GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES: STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING STUDENTS' ENROLMENT IN TECHNOLOGY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

This study was conducted with the objectives of identifying guidance and counselling related strategies for increasing students' enrolment in technology and vocational education programmes in tertiary institutions and the hindrances to students enrolment in the programme. To achieve these objectives, three research questions were posed to guide the study and one null hypothesis was tested. The research questions were answered using mean statistic, while the null hypothesis was tested with t-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance. The population for the study was 605 undergraduate students of technology and vocational education. 200 undergraduate students were randomly sampled from the population. A 15-item questionnaire was used to elicit responses from the 200 undergraduate students of technology and vocational education departments.The instrument was face and content validated by three experts in Technology and Vocational education, while the reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha and the reliability index was found to be 0.89. The study revealed that adequate and effective guidance and counselling facilities in schools will attract more students to technology and vocational education (TVE) programmes. Based on the findings and conclusions, there were some recommendations.

Introduction

Guidance and counselling are the processes of helping individuals discover and develop their educational, vocational and psychological potentialities and thereby achieve an optimal level of personal happiness and social usefulness. Both Guidance and Counselling are processes used to solve problems of life. The basic difference is in the approach. In the process of guidance, the client's problems are listed carefully and ready made solutions are provided by the expert where as in the process of counselling the client's problems are discussed and relevant information are provided in between. In the end of counselling process, the client has an insight to the problem and becomes empowered to take his/her own decisions.

The concept of counselling is essentially democratic in that the assumptions underlying its theory and practice are that each individual has the right to shape his own destiny and that the relatively mature and experienced members of the community are responsible for ensuring that each person's choice shall serve both his own interests and those of society. Therefore, guidance and counselling of students are an integral component of the educational mission of the school.

Guidance and counselling services and programmes promote the personal, social, educational, and career development of all students. There are so many services provided by the guidance and counselling personnel in schools. Prominent among these services rendered by guidance and counselling personnel in secondary schools are information, appraisal, referral, guidance, counselling, planning, placement and follow-up services for the proper guidance of students.

On the other hand, vocational guidance according to Okoro (1993),is the process of helping students to make vocational choices. He stresses that there are two approaches to guidance - the trait factor approach and the developmental approach. The trait factor approach is the older system and owes much to the pioneering efforts of Frank Parsons. Okoro (1993) quoting Parsons stated that choosing a vocation consisted of three main processes which included;

1. forming a clear understanding of your-self, your aptitudes, abilities interests, ambitious, resources, limitations and their causes;
2. acquiring knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensations, opportunities and prospects in different lines of work;
3. true reasoning on the relations of the two groups of facts.

Furthermore, Okoro (1993) stated that the developmental approach to guidance is usually credited to Ginzberg and Super. He revealed said that Super (1957) described guidance as the process of helping a person to develop and accept an intergrated and adequate picture of himself and of his role in the work, to test this concept against reality and to convert it into reality with satisfaction to himself and benefit to the society. Okoro was of the opinion that this approach to guidance involves far more than matching student to the occupations they are most suited for. Vocational development should be an orderly, ongoing continuous and generally irreversible process of helping individuals to enter into occupations and progress in them.

In another development, technology and vocational education is education to earn a living. The terms technology and vocational education are normally used interchangeably to mean education for acquisition of knowledge and skills for work. Benson (1988) defined technology education as a comprehensive action based education programme concerned with technical means, their evolution, utilization and significance with industry, its organization, personal systems, techniques, resources and products and their social and cultural impact. Although technology education includes technical education according to Benson, it is also much more demanding as it aims at developing practical skills, attitudes and habits that make the recipient a creative innovative and resourceful person. Technology education is offered at all levels of educational system. Its principle is reflected in the National Policy on Education (2004) which states: there are, as of now, five types of educational institutions outside the university; the prevocational and vocational schools at post primary level, the technical colleges, the polytechnics and colleges of technical teacher education at the post secondary level. Also, stated in the principle of vocational education include; that vocational education will be effective in proportion as it enables each individual to capitalize his or her interest, aptitudes and intrinsic intelligence to the highest possible degree and effective vocational education for any profession, calling, trade, occupation or job can only be given to the selected group of individuals who need it, want it, and are able to profit by it.

In order words, vocational education is a form of education in which people are provided with practical skills which will allow them to engage in careers which involve manual or practical abilities. Vocational education has a specific and practical focus and it is designed to provide people with the skill knowledge and work attitudes needed to start a career in an area of interest.

In Nigeria, technology & vocational education (TVE) is offered at the junior secondary, senior secondary and in the tertiary levels of education. At the junior secondary level, subjects like introductory technology, practical agriculture, home economics, and business studies are offered as prevocational subjects. At the senior secondary and tertiary levels, subjects and courses such as agricultural science, metal work, electronics, technical drawing, woodwork, and automechanics, are offered with the objective of acquiring specific skills in the areas to prepare persons for gainful employment.

In the same vein, students that attended technical colleges and those that attended ordinary secondary schools have different orientation about TVE because in technical colleges, more efforts are made in training the students to acquire skills in different trades unlike in secondary

schools where such efforts are not made. As a result, there is a high level of unemployment among secondary school leavers in the country. Ozoro (1990) pointed out that Nigeria secondary school leavers are unemployable because they lack saleable skills. By equipping persons with the skills and knowledge required by society, vocational education makes it possible for them to find work or create jobs for self employment.

There is every need to provide the students in senior secondary schools with guidance and counselling services. Guidance and counselling are needed in determing factors which influence students' choice of technology subjects at senior secondary school level. Thus, career guidance should form an integral part of any organized school programme. This is because, helping the youth during his or her adolescent period to obtain reliable and significant information upon which to base a choice of occupation or academic career he has to choose are just as truly educational services as teaching the same youth English and Mathematics as well as the knowledge of available jobs. Through guidance counsellors he will be helped to know the courses that give credence to the possessors of such jobs and hence they will know the subjects to choose.

Another prominent factor that appear to influence the choice of technology education programmes in secondary schools and tertiary institutions in Nigeria is the societal ignorance of what technology education is all about and its laudable objectives. Emeniru (1991) indicate that one of the earliest constraints to the development of vocational education in Nigeria is that there is general misconception about what vocational education is all about. Many people view vocational education as education for the poor or for people who are not intellectually sound to do academic work. People therefore especially parents prefer to encourage their wards to take careers in medicine, law, engineering and architecture instead of vocational education. Shofolaham (1990) revealed that the degree of ignorance on the new policy was alarming and even those who were supposed to know were most ignorant about it. There is general axiom that ignorance is more expensive than learning and ignorance is worst when the learned are involved. Ukeje (1990) observed that many Nigerians think that it is degrading for an intelligent man to work with his hands and they regard manual work and vocational education as belonging to the school drop-outs, the handicapped, the poor and wretched in the society. Thus, many children do not like studying vocational courses particularly the trade course like building or carpentry for fear of being christened academic never-do-wells, poor and wretched individuals. As a result of this misconceptions, there is poor students' intake in technology education programmes in both secondary and tertiary school levels of education. Therefore, the problem of this study is what are the ways of enhancing students enrolment in technology and vocational education programmes in schools through guidance & counselling in tertiary institutions in Enugu state.

The Purpose of the Study

The objectives of this study was to determine the guidance and counselling related strategies for improving enrolment of students in technology and vocational education in tertiary institutions in Enugu state. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. identify guidance and counselling services available in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.
2. determine the guidance and counselling related strategies to enhance students enrolment in TVE programmes in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.
3. find out the hindrances to enrolment of students in TVE in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the guidance and counselling services available in tertiary institutions in Enugu State?

2. What are the guidance & Counselling related strategies to enhance enrolment of students in TVE programes in tertiary institutions in Enugu State?
3. What are the hindrances to enrolment of Students in TVE in tertiary institutions in Enugu State?

Hypothesis

The study also tested a null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of students who attended secondary schools and those who attended technical colleges on guidance and counselling related strategies for increasing students enrolment in technology education programmes in tertiary institutions in Enugu state.

Methodology

The type of research design adopted in the study was survey. According to Nworgu (1991), survey is a study where peculiar characters of a known or identified population are studied through a sample which is deemed to be representative of the population. In other words, this study used a representative sample to determine the opinions of technology and vocational education students in relations to improving students' enrolment in technology education programmes.

A random sampling technique was adopted in selecting 200 respondents from a total population of 605 undergraduate students of technology/vocational education programmes in four government owned tertiary institutions in Enugu State. A total of 105 undergraduate students out of the 200 sample selected for the study attended secondary schools while 95 attended technical colleges.

The instrument for collecting data was the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 15 items structured in a four point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree with weighted values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The questionnaire was made up of three sections, A, B and C. Sections A, B and C sought information relevant for answering the three research question that guided the study. All the 200 copies of the questionnaire distributed were correctly filled and returned thus, giving 100 percent return rate.

Face validity of the questionnaire was done by three experts, two of them from the Department of Technology & Vocational education, Enugu State University Science and Technology while one of the experts was a Lecturer in the Department of Technological and Vocational Education Enugu State College of Education (Technical), Enugu. They made suggestions that helped in producing the final instrument used for the study. The reliability of the instrument for data collection was determined using Cronbach Alpha. This formula was deemed suitable for testing the internal consistency of the test items because of the nature of the instrument itself. In determining the reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was administered to 30 undergraduate students of Department of Technical and Vocational Education Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The data collected from respondents to the instrument were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient and it yielded 0.89 thus, indicating that the instrument was reliable and sustainable for use by the study.

Mean statistic was used to answer the three research questions that guided the study while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis formulated for the study. Results were presented in Table 1. The decision rule was that items with mean values of 2.50 and above were regarded as agreed opinion while those with mean values below 2.50 were indicated as disagreed.

RESULTS

Table 1 _
Mean (X) Scores and Standard Deviations SD of the Undergraduate Students' Responses on Guidance/Counselling Services Available in Schools.

S/N	Items On Guidance/ Counselling Related Services	Secondary Schools				Technical Colleges			
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD_1	N_1	Decision	$\bar{X}_1$	SD_1	N_1	Decision
1.	Opportunities to develop knowledge and appreciation of themselves and others.	3.72	0.45	105	Agree	3.59	0.49	95	Agree
2.	Opportunities to develop relationship skills, ethical standards and a sense of responsibility.	3.90	0.31	105	Agree	3.45	0.68	95	Agree
3.	Opportunities to acquire skills attitudes necessary to develop educational goals which are suited to their needs, interests and abilities.	3.56	0.62	105	Agree	3.74	0.55	95	Agree
4.	Information that would enable them to make decision about life and career opportunities.	3.79	0.41	105	Agree	3.84	0.37	95	Agree
		$\bar{X}S_1$= 3.74	δ_1 = 0.45	N_{S1} = 105	$\bar{X}_{T1}$ = 3.66		δ_{T1} = 0.52	N_{T1} = 95	

Table 1 shows that all the statements in the items are guidance and counselling services provided in the tertiary institutions in Enugu state.

Table
Mean ($\bar{X}$) Scores and Standard Deviations showing the Undergraduate Students Responses on Guidance/Counselling Related Strategies for Increasing Enrolment in Technology Education Programmes Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State

S/N	Items On Guidance/Counselling Related Strategies	Secondary Schools				Technical Colleges			
		$\bar{X}$	SD	N	Decision	$\bar{X}_2$	SD_2	N_2	Decision
5.	Adequate provision of guidance counselling services in schools will help to increase students choice of Technology/Vocational education courses in tertiary institutions	3.82	0.39	105	Agree	3.67	0.66	95	Agree
6.	Knowledge of job availability in technological fields through vocational guidance counselling will attract more students to TVE education programmes	3.89	0.32	105	Agree	3.44	0.70	95	Agree

7.	Early exposure of students to technology education will attract more students into the programmes	3.81	0.40	105	Agree	3.66	0.48	95	Agree
8.	Provision of occupational guidance and counselling services to post primary school students in respect of TVE education will help to increase students enrolment in the programmes.	3.76	0.43	105	Agree	3.11	0.57	95	Agree
9.	Sharing of guidance and counselling pamphlets or handbooks containing detailed information on available opportunities through TVE education will enhance students enrolment in the programmes	3.50	0.67	105	Agree	2.67	0.68	95	Agree
10.	Effective utilization of technology staff to expose students to the laudable objectives of TVE education will help to increase students enrolment in the programmes	3.40	0.67	105	Agree	3.46	0.67	95	Agree
		$\bar{X}_S$ = 3.70	δ_S = 0.48	N_S = **105**		$\bar{X}_{T2}$ = **3.34**	δ_{T2} = 0.63	N_{T2} = **95**	

Table 2 reveals that all the guidance and counselling related strategies suggested in this study can be employed for increasing the students enrolment in technology education programmes. Knowledge of job availability in technological fields through vocational guidance counselling will attract more students to technology education programmes and has the highest mean score of 3.89 . Technological awareness should be created among the students in their early stage of life. Early exposure of students to technology education will attract more students into the programme and has a mean of 3.81 for the secondary schools and a mean of 3.66 for technical colleges.

Table 3
Mean ($\bar{X}$) Scores and Standard Deviations (SD) showing the Undergraduate Students Responses on Hindrances to Enrolment in TVE Programme in Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State

S/N	Items On Hindrances to Enrolment of Students in TVE programmes	Secondary Schools				Technical Colleges			
		$\bar{X}$	SD	N	Decision	$\bar{X}_2$	SD_2	N_2	Decision
11.	Parents do not give their children free hand to choose technical related courses/occupations.	3.85	0.36	105	Agree	3.24	0.61	95	Agree
12.	Societal ignorance about the objectives of technology/vocational education affects enrolment in TVE negatively.	3.68	0.56	105	Agree	3.61	0.62	95	Agree

13.	Poor environmental conditions of the workshops as a result of poor funding in TVE programme	3.80	0.40	105	Agree	3.23	0.42	95	Agree
14.	Hazards associated with the programmes in TVE with low wages.	3.87	0.34	105	Agree	3.46	0.68	95	Agree
15.	Students lack of interests in TVE affects enrolment in TVE programmes negatively.	3.52	0.71	105	Agree	3.27	0.75	95	Agree
		$\bar{X}_S$ = 3.74	δ_S = 0.47	N_S = 105		$\bar{X}T_3$ = 3.34	δT_3 = 0.63	NT_3 = 95	

Table 3 presents data on the items statements on hindrances to enrolment in TVE programmes. Item number 14 attracted the highest mean of 3.87 and the grand mean of table 3 for secondary schools was 3.74 while that of Technical Colleges was 3.36. Thus revealing that respondents agreed the items as hindrances to students' enrolment to TVE programme.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of students who attended secondary schools and those who attended technical colleges on guidance and counselling related strategies for increasing students enrolment in technology education programmes tertiary institutions.

Table 4: T-test Summary of Students who Attended Secondary Schools and Those Who Attended Technical Colleges on Guidance and Counselling Related Strategies for Increasing Students Enrolment in Technology Education Programmes.

S = Significance, NS Not Significance

Post Primary School Attended	Mean $(\bar{X})$	Standard Deviation	Number (N)	Degree of Freedom	t-calculated	t-table or t-critical	Decision
Secondary Schools	3.70	0.48	105	198	4.59	1.96	S
Technical Colleges	3.34	0.63	95				

The data presented in Table 2 shows that the t-calculated which is 4.59 is greater than the t-table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule is that since t-calculated 4.59 is greater than the t-table 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and at 198 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference between the responses of students who attended secondary schools and those who attended technical colleges on the guidance and counselling related strategies for enhancing students enrolment in technology education programme.

Discussion of Result

The study revealed that adequate provision of guidance and counselling services in schools especially in post primary schools will in no small measure enhance students enrolment in Technology and Vocational education programmes in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Research question are which sought information from guidance and counselling services provided in the schools, the analysis showed that all the responses made were strategies for increasing students enrolment in technology and vocational education programmes.

Through effective guidance and counselling, awareness of the objectives of technology education would be created among the citizens. Knowledge of availability of jobs and courses that give credence to such jobs would be made known.

Further, investigation revealed that wide publicity of technology education programmes and its laudable objectives to the general public through effective use of guidance counselling facilities in schools will attract more students to technology education. The study also revealed that guidance and counselling services would be more effective if students were exposed to it in their early stage of life. This assertion conformed with the findings of Oyeneye (1990) who stated that before pupils entered secondary schools, they should be acquainted with various types of occupations, the educational requirements and prospects offered by technical education. This could facilitate in capturing the interest of the students in the early stage of their life and will hardly deviate from it in their adolescent and adult stage. Hence, effective provision of guidance and counselling services in schools using adequate facilities and processes could have great impact on improving students enrolment in technology education programmes in tertiary institutions in Enugu state.

Also identified in this study were some of the hindrances to students enrolment in TVE programmes. Parents' negative attitudes toward technology education, societal ignorance about the objectives of education at different levels, and hazard associated with the workshops among other factors were discovered as hindrances to students' enrolment in TVE programmes.

The hypothesis tested revealed that the opinions of students who attended secondary schools differed significantly from their counterparts who attended technical colleges on the issue of guidance and counselling related strategies for enhancing students enrolment in technology education programmes. The differences in their opinions could be attributed to their varied orientation in post primary education stage.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion of the results of this study, it was concluded that effective use of guidance and counselling facilities in schools will attract more students to technology and vocational education programmes. The study also revealed that technology and vocational education should be given wide publicity to expose the laudable objectives of the programme.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1) Tertiary institutions should be provided with adequate and effective guidance and counselling facilities,
2) forum should be created at regular basis in schools and colleges where students should be exposed to laudable objectives of technology education programmes.
3) Education boards should provide every school with qualified and adequate number of guidance counsellors to direct students appropriately in choosing their career in order to minimize failures, unemployment and frustration among graduates of secondary education institutions.

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