

REPOSITIONING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMME IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS THROUGH COMPETITIVENESS, INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Happiness Onyedikachi Oguoma, Ph.D and Stella Chinekezie Nwaigwe

Abstract

Guidance and counselling is an important and integral part of the educational system designed to assist students resolve their personal and academic issues and also equip them with the necessary skills to realize their full potentials and adapt comfortably in the world. Children enter the school environment with a lot of their own personal problems. Some of these problems may be emotional, some are social, or educational or even future aspirations like choosing a career. Guidance and counselling offers school children a measure of assistance in resolving these issues. It helps to make learning a positive experience for every child and also encourages their emotional, academic and personal development. Thus guidance and counselling programmes in tertiary institutions that produce school counsellors should be top-notch and dynamic to equip the trainee counsellors with the knowledge, skills and competencies they require to function effectively in the school environment. This paper therefore focuses on ways of repositioning guidance and counselling programmes to be competitive innovative and entrepreneurial.

Keywords: Guidance, counselling, competitiveness, innovation and entrepreneurship.

The National Policy on Education advocated for guidance and counselling as one of the services to be provide by the government at the Basic Education level (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2013). Guidance and counselling will help in the realization of some of the main national goals of the country as stated by the policy such as goal a) development of the individual into the a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen; goal b) total integration of the individual into immediate community, the Nigeria society and the world; goal c) development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to society (FRN, 2013). This is because guidance and counselling is a mechanism that not only empower the individual but also enables them to develop themselves for effective integration in the society. Guidance and counselling is the process of helping an individual (a student) discover himself and be able to fit in and adjust to his society. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica (n.d), guidance and counselling is the process of helping an individual develop their educational, vocational, and psychological potential and thereby to achieve an optimal level of personal happiness and social usefulness. Guidance and counselling has two distinct components –guidance and counselling. Guidance, according to Bokah & Umennaik (2016), is the total programme engaged in by an educational institution that is aimed at helping an individual client to make meaningful choices that would achieve self-actualization. Counselling on the other hand refers to a number of proceedings

used in assisting an individual in solving problem which arise from various aspect of his life or overall personal development so that he could be more effective satisfied and more useful to the society in which he live (Mallum as cited in Bokah & Umennaikie,2016). People who carry out these duties of guidance and counselling in educational institutions are called guidance and counsellors. Guidance counsellors are trained to help students with their educational and social personal problem as well as assist them in making career plans. They are especially trained to provide guidance services as well as counselling services to secondary school students in Nigeria .Ebizie, Enajedu & Egenti (2016) opine that the roles of guidance and counselling programme is to bring about the maximum development and self-realization of human potential for the benefit of the individual and society. Guidance services provided by the guidance counsellor include;

Orientation Services

These are activities designed to familiarize newly admitted students with the school environment. Students are introduced to school rules and regulations, the school management team, school facilities, staff, school functionaries, etc. The newly admitted students are fully integrated into the school culture.

Appraisal Service

The guidance counsellor keeps a cumulative folder where information about individual students are collected, organised and kept. This folder contains comprehensive information of each student over the period they are in school. This enables the school successful appraise students and plan the type of programme they would provide for the students

Information Service

This service provides students with information about higher institutions and courses available. Educational, vocational, and social-personal information are also provided to enable student make realistic choices.

Counselling service

This is the centre of the guidance programme. Counselling is a professional relationship between the guidance counsellor and client (student) to help the client understand himself better and make realistic choices.

Placement Services

This service by the counsellor assists the school to place students in the subject areas where they appropriately belong using their ability, aptitude and career interest.

Follow up Service

Follow up service involves regular monitoring of a client to ascertain the level of progress made by such a client after the end of a guidance or counselling session.

Referral Service

This involves referring students to appropriate specialists when a problem is beyond the counsellor's ability.

counselling according to Igbo (as cited by Ebizie et al, 2016) is a learning process in which a counsellor helps an individual or individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environment and be in a position to choose the right type of behaviours that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and step up, educationally, vocationally and socio personally. To Olayinka (1993), counselling is a face to face, person to person relationship in which a person (the client) seeks the help of or seeks to effectively communicate with another person (the counsellor). Counselling is more of an assistance rendered to a client on a face to face basis in order to enable the client understand himself better and make meaningful decisions on his educational, vocational and socio personal problems. It is an interactive process between the counsellor and client whereby the clients are guided to understand and help themselves. When guidance counsellor carries out the responsibility of counselling, it is called a counselling service.

Counselling service includes all the techniques and strategies adopted by the counsellor to facilitate changes in the behaviour of the client through understanding of himself and the environment (Bokah & Umunnaike, 2016). Counselling services include educational counselling, vocational counselling and socio-personal counselling.

Educational Counselling

This is aimed at enhancing learning and academic achievement. It includes services such as subject selection, study habit, entering appropriate programmes in the school, coping with examination anxiety, etc.

Vocational Counselling

This is one of the most important services rendered by the school counsellor. This involves making available to students information about careers and the world of work. It assists students to make career choices based on their ability, talents, aptitude or interest. It also helps students make informed choices on the course of study and institutions that could effectively enable them pursue a particular career.

Personal-Social Counselling

This deals with social and personal problems of the student. Problems such as emotional disturbances, sexuality, family problems, financial problems, lack of self-assertiveness, negative self-concept, low self-esteem and personality maladjustments. Personal social counselling helps the client to come to grips with his emotional and personality issues.

Professional Training of Guidance Counsellors

The school guidance counsellor provides a wide range of services in the school. These services cut across the school environment, the family and the society. There is no gain saying that these services need capable hands to provide them in the school. Oguzie (2014) posits that to effectively manage and utilize these programmes in the school calls for adequate deployment of

professionals (counsellors) that have been trained academically to help their beneficiaries achieve maximally in spite of all limitations. Okobiah (as cited in Oguzie, 2014) states that the counsellor needs to acquire wealth of experiences through continuous training and development in order to facilitate/ inculcate the spirit of consciousness for peace, conflict resolution and national security into learners.

As pointed out earlier in the introduction, guidance counselling units in schools require professionals guidance counselling could be a maximal tool in achieving some of our national goals. Effective guidance counselling units in schools require professional guidance counsellors to man them. Professional here means academically trained guidance counsellors.

The course guidance and counselling is offered in most faculties of education of universities and some degree awarding institutions such as colleges of education. It has two entry points UTME and direct entry. Candidates offering the course through direct entry already have other certificates like the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) and want to major / specialize in guidance and counselling. The course runs a period of four years for UTME candidates depending on the institution. At the end of course, candidates are awarded the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree in guidance counselling and are qualified to practice as guidance counsellors. At the post graduate level, candidates are awarded the Masters in Education (M.Ed.) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Graduated counsellors also possess necessary content that would that enable them function effectively as school guidance counsellors

In addition, the curriculum of guidance and counselling programme as a course of study provides for a period of internship/practicum for the student counsellor. This practicum is an integral aspect of the academic programme without which the programme is incomplete. Practicum is an internship programme where student guidance counsellors are posted out to various schools for practical experience.

Repositioning Guidance and Counselling Programme through Competitiveness, Innovative Practices and Entrepreneurship

To reposition the guidance and counselling programme in tertiary institutions means to adjust or alter the curriculum of the programme or to place it in a different way for it to be competitive, innovative and entrepreneurial. This is more so because the world is leaning towards technology and school children nowadays are more technologically minded than their predecessors. In order for the guidance and counselling to effectively provide guidance and counselling services to the students of this new technology age they have to be on the same page with them. Being on the same page will entail overhauling the curriculum that graduate school counsellors. If the curriculum is structured to meet new trends in global world then graduate of the curriculum would be confident, competent and effective in meeting the needs of the new age children. It is glaringly evident that things including education should not be done as they are done before. Likewise curriculums should also change to reflect these new trends.

Onyilofor (2013) is of the view that repositioning guidance and counselling and curriculum innovation in higher education in Nigeria promises a bright future for the country as entrepreneurship/guidance and counselling and curriculum innovation provides for the training of students in both the theoretical and practical on- the- job applications in different skills. Brott &

Myers, Studer (as cited in Kozlowski & Huss, 2013), posit that school counsellors jobs encompass much more than individuals and group counselling, and the traditional training models are not keeping up with the needs of today's school counsellors. Repositioning the study of guidance and counselling in institutions of higher learning imbues the trainee counsellor with new knowledge, skills and techniques of counselling that will enable them meet the needs of today's children. The world is changing, educational practices must also move with the changing world. Since the traditional training models are not keeping up with the needs of today's counsellors, there is need to discard the traditional and replace them with the modern and dynamic as global trends dictate. This paper focuses on repositioning guidance and counselling through competitiveness, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Competitiveness

The World Economic Forum (2016) defines competitiveness as the set of institutions, policies and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country. In the context of repositioning the study of guidance and counselling in tertiary institutions, it could mean those policies, factors or content that would determine the level of productivity of the course.

Economics online (2020) defines it as the ability of a country to compete effectively in global markets. In the education set up, it could mean the ability of a course of study or professions to compete effectively with others. It is the ability of people to compete successfully (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). Competitiveness is the ability of educational professions to compete successful. Competitiveness is a driving force that makes people work very hard, fosters personal development (competitiveness 2020). Repositioning guidance and counselling through competitiveness means revitalising the curriculum to bring out the best in the trainee counsellors thereby fostering their personal and professional development. This will eliminate complacency and calls for explorative and innovative measure when providing guidance services in schools. Competitiveness here does not mean rivalry with other courses but rather consistent improvement in course contents so as to avoid being obsolete. Brott (as cited in Kozlowski & Huss, 2013) reports that it is imperative counsellor educators are structuring the professional identity developments of counsellors in training through guided learning experiences. School counsellors in training should become familiar with methods to implement comprehensive school counselling programmes (Luke & Bernard; Murphy & Kefferberg; Studer; as cited in Kozlowski & Huss, 2013). This could be achieved with a competitive curricula structured towards producing counsellors with critical, creative and innovative minds. A curricula that equip it graduates with the necessary technical know-how to succeed in their career.

Innovation

Innovation is a new idea, method, thing, etc. Cambridge Dictionary (2020) defines it as the use of a new idea or method. According to Bokah and Umennaike (2016), innovation in educational system implied application of new ideas, methods, equipment etc. towards enhancement of knowledge. Innovation in guidance and counselling include E-counselling/online counselling, use of media in counselling, gaming, use of ICT, etc. The counselling curriculum should incorporate these innovations

Entrepreneurship

The word “entrepreneur” originates from a thirteenth century French verb, *entreprendre*, meaning “to do something” or “to undertake”. By the sixteenth century, the noun form, *entrepreneur*, was being used to refer to someone who undertakes a business venture. Richard Cantillon, an economic, made the first academic reference of the word in 1730 when he identified the willingness to bear the personal financial risk of business venture as the defining characteristic of an entrepreneur (Sobel, 2019). Hisrich (as cited in Anibueze, 2013), defines entrepreneur as the “process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic and society risks, and receiving the resulting rewards towards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independences. A new counsellor in Nigeria need to employ the entrepreneurial initiative by creating job for himself and others”. Anyakohe (as cited in Egbe-Okpenge & Igbo, 2013) sees the entrepreneur as one who chooses or assumes risks, identifies business opportunities, gathers resources, initiates actions and establishes an organization or enterprise to meet such demand or market opportunity. Both definitions identify an entrepreneur as an independent, innovative, risk taker and go getter. That is to say that an entrepreneur is an achiever.

Entrepreneurship means the act of creating a business through innovative, risk assuming management (Anibueze, 2013). It is the process of discovering new ways of combining resources (Egbe-Okpenge & Igbo, 2013). While entrepreneurs are the people entrepreneurship is the process. Entrepreneurship needs such skills as innovative, creative, communicative, interpersonal, self-esteem, self-worth, technical, assertiveness, problem solving etc. It is such skills that need to be inculcated in the trainee counsellor to enable them achieve maximum result in their counselling work. It will also enable them be positive role models to their counsellees. Entrepreneurship does not necessarily have to be business oriented, it could be the ability to assume entrepreneurial processes to facilitate ones success in their chosen careers. Hence repositioning guidance and counselling towards entrepreneurship, will ensure a successful counselling career. It will inculcate in the trainee counsellor all the skills needed to succeed as a counsellor in today’s world. This is in agreement with Hisrich and Peter (as cited in Onyilofor, 2013) statement that entrepreneurship education will enable the student counsellors to learn communication skill, accountability skill, management skill, organizational skill, leadership skill, among other skills. Onyilofor (2013) posits that entrepreneurship education also enables the student counsellors to learn inter/intrapersonal skills, interest skill, attitude skill, motivation skill, psychomotor skill, cognitive skill, and affective skill. Oreh (as cited in Onyilofor, 2013) mentions the generic skills one should acquire through higher education to include analytical power, accommodation, problem solving, team spirit, creativity, versatility, life-long learning skills, and information technology skills. These are all the skills that would be counsellors should cultivate for the effective discharge of their duties.

Conclusion

This paper explores the numerous services provided by a guidance counsellor to students in the Nigeria secondary school system. It highlights ways of repositioning the study of guidance and counselling with elements of competitiveness, innovation and entrepreneurship for optimal performance of the would-be counsellors.

Recommendation

There is no doubt that guidance counsellors will gain tremendously with a restructured curriculum tailored towards innovativeness and entrepreneurship. This paper therefore recommends that the guidance counselling programme be repositioned to accommodate creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. That the concept of entrepreneurship should not be limited to business creation but should be taught to accommodate skills needed to succeed in ones chosen career. There should be an extension of the period of practicum internships to not only enable the trainee counsellors acquire more practical experience but also to practice already acquired skills. That entrepreneurship education be made an integral part of the curriculum of the guidance and counselling course in Nigerian's tertiary institutions.

References

- Anibueze, A.U.(2013). The need for a new curriculum and a new counsellor in Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and social sciences (IOSR-JHSS)*, 15,(16) 75 -80. Retrieved from www.iosrjournal.org
- Bokah, A.A. &Umennaik, C.C (2016). Creativity and innovation in guidance and counselling:Challenges and prospects for nation building. *Journal of Teacher Perspective*, 10(2) 18
- Cambridge Dictionary*(2020). Retrieved from <http://dictionary.cambridge.org>
- Competitiveness (2020) in *Cleverism*. Retrieved from <http://www.cleverish.com>>competitiveness
- Ebizie, E.N., Enajedu, E.E.&Egeati, N. (2016). The role of guidance counselling in effective teaching and learning in schools. *Ray: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 1 (2), 36-48
- Economics online*(2020). Retrieved from <https://www.economicsonline.co.uk>
- Egbe-Okpenge, E.G& Igbo, H.I.(2013). Relationship between counselling entrepreneurship development skills of Nigerian final year undergraduates.*Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 84, 120,-127. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.06.521>
- Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com>
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National policy on education*. Lagos: NERDC
- Kozlowski, k.A. & Huss, S. (2013, March 22-24). *Training of school counsellors*.Paper based on a programme presented at the 2013 American counselling Association conference, Cincinnati, OH. Retrieved from <https://www.counselling.com>>vistas

- Oguzie, S.N.(2014). Guidance and counselling services as a coping strategy for inculcating the consciousness of peace, conflict resolution and national security among secondary school youths in Anambra state, Nigeria. *African Research Review*, 8 (2), 256-279.
- Olayinka, M.S. (1993) Guidance and counselling for Nigerian schools. Nigeria, Literamed Publication Limited.
- Onyilofor, F.N.C. (2013). Repositioning guidance and counselling and curriculum innovation in higher education in Nigeria. *Journal of International Education Research*, 9 (2), 153-163.
- Sobel, R.S. (2019). Entrepreneurship in *Econlib*. Retrieved from <https://www.econlib.org.org>>Enc>Ent...
- World Economic Forum (2016). *What is competitiveness?* Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org>>2016/09