A Review on Career Compromise in Zimbabwe.

BY

[1]Chiedza Joy Goya, [2]Dr Mirwan Surya Perdhana, S.E., M.M., Ph.D
[1,2]Faculty of Economics and Business Department of Masters of Management Diponegoro University

Abstract

Based on relevant research, the article outlines the phenomenon of career compromise in Zimbabwe. An overview of the career compromise from different scholars, also outlining how career decision-making and career choice are affected by the cultural values, education system, and the job market of Zimbabwe. This helps to understand the reasons that lead to career compromise in Zimbabwe by looking into multiple researches that focus on the economic situation, job availability, skills mismatch, education system, influences of parental and family guidance, teachers' guidance, and peer influence on career choice and decision making. Finally, the paper summarises with the shortcomings of relevant research and proffer ideas to future studies.

Keywords: Career compromise, career choice, career decision, job market, economy, employment

INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe's economy has been grappling for years since the ESAP (Economic Structural Adjustment Programme) in 1990. This has inevitably affected every sector and industry that anchors the nation. There is unrest to be financially stable irrespective of the fact that the populace is encompassed of literate and learned individuals, still, people find it difficult to survive in such an unstable and limited economy. As expected of educated individuals to succeed in life by being employable, however, the economic environment has not been lenient to the educated population as there is limited to no job prospective. The high unemployment rate in Zimbabwe is due to a number factors, for instance, skills mismatch, no job market, lack of career guidance, and poor government policies on employment. This situation has led the nation to compromise on their career aspirations to take up jobs only for survival, some have fled to other countries in search of greener pastures causing a knowledge gap in Zimbabwe. Career compromise is quite common in Zimbabwe because of the strive to succeed, it is important that action is taken hence to amend the situation most particularly conducting more research on the phenomenon to enlighten the nation on the present situation, by so doing career guidance should be made an important step to career decision making, amendment of government policies in the economic sectors, education and employment and including non-governmental organisations with their diverse expertise in different sectors.

Career compromise

Career compromise is a situation where individuals make trade-offs to their desired career settling for a less satisfying and less appealing job. Usually, individuals compromise on their aspirations because of the unavailability of the job market, economic constrains, educational background, societal conformities, family and cultural expectations. In accordance to academic view, this is when individuals give up on their desired career paths or reduce the weight they place on their occupational values in order to pursue occupations that align with those values (Ryu & Jeong,2021). According to (Tsaousides & Jome 2008) when evaluating a profession option's accessibility, compromise arises when opinions about outside obstacles make the decision unaffordable. People reassess their decisions and swap out their more desirable professional choices for ones that are more practical when outside circumstances prevent them from achieving their ideal career goals.

A compromise is classified as major when it involves making career decisions that are unacceptable in terms of sex type, prestige, and interest; moderate when it involves making decisions that are tolerable in regards to the three facets of sex type, prestige, and interest; and minor when it involves making decisions that are reasonably attractive in all respects, according to (Gottfredson and Lapan, 1997). Research on self-reported compromise has shown that feelings of compromise are associated with depression, adjustment issues, job and life dissatisfaction, and decreased well-being (Carr, 1997; Hesketh

& McLachlan, 1991; Ocansey, 2000). In terms of job satisfaction compromise can be experienced at both positive and negative level, workers will be more content and effective in an atmosphere that suits their personality (Holland, 1997).

Culture of Zimbabwe

In the light of gender mainstreaming, Zimbabwe is predominantly a patriarchal society, meaning there is male dominance in all sectors including the job sector. According to studies on the transition from equilibrium society to male dominance, before colonialism, the important contribution that Zimbabwean women made to the production and processing of food established and preserved their rights in the home and in other domains, like as politics, culture, religion, and society. However, the emergence of the economy of colonialism resulted in the marginalization of women's status in a number of ways. Firstly, the introduction of title documents allowed males to hold property alone. Due to their status as minors and their ownership of property, women were not allowed to own title deeds (Chengu 2010).

Women thus grew more economically dependent on males as they lost access to and control over land. As a result, there was a rise in household patriarchy, which was further supported by colonial social structures like the labor market. Second, as colonialism remained firmly established in Zimbabwe, women's and girls' agricultural contributions to the household were seen as significantly less significant since their crucial role in food production was eclipsed by the more profitable male-dominated cultivation of cash crops for the global marketplace (Dorsey 1996; Marira 1991). Lastly, girls and women were negatively impacted by the advent of wage labor as it forced boys and men from rural regions to seek employment in cities, which had an adverse social and economic effect on women. It is still difficult for men and women, or girls and boys, to create an egalitarian environment where they may express their autonomy in choosing a vocation throughout every facet of their economy, even thirty years after independence. This is known as the transitional difficulty that the occupational structure faces. Men were naturally superior to women when it came to physical prowess. The gender gap has narrowed as brains have emerged as the winning strategy. Gains in women's economic prospects, however, are still trailing behind, particularly when it comes to issues of agency, such as choosing a job within their social structures (Giddens 2001).

As stated in a study that aimed to determine the factors influencing female students' goals and career choices in a subset of Zimbabwean high schools (Mutekwe et al, 2011). According to the study, a variety of factors, including socialization into gender roles, parental expectations, teacher attitudes, the gender-specific of school subjects, and the gender-specific professional terrain in which they exist, have an impact on girls' career choices and aspirations. Through semi-structured interview and questionnaires, authors outline that some of the females did not have the autonomy to pursue male-oriented jobs like trucking as this job requires them to be far away from their families for weeks or so. In line with

Gottfredson's infamous theory of circumscription girls or women in Zimbabwe, are meant to sacrifice on their career aspirations for more grounded careers that allow them to be closer to their families, as women in Zimbabwean culture are stereotyped to the role of being homemakers so any career they choose must not affect with their feminine roles. These gendered perceptions align with the findings of (Helwig, 1998), who linked the gender-specific views of a sample of 2–6 graders about working married mothers of preschool-aged children to the socialization of gender roles in the home and in society at large, which favors the ideals and discourse of the "stay-at-home-mom" for mothers of young children. The connection between academic subjects and professional choices is another theme that surfaced from the girls' replies during the focus group discussion.

The Zimbabwean culture is deeply rooted in communal values, (Ringson, 2017) argued that children are not individually raised rather in a collective manner (community responsibility) in this case this has an impact to their life choices as children in Zimbabwe do not generally have the autonomy to choose a career that they are not socialized into. The study by (Mutekwe et al, 2011) also outlined how parents and siblings have an influence on the type of career their children can pursue, girls took up careers they were advised to by their parents and siblings. The survey also showed that female students' profession choices and goals are significantly influenced by their professors. This data backed up by (Farmer, 2001) assertions that instructors have the same impact on students' profession choices as families have on their interactions with them in the classroom. Instructors may even have conversations with students and offer career advice. This has an impact on how the students see various vocations and the decisions they make as a result. It has long been acknowledged that one of the key influences on students' career decisions is their professors' support and expectations for them.

In addition, a study by (Siyakwazi et al, 2000) outlined that male made career choices according to their societal expectations as 'natural' breadwinners so they chose careers that were generally high in salary. In this study, males showed a high career decision self-efficacy (Bandura,1997), respondents who were male were more likely than female to think they can choose a job without parental guidance. Another study by (Mtemeri, 2019) aimed to examine the influence of family on career choices for their children. The study drew conclusions with the use of descriptive statistics, in contrast to the father (46%), the family company (28%), the dominant profession in the family (27.7%), and the extended family members, who had varying but lesser effects, the mother (47.3%) and the siblings (51%) had a significant influence on children's career choices. The professional choices of their children were similarly perceived to be influenced by the parents' careers (59.8% and 51.9%, respectively). According to the results of the current study, parents, siblings, and mothers have the most influence on their children's job decisions. That being said, the mother was deemed to have the most influence over the father and the

siblings. It was believed that the father and mother would have an impact since children look up to their parents (Van Raden, 2011, p. 37). In relation to the above, another study by (Mtemeri, 2020) revealed that students' job choices are influenced by their friends. This aligns with Bandura's social cognitive theory, which argues that peers may be sources of social learning because they model and validate behavior patterns and act as benchmarks for evaluating and validating self-efficacy (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Career compromise highlighted by (Gottfredson, 2002) in the theory of circumscription and compromise as levels to choosing a career according to race, prestige, gender, income, and status. The studies above highlighted the Zimbabwean culture within career choice through gender-mainstreaming, parental and sibling guidance, and the influence of peers.

Table 1 showing relevant studies on the influences of career decision-making amongst students in Zimbabwe

Author	Focus	Research methods	Results
(Mutekwe et al, 2011)	Examine the variables influencing the goals and career choices of female students in particular Zimbabwean schools	qualitative, focused group interviews	Girls' professional goals and choices are impacted by a wide range of factors, the most prominent ones being gender role socialization, family expectations, instructor attitudes, the gender mainstreaming of the subjects they study in school, and the gendered occupational environment in which they work.
(Siyakwazi et al, 2000)	impact from peers, family, and school while choosing a job	quantitative, questionnaire	males exhibited the autonomy to choose their own career paths whilst women need the consent of their parents to make career choices. Males saw salary as the main priority in choosing a career whilst women sought for job security
(Mtemeri, 2019)	discovering the impact of parents on their childrens' professional paths	descriptive quantitative, questionnaire	parents had an influence to their childrens' career path, siblings and eternal relatives had an impact to childrens' career choice but to a lesser extent
(Mtemeri, 2020)	A factor influencing high school students' decisions about their careers is peer pressure.	descriptive quantitative, questionnaire	students were influenced by their peers in making career decisions through peer advice, encouragement, and peer education

Education

Education is a fundamental necessity in Zimbabwe as it is deemed as the key to success. Studies have shown how the nation is driving at matching educational skills set to match that of the global village, necessity of giving students 21st-century skills to help them live in a volatile, unpredictable, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment has been suggested by a number of writers. Both (Kennedy, 2019; Gravett, 2019). According to a study by (Muyambo-Goto et al, 2022) argued that the majority agricultural nation of Zimbabwe introduced a new curriculum, the Zimbabwe Curriculum Framework (ZCF, 2015–2022), to better prepare its students for life in an increasingly globalized and competitive world. The ZCF aims to address and align the curriculum to the demands of the twenty-first century. In line with the career decision-making concept, the authors went further to highlight that in order to address issues like poverty, violence, economic hardship, and environmental crises, the demand for 21st-century skills in environments like Zimbabwe must be defined in terms of life skills, (Joynes et al.,2019). In this case, as Zimbabwe's educational system is being enhances this would broaden the sphere of diversity in skills hence making liable to individuals to have wide range of sectors to make career decisions.

Another study by (Kangoyo, 2005) highlighted that, because of the government's active education initiatives, the nation has produced professionals who work in both the public and private sectors. Zimbabwe has thousands of teachers, engineers, physicians, nurses, and other professionals working in neighboring countries and abroad. The nation also emerged as a key supplier of educated labor in Southern Africa. This success story is saddened by the fact that the government's misguided economic policies fostered a hostile atmosphere

that led to the "brain drain" of the nation's professionals—a topic that will be covered in more detail later. As noted by (Rosli and Suib, 2020), a growing number of students consult career advice instructors due to the challenges they face while choosing a job in school. A study by (Mtemeri, 2022) mentioned that the students said that their courses and the school's screening process had a major impact on their job choices, making some occupations more appealing to them than others. The study also went further to outline that teachers of career advice felt that by providing career assistance in schools, schools have an impact on students' careers. They contend that career counseling helps students make more informed decisions about their careers and dispels misunderstanding.

The theory of circumscription indicates that adolescents in the stage of orientation to the internal unique self, according to (Hashim and Embong, 2015), the student's peer group is the single most important factor in influencing career decisions. Teens are particularly susceptible to peer pressure because they look to their friends for approval when making decisions about their lives, including their careers. It was also shown that peer interactions had an impact on students' job decisions. According to Kiuru (2008), individuals of closely connected peer groups in Finland are more likely to follow similar educational paths because they are more receptive to the ideas of their peers. A study by (Mtemeri, 2020) on peer influence on carrer decision-making of students argued that according to the results of the relevant study, students' job decisions were influenced by the professional information they received from friends and peers. Students exchange crucial information about employment options with friends and classmates. Instructors that provide career counseling agreed with students when they emphasized the importance of friends' recommendations for jobs in shaping students' decisions. The study also revealed that peers had an impact on students' job decisions. This is in line with Bandura's social cognitive theory, which holds that peers may be sources of social learning since they can act as comparison references for evaluating and validating self-efficacy as well as models and sanction behaviors (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). It was believed that friends and other students may influence their peers by imparting career-related knowledge. There are a number of inter-plays in the influences of the educational system on how it enhances an individual or it rather causes more harm to how they will make profound career decision-making efficacy (Betz et al, 1996).

Job market

Over the years Zimbabwe has been encompassed with high levels unemployment. A wide range of factors are in intertwined with the scarcity of jobs on the market this includes skills gap and skills mismatch. A study by (Istileulova, 2018) two challenges that many workforces throughout the world face: First, the expanding problem of mismatch in talent, the relationship between candidate and company expectations reveals that problem-solving, resilience, and communication skills are where modern graduates most need improvement. Other soft skills, such as

creativity, flexibility/adaptability, and leadership abilities, also showed notable skill differences.

There are quite a number of employment challenges in Zimbabwe, (Zimbabwe Labor Market Assessment, 2014) Zimbabwe has an extremely small number of official occupations. Eighty-four percent of jobs are in the informal sector, according to (Labor Force Survey,2011). Annually, about 300,000 young individuals join the workforce, yet fewer than 10% of them find official employment. Further outlined that, workers depend on several revenue streams and are in survival mode. Based on an analysis of 858 employees, a "Profile of a Zimbabwean Employee Survey" found that 60% of workers rely on one or more sources of income to augment their pay. The significant economic downturn that took place during the "Lost Decade" (1998–2008) and the challenging economic environment that followed are the key causes of Zimbabwe's present employment issues. From the standpoint of employment, some of the most crucial components of that fall are highlighted in this section. The economic challenges that exist today, such as the liquidity crisis, inadequate infrastructure, government debt, pressure towards indigenization, corruption, unclear policies, and a lack of formal employment, have all contributed to a low demand and low credibility environment that has caused businesses to shrink and, ultimately, produced a desperate labor force. Youth unemployment in Zimbabwe is a serious problem, according to statistics from the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT). For young people between the ages of 15 and 34, the unemployment rate is almost 30% (ZIMSTAT, 2022). This information highlights how serious the job problem is for the younger generation.

In Zimbabwe the level of education counts on employability, according to (ZIMSTAT, 2023) indicates that 0% unemployment of those holding a Doctorate compared to those who have attained a vocational certificate, bachelor's, and master's. The survey goes further to generalize those women are the most affected in the societal problems in areas such as unemployment, illiteracy, job disparities, and retrenchments. Further in the survey, there is evidence of skills gap as people move to South Africa 5.6%, Zambia 21.8%, Malawi 14.5% and the largest percentage to have migrated is in Mozambique at a rate of 51.1%.

Future research trends

Firstly, future research can also consider the economic impact on individuals that may lead them to compromise on their careers. Studies by (Labor Force Survey,2011; Mutekwe et al, 2011; Kangoyo, 2005) outlined that there are economic disparities in Zimbabwe led to career compromise because of low salaries, poor education systems, gender inequalities, and no job market. However, these studies failed to outline the impact of these career compromises on individuals, how career compromise is affecting the people mentally, socially, and the industries of Zimbabwe. In this case, it calls for future scrutiny in research as researchers can make use of the career adaptability factor to access how well adaptive and innovative are those that are faced with need to compromise on their

careers. Secondly, future researches can delve on how culture has a significant impact on career compromise. Zimbabwe is greatly cemented into its culture and it is important for future research to have a comprehensive understanding of the immaculate culture. Though outlined by (Siyakwazi et al, 2000; Mtemeri, 2020) there is need of more research on the socialization and cultural role identification that may impact career compromise and how the compromises have impacted on the individuals, this can be assessed through the circumscription and career compromise theory. Thirdly, it is important to note that career guidance from all streams is a necessity for the success of an individual. Research can focus on how career guidance mostly for those in midlife career crisis, how it has assisted those affected by career compromise to manoeuvre through compromise. It is important to outline the impact of non-governmental organisations in career guidance and coaching in midlife crises. Lastly, research on government policies on employment, economy, and education systems is crucial hence to understand the flaws that may influence career compromise because of illiteracy, skills mismatch, and unemployment, and assess how amendments to government policies may be crucial to curb such problems.

Acknowledgments

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