



## **Enhancing Effective Career Information among Secondary School Students for Effective Career Development**

**Agi, W. Comfort<sup>1</sup>, Chukwu, Chidinma Ogonna<sup>2</sup> & Adebayo, Susanah M<sup>3</sup>.**

**Department of Educational Foundations**

**Rivers State University, Port Harcourt**

**08030958193**

**Email: [comfortagi@gmail.com](mailto:comfortagi@gmail.com)**

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper focused on enhancing career information for effective career development. The paper is a position review. It re-examines the concept of career information as embracing accumulated experiences, sequence of positions, a total pattern of job which one undertakes throughout one's life. Information was also conceptualized to mean a process of generating and transmitting and retrieving of signals. The study also postulated various definitions associated with occupational or career information as censored by different authorities. The paper stated that career development involves the person's creation of a career pattern and decision-making style which begins with an individual's earliest awareness of the ways in which people make a living. Types of career information were stated and an example of educational requirements and training was given. Other types of career information necessary for secondary school students were given as thus: the nature of the work, mode of entering into an occupation, job prospects and advancement, salary and other benefits and job hazards. The paper also reviewed purpose/functions of providing occupational information. Effect of lack of adequate and appropriate career information was explained such as wrong subject combinations job dissatisfaction, instability, emotional difficulties and low self-esteem. Approaches career information can enhance career development were stated and discussed and finally relevance of career information were discussed, conclusion was made and several recommendations were stated.

**Keywords:** Career information, career, and career development, information.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Information widens people's knowledge and scope and it is out of an individual's knowledge content and experiences that effective decisions are usually taken. This is true of vocational decisions making. One of the major problems leading to the wastage of human resources is unrealistic academic and vocational expectations, misplacement of priorities and interests because of lack of appropriate or inadequate career information. When students make unrealistic vocational choice, frustration, lack of interest, vocational maladjustment, reduction of input and output, work manipulation and misuse of talents would be the end product. Similarly, problem of job-dissatisfaction, apathy to work, non-challant attitude to work and other aberrative work practices could be due to lack of early exposure of young people and adolescents to occupational information (Daodu, Elegbede and Adeotun, 2016). In order for students to assess information, the secondary schools curriculum in Nigeria has pre-vocational and vocational subjects to be offered by students at both the junior and senior secondary schools level. With this, it is expected that students should acquire skills and should be able to use the skills when appropriately when due. The inability for students to acquire skills would be as a result of the perception they have about the skills, teacher teachings methods and lack of proper counselling services. The essence of counselling is to help individual make proper decision in life. One of such decisions as choosing a career pathway, career

development is more than just deciding on a discipline and/or what job a person wants to get into when he/she graduates. It is really a lifelong process, meaning that throughout one's life, one will change, situations will change, and one will continually have to make career and life decisions based on these changes.

The goal of career guidance is not only to help one make the decisions and needs to make now, but to give the individual knowledge and skills he/she needs to make future career and life decisions. This led to the words of Napoleon Hill, an American author who said thus, "No man can succeed in a line of endeavour which he does not like" (Agboola, and Abikwi, 2015). At this point one needs to be on the right career track. The best place a youngstar can acquire reliable career advice is their secondary schools. Secondary school occupies an important place in a child's life as many facts of his/her life are associated with it. In secondary school, the child's personality and ideology of life begins to evolve, the child develops social skills and his/her bank of knowledge expands at this level of schooling. It is at secondary school that a student confronts his/her very first career choice. At SS2 precisely, students should decide between science, Arts or vocational subjects. Although some of them pick subjects because their friends do so while some decide according to their parent's wishes. However just a few of them select subjects based on their interests and not knowing if their preferred subjects would lead them to their desired careers or not. Therefore, all these inadequacies and experiences have shown that students lack awareness on the importance of counseling services in choosing appropriate career. Therefore, there is a need to assist students by equipping them with appropriate strategies that would make them to have access and acquire relevant occupational information to make wise and realistic career decision-making. Holland (1985) stressed that information is central to theories of vocational decision-making. In line with this, Super (1984) remarked that to make an important career decision requires information. On this note various questions, evolved such as what sort of information? When is the information processed? When is the information required? What is the source of the information? Information is geared towards changing a person's knowledge and perception and it could be in a form of message, document, resources, data, teaching or counseling information (Darvin, 2015) in Daodu, Elegbde and Addotuu (2016).

### **The Concept of Career Information**

Career is a term that embraces accumulated experiences sequence of positions, a total pattern of job, or occupations (paid and unpaid) which one undertakes throughout one's work life. It includes leisure engagement, learning, work, progress and other life role. A career is often composed of job held; titles earned, and work accomplished over a long period, rather than one position (Akinade, 2016). Career information is therefore the provision of information that is accurate, up to date, accessible, objective, relevant, and available in a variety of formats. It is valid and usable data about positions, jobs, occupations, including duties, requirements for entrance, and conditions of work, rewards offered, advancements pattern, existing and predicted supply and demand for works and sources for further information (Akinade, 2016). According to Kolo (1994), career is a total life long experience of a person in the world of work, which has come to serve as his/her means of livelihood career can also be seen as a profession one does over a life span and is significantly influenced by self concept. Career is synonymous with work. Work is the central activity around which one plans his/her daily life. The kind of career we do in our society to earn a living helps a great deal in determining our identity. Information according to Komolafe (2005) is the process of generating, transmitting, receiving, storing and retrieving of symbols or signals. Igbeka (2001) in Daodu, Elegbede and Adedotun (2016) defined occupational information as a process by which an individual willingly and purposefully engage in the search of career related information to change their state of knowledge and for career maturity: Norris (2012) stated thus; "Valid and usable data about positions, jobs, occupations including duties, requirements for entrance, conditions of work, rewards offered advancement pattern, existing and predicted supply and demand for sources of further information.

There are various definitions associated with occupational information. Broadly defined, these terms encompass the full range of information about labour market conditions and trends, including employment and unemployment, industry and wages, labour market projections, individual workers or

job seekers, and providers of education and training (Sommers, 2014). Also included is information about specific industries, occupations, and careers, such as qualifications, job duties, educational requirements, working conditions and work settings, compensation, employers, and current job vacancies (O'Reilly, 2011; Summers, 2014). Hoppock (2010) defined occupational information as all kinds of information regarding position, job or occupation provided that the information is potentially useful to the person who is choosing an occupation. From the above definition, we could deduce that the information has to do with position, job or occupation. In the same vein, Hayes and Hopson (2013) defined occupational information as facts about jobs for use in its related conditions and information about the world of work. Individual needs for and uses of occupational information are divergent. primary school pupils needs it to develop an understanding of the world of work correlating with personal attributes and interest and career choice, while secondary and post secondary students need it to make informed choices about education, career paths and specific jobs. The essence of this information is life long, as the workplace changes and adults make career choices recurring throughout life.

Achebe (2012) showed an unrealistic career choice pattern and a low level of career information among secondary school students. This is because their career choice pattern is porous and faulty. To further buttress this point Adesemowo (2011) revealed that most of our secondary school students are not exposed to organized career/occupational planning programme. From her study it was found out that both the urban and rural students are ill prepared for career-life. The aforesaid challenges are problematic and call for revitalization of a well packaged and rebranded occupational information into our school system.

### **Conceptualizing Career Development**

Career development is the ongoing process of managing one's life, developing the skills and knowledge that enable one to plan and make informed decisions about one's education, training, and career choices. Career development involves the person's creation of a career pattern, decision-making style, integration of life roles, values expression, and life-role self concepts. It is the life long process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transactions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future (Akinade, 2016). Career development begins with an individual's earliest awareness of the ways in which people make a living. For example, when a child notices that some people are teachers, others bricklayers, and some are nurses, it signals the start of this process, which continues as that person begins to explore occupations and ultimately decides what career to pursue. It also includes getting the required education and training, then applying for and getting a job, and ultimately advancing in it. For many people, it will also include changing careers and jobs at least once, but probably more often. For instance, some university professors started their teaching career as primary school teachers. They acquired more education and exposure. Then they moved on to the secondary school, and finally ended up in the university.

### **Types of Career Information for Students**

#### **1. Educational Requirements and Training**

For any type of occupation the individual has indicated interest in, the educational requirements for entry into such job should be made available to him/her. The individual should know the subject combinations needed for such an occupation. For instance, the following school subject-combinations can be seen suitable for the professional designations.

<b>S/N</b>	<b>School Subjects</b>	<b>Career Opportunities</b>
1.	English Language Literature in English Mathematics Christian Religious Knowledge	1. Law 2. Social Sciences (Psychology, Sociology, Political Science) 3. Education
2.	Agricultural Science English Language Biology Chemistry Economics Geography General Science Physics Mathematics Additional Mathematics	1. Medicine 2. Agriculture 3. Education 4. Nursing 5. Engineering 6. Physical Science 7. Social Sciences 8. Surveying, etc
3.	Literature in English English Language Fine Arts Mathematics History	1. Printing 2. Sculpture 3. Painting

2. **The Nature of Work:** Another occupational information that to be meted out includes the type of duties (responsibilities) which are done, the tools type used. It also include if the nature of the work is a shift one including weekends and public holidays or frequent travels. With this information a person is acquainted with before finally making up his/her mind about a career.
3. **Mode of entering into an Occupation:** This tells whether individual will need personal references, or will it be through examination or apprenticeship or direct application or a combination of some or all of these methods (Daodu, et al, 2016). This is important because for certain jobs, despite possession of the required educational qualification, someone will still have to write an examination in order to qualify for consideration for the job.
4. **Job Prospects and Advancement:** Students must be told or furnished with information that is adequate about the prospects and advancement about the job before making decision. They need to know and ask questions on how long they will work before getting promotion and what would they do on the job to get promotion.
5. **Salaries and Benefits:** One most vital reason and motivating factor for choosing a job is the economic benefit attached to that job. Apart from the salaries, what are other benefits one is expected to have for choosing a job?
6. **Job Hazards:** Students should be informed that every job has its own hazards. Job hazard is seen as the danger, difficulties or harassment faced by a worker that is threatening to his life. Such hazards are death, diseases, accidents that could either result to death or deformity, jail terms, among others.

**Purpose/Functions of Providing Occupational Information**

1. It is to increase the client’s feeling of security in the world of work.
2. It encourages the natural curiosity of clients by assisting them to learn the things they want to learn and to enjoy learning them.
3. Career development for workers would make them aware of their chances and how best to achieve their work goals.
4. It encourages wholesome attitude towards all useful work.
5. To provide students needed role models.
6. To begin developing a desirable approach to the process of career planning.

7. To help students who are dropping out of school and going to work.
8. To help students who really need money how they can get it without stealing.
9. It motivates and stimulate vocational thinking. Used to increase young peoples awareness of the occupational world and stimulate their interest in exploring it.
10. Also helps students identify work situations which are compatible with his needs.

### **Effect of lack of Adequate and Appropriate Career Information**

A young man or woman who makes an ill-advised career choice will feel the effects in many ways such as:

1. **Wrong subject combinations:** Many students fall victim of this issue in secondary school, which leads to absenteeism and truancy due to loss of interest in the subjects. Wrong subject combination breeds: involvement in examination malpractice due to inadequate preparation for examination; loss of interest in schooling, repetition of classes; tendency to drop out of school and frustration.
2. **Job dissatisfaction:** The effect of a poor career choice as a result of lack of information will be felt, not only in job dissatisfaction, but in a more general way as well. Collins (2007) stated that people who do not like their work are often unhappy with life in general. When a person is notifying at work, this unhappiness can permeate his or her whole life.
3. **Instability:** An individual who begins poorly on a career path is far more likely to change jobs- and careers – frequently. Such instability has come to mark a whole generation of youth entering the work force.
4. **Emotional Difficulties:** A person who does not feel fulfilled and rewarded in his career is likely to experience higher levels of stress, frustration, resentment, and regret than the individual who is content with his or her choice of career. Such emotions can create or exacerbate emotional problems.
5. **Low Self-Esteem:** Due to lack of career information, an individual who is unfulfilled and frustrated in his or her work is vulnerable to a deteriorating sense of self-worth. Some men or women find it more difficult to excel in a job well may be tempted to discount their performance, reasoning that their lack of satisfaction reflects a deficiency in themselves.

### **Approaches career information can enhance career development.**

The following career information avenues discussed below could be used to enhance career development:

1. **Advocacy through print electronic media:** The print media include newspapers, textbooks, flyers, posters, bill boards, etc. These are ways and means that students gather information about careers. Although many books have been written on vocational choice but more need to be done to create more impact. Today, we see and read flyers and posts displayed at strategic places to educate the people. It is, however, regrettable that many students and even counselors do not still utilize the information displayed.
2. **Awareness Campaign:** This is another way through which career information is disseminated. It could be carried out in schools especially where students are through the medium of career day/week and/or any other medium.
3. **Advocacy through other mass media like radio, television and other electronic media or devices:** Radio and television are media that the rich, poor, educated and uneducated listen and view. When the blind listen to radio Jingles, adverts, playlets could be carried out through the radio and television. If other programmes like news could be cast on the radio and TV., subject combinations and career guidance/career choice would be aired on these electronic systems.
4. **Career Conferences:** This is a forum for interactions or rubbing of minds of people from all works of life. People share their experiences, failures on a job and give report of researchers carried out in the different careers they do. Such discussions and information are beneficial to students.

5. **Excursion/Plant Visit:** Another way to give career information is to take students on excursion and plant visit. Excursion could be anywhere but related to particular subject the students are offering while plant visit is specific and definite. It could be a factory or company where an item is made or constructed. When students avail themselves of such opportunity, they learn or get to see how things are made and under what conditions. They also see the nature of job done, hours spent, materials needed and hazards in the job (Dardu, et al, 2016).
6. **Parent-Teachers-Association (PTA):** Parents play enormous role in giving out vocational information to their children. Olayinka in Daodu, et al (2016) enlightened that Parent Teachers Association is also a forum that can be used to enlighten parents about job opportunities for their children and how they can motivate them to be achievement oriented.
7. **School Assembly:** One of the easiest and commonest ways of giving out occupational information to students is through the school assembly. Here the principal gives the counselor opportunity to tell the students about the school's plan on career development and a talk to be presented on what it takes to become a professional in one career or the other (Hayes, 2014).

#### **Relevance's of Career Information enhancing career development**

1. When occupational information is given to students, it would make them remain focused and committed to a chosen career or profession. They will not be distracted to unprofitable and destructive activity.
2. It helps them to be properly informed about their personal strengths and weaknesses where they can fit in the world of work. The knowledge will guide and give them a sense of direction about any career of their choice.
3. Knowledge of occupational information helps clients to decide on the type of work they will do or engage in at the early stage of their life when they have not been exposed to gangsterism and negative influences. Vocational information is an eye opener to many youths because it assists them to make a right decision which ultimately bring about their career development.
4. Relevant and reliable vocational information service would enhance students to meet today's career challenges.
5. Realistic occupational information helps to secure and stabilize the future of the students. Once the student can make a realistic career decision, well trained and gainfully employed with stable income, he/she would contribute meaningfully to the development of the society.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Information is seen as the springboard to any decision-making an individual has to make in life. If proper disseminated good decision-making is carried which in turns enhances the growth of the individual and society at large; and if wrongly given, wrong decision making is taken resulting in bad society. Similarly, career information helps young people to make proper subject selection and combinations which in turn lead to stable occupation, then there will be drastic reduction hooliganism, disruption and violence behaviour in the society. To curb bad influences among secondary school students there is need for proper career information both within and without the school setting using every available resources to do this. It is on this note that all professional counselors must arise to champion this course and be seriously involved in providing career information.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are made to buttress proper discharge career information for career development:

1. Due to inadequate trained guidance counselors in most of the secondary schools, teachers should be guided to undergo in service training on career education to complement counsellors' effort or carryout some counsellors' responsibilities in schools where there are no counselors yet. This will go along way to delete occupational dilemma among students.

2. Curriculum planners and policy makers in education should make career education a compulsory subject from primary to post-primary education. So that student will obtain relevant career information at the right time to enhance career development.
3. School library and counsellors' office should be equipped with relevant and current books, magazines, journals, videotapes, career talk cassettes, etc which can give right career information on some professions, occupational/career works environment and different write-ups that could provide answers to various career related questions of students. All these materials should be accessible and self explanatory enough for easy comprehension.
4. Guidance counselors should employed and allowed to perform their functions into the schools that do not have any so as to ameliorate the problems of students dropout and becoming nuisance to the society.

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