

INFLUENCE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING ON DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS AMONG TECHNICAL COLLEGE STUDENTS IN RIVERS STATE

Dr. Mrs. M. N. Izuchi¹ and Obed. O. O²

¹Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education
University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

²Department of Vocational and Technology Education, Faculty of Science and Technical
Education, River State University of Science

ABSTRACT: *The study investigated the Influence of information dissemination and personal-social adjustment on the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State. Two research questions guided the study. Survey research design was adopted in conducting the study. The total population for the study was 330 respondents which comprises of 88 Technical college teachers and 242 technical college students. A structured questionnaire based on four point scale was used as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire was validated by three experts from the Department of Industrial Technical Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumine Port Harcourt. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used and a reliability coefficient of 0.912 value was obtained. The research questions were analyzed using mean and standard derivations to answer the research questions. Findings of the study revealed that information dissemination on business acumen will motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills in Rivers State. Further-more counselling on personal-social adjustment will equip students for the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State. It was recommended that; A well-articulated entrepreneurship education should offer more than self-employment that will contribute to national development. Also Entrepreneurship skills can be reactivated among students at all levels of education through intensive and articulated guidance and counselling services, thereby making them psychologically ready for business venture before leaving school.*

KEYWORDS: Guidance and Counselling, Career Guidance, Information Dissemination, Personal-Social Adjustment, Entrepreneurial skills and Technical College.

INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counselling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities and services aimed at assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world (Egbochuku 2008; Oniye and Alawane 2008; Eyo, 2010; Lunenburg 2010). Oniye and Alawane (2008) added the development of effective study habits in relation to how one can utilise his/her assets and manage his/her abilities for optimal development as an essential service of guidance and counseling services. In relation to the above, Idowu (1990) views guidance and counselling as a process of planned intervention within a school system by which the total development of students are stimulated in areas relating to their personal, social, career, emotional and academic concerns. School guidance and counselling programmes have therefore been introduced to assist students overcome the number of challenges they experience at home and at school. Nziramasanga (1999) states that because of many pressures imposed on the family, parents tend to have little time with their

children to give them the necessary guidance. There are different types of counselling - including career (vocational), marital, personal-social and educational counselling, among others. Guidance and counselling is ubiquitous for it exists everywhere human beings are found. Most technical college students of Nigerian technical institutions are in the exploration stage of career development theory by Donald Super. This stage which is between 15 and 19 years (Shertzer and Stone, 1981) is when adolescents and young adults explore different occupational alternatives and match them with the knowledge acquired about various occupations. Therefore, it is a critical period when career counselling is needed since career counselling is the process of assisting individuals in the development of a lifelong work, focusing on workers' role and interactions with other life roles (Neck, 1997). In career counselling, the counsellor helps the students through proper orientation and current global trends in the world of work. Students also need counselling on the dignity of labour and entrepreneurial characteristics such as determination, need for achievement, taking initiative, calculated risk taking, creativity, innovativeness, and leadership among others.

In extension, the term career guidance is generally replacing the concept of vocational guidance. Vocational guidance is focused upon the choice of occupation and is distinguished from educational guidance, which focuses upon choice of courses of study. Career guidance brings the two together and stresses the interaction between learning and work (Bezanson & Turcotte, 2004). Career guidance has been identified as a key focus in addressing this mismatch between the needs of labour market and the products of the educational and training system thereby dealing with unemployment and improving labour mobility (Balasuriya & Hughes, 2003). There are a number of variations in the definition of career guidance. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2004) defines career guidance as services and activities intended to assist individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training, occupational choices and to manage their careers. This definition includes making information about the labour market and about educational and employment opportunities more accessible by organising it, systematizing it and having it available when and where people need it. It also includes assisting people to reflect on their aspirations, interests, competencies, personal attributes, qualification and abilities to match these with available training and employment opportunities. Career guidance plays a key role in helping labour market work and education systems meet their goals. According to "International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance" (IAEVG, 1992), career guidance refers to assistance given to individuals or groups of individuals in addressing problems related to occupational and life choices, offering full opportunities for personal development and work satisfaction. A mismatch has been evident between the skills imparted by the national education system and those demanded by the workplace. Career guidance is widely accepted as a powerful and effective method of helping to bridge the gap between education and the world of work, as well as between school and society (Hansen, 2006). It is a means of assisting young people to make appropriate and judicious educational choices that will enable them to develop their entrepreneurial skills and potential and to have access to employment opportunities that are compatible with their interests and abilities. It can also help to instill confidence and positive attitudes, to derive fulfillment from their chosen areas of learning and work and most importantly, to inculcate an eagerness for lifelong learning. The potential impacts of such efforts include reducing youth unemployment and raising income, thereby reducing poverty. According to Jarvis (2011), career guidance assists the young ones in selecting their career in line with their choice and interest thereby making them healthy, self-reliant, resilient individuals and develop entrepreneurial skills. It enables individuals to assess

the following areas while choosing a career (Francis, 2011): Aptitude, Skills, Personality, Interests, Needs and Priorities

However, these careers are offered in Technical institutions like Technical colleges. Technical colleges is concerned with the acquisition of skills and knowledge for employment and sustainable livelihood (Maclean and Wilson, 2009). Technical education is that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of skills as well as basic knowledge. Vocational education, on the other hand, is training for a specific vocation in industry or trade or job (Webster, 1993). The mission of technical and vocational education is to promote the production of skilled, technical and professional manpower to revitalize and sustain the national economy and reduce unemployment and poverty. According to Oni (2006), technical and vocational education gives individuals the skills to learn and become productive citizens and for advancement in the workplace. Despite the contributions of technical education to national development, it still has a low public status (Moja, 2000). This mentality has, in most part, contributed to the neglect of technical education institutions and reason why the youth shy away from technical and vocational studies. As a result, most of the secondary school graduates (and some of those who managed to pass through the university) lack the skills and knowledge to compete effectively in the rather tight labour market and thus loiter around in the cities from dawn to dusk looking for jobs that are not available (Dike, 2009). The youth are struggling with the challenge of acquiring “employability” skills because the society is focused mostly on formal university education. Every facet of the economy has been affected by the scarcity of skilled technicians. The society lacks competent bricklayers, carpenters, painters and auto mechanics, laboratory and pharmacy technicians, electrical/ electronic technicians and skills vocational nurses etc. which the nation needs to function effectively and efficiently (Moja, 2000). Some scholars perceive technical and vocational education as one of the “bulwarks of social efficiency” as the preparation of a well-trained workforce is a sine qua non of an efficient society (Camp, 1982 and 1983). In this regard, technical and vocational education is an integral component of lifelong learning and an important determinant of income and wealth creation/distribution. It empowers the youth with skills to become productive and highly paid workers. In this era of global unemployment situation, the role of vocational and technical education in reducing youth unemployment cannot be overemphasised. Olaitan (1996) emphasized that one of the major crucial factors leading to unemployment in most countries is lack of vocational and technical skills.

Vocational education refers to systematic learning experiences which are designed to fit individuals for gainful employment in recognised occupations as semi-skilled workers or technicians or sub-professionals. It includes guidance and counselling in relation to training and giving other instruction directly associated to an occupation (Osuala, 1987). According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria’s National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004), vocational education is seen as an integral part of general education; a means of preparation for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work; an aspect of lifelong learning and preparation for responsible citizenship; an instrument for promoting environmentally sound, sustainable development and a method of alleviating poverty and entrepreneurship.

An entrepreneur can be defined as one who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to achieve. According to Anyakoha (2006), the entrepreneur is one who chooses or assumes risks, identifies business opportunities, gathers resources, initiates actions and establishes an organization or enterprise to meet such demand or market opportunity. This

definition shows that the entrepreneur is seen as an independent, self-sufficient individual who is willing to face whatever comes up as a result of the decision being taken. So it can be inferred that an entrepreneur is one who has decided to start a personal business which is profitable. The mind is made up to put into maximum use all the abilities and potentials at its disposal.

Entrepreneurship education apart from career guidance, technical and vocational education, entrepreneurship education is also effective in preventing youth unemployment. There is a growing recognition among governments and international bi- and multi-lateral organisations that as jobs become scarce, youth entrepreneurship becomes an important strategy for integrating youth into labour markets thereby addressing unemployment challenges (ILO, 2009). Due to limited resources, life and work experiences, young people face barriers than older age cohorts (Schoof, 2006; Blanchflower and Oswald, 1999). Suleiman (2006) defined entrepreneurship as “the willingness and ability of an individual to seek for investment opportunities to establish and run an enterprise successfully”; while Drucker (1985) viewed an entrepreneur as a person who perceives business opportunities and takes advantage of the scarce resources and use them profitably. Entrepreneurs are job creators and/or become self-employed rather than seekers of jobs in an overstretched public service. The entrepreneur is essentially a person who owns or controls a business through which income is gained. An entrepreneur gives the marketplace a product or service by doing it in a new way. Drucker also considers that the entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it and exploits it as an opportunity. Entrepreneurship is not just skill acquisition for acquisition sake; it is an acquisition of skills and ideas for the sake of creating employment for oneself and also for others. It also includes the development based on creativity (Oseni, Momoh and Momodu, 2012). Entrepreneurship leads to the development of small, medium and sometimes large scale businesses based on creativity and innovation. The success of these businesses in turn helps in developing the nation’s economy. It equally reduces poverty rate with visible increment in employment rate among the students. Entrepreneurship shifts young people from being “job seekers” to “job creators” and also from social dependence to self sufficient people and also develop entrepreneurship interest.

However, the need to inculcate in students the workplace basic and thinking skills that will enable them to fit properly in the world of work and improve their performance , arouse their interest, encourage both male and female students participation calls for effective counseling. Nazzal (2002) posited that interest is referred to as persisting tendency to pay attention and enjoy some activities or content of interest if it is pleasing and engaging ones attention. Interest can be expressed through simple statements made by individuals of their likes and dis-likes. It can be observed through overt actions or activities been performed by the subject, and the need to learn it well. Duch (2002) described interest as an activity that drives or motivates an individual for action. The question now becomes what are the influence of guidance and counseling on development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Ahoada East Local Government Area. Therefore, there is need to investigate the influence of guidance and counseling on development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Ahoada East Local Government Area.

Statement of the Problem

The government in her bid to reduce unemployment introduced a new curriculum in the Senior Secondary School with effect from the 2011 academic year. The goal of the new curriculum is geared towards wealth creation, entrepreneurship development and skill acquisition training for self-employment. The new Senior Secondary Education Curriculum (SSEC) expected to

launch Nigeria to a higher level in terms of entrepreneurial development was formally launched and presented to the public in Abuja on Monday, 14th March, 2011 by the minister of Education Prof. Ruqayyat Ahmed Rufai. The philosophy of the new SSEC is summarized by Oduselu, (2011): “every senior secondary education graduate should have been well prepared for higher education, as well as captured relevant functional trade/entrepreneurship skills needed for poverty eradication, job creation and wealth generation, and in the process strengthen further the foundations for ethical, moral and civic values acquired at the basic education level”.

To what extent this curriculum will be achieved depends on the level of sensitization through vocational guidance and counseling. Common knowledge holds it that individuals derive more satisfaction when they make realistic career choices. Exposing students or prospective employees to the present reality of the world of work therefore, becomes a necessary task that must be done. It requires a sensitization on the different job opportunities available, appropriate training and skills required for such jobs; aptitude, personality and hobbies necessary throughout life for such jobs. Sensitization could be done by professional career counsellors and institutional management through conferences, seminars and workshops since the main goal of technical education is to achieve self-reliance. The foregoing therefore underscores the need to explore the Influence of information dissemination and personal-social adjustment on the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State. Therefore, the problem of this study is: what are the Influence of information dissemination and personal-social adjustment on the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State?

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to assess the Influence of information dissemination and personal-social adjustment on the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State. Specifically, the study explored the following:

1. Influence of guidance and counseling information dissemination on business acumen in motivating technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills in Rivers State.
2. Influence of counselling on personal-social adjustment in equipping students for the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. To what extent does information dissemination on business acumen motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does personal-social adjustment equip student for the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05% level of significance.

H₀₁ There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of instructors and students on the extent information dissemination on business acumen motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills in Rivers State.

H₀₂ There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of instructors and students on the extent personal-social adjustment equip student for the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The design employed in the study was a descriptive survey. According to Gall, Gall and Borg (2007), a survey research is a method of data collection in which questionnaires or interview is utilized in collecting data from a sample that has been selected to represent a population to which the findings of the data analysis can be generalized. The study was carried out in Rivers State.

The state has technical college and the students of the college are suitable to form the population of the study. The rationale for choosing these students is based on the fact that they possess the skills required for entrepreneurship within the State. The targeted population of the study was 330 respondents which comprise of 88 instructors and 242 students. The entire population of 330 respondents was purposively sampled and used for the study. A questionnaire titled. 'Influence of information dissemination and personal-social adjustment on the development of entrepreneurial skills Questionnaire (IIDPAAESQ) was used for data collection. The instrument consisted of 28 - items relevant for answering research questions posed in the study. The response format of IIDPAAESQ was a four point rating scale of SD-Strongly Agreed, A-Agreed, D-Disagreed and SD-Strongly Disagreed with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The IIDPAAESQ was validated by three experts in Guidance and counseling and technical and vocational education department. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient formula was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a reliability coefficient of .912 reliability index. This indicated that the instrument was reliable. The cronbach alpha reliability coefficient method was used because it gives a generalized formula which deals with multiple scores items.

The data generated from the use of structured questionnaire of the study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses using SPSS Version 20. Therefore any item with mean less or equal to 2.49 was regarded as disagree, whereas any item with mean that is greater or equal to 2.50 was accepted .

RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent does information dissemination on business acumen motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of how information dissemination on business acumen motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills.

S/NO	ITEMS	X	SD	RMK
1.	Provision of appropriate Information service on buying and selling should motivate students' interest in business ventures	3.28	1.10	A
2.	Frequent field trips to production plants should expose students to business skills	3.05	0.98	A
3.	Guided exposure of students to trade fairs will assist them to acquire business acumen	3.10	1.00	A
4.	Relevant business information service to students will equip them to establish trade posts on leaving school	3.10	0.92	A
5.	Realistic occupational placement service will motivate students to develop entrepreneurial flair	3.11	0.90	A
	Grand mean	3.21	0.65	A

Data in table 1, revealed that all the items had mean values ranging within 3.05 - 3.28 and a standard deviation ranging within 0.90 - 1.10 which indicate that is within the real limit of numbers 2.50-3.49. The closed range of the standard deviation also indicate that the respondents were not too far from the mean and were close to one another in their responses, further-more it indicates a strong agreement that information dissemination on business acumen motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills.

Research Questions 2: To what extent does counselling on personal-social adjustment equip students for the development of entrepreneurial skills in technical college in Ahoada East Local Government Area?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of how personal-social adjustment would equip student for the development of entrepreneurial skills in technical college in Ahoada East Local Government Area.

S/NO ITEMS	X	SD	RMK
6. Counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist students to develop good public relation for viable business transaction	2.61	1.10	A
7. Counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist interested students to set their limits right in entrepreneurship development	2.67	1.26	A
8. Counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist school leavers to maintain viable business partnership	2.53	0.97	A
9. Counselling on financial prudence/ management will help entrepreneurship aspirants raise required capital for business venture	2.54	1.15	A
10. Counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist proper placement of individuals into suitable enterprise	2.15	0.74	D
Grand mean	2.59	0.54	A

Data in table 2, revealed that item 6, 7, 8 and 9 had mean values ranging within 2.53 - 2.67 and a standard deviation ranging within 0.97 - 1.26 which indicate that is within the real limit of numbers 2.50-3.49. The closed range of the standard deviation also indicates that the respondents were not too far from the mean and were close to one another in their responses. However, item 10 had a mean of 2.15 and standard deviation of 0.74 indicating that the respondents disagreed with the item that counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist proper placement of individuals into suitable enterprise. The grand mean shows that (2.59) majority of the respondents were in agreement that counseling on personal social adjustment will enhance the technical college students' skills in entrepreneurship.

Hypotheses

H₀₁ There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of instructors and students on the extent information dissemination on business acumen motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills in Rivers State.

Table 3: The t-test analysis of Difference between Instructors and Students on the extent information dissemination on business acumen motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	X	SD	P-value	Standard Error	DF	t-cal	t-Crit	RMK
Instructors	88	3.32	0.76	0.05	0.09	202	0.92	1.96	Accepted
Students	242	2.65	0.82						

Result in table 3 revealed that t-cal (0.92) is lesser than t-crit (1.96) which indicates that the hypothesis stated is accepted. Therefore there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of instructors and students on the extent information dissemination on business acumen motivate technical college students' interest toward development of entrepreneurial skills in Rivers State.

H₀₂ There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of instructors and students on the extent personal-social adjustment equip student for the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State.

Table 4: The t-test analysis of Difference between Instructors and Students on the extent personal-social adjustment equip student for the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	X	SD	P-value	Standard Error	DF	t-Cal	t-Crit	RMK
Instructors	88	3.26	0.60	0.05	0.09	202	0.43	1.98	Accepted
Students	242	2.58	0.72						

Result in table 4 revealed that t-cal (0.43) is lesser than t-crit (1.96) which indicates that the hypothesis stated is accepted. Therefore there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of instructors and students on the extent personal-social adjustment equip student for the development of entrepreneurial skills among technical college students in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study are discussed in line with the specific purposes of the study:

The study found out that information dissemination on business acumen can motivate technical college 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 the following to the students: Opportunities to develop knowledge and appreciation of themselves and others; Opportunities to develop relationship skills, ethical standards, and a sense of responsibility; Opportunities to acquire skills and attitudes necessary to develop educational goals which are suited to their needs of intents and abilities and Information that would enable them to make decisions about life and career opportunities.

The study also revealed that counselling on personal-social adjustment would equip student for the development of entrepreneurial skills in technical college students: This is in line with Akinade (2005), who stated that the purpose of career counselling includes: Identification of

personal preferences, exploration of career options, collection and collation of data about careers, making decisions about careers, implementing change from the present situation and assisting with employment seeking or job application issues.

CONCLUSION

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. Early identification of the talent of an individual is very essential for the proper planning of programmes for the manpower needs of the country. Guiding young people to pursue the right type of entrepreneurship education through vocational counselling in which there will be no over-production of certain manpower needs and under-production of the other aspects of the manpower needs, is a sure way of eradicating unemployment and building a more prosperous and advanced country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A well-articulated entrepreneurship education should offer more than self-employment that will contribute to national development.
2. Entrepreneurship skills can be reactivated among students at all levels of education through intensive and articulated guidance and counselling services, thereby making them psychologically ready for business venture before leaving school.
3. Unemployment and family poverty can be eradicated through entrepreneurship guidance right from the primary to tertiary level of education.

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