Dissemination of Career Information Using E-counselling among Secondary School Students in Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

To carry out the study on dissemination of career information through e- counselling a descriptive survey research study was used in Educational Zone of Enugu State Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. A total of 25 guidance counsellors and 34,244 students from 60 public secondary schools were also used with a sample size of 367 respondents. The composition of the population was 25 guidance counsellors and 342 students while all the counsellors were used because of the manageable size. To get the sample size, simple random sampling techniques was used to get 1% of the students' population which gave a total of 342.The instrument used was Dissemination of Career Information Using E-Counselling Questionnaire (DCIUECQ)which was face validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education. It was trial tested using 30 students of Anambra State Secondary School and its internal consistency was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha co-efficient statistical method. The result gave overall Alpha- co-efficient value of 0.75. To answer the research questions posed, Mean and standard deviation were used while t-test statistics was also used to test the two null hypotheses. The major findings revealed that the extent to which e-counselling facilities (computer system, cellular phone, CD-ROM, internet connection, web browser, flash drive, virus scanner, back up, among others are available for career information dissemination is low. it was found that the extent of students' awareness level of e-counselling opportunities for career information dissemination is low. The findings showed that provision of Word Wide Web, Internet facilities and headsets, installation of world web camera as well as sufficient personal computers connected to the school network among others are the strategies for enhancing utilization of e-counselling in career information dissemination among the secondary school students. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of student and counsellors on availability of e-counselling facilities for dissemination of career information, awareness level of e-counselling opportunities for career information dissemination. Based on these findings, some recommendations were made

Keywords: Dissemination; e-counselling; Career; Information.

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1. Introduction

The use of Electronic communication virtually in all areas of life is a new phenomenon in most contemporary societies especially in Nigeria. Every country wants to be digitalized due to advancing nature of technology. This development has also influenced every profession which counselling profession cannot be glossed over. This development has resulted in changes in the nature of many jobs as well as the need for occupational information. Based on the above premise, it becomes necessary that students should be exposed to a wide range of occupations while in school to ensure enough stimulation for career development decision. In this contemporary time, the sourcing of career information using old literatures, brochures and workers is becoming archaic as it is not dynamic and does not stand the test of time. Consequently, career information is affected. The application of computer technology to counselling procedures is gradually creeping into every society and resisting change in Nigeria. Computer appears to be more pronounced in the field of education as it is used in teaching, learning and evaluation of educational processes [1]. She stated that Counselling can be done through phone to phone conversation, hence the utilization of e-counselling becomes inevitable in communicating career information to the clients.

Communication refers to the exchange of information, news, ideas among others. These exchanges could be through e-counselling, radio, TV, letter, telephone, Twitter, Facebook, Ping, e-mail, WhatsApp in order to pass information from one source to the other. Communication is an important process in human relationships. It enables the teacher to advance his subject matter. It can also be seen as the transfer of information, ideas, beliefs, orders or instruction from one person or group to another through both wired and wireless communication networks. The absence of face –to-face contact can also prompt clients to communicate more openly without concerns and clearly offers a level of anonymity that is perceived by many users as non-threatening through allowing an invisibility that can be excluded [6]. The absence of face-to-face communication promotes client to communicate more openly during counselling.

Counselling is a helping relationship between a client and a professionally trained competent counsellor geared towards helping him understand himself better in making wise decisions in life upon a mutual enterprise, Reference [5] observed counselling as a professional programme specially designed to assist individuals in different settings to adjust effectively in their areas of operation. Reference [1] defined counselling as a process of helping an individual or individuals through direct personal face to face or even through telephone encounter to gain insight into their problems. Reference [1] further noted that the job of counselling is to give the individual an opportunity to define, explore, discover and adopt ways of living more satisfying and resourceful life within the society, educational and vocational groups with which he identifies.

In many ways, e-counselling shares some similarities with live-coaching. E-counsellor or therapist though may not offer complete counselling services to occupational maladjusted individuals, but they can diagnose illnesses, offer guidance and advice electronically to people experiencing problems in relationships, work or life. Furthermore, online counselling is an electronic way of getting supportive counselling either through a live Webcam session (with a provider such as skype) or via telephone. Online therapy experience helps in achieving ones needs and goals. Perhaps, having relationship difficulties, dealing with a loss, struggling through a live

transition or, simply having some questions and need a few brief consultations. It is directive in its approach, similar to coaching, in that one will be offered skills to deal with some of the difficulties. It is also a professional counselling service delivered via a private conference portal. It is a service of written exchanges with a professional counsellor, and does not depend on quickness of thought or speed of typing; the client will work with the e - counsellor at his or her own pace.

Operationally, e-counselling, online counselling or e-therapy, e-mail is an electronic way of getting supportive counselling which is utilized either through Webcam or through telephone. Other ways which e-counselling could be effectively utilized are 2go, Facebook, Google, Twitter, YouTube, Whatsapp among others. Nevertheless, despite its challenges, e-counselling utilization is quickly becoming an important source for a growing number of consumers. It offers mental health professions which is another way of providing services to their clients, while ensuring that issues such as confidentiality, ethical and legal protection of counsellors are maintained [14].

A good aspect of e-counselling is convenience, both the counsellor and the client have the convenience of corresponding with each other at a range of variant times which can take away the hassle of scheduling and setting appointments more common in traditional settings; and which creates an opportunity for the therapist to extend their services to more clients as appointments can be potentially scheduled over 24 hours and reach a larger geographical region. Those individuals who are ambivalent about counselling or who may be uncomfortable with the traditional models of therapy, may find e - counselling more suitable whereby it has been found that e-counselling is preferred by those who are uncomfortable with face-to-face communication to avoid someone to know about their problems or who are suffering from social phobia, agora phobias or anxiety disorders.

Furthermore, professionals and lay people alike have continuously questioned the effectiveness of e-counselling interventions. There is currently little research supporting the lack of effectiveness of e-counselling that is provided solely through such a medium [16]. The lack of utilization of career information could increase the risk of students' making wrong choice of career. Career is a progress or general course of action of a person through life or some phase of life [2]. Reference [10] perceives career as an occupation or profession especially one requiring special training followed as one's life work, it can also be defined as the totality of occupation which an individual occupies throughout his life or the totality of occupation(s), jobs, positions throughout a persons' working life service [12]. Reference [9] indicated that the term "career" as used in the field of counselling has a broad meaning. Technically, it refers to "a sequence" of roles or positioning including work, leisure and educational pursuit which may encompass a number of occupations, vocations or job one person engages into including his or her working life. Reference [13] has it that a close examination of the definition indicates that "career" includes a number of closely related terms such as occupations, jobs, positions and work, which tends to confuse the neophyte so that they are used synonymously.

Career information is a valid and usable data given to an individual to help him to become purposeful and effective in his career related behavior. It provides exposure and experiences to students for enabling them to make more appropriate educational and vocational decisions when required. The purpose is not to pressurize the

individual into making a choice but to broaden the knowledge of self and environment necessary for stimulating the individual for improving potentials as one matures. Reference [4] noted it is used to help the individual to understand the need to plan rather than to drift. It equally helps in broadening the individuals' outlook, and also helps to increase his appreciation of alternatives and their consequences so that he may choose wisely, make sound decisions and consciously control his behavior. Reference [4] further noted that through career information other necessary information's or education that can be offered to students to help individuals becomes aware of their natural call and to perform a particular role in the world of work.

Operationally, career information is the totality of ways in which one learns about work or a process of facilitating career development in all students' experiences as well as experiences in the business, industrial sector and home. Operationally, career implies a long, if not a lifetime commitment to moving upwards through a series of related occupations and status according to a schedule. They are therefore associated with situations in which occupational mobility is considered the norm. This means a professional growth in an occupation. For instance, a non-graduate can grow in the teaching occupation to the stage of having it as career. Thus career involves not only a systematic education for initial occupational experience in which each occupation is considered as technical and social preparation for the succeeding ones.

Secondary school students are those who have received a first school leaving certificate and admitted to post primary education. They are secondary school students who are yet to gain admission into university. Secondary school students are those who are seeking admission into colleges or universities on different careers; but have graduated from primary school [7]. To stay marketable in today's economy, secondary school students cannot ignore the influence of new technology in today's communication. Secondary school students' counselling centres are in a position to advance the field of online counselling due to current fiscal constraints and high student demands for e-counselling services.

More research is now needed to expand on existing empirical data, and continue to evaluate anecdotal evidence through empirical methods. In moving forward at the secondary school students' level, it is especially important to gain a thorough understanding of students' interest in and attitudes towards e-counselling services to guide career programme development. The current study explored students' utilization of e-counselling in career information dissemination notwithstanding their locations.

The growing body of research into online counselling has established the efficacy of e-counselling with treatment outcomes more than traditional in-office settings. Reference [8] further noted that e-counselling has additional benefits unrealized by office - based treatments as it allows the patient to attend sessions at a higher rate than traditional sessions. The number of missed appointments is much less intimidated than they would in traditional settings. This makes clients more likely to be honest and thus allow the counsellor to provide better treatment with functional e-counselling facilities [19].

Students' awareness level of e-counselling opportunities means the ability of the students to directly know and perceive a known situation or fact about e-counselling. The Internet has facilitated the establishment of e-counselling. The rising popularity of e-counselling is attributed to its ability to enable students to seek advice as

regards career path without the constraints of time and space. Given this rising popularity, the students' awareness level of e-counselling opportunities as well as its utilization in Nsukka Education Zone is not known.

Utilization is the extent to which a given group uses a particular service in a specified period. Although, it is usually expressed as the number of services used for the service, its rates may be expressed in ratios, it is the extent to which the members of a group use a programme over a stated time, specifically, it is measured as a percentage determined by dividing the number of covered individuals who submitted one or more claims by the total number of covered individuals [15].

There are a lot of factors which may hinder the utilization of e-counselling among secondary school students. Some of the factors range from irregular power supply to insecurity in the school. There is a growing interest in the utilization of e-counselling at the secondary education level to improve communication which involves a variety of applications, mainly utilizing Internet services [17]. Poverty, lack of internet infrastructure are some of the factors which may also hinder the utilization of e-counselling among students in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State. For such factors to be overcome, certain strategies should be looked into for an effective utilization of e-counselling among the students. It is based on the above review that the researcher investigated the dissemination of career information using e-counselling among secondary school students in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

E-counselling programs are pertinent to secondary schools as the school will need to prepare students to successfully transit to the next level, whether it is higher institution or a job. Students need to have the full information and competencies required for the options of career they choose in life. Quality utilization of career information dissemination programs in secondary schools can promote self-discovery, career planning, and self-advocacy skill attainment needed for successful career choice and job satisfaction. From literature, there is a disconnection between students' courses of study or job pursuits and existing job openings and career needs. Report also shows that despite the prospects of career information dissemination in secondary schools, some students drop out of higher institutions. Many others find it difficult to cope with the choice of career admitted into and consequently some drop out while many others graduate with poor results. They subsequently flounder in the labour market with little opportunity of attaining self-fulfillment. Irrespective of undoubtedly wider coverage and privacy expected to be achieved through e-counselling, it is still not established whether it is being utilized in Secondary Schools in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

In specific terms, the study sought to;

- examine students' level of awareness of e-counselling opportunities for effective dissemination of career information among secondary schools in Enugu Education zone
- determine extent of utilization of e-counselling for effective dissemination of career information among secondary schools in Enugu Education zone.

1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- What is students' level of awareness of e-counselling opportunities for effective dissemination of career information among secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone?
- What is the extent of utilization of e-counselling for effective dissemination of career information among secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone?

1.4. Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study.

HO1: There is no significant difference between mean scores of guidance counsellors and students in the urban and rural secondary schools in Enugu on awareness level of the opportunity of e-counselling for effective dissemination of career information among secondary schools in Enugu Education zone

HO2: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of guidance counsellors and students in the urban and rural secondary schools on the extent of utilization of e-counselling for effective dissemination of career information among secondary schools in Enugu Education zone.

1.5. Method

The researcher adopted a descriptive survey method. Descriptive survey is aimed at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristic features or facts about a given population. This design is considered suitable for this study because it allowed the researcher the opportunity of gathering information/data on the utilization of e-counselling in career information dissemination among secondary schools in Enugu education Zone, from a sample considered to be significant representative of the population in their natural setting.

This study was carried out in all the 60 secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone in Enugu state which comprises three local government areas namely: Nkanu, Udi and Awgu with 30 secondary Schools.

The population for the study is 34,269 respondents which is made up of 25 guidance counsellors and 34,244 students in the 60 public secondary schools Enugu Education Zone.

The sample size for this study is 25 guidance counsellors, and 342 students. The population for guidance counsellors was not sampled because it is manageable. However, simple random sampling tecwas used to get 1% of the students' population which gave a total of 342. This is in line with the postulation of Uzoagulu who stated that if a population is known and it is in few thousands, the researcher can make use of any percent to get the sample size.

The instrument that was used for data collection is Dissemination of Career Information using E-Counselling Questionnaire (DCIUEQ) developed by the researcher and face validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education. It has two sections, A and B. Section A deals with the bio-data of the respondents while section B deals with information on Utilization of E-Counselling for Effective Dissemination of Career Information among secondary school students. It has 48 items built in five clusters. Cluster one has 15 items on extent of availability of e-counselling facilities in career information dissemination, cluster two has 7 items on the extent of awareness of e-counselling opportunities in career information dissemination, cluster three has 12 items on extent of utilization of e-counselling in career information dissemination, cluster four has 7 items on factors responsible for hindering e-counselling, cluster five has seven items on strategies for enhancing utilization of e-counselling. The response format for the instrument was a 4-point scale of Very High Extent (4 points), High Extent (3 points), Low extent (2 points) and Very Low Extent (1 point). The respondents were requested to rate the extent to which they utilize e-counselling in career information dissemination among secondary schools in Enugu Education zone of Enugu State. An introductory letter stating the purpose for the study was attached to the instrument to establish rapport with the respondents.

To determine the reliability of the instrument, 30 copies of the instrument were trial- tested. The 30 copies of the instruments were administered in Obollo-Afor Education Zone of Enugu State where SS2 students responded to the items. To determine the internal consistency of the instrument, statistical analysis was conducted using Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. Cronbach Alpha was applied because the items in the instrument are polychotomous, that is they do not require right or wrong answers. The instrument had an overall reliability estimate of 0.75 which shows that the instrument was reliable.

The instrument was distributed and retrieved from the respondents on completion with the help of three research assistants. Out of the 367 copies of the instrument administered, 350 copies were retrieved.19 copies were retrieved from the guidance counsellors and 331 from the students which yielded a 95.37% return rate.

In analyzing the data, a developed Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used. Specifically, mean scores and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions that guided the study. The degree of very high extent was determined by finding the mean of the normal values assigned to the options. A four-point rating scale with assigned values were used to rate the responses of the questionnaire items as follows; Very High Extent 4, High Extent 3, Low Extent 2, very low Extent 1. To make inferences on the respondents and mean scores, the researcher used real limit of numbers. Thus the respondents mean scores that fall with the following range were regarded as 0.00 -1.49 – VLE, 1.50 – 2.49 – LE, 2.50 -3.49 – HE and 3.50 – 4.00 – VHE.

For, the hypotheses formulated to guide the study, the rule is that if t-calculated is equal to or greater than the t-critical value at the chosen confidence level (0.05) and degree of freedom (n1 + n2 – 2) the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected, but if the calculated t-value is less than that of t-critical from the table value then the null hypothesis was not rejected.

1.6. Results

Research Question 1

What is students' level of awareness of e-counselling opportunities for effective dissemination of career information in Enugu Education zone?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of the Students' Awareness Level of e-Counselling Opportunities for effective dissemination of Career Information

ITEMS	Guidance Counsellors 19			Students 331		
The followings are the extent of students' awareness level of e-counselling opportunities for effective dissemination of career information:	$\overline{X}$	SD	Dec	$\overline{X}$	SD	Dec.
Using classroom for career information dissemination	2.40	1.01	LE	2.22	0.88	LE
Using messaging via internet connectivity to disseminate career information	2.31	0.89	LE	2.18	0.91	LE
Using synchronous e-counselling approach	2.19	1.01	LE	2.19	0.86	LE
Using Asynchronous e-counselling approach	2.23	0.85	LE	2.21	0.91	LE
E-counselling through film modeling of various types of occupation	2.10	0.92	LE	2.10	0.81	LE
Using Psychometric test instruments stored in CD – Rom in appraising students career choice	2.21	0.86	LE	2.29	0.93	LE
Using WhatsApp in e-counselling to guide people in making career choice	2.31	0.91	LE	2.31	0.95	LE
Cluster mean	**2.25**	**0.92**	**LE**	**2.21**	**0.89**	**LE**

Data presented on Table 1 above shows that the respondents responded to a low extent to the stated items. However, the guidance counsellors' mean ranged from 2.10 to 2.40, while that of the students ranged from 2.10 to 2.31. In addition, there were cluster means of 2.25 and 2.21 for the guidance counsellors and students as well as standard deviations of 0.92 and 0.89 respectively. The answer to research question 2 signifies that, students have low awareness level of e-counselling opportunities for effective dissemination of Career Information among students in Enugu education zone of Enugu State.

Research Question 2

What is the extent of utilization of e-counselling for effective dissemination of Career Information among the students in Enugu Education zone?

Data presented on Table 2 above shows that the respondents responded to a low extent to the items. The guidance counsellors' mean ranged from 2.19 to 2.33, while that of the students ranged from 2.13 to 2.37. In addition, there have cluster means of 2.27 and 2.24 for the guidance counsellors and students as well as standard deviations of 0.89 and 0.90 respectively. The table shows that, the standard deviation scores are small signifying that they are closely clustered around the mean. Thus; the answer to research question 3 is that e-counselling is utilized in career information dissemination among the students in Enugu education zone of Enugu State to a

low extent.

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of the Extent of Utilization of e-Counselling for effective dissemination of Career Information among the students

ITEMS	Guidance Counsellors 19			Students 331		
The followings are the extent of utilization of e-counselling for effective dissemination of career information :	$\bar{X}$	SD	Dec	$\bar{X}$	SD	Dec.
Sourcing career information via internet	2.30	0.89	LE	2.32	0.91	LE
Using Facebook to disseminate career information	2.24	0.81	LE	2.37	0.95	LE
Sourcing career information via E-mail	2.22	0.83	LE	2.29	0.89	LE
Using mobile phones to extend career information	2.30	0.91	LE	2.31	0.95	LE
Utilizing computer to share career information	2.21	1.01	LE	2.19	0.88	LE
Making use of Gmail to disseminate career information	2.20	0.86	LE	2.21	0.93	LE
Use of BBM to disseminate career information	2.19	0.88	LE	2.19	0.90	LE
Sourcing career information through Google search	2.31	0.89	LE	2.21	0.93	LE
Using Twitter to share career information	2.33	0.90	LE	2.18	0.88	LE
Using 2 go to disseminate career information	2.29	0.95	LE	2.13	0.80	LE
Making use of Palm Chat to extend career information	2.28	0.91	LE	2.22	0.94	LE
Using Whatsapp in messaging to source career information	2.31	0.86	LE	2.24	0.81	LE
Cluster mean	**2.27**	**0.89**	**LE**	**2.24**	**0.90**	**LE**

Hypotheses:

H01: There is no significant difference between mean scores of students and counsellors on the students' awareness level of e-counselling opportunities for effective dissemination of career information in Enugu Education zone.

Table 3: t-test analysis of thesignificant difference between the mean scores of students and counsellors on the students' awareness level of e-counselling opportunities for career information dissemination

Groups	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Guidance counsellors	19	2.25	0.92				
				348	0.02	±1.96	Do Not Reject Ho₂
Students	331	2.21	0.89				

Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value of 0.02 is less than the critical t-value of ±1.96 with a degree of

freedom of 348 at .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was, therefore, not rejected. This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean scores of guidance counsellors and students on students' awareness level of e-counselling opportunities for career information dissemination in Enugu education zone of Enugu State.

H02: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of students and counsellors on utilization of e-counselling in dissemination of career information.

Tale 4: t-test analysis of the significant difference between the mean scores of students and counsellors on utilization of e-counselling in effective dissemination of career information among students

Groups	N	X̄	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Guidance counsellors	19	2.27	0.89				Do Not Reject Ho_3
				348	0.15	±1.96	
Students	331	2.24	0.90				

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of 0.15 is less than the critical t-value of ±1.96 with a degree of freedom of 348 at .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was, therefore, not rejected. This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean scores of guidance counsellors and students on utilization of e-counselling for effective dissemination of career information in Enugu State.

1.7. Conclusion and Recommendation

It was discovered that the students are not aware about e-counselling opportunities for dissemination of career information which no doubt has hampered their career decisions. In the same vein, the extent of utilization of e-counselling in effective dissemination career information among the students is low because of the level of their awareness.

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- The state government and some well-meaning individuals should provide the necessary e-counselling facilities in order to have a functional e-counselling service.
- Trained or professional career counsellors should liaised with mass media and other relevant agencies like churches to create awareness on the need for installation of internet and electrical facilities in schools in order to have a functional e-counselling service.
- In-service trainings, workshops and conferences should be organized for the counsellors in order to advance in their measures for utilization of e-counselling for effective dissemination of career information.

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