personality plays an important role in the choice of the right career (Antwi et al., 2019). Students must have a self-motivated attitude so that they can research profession options early in life rather than waiting until they are forced to

make a choice (Antwi et al., 2019). Students must take seriously the role grades play in limiting opportunities in the future. Splaver goes on to say, “It is important for one to have a good understanding of her personality if she is to make intelligent career plans” (Eremie & Chiamaka, 2019).

According to Eremie and Chiamaka (2019), interest has become the most important determinant factor of occupational choices. Interest inventories have been developed to help identify interests and relate them to careers. By measuring the interests of successful and satisfied people in an occupation, researchers have developed scales that compare the interests of individuals to the interests of people who are certain about what they want to do. Similarly, a related study in Kenya according to Nyamwange (2016) show that establishing interest in a vocation depends in large part on having prior understanding of what it requires, which was stated by 272 (91.9%) of all respondents. A person will make a decision while fully informed of what to expect, what work habits are required of them, and the possible profits if they have prior knowledge of the situation they are going to enter.

Further noted by Eremie and Chiamaka (2019) that education falls under opportunities for students because education differs in terms of the system of education, the quality of education and even the level of education. There are those students who are privileged to have access to the best quality of education and even to the highest level of education whereas others do not. Those who have access to quality education are most likely going to make their career choices early. We tend to pursue more vigorously the values that have more meaning to students than those that are less important to them. For instance, getting an education must have positive implications

for students. How actively one pursues education is related to the strength of the value one places on education. Values at times conflict by fulfilling one goal while interfering with achieving another. Students may encounter conflicts throughout their life that will require them to rank their values, whether they are or are not aware of the choice (Eremie & Chiamaka, 2019).

Furthermore, Asantewaa (2020) adds that many students choose their careers based on their academic ability. However, some student's work habits do not match the field of study they have chosen. These students could feel underwhelmed by the course of study they have selected. These pupils could find their topic of study to be difficult and uninspiring. Therefore, helping these students choose a topic of study through career counselling is crucial. Similarly, a related study according to Nyamwange (2016) reveals that 73 (55.7%) of the participants said that asking questions about a career was driven by a desire to learn more about how much money the career may pay. Additionally, 31 (23.7%) of the participants believed that the need to understand the marketability of a vocation was the real motivation for asking questions about it. Additionally, 15 respondents (11.5%) believed that the goal of asking questions was to comprehend the work habits of the career. Knowing the value of a career was a less important argument provided by respondents as to why people inquire about careers.

### **2.9.8 Career Choice and Gender**

According to Asantewaa (2020) attitude toward a certain career is the reason for the vast difference in careers chosen by females, males and the different ethnic groups. However, this attitude comes about due to the type of influence a person has received

throughout his/her development. Student makes their career choice by their gender type and the prestige the career comes with.

Furthermore, Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) add on how stereotyping of jobs has also been observed amongst the genders, where boys tend to opt for high-earning careers, and girls in schools and daycares. Similarly, a study conducted in Florida reports that 99% of males opted for cosmetology fields and 100% of males chose to be plumbers.

According to Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) research reports that females traditionally avoid male-dominated fields. However, in contrast, recent studies show that women are adopting conventionally male-oriented professions. Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) refer to Brock and Cammish who interviewed school children from six countries, viz. India Bangladesh, Jamaica, Cameroon, Sierra Vanuatu and Leone, asked them to share their opinion on gender factor which acts as a barrier to women's education. Females said that having access to education was a prevalent factor. Cultural prejudices in favor of men rather than women are a significant disadvantage for women.

In the modern world, media has a significant impact on decisions made at all levels. Commercial advertising is responsible for fostering gender stereotypes. Information about various professions is provided by various commercials and posters. These messages leave an impact on the people and they adopt careers which are not traditionally associated with their gender. Contrary to findings, a related study according to Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) results show 78% denied being influenced by print media. Children tend to be more informed about situations they see on television and in movies, rather than reality, which serves as a strong influence on their career decisions (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017)



## **2.10 Chapter Summary**

Factors that influence career paths have been identified in the literature. The effect of the family and the function of the school providing career guidance programme, the role teachers play in guiding students in their career decision-making, and the student's developmental abilities and interest in studying subjects in school form based on career counseling were mentioned as variables influencing high school students' career paths. Environmental variables, media, gender difficulties, and peer pressure were all explored about their impact on students' job decisions. The research approach employed in this study is discussed in the following chapter.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The study's major goal was to find out the factors that influence students' career choices in Senior High School; in the case of International Community School (ICS).

It is well acknowledged that the quality of any research endeavor is determined by the collection of relevant data that will be used to answer a specified problem. The validity and reliability of data collecting and the findings gained are determined by the quality of these processes. The approaches to be employed in the research study are outlined in this chapter. The following subheadings outline the research methodologies and procedures to be employed in the study: research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrument, data collection procedure, and data processing and analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Approach**

The study adopted the quantitative research approach where variables are measured using a numerical system with data analyzed using a range of statistical models, correlations and associations between the variables presented. This provides the researcher with a statistical view and numerical substance, or measure of variables tested and reality in figures. The process of gathering and analyzing numerical data is

known as quantitative research. It can be used to identify trends and averages, formulate hypotheses, examine causality, and extrapolate findings to larger populations (Bhandari, 2021).

### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design is the overarching method adopted to combine the various components of the study logically and cohesively, ensuring that you will effectively address the research problem; it is the blueprint for data collecting, measurement, and analysis (University, 2020). The purpose of the research design is to offer a suitable framework for a study. The decision to be made about research strategy is a very important decision in the research design process since it affects how relevant information for a study will be gathered; yet, the research design process involves several interrelated decision methods (Sileyew, 2019). A research design is a programme that directs a researcher's data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

When the goal of the research is to discover traits, frequencies, trends, and classifications, descriptive research is the best option. When little is known about the subject or issue, it is helpful. Before you can research why something happens, you need to understand how, when and where it happens (Bhandari, 2021). Further explained by University (2020) that descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe "what exists" concerning variables or conditions in a situation. Survey research means collecting information about a group of people by asking them questions and analyzing the results (Bhandari, 2021).

In this sense, the descriptive research design was used in this study. The researcher used a descriptive survey in the hopes of gathering the necessary information on variables that influence career choice among SHS students in the case of International Community School (ICS). To determine and search for information regarding the situation at hand, the survey method of descriptive research was employed, which contained data from a questionnaire.

### **3.3 Study Area**

Amansie West District is one of the Ashanti Region's forty-three districts. According to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, the District's population is 109,416 people and spans an area of 1,364 square kilometers. Mpatuam, Pakyi No. 1, Antoakrom, and Esuowin are the district's principal settlements, in addition to its capital Manso Nkwanta. Pakyi No. 1 has both public and private schools which run the Ghanaian education curriculum from primary to Junior High school level. International Community School (ICS) (ICS-Kumasi) is the only school in Pakyi No.1 that runs the Cambridge International Assessment Examination curriculum from the primary level to the secondary level. International Community School (ICS) hosts a student population of over 1400 with culturally diverse nationalities from around the world forming about 20% and 80% Ghanaians. Students who complete their high school education in ICS-Kumasi seek tertiary education in Ghana and abroad with diverse career aspirations and influences from both cultural, and foreign educational experiences. The school also has a guidance and counseling unit that helps the students on different issues. The information gathered inspires the study to find out

what factors influence career choices among high school students particularly at International Community School (ICS).

### 3.4 Population

According to Bhandari (2021) population is the entire group that you want to draw conclusions about. A research population is a clearly defined collection of individuals or things that are known to have similar characteristics. A population's members frequently have a common, unifying characteristic or attribute.

The target population was made up of all Advance Level (A-Level) High School Students which is made up of Year 12(Lower sixth formers) and Year 13(Upper sixth formers) in the International Community School (ICS). The accessible population of the study is 122 in total. The year 12 are 55 in total and Year 13 are 67 in total.



**Table 1-Distribution of the Population by Year group and Gender**

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Number of students</b>
Year 12	26	29	55
Year 13	34	33	67
Total	60	62	122

Source: International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1, 2021/2022.

### 3.5 Sample Sampling and Procedure

The sample is the specific group of individuals that the researcher will collect data from. The researcher samples from Year 12 (entry group) and Year 13 (Final year).

In stratified sampling, the population is divided into smaller groups that can have significant differences. It allows the researcher to draw more precise conclusions by ensuring that every subgroup is properly represented in the sample. To use this sampling method, you divide the population into subgroups (called strata) based on the relevant characteristic (e.g., gender, age range, income bracket, job role) (Thomas, 2021). The method of stratified random sampling is employed by the researcher. In determining the sample size for data collection, the researcher used Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) table to define the sample size of 92 of a total population of 122 (Kenpro, 2012). In proportionate sampling, the sample size of each stratum is equal to the subgroup's proportion in the population as a whole (Thomas, 2021). Therefore, using proportionate sampling to divide equally the 92-sample size into 2 strata of 46 each. Within each stratum, the researcher uses a random sampling technique to select the participants. The Head of Secondary and school counselors provided the class registers of Year 12 and Year 13 which were used for the random sampling in selecting the students till the required number was reached.

**Table 2-Distribution of Sample Selection**

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Sample selected</b>
Year 12	55	46
Year 13	67	46

Total	122	92
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Source: International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1, 2021/2022.

### **3.6 Data Collection Instrument**

According to Bhandari (2021), a questionnaire is a specific tool or instrument for collecting data. It's a brilliant platform to get reliable information about procedures and conditions that respondents are expected to also be acquainted with. It can also be used to find out about people's perspectives, feelings, and behaviors. A questionnaire was used to collect the study's data. Questionnaires were printed and distributed randomly to the target population which answered or gave feedback within a set time. Questionnaires were retrieved and later coalited into the various tables presented in this study using the SPSS 21 software. Creating valid and reliable questions that address your research objectives, arranging them in a suitable order, and selecting a suitable methodology for administration are all part of designing a questionnaire (Bhandari, 2021). The researcher based the instrument on previous research. Prior to the preparation of the questionnaire, a detailed literature assessment of studies on variables that influence career choice among Senior High School students in the case of International Community School (ICS) was conducted.

The questionnaires were made up of four main sections. Section A was made up of the background characteristics of respondents, Section B looked at school factors that influence the choice of career. Section C considered the parental factors that influence the choice of career. Section D was on environmental factors that influence the choice of career. Apart from the question in Section A, the rest of the Sections contained

questions measured using the four-point Likert scaled items. All the items were positive and were scored as Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 (See Appendix).

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability of Instrument**

The extent to which any measuring instrument measures what it is meant to measure is known as validity in quantitative research (Haradhan, 2017). The content of a test has face validity if it appears to be relevant to the person taking it. It assesses the questionnaire's design in terms of feasibility, legibility, style and formatting coherence, and the clarity of the language employed (Taherdoost, 2017). Face validity, in other words, refers to researchers' subjective judgments of the measuring instrument's presentation and relevance, such as whether the items in the instrument appear to be relevant, rational, unambiguous, and clear (Taherdoost, 2017). The degree to which the instrument fully examines or measures the concept of interest is referred to as content validity (Taherdoost, 2017). Therefore, the questionnaire was handed to my supervisor and career guidance and counselors in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1 to improve the study's validity. To determine whether the research instruments were appropriate, comments were made on the format, content, language, clarity, the relevance of the items and structure. Rewording items, adding research questions, and removing some extraneous statements were all suggested. Corrections were done to ensure that the questionnaire items would focus on the information needed for the research questions. Therefore, face validity and content validity were ensured for the study.



Middleton (2022) refers to reliability as the consistency with which a method assesses something. If the same result can consistently be obtained by following the same steps in the same circumstances, the measurement is regarded as dependable. A reliability test was performed to ensure that the research instrument was consistent. By changing or removing items, the research tools were enhanced. The Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency was used to assess the instruments' dependability. The reliability coefficient obtained was .792, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

### **3.8 Ethical Consideration**

According to Bhandari (2021), scientific integrity, human rights and dignity, and science-society collaboration all depend on research ethics. These principles ensure that study participants' involvement is voluntary, informed, and safe. Informed consent entails communication and exchange of information between the researcher and the potential participant. The entire informed consent process entails providing a participant with enough information about the study, allowing the participant sufficient time to consider all options, responding to the participant's questions, ensuring that the participant understands the information, obtaining the participant's voluntary agreement to participate, and continuing to provide information as the individual or situation requires (Research, 2022). All of the study's potential and concerns were presented to the participants in the presence of the school's Guidance and Counselling counsellors. The written consent was received on behalf of the students by the institution through the school's Guidance and Counselling Unit. The researcher sought permission from the school management because the research participants were largely students.

### **3.8.1 Confidentiality and Anonymity**

To maintain confidentiality, the students were given the option of filling out their questionnaires in private. All participants' privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality were protected during the analyses of the results. Throughout the research effort, the participants' names were neither utilized nor revealed. The conclusions were discussed based on the tendencies that emerged from the data, not on any previous notions.

### **3.9 Data Processing and Analysis**

The Completed questionnaires were entered into Google form and SPSS software (version 20.0) to process data. The analyses focused on descriptive statistics that involved computing means, standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages.

### **3.10 Chapter Summary**

A descriptive survey with quantitative approaches was used in the study. The study involved High School students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1 in the Amansie West District in the Ashanti Region. The sampling techniques used were stratified and random sampling. The main research instrument used in collecting data was a questionnaire. The study applied validity and reliability checks on the instrument. Ethical responsibilities were ensured to make the study valid. The next chapter looks at results gathered from data and possible discussions.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS/FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the questionnaire data analysis based on the topic under investigation. The goal of the study was to find out what factors influence career choice among high school students in the case of International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1. The outcomes of the three (3) research questions were used to conduct data analysis and interpretation. The analysis was conducted out of 122 students from two-year levels resulting in 92 selected respondents answering the questionnaires. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Means-M, Standard Deviations-Std.D, Frequencies-F, and Percentages -%). The first section presents the limitations of the study. The demographic features of the students chosen for the study are described in the second section of this chapter. The research findings are reported in the third section, which is based on the study's research questions.

#### **4.1 Demographic Characteristics**

The respondents' backgrounds are discussed in this section. Gender, year level, course, and age are among them. The demographic features of the respondents are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3- Demographic Characteristics of Students**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Subscale</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent %</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female	42	45.7
	Male	50	54.3
<b>Year Level</b>	Year 12	46	50
	Year 13	46	50
<b>Courses</b>	Humanities, Sciences, and Language	1	1.1
	Humanities and Language	14	15.2
	Humanities and Sciences	14	15.2
	Humanities and Vocational	2	2.2
	Humanities, Sciences, Language, and Vocational	1	1.1
	Other(s) Specify	8	8.7
	Pure Humanities (History, Geography/ Economics/ Accounting/ Business)	20	21.7
	Pure Sciences (Chemistry, Biology/ Physics/ Mathematics)	31	33.7
	Pure Vocational (Art and Design/ AICT)	1	1.1
<b>Age</b>	Below 15	1	1.1
	16-18	83	90.2
	19 and above	8	8.7

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Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 3 indicates the summary of the results on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The results indicate that the majority of the respondents were males (n=50, 54.3%). While the females were the least (n=42, 45.7%). About their courses, those offering Pure Science (Chemistry, Biology, Physics and Mathematics) were the majority (n=31, 33.7%). The age range results showed that most of the students were within 16-18 years the majority (n=83, 90.2%).

#### **4.2 Analysis and Discussion of the Research Questions**

The selected respondents from the two-year levels in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1 were made to rank their responses using Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Using means, the scales were scored as (Strongly Agree =4, Agree =3, Disagree= 2 and Strongly Disagree =1). For the scale, a criteria value of 2.50 was established. The scores were combined and divided by the number scale ( $4+3+2+1= 10/4=2.50$ ) to produce the criteria value (CV=2.50). Statements on the variables that scored a mean of 0.00 to 2.49 were regarded as low factors that associate with career choice among Senior High School students in International Community School (ICS) to comprehend the mean scores. The statements with a mean score of 2.50 to 4.00 were considered a strong factor influencing career choices among Senior High School students in International Community School (ICS).

#### **4.3 Research Question 1: What school factors influence the choice of career among SHS students in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1?**

The question intended to find the school factors that influence the career choice of high school students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1, and the results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4- Means and Standard Deviations of School Factors that Influence the Career Choice**

<b>School Factors (SF)</b>	<b>Year 12 (M)</b>	<b>Year 13 (M)</b>	<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>MR</b>
Career guidance is comprehensively offered at our school.	3.43	3.43	3.43	.816	1st
My subjects influenced career decision.	3.46	3.33	3.39	.695	2nd
Career is linked to favourite subjects.	3.35	3.15	3.25	.885	3rd
School career exploration activities broaden my career horizons.	2.93	2.89	2.91	.885	4th
Career guidance cleared my confusion.	2.93	2.74	2.84	.952	5th
Career guidance counsellor was influential to my career choice.	2.30	2.39	2.35	.954	6th
Career resource models influenced my career decision.	2.20	2.20	2.25	.897	7th

School career days influenced my career choice.	1.98	2.35	2.16	.941	8th
Former students' careers influenced me.	1.91	2.30	2.11	.907	9th
Career trips influenced me.	1.85	1.78	1.82	.889	10th
The school head influenced my career choice.	1.57	1.67	1.62	.754	11th
Average Mean/SD	2.75	2.57	2.56	.870	

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, N=Sample Size

Table 4 indicates that most school factors influence the career choice of Senior High School students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1 in general. This was conclusive when the average mean (MM=2.56) of the students' responses exceeded the Test Value of 2.50.

In interpreting the result, it is clear that some school factors scored higher means in relevance to the Test Value of 2.50 which meant that they played a high factor in influencing career choice among respondents from International Community School (ICS). For example, most students in both Year 12 (M=3.43 >TV (2.50)) and Year 13 (M=3.43 >TV (2.50)) pointed to the fact that career guidance is comprehensively offered at their school which influences their career choice (M=3.43 >TV (2.50), SD=.816, n=92). This explains that the career guidance offered at International Community School (ICS) is a strong factor that influences these high school students when it comes to their decision-making in career selection.

The result is supported by Bassey and Edet (2018) that School-based Career guidance offered to high school students helps them make realistic or appropriate career choices and maximizes their potential. Further opined is that students should be exposed to Career Guidance and Counseling services early in school, including relevant and accurate career information, so that they can use it in their career decision-making (Bassey & Edet, 2018). Further support for the result was evident in a study survey done on senior high school students in the Agona East district which demonstrated that career counseling assists students in connecting what they learn to their interests, capacities, and aspirations, as well as matching these to available opportunities (Upoalkpajor, 2020). Risnasari and Basuki (2020) stressed the fact that career awareness is a crucial component of career guidance and counseling services. This means that career coaching and counseling entails an awareness of the development, exploration, goals and practical professional decision-making of uncovering career opportunities by the student. These studies support the fact that career guidance offered in schools is a factor that influences career choice among high school students particularly International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1.

A similar result is evident when the responses from both Year 12 ( $M=3.46 >TV$  (2.50)) and Year 13 ( $M=3.33 >TV$  (2.50)) indicated that the subjects they do influenced their career decision ( $M=3.39 >TV$  (2.50),  $SD=.695$ ,  $n=92$ ). This explains that courses studied are one of the strong school factors that impact Senior High School students in International Community School (ICS) career decision-making. This result finds a supporting study done among the Abuakwa South Municipality's Senior High School (SHS) students with the majority of the students' career choices



were largely based on the programme of study they choose upon entering the SHS which they will likely continue to study at the University or other higher tertiary institutions of learning, as well as their future career opportunities and all these links to SHS programme they have selected (Adinkrah & Fosu-Ayarkwah, 2020). A student's ability, interest and achievement on a task play a psychological role in determining the career path they will want to pursue. According to Quiño (2022), a study conducted in the Philippines during the pandemic showed in the result that participants agree to the fact that they chose their programme based on their preferences, which were influenced by their personality and habits.

A further result from both Year 12 ( $M=3.35 >TV (2.50)$ ) and Year 13 ( $M=3.15 >TV (2.50)$ ) shows that a school factor that influences preferred career choice among high school students is linked to studying their favourite subjects ( $M=3.25 >TV (2.50)$ ,  $SD=.885$ ,  $n=92$ ). This explains that preferred career choice is linked to students' interest, aptitude and ability in doing well in favourite subjects is a strong school factor that influences high school students in International Community School (ICS). The study's findings support the Trait and Factor theory, which states that career choice is based on matching personal traits such as abilities, resources, personality, and so on.

Supported studies to the result according to Pascuala (2014) reveal that students only agree that their favourite subjects are a reflection of their talents but although students' interests in pursuing subjects and personalities are used to determine the suitability of subjects for them, other factors such as aptitude and intellectual ability are as important when choosing a career. A similar result is seen in a study conducted in

South Africa among High school students and the participants believed that the influence their academic achievements and self-efficacy had on their career choices is significant (Chinyamurindi, Hlatywayo, Mhlanga, Marange & Everson, 2021).

Data also reveals that the students in Year 12 ( $M=2.93 >TV (2.50)$ ) and Year 13 ( $M=2.89 >TV (2.50)$ ) agree that school career exploration and career decision-making activities broaden students' career horizons as a school factor that influences their career decision making ( $M=2.91 >TV (2.50)$ ,  $SD=.885$ ,  $n=92$ ). This explains as a strong school factor of influence among high school students in International Community School (ICS) is when they are taken through career explorations and decision-making activities which makes them understand the varied careers. This also helps them make informed choices when it comes to career selection.

Studies from China support this result according to Chen, Liu, Wen, Ling, Chen, Ling and Gu (2021) that career exploration at high schools is becoming increasingly popular in China, owing to the new college entrance examination reform programme.

High school students can cultivate the ability of career planning with the skills to adapt to future career changes. In support of the study according to Bassey and Edet (2018), individuals are exposed to a variety of choices due to their increased awareness and understanding of hidden truths regarding careers. This draws on both school administrators and counselors to provide updated information on educational pathways, opportunities, programme on career guidance and training to high school students to assist in their informed decision-making when it comes to career choice.

A further result from Year 12 ( $M=2.93 >TV (2.50)$ ) and Year 13 ( $M=2.74 >TV (2.50)$ ) indicated the fact that school career guidance cleared career confusion that they

had when it came to making career choices ( $M=2.84 > TV (2.50)$ ,  $SD=.952$ ,  $n=92$ ).

This explains that school career guidance is a high school factor that influences high school students in International Community School (ICS) in clarifying issues around careers and helping them make informed choices when it comes to careers.

The work of Uleanya, Uleanya, Naidoo and Rugbeer (2021) conducted in South Africa affirms the result that effective communication and career-related information when rightly delivered during career guidance helps students to make smart career decisions. Also, in supporting the result the work of Amoah, Kwofie and Kwofie (2015) stated that students agreed to the fact that career guidance was strong instrumentation to their career decision-making. Further suggestion to support the study is for counselors to consider adding new topics on career guidance and counseling programme to aid students in their discovery stage of career alternatives enhancing the clarity of information given concerning career choices (Uleanya, Uleanya, Naidoo & Rugbeer, 2021). This finding further points to the fact that when the information given during career guidance is not well programmed, students will face the difficulty of indecision or will get confused during decision-making.

#### **4.4 Research Question 2: What parental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1?**

The question intended to find the parental factors that influence the career choice of high school students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1, and the results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5- Means and Standard Deviations of Parental Factors that Influence the Career Choice**

<b>Parental Factors (PF)</b>	<b>Year 12 (M)</b>	<b>Year 13 (M)</b>	<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>SD Std.</b>	<b>MR</b>
Information from parents helped me.	2.63	2.24	2.43	.976	1st
My mother influenced my career.	2.35	2.30	2.33	.962	2nd
My father influenced my career.	2.22	2.24	2.23	.927	3rd
My father's career influenced me.	2.22	1.98	2.10	1.090	4th
My parent's income influenced me.	2.09	1.98	2.03	.988	5th
Older siblings influenced my career choice.	1.89	1.93	1.91	1.013	6th
Mother's career influenced my choice of career.	1.78	1.89	1.84	.964	7th
Family profession is my choice career	1.85	1.76	1.80	1.024	8th
Family business influenced my career choice.	1.67	1.80	1.74	.936	9th
An extended family member influenced my career choice.	1.83	1.65	1.74	.959	10th
Average Mean/SD	2.05	1.98	2.02	.984	

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, N=Sample Size

Table 5 indicated that most parental factors do not influence the career choice of Senior High School students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1 in general. This was conclusive when the average mean ( $MM=2.02$ ) of the students' responses was less than the Test Value of 2.50.

However, the result from Year 12 ( $M=2.63 > TV (2.50)$ ) is the only indication that information they got from their parents helped them to choose a career as a strong factor of influence when they make career decisions but on the contrary Year 13 ( $M=2.24 < TV (2.50)$ ) disagree to the factor that information they get from parents has a significant influence on their career choice making in International Community School (ICS). This study finding reveals that parental guidance in terms of the information given on careers is not a factor that influences their career choice-making ( $M=2.43 < TV (2.50)$ ,  $SD=.976$ ,  $n=92$ ). A similar study in Lagos supports this finding according to Ukwueze and Obiefuna (2017), where the parental factor was not a significant influence on the high school student's career choices and a possible reason could be interpreted from this result as although parents had a significant influence on their children's profession decisions, urban students were less likely to ask their parents for advice than their rural counterparts. Therefore this reason is a likely indication revealed in the findings of the study conducted among the high school students of International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1.

Most studies do not support this result as the role of parental influence has been seen as a major influence when it comes to high school students' career choice decision-making. Contrarily to the result findings of this study, the work of Xing and Rojewski (2018) suggested that parental factor was statistically significant in predicting Chinese

secondary vocational students' career decisions. For this study, it will be necessary for the career guidance department in International Community School (ICS) to convene sessions with parents to update them on their children's progress on career paths, explain the role of parents in positively guiding their children's career development with relevant information, and urge them to participate in their children's school and extracurricular activities that would enhance their career choice decision making. A further result from a study conducted in the senior secondary school of Bhutan according to Sangay (2019), it is advised that parents should refrain from interfering with their children's decisions unnecessarily because doing so will reduce the senior secondary school students' ability to make career decisions because there is a significant negative relationship between parental involvement and career decision-making.

#### **4.5 Research Question 3: What environmental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1?**

The question intended to find the environmental factors that influence the career choice of high school students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1, and the results are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6- Means and Standard Deviations of Environmental Factors that Influence the Career Choice**

<b>Environmental Factors (EF)</b>	<b>Year 12 (M)</b>	<b>Year 13 (M)</b>	<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>SD Std.</b>	<b>MR</b>

Teachers give comprehensive advice.	2.87	2.80	2.84	.806	1st
Teachers' advice was helpful to me.	2.78	2.67	2.73	.866	2nd
Teacher information is reliable.	2.67	2.54	2.61	.784	3rd
News on famous people influenced me.	2.48	2.74	2.60	1.063	4th
Internet reading influenced my choice.	2.49	2.47	2.48	.993	5th
Validation of careers is from my teachers.	2.17	2.20	2.18	.925	6th

**Table 6 Continued**

<b>Environmental Factors (EF)</b>	<b>Year 12 (M)</b>	<b>Year 13 (M)</b>	<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>SD Std.</b>	<b>MR</b>
Watching documentary influenced me.	2.13	2.22	2.17	1.001	7th
Adverts on social media influenced me.	1.95	2.17	2.07	1.003	8th
My class teacher influenced me.	1.91	2.18	2.04	.965	9th
A film I watched influenced my choice.	2.00	2.04	2.02	1.038	10 <sup>th</sup>
Radio/TV talk show influenced me.	1.91	2.07	1.99	.925	11 <sup>th</sup>
Teacher's advice changed my mind.	1.48	2.09	1.78	.849	12 <sup>th</sup>

My best friend influenced my choice.	1.35	1.62	1.48	.705	13 <sup>th</sup>
Classmates influenced my choice.	1.09	1.57	1.33	.697	14 <sup>th</sup>
Average Mean/SD	2.09	2.24	2.17	.901	

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, N=Sample Size

Table 6 indicated that most of the environmental factors do not influence the career choice of Senior High School students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1 in general. This was conclusive when the average mean (MM=2.17) of the students' responses is less than the Test Value of 2.50.

Moreover, in interpreting the result, it is clear that some environmental factors scored higher means in relevance to the Test Value of 2.50, and meant that they played a high factor in influencing career choice among respondents from International Community School (ICS). For example, most students both Year 12 (M=2.87 >TV (2.50)) and Year 13 (M=2.80 >TV (2.50)) pointed to the fact that teachers give comprehensive and proper advice on careers (M=2.84 >TV (2.50), SD=.806, n=92). This explains the agreement in response of the participants at International Community School (ICS) that teachers giving well-informed advice on careers is a strong factor that influences these high school students when it comes to their decision-making in career selection. Similar statistics are recorded from the study on teachers' influence as a strong factor in career choice making when both Year 12 (M=2.78 >TV (2.50)) and Year 13 (M=2.67 >TV (2.50)) responses indicated that teachers' advice on career guidance was helpful to them in International Community School (ICS) (M=2.73 >TV (2.50)),



SD=.866, n=92). Again, teacher influence from the result gathered from the study shows from both Year 12 (M=2.67 >TV (2.50)) and Year 13 (M=2.54 >TV (2.50)) agree that career information given by teachers is always reliable and is a strong factor that influences high school students in International Community School (ICS) career choices (M=2.61>TV (2.50), SD=.784, n=92). These findings on teacher role in high school students' career choice making are consistent with a study conducted in Cameroon by Younyi and Achankeng (2020 ) and among Chinese secondary students in Hong Kong according to Wong, Chen and Yuen (2022) suggested that teacher support given to high school students plays a major role in student career choices. The study also indicated that motivational support from teachers has positive significance on students' self-efficacy in improving decision-making and career development exploration (Wong et al., 2022). Further, acknowledging that successful career counseling in schools requires access to current knowledge about the labor market and the ability of teachers to communicate this information to students is very important because it is the most important factor influencing how well career self-efficacy is developing among high school students (Wong et al., 2022). Lack of information may cause students to be misguided in their career decision making which will affect both their career fulfillment and society in the future. It is clear to note from the results that the teacher factor in high school students' career choice making shows students trust and confidence in what teachers provide as guidance to career paths and this trust of the students must be handled with the intentional focus of the teacher giving relevant information and providing genuine thoughtful care when advising students on career paths.

Another notable strong environmental factor from the result with a mean score of 2.60 scored above the Test Value of 2.50 is reading or watching the news about famous people influenced my decision of career choice among the high school students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1 (M=2.60>TV (2.50), SD=1.063, n=92). Although Year 12 (M=2.48 <TV (2.50)) disagreed with the factor, Year 13 (M=2.74 >TV (2.50)) agreed with the fact that reading or watching the news about famous people is a strong factor of influence when it comes to career decision making. The result is supported by a study according to Ukwueze and Obiefuna (2017), that showed that students picked professions where individuals are held in high regard. This implies that some classes of individuals might not even explore some jobs outside of the supposedly prominent fields they have encountered through the media about famous people's careers. Further supported a study on this result according by Njogu, Kibaara and Gichohi (2019) indicated that it has also become clear that the media's projection of celebrities has a significant impact on secondary school pupils' career decisions as a strong factor. Whereby students' perception of themselves and the world of work has been influenced by new concepts and worldviews brought about by the development of online information and social networks, which has also assisted students in making career decisions (Njogu, Kibaara & Gichohi, 2019). All parties involved in career advising must be aware of this media development significantly directed to famous personalities and implement programme to encourage media literacy that will improve high school students' ability to make relevant career decisions.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The study sought to find out factors that influenced career choices among high school students in the case of International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. This chapter includes the study's findings and recommendations for career counseling among high

school students. The presentation of information about areas for additional study concludes the chapter.

### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

The following findings were established:

1. Generally, studies have indicated that having a comprehensive career guidance programme within the curriculum helps students with their career choice-making. This study has proven this school factor when it comes to making decisions about their career choices, these high school students are strongly influenced by the career guidance provided at International Community School (ICS) Pakyi No. 1. According to Bassey and Edet (2018), school-based career counseling provided to high school students helps them make sensible or suitable career decisions and maximizes their potential.
2. This study shows that selecting courses is one of the significant school factors that influence senior high school students' career decisions at the International Community School (ICS). A student's aptitude, enthusiasm, and performance on a task have a psychological impact on the career path they will choose.
3. A significant school factor that influenced high school students at International Community School (ICS) is the relationship between intended career choice and students' interest, aptitude, and capacity for success in favorite subjects. The study's findings are consistent with the Trait and Factor hypothesis, which contends that choosing a vocation is dependent on a person's ability to match their resources, abilities, personality, and other personal traits.

4. The study indicates another strong school factor as students in high school at International Community School (ICS) are strongly influenced in their career choices when they participate in career exploration and decision-making exercises that help them comprehend the variety of careers. To help high school students make an informed decision about their career, this calls on both school counselors and administrators to give them up-to-date information about educational pathways, possibilities, career guidance programme, and training.
5. School career guidance is a strong high school factor that influences high school students at International Community School (ICS) by helping them clarify career-related questions or doubts and by assisting them in making educated career decisions. This research emphasizes the fact that students would experience trouble making decisions or may get confused when given poorly programmed information during career counseling.
6. This study on contrary to previous research findings on parental influence on high school students' career choice making shows that most parental factors do not influence the career choice of senior high school students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1 in general. According to Ukwueze and Obiefuna (2017), a similar study in Lagos supports this finding, where the parental factor was not a significant influence on the high school students' career choices. One possible explanation for this finding could be inferred from the fact that, despite parents' significant influence over their children's career decisions, urban students were less likely to ask their parents for advice

than their rural counterparts. Therefore, the results of the study done among the high school students of International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1 provide a likely indication that this is the cause.

7. The study's findings on environmental factors that influence high school students' career choice-making were revealed in participants at International Community School (ICS) concurring that teachers' well-informed career counseling is a significant element influencing their decisions to pursue particular careers. The study also shows teachers' influence as a significant factor in career choice-making among high school students.
8. The study also indicates that teachers' advice on careers is consistently accurate and has a significant impact on the career decisions made by high school students at the International Community School (ICS). The findings make it abundantly clear that teachers play an important role in high school students' decision-making regarding their career paths. This trust on the part of the students must be handled with deliberate attention to the teacher's dispensing of pertinent information and demonstrating genuine thoughtfulness when counseling students on career paths.
9. Results from the study shows that reading or watching the news about famous individuals influenced decisions as part of the environmental factor to pursue a career among the high school students at International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1. All parties engaged in career counseling must be aware of the media's increasing focus on well-known personalities and put in place

initiatives to promote media literacy that will help high school students make informed career decisions.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The process of choosing a career is dependent on the individuals' level of awareness as well as other factors that have a big impact on their choice. The current study discovered that factors that had the most significant influences on high school students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1 were school factors compared with parental factors and environmental factors. The study reveals that the role of career guidance programme offered in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No.1 has a significantly positive influence on the high school students to get reliable education or exposure on careers which helps them make informed career choices. Further in the study, parental factors were not a significant influence in making career choices among high school students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1. Furthermore, the study also shows that teachers have a significant influence on the career choice making among the high school students in International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1. Also, the study indicates that the role of the media reporting or writing about famous people is a factor that influences high school students in making career choices in International Community School (ICS) Pakyi No. 1.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are suggested:

1. Parent involvement in their children's professional interests and training in career counseling should be significantly encouraged. To assist parents in directing their children toward career pathways, the school should start career guidance programme that make it clear for parents to know educative information that will help the student's career choice making.
2. Career guidance programme in schools can invite Universities or other career firms to serve intern short courses on career counseling to inform students of current employment trends and aid in decision-making.
3. This study also recommends that school counselors put in place initiatives to promote media literacy that will help high school students make informed career decisions.
4. Further, it's recommended for teachers to be professionally trained to handle career guidance with purposeful intent since it was discovered from the study that students have high trust in the guidance given by their teachers on career choice making.

#### **5.4 Suggestion for Future Research**

1. The current study focused on the factors that influence career choice among high school students, the case of International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1. For the present study's findings to be validated and their generalizability to be assured, additional research from other districts of the nation is necessary.
2. The current study used the quantitative research in finding the factors that influence career choice among high school students, the case of International



Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1. Additional research can employ other mixed methods to expand interpretations and research findings.

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## APPENDIX

### UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

I am a Post Graduate Diploma of Education student in the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Education Winneba. Currently, I am conducting research on the topic: “*Factors That Influence Career Choice Among High School Students: The Case of International Community School (ICS)*”. You are kindly requested to share your thoughts on the factors that influence your career choices as this is purely for an academic exercise and not intended for any other use aside that. All information provided in this survey will be treated with the utmost confidentiality; therefore, your anonymity is highly guaranteed. It will take you a maximum of 10 minutes to respond to the questionnaire. Thank you for your co-operation. Please tick (✓) your responses where applicable.

#### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

**1. Gender:**

- a) Male ( )                      b) Female ( )

**2. Year Level**

- a) Year 12 ( )                      b) Year 13 ( )

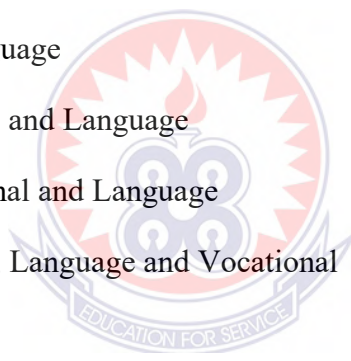
**3. Course:**

*(Please tick the appropriate course combination you study)*

- a) Pure Humanities (History, Geography/ Economics/ Accounting/ Business) ( )
- b) Pure Sciences (Chemistry, Biology/ Physics/ Mathematics) ( )
- c) Pure Vocational (Art and Design/ AICT) ( )
- d) Pure Languages (French and Literature) ( )

*(Please tick the appropriate course combination you study)*

- e) Humanities and Sciences ( )
- f) Humanities and Vocational ( )
- g) Humanities and Language ( )
- h) Humanities, Sciences and Language ( )
- i) Humanities, Vocational and Language ( )
- j) Humanities, Sciences, Language and Vocational ( )
- k) Other(s) Specify:  
.....



**4. Age**

- a) Below 15 ( )
- b) 16-18 ( )
- c) 19 and above ( )

**SECTION B: What school factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1?**

Please, use the following Likert scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the statements in the table below. 4=Strongly Agree (SA), 3=Agree (A), 2=Disagree (D), 1= Strongly Disagree (SD).

Please, indicate your choice by circling the right number in the table that corresponds to each statement.

No	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1	Career guidance is comprehensively offered at our school.	4	3	2	1
2	School career days influenced my career choice.	4	3	2	1
3	Career trips or field trips influenced my career choice.	4	3	2	1
4	School career guidance cleared career confusion that I had.	4	3	2	1
5	The career guidance counsellor was influential to the career I want to do.	4	3	2	1
6	The school head was influential to the career I want to do.	4	3	2	1
7	The subjects I do influenced my career decision.	4	3	2	1
8	Former students' careers had a positive influence on my career choice.	4	3	2	1
19	School career exploration and career decision making activities broaden students' career horizons.	4	3	2	1
10	Career resource models who come to present on their fields influenced my career decision.	4	3	2	1
11	My preferred career is linked to my favourite subjects.	4	3	2	1

**SECTION C: What parental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the International Community School (ICS), Pakyi No. 1?**

Please, use the following Likert scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the statements in the table below. 4=Strongly Agree (SA), 3=Agree (A), 2=Disagree (D), 1= Strongly Disagree (SD).

Please, indicate your choice by circling the right number in the table that corresponds to each statement.

No	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1	My father influenced me into the career I want to pursue.	4	3	2	1
2	My mother was influential to the career I want to pursue.	4	3	2	1
3	The family business influenced my career choice.	4	3	2	1
4	The dominant profession in my family is also my preferred career.	4	3	2	1
5	Information I got from my parents helped me to choose a career.	4	3	2	1
6	My father's career had an impact on my choice of career.	4	3	2	1
7	My mother's career had an effect on my choice of career.	4	3	2	1
8	My parent's monthly income influenced my career choice.	4	3	2	1
9	Older siblings had an influence on my career choice.	4	3	2	1
10	An extended family member was influential in the career that I chose.	4	3	2	1

**SECTION D: What environmental factors influence the choice of career among Senior High School students in the International Community School (ICS), Paky No. 1?**

Please, use the following Likert scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the statements in the table below. 4=Strongly Agree (SA), 3=Agree (A), 2=Disagree (D), 1= Strongly Disagree (SD).

Please, indicate your choice by circling the right number in the table that corresponds to each statement.

No	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1	My class teacher was influential to the career I want to pursue.	4	3	2	1
2	Validation of careers is provided by my teachers.	4	3	2	1
3	I easily change my mind about a career because of my teacher's advice.	4	3	2	1
4	Teachers' advice on career guidance was helpful to me.	4	3	2	1
5	Career information given by teachers is always reliable.	4	3	2	1
6	My teachers give comprehensive and proper advice on careers.	4	3	2	1
7	My best friend influenced my choice of career.	4	3	2	1
8	Classmates made me choose my choice of career.	4	3	2	1
9	A film I watched influenced my choice of career.	4	3	2	1
10	Watching a documentary on TV influenced my choice of career.	4	3	2	1
11	Listening in on a radio/TV talk show made me take a decision on my career choice.	4	3	2	1
12	Seeing adverts on social media influenced me to make my career choice.	4	3	2	1
13	Reading articles from the internet influenced my career choice.	4	3	2	1
14	Reading/watching news about famous people influenced my decision of career choice.	4	3	2	1