

Perceived Impact of Guidance and Counseling Services on the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills for Sustainable Livelihood Among Students

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This paper focused on finding out the opinions of three categories of educators viz.: EA (education administrators), GC (guidance counselors), and CT (classroom teachers) on the impact of guidance and counselling services in entrepreneurship development among secondary school students. Three research questions were drawn to ascertain the opinions of the educators used for the study viz.: (1) Can information service on business enterprise motivate students' interest for entrepreneurship? (2) Can counselling on personal-social adjustment equip students for entrepreneurship? and (3) Can guidance on educational and occupational adjustments equip students for entrepreneurship? The sample of the study was composed with simple random sampling technique to include 10 principals and 10 education officers, making up 20 education administrators, 10 guidance counselors, and 100 classroom teachers. In all, there were 130 respondents. A 4-point Likert type scale questionnaire titled "Educators Questionnaire" was used to obtain data for the study. Using Cronbach Alpha internal consistency reliability test, the instrument was confirmed reliable at 0.86. The findings show that guidance and counselling services will enhance students' skills for entrepreneurship development which in turn will boost productivity, sustainable livelihood, and national development. Recommendations on government, GC, and policy-makers on educational matters involvement to reap the full benefits of school guidance programme were proffered.

Keywords: counseling, special education, service delivery

Introduction

The new national policy on education was first introduced by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1977 and subsequently revised in 1981, 1989, and 2004, respectively. The highlights of the policy are to provide elaborate background for schooling adolescents at junior secondary level by exposing them to various manipulative skills. The new national policy on education therefore aimed at providing entrepreneurship development among schooling adolescents by equipping them for appropriate adjustment in the field of work, and motivating their curiosity and drive for business enterprise. 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 counselling as an integral part of the new policy aimed at providing special services which will assist students attain

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self-understanding to harness their latent potentials for proper educational, personal-social, and vocational development and adjustment.

According to Egbochuku (2008), the aims of school guidance and counselling 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.

According to Akolisa (2009), more than 90% of the school leavers are dependent on parents and relations for their daily bread contrary to the aim and purpose of sending them to school. While only very few of these school leavers are self-employed. Entrepreneurship development as a process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structure/training and institution building programmes can be realized by students through active guidance and counselling programme. This will equip more students for self-employment which is a worthwhile objective for sustainable livelihood in developing national economy as Nigeria. More importantly, a well-articulated entrepreneurship development should offer more than self-employment and focus on helping people start and grow dynamic business that provides high value added which will contribute more to national development.

Entrepreneurial 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.

The Statement of the Problem

Sustainable livelihood in a developing country as Nigeria can only be successfully and largely attained by the combined efforts of the government and private sector. The youths in school should therefore be given proper perspective, exposure, and orientation to the world of business through some of the in-built school programmes and services. It is therefore assumed that guidance and counselling as one of the school services will meet with this expectation. Hence, the problem this study wants to address put in a simple question is: Can guidance and counselling services contribute to the development of students for entrepreneurship?

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to inquire among educators if guidance and counselling services will assist students develop entrepreneurial skills.

Precisely, the investigation will focus on finding out the following:

- (1) Whether information dissemination on business acumen would motivate students' interest toward entrepreneurship;

(2) Whether counselling on personal-social adjustment would equip student for entrepreneurship;

(3) Whether guidance on educational and occupational adjustments would equip students for entrepreneurship.

The Significance of the Study

The relevance of this study for combating unemployment in a developing country as Nigeria will not be over emphasized. Students who will be passing out of school at all levels and who may not be opportuned to gain government or private employment will benefit if the result of this study indicates that guidance and counselling services can contribute to the development of entrepreneurship. Various communities and the nation at large should benefit from the result of this study, if the youths can acquire skills for the development of entrepreneurship, thereby, reducing idle minds which constitute devils workshops, curbing arm robbery, kidnapping, stealing, and other criminal acts that are presently in vogue in Nigeria.

The result of this study may reinforce the school guidance counselors for hard work based on the realization that they can contribute seriously to national development. The result of this study will throw more light to the government and public on the benefits of school guidance and counselling for nation building, hence, intensify their support to the programme.

Methodology

This is a survey study. The opinion survey of educators (comprising school administrators, classroom teachers, and school guidance counselors) was conducted to elicit information on the contribution of guidance and counselling services to the development of entrepreneurial skills among schooling adolescents. The scope of the study covers 10 secondary schools from Nsukka Education Zone and Nsukka Zonal Education Office. Purposive sampling technique was used to compose the sample of school administrators, while simple random sampling technique was used to compose the sample of classroom teachers and school guidance counselors. In all, 10 zonal education officers and 10 school principals made up the 20 school administrators used for the study. One hundred classroom teachers and 10 school guidance counselors were also part of the sample composed for the study. A total of 130 respondents constituted the sample for the study. Sex was not a factor for the study.

Instrumentation

A 4-point Likert type scale structured questionnaire titled: "Educators Questionnaire" was designed by the researcher to obtain data for the study.

The questionnaire consisted of two main sections viz.: Section A—personal data of the respondent; and Section B—15 items requesting information about the relevance of various aspects of guidance and counselling services on the development of entrepreneurial skills among students.

The respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed to each item.

The scoring of the instruments was: "SA (Strongly agree)" = 4 points; "A (Agree)" = 3 points; "D (Disagree)" = 2 points; and "SD (Strong disagree)" = 1 point.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The EQ (Educators' Questionnaire) was both constructs and face validated by professional counselors and measurement and evaluation experts. The reliability of 0.86 was obtained using the Cronbach Alpha Internal Consistency reliability test.

Administration of the Instrument

The instrument was administered by the researcher and research assistants directly to the respondents and collected from them after filling.

Analysis of Data

Descriptive statistics was used for the analysis of data collected for the study.

Results

For the presentation and interpretation of the findings of this study, educators were presented in three categories viz.: EA (education administrators); GC (guidance counselors); and CT (classroom teachers).

Table 1

Educators Responses on Whether Information Service on Business Enterprise Can Motivate Students' Interest for Entrepreneurship

S/N	Questionnaire item	Category of educators																							
		EA								GC								CT							
		SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.	SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.	SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.
1	Provision of appropriate information service on buying and selling should motivate students' interest in business ventures	12	3	2	3	20	64	3.2	Positive	8	2	0	0	10	38	3.8	Positive	70	10	10	10	100	340	3.4	Positive
2	Frequent field trips to production plants should expose students to business skills	10	5	3	2	20	63	3.2	Positive	7	2	1	0	10	36	3.6	Positive	50	25	15	10	100	315	3.2	Positive
3	Guided exposure of students to trade fairs will assist them to acquire business acumen	8	5	3	2	20	59	3.0	Positive	6	2	1	1	10	33	3.3	Positive	40	25	25	10	100	295	3.0	Positive
4	Relevant business information service to students will equip them to establish trade posts on leaving school	8	3	5	4	20	55	2.8	Positive	6	1	2	1	10	32	3.2	Positive	40	10	25	25	100	265	2.7	Positive
5	Realistic occupational placement service will motivate students to develop entrepreneurial flair	14	2	1	3	20	67	3.4	Positive	8	1	1	0	10	37	3.7	Positive	70	10	5	15	100	335	3.4	Positive
Total mean \bar{X}		15.6								17.6								15.7							
Cluster \bar{X}		3.12 Positive								4.0 Positive								3.1 Positive							

Notes. TF = Total frequency; TP = Total point.

In Table 1, the results of the findings indicate that the cluster scores on the opinions of the three categories of educators on whether information service on business enterprise if rendered by the school guidance

counsellors can motivate students' interest for entrepreneurship are 3.12, 4.0, and 3.1, respectively. Since the mean scores are each above 2.5, the results of the findings from the three categories of educators point to the fact that information service can motivate students' interest for entrepreneurship. The three categories of educators shared similar opinion on the efficacy of information service to motivate students' interest for entrepreneurship.

Table 2

Educators Responses on Whether Counselling on Personal-Social Adjustment Can Equip Students for Entrepreneurship

S/N	Questionnaire item	Category of educators																							
		EA								GC								CT							
		SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.	SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.	SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.
6	Counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist students to develop good public relation for viable business transaction	11	4	1	4	20	62	3.1	Positive	6	2	1	1	10	33	3.3	Positive	60	20	10	10	100	330	3.3	Positive
7	Counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist interested students to set their limits right in entrepreneurship development	14	3	1	2	20	69	3.5	Positive	7	1	0	2	10	33	3.3	Positive	70	10	5	15	100	335	3.4	Positive
8	Counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist school leavers to maintain viable business partnership	12	3	2	3	20	64	3.2	Positive	6	1	1	2	10	31	3.1	Positive	60	10	10	20	100	310	3.1	Positive
9	Counselling on financial prudence/management will help entrepreneurship aspirants raise required capital for business venture	10	5	3	2	20	63	3.2	Positive	5	2	2	1	10	31	3.1	Positive	50	20	20	10	100	310	3.1	Positive
10	Counselling on personal-social adjustment will assist proper placement of individuals into suitable enterprise	15	1	2	2	20	69	3.5	Positive	7	1	1	1	10	35	3.5	Positive	70	10	10	10	100	340	3.4	Positive
Total mean \bar{X}										165								16.3							
Cluster mean \bar{X}										3.3 Positive								3.3 Positive							

Notes. TF = Total frequency; TP = Total point.

In Table 2, the data analysis on each of the responses from the three categories of educators presents a cluster mean of 3.3, 3.3, and 3.3 respectively. Since the cluster means are each above 2.5, the results are all positive to the assumption that counselling on personal-social adjustment can equip students for entrepreneurship.

A close observation on the cluster means also points to the fact that there is no difference on the opinions of the three categories of educators used for the study.

Table 3

Educators Responses on Whether Guidance on Educational and Occupational Adjustments Can Equip Students for Entrepreneurship

S/ N	Questionnaire item	Category of educators																							
		EA								GC								CT							
		SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.	SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.	SA	A	D	SD	TF	TP	\bar{X}	Dec.
11	Guided subject selection will facilitate educational adjustment among business oriented students	10	3	4	3	20	60	3.0	Positive	5	2	1	2	10	30	3.0	Positive	50	20	5	25	100	295	3.0	Positive
12	Counselling on occupational choice will motivate business oriented students to appreciate entrepreneurship	12	2	3	3	20	63	3.2	Positive	6	1	1	2	10	31	3.1	Positive	60	10	20	10	100	320	3.2	Positive
13	Comprehensive occupational information will provide relevant insight to students on business enterprise	13	2	2	3	20	65	3.3	Positive	7	1	1	1	10	35	4.0	Positive	80	5	5	10	100	355	4.0	Positive
14	Counselling on educational diversification will expose students for acquisition of entrepreneurial skills through apprenticeship training	14	2	2	2	20	68	3.4	Positive	7	2	0	1	10	35	4.0	Positive	60	20	5	15	100	325	3.3	Positive
15	Counselling for occupational adjustment will highlight the prerequisites students should possess for entrepreneurial success	12	4	3	1	20	67	3.4	Positive	6	2	2	0	10	34	3.4	Positive	60	20	10	10	100	330	3.3	Positive
Total mean \bar{X}																									
Cluster mean \bar{X}																									

Notes. TF = Total frequency; TP = Total point.

In Table 3, the cluster means of 3.3, 3.5, and 3.4 on the responses of EA, GC, and CT respectively indicate that the three categories of educators have positive opinions that guidance on educational and occupational adjustments can equip students for entrepreneurship. A close look at the cluster means of the three categories

reveals that no significant difference exists among the opinions of the educators on the issue under investigation.

Discussion

The findings of this study generally revealed that guidance and counselling services will have positive impact on the development of entrepreneurial skills among secondary school students. These findings are in agreement with the finding of Egbochuku (2008) that guidance and counselling has a great impact on student's adjustment in many aspects of life endeavour. Therefore, all the stakeholders in education industry should give extensive supports to school counselling programme for it to succeed and achieve the desired impact.

Impact of Information Service on Motivation of Students for Entrepreneurship

The opinions of the three categories of educators used in this study to ascertain the impact of information service on equipping students for entrepreneurship upheld that information service will be a useful tool for giving students the desired exposure for acquisition of entrepreneurial skills with the cluster mean scores of 3.12 for EA, 4.0 for GC, and 3.1 for CT. These findings are in agreement with the views of Sexton and Smilor (1997) in "entrepreneurship" which stated that entrepreneurship development should be about helping people to acquire dynamic business skills and insight which will engender curiosity and drive in them for business enterprise.

Impact of Guidance and Counselling on Personal-Social Adjustment to Equip Students for Entrepreneurship

The three categories of educators viz.: EA, GC, and CT used for this study registered mean scores of 3.3, 3.3, and 3.3 respectively as indicated in Table 2. These findings suggest that in the opinion of the educators, guidance, and counselling will intensively equip students for sound public relation, self-understanding, and better management skills which will facilitate entrepreneurship development. These findings are in agreement with previous research reports of Tomecko and Kolshorn (1996) on "promoting entrepreneurship" which highlighted that for business enterprises to thrive, the managers and directors must be versatile in public relations and financial and personal managements. They went further to stress that sociability and self-understandings are essential attributes for business promotion.

Impact of Guidance on Educational and Occupational Adjustments for Students' Entrepreneurship Development

The mean scores of 3.3 for EA, 3.5 for GC, and 3.4 for CT indicated a unanimous opinion of the educators used for this study that guidance for better educational and occupational adjustments can enhance students' entrepreneurship development.

The findings tend to suggest that if students are assisted to harness their abilities and potentials they will be more productive educationally and occupationally, and hence, become more enterprising to attain sustainable livelihood which will in turn contribute to national development.

The findings of this study have a strong support by the findings of Obeta and Dimeze (2007) which indicated that school guidance programme help students to build self-concept realistically, expose students to the world of work, and help students to assess their interests, abilities, and values in relation to their occupational choice. By these outcomes again, guidance and counselling can contribute to individual productivity and national development in general.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of this study have clearly indicated the relevance of guidance and counselling programme for entrepreneurship development among students and the youths in general. As an aspect of entrepreneurship development, school guidance and counselling should be expanded to include structural training and institution-building services for the enhancement of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge among students and young school leavers including school dropouts. This innovation is important so as to reap maximally the full benefits of guidance and counselling programme for national development.

Government should therefore, provide essential facilities including human and material resources, workshops, and in-service training to maximize both input and output of GC for entrepreneurship development.

Since entrepreneurship is conducive to economic growth and the creation of employment, government programmes and policies should have significant impact to boost the level of entrepreneurship within a country.

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