COUNSELLING SERVICES AND CAREER CHOICE AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN UYO EDUCATION ZONE IN AKWA IBOM STATE

By

OFFIONG JAMES BASSEY *

JESSIE IME EDET **

* Secretary, Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
** Counsellor, Secondary Education Board, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

The concept of Counselling, Career Choice, Occupational Information, Appraisal Service, Vocational Guidance, Educational Guidance, and Career Day/Week were reviewed. A random sampling of 490 students selected from ten secondary schools was used. Statistics used were Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression. It was found out that Occupational Information, Appraisal Service, Vocation Guidance, Educational Guidance, and Career Day/Week have significant relationship with Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students.

Keywords: Education, Guidance and Counselling, Career Choice, Vocational Guidance, Career Day/Week.

INTRODUCTION

Our ancestors tried their possible best to help others succeed in diverse ways, but they were unable to achieve the much needed maximum self-development and self-fulfilment as entrenched in the National Policy on Education (2004). This needed goal of education cannot be achieved without Guidance and Counselling in the school system. However, George (2004) opined that the main purpose of Guidance and Counselling is firmly rooted in the assumption that individuals left alone on their own may not be able to understand themselves and their world to facilitate meaningful and realistic decision-making.

It is also assumed that through Guidance and Counselling Services, an individual achieves greater awareness not only of who he is, but of who he can become. Guidance and Counselling therefore involves a conscious concern for the present and future life of an individual. This is why counselling is needed in schools to assist students to explore and understand themselves so that they can become self-directing individuals.

In the past, career choices were less complex. However, the problems faced by both parents and students in this issue put them in the state of dilemma with the choice of career, the one that can give satisfaction to one's character, determine one's social status, income, style of life, in fact, the one that can make full totality of a person.

Olayinka in Ipaye (1983) maintained that unguided students are prone to make subjects combination error without considering their interest, abilities and aptitudes, and without thinking of their future chosen careers. Some students still make wrong subjects combination, hence, it becomes difficult for them to further their studies (Olayinka, 1983; Ipaye, 1983). Super (1973) also stated that in expressing a vocational preference, a person should necessarily put into consideration his idea of the kind of person he understands himself to be and also the kind of occupation that would not run counter to his real self. It is believed that if one's occupation is at variance with the individual's self, the actualization of his potentials would be very difficult. Unfortunately, most students are neither well informed about occupations nor do they attempt to understand themselves, their interests and abilities properly. The chasm between self understanding and career understanding supports the need for guidance and counseling service in the educational setting. Based on the

foregoing, research questions and research hypotheses were formulated on the relationship between counseling services and career choice to guide this study.

1. Statement of the Study

There is great need for counseling in Nigerian Schools today than ever before. The result of this study will help to shape the future of our youths in the society. Career counseling could be an intervening variable that impact self actualization and job satisfaction.

2. Statement of the Problem

Students often make career choice based on outside influences not matched to their aptitudes or analysis of self actualization. Sometimes, parents and peer impact career choice. In addition, unrealistic financial goals can guide their career choices. Often graduates find themselves in job they were not properly prepared for. In such cases, job satisfaction and self-fulfilment are rarely achieved.

According to Ekpo (2007) in a situation where an adolescent belongs to a group that does not attaché due importance to high academic achievement, this can contribute to low motivation to achieve in school. Every attempt should be made to widen the clients' knowledge about occupation. Unless this is done the individual's occupational choice could be seriously restricted by his/her ignorance of existing job opportunities.

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship between counseling services and career choice among senior secondary school students in Uyo Education Zone, in Akwa Ibom State.

3. Research Design

Ex-post facto survey design was used for the study. The design involves the use of questionnaire to determine the opinions, attitudes preferences, and perceptions of persons of interest to the research.

3.1 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- Is there a relationship between Occupational Information and Career Choice among students?
- Is there a relationship between Appraisal Service and

Career Choice among students?
- Is there a relationship between Vocational Guidance and Career Choice among students?
- Is there a relationship between Educational Guidance and Career Choice among students?
- Is there a relationship between Career Day/Week and Career Choice among students?
- Is there a relationship among Joint Effect of Occupational Information, Appraisal Service, and Career Choice among students?

3.2 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated in the null form to guide the study.

Hypothesis One:

Occupational Information is not significantly related to Career Choice of Students.

Hypothesis Two:

There is no significant relationship between Appraisal Service and Career Choice among Students.

Hypothesis Three:

Vocational Guidance has no significant relationship with Career Choice among Students.

Hypothesis Four:

There is no significant relationship between Education Guidance in School subjects and Career Choice among Students.

Hypothesis Five:

There is no significant relationship between Career Day/Week and Career Choice among Students.

Hypothesis Six:

There is no significant joint effect of occupational Information, Appraisal Service, Vocational Guidance, Educational Service, and Career Day/Week on Career Choice among Students.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

The study population was stratified into Uyo Urban, part of Itu, Ibesikpo Asutan, and Uruan Local Government Areas, Nigeria. The total number of public secondary schools in the study area was twenty, out of the number, ten schools

were used in the study.

To select fifteen percent of the estimated population, simple random sampling technique known as "hat and drawn" was used. Numbers were written on pieces of paper and rolled into balls. The balls were put in a basket and shaken to mix thoroughly so that each has an equal chance of being selected. A ball was picked at a time; after the remaining balls were mixed again before the next sample was drawn. In each school, boys were selected first before girls. The selected students formed the subject of the study. The selection yielded a total sample size of 490 subjects made up of 245 boys and 245 girls.

3.4 Instruments

The researcher developed an instrument called Counselling and Service and Career Choice Questionnaire (CSCCQ). The instrument has three sections: Section A sought for personal/demographic data from the respondents, Section B sought for information on counseling services in Secondary School while Section C measured Career Choice among Students. There were thirty-five items altogether in the instrument.

4. Data Analysis

The relationship between Occupational Information and Career Choice among Students is shown in Table 1.

The value of the correlation coefficient (0.5726) showed that there exists an average positive relationship between Occupational Information and Career choice among students.

The relationship between Appraisal Service and Career Choice among students is illustrated in Table 2.

The value of r (0.7466) indicated that there is a high positive relationship between Appraisal Service and Career Choice.

The relationship between Vocational Guidance and Career Choice among students is illustrated in Table 3.

The value of r (0.6656) showed that there was an average

Variable	$\overline{X}$	SD	r
Occupational Information	11.22	5.21	0.5726
Career Choice	29.46	4.98	

N (Total Number of Students)=490

Table 1. Mean X, Standard Deviation SD, and Correlation Coefficient (r) for Occupational Information and Career Choice

Variable	$\overline{X}$	SD	r
Appraisal Service	11.19	4.67	0.7466
Career Choice	29.46	4.98	

N (Total Number of Students)=490

Table 2. Mean X, Standard Deviation SD, and Correlation Coefficient (r) for Appraisal Service and Career Choice

Variable	$\overline{X}$	SD	r
Vocational Guidance	11.27	5.01	0.6656
Career Choice	29.46	4.98	

N (Total Number of Students)=490

Table 3. Mean X, Standard Deviation SD, and Correlation Coefficient for Vocational Guidance and Career Choice

positive relationship between Vocational Guidance and Career Choice.

The relationship between Educational Guidance and Career Choice among students, correlation coefficient was used in answering the question and it is shown in Table 4.

The value of r (0.820) revealed that there is a high positive relationship between Educational Guidance and Career Choice among students.

The relationship between Career day/week and Career Choice among students. is illustrated in Table 5.

The value of r (0.7105) revealed that there is a high positive relationship between career day/week and career choice among students.

4.1 Hypothesis Analysis of Data

4.1.1 Hypothesis One

Occupational information does not significantly relate to career choice among students.

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used in

Variable	$\overline{X}$	SD	r
Educational Guidance	9.41	4.36	0.820
Career Choice	29.46	4.98	

N (Total Number of Students)=490

Table 4. Mean X, Standard Deviation SD, and Correlation Coefficient for Educational Guidance and Career Choice

Variable	$\overline{X}$	SD	r
Career Day/Week	11.02	4.64	0.7105
Career Choice	29.46	4.98	

N (Total Number of Students)=490

Table 5. Mean X, Standard Deviation SD, and Correlation Coefficient for Career day/week and Career Choice

testing the hypothesis and summary data as shown in Table 6.

The null hypothesis was rejected since the computed r (0.5726) was greater than the critical r (0.088) at df of 488 and 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, occupational information significantly relates to career choice.

4.1.2 Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between appraisal service and career choice among students.

PPMC was used to test the hypothesis and the summary data are shown in Table 7.

Since the computed r (0.7466) is greater than the critical r (0.088) at df of 488 and 0.05 level of significant; the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, appraisal service is significantly related to career choice.

4.1.3 Hypothesis Three

Vocational Guidance has no significant relationship with career choice among students.

PPMC was used to test the hypothesis and the summary data are shown in Table 8.

The null hypothesis was rejected since the computed r (0.6656) was greater than the critical r (0.088) at df of 488 and 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, vocational guidance is significantly related to career choice.

4.1.4 Hypothesis Four

There is no significant relationship between Educational Guidance and Career Choice among senior secondary school students.

Variable	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	df	r
Occupational Information (X)	5497	64988	168287	488	0.5726
Career Choice (Y)	14434	462350			

N (Total Number of Students)=490; *significant P< 0.05

Table 6. PPMC Analysis of Relationship between Occupational Information and Career Choice

Variable	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	df	r
Appraisal Service (X)	5484	64698	169838	488	0.7466
Career Choice (Y)	14434	462350			

N (Total Number of Students)=490; *significant P< 0.05

Table 7. PPMC Analysis of Relationship between Appraisal Service and Career Choice

Variable	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	df	r
Vocational Guidance (X)	5523	66266	171036	488	0.6656
Career Choice (Y)	14434	462350			

N (Total Number of Students)=490; *significant P< 0.05

Table 8. PPMC Analysis of Relationship between Vocational Guidance and Career Choice

PPMC was used in testing the hypothesis and summary data a shown in Table 9.

The null hypothesis was rejected since the computed r (0.820) was greater than the critical r (0.088) df of 488 and 0.05 level of significance. Thus Educational Guidance is significantly related to career choice.

4.1.5 Hypothesis Five

There is no significant relationship between Career Day/Week and Career Choice among senior secondary school students.

PPMC was used in testing the hypothesis and the summary data are shown in Table 10.

The null hypothesis was rejected since the computed r (0.7105) was greater than the critical r (0.088) at df of 488 and 0.05 level of significance. The Career day/Week is significantly related to Career Choice.

4.1.6 Hypothesis Six

There is no significant joint influence of Occupational Information, Appraisal Service, Vocational Guidance, Educational Guidance, and Career Day/Week on Career Choice.

Variable	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	df	r
Educational Guidance (X)	4612	59007	155784	488	0.820
Career Choice (Y)	14434	462350			

N (Total Number of Students)=490; *significant P< 0.05

Table 9. PPMC Analysis of Relationship between Educational Guidance Career Choice

Variable	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	df	r
Career Day/Week (X)	5399	64978	169188	488	0.7105
Career Choice (Y)	14434	462350			

N (Total Number of Students)=490; *significant P< 0.05

Table 10. PPMC Analysis of Relationship between Career Day/Week and Career Choice

Multiple Regression was used in testing the hypothesis and the summary data are shown in Table 11.

Since the computed F (12.00) was greater than the critical F (2.21) at df of 5.484 and 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there exists a joint effect of the independent variables upon the dependent variables. The value of R- square of 0.4173 indicated that the independent variables jointly accounted for 41.52% of variation of Career Choice among students.

Degree of freedom (df) is the number of values in the final calculation of a statistic that are free to vary.

Sum of Square (SS) is used to find the function which best fits from the data.

Mean Squares (MS) are estimates of variance across group. They are used in analysis of variance and are calculated as a sum of square divided by appropriate df.

F value is the statistics used to decide whether the model as a whole has statistically significant predictive capability, that is, whether, the regression SS is big enough, considering the number of variables needed to achieve it.

5. Discussion of Findings

5.1 Occupational Information and Career Choice

From the data analysis in Table 6, the result is significant since the calculated (r) value (0.5726) is greater than the critical (r) value 0.088 at 0.05 level of significance with 488 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative. The significance of the result means that occupational information has relationship with the Career Choice among Senior Secondary School students. This points to the fact that the level of understanding an individual has about any occupation is based on the quality of information they has obtained about that occupation. Hoppock (1967) asserted occupational information as any and all kinds of information regarding any position, job or occupation provided only that the information is potentially useful to a person who is choosing the occupation. Enhancing this observation, Oladele (1978) advised Counsellors to provide the students with accurate, reliable, and comprehensive facts about occupation or career so that they can make wise decisions and choices.

5.2 Appraisal Service and Career Choice

From the Analysis in Table 7, the result is significant due to the fact that the calculated (r) value 0.7466 was greater than the critical (r) value 0.088 at 0.05 level of significance with 488 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative. The result shows that appraisal service has relationship with career choice among students.

This result is in consonance with the confirmation made by Okafor (1991) when he said, Appraisal is not just for formality, but for general purpose, such as prediction, selection, classification, evaluation, and guidance and counselling. This really shows that appraisal service, if done properly in school, can give students wider understanding about their interest, abilities, and aptitudes and therefore help them choose their career accordingly.

5.3 Vocational Guidance and Career Choice

From the data analysis in Table 8, the result is significant since the obtained (r) value 0.6656 is greater than the critical (r) value 0.088 at 0.05 level of significance with 488 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis was dropped in favour of the alternative. The significance of this result is that students who receive vocational guidance have the benefit of making wise Career Choice.

Ekanem and Eneh (2005) wrote that vocational guidance assists students to make realistic and appropriate vocational decisions based on their abilities and interests. Also Vaughan (1970) in support of this finding stated that Vocational Guidance is helping people to choose work in which they will be reasonably contented and successful within the limits of their abilities.

Source of Variable	df	SS	MS	F
Due to regression	5	798.22	159.64	12.00
Residual	484	6438.8113.30		
Total	498	218315.35		

*Significant P< 0.05

Multiple R   = .6460
      R^2 = .4173
Adjusted R^2 = .4152
Standard error of Estimate = 4.96

Table 11. PPMC Analysis of Joint Effect of Occupational Information, Appraisal Service, Vocational Guidance, Educational Service, and Career Day/Week on Career Choice

5.4 Educational Guidance and Career Choice

From the analysis of data in Table 9, the result is significant since the calculated (r) value 0.820 is greater than the critical (r) value 0.088 at 0.05 level of significance with 488 degrees of freedom. The hull hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative. This result shows that educational guidance has relationship with career choice among students.

Anwana (2005) noted that a combination of secondary school subjects must be offered to students to lay a good foundation for a particular occupation later in life. In essence, educational guidance helps students choose subjects based on their interest and aptitude, and that will aid them in their future career choice.

5.5 Career Day/Week and Career Choice

Table 10 shows that the result is significant since the calculated (r) value 0.7105 is greater than the critical (r) value 0.088 at 0.05 level of significance with 488 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis was dropped in favour of the alternative. The result shows that career day/week has relationship with career choice among students.

This fact is supported by Ipaye (1983) by saying that career day/week creates awareness and understanding on hidden facts about career and therefore exposes individuals to varieties of choice to make.

5.6 Joint Effect of Independent Variables and Career Choice

From the analysis of data in Table 11, the computed F (12.00) is greater than critical F (2.21) at degrees of freedom of 484 and at 0.05 level of significance. The result was significant and so the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative. The result shows that independent variables in this study have relationship with career choice among students.

6. Recommendations

Since counselling is a helping profession, counsellors should help students individually and in groups to be aware of work related skills and to understand themselves in terms of ability, interest and aptitude.

The following recommendations are made:

- School counsellors should ensure that students are availed with enough occupational information. With adequate information at their disposal, they can make wise decisions and choice.

- School counselors should conduct appraisal service on students to gain wider understanding about their interests, abilities and aptitudes and also guide them on their choice of career accordingly.

- Counsellors should render vocational guidance to the students by helping them to make a choice of career in which they will be reasonably contented and successful within the limits of their abilities, for it is only a guided student than can make a wise career choice.

- Counsellors must offer educational guidance to students on subject combinations to lay a good foundation for their future career taking into consideration the students interests and aptitudes. This information should be incorporated during their orientation programme for the students.

- Counsellors should organize a career day/week in their respective schools to create awareness and understanding on hidden facts about career and there the students are exposed to varieties of choice to make.

- Government should train more counsellors and send them to schools to guide and help the students make realistic career choice.

- School Administrators should create conducive atmosphere and support counsellors to discharge their duties effectively.

Conclusion

Based on the findings in the study, the researchers wish to draw the following conclusions:

- Career Choice of students is remarkably related to Counselling. That is, good Guidance and Counselling in schools help the students to make realistic career choice.

- Occupational information contributes immensely to career choice of students. That is, the level of understanding an individual has about any occupation is determined by the quality of information he has obtained about that occupation.

- Through appraisal data, the counsellor can predict students' future and guide them towards that direction.

- Vocational Guidance in school assists students to make realistic/ appropriate career choice and also realize their potentials.

- It is imperative to say that occupation and choice of subjects complement each other, such that without one the other cannot develop itself.

Students should be exposed to Guidance and Counselling services including reliable and accurate information about career early in school so that they can use it in career planning.

Field trips, career week, career day, film show, conference and workshop should be organized to students both in and outside the school to help them have a fair knowledge about different types of work available in the world of work. Counsellors should understand that students who lack inspiration for work related activities should be encouraged for effective development.

Suggestion for Further Research

For further research, the following topics are suggested:

- Factors that affect career choice of girls in Akwa Ibom State.

- Family influence on career choice of adolescent in Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State.

References

[1]. Afudo, A. M. O. (1991). *The Role of the Counsellor in Selecting School Subjects,* Owerri. International Universities Press.

[2]. Anwana, U. I. (2005). *Guidance and Counselling: An Information Handbook for Students, Teachers, Parents and Professional Helpers, Enugu*. Academic Publishing Company.

[3]. Denga, D. I. (1990). *Educational and Vocational Guidance in Nigerian Secondary Schools.* Calabar: Rapid Educational Publishers Ltd.

[4]. Ekanem, I. B., & Eneh, G. A. (2005). *Introduction to Theory and Practice of Guidance and Counselling.* Uyo: Inela Ventures and Publishers Ltd.

[5]. Ekpo, S. S. (2007). *Essential of Guidance & Counselling. A Fundamental Approach Lagos* : John Lad Publishers Ltd.

[6]. Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2004). *National Policy on Education* (4th Ed.) Lagos NERDC Press.

[7]. George, I. N. (2004). *Guidance and Counselling for Teachers: An Electric Approach*. University of Uyo, Published Text.

[8]. Hoppock, R. (1967). *Occupational Information (3rd Edition)*. New York, Mcgraw Hill Bool Company.

[9]. Ipaye, T. (1983). *Guidance and Counselling Practices*. Ile-Ife University Press.

[10]. Johnson, L. S. (2000). The relevance of school to career: A study in student awareness. *Journal of Career Development,* 26(94), 263-276.

[11]. Nwachukwu, D. N. (2000). Guidance and Counselling fracticum in Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Schools. *A Guide to School Guidance and Counsellors: Methods, Skills, Techniques and Competencies.* Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers.

[12]. Okafor, A. O. (1991). *Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling in Guidance and Counselling:* A Realistic Approach. In Unachukwu, G. C., & Igborgbor, G. C. (Ed), Owerri, International University Press.

[13]. Oladele, J. O (1978). *Guidance and Counselling: A Fundamental Approach*. Lagos. John Lad Publishers Ltd.

[14]. Olayinka, M. S. (1983). Job aspirations of the youth and the educational provision in Lagos. *West African Journal of Education*. 28(3), 41-49.

[15]. Super, D. (1973). *Vocational Choice: Background Factors* (Vol. 9). Encyclopedia of Education.

[16]. Vaughan, T. O. (1970). *Educational and Vocational Guidance Today*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Offiong James Bassey is currently working as a Secretary in the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and had served in several other sensitive Departments in the University of Uyo, Akwalbom State, Nigeria. She is a renowned Counsellor and had taught in a Private School for some years. She is also a member of Counselling Association of Nigerian (CASSON) and Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). She had her M.A. (Ed.) in Guidance and Counselling. She specializes in Educational Counselling.

Jessie Ime Edet is currently working as a Counsellor in Secondary Education Board, Nigeria. She is a Counsellor and an Educator. She had taught in several Schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. She had her Master's Degree in Guidance and Counselling from University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. She is a member of Counselling Association of Nigerian (CASSON) and Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). She specializes in Vocational Counselling.