



INFLUENCE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES ON STUDENTS CAREER CHOICE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of guidance and counselling services on student career choice. The main purpose of the study is to ascertain the influence of guidance and counselling services on career choice of students. Three (3) research questions and two (2) hypotheses guided the study; it was a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the fourteen (14) government schools in Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra State with the total number of 14, 469 students and 757 teachers. A simple random sampling technique was used to sample five respondents using 10% of the population. Instrument for data collection was a stratified questionnaire. The questionnaire was validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability co-efficient of the instrument. The methods of data analysis used for the study were mean and standard deviation while data were presented using table. It was found that the perception of students on the services of guidance counsellors is that the guidance counsellors should be more functional in the school they are posted to as to achieve those objectives.

Keywords: Guidance and Counselling, Career Choice, Schools.

Introduction

Education has a responsibility of developing unique qualities of an individual and creating all opportunities for enlarging special interest, abilities and talents. It exposes adolescents at junior secondary level to various manipulative skills such that students not capable of continuing at senior secondary level should benefit maximally from this innovation and proceed for appropriate apprenticeship training at the end of their junior secondary school education. On the other hand, guidance and counseling as an integral part of the new policy aimed at providing special services which will assist students attain self-understanding to harness their latent potentials for proper educational, personal-social, and vocational development and adjustment. According to Egbochukwu (2018), the aims of school guidance and counseling services include the provision of the following to the students:

- (1) Opportunities to develop knowledge and appreciation of themselves and others;
- (2) Opportunities to develop relationship skills, ethical standards, and a sense of responsibility;



- (3) Opportunities to acquire skills and attitudes necessary to develop educational goals which are suited to their needs of intents and abilities;
- (4) Information that would enable them to make decisions about life and career opportunities.

In the light of these opportunities, guidance and counselling programme aims at ensuring that no students are submerged in the field of human enterprise and endeavour. However, in the recent years, school leavers at all levels of educational institutions in Nigeria have been faced with severe joblessness. At government establishments and private enterprises, only few vacancies exist for school leavers who are specially connected with people who have overriding influence on government policy-makers and executors, as well as private entrepreneurs.

Guidance and counseling as a course of study has been conceptualized as a programme of activities which has provided man with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in this present age of complex scientific and technological development (Okobiah & Okorodudu 2014). Guidance has been defined by Umar (2014) as the total programme of a number highly specialized activities implemented by specialist to help individual make wise and intelligent choice and decisions. Eyo (2013), averred that guidance is a programme of services to individuals based on their needs and the influence of environmental factors. She went further to state that guidance and counselling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities, programmes and services geared toward assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world and also to develop adequate capacity for making wise choices and decisions.

Furthermore, guidance programmes for secondary school students are designed to address the physical, emotional, social, vocational and academic difficulties of adolescent students. This is to complement learning in the classroom and also enhance academic achievements of students (Eyo 2013). Counselling is a learning process in which a counsellor helps an individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environment and be in a position to choose the right type of behaviours that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and step up, educationally, vocationally and socio personally (Ebizie 2016). In other words, counselling is a transformative process of helping people to learn all that are to be learnt both in and outside the school.

On the other hand, a career is defined as one's lifework in order words, career is one's profession which includes a number of occupations, vocations or jobs one person engage in during his or her working life (Eremie 2018).

Career is the course of events that constitute a life, the sequence of occupations and other life roles which combine express one's commitment to work in his or her total pattern of self-development.

Umar (2014), averred that career choice previously was not as difficult as it is today. There were fewer job opportunities and more importantly, parents, teachers and religious bodies were aware of the existing opportunities as well as requirements for entry into them.

Career counsellors on the other hand do offer a wide range of career related programmes to students which are aimed at assisting students to plan their career, make informed decision and choose a career which will land him or her into the right vocation so as to make students enjoy



their work (Eremie, 2018).

The strategic position of counsellors in secondary schools enable them in assisting to mould the students' educational, emotional, behavioural and psychological challenges. This counselling service is done in tandem with other school personnel (Orewere, 2012). Again, Eremie, (2018), posit career guidance and counselling makes it possible for an individual to see and explore his or her unlimited endowed options. it is an undeniable fact that the major service areas of guidance and counselling are, educational guidance and counselling which assists students in their choices of career, vocational guidance and counselling which assists the individual to choose and prepare for an occupation that is compatible with his interests and aptitudes, and personal and social guidance and counselling which assists the individual to behave appropriately in relation to other members of the society (Eremie 2018).

It is believed that guidance and counselling services in school shall develop, assess and improve educational programmes; enhance teaching and improve the competence of the teacher and reduce cost for the children (Ebizie, 2016) Career counsellors on the other hand do offer a wide range of career related programmes to students which are aimed at assisting students to plan their career, make informed decision and choose a career which will land him or her into the right vocation so as to make students enjoy their work (Eremie, 2018). The strategic position of counsellors in secondary schools enables them in assisting to mould the students' educational, emotional, behavioural and psychological challenges. This counselling service is done in tandem with other school personnel (Orewere, 2012). Again Eremie, (2018), posit career guidance and counselling makes it possible for an individual to see and explore his or her unlimited endowed options. it is an undeniable fact that the major service areas of guidance and counselling are, educational guidance and counselling which assists students in their choices of career, vocational guidance and counselling which assists the individual to choose and prepare for an occupation that is compatible with his interests and aptitudes, and personal and social guidance and counselling which assists the individual to behave appropriately in relation to other members of the society (Eremie, 2018). It is believed that guidance and counselling services in school shall develop, assess and improve educational programmes; enhance teaching and improve the competence of the teacher and reduce cost for the children (Ebizie, 2016). According to Orewere, (2012), for guidance and counselling to be effective, there must be a series of programmed activities to help students develop a positive attitude towards it. This enables students with information and guidance with regards to personal, academic and career option. Hence, guidance and counseling play a vital role in the career choice of the students.

Education therefore, to become functional and effective for individual and national development guidance and counselor has to be incorporated in our institutions. At the secondary school level, student's needs a lot of information on their career choice to enable them perform better in the world of work. But unfortunately, the lack of guidance and counseling services on the career choice of secondary school students create problem to them. They found it difficult to select the subjects that will lead them into choosing their subject choice due to relationship between career and subjects. The lack of guidance and counseling services made the students ignorance about the world of work. The services available to them are not competent enough to give the students adequate information on their career choice. They lack some accommodation for guidance and counselor services some of the teachers were



very uncooperative.

the problem of this study is that some secondary school students are not properly guided due to lack or no guidance and counseling services, counseling services are not encouraged and even where they exist, they lack professional counsellors. Also, inadequate information to guide students on different career prospects. Authors such as (Eyo, 2013; Eremie, 2018) concur that personal-social, educational background, physical, and economic factors affect students career choices. It was observed that few principals and teachers have shown concern but still forget the major role the professional counsellors in secondary school play. Students find it difficult to make wise career decision, this study therefore attempts to look at the effectiveness of the guidance services on career choice of senior secondary students.

Method

This section of the study described the following: Research design, Areas of the study, Population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, instrument for data collection, validation of the research instrument, method of data collection, and method of data analysis.

Research Design: Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. Descriptive survey design according to Eze and Abugu (2013), is a method of collecting data using checklist questionnaires and rating scales. This method suits the research topic because it made use of questionnaire for data collection.

Area of the Study: The study will be carried out in 14 selected Public Secondary schools in Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra State, situated at the centre town of Onitsha. The population of the study are students, that they communicate in English and Igbo languages, and reside in Onitsha Urban.

Population of the Study: The population of the study comprised all the fourteen (14) public secondary school in Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra State with the total number of 14,469 students.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: The sample of the study was 50 secondary school students (20 males & 30 females) drawn from Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra State. The stratified random sampling technique was employed in obtaining the sample. To achieve this, four students were obtained from each secondary school. In each of the schools the students were stratified according to gender, language, occupation and location.

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed titled Influence of Guidance and Counselling Services and Students' Career Choice (IGCSSCC). The questionnaire was divided in two parts: Part A and Part B. Part A contained questions on personal data about each respondent while Part B contained other sets of items on different factors which can influence the respondents. The questionnaire is structured on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D).

Validation of the Instrument: The research instrument was validated by three lecturers in the Faculty of Education, two experts in Educational Foundations and one expert in measurement and evaluation, all in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University. These experts pointed out the research items contained in the questionnaire that were not well constructed and with the help of the validators, the researcher modified it to suit the research objectives.

Reliability of the Instrument: The reliability of the instrument was pilot-tested on 20 students from Onitsha South Local Government Area, Anambra State. After the data collected were



analysed the reliability index yielded 0.72, 0.78, and 0.69 for the three sections A,B,C respectively using Cronbach Alpha formula. These were considered adequate for the study.

Method of Data Collection: A total number of 360 questionnaires were designed and administered on among the respondents in five secondary school selected among the 14 public secondary schools in Onitsha-urban. Copies of the questionnaire were given to the students to complete and return immediately. The arithmetic value for the four points scaling is shown below:

Strongly Agree	(SA)	4
Agree	(A)	3
Disagree	(D)	2
Strongly Disagree	(SD)	1

Method of Data Analysis: The data collected were statistically analyzed thus: the research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation.

Result

Research Question 1: How guidance and counselling services influence student career choice of secondary school students in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on how Guidance and Counseling Services Influence student Career Choice of secondary school students in Anambra State

S/no	Items statement	X	Sd	Decision
1	Guidance and counseling help student to maintain good study habit	2.59	1.99	High extent
2	It prepares student for academic challenges by relating education agendas to their success in future.	2.78	1.40	High Extent
3	It provides support to teachers by serving an important part of the complete team that addresses the education goals and need of their student.	2.99	1.55	High Extent
4	Educational counsellors gather and share resources with teachers to help the staff develop their skills in classroom management and teaching effectiveness.	2.54	1.39	High Extent
5	It makes teaching and learning easy	3.51	1.50	Very high Extent
	Grand Scores	2.88	1.57	High Extent

From table 1 above, the mean score of 2.59 and standard deviation score of 1.99 implies that guidance counselor helps students to maintain good study habit. The mean score of 2.78 and standard deviation score of 1.40 entails that it prepares students for academic challenges by relating educational agenda to their success in the future, The mean score of 2.99 and standard deviation score of 1.55 provides that it provides support to teachers by serving an important part of the complete team that addresses the educational goals and needs of their students. The mean score of 2.54 and standard deviation score of 1.39 implies that guidance counsellors gather and share resources with teachers to help the staff develop their skills in classroom management and teaching effectiveness, the mean score of 3.51 and standard deviation score of 1.50 implies that it makes teaching and learning easy, while the grand mean score of 2.88 and standard deviation score of 1.57 provides that guidance and counselling services influence student career choice of secondary school students in Anambra State.



Research Question 2: How does counselling services influence career choice of secondary school students in Anambra State.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Influence student Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Anambra State.

s/no	Items statement	X	Sd	Decision
6	Vocation counselling makes student motivated learners student learners and facilitate their exploration of careers.	3.55	1.41	Very High Extent
7	It prepares student for career challenges by relating vocation agenda as to their success in the future	3.50	1.72	Very High Extent
8	It identifies strengths and weaknesses of the students.	2.50	1.50	Very High Extent
9	It explores option for students.	2.50	1.41	Very High Extent
10	It identifies the individual set goals.	3.20	1.91	very High Extent
Grand scores		3.05	1.91	High Extent

From table 2 above, the mean score of 3.55 and standard deviation score of 1.41 implies that vocational counselling makes students motivated learners and facilitate their exploration of careers., the mean score of 3.50 and standard deviation score of 1.72 entails that it prepares students for career challenges by relating vocational agenda as to their success in the future, the mean score of 2.50 and standard deviation score of 1.50, provides that it identifies strengths and weaknesses of the students, the mean score of 2.50 and standard deviation score of 1.41 implies that it explores options for the students, the mean score of 3.20 and standard deviation score of 1.91 implies that it explores options for the students, while the grand mean score of 3.05 and standard deviation score of 1.59 provides that vocational counselling services influence student career choice of secondary school students in Anambra State.

Research Question 3: How does a personal social counselling service influence student career choice of secondary school students in Anambra State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the influence of Personal Social Counselling Services Influence Student Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Anambra State

s/no	Items Statement	X	Sd	Decision
11	Personal social counselling brings about better expression and management of emotions, including anger.	3.61	1.53	High Extent
12	Increase confidence and decision- making skills	2.65	1.30	High Extent
13	It gives the ability to change self-defeating behaviours/ habit	2.54	1.46	High Extent
14	Provides better expression and management of emotions, including anger	2.60	2.01	High Extent
15	It relives individuals from depression, anxiety or other mental conditions.	3.05	0.94	High Extent
Grand scores		2.89	1.45	High Extent

From the table above, the mean score of 3.61 and standard deviation score of 1.53 implies that personal social counselling brings about better expression and management of emotions, including anger, the mean score of 2.65 and standard deviation score of 1.30 entails that personal social counselling brings about better expression and management of emotions, including anger, the mean score of 2.54 and standard deviation score of 1.46 provides that it gives the ability to change self-defeating behaviors/habit, the mean score of 2.60 and standard deviation score of 0.94 implies that it provides better expression and management of emotions, including anger, the mean score of 3.05 and standard deviation score of 0.94 implies it relieves individuals from depression, anxiety or other mental health conditions, while the grand mean



score of 2.89 and standard deviation score of 1.45 provides that personal social counselling services influence student career choice of secondary school students in Anambra State.

Discussion of Findings

It was also found that there is no significant difference in the opinion of students on how guidance and counselling services influence career choice of secondary school students in Anambra State. Egbochukwu (2011) supported this finding and asserted that when considering the educational stage at which choice is to be made, secondary school is the best option. The tertiary level of education is the level of education at which students limit themselves to a specific area of proficiency based on the foundation level while in the secondary school level. It is on this premises that this study conclusively maintains that great majority of the students are deeply and highly influenced early in their lives as to career choice and most of these students choose jobs without relating them to their interests, satisfaction and capacity to cope with the nature of the job.

Furthermore, Navin (2019) opined that guidance and counselling help students to know the value of education, educate students and parents about the various courses in education. counselors suggest the stream of course or subject, and assist students at all levels, from elementary school to college, listen to students' concerns about academic, emotional or social problems. Help students process their problems and plan goals and action, and finally, mediate conflict between students and teachers.

The study also revealed that vocational counselling services significantly influences career choice and academic achievement of secondary school students in Anambra State. In line with this findings Seligman (2010) opined in his study that vocational counselling is a set of services designed to develop the skills and ability to practice a vocation in a productive way. Those born with physical or cognitive impairments are taught how to perform in the workplace taking into consideration their abilities and challenges.

It is a process during which a vocational counsellor helps their clients decide, in an aware and independent way, which profession or occupation they want (Issa and Nwalo, 2018). Finally, it was found in this study that there is no significant difference in the opinion of students on the extent to which personal social counselling services influence career choice and academic achievement of secondary school students in Anambra State.

In personal social counselling, individual counseling (sometimes called psychotherapy, talk therapy, or treatment) is a process through which clients work one-on-one with a trained mental health clinician in a safe, caring, and confidential environment (Olamide & Olawaiye, 2013), and that individual counseling is counseling focused on the individual's immediate or near future concerns.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the major aim of guidance and counselling service is to encourage students' academic, social, emotional and personal development. To reach this aim, it helps students to understand themselves better and find effective remedy to their daily problems.



The guidance and counselling services in the school refers to the range of interventions provided to students to enable them to make choices in the key areas of their personal/social lives, education and career.

In other words, guidance and counselling services such as educational, vocational and personal social counselling in schools assist students to harmonize their abilities, interests and values and thereby helping them to develop their full potentials. Counselling is a collaborative process that involves the development of a confidential professional relationship that focuses on personal problems.

Recommendations

From the findings of the study, it is recommended that;

1. Schools should be supplied with sufficient manpower in terms of trained educational counsellors who will be able to guide, direct and assist the students towards achieving their ultimate goal in life.
2. Schools should also provide vocational counselling sessions and career programme for the students, parents and guardians and giving them information regarding the capabilities, intellectual abilities and limitation of their children as well as the need to choose a particular vocation in life.
3. Career clubs should also be introduced in schools which would make available personal social counselling services, career literature and talks from employers of labour.

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