

## **Counselling Services and Secondary Schools Students' Career Choice in Rivers State**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the Counselling Services on secondary schools students' Career Choice in Rivers State. Four research questions were posed to guide the study and three hypotheses was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The researchers used the descriptive survey method for the study. The entire population of 2208 was not studied by the researcher as sample size of 20 percent with a total of 442 respondents was studied. The instrument used was Counselling Services on Secondary Schools Students' Career Choice Questionnaire (IGCSACSCSQ). A 4-Point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) was used and the respondents were requested to select one of the four (4) options. 442 copies of questionnaire were distributed and 398 retrieved for analysis. Test-re-test method was used for the reliability test. The instrument had 16 items which was validated with a reliability coefficient of 0.92 which shows that it was reliable for the study. The mean and standard deviation was used in analyzing the research questions, while the z-test was used in testing the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that Counselors have influence in students' career choice. Counselling service helped students and others in the school feeling happy about. Also the school counsellors' kept personal information of students confidential. It was therefore recommended that Education administrators should be made to understand their basic responsibilities in relation to career management in their schools. This could be through seminars, workshops and conferences.

**Keywords:** Counseling Services and students' Career Choice

### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is generally known as the answer to socio-economic problems of the world. Nations and individuals look up to education to provide a cure for poverty, ignorance, drought, excessive rainfall, mental deficiency, joblessness, bad government, poor communication system, hunger and inadequate shelter among other things. Every nation of the world aspires toward quality of life and social status, Stanley (2013). Therefore, career could be seen to be life time pursuits of an individual.

The complexity of career choice making among individuals was earlier recognized by career theorists such as super (1957), Ginsburg, et al (1951), Tiedeman and O'hara (1953), and Gelatt decision making model (1962). All the above theorists recognized that individual decision-making styles play significant part in the whole process of career development, and that gender, personal interests, and learning experiences were all seen as factors affecting students' career choices.

They recognized that career choice among students was influenced by personality, interests, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, family and social support Odeck (2014). While, Stanley (2013) observed that prestige of a profession was a strong motivating factor influencing students in making career choices. The goal of guidance and counselling is to make it possible for an individual to see and explore his or her unlimited endowed options. Odeck (2014) opined that the major service areas of guidance and counselling are: educational guidance and counselling which assists students in their curriculum and school life choices, vocational guidance and counselling which assists the individual to choose and prepare for an occupation that is compatible with his interests and aptitudes, and personal and social guidance and counselling which assists the individual to behave appropriately

in relation to other members of the society. Guidance and counseling services are very important tools in human development especially during adolescent stage.

Career choice has become a complex task among students in the face of ever changing technology in the information sector. The term career is broadly defined as all life time roles people play including students, parents, employees, retirees and employers. Career choice without doubt is the base which determines the future career of a student. The redirection towards the real professionalism and future of a student in schools through career choice can never be over emphasized. Students with good career choice are expected to enjoy the following benefit: completion of course of study at stipulated time; reduction of drop out; removal of one sided choice of course of study in Secondary school of learning; reduction of wastages in terms of human and material resources in education sector; and proper placement. It is therefore pertinent of mention that, it is important to establish career choice section at primary, junior secondary and senior secondary schools. This will enable students and parents to be focused and reduce wastages of resources and education as a tool for societal change shall continue to safeguard society while career choice is a major assistant, Stanley (2013).

Guidance services in school are crucial for proper Career choice of students. Carew (2012) defined Guidance as directing, counselling, helping and assisting. According to him guidance is “a total programme of a number of highly specialized activities implemented by all staff members to help students make wise, intelligent choices and decisions”. Glennen (2011) similarly defined guidance to pupils as a well developed programme that provides individual counselling and testing, inventory of appraisal services, information services to pupils, staff and parents, group guidance and orientation programmes, vocational and educational guidance, placement and follow up. Olayinka (2010) defined guidance service as a process, developmental in nature, by which an individual is assisted to understand, accept and utilize his abilities, aptitudes, interests and attitudinal pattern in relation to his aspirations”.

Career choices are decisions that should be carefully made because it affects the entire life of an individual; hence it is necessary that such as this should be carried out in order to study the relationship between Counselling Service on student’s career choice in secondary school in Rivers State.

### **Statement of the problem**

Career choice tends to be a persistent problem for the students in the contemporary society. That is why it is not uncommon for students to get into occupations that are not quite suitable to their abilities. Choosing a career is very difficult and in these unsettled economic times, it is not easy to know which direction to take. However, there are so many opportunities available for reliable, honest and hardworking people (Ogilvy, 2014). Opportunities are available but there is lack of information as Van Blerk (2012) notes: Guidance and counselling services in schools are primarily intended for students. Yet, one often finds that students do not fully benefit from these services in terms of behaviour adjustment. The increasing maladaptive behavioural problems among students in recent times gave the impression that guidance services are not making the desired impact for which they are intended. Practicing counsellors, including the researcher are getting worried about possible failure of these services and are wondering what is wrong and how guidance services can be made more effective to achieve the purpose for which they have been designed.

Inadequate awareness in the selection of right subjects has caused to educational career of several students. Students’ inability to comprehend properly the kind of course to study at both senior and university levels is disturbing. This problem results in increase in school drop-out, failure in examination, examination malpractices and host of other problems, which at the end deviate the primary purpose of education especially at the secondary level. The above identified problems mostly result in inadequate trained counselors in secondary schools. These inadequacies could be guided by production of skilled counselors from the colleges and universities.

In most schools, hardly would one find counseling centers where students receive guidance not only on career choice but also on persona- socio and future life plans. These inadequacies without doubt have resulted in social problems such as high level of school drop-out, drug abuse, increase in political thurgery in the society and untimely termination of educational career among youth. The resultant cause of the above problems could be argued against the backdrop of absence or inadequate parental guide, teachers’ negligence, insufficient commitment to work and absence of trained counseling officers in our schools. In schools today there exist low social relationship between

teachers and students, thereby creating a gap for students build their own philosophy of doing things according peer group influences or the media. Therefore, study investigates Counselling Service on student's career choice in secondary school in Rivers State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to determine the counselling services on secondary schools students' Career choice in Rivers State.

Specifically the study is aimed at investigating whether:

1. To examine if counseling services has any influence on students Career choice
2. To examine the factors that influence student's career choice in secondary school.
3. To examine the appraisal service on students' Career choice in secondary school.
4. To examine the Causes of Poor Career Choices among Secondary School Students.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent does the Counseling service influence students' Career choice in secondary schools?
2. What are the factors that influence student's career choice in secondary school?
3. Does appraisal service influence students' Career choice in secondary school?
4. What are the Causes of Poor Career Choices among Secondary School Students?

### **Statement of hypotheses**

H<sub>01</sub>. There is no significant influence of Counseling service on students' Career choice.

H<sub>02</sub>. There is no significant influence on the factors that influence student's career choice in secondary school.

H<sub>03</sub>. There is no significant influence of appraisal service and students' Career choice.

H<sub>04</sub>. There is no significant influence between the Causes of Poor Career Choices among Secondary School Students

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

Descriptive survey method was used to carry out this study. The comparative analysis was achieved by means of utilizing z-test statistic for the comparison of mean scores at 0.05 level of significance. While, the research questions were answered by descriptive statistics: Mean and Standard deviation.

### **Population and Sample of the Study**

The Population of this study consists of Two Thousand Two Hundred and eight (2208) SS2 secondary schools students in three selected local Government Area of Rivers State. The simple random sample of 442 SS2 secondary schools students was drawn from the study.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used for this investigation was A 4-point Modified Likert scale which is an interval scale-ranging from Very High Extent to Very Low Extent, with a numerical value ranging from 4 points to 1 points. The instruments that were used for this study were the questionnaire titled: "Counselling Services on Students Career Choice Questionnaire (CSSCCQ). The instrument has 16 (Sixteenth) items. A weighted average of 2.5 was accepted for research questions.

### **Validation and Reliability of the Instrument**

The instrument was validated by Experts in Measurement and Evaluation in the faculty of Education, who ascertained the face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-re-test method, using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool. A reliability coefficient of 0.92 was obtained for the study.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** *To what extent does the Counseling service influence students' Career choice in secondary schools?*

**Table 1: Mean Analysis on Counseling service influence students' Career choice in secondary schools (N = 398)**

S/N	Items	SA	A	DA	SDA	$\bar{\chi}$	SD	Remark
1	Counselling service helps students and other people in the school to feel happy about themselves	250	100	28	20	3.45	0.69	Strongly Agreed
2	The guidance counsellor assists students with information about the occupation opportunities	198	76	48	76	2.99	1.38	Agreed
3	Counsellor listens very well to whatever problem you take to him or her	215	99	59	25	3.26	0.86	Strongly Agreed
4	Counselors are/ have been the greatest influence in my career choice	320	49	22	7	3.71	0.42	Strongly Agreed
5	The school counsellor keeps any personal information he gets about the students and other clients (secret)	279	100	10	9	3.63	0.41	Strongly Agreed
<b>Total Mean/S.D</b>						17.04	3.76	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean/S.D</b>						3.40	0.75	Accepted

**Source: Survey Data, 2017**

The results of table 4.5 which is for research question one, shows that all the items in the table indicates a positive response with mean scores of 2.95, 2.58, and 3.26, respectively. The response of the respondents shows that Counselors are/ have been the greatest influence in my career choice and Counselling service helps students and other people in the school to feel happy about themselves and also the school counsellor keeps any personal information he gets about the students and other clients (secret). This confirmation was made by the grand mean of 3.40

**Research Question 2:** *What are the factors that influence student's career choice in secondary school?*

**Table 2 : Mean Analysis on the factors that influence student's career choice in secondary school (N = 398).**

S/N	Items	SA	A	DA	SDA	$\bar{\chi}$	S.D	Remark
1	Individual personality is instrumental to one's vocational performances	315	57	10	16	3.68	0.50	Accepted
2	Intellectual Ability is the factors that influence students career choice in secondary school	177	134	57	30	3.15	0.86	Accepted
3	An individual choice of a career may influence the person's value	288	99	10	1	3.69	0.27	Accepted
4	Expectations and prestige	317	48	29	4	3.70	0.41	Accepted
5	Sometimes the environment where a student comes from, tend to determine the student's interest in the selection of career	199	89	58	52	3.09	1.15	Accepted
<b>Total Mean/S.D</b>						17.39	3.19	
<b>Grand Mean/S.D</b>						3.46	0.63	Accepted

**Source: Survey Data, 2017**

Table 4.3 which is for research question two shows that three items in the table were accepted while one in item in table were rejected. In all the respondents accepted by their responses that the environment where a student comes from, tend to determine the student's interest in the selection of career and also Intellectual Ability is the factors that influence students career choice in secondary school. This confirmation was made by the grand mean of 3.46.

**Research Question 3: Does appraisal service influence students' Career choice in secondary school?**

**Table 3: Mean Analysis on the appraisal service influence students' Career choice in secondary school (N = 398)**

S/N	Items	SA	A	DA	SDA	$\bar{\chi}$	SD	Remark
1	Counselling services helps students in difficulties related to their future career choice	298	49	39	12	3.59	8.36	Agreed
2	Disciplinary problems among students can be reduced with the help of the school counsellor	222	124	12	40	3.32	0.88	Agreed
3	Counselling services assists the students to adjust to the school environment	332	49	10	7	3.77	0.33	Strongly Agreed
4	Counselling services helps students to resolve problems they would not have been able to resolve themselves	291	72	20	15	3.10	0.08	Strongly Agreed
5	Counselling services can help to reduce conflicts and frictions among students	311	57	27	3	3.69	0.39	
<b>Total Mean/S.D</b>						17.47	10.04	
<b>Grand Mean/S.D</b>						3.494	2.00	Accepted

**Source: Survey Data, 2017**

The result of table 4.3 shows the mean rating of variables. The four items in the table were remarked accepted. In all, the respondents indicated that Counselling services helps students in difficulties related to their future career choice. Counselling services helps students to resolve problems they would not have been able to resolve themselves. This was confirmed by the grand mean of 3.494 and a standard deviation of 2.00

**Research Question 4:** *What are the Causes of Poor Career Choices among Secondary School Students??*

**Table 4: Mean Analysis on the are the Causes of Poor Career Choices among Secondary School Students (N = 398)**

S/N	Items	SA	A	DA	SDA	$\bar{\chi}$	SD	Remark
1	problem encountered in career Choice is mainly attributed to poor managerial skills and other related administrative lapses	271	86	41	-	3.57	0.44	Strongly Agreed
2	poor managerial skills and other related administrative lapses	320	57	12	9	3.72	11.18	Strongly Agreed
3	peer group influence is more potent in all ramifications	244	99	47	8	3.45	0.60	Strongly Agreed
4	Parents Causes of Poor Career Choices among Secondary School Students	321	69	4	4	3.77	0.25	Strongly Agreed
5		332	49	10	7	3.77	0.33	Strongly Agreed
Total Mean/S.D						18.28	12.8	Accepted
Grand Mean/S.D						3.65	2.56	Accepted

**Source: Survey Data, 2017**

The results of table 4.8 which is for research question four, shows that four items in the table indicates a positive response with mean scores of 3.57, 3.72, 3.45, 3.77 and 3.77 respectively. The response of the respondents shows that problem encountered in career Choice is mainly attributed to poor managerial skills and other related administrative lapses. This confirmation was made by the grand mean of 3.65.

**Testing Of Hypothesis**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference on the Counseling service on the choice of career among male and female senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

**Table 5: The Z-Test Analysis of the mean and standard Deviation of Counseling service on the choice of career among male and female senior secondary school students in Rivers State.**

Variables	N	x	STD	STD Error	DF	p	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male	200	7.2	0.83	0.6572	398	0.05	2.78	1.96	Sig
Female	200	4.2	0.85	0.6134					

**Sources: Field Survey Data, 2017**

The data in table 1 revealed that the calculated z-test value of male senior students and female senior students was 2.78, while the critical t-value was 1.96 at a degree of freedom of 198 at 0.05 significant levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there was significant different of counseling service on choice of career among male and female senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference on the factors that influence student’s career choice among male and female senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

**Table 6: The Z-Test Analysis of the mean and standard Deviation on the factors that influence student’s career choice among male and female senior secondary school students in Rivers State.**

Variables	N	x	STD	STD Error	DF	p	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male	200	78	0.73	0.6578	398	0.05	2.41	1.96	Sig
Female	200	62	0.71	0.6156					

**Sources: Field Survey Data, 2017**

The data in table 2 revealed that the calculated z-test value of male and female senior secondary school students was 2.41, while the critical z-value was 1.96 at a degree of freedom of 198 at 0.05 significant levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there was significant difference on the factors that influence student’s career choice among male and female senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference on the Causes of Poor Career Choices among male and female senior secondary students in Rivers State.

**Table 7 : The Z-Test Analysis on the Causes of Poor Career Choices among male and female senior secondary students in Rivers State.**

Variables	N	x	STD	STD Error	DF	p	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male	200	7.8	0.88	0.6584	398	0.05	2.07	1.96	Sig
Female	200	4.6	0.86	0.6175					

**Sources: Field Survey Data, 2017**

The data in table 3 revealed that the calculated z-test value of male and female senior students was 2.07, and mean scores 7.8 (male) 4.6 (female) respectively, while the critical z -value was 1.96 at degree of freedom of 198 at 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there was significant difference of Causes of Poor Career Choices among male and female senior secondary students in Rivers State.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The findings of this study revealed that Counselors are/ have been the greatest influence in my career choice and Counselling service helps students and other people in the school to feel happy about themselves and also the school counsellor keeps any personal information he gets about the students and other clients (secret). This position was also held by Oladele (2012), Gesinde (2009) and Ogunlade and Akeredolu (2012). Also, the environment where a student comes from, tend to determine the student’s interest in the selection of career and also Intellectual Ability is the factors that influence student’s career choice in secondary school. Ogunlade and Akeredolu (2011) findings are in line with the above findings.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that Counselors are/ have been the greatest influence in my career choice and Counselling service helps students and other people in the school to feel happy about themselves and also the school counsellor keeps any personal information he gets about the students and other clients (secret). It was also concluded that the environment where a student comes from, tend to determine the student’s interest in the selection of career and also Intellectual Ability is the factors that influence students career choice in secondary school.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. Education managers should be made to understand their basic responsibilities in relation to career management in their schools. This could be through seminars, workshops and conferences.
2. Counseling service centers in schools should be provided with trained personal to take charge of guiding student at all levels i.e junior and senior secondary schools. Government should pay more attention to the provision of guidance services equipment in all the secondary schools of Rivers State.
3. Parents and other members of the society in general should be involved in issues related to career choice. Professionals should be invited to schools for enlightenment.

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