CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Gender, as defined by the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 9th edition (2015), is the fact of being male or female, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences, not differences in biology. Kruger (1997) also defines gender as a set of cultural expectations according to which men and women behave.

The process of choosing a career is an aspect that is crucial to an individual's life (Pathara-on et al., 2016). In this phase, one can decide to choose or not to choose certain careers/professions. Students may decide to choose certain careers based on their personalities and interests which might be influenced by gender.

Various perspectives are held about the role of gender in career preference which may differ in other parts of the world (Falk & Hermle, 2018). More males than females continue to pursue careers in engineering, manufacturing and other technology-related subjects while the females, on the other hand, surpass the males in the social sciences, the humanities, health and welfare, and education (ILO, 2020). In developed or wealthier countries, where the standard of living is relatively high and where men and women have nearly equal rights, career preferences between the genders is wider meaning that, there is room to explore various range of careers especially for females e.g. a woman can work as an aeronautic engineer or as a pilot, not caring about stereotypes. This is opposed to the underdeveloped or poorer countries with limited rights for women, meaning that there is a limit to what a woman can do or choose in terms of career. In a country like Nigeria, for instance, it is not often we see female engineers or pilots because these are professions matched solely for males based on stereotypes.

Career choice is being affected by gender bias. This apparent gender bias in employment opportunities can hinder individuals from selecting their preferred career (Gilbert, Burnett, Phau & Harr, 2010).

Career is defined as a profession which a person wishes to undertake throughout the course of his or her life. Career preference is defined as the free opportunity to choose a career. Men and women differ when it comes to career preference and selection. From an early stage, parents tend to their sons and daughters differently which in turn, influences the careers that their children choose (Lytton & Romney, 1991). This is achieved when parents encourage certain gender-stereotyped activities. For instance, parents are more likely to buy toy action figures, toy cars or sports equipment for their male kids and buy dolls, dress-up toys or kitchen sets for their female kids.

According to Orge (2016), Gender stereotypes are simplistic speculations about the gender characteristics, contrasts, and roles of individuals or groups. Females, before this present dispensation, were relegated to domestic duties and just a few females had the opportunity to go to school while the males were given the absolute freedom to go to school. The females who even had this opportunity were fixed into simpler career choices like teaching, sewing, nursing while the males were given the tougher career choices in engineering, medicine, computer science (Gupta & Sue, 1990).

The textbooks one had to go through in high school illustrates the males going for more strenuous careers in medicine, engineering, technology while females are portrayed going for softer careers in nursing, teaching, sewing etc. Thus, the immediate society or environment influences the choice of career of both genders.

Choosing a career in Mass Communication is not as difficult as it seems since there are various options to choose from either in broadcasting, print journalism, advertising, photojournalism etc., but because of the issue with gender in terms of career preference, this has made individuals (or students) select certain career options based on this gender bias.

Mass Communication, according to Pearce (2009), is the process by which a person, group of people, or organization generates a message and sends it through some sort of medium to a large, anonymous, heterogeneous audience.

Mass Communication as a course offers training in a vast range of career opportunities for undergraduates to choose from either in print journalism,

broadcasting, public relations, online media, photojournalism etc. Therefore, students' preference in Mass Communication could vary.

In Nigeria, the first tertiary university to offer Mass Communication as a course was the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1961 with only three students who graduated in 1964 (Ememyeonu, 1991). Since then, there has been a rise in the number of universities, both public and private, offering Mass Communication as well as in the number of students applying to study the course.

One of the features since the inception of Mass Communication as a course, in the 1960s, is the large number of females applying to study Mass Communication in the tertiary institutions. Patricia et al (2015) affirmed that enrolments in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, since the 1960s when Mass Communication started, has been largely populated by female students. Thus, it is an assumption that Mass Communication is a course that is best suited for the females than the males based on the population applying for the course. However, the disparity is that, though, there are more females studying mass communication in the tertiary institutions, in the media industry, there are more males occupying higher positions than females. Morna (2003) stated that in countries such as Nigeria, females constitute the majority of students in Mass Communication courses, only a small percentage of these women go to work in the media industry after graduation. Therefore, the research study is aimed at investigating the reason behind this disparity as well as the extent of the role gender plays as a determinant in the career preferences of undergraduates in the Department of Mass Communication.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Career preference of an undergraduate in a tertiary institution marks the beginning of decision making for him/her on a large scale. The world we live in has caused a lot of stereotypes in gender with regards to the kind of career a male or female should go into. Not only are females overrepresented in some professions (and under-

represented in others), division often occurs within professions, with males holding the more responsible jobs (UNDESA, 2015).

Therefore, this has created confusion in the minds of individuals when it comes to career choices especially in Mass Communication which is perceived as a male-dominated career since a large number of females who graduated from the department of Mass Communication end up not pursuing careers in Mass Communication (Ali, 2010).

The disparity is that while females constitute a larger population of students who study Mass Communication in the universities, the males constitute a larger population of those working in the media industry as well as occupying top positions in media organizations. Also, men are said to have about 63% by-lines and appearances in the news than women who have 36%, according to Borruto (2015). One, therefore, begins to wonder, where are the females who dominated the department of Mass Communication?

The society is one that assigns gender roles and this has become an issue in today's world. Women are expected to be more domestic, homely and reserved while the men are expected to be stronger, tougher and rigid (Booysen & De Witt, 1995). These gender role stereotypes have made it difficult for individuals to make career choices, bearing in mind what the society would say if they go into a career that they are not supposed to go into based on their gender. So, the need to find out the reason behind this disparity and how much of a role gender plays as a determinant of the career preferences of Mass Communication students is important to this study.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the factors that influence the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities.
2. To ascertain the extent gender plays a role as a determinant of the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities.

3. To identify the area of specialization in mass communication that is most preferred among Mass Communication students in the selected private universities.
4. To identify the more dominant gender in the enrollment of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities.
5. To identify if gender is more prioritized than skills in career preference of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities (theory-based).

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the factors that influence opinions on the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?
2. To what extent does gender play a role as a determinant of the career preference of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?
3. What area of specialization in Mass Communication is most preferred among students in the selected private universities?
4. Which gender has dominance in the enrollment of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?
5. Which is more prioritized, gender or skills, in career preference of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities? (Theory-based)

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is aimed at ascertaining the extent of the role of gender as a determinant of the career preferences of Mass Communication students in private universities. It will add to the pool of knowledge in this research area and from the researcher's observation, few researches have been carried out in this area. This study will also benefit the general public because it will serve as a means to notify them of the role of gender in determining the career preferences of Mass Communication students in private universities as well as the effects of gender stereotypes on careers in Mass Communication.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study which focuses on gender as a determinant of the career preferences of Mass Communication students in private universities will be carried out in two private universities located in the southwestern part of Nigeria - Mountain Top University (MTU) and Babcock University (BU). The reason for this choice is that previous studies that related to this research area were conducted on public universities with just very few on private universities. The material scope for this study are online journals, articles and past projects related to the topic. The participants for this study will be students from 100-400 level in the department of Mass Communication from the selected private universities because it is assumed that at these levels, the students are expected to have an inkling on what they would like to choose as a career in the field of mass communication.

1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Gender: The fact of being male or female in society.

Gender stereotypes: speculations made by society about a man or woman's attributes and roles in society.

Career: A professional path which an individual would like to venture into.

Career preferences: simply refers to career choices.

Mass Communication: is a course of study in the higher institution where one learns the process of disseminating information to a wide, heterogeneous audience simultaneously, using various mediums/channels.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter focused on the conceptual framework where all the concepts related to the research study were defined and explained. It also discussed the theoretical framework on which formed the base as wells as backup for the study. Finally, under the empirical review, various works done by other researchers and scholars in relation to the research study were discussed as well.

2.1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 Overview of Communication

Communication is a common phenomenon that differentiates the living from the dead. Communication is one of the crucial aspects of life that is important to the survival of man as food and water is. Obilade (1989) defined communication as a process that involves the transmission of messages from a sender to the receiver. To add to this definition, Folarin (2003) defines communication as any means by which a thought is transferred from one person to another. Communication is important in all human activities.

There are various forms of communication which include:

- Intrapersonal communication: Communication which takes place within a person.
- Interpersonal communication: Communication which involves two or three people.
- Group communication: Communication which involves more than three people bound by a common interest.
- Mass communication: Communication that involves a large, anonymous and heterogeneous population.

2.1.2 Overview of Mass Communication

Mass Communication is defined as the process through which a person, group or organization creates a message and transmits it using some type of medium to a large, anonymous and heterogeneous audience (Pearce, 2009). To further buttress this, Baran (2004) defines Mass Communication as the process of creating shared meaning between the mass media and its audience. Mass media refers to the various channels used to achieve the aim of communication which includes radio, television, newspapers, magazines, e-mails and social media.

Mass Communication as a field of study belongs to the social sciences because it deals with the social aspect of man in terms of his interaction with his immediate and external environment on a daily basis.

Brief history of Mass Communication

Mass Communication started when humans could send messages from one source to a lot of receivers. Books were the oldest medium of mass communication, whereas the newspapers were the first popular mass medium (Ate, 2008). This belief is further supported by Lee (2015) who attested to the fact that the first known book was written in Egypt around 1400 BC but books were not reproduced for the masses until the invention of the printing press in 1455 by Johannes Gutenberg. The invention of printing press is described by Daramola (2013) as a turning point in the history of printing & newspaper production. Newspapers came on board around 100BC and the first English magazine hit the newsstand in 1704. The radio was introduced in the 1920s and television came later in the 1940s. After these inventions came the newest form of mass medium which is the internet, which has changed the status quo of communication around the globe. Over time, the implementation of the new media has helped complement the traditional media as well as compete with them.

In Nigeria, the first newspaper, *Iwe Iroyin* came to existence in 1859. Radio broadcasting came in 1932 and television was established in 1959 by the western regional government when Obafemi Awolowo started the Western Nigeria Television (WNTV). Television came in to being

a hundred years after the first print medium was introduced in Nigeria (Daramola, 2013). Mass Communication has experienced globalization as various parts of the world have welcomed the new trends that come with the mass media especially, the internet.

2.1.3 Mass communication as a field of study

Mass Communication was first introduced as a course by the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1961 with only three students who then graduated in 1964. Then the University of Lagos introduced it in 1967 before other tertiary institutions adopted it into their various academic curricular. Since then, there has been a rise in the number of institutions offering Mass Communication as a course and also in the number of students applying to study Mass Communication in those institutions.

Mass Communication is further divided into a series of sequences which a student may decide to specialize in. These sequences include: Print Journalism, Broadcast media journalism, Public Relations, Advertising, Film production, Book publishing and Photojournalism. The listed sequences are popular in students' choices of specialization.

Print Journalism

Print media journalism involves the presentation of information through newspapers, magazines and books. Some professionals in this sequence are staff correspondents, special correspondents, news editors, chief-editors, political commentators, cartoonists, columnists, feature writers, content writers for magazine etc., (Nandini, 2011).

Broadcast Journalism

Broadcast journalism is the application of traditional print journalism to media that involves broadcasting via the internet, radio, or television (Gonzalez, 2019). Someone in this sequence can work as a newscaster, TV presenter/host, videographer, reporter, anchor, correspondent etc.

A student in this sequence could choose to work in a radio or television house, depending on their preference.

Public Relations

According to Stuart (2012), Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics. Hence, public relations deal with the process of creating and sending information to the public about an organization in order to create good impression about the organization. This is also an area of professional specialization which a student could prefer to venture into.

Advertising

Hoffman (2007) defines advertising as a form of paid media communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action now or later. It is believed to be a very lucrative career option for any individual. Advertising applies to all other forms of mass communication: print, broadcast, public relations etc.

Film production

Film production is also an area of specialization in the Nigerian mass communication industry. Film production in Nigeria was introduced by nationalists and Europeans with the commencement of the first film exhibition in 1903 (Ali, 2004). By late 1960s, indigenous films began to appear in Nigeria. The film production industry involves a large amount of people who work together to achieve a good result in their production. These people include producers, directors, script writers, editors, photographers, actors, continuity person etc.

Book Publishing

The activity of mass production and dissemination of information either through print or electronically on the internet is defined as publishing (Chandler & Munday, 2011). Hence, book publishing is the mass production of books on various topics of interest for the audience who come in contact with the books. People with interest in writing and editing end up choosing this area of specialty as a career.

Photojournalism

Finally, this sequence is also a type of journalism which does not just rely on written communication as in the newspaper or magazine but uses photographs to tell its story. The job of a photojournalist is to get photographs and publish them. These photographs can serve two purposes either as illustrations to news stories or as photo news. Anyone with the professional knowledge of photography can choose to pursue a career in this field.

The above are popular areas in which students studying Mass Communication in tertiary institutions can decide to specialize in as a career.

2.1.4 Gender and Career Preferences in Mass Communication

The society is one that has assumed roles for gender hence, gender stereotypes. Men, as of old, were seen as the "bread winners" or the stronger vessels, while women were described as the "caretakers" or the weaker vessels. As a result of these assumptions, some particular careers are classified as either "male only" or "female only".

Masculinity is identified with competitiveness, aggressiveness, and independence, whereas femininity revolves around the belief that women are caring, selfless, affective in interpersonal relationships, child friendly, emotionally expressive, sensitive and empathetic, and above all submissive and passive (Ridgeway & Balkwell, 1997).

This perceived gender prejudice in career choices can hinder individuals from making their preferred choice of a career.

As earlier discussed, the number of students studying Mass Communication in tertiary institutions has increased. More alarming is that fact that there are more females studying this course than males (Ememyeonu, 1991). But in the workforce, it is seen that there are more males occupying high positions in media organizations than the females.

Studies have shown that females prefer Mass Communication as a choice of study than as a profession as a result of certain factors like stereotypes, attitude of people towards women in the media or fear (Oberiri, 2016). The number of females in the field is quite few compared to the number that graduates from the university, having studied the course. Thus, it is assumed that the male folk exert a form of dominance in the workforce.

2.1.5 Gender stereotyping in Mass Communication

Mass Communication offers a lot of job opportunities for those who have chosen to study it in the tertiary institution. One can be a photojournalist, editor, reporter, book publisher, on-air personality, script writer, videographer, public relations agent amongst others.

Apart from Mass Communication, in some other professions like politics, engineering, medicine, technology etc., women are treated with lesser recognition than men. The labor force is one that has been affected by gender stereotypes whereby a particular gender is favored more than the other based on certain characteristics which the former might possess. The males are the ones who occupy a large majority of power positions when it comes to jobs.

Females are often confined to specific careers/beats that are considered to be less demanding. Females who decide to work as journalists are hardly given beats in areas considered to be 'masculine' such as in political analysis, photojournalism, crime and sports. Though, mass communication is seen as a course befitting for the females as well as the males, the society has, through gender stereotypes, subjected the females to the backseat and assigned the males the higher positions. Even in the news disseminated by the media, the stories usually covered focus on the males more than the females. Women are the focal point of only 10% of news stories, comprise just 20% of experts or spokespeople interviewed, and a mere 4% of news stories are esteemed to challenge gender stereotypes (UNESCO, 2018). These gender stereotypes are a part of the things that undergraduates look at before selecting a course or a career in Mass Communication.

2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories are needed in research because they serve as basis for the explanation of the phenomena being observed. Hence, this research study will be built on the following theories:

2.2.1 Social Role Theory

The social role theory was propounded by Eagly and Woods in 1999. The theory posits that gender stereotypes develop from gender division of labor found in the society. It argues that the

increase in gender stereotypes has risen because of the population of women joining the workforce. Though females are being accepted into jobs that are male-dominated in nature, majority are still confined to jobs that are female-dominated. It states further that the rate at which the females are occupying large portions of employment statistics has helped change the way in which women used to have careers in the time past.

In relation to the research study, it is thus believed that the choice of a career is inherent in the society's beliefs that a woman cannot do what a man can do because she is not as strong or as competent as he is. The reason for fewer females in careers like Journalism is not because they lack the interest to be good journalists but because it is a career that is male-dominated and does not afford the females any utmost recognition like the males. This therefore highlights that gender affects the career choices a student makes.

2.2.2 Social Expectations Theory

The social expectations theory has its foundation in a research on the Payne Fund studies done in the early 1900s (DeFleur, 2010). This theory is similar to Eagly Woods' social role theory which holds that gender stereotypes are prescriptive in nature, meaning that, stereotype regards not only the way things are but the way they should be. This implies that gender tends to influence career aspirations and in turn influences career choice. The society is one that believes that women should not venture into certain careers deemed to be "male-typed" which automatically influences the expectations in the workforce. Societal expectations and the role of women in the workplace has affected many career choices of both men and women (Powell, 2009).

2.3 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Review of related empirical works

2.3.1.   Oberiri, D.A., Kwase, A. D., "The Attitude of Female Mass Communication Students' towards Journalism as a Career in Taraba State University." (2016).

This study examines the attitude of female Mass Communication students of Taraba state university towards journalism as a career. The quantitative survey method was adopted for the

study. Findings revealed among other things that female Mass Communication students have a negative attitude towards journalism as a career. The study also revealed that religion, cultural beliefs and discrimination discourages females from practicing journalism after graduation. The study further recommends that families, religions, cultures and the society should stop the discriminations against females as this will help the society to see females in journalism as important as their male counterparts.

The empirical study above had something in common with the current study. Asides focusing on the female population alone, it highlighted gender discrimination and stereotypes as factors that affect career preferences of undergraduates.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter focused on the methodology as well as research design for the research study. It also focused on the instrument which the researcher used to gather the necessary data for the study. This chapter also discussed the population and the sample size of the study.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

For any research to be carried out, there is the need to identify the right research approach/design as this determines how the vital information for the study will be retrieved. The research design to adopt to carry out a research highly depends on the problem being addressed by the research. Topics that focus on the public perception or on how much of an impact one thing is on another always requires a survey design (Ohaja, 2003). According to Check & Schutt (2012), Survey research is the collection of information from a sample of individuals using their responses to questions. This means that a sample is selected from the population of the study.

For the purpose of this research study, the survey research design was adopted because of its suitability in studies that deal with impact or public perception. It is also flexible and can provide valid results which can lead to generalizations for the study. Surveys are the most effective and trustworthy research methods to use.

3.2 RESEARCH POPULATION

The population of any research study refers to the totality of the population from which samples are drawn from. The population for this study were undergraduates from 100-400 levels studying Mass Communication in the two private universities selected for the study which were, Mountain

Top University (MTU) and Babcock University (BU). Babcock university had approximately 600 students from 100 – 400 level while the Mountain Top university had a total of 174 students from 100 – 400 level.

3.3 SAMPLE SIZE

A sample size is derived from the estimated population of the study. A sample size is referred to as a subset of the population that serves as a representation of the entire population of the study from which generalizations can then be made. To calculate the sample size for the study, the researcher made use of the Taro Yemane sample size calculator.

Taro Yemane =

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = Designed sample size

N = Population size under study

1 = Constant

e = Error margin (0.05)

$$n = \frac{774}{1 + 774\,(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{774}{1 + 774\,(0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{774}{1 + 1.1935}$$

$$= \frac{774}{2.935}$$

$$n = 263.\,71$$

$$n = 264.$$

The sample size for this research study was 264.

3.4 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Random sampling technique was adopted for this study.

The random sampling technique falls under the probability sampling method. Random sampling is a type of probability sampling where everyone in the entire population has an equal chance of being selected (McLeod, 2019). It is the most straightforward method of probability sampling. Using random sampling technique helps achieve generalizations for the research study.

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

To gather data for this study, the main instrument used was the Questionnaire. They include a set of standardized questions that examine a specific topic and gather data about demographics, opinions, attitudes, or behaviors. Questionnaire copies were distributed and administered by the researcher to undergraduates in 100-400 levels from the two private universities, MTU and Babcock, selected for the study. The questionnaire included close and open-ended questions drawn up by the researcher.

3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF MEASURING INSTRUMENT

For the purpose of validity and reliability, the questions drawn for the questionnaires were sent to the research supervisor for scrutiny and correction. A pilot study was conducted as well to test the reliability of the research instrument.

3.7 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

The research study adopted the quantitative method of data analysis and presentation which involved tabulations, simple percentages, frequency distributions and numerals. It basically made use of statistical and descriptive tools to analyze the data collected. The data was presented using tables and charts.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter involved the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings of the data collected by the researcher in the course of the research study. The researcher made use of tables, charts, frequency tables and simple percentage to compute and analyze the data.

4.1 DATA PRESENTATION

A total of 264 questionnaire copies were administered for this study. One hundred and thirty-four (134) copies were administered to MTU while 130 copies were administered to BU, summing up the total questionnaire copies to 264. Out of the 264 copies administered, all were returned, amounting to a 100% percent return rate.

4.1.1 Demographic Data

Below is the table showing the return rate of the copies of the questionnaires distributed in the two private universities located in South-western Nigeria, Mountain Top University (MTU) and Babcock University (BU).

Table 4.1: Return Rate of Questionnaires Distributed

Private universities	Number distributed	Number returned	Percentage
MTU	134	134	50.7
BU	130	130	49.2
Total	**264**	**264**	**100%**

Table 4.1 shows that 134 (50.7%) questionnaires were administered and collected from MTU while 130 (49.7%) questionnaires were administered and collected from BU.

Table 4.2: Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Questions	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	a) Male	129	48.9%
	b) Female	135	51.1%
	Total	**264**	**100%**
Age	a) 15-19	80	30.3%
	b) 20-24	169	64%
	c) 25-30	15	5.7%
	d) 30-above	-	-
	Total	**264**	**100%**
Level	a) 100	61	23.1%
	b) 200	65	24.6%
	c) 300	68	25.8%
	d) 400	70	26.5%
	Total	**264**	**100%**

Table 4.2 shows that all demographic information of the respondents was contained in it.

The sex distribution table shows 129 (48.9%) were males while 135 (51.1%) were females.

The age distribution table shows 80 (30.3%) were within the ages of 15-19, 169 (64%) were within the ages of 20-24 and 15 (5.7%) were within the ages of 25-30.

The level distribution table shows 61 (23.1%) were in 100 level, 65 (24.6%) were in 200 level, 68 (25.8%) were in 300 level and 70 (26.5%) were in 400 level.

4.1.2 Research Question 1

What are the factors that influence the career preference of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?

To answer this question, items 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the questionnaire were examined.

Table 4.3: Choice to Study Mass Communication

Item 1: Did you choose to study Mass communication by yourself?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
a) Yes	225	85.2%

b) No	34	12.9%
c) I don't know	5	1.9%
Total	**264**	**100%**

Table 4.3 shows that 225 (85.2%) of the respondents agreed that they chose Mass Communication themselves, 34 (12.9%) did not choose Mass Communication themselves while 5 (1.9%) had no idea.

Chart 4.1: Factors Influencing Career Preference

Item 2: To what extent did the following factors influence your career preference?

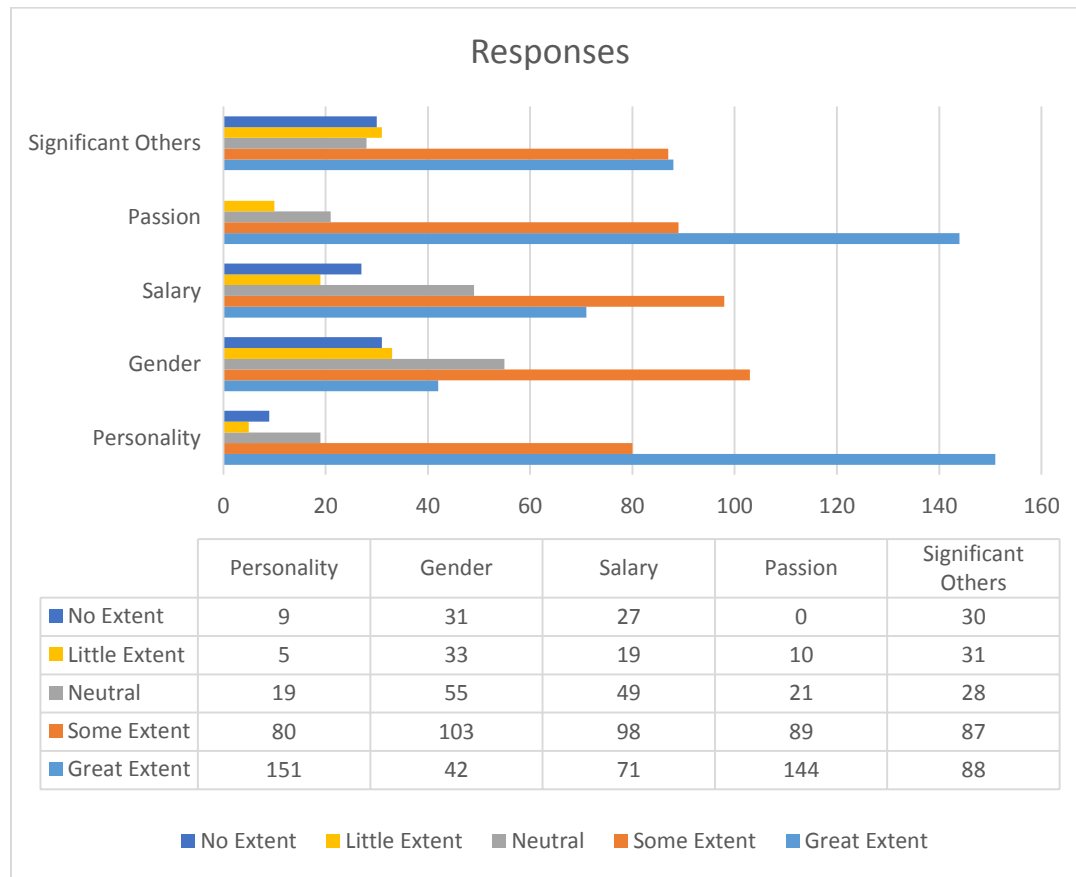|	Personality	Gender	Salary	Passion	Significant Others
No Extent	9	31	27	0	30
Little Extent	5	33	19	10	31
Neutral	19	55	49	21	28
Some Extent	80	103	98	89	87
Great Extent	151	42	71	144	88

Figure 1

Figure 1 shows that 88 (33.3%) of the respondents agreed that their **significant others** influenced their career preference to a great extent and 30 (11.4%) agreed that their significant others did not influence their career preferences while 28 (10.6%) were neutral.

Figure 1 also shows that 144 (54.5%) respondents agreed that their **passion** influenced their career preference to a great extent and 21 (8%) were neutral while 10 (3.8%) agreed that their passion influenced their career preference to a little extent.

Figure 1 shows that the highest number of respondents, 98 (37.1%) agreed that the salary package influenced their career preference to some extent while 49 (18.6%) respondents were neutral while the least number of respondents, 19 (7.2%) agreed that the salary package had little influence on their career preference.

Figure 1 also shows that 103 (39%) of the respondents agreed that **gender** had some influence on their career preference while 55 (20.8%) were neutral and 31 (11.7%) agreed that gender did not influence their career preference.

Figure 1 shows 151 (57.2%) of the respondents agreed that their **personality** influenced their career preference to a great extent whereas 19 (7.2%) were neutral and 5 (1.9%) agreed that their personality influenced their career preference to a little extent.

Table 4.4: Reasons for selecting an Area of Career Specialization

Item 3: What is your reason for choosing your particular area of career specialization? (You can tick more than one)

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Skills	160	60.6%
Passion	155	58.7%
Salary package	51	19.3%
Family background	40	15.2%
Status/prestige	46	17.4%
Range of opportunities	155	58.7%

The respondents had the choice to pick more than one option from the questionnaire.

Table 4.4 shows that 160 (60.6%) of the respondents chose their area of career specialization because of their skills while 155 (58.7%) chose because of their passion. A total of 51 (19.3%) respondents chose because of the salary package while 40 (15.2%) made their choice based on family background. Also, 46 (17.4%) respondents made their choice based on the status/prestige

that the career might offer while 155 (58.7%) made their choice based on the range of opportunities offered.

Table 4.5: Sources that Influence Decision-making on Career Preference
Item 4: Who did you consult before making your decision on your preference?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Myself	123	46.5%
Parents	72	27%
Friends	13	4.9%
Classmates	6	2.3%
Internet	21	8%
Observation of society	23	8.7%
Others: God	2	1%
Pastor	2	1%
Professional	1	0.3%
Aunties	1	0.3%
Total	**264**	**100%**

Table 4.5 shows that the highest number of respondents, 123 (46.5%) made their career decisions themselves while the least number of respondents, 2 (1%) consulted God or their Pastor 2 (1%). It is also interesting that only 1 (0.3%) of the respondents consulted a professional.

4.1.3 Research Question 2
To what extent does gender play a role as a determinant of the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?
To answer this question, items 5 and 6 of the questionnaire were examined.

Table 4.6: Respondents' response about whether gender played a role in Career Preference
Item 5: Gender played a role in my choice of career specialization

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	35	13.2%
Agree	93	35.2%
Neutral	71	26.9%
Disagree	40	15.2%
Strongly disagree	25	9.5%
Total	**264**	**100%**

Table 4.6 shows the extent to which gender played a role in determining the career preference of the respondents. Thirty-five respondents (35, 13.2%) strongly agreed that gender played a role in their career preference, 93 (35.2%) agreed that gender played a role in their career preference whereas 71 (26.9%) were neutral while 40 (15.2%) disagreed and 25 (9.5%) strongly disagreed.

Table 4.7: Suitability of Mass Communication Between Females and Males

Item 6: Mass communication is a course fit for only females

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	22	8.3%
Agree	91	34.5%
Neutral	50	18.9%
Disagree	55	20.8%
Strongly disagree	46	17.4%
Total	**264**	**99.9%**

Table 4.7 shows that 22 (8.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed that Mass Communication fits females more, 91 (34.5%) agreed that Mass Communication fits females more whereas 50 (18.9%) were neutral and 55 (20.8%) disagreed while 46 (17.4%) strongly disagreed.

4.1.4 Research Question 3

What area of career specialization in Mass Communication is most preferred among students in the selected private universities?

To answer this question, items 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the questionnaire were examined.

Chart 4.2: Mass Communication as Initial Choice of Study

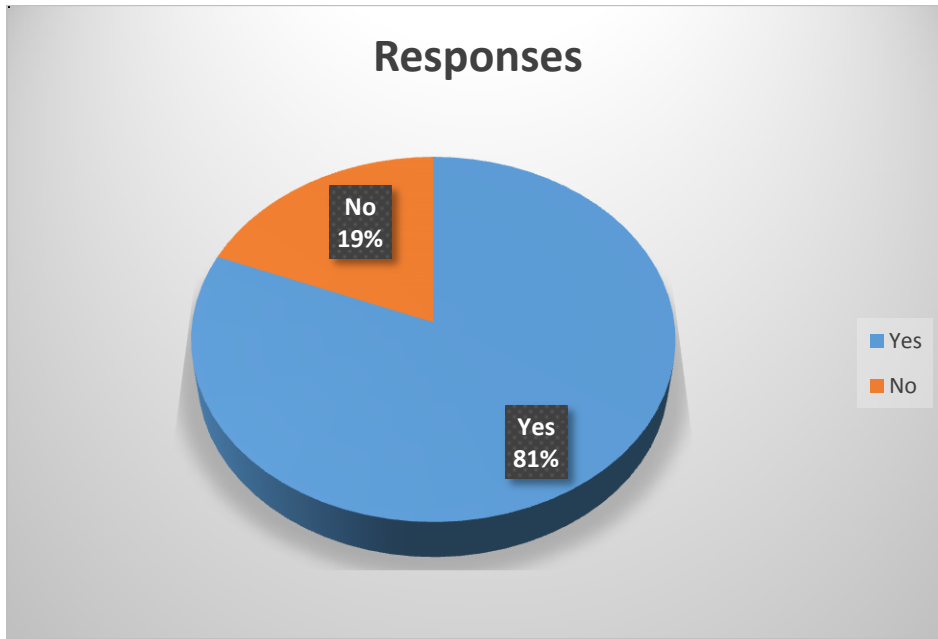**Item 7: Was Mass Communication your initial choice of study?**

Figure 2

Figure 2 shows that 214 (81.1%) of the respondents agreed that Mass Communication was their initial choice of study while 50 (18.9%) disagreed.

Table 4.8: Preferred Area of Career Specialization

Item 8: What is your preferred area of career specialization?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Broadcast journalism	84	31.8%
Print journalism	31	11.7%
Photojournalism	12	4.5%
Public relations	34	12.9%
Advertising	63	23.9%
Book publishing	10	3.8%
Film production	26	9.8%

Others specify: More than one choice	1	0.4%
Documentary production	1	0.4%
None	2	0.8%
Total	**264**	**100%**

Table 4.8 shows the preferred area of specialization of the respondents. A total of 84 respondents (31.8%) chose broadcast journalism while 31 (11.7%) chose print journalism. Twelve respondents (12, 4.5%) chose photojournalism, 34 (12.9%) chose public relations, 63 (23.9%) chose advertising, 10 (3.8%) chose book publishing and 26 (9.8%) chose film production. Four (4) respondents had other specifications where 1 (0.4%) of the respondents had more than one choice and 1 (0.4%) preferred documentary production while 2 (0.8%) had no choice.

Chart 4.3: Level of Satisfaction with Career Preference
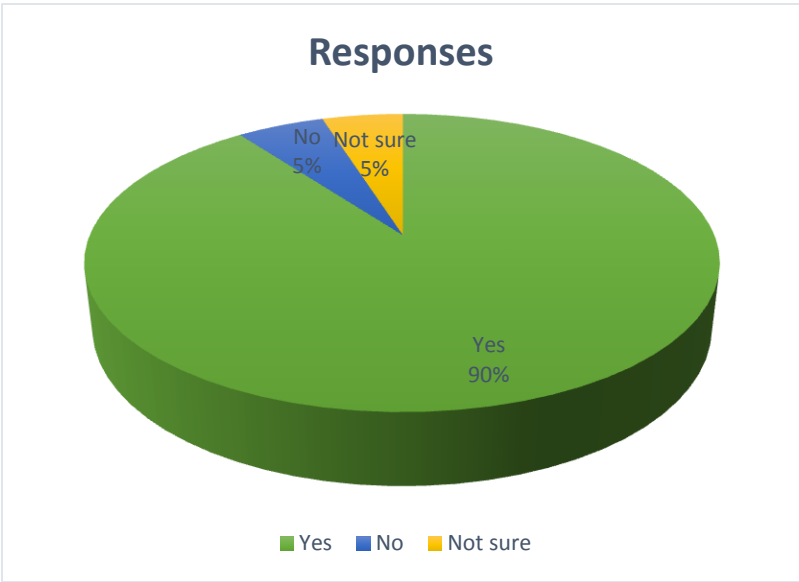**Item 9: Are you satisfied with your choice?**

Figure 3

Figure 3 shows the level of satisfaction of the respondents in their area of career preference. Out of the 264 respondents, 237 (89.8%) were satisfied with their choice, 14 (5.3%) were not satisfied with their choice while 13 (4.9% were not sure.

Table 4.9: Influences on Career Preference Decision.

Question 10: My decision to study my area of career preference was ……………………

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Solely mine	207	78.4%
My parents'	43	16.3%
My friends'	2	0.8%
My classmates'	-	-
Tv/Radio/Newspapers/Magazine/Internet's influence	8	3.0%
Others specify: Mine and people around me	1	0.4%
Aunty	1	0.4%
Divine mandate	1	0.4%
My brother	1	0.4%
Total	**264**	**100%**

Table 4.9 shows 207 (78.4%) of the respondents made their career choices by themselves, 43 (16.3%) were influenced by their parents, 2 (0.8%) were influenced by friends, 8 (3.0%) were influenced by the media and internet while four respondents had other specifications.

4.1.5 Research Question 4

Which gender has dominance in the enrolment of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?

To answer this question, items 11 and 12 of the questionnaire were examined.

Chart 4.4: Dominant Gender studying Mass Communication

Item 11: There are more females than males studying Mass Communication in my university.
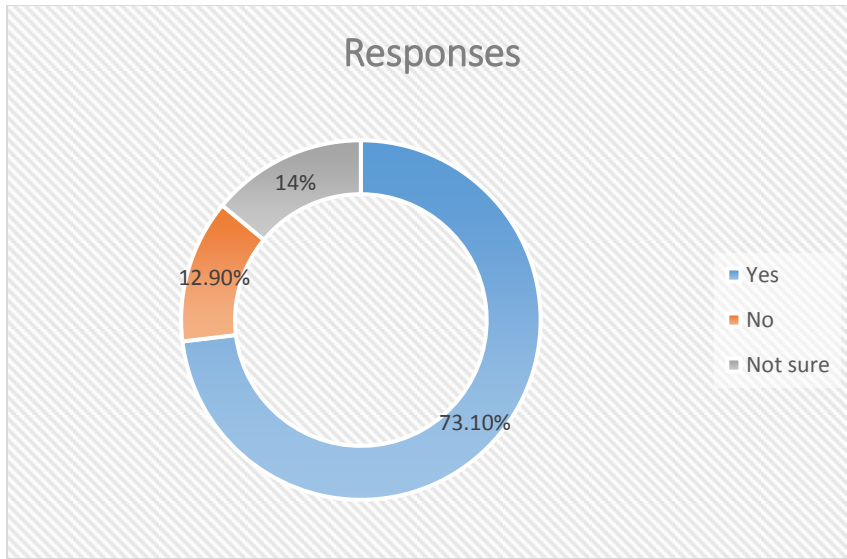
Figure 4

Figure 4 shows the responses on which gender is dominant in the selected universities. A total of 193 (73.1%) of the respondents agreed that the females were more than the males in their university, 34 (12.9%) disagreed while 37 (14%) were not sure.

Table 4.10: Reasons for High Population of Females

Item 12: If yes, why do you think there are more females? (You can tick more than one option)

Options	Frequency	Percentage
They are more brilliant	14	7.3%
Mass Communication fits females more	27	14%
They had no other option but Mass Communication	20	10.4%
Peer pressure from friends to study the same course	11	5.7%
Their parents chose for them	15	7.8%

They have the necessary skills for the mass communication field	76	39.4%
I have no idea	30	15.5%
Total	**193**	**100%**

Table 4.10 shows the responses of the 193 respondents, from Table 4.9, who agreed to having more females studying Mass Communication in their universities than males. The highest number of respondents, 76 (39.4%) believed that they had the necessary skills for the Mass Communication field while 30 (15.5%) had no idea and the least number of respondents, 11 (5.7%) believed that peer pressure from friends to study the same course was also a reason.

4.1.6 Research Question 5

To what extent is gender prioritized over skills, in career preference of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities? (Theory-based)

To answer this question, items 13 and 14 of the questionnaire were examined.

Chart 4.5: Level of Prioritization Between Gender and Skills

Item 13: Students make their career choices in Mass Communication based on their gender more than their skills.
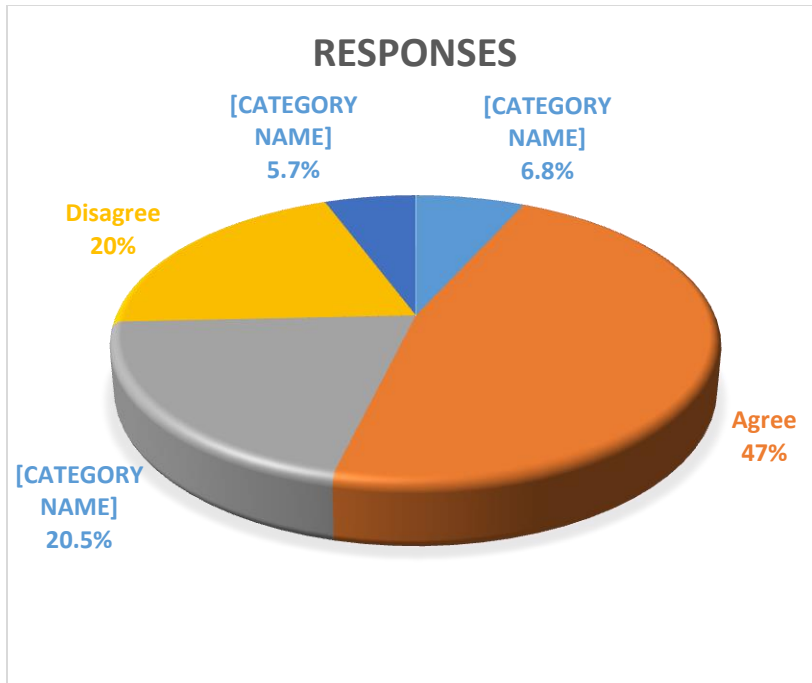
Figure 5

Figure 5 shows the extent to which gender or skill set is prioritized in career choices. A total of 18 (6.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed that students make their career choices in Mass Communication based on gender than skills, 124 (47%) agreed that students make their choices based on their gender, 54 (20.5%) were neutral while 53 (20%) disagreed and 15 (5.7%) strongly disagreed.

Table 4.11: Mass Communication as a Course fit for Females

Item 14: According to societal expectations, Mass Communication is a course for the female folks

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	23	8.7%
Agree	125	47.3%
Neutral	51	19%
Disagree	44	17%
Strongly disagree	21	8%
Total	**264**	**100%**

Table 4.11 shows the responses on whether Mass Communication fits the females more. A total of 23 respondents (8.7%) strongly agreed, 125 (47.3%) agreed, 51 (19%) were neutral while 44 (17%) disagreed and 21 (8%) strongly disagreed.

4.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the data gathered, presented and analyzed, the following findings emerged in answering the research questions.

Research Question 1

What are the factors that influence opinions on the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?

The aim of this question was to identify various factors that could influence opinions on the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities. The data on tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 and Figure 1 were used to answer the research question.

Table 4.3 showed that most of the respondents (225) agreed to choosing Mass Communication by themselves. Figure 1 showed the extent to which the factors influenced their career preference. It showed that most of the respondents (151) were influenced to a great extent by their personalities. Table 4.4 focused on the reasons behind their career preferences. The result showed that majority of the respondents (160) choose their area of specialization based on the skills they possessed. The data contained in Table 4.5 showed the various sources/areas of consultation from which opinions on their career preference were formed. The result from this table showed that most of the respondents (123) made their decisions on their own without consulting anyone or anything.

From the findings, the factors that influenced the opinions on the career preferences of Mass Communication students as identified were significant others (family, friends, classmates), passion, salary package, gender and personality out of which, from the data analyzed, most of the respondents were influenced by their personalities. This agrees with what Hussain et al. (2011) said that a significant relationship exists between one's personality type and their career choices.

Research question 2

To what extent does gender play a role as a determinant of the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?

The aim of this research question was to find out the extent to which gender plays a role in determining the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities.

The data on Table 4.6 and 4.7 were used to answer the research question. The data on Table 4.6 indicates that majority of the respondents (93) agreed that gender played a role in their career preferences in Mass Communication. The data on Table 4.7 showed that most (91) of the respondents agreed that Mass Communication fits females more than males.

From the findings, gender definitely played a role in determining the career preferences of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities. This therefore affirms what Eagly and Woods (1999) implied that gender influences career aspirations as well as career choices.

Research Question 3

What area of career specialization in Mass Communication is most preferred among students in the selected private universities?

This question was to find out the area of career specialization that is most preferred amongst students in the selected private universities.

Table 4.8 and 4.9 as well as Figure 2 and 3 sought to answer the research question. From Figure 2, majority of the respondents (81.1%) chose to study Mass Communication from the onset. Data from Table 4.8 shows the various areas of specialization in Mass Communication, out of which, 84 (31.8%) of the respondents preferred broadcast journalism. Figure 3 sought to find out the level of satisfaction of the respondents in their area of specialization and 237 (89.8%) of the respondents were satisfied with their selection. The data from Table 4.9 focused on factors that could prompt the choice of their specialization and it showed that 207 (78.4%) of the respondents made their decisions on their own volition.

The findings revealed that broadcast journalism is an area of specialization in Mass Communication that is mostly preferred among students in the selected private universities. This

relates to Ememyeonu (1991) who discovered that students prefer roles in television, radio, public relations or advertising as well as other aspects of journalism such as reporting.

Research Question 4

Which gender has dominance in the enrolment of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities?

The aim of this research question was to find out the gender that is most dominant in the enrolment of Mass Communication students in MTU and BU.

Figure 4 and Table 4.10 sought to answer this question. The data in Figure 4 showed the level of awareness of the students on which gender is more in both universities. Most of the respondents (193) chose "yes," indicating that there were more females studying Mass Communication in their universities than males. The data contained in Table 4.10 sought to find out reasons why there were more females than males studying Mass Communication. Most of the respondents (76) believed that the reason for more females was because they possessed the necessary skills, like interpersonal skills, needed for the Mass Communication field.

The findings therefore showed that the dominant gender in the enrolment of Mass Communication students in the selected universities were females. This result agrees with what Ali (2010) found out that the population of female students offering Mass Communication in different tertiary institutions outnumbers that of the male population by a significant amount.

Research Question 5

To what extent is gender prioritized over skills, in career preference of Mass Communication students in the selected private universities? (Theory-based)

This question was formed on the grounds of the theories that serve as a base for the research study. The aim of this question was therefore to find out the which of the two, gender or skills, is more prioritized among students in their career preferences in Mass Communication. Figure 5 and Table 4.11 and 16 helped answer this question. The data in Figure 5 showed that majority of the respondents (124) agreed that gender is considered more than skills in the selection of a

career choice in Mass Communication. The data from Table 4.11 probed further by finding out from the respondents if Mass Communication suits the females more based on societal expectations. From the table, majority of the respondents agreed that Mass Communication is a course for the female folks.

The findings therefore proved that gender is more prioritized over skills among students in their career preference in Mass Communication. This aligns with what the ILO (2020) stated that despite the ability of the females to acquire skills for work, they still face discrimination and stereotypes which serve as barriers to the full utilization of those skills in obtaining proper jobs. Despite having the necessary skills required for a career, gender is placed higher and this serves as a disadvantage for mostly, the females.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Based on the data collected, presented and analyzed in the previous chapter, this chapter focused on the summary, conclusion as well as recommendations for the research study.

5.1 SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to ascertain the extent of the role of gender as a determinant of the career preferences of Mass Communication students in private universities. In order to achieve this, a statement of problem was formulated with five research questions drawn to aid this research. The study was carried out on 100 – 400 level students in the two private universities selected for this study which were, Mountain Top University (MTU) and Babcock University (BU), located in the South-western part of Nigeria.

In getting the needed data, survey research design was deployed using questionnaire as an instrument in designing questions in accordance with the research objectives. The results from the data gathered and analyzed showed, amongst other things, that gender plays a role in determining the career preferences of students in Mass Communication.

It also revealed that there were more females studying Mass Communication in tertiary institutions than males. The study also found out that an area of career preference that is mostly preferred among students was broadcast journalism.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, gender plays a role, to some extent, in determining the career preferences of Mass Communication students. Asides gender, there are other factors that could influence the career preferences of Mass Communication students such as their passion, the skills they possess, the salary package offered in the course of their career, family background and their personalities.

From the analysis carried out, there is no doubt to believe that in a student's decision making with regards to career preference, gender is also considered. Many students, upon graduation from tertiary institutions, will choose to work in organizations where there is less issue of gender stereotypes. This is because of gender stereotypes associated with various professions.

Mass Communication is considered to be a course fit for the females than the males. The disparity is thus that there are more females studying Mass Communication than males in tertiary institutions but there are more males occupying positions and gaining recognition in the media organizations. This goes to show that the females are being stereotyped with regards to professions. The reason for less females occupying high positions, even though, they can do much better than the males is as a result of gender stereotypes present in the society.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Having analyzed the extent to which gender determines the career preference of Mass Communication students, the researcher hereby makes the following recommendations:

- ❖ Discrimination among females should be discarded in the workforce as well as in the society. This will help in promoting gender equality in media organizations and allow female students to make their career choices in Mass Communication without thinking about gender stereotypes.
- ❖ Media organizations should focus on employing and promoting more females to create a sense of gender equality in the workforce. This will help the society see that females can be as good as their male counterparts in doing their jobs.
- ❖ Also, the females already working in the media organizations should be given the chance to take on beats and jobs that are classified as "male type" jobs. This will help bridge the gap that stereotypes have created in the industry and will create a sense of healthy competition between the males and females.
- ❖ Government should create programmes garnered towards gender equality especially in the workforce. Also, through the federal ministry of education, courses on gender equality should be incorporated in the syllabus of every educational institution within the country.

5.4 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Only two private universities in the South-West were used or the study owing to the limited resources available to the researcher.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

My name is Chidebelu Chinaza, a final year student studying Mass Communication at the Mountain Top University, located in Ogun state. The purpose for this questionnaire is to find out the role of gender as a determinant of the career preferences of Mass communication students in Mountain Top University and Babcock University. The research is solely for academic purposes which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Mass Communication.

Information from this document will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

NOTE: Do not include your name on this document.

Kindly tick and fill the appropriate box that applies to you.

Section A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sex: Male ( )   Female ( )

Age grade: 15 – 19 { } 20 – 24 { } 25 – 30 { } 30 – above { }

   Level: 100 ( )   200 ( ) 300 ( ) 400 ( )

   University: M.T.U. [ ]   B.U. [ ]

Section B

Kindly fill and tick, where necessary, the option that applies to you.

Research Question 1: What are the factors that influence the career preference of mass communication students in the selected private universities?

1) Did you choose to study Mass Communication by yourself?

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. I don't know

If your answer is No, who did? ………………………………………………….

2) To what extent did the following factors influence your career preference?

	1	2	3	4	5
Factors	Great Extent	Some Extent	Neutral	Little Extent	No Extent
A. Significant others (Family, Friends, Classmates)					
B. Passion					
C. Salary					
D. Gender					
E. Personality					

3) What is your reason for choosing your particular area of career specialization? (You can tick more than one)

   a) Skills ☐

   b) Passion ☐

   c) Salary package ☐

   d) Family background ☐

   e) Status/prestige ☐

   f) Range of opportunities ☐

   g) Others, please specify

   ……………………………………………………………

4) Who did you consult before making your decision on your preference?

   a. Myself ☐

   b. Parents ☐

   c. Friends ☐

   d. Classmates ☐

   e. Internet ☐

   f. Observation of society ☐

   g. Others, please specify ……………………………………………………….

Research question 2: To what extent does gender play a role as a determinant of the career preferences of mass communication students in the selected private universities?

5) Gender played a role in my choice of career specialization

    A. Strongly Agree ☐

    B. Agree ☐

    C. Neutral ☐

    D. Strongly Disagree ☐

    E. Disagree ☐

6) Mass communication is a course fit for only females

    A. Strongly agree ☐

    B. Agree ☐

    C. Neutral ☐

    D. Strongly disagree ☐

    E. Disagree ☐

Research question 3: What area of career specialization in mass communication is most preferred among students in the selected private universities?

7) Was Mass communication your initial choice of study?

    a. Yes

    b. No

If no, why did you switch to Mass communication?

…………………………………………………………

8) What is your preferred area of career specialization?

    a) Broadcast journalism ☐

    b) Print journalism ☐

    c) Photojournalism ☐

    d) Public relations ☐

    e) Advertising ☐

    f) Book Publishing ☐

    g) Film Production ☐

    h) Others, please specify

       …………………………………………………………………………………

9) Are you satisfied with your choice?

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. Not sure

10) My decision to study my area of career preference was

    …………………………………………………………….

    a. Solely mine ☐

    b. My parents' ☐

   c. My friends' ☐

   d. My classmates' ☐

   e. Tv/Radio/Newspapers/Magazine/Internet's influence ☐

   f. Others, please specify

    ……………………………………………………………………

Research question 4: Which gender has dominance in the enrolment of mass communication students in the selected private universities?

11) There are more females than males studying mass communication in my university.

   a) Yes

   b) No

   c) Not sure

12) If yes, why do you think there are more females? (You can tick more than one option)

   a) They are more brilliant ☐

   b) Mass communication fits females more ☐

   c) They had no other option but Mass communication ☐

   d) Peer pressure from friends to study the same course ☐

   e) Their parents chose for them ☐

   f) They have the necessary skills for the mass communication field ☐

   g) I have no idea ☐

Research question 5: To what extent is gender prioritized over skills, in career preference of mass communication students in the selected private universities? (Theory-based)

13) Students make their career choices in Mass Communication based on their gender more than their skills.

    a) Strongly agree ☐

    b) Agree ☐

    c) Neutral ☐

    d) Strongly disagree ☐

    e) Disagree ☐

14) According to societal expectations, Mass Communication is a course for the female folks.

    a) Strongly agree ☐

    b) Agree ☐

    c) Neutral ☐

    d) Strongly disagree ☐

    e) Disagree ☐

Thank you for your response.