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Factors influencing career choice among high school students in Tanzania

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to identify factors that influenced career choice among high school students in Tanzania. The information obtained would be used to formulate effective recruitment strategies and counseling students on their career expectations in dentistry. All 352 high school students who were studying in five randomly selected high schools completed a pre-tested questionnaire containing twenty-four items addressing five factors. Image of a profession (good experiences from the work of professionals, professionals who are attractive to respondents, and professionals who command high respect in the community) was perceived as an important factor in career choice by the majority of respondents (over 88 percent). Work/profession characteristics (knowledge about work to be done, treating patients, giving medicines to patients, helping relatives, etc.) was ranked as the second most important factor, and course characteristics (availability of postgraduate studies, size of annual intake, pass rate, geographic location, etc.) was ranked third. Direct gains and advice from important persons were perceived as least important in career choice.