

Nigeria National Policy on Education and Career Development of Secondary School Students in Ondo Town

BY

ALAO IRETI FOLASADE, Ph.D.

Department of Educational Foundations and Counselling
Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo

INTRODUCTION

- Career has been described as a significant part of one's life as it determines so many things about one's life.
- It develops as a result of conglomeration of activities over a period of time.
- Career development is thus described as the process by which a person's career identity is formed from childhood through a lifetime.

- The Nigeria National Policy on Education (2013) considers ‘Career Development’, as an important aspect of the education provided for students as a means of preparing them for the world of work, wealth creation and entrepreneurship.
- To facilitate the implementation of this policy and promotion of effectiveness of the educational system, section 8(127: vi) of the NNPE (2013) listed Guidance and Counselling as one of the education support services among others.
- It further stated that in this respect, the govt. will among others in all schools “Establish and Equip (a) Counselling Clinics (b) Career Resource Centres (c) Information Centres; including the provision of adequate number of Guidance Counsellors; and the training of teachers in guidance and counselling.

Issues of concern

- Recent developments in Nigeria shows that many students in higher institutions found themselves studying courses/professions they did not actually choose nor prepared for.
- Some even after graduation went ahead to practice and make comfortable living out of what they did not study at the higher institution, but what they had passion for just in passing.
- The nation has been grappling with the issue of graduates' unemployment
- Employers have also been complaining about unemployable graduates.
- All these raises a concern on the quality and quantity of career education these students have been exposed to for their career development.

- As rightly pointed out in a report by Australian Education Committee (2002) that “career education is one element of the complex issue of young people’s transition from school to employment, training or further education. In recent years there has been significant activity in addressing the range of issues associated with effective management of transitions between school and post-school destinations.” (<https://www.aph.gov.au>).
- Following this background, it is pertinent to look into the provision of the NNPE (2013) for career development of the students in the senior secondary school, its implementation and how it has impacted the career development of the students.

Objectives

The main objective of the study is to find out the contributions of policy and policy implementation in preparing students for career and world of work. Other objectives are

- (1) to find out the extent to which guidance and counselling facilities stated in the NNPE (2013) to support the career development of the senior secondary school students are available in schools in Ondo town
- (2) to find out the students' level of career development and their preparedness for the world of work
- (3) to make useful deductions from the results of the study on helping students with their career development in preparedness for a successful work and career life.

Career Exploratory Behaviour

- The developmental theories of Ginzberg (1951) and Super (1957) as fundamental theories of career development, emphasised the importance and primacy of career exploration in the career development of adolescents and postulated their theories on career life stages around it.
- Contemporary career development theories still consider career exploration as the arrowhead of career development.
- career exploratory behaviour of individuals is considered as fundamental, essential and crucial to their career development.
- Career exploratory behaviour encompasses attitudes and actions taken towards familiarisation with the world of work in terms of one's needs, interests, values and jobs requirements.
- This study therefore measures career development in terms of the students' vocational exploratory behaviour as expressed in their familiarisation with vocational requirements and their personal needs.

Following this background the following research questions were postulated

- 1) To what extent are facilities to support the career development of students available in the secondary schools as stipulated in the NNPE (2013)?
- 2) What is the level of Career development of the students in the senior secondary schools?

Methodology

- The study adopted the survey research design.
- The population for the study consists of all senior secondary school students in classes I, II and III in Ondo Town.
- A sample of three hundred students (300) (male and female) were randomly selected for the study.
- Two hundred and eighty students (280) out of the three hundred completed the instrument adequately.
- Twenty (20) school guidance counsellors participated in the study to complete the questionnaire on counselling facilities in schools. These are counsellors in the twenty schools where students were selected for the study.

Instruments

1) Questionnaire on Counselling Facilities in Schools

2) The Vocational Exploratory Behaviour Inventory. The first part of the Inventory takes care of demographic information while the second part contains items in four vocational exploratory behaviour sub-construct groups viz;

1) Inclusion – Attitude to learning about jobs.

2) Job Inventory – Familiarising with various job types

3) Job Personalisation – Job demands and satisfiers

4) Expansion and Next Step – Making plans to seek additional job related information

The higher the score on the Inventory the higher the vocational exploratory behaviour of the respondent. The inventory has content and construct validity; with a reliability coefficient of 0.68.

- The questionnaire contains items expected to elicit responses on the availability of facilities necessary to support the career development of the students, especially as stipulated in the NNPE (2013).

- The vocational exploratory behaviour inventory was administered on the students while the questionnaire on counselling facilities in schools was completed by the school counsellors.

Results

The data gathered for the study were analysed using simple statistical tools and percentages. The results of the analysis are presented below.

Research question 1: To what extent are facilities to support the career development of students available in the secondary schools as stipulated in the NNPE (2013)?

Table 1: Availability of facilities to support career development in schools

Facility	Available	Not Available	Adequate	Not Adequate
Counselling clinic/unit		20 Schools (100%)		
Career Resource Centre		20 Schools (100%)		
Information Centre		20 Schools (100%)		
One Guidance Counsellor	20 Schools (100%)			20 Schools (100%)
Career day/talk	20 Schools (100%)		3 Schools (15%)	17 Schools (85%)
Career excursion		20 Schools (100%)		
Career exhibition/fair		20 Schools (100%)		

Research Question 2: What is the level of Career development of the students in the senior secondary schools?

The data gathered through the vocational exploratory behaviour inventory were analysed based on the students' scores on the sub-construct groups and the students' total score on the inventory representing their vocational exploratory behaviour score.

Table 2: Level of career development of students in senior secondary school

Sub-Construct	Total Score	Total no of Respondents	Mean	Mode	Students with high Score	Students with Low Score
Inclusion	930	280	3.3	3	118(42.1%)	162(57.9%)
Job Inventory	2,718		9.7	12	172(61.4%)	108(38.6%)
Job Personalisation	810		2.9	4	186(66.4%)	94(33.6%)
Expansion and Next Step	2,046		7.3	9	148(52.9%)	132(47.1%)
Vocational Exploratory Behaviour	6,504		23.2		148(52.9%)	132(47.1%)

- Table 1 shows that three (i.e counselling clinic/unit, career resource centre, and information centre) of the facilities stated in the NNPE (2013) to support students career development through guidance and counselling are not available in the twenty schools visited.
- The only one available is the school guidance counsellor, who in most of the schools also doubles as the school Registrar in the midst of over one thousand students. This is inadequate as a counsellor will surely be overwhelmed.
- Also in terms of vocational exploratory activities in the school only the career talk seemed to be popular as all the schools engage in it.
- Apart from the career day talk that happens once in a while during the school session, three of the schools make it happen also once a week during the morning assembly.
- Other career related activities like career excursion, career exhibition/fair, career club etc. are not available to the students in any of the schools.
- From the analysis on table 1, it is obvious that the students are not likely to be getting adequate support for career development from the school.

Table 2 shows

- that on the inclusion sub-construct less than half of the students exhibit the right attitude to learning about jobs and more than half of them do not show expected attitude towards learning about jobs.
- On job inventory 172(61.4%) of the students scored high on familiarising with various job types; 108(38.6%) of the students scored low on this.
- Also 186(66.4%) students scored high on job personalisation. This shows many of the students possess a good knowledge of job demands and satisfiers.
- Considering making plans to seek additional job information (i.e. expansion and next step) only 148(52.9%) students scored high on this; indicating that only about half of the students have plans to expand their knowledge about the world of work which can assist them in making adequate preparation and realistic decisions about their work life.
- The summary of the scores reflecting the vocational exploratory behaviour of the students shows that on the whole, only 148(52.9%) of the students scored high indicating that just about half of the students are doing well in terms of vocational exploration and by implication career related activities.

Findings

- There is a very big gap between the policy statement and policy implementation regarding students' career development and the provision of guidance and counselling facilities as stated in the NNPE (2013).
- Virtually nothing in terms of facilities was on ground in all the schools visited
- The policy has little or no contribution to the career development of the students.
- counselling clinic/unit, career resource centre and information centre were not available in all the schools
- centres where students could gather authentic, reliable and usable information about occupations, career and the world of work were not available.
- Only one professional counsellor was available in each of the schools irrespective of the number of students in the school.
- More than half of students do not have the right attitude to learning about jobs.
- Though many of the students showed good familiarisation with job types, job requirements, their personal values and interest
- only about half of the students have plans to expand their knowledge about the world of work, which can assist them in making adequate preparation and realistic decisions about their work life

Conclusion

As laudable as the policy on career development of senior secondary school students is, the huge gap between the policy statement and its implementation is robbing the students of the benefits that could have accrued from it. On the whole only about half of the students have their career development on course and getting prepared for career and work-life. The remaining half would need career intervention programmes to assist them as necessary.

Recommendations

Following the findings of the study, it is recommended that;

- 1) There should be proper follow-up on policy and implementation.
- 2) Necessary guidance and counselling facilities (as stated in the NNPE, 2013) should be available in all schools and accessible to all students.
- 3) Efforts should be made by schools to encourage the students to fully engage in more career education and career related activities by mounting such activities like career excursion, career exhibition, career club, to assist the students with their career development.
- 4) Provision of adequate professional counsellors with light administrative assignments in order to be able to attend to students as necessary.