

Business Subject Teachers' Rating of the Roles of Vocational Guidance on Career Preparation of Secondary School Students in Imo State

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Abstract

The present study was designed to determine business subject teachers, rating of the role vocation guidance in career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of this study comprised 909 business subject teachers in all the 469 public secondary schools in Imo State. The entire population was studied since the size is manageable. Thus, census sampling was done. The instrument data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Vocational Guidance and Career Preparation Questionnaire (VGCPQ). The research instrument was face-validated by three experts. A trial testing of the instrument for the internal consistency was established with Cronbach Alpha method and a reliability coefficient of .80 and 0.73 was realized. Copies of the questionnaire were personally administered on business subject teachers by the researcher with the help of five research assistants. The data collected for the study was analyzed using mean ratings and standard deviation to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity of the respondents. Mean rating revealed that vocational guidance plays significant roles on career orientation and career development of senior secondary school students in Imo State. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that vocational guidance helps senior secondary school student's career preparation through career orientation and career development. It was recommended among others that vocational guidance should be introduced into the secondary school curriculum as a compulsory subject for all students to be provided with quality instruction that will enable them chart a career path for career progression and hence the present study was designed to determine business subject teachers, rating of the role of vocation guidance.

Keywords: Preparation, Rating, Roles, Subject Teachers, Vocational-Guidance

Introduction

Education is the bedrock for survival, growth and development of any society. It is relevant to individual and societal growth and contributes significantly to the economic, social, political and cultural development of the human society world-wide. This is why Okolocha and Odimegwa (2019) described it as an instrument per excellence for sustainable national development and global competitiveness. It is a basic necessity of life and an important factor which brings about changes both in citizens and the nation. Education enables people to compete favorably with the best of the world and has a long-standing connection with the economy. According to Agi and Yellow (2013), education is critical to the development of human resources, impartation of appropriate skills, knowledge and attitude. It is basic for transformation, industrialization and socio-economic advancement.

In Africa, where growth and development are essential for poverty alleviation, education particularly secondary education becomes a critical factor for any meaningful development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). The main purpose of education is to transmit wisdom, knowledge and values from one generation to another in order to prepare young people to be active and productive members who contribute to the maintenance and development of the society. Education also has positive influence on the population, health, nutrition of a society and increases the value and efficiency of the labour force. The unemployment problems facing different nations of the world can best be addressed through functional education system where vocational guidance is given a pride of place.

Summarizing Parson's theory Anyamene and Ngwakwe (2020) discussed vocational guidance as a process of assisting an individual to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter into it and progress. The authors also added that ideal career choices are based on matching personal traits (aptitude, abilities, resources, personality) with job factors (related knowledge & skills, wages & environment) to produce the best conditions for vocational success. Similarly, Kagan and Havemann (2014) described vocational guidance as the technique of helping a person to select the right lifetime occupation, often through test of attitudes and interests.

According to Plant (2009), selecting a career is a difficult task and most crucial decision in someone's life. Many students leave secondary school without a clear goal of what to do next. After leaving school, they are often faced with myriad of problems such as seeking for admission for further studies, looking for employment and adjusting to the hard conditions of the society. In some cases, the students pursue higher education programmes in any appealing fields without due regard to the marketability and employability of the graduates. Vocational preparation and career are a continuous aspect of life and cannot end on a spot. According to Alutu (2011), career choice and preparation should be initiated as early as the nursery school years through primary, secondary and tertiary school levels. Career preparation of students refers to the series of educational experiences given to children from cradle to old age that enable them to make career decisions. Career preparation of students can be influenced positively where there is adequate vocational guidance. The vocation or profession of a person determines, to a reasonable extent, a person's mode of living and economic prospects. Similarly, a particular

working atmosphere and service structure influences attitude and behaviour of an individual towards work and life generally. A particular line of work is the focal way to accomplish goals, materialize ambitions and realize dreams in the twisting and meandering life courses. Lack of awareness about careers has grave implications for the future of students because changing from one profession to another leads to waste of energy and resources. The education acquired by individuals and efforts in growing in one profession may appear less useful after changing from one line of work to another. Changing of vocation also generates frustration in educated people because of comparison with previous professions and looking for future avenues in new services. Therefore, appropriate information and guidelines are mandatory for an individual in choosing suitable vocation according to aptitudes.

In Nigeria, many senior secondary school students seem to lack adequate career occupational information before they enter into occupations. Hence, a contributing factor in entrepreneurship gap Ode (2017). Many youths gear up for an increasingly complicated and fast changing society which results to a complex need for personal species social adjustment, economic and vocational awareness among others (Adegoke, 2014). In view of increased changes in the world of work and number of opportunities in the society and to labour market, the need for vocational guidance has increased tremendously. People now realize the fact that everyone cannot become an engineer, doctor or lawyer and that individuals need to explore fields that agree with their interests and abilities. This may be most effectively realized through quality vocational guidance from business subject teachers who are experts in vocational education.

Business subject teachers are those with requisite training in business education in the Universities and Colleges of Education employed to teach subjects like economics, commerce, book-keeping/accounting, business studies at the secondary school level. Teachers of business subjects use different methods and strategies to deliver instructions in their subject areas to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes in students to enable them contribute to societal development. Business educators are expected to possess and utilize relevant knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes in discharging their functions which include guiding secondary school students into vocational lines that agree with their interests and abilities.

Vocational guidance is now essential in secondary schools because many students are not sure of suitable careers options and their requirement to guide their choice. For this reason, they occupy themselves in reading up courses without practical experience. The federal Government policy on education (2004) authenticate that every student should access counseling services. In tandem Otuya (2011) discovered the vocational of business education in secondary schools cannot be attained without sufficient guidance offered by business educators. Business educators training in most universities in Nigeria involve vocational guidance. A good career decision made at the right time can contribute immensely to make a student's future successful and pleasant while a wrong one can ruin it. Despite having a clear idea of what one wants to achieve in life, some students may not know the career path to follow in order to acquire requisite

knowledge and skills to succeed in the career. Vocational guidance can help direct students appropriately by giving them clear cut views of what they can expect from various careers and academic programmes they may be considering.

Vocational guidance serves as a pivotal tool in molding, rebuilding and assuaging the risks of having bad career preparation by secondary school students. Career preparation, in the context of this study focuses on career orientations and career developments. Career orientation and development are very important factors that determine the future of students as they impact on them throughout their lives. The sum total of what a student becomes in life depends on the preparation the student has made for a chosen career.

Indeed, vocational and career related issues are salient across different cultures and nationalities (Leung, 2014). In the current era of globalization, individuals are affected by an array of work-related concerns. Research shows that secondary school students in Nigeria generally and the South-East in particular are faced with the problem of vocational or career choice towards the end of their programme (Egbo, 2017). This is as a result of lack of adequate vocational guidance programmes in secondary schools, necessitating some forms of intervention to facilitate students vocational and career readiness.

Like many developing countries, Nigeria is faced with the problem of inability of her educators to relate education to employment opportunities (Okoye, 2010). This is apparently so in the nation's secondary schools because many teachers appear to be incapable of assisting students to have a vivid picture of the world of work. Olayinka (2011) opined that obtaining good grades in examination. To acquire certificates either for admission into higher institutions or obtain good employment has become the main goal of education to many people, rather than acquisition of knowledge and skills relevant to the career area of interest. Even with limited subject options offered by many Nigerian secondary schools, some students seem to have difficulty in choosing subjects to study for the West African School Certificate Examination because their teachers fail to provide them with relevant information on career options. Many students do not know the relationship between the subjects they are taught in school and their dream careers. It is based on this background that the study on the role of vocational guidance and career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State was conceived. The subjects for this study are male and female business subject teachers with different levels of teaching experience. These variables can influence subjects their views on the role of vocational guidance in career preparation of secondary school students in Imo State. For instance, Jackson (2014) reported that gender effect was a factor on the extent of acquisition of vocational skills for employability by business students in West Australia. Whether and how gender will affect the views of the subjects of this study need to be determined. Furthermore, number of years of teaching experience may determine the effectiveness of vocational guidance and instructional strategy of a teacher (Mang, Campbell, Ross & Boyd, 2013). Olisa (2009) posited that experienced educators can carefully select effective instructional strategies that would help to guide students. The study also determined whether and how level of experience of business

educators will influence the rating of the subjects of this study and the role of vocational guidance on career preparation of the students.

Statement of the Problem

Vocational guidance appears to have lost considerable cognizance and emphasis in secondary schools in Nigeria and Imo State in particular. Many secondary school students leave school without clear direction of what to do next. The situation was not like this in the 1970's when secondary school graduates could easily gain employment, take to craftsmanship or opt for further education. This has resulted in many of them roaming the streets of major cities confused and frustrated.

This perhaps shows that present day students, are not properly guided on vocational areas to follow based on their abilities and personality or how to cope with life after school. Parker (2011) and Dixon (2013) lamented graduates' unpreparedness to compete for available opportunity in the world of work. The authors indicted schools for not guiding students on rudiments of critical thinking and life matters that will help them to cope with the real world of work. Currently, increasing and emerging technological practices are influencing the job demands of industries and institutional organizations (Okolocha and Odimmune, 2019). Okolocha and Odimmune further acknowledged that employers are expressing dissatisfaction with graduates' overall preparedness for jobs. Therefore, the problem of this study implies that these students are not receiving the type of guidance and training that will prepare them for successful careers in a globalized world. This could be the failure of the government and secondary school administration to institutionalize suitable vocational guidance programmes for the students. This development seems to diminish the possibility of students' career success and requires a study to highlight the role of vocational guidance in career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo state. This will provide an empirical evidence which relevant stakeholders will use for objective remedial actions.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the role of vocational guidance in career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State.

Specifically, the study determines the rating of business subject teachers on the role of vocational guidance in:

1. Career orientation of senior secondary school students in Imo State.
2. Career development of senior secondary school students in Imo State

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions. In the rating of business subject teachers:

1. What are the roles of vocational guidance on career orientation of senior secondary school students in Imo State?
2. What are the roles of vocational guidance on career development of senior secondary school students in Imo State?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Business subject teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the roles of vocational guidance on career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State on the basis of gender.
2. Business subject teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the roles of vocational guidance on career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State on the basis of teaching experience.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design to determine business teachers' rating of the roles of vocational guidance on the career preparation of secondary schools' students in Imo State. The population of this study comprised 909 out of 994 business subject teachers in all the 469 public secondary schools in Imo State whose responses were received. The entire population was studied since the size was manageable. Thus, no sampling was done. The instrument that was used to elicit data for the study was a structured questionnaire titled "Vocational guidance and career preparation questionnaire (VGCPQ) developed by the researchers based on insight gained from review of related literature and the variables in the study. It consists of two parts; A and B. Part A contains two items on respondents' demographic data while Part B has two sections of B1 to B2, with career orientation and career development items. The instrument was structured on a 4-point rating scale of strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). 909 questionnaires administered were returned. The research instrument was face-validated by two experts in business education from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, and one expert in measurement and evaluation from Imo State University, Owerri. To determine the reliability of the research instruments, copies of the questionnaire were administered for the purpose of obtaining the internal consistency of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha method for establishing a reliability coefficient was used. The result of the analysis yielded co-efficient of 0.80, and 0.73, B1 and B2 respectively.

Copies of the questionnaire were personally administered on business subject teachers by the researcher with the help of five research assistants. The data collected for the study was analyzed using mean ratings and standard deviation to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity of the respondent's mean rating. The hypotheses were tested with t-test on a 0.05 level of significance. A null hypothesis was not be rejected where the calculated P-value is less than the critical or table value and rejected where the calculated P-value is equal to or greater than the critical value.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the roles of vocational guidance in career orientation of senior secondary school students in Imo State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Business Teachers rating of Responses on the roles of Vocational Guidance on students Career Orientation

SN	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Be acquainted with opportunities for vocational placement of higher education	3.81	.455	Agree
2	Be acquainted with available assistance, scholarship for vocational courses and programmes in higher institutions	3.24	.486	Agree
3	Connect with vocational mentoring, sharing of knowledge that cover job skills, wide range of operations in organizations	3.68	.554	Agree
4	Acquire adequate information about individual potentialities for career success	3.29	.529	Agree
5	Develop self-awareness and confidence	3.51	.600	Agree
6	Be impacted with guided knowledge for vocational and career success	3.45	.540	Agree
7	Break prevailing pressure of culture in vocational inclination	3.42	.706	Agree
8	Chart a career path for career progression and advancement	3.35	.549	Agree
9	Link career needs with organization goals objectives	3.49	.558	Agree
10	Acquire professional skills and competencies for effective performance	3.51	.570	Agree
Aggregate		3.47	.215	Agree

Data presented in Table 1 revealed the mean and standard deviation of business subject teachers' rating of responses on the role of vocational guidance on career orientation of senior secondary school students. The Table shows that the mean responses for the 10 items on career orientation range from 3.24 to 3.81, while the standard deviation range from .46 to .60. The mean responses of the teachers reveal that they agree that the 10 items are the roles of vocational guidance on senior career orientation of secondary school students. From the table, the relatively

low aggregated standard indicates that there is relative homogeneity in the mean responses of the teachers. Therefore, aggregate mean responses of 3.47 also depict that vocational guidance plays roles on secondary school students' career orientation.

Research Question 2: What are the roles of vocational guidance on career development of senior secondary school students in Imo State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Business Teachers rating of Responses on the roles of Vocational Guidance on Career Development

SN	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
11	Understanding of the skills and competencies demands for career occupation	3.79	.433	Agree
12	Enhance capacity to analytically weigh one's suitability for a job	3.23	.480	Agree
13	Identify strengths and blind spots needed to improve one's skills	3.51	.703	Agree
14	Learn about different roles in industries that match one's abilities and interest	3.30	.515	Agree
15	Develop career plans for easy career progression and advancement	3.50	.582	Agree
16	Develop discovery and creative abilities for quality vocational success and advancement	3.41	.575	Agree
17	Develop skills in interpersonal relationship	3.38	.599	Agree
18	Develop abilities to appreciate self-worth, boldness and confidentiality in oneself.	3.47	.558	Agree
19	Develop logical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities needed for innovative performance in vocational job	3.43	.573	Agree
20	Develop communication and time management skills	3.42	.570	Agree
	Aggregate	3.44	.215	Agree

The results shown in Table 2 showed the mean and standard deviation of business subject teachers' responses on the role of vocational guidance on career development of senior secondary school students. The Table shows that the mean responses for the 10 items on career development range from 3.23 to 3.79, while the standard deviation range from .43 to .70. From the mean responses, the teachers' mean agree that the 10 items are the roles of vocational guidance on career development of senior secondary school students. The relatively low aggregated standard indicates that there is relative homogeneity in the mean responses of the teachers. From the Table, the aggregate mean responses of 3.44 reveals that vocational guidance plays roles on the career development senior secondary school students.

Null Hypothesis 1: Business subject teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the roles of the vocational guidance on career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State on the basis of gender.

Table 3: t-test Summary of Business Teachers rating Responses on the roles of Vocational Guidance on Career Orientation based on Gender Difference

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-test	p-value	Decision
Male	393	3.50	.216	907	2.694	.007	S
Female	516	3.46	.212				

Note. S = significant, SD = standard deviation

Table 3 presented the t-test on the difference between the mean ratings of male and female business subject teachers regarding the roles of vocational guidance on the preparation of senior secondary school students. The aggregate mean ratings of the male and female teachers are 3.50 and 3.46 respectively; while the corresponding standard deviations are .216 and .212. Testing at 0.05 level of significance, the difference between the mean ratings of male and female business subject teachers on the roles of vocational guidance on the career preparation is significant ($t = 2.694, p = .007 < .05$). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, business subject teachers differ significantly in their mean ratings on the roles of the vocational guidance on career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State on the basis of gender.

Null Hypothesis 2: Business subject teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the roles of the vocational guidance on career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State on the basis of teaching experience.

Table 4: The t-test Summary of Business Teachers Responses on the roles of Vocational Guidance on Career Orientation based on Difference in Experience

Teaching Experience	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Less Experience (1-10 years)	125	3.47	.207	907	-.261	.794	NS
More Experienced (Above 10 years)	784	3.48	.216				

Note. NS = not significant, SD = standard deviation

Data shown in Table 4 represented the t-test on the difference between the mean ratings of less experienced and more experienced business subject teachers with respect to the roles of vocational guidance on the career preparation of senior secondary school students. The aggregate mean ratings of the less experienced and more experienced teachers are 3.47 and 3.48

respectively; while the corresponding standard deviations are .21 and .22. Testing at 0.05 level of significance, the difference between the mean ratings of less experienced and more experienced business subject teachers on the roles of vocational guidance on the career orientation is not significant ($t = -.261, p = .794 > .05$). Thus, the null hypothesis is not regarded. Therefore, business subject teachers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the roles of vocational guidance on career preparation of senior secondary school students in Imo State on the basis of teaching experience.

Discussion of Findings

The roles of vocational guidance on career orientation of senior secondary school students in Imo State

The result of the analysis 1 revealed business subject teachers' rating of the role of vocational guidance on career orientation of senior secondary school students. It was found that vocational guidance enables secondary school students to be acquainted with opportunities for vocational placement and higher education, be acquainted with available assistance and scholarship for vocational courses and programmes in higher institutions. The study also revealed that vocational guidance enable students to connect with vocational mentoring and sharing of knowledge that cover job skills and a wide range of operations in organizations, acquire adequate information about individual potentialities for career success develop self-awareness and confidence, be impacted with guided knowledge for vocational and career success, and break prevailing pressure of culture in vocational inclination. Vocational guidance according to the study enables students to chart a career path for career progression and advancement, link career needs with organizational goals and objectives, acquire professional skills and competencies for effective performance. This finding is in agreement with Ochong (2013) who affirmed that vocational guidance helps to prepare students for specific careers at various levels of work and to prepare them for future so that they can be useful to themselves and the society where they belong. Ochong emphasized that this plays significant roles in vocational education because it brings about awareness to the student, as they will discover the hidden potentials in them their strengths, and how to work on their weaknesses to have a fulfilled future.

The roles of vocational guidance on career development of senior secondary school students in Imo State

The results presented in Table 2 show of the mean and standard deviation of business subject teachers' ratings of the role of vocational guidance on career development of senior secondary school students. The study revealed that vocational guidance assists senior secondary school students with an understanding of the skills and competencies demand for career occupation, enhance capacity to analytically weigh one's suitability for a job, and identify strengths and blind spots needed to improve one's skills. Other roles of vocational guidance on career development of students as revealed by the study include learning about different roles in industries that match one's abilities and interest, develop career plans for easy career progression

and advancement, develop discovery and creative abilities for quality vocational success and advancement. The study also revealed that vocational guidance assists students to develop skills in interpersonal relationship, develop abilities to appreciate self-worth, boldness and confidentiality in oneself, develop logical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities needed for innovative performance in vocational job as well as develop communication and time management skills.

The results are in agreement with the position of Ogundele, Feyisetan and Sharba (2014) who affirmed that vocational guidance exposes students to the opportunity of developing the transition skills of continuously developing one's competencies in the face of adversity and opportunity and to obtain information on the transferability of one's skills to new opportunities. It enables students to discover their own talents, strength and weaknesses, family expectation and national requirements to sort out the personal relevance of educational and vocational options available. The authors summarized that the idea of vocational guidance is to help individuals develop, explore, crystallize, specify and achieve goals.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that vocational guidance helps senior secondary school students' career preparation through career orientation and career development. Therefore, the role of vocational guidance in career preparation of secondary school students in Imo State cannot be overemphasized because students are more engaged in education and highly motivated about their future when they have a clear understanding of themselves and how they might live and work when they leave school.

Recommendations

Based on the finding and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Vocational guidance should be introduced into the secondary school curriculum as a compulsory subject for all students. This will help the school system to provide quality instruction that will enable the secondary school student chart a career path for career progression and advancement
2. More teachers in the area of vocational guidance should be engaged in the secondary school system to ensure that the goal of vocational guidance and training of secondary school are achieved.
3. Vocational guidance and counseling unit should be established in all secondary school in Imo state in order to effectively attend to the varying and complex vocational guidance and counseling needs of students in school.

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