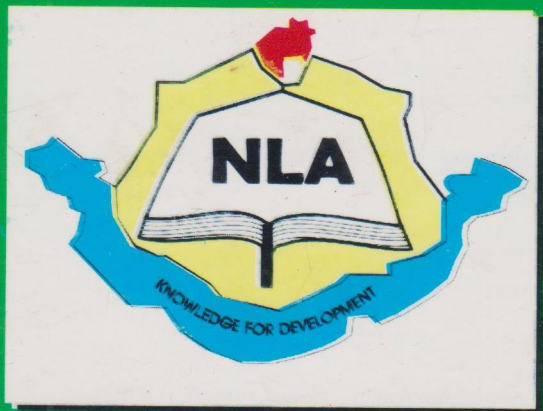


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Personality Typologies and Students' Choice of Library and Information Science as a Career in Tertiary Institutions

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Abstract

This paper sought to examine the relationship that exists between the dominant personality typology of Library Science students with Holland's typology of persons in education. The research design was the survey. The population comprised students from Library Science department of which 120 were randomly sampled from three academic programmes. Data gathered from the descriptive study using the Environment Assessment Technique were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics. This research found that the dominant personality typology of library science students was social. This relates significantly with that of students in education which was their umbrella academic environment.

Introduction

Personality may be seen as the mental, social and emotional characteristic that gives personal identity to individuals. (Clifford *et al.*, 2002) view personality as including the behaviour patterns a person shows across situations or the psychological characteristics of the person that lead to those behaviour patterns. Some psychologists have developed broad theories to explain the etymology and framework of personality. Others have focused on issues such as the influence of heredity on personality, etc. However, this paper will focus on one of the type theories of personality which was developed by John Lewis Holland in 1966.

To Holland (1976) "Human behaviour is a function of both the individual's personality and the environment in which he lives". This model holds that different personality types are best suited to different careers. John Holland proposed six basic personality types and then identified careers that were suited for each type. This model is a modern trait-factor theory that has been very influential in vocational counselling. It is employed by popular inventories such as self-directed search, vocational preference inventory and strong interest inventory.

This typology theory was developed to organize the voluminous data about people in work environments, to suggest how people make career choices and to explain how job satisfaction and vocational preferences occur. Holland based his theory of personality types on several assumptions. If this is the case, it therefore means that people tend to choose careers that are reflective of their personality. He suggested that people who needed help with career decisions can be supported by understanding their resemblance to the

following six ideal vocational personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional (often referred to by the acronym RIASEC). To emphasize further the relationship of environment and personality, we should understand that Holland's work settings could also be categorized by their resemblance to six similar model work environments. Therefore, if people search for environments that allow them to express their interest, skills, attitudes and values, and take on interesting problems and agreeable roles, work environments will become populated by individuals with related occupational personality types. He also suggests that the closer the match of personality to a job or career choice, the greater the satisfaction.

Statement of the Problem

Typologies have been in existence for centuries. Even though it assumed various names, they were geared towards giving meaning to an individual's personality, and are very much with us today. The types that are put together by different psychologists are simply a classification of individuals who share common characteristics.

A wrong choice of career contributes to a lack of job satisfaction and malaise at work. In choosing a career therefore, it is of utmost importance to examine how personality typologies relate with such a decision. This may have informed why Holland studied the vocational preferences of high school and college students and developed a personality environment model for career selection which includes the six personality types, each suited to a particular kind of career or work environment. Holland's model is however interesting but it has not yet been vigorously tested. Therefore this study aims at validating empirically, the relationship between personality typologies

and library science students' choice of career.

Objective of the Study

To compare the dominant personality typology of Library Science students with Holland's typology of persons in education.

Research Question

Is there a relationship between the dominant personality typology of Library Science students with Holland's typology of persons in education.

Significance of the Study

Although some work has been done on tertiary course choice and associated issues, the majority of these investigations have focused on post graduate students. As a result, the choice of undergraduates for this paper is seen as appropriate and the significance of this research is therefore:

to explore the issues involved in a Library Science student's choice of career in relation to Holland's theory.

to examine how a Library Science student's personality type and choice of career relates with persons in education.

Literature Review

In choosing a career, it is important to examine how librarians are influenced by certain factors. A careful review of the theories of career choice gives one an insight into the studies of others. Many theories have explained why and how individuals choose and enter different professions, and in a way most of what motivates individuals to enter a profession also account for the challenges and difficulties encountered in making and implementing a career choice. A solid knowledge base in theory

such as Holland's, provides a meaningful framework and context for choice of work. An off-shoot of the trait-factor theory can be seen in the work of John Holland. Holland's Career Typology focuses on individual characteristics and occupational task. The intent of Holland's theory is to spell out the relationship between occupational environments and personal orientations.

Holland (1985) for example identified personal characteristics, which could be linked with career choice, arguing that people, knowing their own interests and abilities, would actively search out an appropriate career. He identified six broad categories which were not meant to be mutually exclusive. These were realistic, linked with preference for outdoor and physical work, with little interpersonal demands, investigative, linked with scientific pursuits, artistic, linked with creativity, social, linked with contact with and helping people, enterprising, linked with power and needing management behaviours and conventional, linked with office practices and well-structured tasks. Based on these categories, we can categorize the library and information science profession to fit into investigative, social and enterprising.

Holland posited that although each individual is made up of all six types, one type is usually dominant, and most personalities tend to resemble up to three of the six personality factors. Personalities are matched with similar combinations of work environments using a problem-solving approach. Thus the closer the match of personality to the job, the greater the satisfaction. Holland's Career Typology takes a cognitive, problem solving approach to career planning and this model has been extremely influential in vocational counselling. Holland's (1997) six dimensional vocational model is premised on a match between individuals and occupations. He

proposed that a good match between a person's career interest and occupational type is the critical concept underlying career satisfaction and longevity.

Holland referred to this matching process as person-environment congruence or fit. "This concept has transcended the vocational psychology field and is now the dominant model underlying theories of organizational behaviour" (Muchinsky, 1999). This is why this research paper seeks to explore whether or not, Holland's theory and research is relevant and could shed more light on the behaviour and organization of college faculty and students, which could ultimately improve the effectiveness of a student in a chosen career field.

This general model of career interest dimensions is helpful for understanding how people approach or operate within learning and work environments, Holland (1997) has identified six personality types or "themes" that represent characteristics of both the work environment, personality traits, and interest in a chosen career or occupation are: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional or R,I,A,S,E,C respectively.

Briefly, these six themes are enumerated thus:
'Realistic' (Working with things and tools),
'Investigative' (Scientific Pursuits),
'Artistic' (Aesthetic Pursuits and self-expression),
'Social' (Contact with and helping people),
'Conventional' (Office practices and well-structured tasks),

A student's choice greatly affects the type of career he will enjoy. As such, some students are interested in careers that encourage teamwork and allow for significant interaction with others. By so doing, their interest will be enshrouded in friendliness, generosity, helpfulness, tactfulness, understanding, responsibility

and sympathy. Olayinka (1983) stated that there are many careers in which people with the above personal qualities can derive satisfaction.

It is nearly impossible to make a sound choice regarding a career. Therefore, Tracy and Rounds (1995) asserted that students who do not understand themselves are not prepared to make a decision regarding the rest of their life. Invariably, self-assessment enhances personal interest and is the key to making career decisions. Nnachi (2000) said perception people hold of themselves tends to influence their choice of career. In their research to show how academic environments boost students' interest in the field of librarianship, Smart *et al.* (2000) reported that students in different clusters of academic disciplines create distinctive academic environments as a consequence of their preference for alternative goals and competencies. From the authors' findings, it can be inferred that academic environments have an over-riding influence on the choice of librarianship as a career and the stability of Library Science students' abilities and interests. Therefore academic environments socialize students towards the choice and development of interests and skills predicted by Holland's (1997) typological theory.

In a study, Olayinka (1983) investigated among other things the careers Nigerian youths preferred most and the reasons they offer for their choice. In descending order of magnitude, their most preferred careers were medicine (17.9%), engineering (16.7%), nursing (10.4%), accounting (8.9%) and business administration (6.3%). Apart from high salary and better conditions of service, another major reason for their choice of career was humanitarian interest. This is done with the belief that one could do well in a career that the individual has interest in.

Methodology

The survey research design was used for this study. The research area covered three programmes of study in Library and Information Science in the University of Uyo,

namely: full- time undergraduate students, sandwich students and diploma. A total of 120 students that made the population were randomly sampled, 40 from each of these three academic programmes. The instrument used for data collection was a survey questionnaire. The data gathered from the respondents' responses to the items in the questionnaire was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics (rxy). This was also used in computing and comparing the critical value of rxy with the obtained values, thereby establishing the relationship between personality typologies and students' choice of library science and information science as a career in tertiary institutions.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Students' Self- Rating

Personality Types	No. of Students	Percentage
Realistic	101	15.8
Investigative	111	17.4
Artistic	102	15.9
Social	116	18.2
Enterprising	108	16.9
Conventional	101	15.8
Total	639	100

Research Question 1

Is there a relationship between the dominant personality typology of Library Science students with Holland's typology of persons in education?

Table 2

Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistic showing relationship between a student's choice of career (x) and personality type (y)

X	Y	x ²	y ²	Xy	r	Cal. t value	Critical t-value
39	116	1521	13456	4524			
6	14	36	196	84			
9	18	81	324	162	1.983	2.32	1.980
7	18	49	324	126			
-	-	-	-	-			
18	48	324	2304	846			
79	214	2011	16604	5742			

* Significant at .05, t-critical = 1.980; df = 118

Results

In order to answer the above research question, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics was used to compare the choice of career (x) and personality types (y). The r-value was 1.983. This was later converted to t-value of 2.32 as against the table values of 1.980- from the t-table. This is tested at 0.05 level of significance and the result showed that there is a positive relationship between a student's personality type and choice of career. Therefore, there is a significant relation between Library Science students with Holland's typology of persons in education.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings of this study, it is seen that Holland's theory of personality types and choice of career has been validated. Even though Holland categorized the dominant personality typology of education students as social, this study confirms the groupings. Students the Faculty of

Education in the University of Uyo have the social personality typology but this study has gone a step further to find out that people are mostly influenced by their chosen career fields and it is only in such career fields that their personalities and potentialities are brought to bear. In this case, the social personality type had the highest level of significance (18.2%). Despite this, the students still exhibited other typologies that reflected their department, i.e. investigative (17.4%), enterprising (16.9%), artistic (15.9%), a student of Library Science who is a prospective Librarian artistic (15.9), realistic (15.8), and conventional (15.8%). Investigative and Enterprising personalities showed moderate relationship with students' choice of library and information science as a career. Students in Library and Information Science therefore exhibited other traits irrespective of the fact that their dominant trait was social because of the faculty they belong and this goes a long way to show that the dominant personality typology of Library and Information science students in education (their mother faculty) is social. This is in line with Holland's assertion that an individual can combine more than one typology.

Conclusions

This study was conducted to compare the dominant personality Typology of Library Science students with Holland's typology of persons in education. It found that the dominant personality typology of library Science students is Social and this was found to relate significantly with persons in education who as teachers, possessed the same trait.

Recommendations

To validate Holland's theory in the measurement of career interests, the following recommendations were made:

Families, particularly their work patterns, also have a

profound impact on their children's career interest. Students should be able to study or use Holland's code in recognizing, differentiating and understanding the diverse academic disciplines and the facilities who dominate them. By doing so, they will more likely find a place within the University that will increase their level of satisfaction.

Since the academic advising office is often the first stop of a student undecided about his or her career choice, counsellors and advisers operating from Holland's theoretical system need to be fully informed about the theory, the research that support it, the instruments that are based upon it and the counselling and advising techniques that could be derived from it. Such theory-driven practice might represent a new paradigm, especially in academic advising.

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