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ENTREPRENEURIAL CURRICULUM GUIDANCE ON VOCATIONAL CHOICES OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

Nsikak-Abasi Udofia,

Faculty of Education, University of Uyo

Eno B. Usoro,

Faculty of Education, University of Uyo

Maria Emmanuel Afangideh,

Faculty of Education, University of Uyo

Enoima Effiong Umoh,

Faculty of Education, University of Uyo

Abstract

The study set out to ascertain entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. It was also the intention of the study to determine if such guidance will help young learners to be self-dependent at the end of their secondary education. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study, while a sample of 200 secondary school learners responded to a modified version of the Vocational Interest Inventory (VII) instrument developed by the researchers. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Analysis of Covariance statistics was used for the analysis of the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that entrepreneurial curriculum guidance influences vocational choices of male and female students as well as vocational choices of arts and science students. The study recommended among other things the need for the introduction of functional curriculum guidance and counseling services and enterprise education at all levels of education for boys and girls.

Background to the Study

Entrepreneurial curriculum guidance is needed for appropriate vocational choices among secondary school students so that they would choose careers that lead to self sustenance and apparently reduce poverty. Okeke (1996) attested that there is an increasing tendency for school leavers all over the nation to be unemployed, but the possibility for gainful employment is obvious only when one makes a wise choice of his career as he moves towards leaving school. Anagbogu (2002) is of the opinion that choice of career is important to the secondary school child, and the subjects a child offers strongly affect his future career.

According to Hapin, Power and Fitz (1997), vocational choice is referred to the decision an individual makes whether tentatively or decisively to prepare for, or accept a job in one occupation rather than any other.



Also, Nwakolo (1997) stated that entrepreneurship is the ability to set up a business enterprise as different from being employed. The ability should be acquired and should differ in some respects from the ability required to enable a person obtain an employment. This according to Nwakolo involves the acquisition of skills, ideas and managerial abilities necessary for self-reliance.

In a bid to plan for the citizenry, The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) attested that the senior secondary level will be for those able and willing to have a complete six year secondary education. The document further specifies that it will be comprehensive and will have a core curriculum designed to broaden pupils' knowledge and outlook.

The core curriculum is the group of subjects which every student must take in addition to his specialties. It will enable the students to offer arts and science or commercial subjects. The FRN explained that every student is expected to select three of the core subjects depending on the choice of career up to the end of the second year of the senior school course.

In spite of the attestation by FRN, in Nigerian schools generally, guidance and counselling services are yet to be properly inculcated into the system, hence improper vocational choice in our secondary school (Onyejiaku, 2001). Students seem to lack the occupational information and as such cannot identify the relationship between various subjects choice and occupational opportunities.

According to Anagbogu (2002), it is the duty of the school guidance counsellor to intimate students on the prospect available in the world of work, which at the end will make job satisfaction. He is also responsible for creating awareness in the occupational opportunities available in the labour market, and how viable each subject choice affect their future occupation and happiness.

In another development, Onyejiaku (2001) stated that the counsellor while teaching entrepreneurial, or occupational guidance should emphasize on the jobs open to the students with certain qualifications, the possibility of self-employment the nature of the occupations, the job requirements and the future forecasts for certain occupations. This will not only help the students select appropriately the rightful subjects that will end them job or occupational satisfaction, but will also save the society from low labour turn over in various jobs and occupations (Egbule, 2006).

Guidance counsellors should equally emphasize to the learners that entrepreneurs are the organizers and risk takers, who decide what should be produced and what factors of production should be employed. Ayeduso (2004) emphasized that an entrepreneur is to be creative, and innovative and stressed that whatever legal business one does for a living, can be considered as self-employment or an entrepreneurship. It abounds in all spheres of human endeavour, in sports, entertainment, arts, electrical engineering trades, building trades, beauty culture trades, leathers works, business trades, among others.

Also in Nigeria, the crave for women emancipation and equally in educational opportunities had done little to bridge the gap between occupation which are characteristics of either sex. The layman on the streets knows that in some occupations, there are different interest

between males and females, and most of the masculinity-femininity vocational interest tests are based on this knowledge (Onyejiaku, 2001).

According to Anagbogu (2002), sex differences in vocational interests have been examined by some people in terms of physiological and physical variables. Onyejiaku (2001) further stated that several studies have given ample evidence to show that individual vocational interest of boys and girls are generally characteristics of either sex. Most of the investigations in this area indicate that while engineering is almost exclusively a masculine vocation, nursing on the other hand is a feminine job, but with regards to teaching, a greater percentage of girls than boys aspire to the profession. Onyejiaku further emphasized that although vocational interests are often influenced by social pressures, yet sex difference in certain vocation have remained relatively constant over the years, and this shows that social pressure notwithstanding, some occupations are sex specific.

Furthermore, the school curriculum can shape the goals of those who pass through it, it can influence the kind and range of information they possess about the world of work. Njoku (2007) in his opinion affirmed that vocational perception and aspiration of students are shaped by their best subjects, and also, the influence of scholastic achievement in terms of proficiency in certain subjects often seems to overshadow other factors. Entrepreneurial guidance helps learners to choose the subjects they know best and subject combinations for arts or science and commercial subject (Ekong and Williams, 2004).

At this level also, students who excel in Arts or the sciences tend to choose, to apply and to specialize in related areas in institutions of higher learning. Anwana (2005) confirms that model of variables in career choice and their relationship are; school subject combination and choice of career, interest in subjects related to the chosen career and academic achievement in subjects required for the chosen career.

It is undeniable that more than ever before, there is an army of neglected young people in Nigeria. Amadi & Asagwara (2007) attested that this is because there was no proper planning for the future of young people who were not absorbed in the formal world of work after the completion of their academic effort.

There is no doubt that Nigeria is faced with numerous political, economic, social, religious and medical problems which in turn give rise to poverty, unemployment, hunger, armed and open robbery, cultism, hardship and suffering in form of denial of basic amenities among others (Njoku, 2007). The persistence of youths' unrest in the society and frequent cases of kidnapping may not be unconnected with inadequate and lack of occupational skills and attendant unemployment problem.

The problem that therefore attracted the attention of the researchers to embark on this study is the high rate of young school leavers who have got what they sincerely believe to be education roaming most of our towns and cities, but cannot obtain employment or be self-reliant. The researchers are of the opinion therefore that there is need to expose students while in school to necessary skills that will make them stand on their own without desperately depending on government or other individuals for employment. The problem of the study was whether entrepreneurial curriculum guidance influence vocational choices of senior secondary students in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.



Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the study were:

1. To examine the influence of entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of male and female secondary school students.
2. To examine the influence of entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of Arts and Science students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

1. To what extent does entrepreneurial curriculum guidance influence vocational choices of male and female students?
2. To what extent does entrepreneurial curriculum guidance influence vocational choices of arts and science students?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant influence of entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of male and female students.
2. There is no significant influence of entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of arts and science students.

Research Method

The study employed a simple survey design because of its suitability in eliciting information to meet research objectives, in line with processes that are going on, and effects that are being felt (Udoh, & Joseph, 2005).

A purposive sample of 200 senior secondary two students from Uyo Local Government Area were selected from a population of two thousand, one hundred and fifty (2,150) senior secondary two (SS 2) students, with 1,206 males and 944 females (Ministry of Education, Research, Statistics and Planning Unit, Uyo (2008), and Local Education Committee, Uyo (2008).

The researchers used the modified version of the Vocational Interest Inventory (VII) which they developed to help the respondents indicate the type of work they will be interested in after leaving school. It consisted of demographic information and directives on how to respond to the questions on the areas of interest. It was based on a 5 point Likert Scale of:

5	-	Like very much	-	LVM
4	-	Like	-	L
3	-	Neither Liking nor Disliking	-	NL or ND
2	-	Dislike	-	D
1	-	Dislike very much	-	DVM

The research instrument had ten (10) interest areas of A to J, and each had 10 items for the respondents to respond to. It follows that the instrument had a total of one hundred (100) items in all, in which they all responded to by ticking any of the items listed above.

Results

Research Question One

To what extent does entrepreneurial curriculum guidance influence vocational choices of male and female students?

Table 1 : Mean and standard deviation results on entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of male and female students

Factor	N	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Male	80	39.26	12.98
Female	120	39.25	12.99

The results of data analysis summarized in Table 1 above show that the males had the mean score of 39.26 and a standard deviation of 12.98, while the females had a mean score of 39.25 and a standard deviation of 12.99. Both groups had high mean scores and low standard deviation. It means that there was no difference in the response of both males and females in entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on their vocational choices.

Research Question Two

To what extent does entrepreneurial curriculum guidance influence vocational choices of arts and science students?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation results on entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of Arts and Science students

Factor	N	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Arts	60	39.21	13.00
Science	140	39.25	12.99

The results summarized on Table 2 above indicate the arts students had a high mean score of 39.21 and a low standard deviation of 13.00, while science students equally had a high mean score of 39.25 and low standard deviation of 12.99. This means that choice of subjects, whether science or arts is influenced when students are exposed to entrepreneurial curriculum guidance.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

There is no significant influence of entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of male and female students.

Table 3: ANCOVA Results on Entrepreneurial Curriculum Guidance on Vocational Choices of Male and Female Students

Source of Variance	df	SS	MS	F
Between Groups	1	37912	37912	8.23



Within Groups	10	46065.56	46065.56
Total	11	83977.56	

N = 200, Significant $p < .05$

The summary of the analysis of co-variance presented on Table 3 above reveals that the table or critical f-value of 8.23 is greater than the calculated F-value of 4.84 and 1 and 10 df at 0.05 level of significance. This showed that there is significant influence on vocational choices of male and female students when entrepreneurial curriculum guidance is given to students.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of entrepreneurial curriculum guidance on vocational choices of Arts and Science students.

Table 4: ANCOVA Results on Entrepreneurial Curriculum Guidance on Vocational Choices of Arts and Science Students

Source of Variance	Df	SS	MS	F
Between Groups	1	39374	39374	
Within Groups	10	60856.31	6085.63	6.47
Total	11	100230.31		

N = 200, Significant $p < .05$

The summary of the analysis on Table 4 indicates that the critical or Table F-value of 6.47 is greater than the calculated f-value of 4.84 with df of 1 and 10 at 0.05 level of significance, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This showed that there is a significant influence on the choice of subjects when students are exposed to entrepreneurial curriculum guidance.

Discussion

The results of the findings summarized in Tables 1 and 2 (research question one and hypothesis one) showed a significant influence in the male and female students' response to their vocational choice after receiving entrepreneurial curriculum guidance. Furthermore, since the critical F-value of 8.24 was greater than the calculated F-value of 4.84 with 1 and 10 df at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. This therefore means that male and female students who received entrepreneurial curriculum guidance responded positively to their vocational choices.

These results agree with Egbule (2006) who stated that entrepreneurship education provides the students with meaningful education which would make them self-reliant and subsequently encouraged them to derive profit and be self-independent.

The results are also contrary to Onyejiaku (2001) and Anagbogu (2002) who stated that several studies have given ample evidence to show that individual vocational interest of boys and girls are generally characteristic of either sex.

Also, the results of the findings summarized in Tables 2 and 4 (research question two and hypothesis two) revealed that entrepreneurial curriculum guidance influence the vocational choices of arts and science students. Equally, since the critical F-value of 6.47 was greater than the computed F-value of 4.84 with df 1 and 10 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that when students are guided and counseled, they will be able to make positive choice of their future vocations in line with their capabilities in subjects of their choice.

The result is in support of Njoku (2007) who affirmed that the vocational perception and aspiration of students are shaped by their best subjects. The findings also agree with Ekong and Williams (2004) who stated that model of variables in career choice and their relationship are; school subject combination and choice of career and academic achievement in subjects required for the chosen career.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it concluded that entrepreneurial curriculum guidance is important in schools to assist male and female students in their choices of vocation and subjects in relation with their vocation of interest. It also concluded that when entrepreneurial curriculum guidance counselling is properly instituted in schools it will help all students to be self-reliant and will also enhance the nation's economy and manpower development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be an introduction of vocational guidance, counselling and enterprise education by the government of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria at all levels of education: primary, secondary and tertiary.
2. Regular update of the counsellor's knowledge through seminars, workshops and in-service training programmes to enhance their professional expertise is required in providing most of the services.
3. Boys and girls should be given the same guidance in matters pertaining to choices of subjects and vocations guidance counsellors.
4. A directorate of school counselling should be established in Akwa Ibom Secondary Education Board to take charge of the organization, administration and monitoring of guidance and counselling services.

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