

## CAREER COUNSELLING NEEDS FOR WOMEN IN RIVERS STATE

**Dr. Maxwell. D. Eremie**

Department of Educational Foundations, faculty of Technical and Science Education,  
University Of Science And Technology, Port Harcourt Rivers state.

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study examined career counselling needs for women in Rivers State, Nigeria. The survey method was used. A simple random sampling technique was used to select three hundred (300) female undergraduate students from a population of nine hundred. The instrument used for this study was the “Students Self Rating Career Counselling Needs Scale’ SSRCCNS) for data collection. The t-test statistics was used to test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that the two null hypotheses were accepted: There is no significant difference in career counselling needs between part-time female undergraduate students who are having academic problems, and those having clear standing. Also, it was revealed that there was no significant difference in career counselling needs between female part-time undergraduate students who are employed and those unemployed. Based on the findings some recommendations were made: (1) Universities in Rivers State should open service career counselling centre to assist students with their career counselling needs. (2) Career counsellors should pay attention to dual career women. (3) Career counsellors should assist students to express their fears about gender role stereotyping in the given culture.*

**KEYWORDS:** Career, Counselling, Women, Nigeria.

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## INTRODUCTION

There are differences in the career development of women than men. It is obvious that all levels of employment, but especially at the higher occupational levels or in non-traditional careers, females will likely show more conflict and differences in job seeking patterns, and will likely have to overcome more disappointments and obstructions to career advancement. (Eremie, 2005).

Laug (1978) suggested the following to assist non-traditional female career aspirants:

1. Expect a challenge that is, testing of boundaries, predices, and loneliness and so on.
2. Embrace your uniqueness to accept unique career aspects of self.
3. Be creative – that is, make creative responses and decision in assertive manner.
4. Play the power game, that is, to understand the rules and how things happen.
5. Analyze and build significant male relationships both at work and at home.
6. Seek role models, that is, to observe and learn from a successful female role model in your field.
7. Be human – that is, be aware and attend to self-needs and desires.

Voight, et al (1980) opined that to achieve the above suggestions, females should adequately engage in networking, peer counselling and professional advancement and support. Women are advised to channel information through these created guidance networks.

### **Career Patterns of Women**

Women entering or reentering the labour force were prescribed to follow certain career patterns (Zunker, 1986). The stable home-making pattern is engaged by women who marry while in college or immediately after leaving college or university. These categories of women do not have significant previous work experience to join the workforce. The conventional career pattern young women leaving college or university go to work for a period of several months or several years, in an occupation which they have no previous experience other than college or university training. Some women left the work force after several years and decided to get married and become full time home makers. While, the stable working career pattern women who engage in this type of career pattern after leaving college or university, do so for a life time.

The double-track career pattern women, who go to work after finishing their formal education, marry and continue with a double career of working and home making. They may decide to take occasional time out from employment for child bearing. The double role is not quite easy, the married working women, that are doing two jobs-one with and one without pay.

The interrupted career pattern: Here, the sequence is one of working, home-making, and working a while, instead of homemaking. In this sequence, the young woman may decide to work for some time, then marries and then, when her children are of age-old enough, she leaves them for work, trying to meet her financial obligations, where she is a widow.

The unstable career pattern: In some women, this type of career pattern consists of working, homemaking, working again, returning to full time homemaking. In most cases, the economy dictates the pattern for women who are undergoing irregular economic pressures. This career pattern is mostly observed among the lower socio-economic levels.

### **Career Counselling Theories and Women**

Osipow (1983) indicated that career development of women has gained attention by career development theorists. Farmer (1978) similarly suggested theories free of gender-role stereotyping. Super (1957) propounded career development theory that considered a self-concept approach. His concept of career theory is a longitudinal, developmental approach rather than a single choice, matching approach. Career development patterns of women were classified into seven categories:

1. Stable homemaking
2. Conventional
3. Stable working
4. Double track
5. Interrupted
6. Unstable and

7. Multiple trials.

Ginzberg (1966) mentioned three life – style criteria for women that may be used in career counselling modalities:

1. Traditional homemaking oriented.
2. Transitional – that is, more emphasis upon home than job and.
3. Innovative – that is, giving equal emphasis to job and home.

He opined that it is difficult for many women to move towards the innovative dimension, primarily due to psychological barriers; that is some women may be uncomfortable to become more career oriented for fear of losing the stereotypical female identity accepted by our society.

Psathas (1968) occupational choices for women are greatly guided by home and family responsibilities. He further indicated that one's social class, and general cultural values of past and immediate families are major determinants influencing occupational choice. Vetter (1978) pointed out that women do indeed have special needs that must be addressed in career counselling programmes is well call for consideration. Sanguiliano (1978) opined that women's self – identification is significantly delayed because of the conflicting expectations ascribed to female identity.

### **Statement of the Problem**

While trainers, mentors, and colleagues at the workplace can offer advice in regard to work – related issues, they do not have the necessary training and experience to offer career counselling to perplex employed or unemployed females as they try to make decisions regarding various trade – offs between career opportunities and family happiness. Career counsellors can be of particular help to female job seekers or those that are gainfully employed. Women who have charted employment opportunities will find a variety of barriers in the way of their goals. First, the bias associated with sex – role stereotypes in the working world still exist in most cultures (Arenius, 2004; McClelland, et al 2005; and Tsoka, 2011).

Based on the above mentioned problems which females encountered at work place, the research is poised to ask the following question. To what extent if any, female undergraduate part-time students will need career counselling services in Rivers State?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate career counselling needs of female undergraduate part-time university students in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent female undergraduate part-time students who are employed and those unemployed need career counselling?
2. To what extent female undergraduate part-time students who are having academic problems and those having clear standing need career counselling?

### **Hypotheses**

For the purpose of this study, the following null hypotheses were advanced and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in career counselling needs between Part-Time female undergraduate students who are employed, and those unemployed.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in career counselling needs between Part-Time female undergraduate students who are having academic problems, and those having clear standing.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study was limited to female Part-Time undergraduates in Rivers State. The study was, however, delimited to one State University in Rivers State. Three hundred female Part-Time students were used for the study.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The research method used was the descriptive survey. The researcher employed survey method because the study measures the career counselling needs of Part-Time female students. The t-test statistics was used at 0.05 level of significance.

### **Population of the Study**

The study covered one State University in Rivers State, with total Part-Time female students of nine hundred (900)

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The sample population for this study consisted of three hundred female Part-Time undergraduate students. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting three hundred (300) students.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used for this study was the “Students Self Rating Career Counselling Needs Scale’ (SSRCCNS). The scale has three (3) sections: Personal Data (section A), Response Guide (Section B), twenty items – career counselling needs. It was a 4-point interval scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Responses were assigned values ranging from (4) points to (1) points.

### **Validation of the Instrument**

The instrument “SSRCCNS” was subjected to content and face validity by experts in psychometrics, in the faculty of Education. A test is valid when it measures what it purports to measure at any given time and situation.

### Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was determined by utilizing the test-retest method. After the first administration of the instrument, an interval of two weeks was allowed before the second administration. The spearman Brown Prophecy formula was used to determine the reliability of the full length of the test. A correlation coefficient of 0.79 was reached. This was considered high enough as a reliability estimate of “SSRCCNS”.

### RESULTS

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in career counselling needs between female Part-Time undergraduate students who are employed, and those unemployed. The result is shown in table 1

**Table 1: The T-Test Analysis of the mean and standard Deviation of Career Counselling needs among Female Part-Time Students who are Employed, and those that are Unemployed.**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	STD	Std Error	DF	P	t-cal	t-crit	decision
employed female students	150	5.2	0.84	.5677	298	0.05	1.560	1.96	accepted non sig.
unemployed male students	150	5.4	0.89	.05781					

The data in table 1 revealed that the calculated t-test value of employed female Part-Time, and unemployed female Part-Time students for career counselling needs was 1.560, while the critical t-value was 1.96 at a degree of freedom of 298 at 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, meaning that, there was no significant difference between employed female Part-Time students and those female Part-Time student that are unemployed.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in career counselling needs between Part-Time female undergraduate students who are having academic problems, and those having clear standing. The result is shown in table 2.

**Table 2: The T-Test Analysis of the mean and standard Deviation of Career Counselling needs among Female Part-Time Students who are having Academic problems, and those having clear standing.**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	STD	Std Error	DF	P	t-cal	t-crit	decision
Having academic problems	150	5.3	0.85	.05687	298	0.05	1.62	1.96	accepted non sig.
Having clear standing	150	5.5	0.90	.05786					

The data in table 2 revealed that the calculated t-value of female part-time students having academic problems, and female part-time students having clear standing who need career counselling was 1.62, while the critical t-value was 1.96 at a degree of freedom of 298, at 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, meaning that, there was no significant difference between female part-time students having academic problems, and those who are having clear standing.

## DISCUSSION

Hypothesis one states that there is no significant difference in career counselling needs between female part-time undergraduate students who are employed, and those unemployed. Both groups of students need career counselling in the areas of educational, personal-social, career information, and the role of the female in the marital family structure. The demand for these needs are in line with super (1957); Mathews and Tiedeman, (1964); Ubulom, et al (2006) and FRN (2004).

Hypothesis two states that there is no significant difference in career counselling needs between part-time female undergraduate students who are having academic problems, and those having clear standing. Career counselling is highly needed among those students that are having academic problems in different areas of their studies, interpersonal relationships, either at the family level or at work environment. Career counselling is necessary for those part-time female students who are working at the same time as home makers, that is, taking care of their husbands and children as dual career women. The need for career counselling for dual career women are supported by Zunder (1986); Sekaron (1986); Rapoport and Rapoport (1976); Tsoka (2011); James and Yusuf (2011) and Ilogho (2011).

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study showed that career counselling is necessary for all female part-time students irrespective of clear academic standing. All female part-time students should seek career counselling to address their individual career goals, since most career theorists see career as a life time venture, not limited to academic and personal-social areas.

### Recommendations

- (1) Universities in Rivers State should open and service career counselling centre to assist students with their career counselling needs.
- (2) Career counsellors should pay attention to dual career women.
- (3) Career counsellors should assist students to express their fears about gender role stereotyping in the given culture.

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