

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION AND CAREER PREFERENCE AMONG SECONDARY STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN BAYELSA STATE.

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Abstract

The study investigated the correlation between occupational information and career preference of Secondary students in public schools in Bayelsa State. Four research questions and four hypotheses guided the study. Correlation research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 2,847 students. A sample of 400 students was selected through stratified sampling method. The researchers adopted vocational interest inventory (vii) and also developed an instrument tagged Occupational Information Questionnaire (O.I.Q) for data collection. Cronbach's Alpha formula was used to determine the reliability coefficient. Vocational interest inventory (vii) yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.902 while Occupational Information Questionnaire (O.I.Q) yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.941. Pearson product moment correlation was used to answer the research questions and test the hypothesis at 0.5 alpha level. The result of the study revealed that, there is a significant correlation between occupational information, and career preference, significant correlation between student's participation in Field Trip and career preference, significant correlation between career day and career preference, significant correlation between career guidance and career preference. Based on the findings, the following recommendations among others were made, that Guidance Counsellors should provide adequate occupational information to students. The Government and Parents Teachers Association and philanthropists should assist in the sponsorship of Field trip and career day in schools.

Keywords: Career day, career guidance, career preference, Field trip, Occupational Information.

Introduction

Occupational information is an important factor to consider while making career preference Clement and Milson (2008) opined that, the cognitive ability of students career information increases when they are provided with occupational information. In this context, occupational information connotes the individual's knowledge about careers in the occupational world. It is an indisputable fact that, an individual cannot make realistic career preference if he lacks knowledge about the existence of various careers in the field of work. There is a popular saying that, "If you are not informed, you will be deformed". When you lack the knowledge and understanding about careers in the field of work, their entry requirement, nature of work, job hazard and benefits you will end up making unrealistic career preference. Most of our secondary school leavers while in school were not adequately provided with occupational information through industrial visit or filed trips, career convention, career day, career week, career exhibition, career guidance etc.

Thus, as a result of this failure most of them are in wrong professions which have cause low productivity and unfulfilled economic goals. This situation calls for urgent attention. Our young boys and girls must be provided with adequate occupational information so that they can be well equipped to make right career decisions. Anyaduba as cited in Welson (2016), affirm that, when youths are provided with occupational information, they will be in a better position to access their personal characteristics and what is required by their preferred career. Thus occupational information plays a significant role in career decision making. An individual requires accurate occupational information about careers, their entry requirement, and nature of work, job hazards and benefits to make good career preference.

Concept of Occupational Information

It is an indisputable fact that, career decision making can only proceed on the basis for sound knowledge and understanding about occupational information. The fact is that, an

individual who have knowledge about the existence of various jobs, their entry requirements, job advantages and disadvantages would be in a better position to make realistic career preference without difficulty. This knowledge of various kinds of occupation is indispensable for realistic decision making with respect to career. Nwamuo (2001), opined that occupational information is assisting individuals to obtain realistic information concerning careers in the world of work. This implies that, occupational information is facts about jobs, their entry requirements and condition of service. In support of this view, Myres (2001), asserted that, career guidance is made possible when there is proper occupational information. It is very sad to note that, many students are ignorant about various careers in the world of work. This is one of the reason why some of our young boys and girls find it difficult to make right career preference. Caplow as cited in Bright, Pryor and Harpharm (2005), uphold the view that, most students make preference in career without having full awareness of existing careers in the occupational world. Thus it is an indisputable fact that, an individual cannot make realistic career preference if he lacks knowledge about the existence of various careers in the field of work. There is a popular saying that “if you are not informed, you will be deformed”. Therefore students need valid occupational information in order to make wise career decisions. Idris (2011), carried out a study on the relationship between sources of occupational information and career choice among secondary school student in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The findings revealed that, there is a significant relationship between occupational information and career choice. Also Anagbogu (1992) asserted that, occupational information provides individuals with facts, condition and requirements about existing jobs. Thus the importance of occupational information cannot be brought down to the background because it is an essential tool that enables an individual to make right career preference. The fact remains indisputable that, without valid occupational information, an individual will be drag into total darkness. This is the reason why the government at all levels must make provision

for the employment of sufficient Professional Guidance Counsellors in Schools.

Techniques of Disseminating Occupational Information

Field Trip or Industrial Visit:

Industrial visit or field trip provides students the opportunity to have first-hand occupational information. It is an organized programme for students to visit selected industries, establishments, institutions or other work places for the primary purpose of gaining valid information from the workers and employers.

However, for better organization, the students should be divided into groups according to their occupational interest because it is good to explore the occupation in which one is interested, if possible to participate in executing the work. Similarly, each group should have a leader and should examine critically and ask questions on the type of job performed, the tools and machines used by the workers, its entry requirements, and condition of services, job benefits and hazards. At the end of the tour students should be able to give a complete observation and major findings. Ordu (2012) upholds the view that, career information is relayed through field – trip, that participation in field trip makes an individual to be well informed to make right career choice.

Career Day:

Another source of occupational information is through the organization of career day and career conference. Both programme aim at fostering occupational information to students. During these programme, students are provided with expert information about specific occupations. Their entry requirement, condition of services, job benefits and hazards.

A career day is a day set apart for career orientation. When students are given the opportunity to hear valid information from specialist in various occupations while career conference takes enough days where specialist from different occupation use each day to provide expert information about their profession and students are given the opportunity to ask questions on the areas of their interest. Onyejiaku as cited in Nwamuo (2001) opined that, career day is day set apart for career orientation when specialist speakers on specific occupations are invited. Also

Nwamuo (2001) affirmed that, career day orient students about careers and it is carried out in one day.

Guidance Display:

Guidance display involves the display of occupational information on the bulletin board at strategic positions in the school to attract the attention of the students. In some situation, the display also shows the relationship between school subject and occupation to enable students have full knowledge of the school subjects that they must offer that can enable them to study a specific profession.

Similarly, to sustain the reading interest of the students, the Guidance Counsellor should ensure the display of new themes every week and also portray the information that concerns the present and future occupational needs of the students. When the guidance display in a bill board is well organized it becomes an effective tool of creating occupational awareness among students and it goes a long way to stimulate their career interest towards a particular occupation. Salami(2006), affirm that bill board is a channel through which students are presented with occupational information.

Group Guidance

Group Guidance is also a source of occupational information. In the group guidance, the Guidance Counsellor organized students in groups with similar occupational interest and specifically disseminate to them comprehensive occupational information which include full details concerning the job entry requirement for the study, job characteristics, condition of service, job hazards and benefits.

Furthermore, in group guidance the students are also provided with the opportunity to see the practical aspect of the job where they practically observe the workers in action so as to be familiar with the demands and activities of the job success. Babatunde and Osakinle (2013), opined that, group guidance provides students with vocational and educational information. Also Owuamanam (2003), asserted that, group guidance create the opportunity for students to discuss their common problems and issues concerning their vocational and educational problems.

Mass Media:

The mass media is a medium of disseminating occupational information to students. The television, radio and overhead projectors are used to record information about different occupations for students to watch or sometimes listen. Sometimes detail information about a particular profession is being acted like a drama in the television or radio and also as the students watch and listen, it increases their occupational awareness and this in return stimulate their occupational interest towards a specific career. Asma as cited in Idris (2011), upholds the view that, mass media plays an essential part in the decision students makes in terms of career. Thus, mass media is a powerful means of disseminating occupational information to students.

Publication:

Publication is also seen as an essential tool of disseminating occupational information. Some publications in magazines, newspapers, career journals and business papers have special page where occupational information is being provided for the general public. Thus, the school Guidance Counsellor should provide enough encouragement to motivate students to read these various publications so that they can be well inform about the existence of old and new careers in the world of work. In some universities and colleges, students from different clubs on basis of their career interest or areas of study and they publish useful information monthly, quarterly or yearly concerning their area of study or career interest. This goes a long way to provide vital information for students. Oniyama, Omoni and Ijeh (2009), asserted that, newspaper, radio and television provide students career information.

Career Guidance

Career guidance is an essential tool that can enable students to make right career preference because its primary goal is to provide students with career information and make them to have adequate knowledge and understanding about their strength, weakness and personality traits that can be well directed towards a particular career so as to enjoy job happiness. Thus, it is very necessary that students are provided with adequate career guidance before making their preference in career. This is due to the fact that,

when an individual is given proper career guidance by a Professional Guidance Counsellor, he will be in a better position to make realistic career preference. Opposite will be the case if individuals are not given adequate career guidance. Bruce (2017), opined that, career guidance helps individuals to make decisions in planning and building their career. Also, Borbey – Pecze and Watts (2011), asserted that, career guidance provide students with occupational information and knowledge about work and lifelong learning.

Statement of the Problem

Choice moves on the wheels of knowledge. Career decision making can only proceed on the basis of sound knowledge and understanding about occupational information. Therefore, students need adequate occupational information to be able to make realistic preference.

However it is very sad to note that, most of our students are ignorant about various careers in the world of work. This is one of the reason why they find it difficult to make right career preference. This indeed is a big problem in our society that must be tackled. The fact remains obvious that, an individual cannot make realistic preference in career without having valid occupational information about existing careers in the world of work. Preference in career requires adequate occupational information otherwise one will stumble into careers blindly. Cawplow as cited in Bright, Pryor and Harpharm (2005), asserted that, most students make preference in career without having full awareness of existing careers in the world of work.

Thus considering the importance of occupational information in career decision making the researcher decided to investigate the correlation between occupational information and career preference among senior secondary students in public schools in Bayelsa State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the correlation between occupational information and career preference among secondary students in public schools in Bayelsa State. Specifically, the study aims at finding out whether:

1. Occupational information correlates with career preference.
2. Students participation in field trip correlates with career preference.
3. Students participation in career day correlate with career preference.
4. Career guidance correlates with career preference.

Research Questions

The study will provide answer to the following research questions.

- I. What is the correlation between occupational information and career preference among senior secondary school students?
- II. What is the correlation between students' participation in field trip and career preference among senior secondary school students?
- III. What is the correlation between students' participation in career day and career preference among senior secondary school students?
- IV. What is the correlation between career guidance and career preference among senior secondary school students?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 alpha level so as to make decision on issue being investigated.

- H₀₁:** There is no significant correlation between occupational information and career preference among senior secondary school students.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant correlation between students' participation in career day and career preference among senior secondary school students
- H₀₃:** There is no significant correlation between students' participation in field trip and career preference among senior secondary school students
- H₀₄:** There is no significant correlation between career guidance and career preference among senior secondary school students

Methodology

The study adopted correlational research design. Nworgu (2006), defined correlational research design as the type of study that seek to

establish relationship that exist between two or more variables. Four research questions and four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprises all the senior secondary two (SSII) students. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select one Local Government Area each from the three senatorial districts in Bayelsa State. From the three Local Government Areas selected, random sampling by balloting was used to select 3 secondary schools, each making a total of 9 schools across the state. Thereafter SS II students were purposely selected for the study because they are next to graduate and must have made their career preference. Four hundred (400) SS II students from a public school from the sample size. Two instruments were used for data collection. Occupational Information Questionnaire (O.I.Q) and vocational interest inventory (VII). The Occupational Information Questionnaire (O.I.Q) was constructed by the researcher. It is divided into two sections, A and B. section A is to get information concerning the bio-data of the respondents while section B elicit response from the respondents. This questionnaire has four sub-sections namely: occupational information, students occupation in field trip, students participation in career day and career guidance. The instruments is structured on five points Liwert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Undecided (U) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The

respond format gave 5 pints to Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points to Agree (A) 3 points to Undecided (U) 2 points to Disagree (D) and 1 point to Strongly Disagree (SD) respectively while the researcher adapted vocational interest inventory (VII) to elicit responses from the respondents concerning their career preference. The instruments were validated by test experts in measurement and evaluation. Cronbach Alpha Formula was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. Occupational Information Questionnaire (O.I.Q) had a reliability coefficient of 0.941 while vocational interest inventory (VII) had a reliability coefficient of 0.902. Pearson product moment correlation was used to answer and analyze the research questions and the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant.

ANALYSIS OF RESULT

Research Question 1: What is the correlation between occupational information and career preference among senior secondary school students?

Ho1: There is no significant correlation between occupational information and career preference among senior secondary school students

The research Q1 and Ho1 were answered with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on table 1 below

Table 1: Correlational Analysis on occupational information and Career Preference

		Occupational information	Career preference
Occupational information	Pearson Correlation	1	.903**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Career preference	Pearson Correlation	.903**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result in table 1 revealed that, the correlational coefficient between occupational information and Career Preference, is $r=-0.645$, at $n=400$ and a p-value less than 0.05 ($p=0.00$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, then the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a

significant relationship between occupational information and career preference in senior secondary school students in Bayelsa State.

Research Question 2: What is the correlation between student participation in fieldtrip and career preference among senior secondary school students?

Ho2: There is no significant correlation between student's participation in field trip

Table 2: Correlational analysis on Students' participation in field trip and Career Preference

		Participation in field trip	Career preference
Participation in field trip	Pearson Correlation	1	-.685**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Career preference	Pearson Correlation	-.685**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result in table 2 revealed that, the correlational coefficient between students' participation in field trip, is $r=-0.685$, at $n=400$ and a p -value less than 0.05 ($p=0.00$). Since the p -value is less than 0.05, then the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between students' participation in field trip and career preference among senior secondary school students in Bayelsa State.

and career preference among senior secondary school students

The research Q2 and Ho2 were answered with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on table 2 below

Research Question 3: Is there a correlation between student's participation in career day and career preference among senior secondary school students?

Ho3: Students participation in career day and career preference among senior secondary school students do not significantly relate

The research Q3 and Ho3 were answered with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on table 3 below

Table 3: Correlational Analysis on students' participation on career day and Career Preference

		Participation in career day	Career preference
Participation in career day	Pearson Correlation	1	-.046
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.657
	N	400	400
Career preference	Pearson Correlation	-.046	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.657	
	N	400	400

The result in table 3 revealed that, the correlational coefficient between students' participation in career day and Career Preference, is $r=-0.903$, at $n=400$ and a p -value less than 0.05 ($p=0.00$). Since the p -value is less than 0.05, then the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between students' participation in career day and career

preference in among senior secondary school students in Bayelsa State.

Research Question 4: Is there a correlation between career guidance and career preference among senior secondary school students?

Ho4: Career guidance and career preference among senior secondary school students do not significantly relate

The research Q4 and Ho4 were answered with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on table 4 below

Table 4: Correlational analysis on Career Guidance and Career Preference

		Career guidance	Career preference
Career guidance	Pearson Correlation	1	-.646**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Career preference	Pearson Correlation	-.646**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result in table 4 revealed that, the correlational coefficient between career guidance, is $r=-0.646$, at $n=400$ and a p-value less than 0.05 ($p=0.00$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, then the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between career guidance and career preference in senior secondary school students in Bayelsa State.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of research question one and hypothesis one indicate that, there is a significant correlation between occupational information and career preference among senior secondary school students. This implies that, occupational information relates with career preference.

This finding is in agreement with that of Idris (2011) who found out that, there is a significant relationship between occupational information and career choice.

Also, the findings of this present study are in agreement with the opinion of Myres (2006), who affirm that, career guidance can only function when there is adequate occupational information.

The finding of research question two and hypothesis two indicate that, there is a significant correlation between student's participation in field trip and career preference among senior secondary school students. This implies that field trip relates with career preference.

The finding of this study is in agreement with the opinion of Ordu (2012), who upholds the

view that, career information is relayed through field trip, that participation in field trip makes an individual to be well informed to make right career choice. Also, the findings of the study can be attributed to the area of the study, sample of the study, level of maturity and intellectual ability of respondents

The finding of research question three and hypothesis three indicate that, there is a significant correlation between students' participation in career day and career preference among senior secondary school students. This implies that students' participation in career day relates with career preference.

This finding is in agreement with the opinion of Uzoeshi (2013), who upholds the view that, career day is an avenue to get accurate vocational information, with this information student are able to make realistic career choice.

The finding of research question four and hypothesis four indicate that, there is a significant correlation between career guidance and career preference among senior secondary school students. This implies that career guidance relates with career preference.

The finding of this present study is in agreement with that of Oyeniran (2008), who found out that, there is a significant relationship between career guidance and career preference. Also, the finding of this study is in agreement with that of Idris (2011), who found out that there is a significant relationship between career guidance and career choice. The findings

of the study can also be attributed to other variables like culture, area of study, sample of the study, valid response to items in the instruments and level of maturity.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that, occupational information, student's participation in field trip, student's participation in career day, and career guidance has significant correlation with career preference. Therefore Guidance Counsellors should provide adequate and valid occupational information to students to be able to make realistic career preference that can be suitable to their personal attributes.

Recommendation

1. Guidance counsellors should provide adequate occupational information to students
2. Guidance counsellors should organize field trip and career day for students termly
3. The Government and Parent Teachers Association, philanthropist, oil companies and Banks should assist in the sponsorship of Field trip and career day in schools.
4. The Government should make provision for the employment of sufficient professional Guidance Counsellors in schools.
5. The Government at all levels should establish career libraries in schools.

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