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ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND CAREER COUNSELLING AS CORRELATE OF EFFECTIVE CAREER CHOICE AMONG STUDENTS IN OWERRI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the entrepreneurship education and career counseling, as correlates of effective career choices among students in Owerri Municipal Council. The study adopted a Correlational design which sought to establish the direction and magnitude of the coefficient of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, entrepreneurship and counseling and effective career choice respectively. The population of this study is 1,712 students. Sample size of the study was 390, applying multistage sample random technique. The researcher adopted two instruments for data collection and they are Career Counselling Rating Scale and Entrepreneurship Skills Rating Scale. The data were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistic. Findings revealed significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship and counseling and effective career choice. The study recommended that counselors should incorporate entrepreneurship education into the counseling programmes to enhance choice and decision-making capacities among students.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, career counseling, effective career choice, students, Owerri Municipal Council

Introduction

The problem school leavers face with employment point to the deficiencies inherent in Nigeria's educational system which was inherent from the colonial masters. The system of education then favoured skills for elementary while collar job centered on reading and writing rather than technical skills of development Adebayo (2022) identified this system as outdated because it doesn't fit into 21st century Education. This system has deprived graduates of today skills needed for employment resulting in massive unemployment among youths after graduation from polytechnics and Universities. According to Ayinde (2021) these are the challenges many Nigeria youths must overcome. Progressive thinkers around the country have overwhelming suggested that Entrepreneurship Education linked to counseling may help ease these challenges

and make the future of Nigerian graduates bright.

Entrepreneurship education is the type of education that provides the learner with the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and the motivation needed to establish, manage or expand a business outfit. Maguire (2019), stated that entrepreneurship education is concerned with inculcating a range of skills and attributes including the ability to think creatively, to work in teams, to manage risks and headlines uncertainty. Entrepreneurship Education therefore, is that form of study that enables an individual to maximize the development of appropriate knowledge and skills that will help graduates to manage the resources around him within the limits of his capabilities to start and successfully manage business. Entrepreneurship education equips the student with the ability to discover a line of business opportunity, seek out investment, establish and run the business successfully.

Entrepreneurship education is centered on objective of equipping adolescents who went to tertiary institutions with technical skills and mindset of operating small-scale business or establishing new firms. Therefore, acquiring a good foundation for entrepreneurship skills is fundamental for a successful self-development. Another objective of entrepreneurship education is to help graduates nurture and develop their talents and potentials through training mentorship, workshops, seminars and conferences. Entrepreneurship education help in teaching graduates' social skills that are essential attributes/qualities of self-development and social stability. Tchonlbe (2019) opined that entrepreneurship education encourages financial liberty, literacy, and personal actualization in-line intent perceptions. It also inculcates business processes including shares and rising capital to save a liquidating business outfit. Entrepreneurship education creates insights help brainstorming, ingenuousness and resourcefulness.

Entrepreneurship education, builds conscientious thinkers, open to experiences, low in neuroticism and concert agreeableness. A trained entrepreneur is a possessor of enthusiastic vision which is the driving force of an enterprise. Entrepreneurship education, promotes vision with passion, persistence, and determination, coupled with developmental strategies, positive thinking and decision making. According to Nwankwo (2021) entrepreneurship education incorporate, democratic views in decision making. It also prepares adolescents to be responsive, productive, competent and high esteem enterprising individuals who will become good leaders in future. In a nutshell Anyakoha (2018) opined that right knowledge of entrepreneurship education immerses the adolescents into real life learning experience, reading to risk taking, management and learning from outcomes thereafter.

Counselling as a helping profession aimed at achieving better self-exploration, self-understanding, self-development leading to better understanding of self, career

selection and development. Counselling also leads to maturity problem solving and adjustment. The counselor is well trained to explore opportunities, desirable and uplifting channeled towards the all-round development of the child. Counseling utilizes existing potentials and resources to modify behavior and resolve social challenges among adolescents. Adolescents and undergraduates therefore require career counseling for proper selection and advancement of potentials towards skill acquisition and self-development. A counselor, a specialist in the helping profession is one that has training and certification in the discipline – Guidance and Counselling who uses his or her expertise to assist others in their difference concern (Okeke, 2018). A counselor is needed to help students develop the mindset of entrepreneurship and make proper career selection towards self-development of latent potentials.

Career counseling amounts to enhancing self-awareness through, testing and interviewing, assisting in drawing contracts on relevant information disclosed by client. Career counseling provides alternatives before the client while the final decision is left for him/her to make (Akume, Igbo and tor – Anyin, 2019). Career counseling is for every student. It is a person-to-person relationship in which one person helps another to resolve an area of conflict. It is designed to help an individual achieve an awareness, skills, knowledge, values and feelings. It focuses on developing the best in an individual while weighing all variables that may impede the opportunity (Akinade, Sokan and Osarenren, 2016).

Career counseling according to Nwoba and Ifelunni (2016) is a planned programme of education that provides usable, adequate and upto date information that help students make realistic career choice. Through career counseling individuals are assisted to gain insight into the world of work (Oscar, 2017). For a student to choose a particular vocation, such student must have interest, abilities and aptitude in the area to be chosen. Career counseling is a long-life learning education that transforms individuals. The major content of vocational counseling services, include occupational typology and classification, career guidance and vocational development. Career counseling is beneficial to students because it helps them live useful life, have learning and problem-solving skills such as critical thinking and analysis to apply to their chosen vocations. Career counseling will help students to understand both the world of education and the world of work. Through career counseling students will be able to become aware of vocation that are readily available plus where they are available, criteria for entry and method of succeeding in them.

Career counseling will enable young people to develop and use their talents in useful and beneficial manner (Egbule, 2015). Career counseling is necessary for effective vocational choice. When students are satisfied with career choice made and become productive to self and nation, the essence of a counselor has been justified.

Effective career choice is when prospective student is guided to make useful choice based on his/her potentials, availability of alternatives and job sustainability. The present study becomes essential for a period as in Nigeria today where many graduates are parading the streets without employment. Wrong career choice and very poor entrepreneurial skills have the situation creating social instability, advancement in crime rate, drug addiction, manifesting mental health challenges and social instability in general.

The desire to confront career counseling challenges were observed in the studies of Nwoba *et al.*, (2016) and Egbule (2015). Both studies did not satisfy the need of the time because they did not make an impression on entrepreneurship counseling as a readily alternative with quick results in curbing soaring unemployment rate in Nigeria. Secondly the two studies were carried out in Enugu and Benue away from the area of the present study. The study and its findings are highly needed here in Owerri Municipal Council because of the high unemployment challenges among graduates from secondary and tertiary institutions.

Statement of the Problem

The ideal situation should be that students are guided in selecting careers according to their potentials, opportunities available and alternatives. These desirables will lead them into developing skills needed by employers. The choices made in career should be able to help them function optimally by being at their best both at work place, as an entrepreneur and industrialist. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Many students are not aware of the professional qualities of the career counselor and have not been to them for proper information on career selection. This has resulted in many making wrong choices because they lacked correct information on employment opportunities, alternative careers that may fit into their talents and future prospects of careers selected in a particular country. In the area of this study students are not opportune to visit career counselor for their professional advice. Many schools lack the services of career counselors. Get rich quick syndrome has interfered in students making good choices based on their potential subjects they are good at and economic opportunities available. The present student will draw from these lapses hence, its findings will either attract policy statements or declaring state of emergency on the unavailability of counselors in almost all the secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council.

Purpose of the Study

The present study investigated on entrepreneurship and career counselling as correlates of effective career choice among students in Owerri Municipal Council. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the relationship between entrepreneurship and effective career choice among students.
2. ascertain the relationship between career counseling and effective career choice among students

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

1. What is the relationship between entrepreneurship and effective career choice among students in secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council?
2. What is the relationship between career counseling and effective career choice among students in secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses guided this study

1. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and effective career choice among students in secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council.
2. There is no significant relationship between career counseling and effective career choice among students in secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council.

Methodology

The study is correlation design. Correlational design is a type of study that seeks to establish the direction and magnitude of the coefficient of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Area of this study is Owerri Municipal Council. Owerri Municipal Council is the site of Government of Imo State. It has eleven secondary schools. It lies on the coordinates of longitude 7.03^{oN} and latitude 5.47^{oN}. The population of this study is 1,712 students from ten secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council. Respondents in this study are SS2 students who represented the population stated above. The present study has a sample of 390 selected by applying Taro Yamane formula for sample selection from a given population. The sample was selected by applying multistage simple random technique. The researcher adopted two instruments for data collected and they are namely: Ohuakanwa (2025) Career Counseling Rating Scale and Ukwoma (2019) Entrepreneurship Skills Rating Scale. The two instruments were adopted with determined psychometric reliability coefficients of 0.71 for Ohuakanwa (2025) Career Counselling Rating Scale and 0.79 for Ukwuoma (2019) Entrepreneurship Skills Rating Scale. The questionnaires, OCCRS and UESRS were attached to the purpose and research questions and given to three specialists from the departments of Guidance Counselling and Measurement/Evaluation for their inputs. They were supposed to vet the usuability and content validity of the instruments. Their recommendations and inputs were later applied on the final draft copy of the instruments to be administered to respondents (SS2) in Secondary Schools in Owerri Municipal Council. OCCRS and UESRS were adopted and their reliability coefficient determined to be OCCRS = 0.71 and UESRS = 0.79. According to Nworgu (2015), these coefficient indices are considered adequate for the instruments to be effectively applied in the present study. The researcher visited the selected schools for the study. This was to enable the approval of the authorities to be

obtained for the study. Days and venues for the exercise was selected for each school. Approval of school counselors and business studies teachers were obtained for the present study. Data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation values specifically for the research questions. The hypotheses were tested by adopting Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co efficient of statistics. Based on Nwanna (1998), coefficient of 0.199-2.99 represents poor correlation; 0.3-0.499 represents moderate correlation; 0.599 – 0.699 represent strong correlation while 0.7 – 1 represents very strong and perfect relationship.

Results

Research Question 1: What is relationship between entrepreneurship studies and effective career choice among students in secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between career counseling and effective career choice among students in secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Analysis between Entrepreneurship Studies and Effective Career Choice among Students

Variables		Entrepreneurship	Effective Career Choice
Entrepreneurship studies	Pearson	1	0.62
	Sig (2-tailed)	390	0.00
Effective Career Choice	Pearson analysis	0.62	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.00	390

In table 1 the coefficient of the relationship as shown is 0.62 which represent a strong relationship between entrepreneurship and effective career choice. The hypothesis when tested revealed that the probability value on the table 0.00 against alpha level of 0.05. in comparing the two values, the probability value of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05 therefore the relationship is significant. There is a significant relationship between Entrepreneurship studies and effective career choice among students in Owerri Municipal Council.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between career counseling and effective career choice among Secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council?

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between career counseling and effective career choice among secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council.

Table 2: PPMCC analysis in the relationship between career counseling and effective career choice

Variables		Career Counselling	Effective Career Choice
Entrepreneurship studies	Pearson	1	0.73
	Sig (2-tailed)	390	0.00
Effective Career Choice	Pearson analysis	0.72	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.00	390

In table 2 the coefficient of the relationship is 0.72 while the probability value is 0.00. With the coefficient index of 0.72, the relationship is very strong. Against the alpha level of 0.05, the probability value of 0.00 is less hence, significant. There is therefore a significant relationship between career counseling and effective career choice among secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study shows that there is a strong and significant relationship between entrepreneurship studies and effective career choice. This result means that entrepreneurship studies have a strong and linear association with effective career choice among secondary school students in Owerri Municipal Council. The reason for this result is because entrepreneurship studies align to selection of careers appropriate to students' skills hence effective. The finding of this study is in tandeem with the finding of Ukwuoma (2019) and Onwubiko (2019) both studies revealed that entrepreneurship studies expose students to diverse opportunities inherent in business, and self-employment.

The result of the second research question revealed that career counseling has a strong relationship with effective career choice. The result means that a linear association exist between career counseling and effective career choice. This result suggests that through career counseling students make appropriate and effective career choice for self-development. The present finding aligns with the result of Njoku (2015) whose study revealed that career counseling promotes correct and effective selection of courses in the University. The finding of the study is also supported by Nwoba and Ike-Ifelunni (2016) whose study revealed that students select careers online with their skills if counselled by professionals such guidance/counselors.

The result of the study revealed that self-development is promoted by effective career choice. The result means that students who developed their skills would have received career counseling. The reason for this result is that proper counseling skills are developed through appropriate career selection. The finding of this study aligns with the result of school (2019) study which revealed that students who went through career that were best and ideal to their potentials. The present study's finding is also in agreement with Otuka (2018) study.

Counseling Implications

The researcher deduced the following implications from the findings of the study.

1. There is a strong and significant relationship between entrepreneurship studies and effect career choice. There is the implication that wrong choices are promoted by ineffective counseling practices.
2. There is a strong and significant relationship between career counseling and effective career choice. There is the implication that effective career choice is the product of career counseling.

Summary and Conclusion

The present study has showed that career counseling could enhanced career choice in Entrepreneurship were graduates become employers of labour rather employees. Selecting proper career could only be guaranteed through adequate counseling strategies which suggests that counselors are needed practical at every level of education to prepare pupils, students and undergraduates for the challenges of the future. The researcher suggests that another study be carried on perception of career choice through career counseling.

Recommendations

The researcher made the following recommendations in line with the findings of the study.

1. Entrepreneurship studies should be introduced in secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council
2. Effective career choice must be determined only when students are allowed to go through counseling services. Students should be subjected to career counseling for proper career choice.

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