

RELEVANCE OF CAREER COUNSELLING IN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS FOR JOB CREATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Career guidance and counselling is an important avenue through which students acquire the ability to make rational career decisions. This is because during the career counselling process, all aspects of an individual's life are considered as an integral part of the career making and planning. The main purpose of the study was to assess the relevance of career counselling on secondary school students' development of entrepreneurial skills for job creation and National development. The study was guided by two research questions and one hypothesis which was formulated based on the purpose of the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and the area of the study was Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Self structured and validated questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. Thirty counsellors were purposively drawn; mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while chi-square was used to determine the level of significance at 0.05. The results revealed that sales and personal maturity skills, which include self-awareness, accountability, emotional skills and creative skills contributes most to National development. Also career counselling information dissemination could teach principles of entrepreneurial decision-making and planning skills. Conclusions were drawn and the study recommends engagement of enough qualified and experienced teachers in our schools so that the students will be taught the requisite skills that will enable them firm effectively when they are out from school.

Keywords: career counselling; secondary school; entrepreneurial skills; job creation; National development.

Introduction

Career is a chosen life time job one is interested in and has the ability and skills to perform such a job. Not all students in secondary and tertiary schools are aware of which careers they should choose. Guiding this group of students through career choices is the duty of the counsellor to help each student find their right career, more so for development of entrepreneurial skills and job creation (Magaji & Magaji, 2014). Counseling interventions have been defined in professional literature as a unique interrelationship between a client and a counselor, which aims to create a

change and a growth in social adjustment, Personal and professional development. During the career counseling process, the counselor has the responsibility to redirect the client towards change in personal and entrepreneurial skills development. This paradigm shift is essential to avoid being jobless after leaving school, it is also important that secondary and tertiary schools prepare their products against any odds in the world of work by providing them with relevant entrepreneurial skills.

Entrepreneurship is the process by which individuals pursue opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control (Muyil, 2011). The process is made possible when the individual has some relevant skills needed for a particular entrepreneurship. Skills required for any entrepreneurship are interest, foresight, abilities, capabilities and competences necessary for advancement in the profession (Magaji & Magaji, 2014). A skill is defined as the ability to do a thing very well (Hornby, 2006). It should be said to be an ability to exhibit some degree of competence in performing an act, through the use of knowledge and required skills. Skills are competences or attributes necessary for any venture. Skills must be acquired through formal and non-formal means (Magaji & Magaji, 2014). They are prerequisites for entry and success in any career venture. The European Commission (2009) in its contribution said that entrepreneurship skills are potentialities acquired and developed through relevant training to demonstrate competence.

Counselling plays a vital role in creating psychologically conducive environment that engenders and fosters entrepreneurship spirit in the young ones (Obi, 2016; Bhuyan, 2007). The counsellor's role has been identified as working on students' mindsets and stimulating their interest in self-employment and business creation as well as emphasizing on the unlimited opportunities in the informal sector in the 21st century. If counselling for entrepreneurship is provided, entrepreneurship skills can be grasped and then honed (Obi, 2013; Obi, 2016).

This study advocates that teacher counsellors assist secondary school students with entrepreneurial career inclination in order to facilitate intentional choices regarding occupations based on their interests, skills, projected job growth, and decline. Career counselors could administer various assessments to help clients discover their career skills and interests and new career possibilities (Wood & Hays, 2013). The students might also consider the different possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) they could become depending on their choices (Pisarik & Shoffner, 2009). To facilitate this process, teacher counselors have the option to use Possible Selves Mapping (Shepard & Marshall, 1999) with high school graduates to help them discover more about their identity and improve career decision making (Michel, 2013). This assessment encourages clients to think about who they could become, hope to become, and fear they might become in the future (Shepard & Marshall, 1999). It is important for high school students to receive realistic information about their skills, interests, and the job market so that they can make effective career decisions about which occupations to pursue or avoid.

This study was anchored on Career construction theory (Savickas, 2005) and McClelland's (1961) theory of need for achievement and goal setting. McClelland argues in his book "The Achieving society", that the drive towards achievement is the basis of activity for most entrepreneurs. From the view expressed, the initiatives, innovation, opportunities and proactiveness which are basic entrepreneurial skills form the basic spring board for this study.

Additionally, the career construction theory was adopted to assist secondary school leavers improve adaptability during career transitions. In career construction theory, teacher counsellors use the career style interview (Savickas, 2005) to encourage the client tell his or her story. Throughout this narrative process, clients to gain awareness about life themes (e.g., aspects that give an individual meaning and purpose), vocational identity (e.g., abilities, skills, needs, values, and interests), and career adaptability (e.g., coping skills to overcome career challenges).

McClelland and career construction theories was therefore adopted because the current study advocates equipping the youths with needed and necessary entrepreneurial skills that can help them to strive for excellence in order to counteract the attitude of the society towards them. This approach is helpful with high school graduates striving to construct their identities and discover jobs that may be enjoyable. By gaining self-awareness and enhancing career adaptability, high school graduates are better equipped to make career-related decisions.

Statement of the Problem

Unemployment is one of the major issues affecting Nigeria's National development. The rate of unemployment among the youths has increased during last few years due the fallout from the economic challenges. Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) reported a youth population of 80 million representing 60 percent of the total population of the country. Also, 64 million of them are unemployed, while 1.6 million are underemployed. The problems created by unemployment ranges from idleness, gossiping, stealing, robbery, prostitution, money launderings, political thuggery, insurgency, kidnapping, cultism, and many more (Chiekezie, Nzewi & Erhinmwionose, 2016).

The issue of unemployment was further aggravated by the fact that Nigeria education system as inherited from colonial master does not equip her graduates with the skills needed to create jobs. The government in her bid to reduce unemployment introduced entrepreneurship in the Senior Secondary School curriculum with effect from the 2011 academic year. To what extent this curriculum will be achieved depends on the level of sensitization through effective career counselling. The problem of this study therefore is to assess the perception of secondary school counsellors on relevance of career counselling information dissemination in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills as an antidote to job creation and National development.

Research questions

1. What are the relevance of entrepreneurial skills in job creation and National development?
2. What are the relevance of career counseling information dissemination in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills?

Research Hypothesis

One null hypothesis guided the study:

H₀₁: Career counselling information dissemination has no significant relevance in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used in order to carry out the study and the research was carried out in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Awka South Local Government Area (LGA) is made up of nine towns, namely, Amawbia, Awka, Ezinato, Isiagu, Mbaukwu, Nibo, Nise, Okpuno and Umuawulu.

A validated questionnaire was used for data collection, the instrument contained ten items on a four point scale of strongly agree (SA = 4 points), Agree (A=3 points), Disagree (D=2 points) and strongly disagree (SD=1 point). The researcher administered 30 copies of the questionnaire to the selected counsellors. They were collected from the respondents almost immediately recording 100% return rate.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used Mean & Standard Deviation answering the research question. The relevance point for the items stood at 2.5 Mean score equally (ie SA⁴, SA³, SD², D¹) totalling 10. Therefore Mean score equal $\frac{10}{4} = 2.5$. Also Chi square statistics was also used to test hypothesis.

Results

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses on relevance of entrepreneurial skills in job creation and National development

S/N	Items	<i>fx</i>	Mean \bar{x}	Std Dev	Decision
1	Efficiency and technical Skills which are those skills necessary to produce the business product or service contributes to National development.	91	3.03	0.98	Relevant
2	Leadership and managerial Skills, which are essential to the day to-day management and administration of the company contributes to National development	67	2.23	1.5	Not-relevant

3	Technical and communication Skills, which involve recognizing economic opportunities and acting effectively on them contributes to National development	94	3.13	0.96	Relevant
4	Sales and personal Maturity Skills, which include self-awareness, accountability, emotional skills and creative skills contributes to National development	101	3.37	0.8	Relevant
5	Networking skills, which are essential to growing a network facilitates business opportunities and partnership deals contributes to National development	93	3.10	0.91	Relevant
Overall Mean Average		2.972			

Table 1 showed counsellors perception on relevance of entrepreneurial skills in job creation and National development; it was observed that sales and personal maturity skills, which include self-awareness, accountability, emotional skills and creative skills contributes most to National development with a mean of 3.37. However, they suggest that leadership and managerial skills, which are essential to the day to-day management and administration of the company, are not relevant to national development (2.23). In general, items number 1, 3,4 and 5 yielded a mean score of 3.03, 3.13, 3.37, 3.10 and standard deviation of 0.98, 0.96, 0.8 and 0.91 respectively and thus were considered relevant while item 2 gave the mean score of 2.23 corresponding to standard deviation of 1.5 and thus was considered irrelevant.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on relevance of career counselling information dissemination in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills

S/N	Items	f_x	Mean \bar{x}	Std Dev	Decision
6	Increase the students' knowledge about themselves, their interests, abilities, needs and values	77	2.57	0.99	Relevant
7	Develop positive work attitude and increase their knowledge of career possibilities, the structure of the world of work and job duties requirements	94	3.13	0.85	Relevant
8	Teach principles of entrepreneurial decision-making and planning skills	104	3.47	0.72	Relevant
9	Improve entrepreneurial skills in seeking, creating, evaluation and communicating vocational information	100	3.33	0.87	Relevant

10	Increasing self-esteem , motivation and building entrepreneurial effectiveness	100	3.33	0.7	Relevant
Overall Mean Average			3.166		

Table 2 showed counsellors perception on relevance of career counselling information dissemination in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills; it was observed that career counselling information dissemination could teach principles of entrepreneurial decision-making and planning skills with a mean of 3.47; career counselling information dissemination has been considered effective in increasing self-esteem, motivation and building entrepreneurial effectiveness with a mean score of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.7. In general, items number 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 yielded a mean score of 2.57, 3.13, 3.47, 3.33, 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.99, 0.85, 0.72, 0.87, 0.7 respectively and thus were considered relevant.

Table 3: Summary table of decision statistics for hypothesis 1

Parameter	Value
Degree of Freedom (<i>df</i>)	12
Level of Significance	0.05
χ^2 Critical Value	21.03
χ^2 Calculated Value	45.18

From research hypothesis one above, the expected frequencies are in brackets. Therefore, since the calculated χ^2 value (45.18) is greater than the χ^2 critical value (21.03) at *df* 12 and 0.05 level of significant, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that career counselling information dissemination is significantly relevant in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills.

Discussions

Research question one sought to find out the relevance of entrepreneurial skills in job creation and National development. The analysis indicated that efficiency and technical Skills which are those skills necessary to produce the business product or service contributes to National development, this opinion has been collaborated by Chiekezie, Nzewi and Erhinmwionose (2016) suggesting that technical knowledge and vocational skills are necessary for agriculture, commercial and economic development. However, some counsellors do not believe that leadership and managerial Skills contributes to National development. This could be as a result of the macro nature of entrepreneurship ventures where few people and most time one person is involved in the business (Awogbenle and Iwuamadi, 2010).

Research question two sought to find out the relevance of career counselling information dissemination in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills. The respondent upheld that career counselling information dissemination teach principles of entrepreneurial decision-making and planning skills, this result is in line with the submissions of Michel (2013) who believed that counselling provides opportunity healthy interaction in a safe, confidential environment which allows the client the time and space to shear his/her aspiration.

Research hypothesis states that career counselling information dissemination has no significant relevance in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills. The null hypothesis was however rejected suggesting that career counselling information dissemination is relevant in motivating secondary school students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills. This is in line with Egbochuku (2008), who explained that the aims of school guidance and counselling services include the provision of opportunities to acquire skills and attitudes necessary to develop educational goals.

Counselling Implication

The findings of this study have a number of implications for education and career counselling. The results of this study provide information as regards diversification of students into different courses which are relevant employment after graduation. The results of this study revealed that establishment of industries; adequate career counselling and skill oriented education will help to reduce unemployment. In effect, many schools and colleges can revamp their education schools to include an emphasis on entrepreneurial skills that promote self employment thereby reducing the rate of unemployment of graduates.

Conclusion

In this study, the researcher had studied on relevance of career counselling on secondary school students' development of entrepreneurial skills for job creation and National development. Entrepreneurial skills are a mean of self-empowerment and adjustment into the society. This implies that when there is entrepreneurship skill acquisition, jobs will be created. This will lead to increase in productivity, and abundant supply of goods and services. Counselling in schools at all levels will enable the country to identify her talented youths and nurture them to the optimal level of social, educational and economic development.

Recommendations

Our educational system should be well planned and organized so that people would not be left unemployed after educational training. There should be enough qualified teachers in our schools so that the students will be taught the requisite skills that will enable them firm effectively when they are out from school. An effective

guidance and counselling programme should be on introduced into all the secondary school so that students should be guided when choosing their course of study into higher institutions which will yield practical and positive solution at the end of the courses. Government should establish more industries and provided loans also for graduates who may want to set up their private establishment. Independence of work and self-reliance principle should be inculcated in our children as they grow up.

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