

AN ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING BEYOND 2020

Magdalyn Aboh, Ph.D

Abstract.

Guidance and counselling is as old as human existence. In pre-modern societies, it was family guidance that is, parents, elders, peer and specialists within communities that served as counsellors. With modernization, changes in our environment, education and social life have made the pre-modern guidance irrelevant in aiding individuals to cope with the challenges of this era. Thus, modern guidance and counselling is only a supplement to the traditional practice. Here the traditional term guidance is part of our culture and practised in the contemporary era. With this the National Policy on Education (1977 edition) and (1981 edition) conforms that it is desirable to provide a guidance counsellor in secondary school that will aid educational development in Nigeria beyond 2020. In this vein, the term guidance is viewed as an umbrella term that covers all the means whereby an institution identifies and responds to the individual needs of students no matter the demand and no matter its sources. It entails aiding the individual to develop his potentials to the maximum. Ethically the individual needs to play well so that he knows what is good or bad for him. This involves knowledge about area of interest, his nature (introvert or extrovert, aggressive or lovely persons), his educational level. Issues concerning the career, the career prospects, salary structure and incentives, nature of the work, people on this type of work, tools used, risk, problems in line with the career. In this light, what is the ethical code of the job. Thus, the paper examined ethical concept, the ethical essence of guidance and counselling in education and development beyond 2020, the duties of parents, school administration, government and the community in guidance, the ethical codes of planning and development, the ethical problem confronting guidance in Nigeria and combating guidance problems in Nigeria beyond 2020, then round-up with conclusion.

In different societies both pre-modern and modern parents, community, leaders (stakeholders) and other extended families used to and still offer invaluable guidance to the younger generation and those in need. It is clear that these people help others when they have personal and social problems which they could not easily solve.

Thus, the traditional term guidance is part of our culture that is being utilized in the contemporary era. Counselling is more limited in scope than guidance. As it entails a wide range of service involving giving advice, support in times of trouble or need, encouragement and the giving of data. Here it create opportunities and suitable environment for personal social, education and vocational growth of the individual (STUP 2007: 234-5), which is very essential for education and development in Nigeria beyond 2020.

However, ethically a moral criterion is the measure we use for determining the value or worth of an action or attitude (Struhi 1975:75). In this light, the paper shall examine ethical concept, the ethical essence of guidance and counselling in education and development beyond 2020, the duties of parents,

school administration, government and the community in guidance, the ethical codes of planning and development, the ethical problem confronting guidance in Nigeria and combating guidance problems in Nigeria beyond 2020, then the paper rounded-up with conclusion.

Ethical Concept

Ethics is derived from the Greek word ‘ethos’ is synonymous with ‘moral’, both connoting customs, habits and accepted ways of behaviour of an individual or a community (Uduigwomen, 2006:1).

Here the meaning of ethnics can only be clear after its definition, purpose and possibility are stated. According to Uduigwomen (2006:1) as he quotes Lacey (1976) defines ethnics as “The study of whether there is a set of virtues as any values each and every person should pursue, whether there is a set of virtues as a code of principles of conduct for everyone and what these are if they do exist. While he incite Machan (1977:30) definition which defined ethics as “the study of whether there are any values each and every person should pursue, whether there is a set of virtues as a code of principles of conduct for everyone, and what these are if they exist.

Ethics like other branches of philosophy which deal with abstract problems, the problems of ethics or moral philosophy are ones which everybody seems to be familiar with. Thus, ethics deals with issues or problems or questions which normally arise in everyday life. Ethics deals with questions of ethical or moral value that are concerned with human conduct in the society. Like what is good for life for man? Is there a standard of right by which all human actions can be judged? If such a single standard exists, on what basis will it be determined? What does goodness or badness of human conduct mean? Does right conduct imply curbing our natural desire, or seeking their fulfilment? What is duty? What is obligation? How should men conduct themselves? Is abortion right? Should I cheat during examination? Should I tell the truth or not in the face of danger? What general ideas should they pursue? (Uduigwomen 2006:1).

With this it is clear that the object of ethics is morality of human conduct or behaviour. Here morality becomes the yardstick or thermometer for measuring good and bad actions. Morality is concerns with judgement about the rightness or wrongness of actions committed with the greatest amount of freedom. It is the solution of the problem created by conflict among the interests of same person or different persons. Its system contains beliefs about the nature of man, ideas and rules which stipulate what ought not to be done, and about the motives which determine what one does. It pertains what is good and evil concerning human beings as such, by virtue of their being human. Morality concerns what is open to their choices, not what happens to them due to factors beyond their control (Uduigwomen 2006:2).

In this light the purpose of ethic is base on human conduct, as it has a vital role in human life. First, the need for ethics arises because human beings have no automatic guidelines by which they regulate their lives. Second purpose of ethics is to discover the general or universal principle to guide human conduct. In Uduigwomen (2006:3) as he quotes Hare (1963) confirmed that the purpose of ethics is that of “helping us to think better about moral question by exposing the logical structure of language in which those thoughts are expressed. In his view ethics is relevant to human life because of the need to answer some questions that apply to all normal human beings. Uduigwomen (2006:3). Thirdly ethics is to help us to better conform our conduct to the norms of morality to influence our conduct for good. Uduigwomen (2006:3) rightly captures Omoregbe (1993) by pointing out that this does not mean that all who study ethics will necessarily live virtuous or morally upright lives. As there are several people who have not studied ethics or heard of the word ethics, but have live upright moral lives. A study of ethics should make us to be able to evaluate our own and other people’s conduct, while if the desire for a change is there, we are better able to rectify our lives and make useful recommendation that will aid others rectify their lives.

While philosophers who belong to the analytic school are of the view that the purpose of ethics is to clarify and analyze moral terms that occur in ethical statements and discourse. Thus, ethics should be able to tell the meaning of such terms as “good”, “bad”, “right”, “wrong”, “ought”, “obligation”, “responsibility” and several others (Uduigwomen, 2006:3).

In this light, according to Shailer (1923:152) ethics is the science, or philosophy, or more modestly, the study of moral conduct regarded as right or wrong or as what 'ought' or 'ought not' to be done; or as involving deliberation and choice between ends viewed as 'good'.

According to Struhi (1975:61) it is no illusion but uncontested fact that here and now we know that hatred, cruelty, intolerance and indifference to human misery are evil; that love, kindness, tolerance, forgiveness and truth are good, so unquestionably good that we do not need God or heaven to assure us of their worth.

The Ethical Essence of Guidance and Counselling in Education and Development Beyond 2020.

We have several definitions of the term guidance. It is a word that is derived from the word 'guide' which means direct, watch over, know, aid and inform. Ethically guidance can be seen as an umbrella term that refers to all that is done to protect and guide the development of students beyond 2020. Here it is the help given by one person that is the counsellor or teacher to another in making choices and adjustment and in solving problems. Thus, the term guidance as an umbrella is a term that embraces all the means whereby an institution identifies and responds to the individual needs of students no matter the wants and no matter its sources. With this, guidance includes helping the individual to develop his potentials to the maximum. In this vein, guidance deals with large number of students in a teaching and learning situation that will aid education and development in Nigeria beyond 2020. (STUP 2007:234).

STUP (2007:234) quotes Isaken and Mink (1963) and defines guidance as a programme of service to individual student based on the needs of each student, and understanding of his immediate environment, teachers, peers, parents and people generally and the effects of their influence on the student. While Zeran and Riccio (1962) confirmed that guidance is a process, developmental in nature, by which an individual is enabled to understand, accept and utilise his abilities, aptitudes and interests in relation to his aspirations.

Ethically guidance in this era's language has always been referred to as rendering help to an individual or group in certain areas such as personal, social, educational and vocational. In this light, guidance deals with giving direction, advice and information to an individual or group of people which includes the supply of information to a person or group of persons concerning primary choices of courses, disciplines or careers (STUP, 2007:235).

Counselling is a part of guidance but is limited in scope than guidance. With this, some authorities view it as a core of guidance, as it denotes a wide range of activities involving giving advice, support in times of troubles or want, encouragement and the giving of information. Thus, a guidance counsellor is a professionally equipped person in guidance and counselling who renders help to individual students according to the demand of every student or group, in understanding their abilities, aptitude, interest and educational needs.

According to STUP (2007:235) counselling can be defined as a process in which one person assists another in a person-to-person or face-to-face encounter. Counselling provides an atmosphere within which one person that is the counsellor or teacher can render help to another person or group of persons that is the counselee. The term help simply means helping with the view to facilitating his getting into grips with the issue at hand.

In this light, it is clear that counselling is concerned with creating opportunities and suitable environment for personal, social, educational and vocational growth of the individual. The major aim of counselling is to aid students to explore and participate in their own development towards becoming meaningfully self-directed in a changing society beyond 2020. As in counselling the person learns about;

New ways of communicating, new ways to obtaining information, new ways of making decisions, new ways of responding to the environment and new ways of interacting (STUP, 2007:235). Thus, counselling is a process of aiding a person or group of persons to find solution to his or their problems. Here a interpersonal interaction is established between two persons that one tries to aid others to understand and solve their problem (STUP, 2007:235).

Sphere of Guidance and Counselling in Education and Development in Nigeria Beyond 2020.

The desire to aid students choose the right courses according to their own interest and the test of the nation is the case of the 9-3-4 educational system. Like if a student is good in the sciences, arts, vocational or creative work, the student can be directed to schools that are meant for him or her, with this aid students can reap the benefit from their schooling. In this vein, as the society becomes complex, the desire for an organised guidance in the secondary schools become inevitable for education and development in Nigeria beyond 2020. With this, students require the services of a guidance counsellor to aid them make wise decisions, plans and to utilise their skills to the maximum, in these areas;

Academic

Students in all institutions of learning that is from the secondary to the university need valid and usable information which will relate to their advancement and experience levels concerning all kinds of present and future educational opportunities and demand for entrance and problems of student life. Here the teacher or counsellor can aid students to do things like these;

The counsellor should assist the student to understand appropriate combination of school subjects or courses. Like students sent o school based on quota-system is un-academic. Here, for education and development in Nigeria beyond 2020, students schooling should be based on academic ability as this will aid students to avoid failure and frustration.

In the same vein, according to STUP (2007:237) the counsellor, through counselling should help students to improve upon their academic performance, as students are assisted in developing good study habits or skills as success in study relies not only on ability and hard work, but with effective methods of study. In this light students are lead to developing their own initiatives, as an individual student and how he can maximise his potentials in a given environment, then developing realistic plans for the future, that is beyond 2020.

Vocational

In view of the entrepreneurship education, the essence of appropriate occupational aspiration and the ultimate occupational choice, career guidance is unavoidable with the following aims of career education.

Students are made to understand or respect manual labour, by helping them to realise that life is not all that smooth. The guidance counselling service should be provided to the students to help them in coping with the problems of life. By knowing that job opportunities are very scarce. In this light, they relate the concept of education generally to practical aspects or realities or life, especially the world of work (STUP, 2007:237).

Students are enlightened to increase the relevance of the educational process to employment desires of the society. It is clear that today most youth cannot contribute their quota to the economic development of the society that they belong, due to inappropriate occupational aspiration and choice, and this have led most individuals to function below the level of maximum efficiency.

Guidance counsellors should offer opportunities for the awareness of areas of occupational aspiration and choice to all students. As this will aid to avoid the persist threat of unemployment arising from technological changes and politics, threats of religious crises and actual religious crises in Nigeria. This will not only give a plus to the complexity of the task of career planning but aid choices among conflicting values. Thus, guidance counsellors should aid the students to select subjects or courses and choose occupations suitable to their temperament and tests that suit their ability (STUP, 2007:237).

Personal - Social

Guidance and counselling service are aimed at helping the students or individuals to understand their personalities or themselves and other people. With these services students will be aided with these personal social needs for education and development in education beyond 2020, which are:

a. Adjustment Needs

Most of the adolescents in Nigerian secondary schools face adjustment problems as many of them now do not stay within their traditional society or parents. Thus, they should be aided to adjust to new situations in the jobs they find themselves.

b. Lack of Parental and Inadequate Family Guidance

Today in the modern society, there are several parents who do not care for their children. They have no time to spend with their children at home. The problem is compounded with lack of guiding values, patriotism, drug abuses, corruption, little or not human life, indiscipline and other vices.

c. The Concept of Individual Differences and Meeting of Emotional Needs.

Today individual attention and direction are essential for quality and productivity. Here the counsellor uses his skills to help the counsellee get rid of his emotional problems.

The Duties of Parents, School Administration, Government and the Community in Guidance.

The Duties of Parents.

Parents can be introduced in guidance to the school's counselling programme through Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.) meetings. At such meetings the principal should give the counsellor the opportunity to explain the need for guidance services and the essence for their cooperation and engagement, and that all parents duties should be as follows;

Parents should provide for their children moral, social, educational and financial needs, to aid them face their studies and school work al at home in total.

Parents should give cooperation to school administration and support by offering moral and financial aid for the development and implementation of school guidance programme. And to encourage their children to use their leisure time properly (STUP, 2007:250).

The Duties of the School Administration.

Here the principal's work includes planning, directing, coordinating and managing human and material resources. In this manner he has to perform the following duties:

The principal is to explore and interpret the philosophy of guidance and counselling to the teachers, parents and the immediate environment where the school is sited.

He is to provide the financial support and suitable facilities, such as up-to-date careers, library, bulleting board, test and non-test instruments, stationery and other important facilities.

The principal is to offer moral support for the development and implementation of the guidance and counselling by assigning the right guidance responsibilities to staff and students (STUP, 2007:251).

The Duties of the Government.

The government have several duties to play, which are;
To help with equipment and other infrastructure for the provision of guidance and counselling in all government, properiortiate, and mission schools.

With this, the local, state and federal governments should be prepared to organise seminars, workshops for parents on themes such as "Behaviour problem of children and helping the youth to achieve".

Thus, government should appeal to and encourage wealthy individuals in the society to contribute their quarter, funds, material and facilities to guidance and counselling (STUP, 2007:252).

The Duties of the Community.

The community on her part must be enlightened on the services of guidance and counselling to the school programme, through the following ways;

On career “Day” or “Career Week” events, people who are specialists in their field within the community should come and share their knowledge to the students. While specialists should be ready to play attention to referral cases from the school. And offer moral and financial aid to guidance and counselling programmes (Bulus 1986).

The Ethical Codes of Planning and Development.

Career is a chosen life work. It is the total work one does in a given job in one’s life time. While planning is the time-tabling of what and how activities will be carried out. In the process of planning, attention is given to the material resources available for use in carrying out the plans. In the same light, an individual needs to make a time-table of how he desire to get into the kind of job he wants to do in future. The planning of the kind of job and individual wants to do in future include getting the necessary education needed, offering the type of subjects to qualify one for that job. It also requires preparing your mind towards the work. Thus, career development entails progressing and making success in the job one has chosen. In this light, career development comes after you have started working; it is growing on the job (STUP, 2007:267).

Factors Affecting Career Planning and Development

Parents

They can affect one’s career planning and development, by not taking care of the child by not giving the child required education needed to enable him go into the career he planned for. Secondly by forcing the child to go into the career they (parents) want him to choose. In this case the refusal of the student to go into such career lead to no payment of their fees.

The Peers. Friends can affect one’s career, as a child would want to go out for the same job his friend has without having the same educational requirements or talents, while he has not even offered the same subjects or courses.

Employment opportunities, this affect career where there are several people on a job. Then the prestige of the career, this may fall in the course of time. While other professions are looked down upon, but with the course of time may become valuable. And the economic gains one gets from a job. Here people begin to look at jobs based on their salary advantages, such as retirement benefits, allowances, holidays and several others. Thus, the more there are these advantages, the greater the number of people who plan for career opportunities in the profession (STUP, 2007:268).

Stages of Career Planning and Development

We have three basic stages of career planning and development.

First is fantasy stage of career development and planning which is the stage when one is still day-dreaming about several careers that appear attractive to him. This means, an individual wants to be a lawyer today, tomorrow is teaching, the next day is accounting etc. At this period he acts like a child who wants all things shown to him or her. Thus, it is the era of confusion for the individual.

Second is the tentative stage, at this era an individual becomes stabilized a little as he drops his desire for some jobs and wants few of them. And he starts to plan for them, while some of them again will drop later.

Thirdly the realistic stage; here the individual is mature to make a concrete decision of the kind of career he feels is good for him. As he is now convinced that possibly going into a particular job is best for him. Now the choice becomes realistic as he would have reviewed the kind of education he has acquired, the school subject taken and the possibility of getting quickly employed (STUP, 2007:258). Ethically the guidance counsellor is accepted to help an individual to go through successfully and morally.

Data Needed for Career Planning and Development.

All the stages in career planning and development certain information is demanded to aid the individual do a good career planning and development. This information demanded is of two divisions which include;

1. The information about the individual who wants to plan and develop his career. He needs to plan well so that he is aware of what is good or bad for him. Here the data needed include:

The area of his interest; the type of person he is, is he an introvert or extrovert, aggressive or lovely person? You need to know this, the educational background of the person, the performance in the school subjects. All these you need to know about the person for a good career planning (STUP, 2007:269).

2. The data about the career include;

The career prospects, the salary structure and other benefits, the demands of the work, the place where the work is carried out. Is it inside the room or outside, in the field, the type of people or things to work with, the risks and problems associated with the career (STUP, 2007:269).

With these stages and data about the individual and career, an individual can plan well for his career. As Struhi (1975:7) rightly confirmed this situation when he asserted thus;

But even more important, what should emerge from a consideration of the moral dilemmas that follow is a clear sense of the need to develop a theoretical perspective from which we turn our moral intuitions into rationally defensible moral positions.

The Ethical Problems Confronting Guidance Services in Nigeria

Guidance services is experiencing some ethical problems from different people who should have been aiding it. They are problems from the personnel like the principals, teachers, the counsellors, the parents, guardians and the students too.

Problems associated with the Principals

1. Most principals do not know what guidance service is all about, its nature and purpose and so do not encourage or co-operate with the counsellor.
2. Most principals refuse to offer comfortable accommodation for the guidance service programmes.
3. Principals are psychologically scared or threatened that the counsellor is coming to usurp his authority and power in the school.
4. Guidance service programme are not well funded by the principals as they refuse to, when they know that finance is the prime mover of projects which is propelling the entire system.
5. They refuse to permit or do not encourage teachers to attend guidance service workshops and conferences.
6. No time for the counsellor to do his work. As he is engaged with lot of load in the school, he is either teaching or doing administrative work which is not his schedule.
7. Principals and teachers see guidance service as a cure for all educational difficulties of children which it is not, with acknowledging it.

Problems Associated with the Teachers.

a. Shortage of teachers or lack of adequately qualified teachers in many important subjects such as mathematics, English, Physics, constitute a problem. This inadequacy makes them not to contribute effectively to the student's educational and vocational planning.

b. Overloaded lesson and increase in the enrolment of students. Teachers are given many periods and the number of students in a class is too much for their control. This prevents them from giving

individual attention to their students. As a result, they would not be able to gather pertinent information about students which would have helped the growth of guidance services.

c. Most teachers do not acquire effective study skills and in effect cannot help the students to develop one. This contributes to the problem of guidance service in that the goals of guidance services and that of the individual may not be realized.

d. Teachers are supposed to keep accurate and correct data of students under them. But many teachers fail to do this. This is a problem because in guidance service, accurate and authentic records are required.

Problems Associated with Parents and Guardians.

1. Guidance service programme at times need resource persons who are specialists. Some parents or guardians refuse to come when invited for a seminar, workshop etc.

2. Parents and guardians are supposed to give either health, educational or social information of their children or wards to the counsellor. But most of them do not and when demanded for they turn it down.

Problems from the Counsellor

1. Some people piloting the affairs of the guidance service are not qualified. They are lacking in certain areas. This is a problem in that guidance service established in schools will not function effectively atimes in their home front.

2. Many counsellors do not conduct research in their field after their graduation from school. This is a problem. Obsolete information is a handicap.

3. Counsellors do not devote their time to the scheduled work as most of them are more business minded.

4. Counsellors often fail to keep career library which is important to students, this lead to lack of adequate information.

5. Divulging of information which should not be by the counsellor is a problem to guidance services.

Problems Associated with the Students.

1. Many students do not go for the guidance service programmes that are organised for them. As they are ashamed, feeling that their weak points or secrets will be exposed.

Problems Associated with the Government.

1. Most state' government budgetary allocation, nothing is budgeted for the running of guidance services.

Combating Guidance Programmes in Nigeria beyond 2020

Principals.

1. Principals should be made to be aware of what guidance services are all about, while they should know that guidance counsellors are not their rival in powers and authority; rather they should co-operate with the counsellors for the realization of a common goal.

2. Principals should make conscious effort to provide guidance service programme with comfortable accommodation so that its operations will be carried out successfully.

3. Principals should know that they are the administrative head of guidance services and should see that they do everything to keep it running.

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4. They should sit up and encourage their teachers to attend guidance service workshops and conferences.
5. The erroneous idea in the principals mind should be wiped off, that is guidance is a cure to all educational and vocational difficulties.
6. Principals should support by giving funds for guidance service properly.
7. Principals should not schedule counsellors for teaching or for administrative work of theirs, but acknowledge their duties.

Teachers

1. You should have right qualification, by offering the right courses especially guidance and counselling.
2. Your periods and class size should be reduced, few lessons should be assigned to him.
3. You must try as much as possible to keep accurate and correct data, by maintaining the bio-data of students, alongside their problems as top secrets.

Parents

1. Parents and guardians should help the guidance service by giving information about their children or wards, especially their bio-data.
2. Parents and guardians should willingly accept to be resource persons when invited to the guidance service programmes, especially during seminars, conferences and workshops.

Counsellor

1. Unqualified counsellors should not handle guidance service programmes, not even on the basis of experience.
2. Counsellors should endeavour to conduct researches, after they have left school.
3. Counsellors should adhere strictly to their scheduled work, avoid business ties during working hours.
4. Counsellors should try as much as possible not to reveal information; for it is against the ethics of the profession unless there is a need for such, particularly the ones related to counselling services.

Students

1. The counsellors, principals, teachers, parents and guardians should encourage the students to go for guidance service programmes at all levels of educational background.

Government

1. The local, state and federal government should provide funds to schools for guidance programmes.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is clear that the ethical practice of guidance and counselling help students to utilize their potentialities effectively. With this, individual and group of students understand what is 'right' and 'wrong' or the 'good' and 'bad' and solve their problem. Thus, ethically education and guidance in Nigeria have to provide assistance to an individual to enable him personal freedom and confidence in himself. As they are aided through the services of guidance and counselling to grow in self-understanding, develop potentialities for wise and realistic educational and vocational decision. In this light, ethically they provide services to students in personal problems, choices and decision as each of them must be exposed to in life (STUP, 2007:275).

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