

An Evaluation of Unemployment Reduction in Akwa Ibom State using Career Guidance and Counselling

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DOI Link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v3-i10/287>

Published Date: 14 October 2013

Abstract

This study was carried out to examine the possibility of reducing unemployment in Akwa Ibom State using career guidance and counselling interventions. To guide the study, four research questions and four null hypotheses were formulated. Variables such as educational guidance, vocational, personality trait guidance and sociological guidance were used in the investigation. A survey design was used in studying a population of 6509 senior secondary two students in 58 public secondary schools that have guidance counselors, and a sample of 651 who were drawn from 31 public secondary schools to participate in this study as respondents. One school and 21 respondents were studied in each of the 31 local government areas. The result showed that there was significant relationship between reduction of unemployment and career guidance and counselling intervention in Akwa Ibom State. The researcher recommended that, the State Ministry of Education should ensure that each public secondary school has a guidance counsellor in order to reduce students' career maladjustment which would lead to future unemployment.

Keywords: Career guidance, Career counselling, Sociological guidance, Personality guidance, Unemployment,

Introduction

Career guidance and counselling interventions could be seen as a continuous process. Employment guidance is the fundamental principle which can be delivered to a counselee irrespective of the age on how to secure and sustain employment. Career guidance and counselling refers to as a process rendered by a trained counsellor, to a client or counselee

for the purpose of giving the individual the needed career help, and making the individual understand himself, identify a suitable career, or vocation which are appropriate for him in the world of work. Employment guidance and career education interventions are processes which are mapped out to protect the youths from unemployment.

Guidance and counselling is a formalized educational package aimed at assisting an individual to attain fullest self development and self realization or identification of self potentials. It helps an individual by assisting him get into appropriate profession or vocation or life style that would make him functional to him and to the society in which he belongs (Clifford, 2008). In the past decades, the parents were totally responsible for deciding the type of education, profession, and vocation for their children. According to Nwachukwu (2001), due to increasing pressure of family financial needs and demands, most parents engage in long hour's employments and occupations thereby have little or no time to decide their children's educational and vocational choices. In view of carrying the adolescents along side with the modern growth of professional and technological advancement, the guidance and counselling services were introduced into the secondary school system. This was aimed at equipping the school adolescents with appropriate psychological assistance that would sensitize, awaken, and enlighten thought towards future life encounters, and would also help them avoid unnecessary personality maladjustments, such as unemployment, aggression and frustration after studentship.

Callow (1997) explained that an individual that is not guided properly towards the principles of life is likened to a bicycle without brakes. Such an individual has no limitations in life in terms of choice and functions. Many secondary school students do not even understand reasons why their parents sent them to school. A lot of them do not know which subjects to study, and for such reasons why they develop negative attitudes to the subject teachers and to the subjects they teach. According to Sauquoit (2008), students who develop *laissez-faire* attitudes towards academic activities, and feel unconcerned about consulting the school guidance counselors, usually fail in examinations and drop-out of school to become unemployed.

Bordin (2003) opined that when an individual becomes confused in choosing a profession or vocation, there is a tendency for making him learn many trades and occupations but becomes a master of none. Such situation can render an individual unemployed, poor and frustrated throughout life time. In another perspective, Crosby (1995) states that if an individual lacks proper career guidance while in school, choosing appropriate vocation or profession is always a problem.

If an individual cannot deeply understand himself, his physiological status, psychological level and needs, as well as his intellectual stand, such an individual cannot understand his environment, his people, his culture, and his aspirations (Selegwan, 2000). Personality concepts of an individual are an essential tool that can foster the image of the individual's strength or weakness in every undertaking such as in employment and self-reliance after such life.

The study of an environment or society in which an individual finds him must be cautiously guided especially in the world of work. According to Ekanem and Eneh (2005), an education which is incompatible with the kinds of works that exist in the society's labor market is considered to be in vain. Education of a people or society must be capable of providing sufficient labor, intellectual, entrepreneurial, economical and political needs of such society; otherwise, such education is not worthwhile to learners after studentship.

A properly guided career choice manifest into a lucrative and rewarding employment, therefore, career refers to as a general course of action or progress of a person through life and which is often expressed in some professions (Onyejiaku, 1991). In another perspective, Denga (2001), describes a career as a person's total life pattern which may include both work and non-work factors. It is the sequence of major positions occupied by a person throughout his pre-occupational, occupational and post-occupational life. Career exists only as people pursue them therefore, they are person-centered.

Effiong (2006) submits that a great number of secondary school students are usually over-anxious to engage into careers and professions which will make them socially popular, financially buoyant, and notoriously affluent in his society. Most of them desire prestige without hard labor. According to Uko (2003), students in the secondary schools wish to become future aeronautics pilots, engineers, top-politicians, surveyors, medical doctors, University lecturers and professors. Only a little percentage of the youths would choose to become classroom teachers, agriculturists, artists of any kind, or to become nurses. Some students do not consider or deeply understanding their personal concepts, interests, value, attitudes, physiological status and intellectual abilities, therefore, guidance and counselling services in the school system has come to stay as remedy against future frustration, unemployment and personality adjustment among the youths in Akwa Ibom state.

Research Questions

- (1) How does educational guidance counselling intervention help in reducing youth unemployment?
- (2) How vocational guidance counselling intervention does helps in reducing youth unemployment?
- (3) In what ways does personality trait guidance counselling helps in reducing youth unemployment?
- (4) In what ways does sociological guidance counselling helps in reducing youth unemployment?

Research Hypotheses

- (1) Educational guidance counselling does not significantly relate with reduction of youth unemployment.
- (2) Vocational guidance counselling does not significantly relate with reduction of youth unemployment.
- (3) Personality trait guidance counselling does not significantly relate with reduction of youth unemployment.
- (4) Sociological guidance counselling does not significantly relate with reduction of youth unemployment.

Methodology

A survey research design was used in this study. Akwa Ibom State was chosen as the Area of this study. A purposive sampling technique was used in selecting six hundred and fifty-one (651) students in thirty-one (31) senior secondary two (SS2) in public secondary schools that have guidance counselors.

A researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Reducing Unemployment in Akwa Ibom State using Career Guidance and Counselling Questionnaire" (RUIAISUCGACQ) was used in collection of data for the study. It has section 'A' for student's personal data, section 'B' measured educational guidance, section 'C' measured vocational guidance, section 'D' measured personality trait guidance, and section 'E' measured sociological guidance, while section 'F' measured school leavers' unemployment.

A four (4) points rating scale was used in measuring data obtained from the research questionnaire as follows: Strongly agree (SA) - (4 points); Agree (A) - (3 points) ; Disagree (D) - (2 points) ; and strongly disagree (SD) -(-1 point)

Research experts in Test and Evaluation Unit of Educational Foundations Department, Guidance and Counselling validated the instrument. A test re-test internal consistency reliability test was carried out to determine the reliability of the instrument using Chronbach alpha.

The researcher distributed the copies of questionnaire in person, with the assistance of the guidance counselors in the sampled schools. One hour was allowed, and all the completed copies were retrieved from the respondents immediately after the exercise.

The Pearson’s Product moment correlation (PPMC) analysis was used in testing the null hypotheses which were formulated in the study. Each hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Also, the simple percentage was used in computing the answers to research questions raised in this study.

Results

Table 1: Educational Guidance and Reduction of youths unemployment

ITEMS	STATEMENTS	SA=4 POINTS		A=3 POINTS		D=2 POINTS		SD = 1 POINTS		TOTAL		TOTAL SCORES
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1.	I received career guidance from a counsellor to enable me understand the school subjects that can lead to my future career	94	1.4	595	90.9	43	6.6	7	1.1	651	100	1948
2.	Career counsellor helped me know the kinds of job opportunities in the labor market.	41	06	507	77.9	13	20.1	9	1.4	651	100	1808
3.	Career counsellor helped me understand the career I can fit best.	18	2.8	511	78.5	21	3.2	10	15.1	651	100	1676
4.	I participated in a seminar on career education.	12	1.8	529	81.3	11	1.7	99	15.2	651	100	1756
5.	I know the duration of my future career through the help of my school career counsellor.	83	1.3	512	78.6	35	5.4	96	13.7	651	100	1734
TOTAL SCORES											8922	

From Table 1 the responses for agreement level (SA-A) record higher scores than the disagreement level (D-SD) record lower score. It implies that respondents agree that educational guidance and counselling interventions can help in reducing youths unemployment after leaving school in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 2: Vocational Guidance Counselling and Reducing Youths Unemployment

ITEMS	STATEMENTS	SA=4 POINTS		A=3 POINTS		D=2 POINTS		SD = 1 POINTS		TOTAL		TOTAL SCORES
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
6.	I learned about the available vocations in the labor market through the help of a career counsellor.	16	25	52	80	36	55	77	118	65	100	1779
7.	I can boast of choice an appropriate after my education through the help of a career counsellor	21	32	50	77	27	41	10	15	65	100	1808
8.	I was guided on the conditions applicable in a choice of lucrative career	17	26	51	78	24	37	99	152	65	100	1818
9.	I participated in excursions to industrial sites	12	18	49	75	59	91	87	134	65	100	1732
10.	I can now understand the differences of various vocations through the help of a career counsellor.	24	36	48	74	16	25	12	19	65	100	1707
TOTAL SCORES											8844	

From Table 2, it is revealed that there were higher scores than the agreement level (SA-A) as than disagreement level (D-SD). This shows that vocational guidance and counselling can help in reducing unemployment among young school leavers in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 3: Personality Trait Guidance Counselling and Youth Unemployment

ITEMS	STATEMENTS	SA=4 POINTS		A=3 POINTS		D=2 POINTS		SD = 1 POINTS		TOTAL		TOTAL SCORES
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
11.	I was properly guided by career counsellor to understand who I am, in the world of work.	21	33	53	81	6	9	3	5	65	100	1839

12.	I understand my career interests through the help of a career counsellor	1 3	2.0 8	51 8	89. 2	4 8	7. 4	9 4	1. 4	651 10 0	1890
13.	My attitude towards future career was properly guided by a career counsellor.	1 7	2.6 5	55 5	85. 2	5 7	8. 8	2 2	3. 4	651 10 0	1869
14.	My career counsellor guided me on which of careers I should place greatest value	2 3	3.5 2	57 2	87. 0	4 3	6. 6	1 3	2. 0	651 10 0	1821
15.	I was guided by a counsellor on how to use natural talents in me on future employment.	3 0	4.6 7	56 7	87. 1	5 4	8. 3	- -	- -	651 10 0	1809
TOTAL SCORES											9228

The result in Table 3 indicates that there were more responses to agreement level (SD-A) than the disagreement level (D-SD) which. It implies that personality trait guidance and counselling interventions can help in reducing unemployment among young school leavers in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 4: Sociological Guidance counselling and Youth Unemployment

ITEMS	STATEMENTS	SA=4 POINTS		A=3 POINTS		D=2 POINTS		SD = 1 POINTS		TOTAL		TOTAL SCORES
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
16.	My school counsellor guided me to understand the kinds of important career available in our society.	8	1.2	5 2 1	80. 0	1 1	1. 7	11 1	17. 1	65 10 0	1728	
17.	I was guided to understand where employments are obtainable in our society.	1 1	1.7 8	5 1	79. 6	1 6	2. 4	10 6	16. 3	65 10 0	1732	
18.	I participated in a career seminar on the society and employment for youths.	6	0.9	81. 4	2 4	3. 7	91 0	14. 0	65 10 0	1753		

		5 3 0									
19.	My career counsellor made me to understand common causes of unemployment in my society.	1 2.0 5 79. 8 1. 11 17. 3 1 3 2 4 5 6	65 10 1 0	1730							
20.	I was properly guided on the effects of unemployment on young school leavers in our society.	9 1.4 5 80. 1 2. 10 15. 2 9 4 2 1 5 7	65 10 1 0	1746							
TOTAL SCORES										8689	

Table 4 result shows that there were higher responses to agreement level (SA-SD) which recorded 8024 scores. Scores, than disagreement level (D-SD) which recorded 665 scores. This implies that sociological guidance counselling can help in reducing unemployment among young school leavers in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 5: Responses to Youth Unemployment items

ITEM S	STATEMENTS	SA=4 POINTS		A=3 POINTS		D=2 POINT S		SD = 1 POINT S		TOTAL		TOTAL SCORES
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
21.	Refusal to consult guidance counsellor may result in future unemployment among school leavers.	21 8	33. 5	38 2	58. 7	3 7	5. 7	1 4	2. 1	65 1	10 0	2086
22.	Disuse of guidance and counselling explanations by the guided youths often result in unemployment	23 6	36. 3	39 1	60. 1	1 3	2. 0	1 1	1. 6	65 1	10 0	2154
23.	Lack of career seminars can result in future unemployment	21 4	32. 9	37 6	57. 7	3 1	4. 8	3 0	4. 6	65 1	10 0	2076
24.	Lack of career excursions may result in											

	youth unemployment after leaving school.	24 3	33. 7	38 7	59. 4	9	1. 5	1 2	1. 8	65 1	10 0	2163
25.	Career counselors can help in recommending the youths to employers of labor	25 1	38. 6	39 2	60. 2	3	0. 5	5 7	0. 7	65 1	10 0	2191
TOTAL SCORES											10,670	

Table 5 shows that there are more scores on agreement level (SA-A) than those on disagreement level (D-SD). It implies that young school leavers are usually vulnerable to unemployment if they have no opportunity to further education, in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 6: PPMC of Educational Guidance Counselling and Youth Unemployment

Variable	N	$\sum x$ $\sum x^2$	$\sum y$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	<i>r</i> Calc.	Decision
Educational Guidance Counselling Youth Unemployment	651	8922	10670	19034758	3.83	*significant

df = 649 P = <.05, Critic. r = .088

The table 6 result shows that, the calculated r-value (3.83) is greater than the critical r-value (0.088) at 0.05 level of significance under a two tailed test, with 649 degrees of freedom. It implies that the null hypothesis is rejected and as such educational guidance and counselling is significantly related with reduction of unemployment among school leavers in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 7: PPMC of Vocational Guidance and Reduction of Youth unemployment

Variable	N	$\sum x$ $\sum x^2$	$\sum y$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	<i>r</i> Calc.	Decision
Vocational Guidance Counselling Youth Unemployment	651	8844	10670	18865947	2.86	*significant

df = 649 P = <.05, Critic. r = .088

Table > result shows that the r-calculated value (2.86) is greater than r-critical value (.088) at 0.05 level of significance under a two-tailed test, with 649 degrees of freedom. It implies that the null hypothesis is rejected and as such, vocational guidance and counselling is significantly related with reduction of youth unemployment in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 8: PPMC of Personality trait Guidance and Reduction of Youth unemployment

Variable	N	$\sum x$ $\sum x^2$	$\sum y$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	<i>r</i> Calc.	Decision
Personality Guidance Counselling	651	8844	10670	19689600	5.62	*significant

Youth	651	17035704	22779938
Unemployment			

df = 649 P = <.05, Critc. r = .088

Table 8 result shows that the r-calculated value (5.62) is greater than r-critical value (.088) at 0.05 level of significance under a two-tailed test, with 649 degrees of freedom. It implies that the null hypothesis is rejected and as such, Personality trait guidance and counselling is significantly related with reduction of youth unemployment in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 9: PPMC of Sociological guidance counselling and Youth Unemployment

Variable	N	$\sum x$ $\sum x^2$	$\sum y$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r Calc.	Decision
Sociological Guidance	651	8689	10670			
Counselling						
Youth	651	15100233	22779938	18542040	3.39	*significant
Unemployment						

df = 649 P = <.05, Critc. r = .088

The result in Table 9 reveals that, the calculated r-value (2.39) is greater than r-value (.088) at 0.05 level of significance under a two-tailed test, with 649 degrees of freedom. It implies that the null hypothesis is rejected and as such, sociological guidance and counselling is significantly related with reduction of youth unemployment in Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion

The result is similar to the result of a study which was carried out by Asuquo (2008) which stated that educational guidance counselling interventions allow the students to understand the types of subjects which can be combined in order to enhance admissions into tertiary institutions. This is to protect school-leavers from frustration. It is in line with the assertions of Coleman (1991) which holds that, career education is designed to enable individuals realize early in life, the importance of work and to give them the opportunity to have discussions with guidance counselors for greater clarification about the world of work.

It is in line with the result of a study conducted by Ebong (2006) which stated that vocational guidance counselling enables an individual to understand himself, the types of vocations that are available in the labor market, as well as making an individual to take personal discussions and occupational choice in order to prevent him from unemployment after leaving school.

Vocational guidance counselling involves a lot of strategies which may include taking the students to work sites, industrial base, technical workshops and vocation-related places of interests through excursions or field trips. These are to enable the students see things by themselves so as to allow them decide on vocational choices after leaving school instead of staying redundant at home. This results imply that vocational guidance counselling can significantly help in reducing youth unemployment after leaving school.

Personality trait guidance allows an individual to identify personal creativities that are resident in the person. This can direct an individual to understand his abilities or worth, and how to utilize such abilities for gainful employment. A study conducted by Uko (2003) in Ikot Ekpene senatorial district, observed this, that, Personality trait guidance counselling is an avenue for identifying hidden treasures and characteristics which are resident in human beings such as interest, attitudes, value and natural talents. According to the postulations of Gerald (1991), limitation is the worst option in relation to choice making because individuals differ in their faces, height, body size, weight, strength, weakness, and

talents. But through the help of personality guidance counselling intervention,, as well as proper usage of students' continuous assessment records this can be overcome.

The assertions in Effiong (2006) that although the youths are legitimate members of the society, they do not fully understand the very society in which they live in terms of finding employment except after counseling. In another perspective, Denga (2001) asserts that holding a certificate is not a guarantee for getting an employment except one is properly counseled and guided on searching for a job. It is in confirmation of the views of Davidson (1996) which indicated that jobs are available everywhere but it is difficult to locate them except through proper guidance on the types of jobs available in a particular part of human society and how to reach them. This implies that if individual youth is given sociological guidance, it is impossible for such an individual to become jobless in Akwa Ibom State.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the above results it is concluded that, educational, vocational, personality trait and sociological guidance and counselling can help in reducing unemployment among young school-leavers in Akwa Ibom State. In view of this conclusion, it is recommended that, the government should employ sufficient career guidance counselors in public secondary school. The students should endeavour to consult career counselors for help. And, members of Parents-Teacher-Association (PTA) should co-operate and encourage their children to consult the guidance counselors for academic, career, emotional and personal-social help.

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