

**Effect of Career Group Counselling Technique on Vocational Awareness
and Aspiration among Senior Secondary School Students in
Yobe State, Nigeria**

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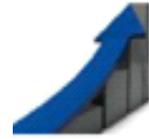
Abstract

This study examines the effects of career group counselling technique on vocational awareness and aspiration among senior secondary school students in Yobe State, Nigeria. Pretest-posttest, control group quasi-experimental design was used in the study. Multi-stage sampling technique was used in sampling 120 participants from twelve (12) schools in three (3) local government areas in the state. The respondents were measured with validated scale of 0.78 reliability coefficient and the data obtained was analyzed using T-test statistical analysis. Two (2) research objectives with corresponding hypotheses were formulated and tested at 95% level of confidence. The results showed that there was significant difference in the vocational awareness and aspiration of senior secondary school students' exposed to career group counselling technique and those in the control group expose to lecture on current health issues ($t=58.43$; $p<0.05$) and there was significant difference in the vocational awareness and aspiration of male and female senior secondary school students ($t=38.41$; $p<0.05$). In view of these findings, the study recommended that educational stakeholders should intensify their effort to organize seminars/conferences on the implications of career group counselling technique as effective interventions towards enhancing vocational awareness and aspiration and that secondary school teachers should emphasis during their lesson, the career implications of subjects so that student will see how individual subjects relate to existing vocations, thus, increasing their knowledge of occupations.

Keywords: Career, Group Counselling Technique, Vocational Awareness and Aspiration

Introduction

Vocational awareness and aspiration are important and vital aspects of education; this is because it assists the students to understand and know what he or she would like to do in future. Career choice supposes to start at the lowest levels of education (Nursery and Primary). It starts



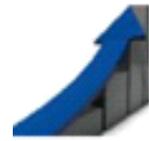
with concrete objects like pictures of people of different professions such as the military officer, the doctor, the banker, the nurse, the lawyer, the teacher, the pilot, the engineer, the plumber, etc (Mallum, 2015). Occupational information could, however, be introduced to students especially those in the senior secondary schools by simply classification and description of different job types that can be observed within the community (Sambo, 2008). In recent past, it was very easy to choose a vacation but today it is very difficult because of ma's advancement in technological development and science related orientation and achievement. Denga (1982) warns:

“Gone are days when education was regarded as an insurance policy for any type of job. In the past, a graduate from the university, secondary school and even primary school was generally regarded as qualified for a variety of jobs that were available regarded. In fact one could shut his eyes and randomly choose his occupation from among a pool that was considered crucial since labour market was largely virgin.”

Vocational choice is mostly confusing to learners due to the numerous subjects offered in senior secondary schools as enunciated in the National Policy on Education (NPE) (2013). Parental background such as (parental educational level, parental socio-economic status and parental value and expectation), peer pressure and inadequate career guidance affects the career choice of the student in one way or the other (Muraina, 2018). The process of career choice is very critical more especially at secondary school. Secondary school level is the stage for reality testing of self-concept where students become fully aware of their preferred life style and increasingly become conscious of what they can do and what they cannot do (Sambo, 2008). The period is actually when students engage in applying for entry into university and other college of higher learning. They become fully involved in educational and vocational information that relate to their potentials.

Bulus (1989) warns that, the current wave of unemployment gives us the impression that we are over producing education people, but this is not true, but we educating them wrongly. Career choice requires certain guidance and counselling in selecting subjects and majors for the students. Furthermore, with increasing competition in the labour market, it is critical for students to know what other information requirement, besides the subject counts, Mallum (2015) also advised that, Career choice is not something that one can choose irrationally. Such other requirements may include additional skills and experiences, internships, and co-curricular activities which provide experiences and competences (Muraina, 2018).

Career development process involves gathering information about the current trends in the labour market such as availability of the job opportunities, salary, job hazards, requirement for the job and process of advancement are some important consideration in career choice, thus information about the world of work helps one to select appropriate subjects, and courses, as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. School guidance and counselling officers should help students access this information from ministries, pamphlets, Books, Bulletins, Web

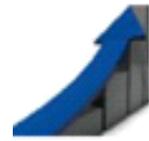


sites, Journals, Organizing career day and the mass media (Owoyele & Muraina, 2015). Apart from course of study, employers are looking for exposure and experience of the candidate who can fit in many set ups, work in various environments, deal with diversity of cultures and backgrounds, and be committed, innovative and creative. Thus, school counsellors should encourage development of these attributes through engagement in co-curricular activities (Sadker & Sadker, 2000).

Vocational awareness and aspiration of students' is very important to every nation especially a developing nation like Nigeria (Omeje, 2007). Bakie cited in Mallum (2015) lament that, today in Nigeria in all cities and villages, we see lunatics loitering the streets, crime and juvenile delinquency are on increase, and frustration is becoming the rampart in the society. These therefore calls that, people need to have the knowledge and information on national manpower resources, requirements, analysis, trends in employment and unemployment (Omeje, 2007). The choice of a vocation therefore is one of the most important decisions one makes in life. A mistake is castle in time, money and moral; hence the proper career guidance is imperative (Mallum, 2015).

Nowadays, the issue of vocational awareness and aspiration has attracted the interest of many researchers and government. Vocational choice is a developmental process and spans almost through person's life time (Ohiwerei & Nwosu, 2009). The choice determines satisfaction one expects to get from his work and the opportunities he has for promotion and advancement. Kemjika (1995) observed that most students have inadequate and insufficient information about different jobs, courses of study and other requirements. Without detailed and adequate information about occupations, students many jump blindly into jobs to become frustrated and unhappy later in life and perhaps at such times when a retreat would no longer be easy or possible (Omeje, 2007). This study therefore focused on effects of career group counselling technique on vocational awareness and aspiration of secondary school students' in Yobe State, Nigeria.

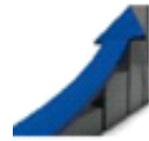
Career counselling technique is one of the counselling interventions that involve helping students' to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter it, and progress in it (Oladele, 2007). Thus career counselling technique is not one step activity but a process that runs through the entire process of learning. According to Oladele (2007) Frank Parsons was seen as the founder and father of modern vocational guidance and his work had a lasting influence to date. In the period between 1908 and 1909, Parsons established the Vocational Bureau at Boston in the U.S.A, which was attached to the Civil Service House in Boston, later to become part of Harvard University. To Parson (1909) vocational guidance was that of matching individual with the available occupations, to enable them a living. Parson further saw vocational guidance as every person duty, provided the information about the individual and the occupations are known. It is in fact a life-long process beginning from birth to death, having various stages and milestones through life. Vocational counselling strategy is a phase of education, which enables individuals to comprehend the world of work, essential human needs, the dignity of labour, and the value of work (Oladele, 2007). Career counselling technique is a component of counselling therapies that



contain vital activity in educational system. It is consumed by learners and helps them set proper educational and developmental goals as well as pursuance of the right type of education (Odo, 2015). Vocational counselling strategy lays emphasis on participation in occupations of economic and social values (Patton & McMahon, 1999). It assists the students and applicants in exploring available training and career, as well as to gain insight into the world of work and acquire the value and dignity of work (Oladele, 2007). Career counselling technique focuses on career education, career awareness, career planning, and placement. Thus, Career counselling technique is a precursor to vocational counselling and the two go hand in hand in preparing the youth for future occupational role. The greatest challenge for schools today is to create a clear connectivity between schooling and career, and to make learners understand this link which can easily be achieved through vocational counselling strategy (Joyce & Lydia, 2015; Patton & McMahon, 1999).

The moderating variable in this study is gender which is either being male or female (Masculine or Feminine). Researchers have however, noted that gender differences are not biological, but rather are due to socialization and discrimination (Watkins, Kaplan, Brief, Shull, Dietz, Mansfield & Cohen, 2006). Literatures portrays the historic and contemporary stereotyping of women rightfully belongs only to the home, should only work in teaching, nursing or secretarial profession, are not good bosses, are absents from work more frequently than men, become emotionally in crisis situation (Mallum, 2000). Traditional beliefs once entrenched in an individual's belief system will shape his/her way of looking at the world, the career opportunities available, as well as personal vocational aspirations, drives and efforts. Career interests and awareness have sex differences but these differences may be more due to socialization rather than biological influences. However, there is evidence to the effect that levels of sex based hormones such as testosterone as well as personality types such as neuroticism may be responsible for differences in vocational awareness and aspiration (Feldman, 2000).

Based on the RIASEC model, most women tend to be social and artistic, unlike men who tend to be investigative (Weis, Firker & Hennig, 2007). Men and women tend to be geared towards very different occupations, and there exists a lot of segregation in the workforce. Mallum (2000) lenin: there is no real freedom nor there can be; as women are handicapped by men's legal privilege. There is also an indication that men and women value different aspects of work and therefore, make different career choices, as a result of formed occupational preferences (Feldman, 2000). An occupational personality is not an inherent characteristic, but rather a product of the interaction between the environment and other individual characteristics. Parental influences, family, education, and social experiences may contribute to divergent occupational personalities between men and women (Rosenbloom, Ash, Dupont & Coder, 2007). There are observable gender differences in the way students perceive their academic and social self-efficacy beliefs. Female student have a higher sense of efficacy and are more resistant to peer pressure than males, and this leads to higher career awareness and aspiration among girls. The higher sense of self-efficacy beliefs also leads to more control in females and this contributes to inhibit depression among girls (Vecchio, Gerbino, Pastorelli, Bove & Caprara, 2007). Over the



past twenty-five years a lot of research efforts have been made in the area of career awareness to understand the problem of career conflict (Cohen, Chartrand & Jowdy, 2005; Owoyele & Muraina, 2015). The belief that young girls are less useful than boys in carrying the name of the family similarly affects their vocational awareness and aspiration. Majority of the available studies did not address career awareness despite the enormity of the problem among secondary school students. Presently a survey of literature indicates that there have been widespread studies in the area of guidance and counselling but there are still gaps specifically in effects of career counselling technique on vocational awareness and aspiration of secondary school students in Yobe State, Nigeria.

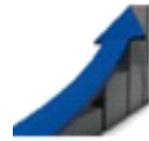
Statement of the Problem

One of the principle aims of education is to provide manpower for the economic sector of the country. In this light, among its objectives, education is seen as a powerful tool and indeed a precursor to career entry. In order for the country to maximise its production potential, the workforce must be made up of appropriate individuals working in appropriate occupational fields (Muraina, 2018). Appropriateness here goes beyond training to include mental and psychological dispositions, interest, attitude, and ability to adjust to the challenges of the occupation. Lack of proper career education and career guidance in Nigerian schools, may have led to inappropriate career choices among students. This may eventually have led to misfits in the labour force due to lack of a proper match between the person and his/her career. The current mass unemployment in Nigeria is threatening the career awareness of school leavers. Students are expected to choose their careers in the senior secondary school. More often than not students rush to parents for guidance as to which subject and career to choose. However, choosing the right subject combination leading to the right profession can make the difference between enjoying and detesting the career in future. The consequences of unrealistic vocational choice and career awareness have been failure of students to enter appropriate higher institutions to pursue courses of their choice, frustration, having to drop out of school, inability to get employed because of lack of relevant job requirements and qualifications and poor vocational adjustment on employment. As such, this study focused on effects of career group counselling technique on vocational awareness and aspiration of secondary school students in Yobe State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the effects of career group counselling technique on the vocational awareness and aspiration of secondary school students' in the experimental group and those in the control group.
2. Determine the effects of career group counselling technique on the vocational awareness and aspiration of male and female secondary school students'



Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

- H₀₁:** The effect of career group counselling technique does not significantly differ between students' in the experimental group and the students in the control group.
- H₀₂:** The effect of career group counselling technique does not significantly differ between male and female secondary school students' in the experimental group

Methodology

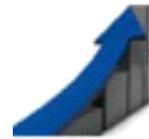
The study adopted the pretest-posttest, control group quasi-experimental design. The population for the study comprised 7,115 public senior secondary school students' in 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Yobe State, Nigeria (TSB, 2019). Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study. The first stage involved the use of purposive sampling technique to select 3 LGAs. The second stage witnessed the selection of 1 public secondary school from each sampled LGAs, making the total of 3 secondary schools. Forty (40) secondary school students from intact classes were selected. On the whole, 120 secondary school students' were drawn for the study. However, the whole population was grouped into two, one group formed career group counselling technique class and the remaining one served as control group and received lectures on current health issues.

Instrument for Data Collection

Vocational Awareness and Aspiration Scale

Career awareness scale developed by Ogola (2002) was used to measure the career awareness of participants. The scale consists of twenty (20) items aimed at unveiling the respondents' level of career awareness. The items were built on a 4 point scales which are: 1 (strongly agreed), 2 (agreed), 3 (disagreed) to 4 (strongly disagreed). To establish the reliability of the scale, the internal consistency was computed and Cronbach's alpha of .85 was obtained.

The study was carried out in four different but interconnected phases: pre-session activities, pre-test, treatment and post-test. At the pre-session, activities included the screening, recruitment and assignment of participants to the experimental and control group. Advertisement was made to request for participants in the school. A preliminary meeting was organized to familiarize with the interested participants and to solicit their willingness to participate in the study. At the pre-test stage, vocational awareness and aspiration scale was administered to the participants. Participants in the experimental group only were exposed to 10 sessions of treatment. Each session spanned for an average of 50 minutes. Though the control group was not treated, they were exposed to a lecture titled "Current Health Issues". The post-test was administered following the conclusion of the programme. T-test statistical analysis was employed to analyze the data in this study. T-test was used to establish any significant difference in the vocational awareness and aspiration of participant in treatment group and control as well as male and female.



Result

H01: The effect of career group counselling technique does not significantly differ between students' in the experimental group and the students in the control group.

Table 1: t-test of Students Exposed to Career Group Counselling Technique and those Exposed to Conventional Lecture Method on Current Health Issues

Groups	N	MEAN	t-cal	df	P-value	Sig
Experimental	54	69.43	58.75	118	0.000	0.05
Control	66	47.12				

In Table 1 above, t-calculated is 58.75, P-value is 0.00 at degree of freedom 118 and level of significance, 0.05. P-value is therefore less than level of significance. The null hypothesis is hereby rejected, meaning that there is significant effect of career counselling on vocational awareness and aspiration between students in the experimental group and students in the control group.

H02: The effect of career group counselling technique does not significantly differ between male and female secondary school students' in the experimental group

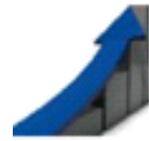
Table 2: Independent t-test of Male and Female Students expose to Career Group Counselling Technique

Gender	N	MEAN	t-cal	df	P-value	Sig
Male	24	51.65	38.41	52	0.000	0.05
Female	30	63.97				

In Table 2 above, t-calculated is 38.41, P-value 0.00 at degree of freedom 52 and level of significance 0.05. P-value is therefore less than level of significance. The null hypothesis is hereby rejected, meaning that there is a significant difference in career counselling technique between male and female students in the experimental group.

Discussion of Findings

The result in the Table 1 showed that there was significant effect between vocational awareness and aspiration of secondary school students exposed to career counselling technique and those in the control group. The mean value of the table 1 has also revealed that the students in career counselling technique had higher vocational awareness and aspiration than their counterpart in the control group. This further indicates that the treatment has significant effects on vocational awareness and aspiration of secondary school students. In line with this finding, career counselling technique is found as a phase of education, which enables individuals to comprehend the world of work, essential human needs, the dignity of labour, and the value of work (Oladele, 2007). Moreover, the finding has agreed with the earlier finding of Muraina (2018) whose finding reveals that there was significant difference in the career awareness of in-



school adolescents exposed to vocational counselling strategy and those in the control group. Career counselling technique is a component of counselling therapies that consumed by learners and helps them set proper educational and developmental goals as well as pursuance of the right type of education (Odo, 2015). Career counselling technique lays emphasis on participation in occupations of economic and social values (Patton & McMahon, 1999). It assists the consumers, (particularly students) in exploring available training and occupations, as well as to gain insight into the world of work and acquire the value and dignity of work (Joyce & Lydia, 2011). Thus, Career counselling technique is a precursor to vocational counselling and the two go hand in hand in preparing the youth for future occupational activities. The greatest challenge for schools today is to create a clear connectivity between schooling and career, and to make learners understand this link which can easily be achieved through vocational counselling strategy (Abiola, 2014; Patton & McMahon, 1999).

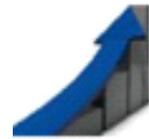
The result of Table 2 revealed that there was no significant difference between the vocational awareness and aspiration of secondary school students based on gender. The mean value of the table 2 further revealed that female students had slightly higher career awareness and aspiration than their male students' counterpart but the difference is not statistically significant. This further meant that gender had no significant effects on vocational awareness and aspiration of secondary school student. This is consistent with the study of Watkins et al (2006) who found that gender differences are not biological, but rather are due to socialization and discrimination. However, there is evidence to the effect that levels of sex based hormones such as testosterone as well as personality types such as neuroticism may be responsible for differences in career interests (Feldman, 2000). Based on the RIASEC model, most women tend to be social and artistic, unlike men who tend to be investigative (Weis et'al 2007). Men and women tend to be geared towards very different occupations, and there exists a lot of segregation in the workforce. There is also an indication that men and women value different aspects of work and therefore, make different career choices, as a result of formed occupational preferences (Feldman, 2000).

Counselling Implication

Individuals' unique configuration of capabilities, potentials and weakness are stable for students more especially at secondary level, hence should be measured at this time to provide an understanding of the person to guide him/her towards selection of vacation. Since school subjects are also based on abilities and interests, career counselling can help students match their intellectual ability with their areas of interest to enable them make proper choice. Thus, career counselling is not only for applicant but also for students. If guided well in subject combination, no difficulty will be experience after graduation. Counselling was viewed as simply information dissemination rather than decipher of such information.

Conclusion

Vocational awareness and aspiration is a core developmental challenge for students' in secondary school. Establishing a strong sense of identity provides individuals with a sense of



continuity and sameness, and plays favourably into psychosocial functioning. The study was restricted to the use of career counselling technique on vocational awareness and aspiration. Base on the findings of this study, persistent low vocational awareness of Nigerian secondary school students need not to continue indefinitely. There is hope that with the improvement of career group counselling technique skill, the situation can be changed for the better. The issue of vocational awareness has attracted the interest of many individuals and government. Career development or choice is a developmental process and spans almost through person's life time. The choice determines satisfaction one expects to get from his work and the opportunities he has for promotion and advancement.

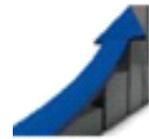
Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations were made:

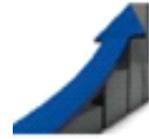
1. Educational stakeholders should intensify their effort to organize seminars/conferences on the implications of career group counselling strategy as effective interventions towards enhancing vocational awareness among secondary school students.
2. Secondary school teachers should emphasis during their lesson, the career implications of subjects so that student will see how individual subjects relate to existing vocations, thus increasing their knowledge of occupations.
3. The students in the secondary school should be encouraged and trained on the effective usage of these interventions (career group counselling technique). This will make the students to adopt effective attitude towards enhancing their vocational awareness and aspiration.

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