



Consistency of Occupational Choice Between Counselling and Uncounselled Professional college Students in Meerut City.

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Abstract:

A study was conducted to determine the consistency of occupational choice between counselling and uncounselled professional college students in Meerut city. 450 students were selected randomly in this study. 225 Male and 225 Female students consisted in this study and attending 10 professional college of Meerut city. The data was collected with occupational aspiration scale by J.S Grewal. Chi-square Analysis was utilized to analyze the data. Result indicated that significant difference exists in the level of consistency in occupational choice between the counselling group and the uncounselled groups, Gender has no significant influence on the occupational preference of counselled and uncounselled students. On the basis of this findings, suggestions were made on the ways to enhance career development of students.

Keywords: Gender, Counselling, Uncounselled, Occupational Choices,

Introduction

Counseling is a helping relationship in which one person endeavors to help his/her adjustment problems. This helping relationship originated from the very discovery that young people need to be guided in their career decision making process. Counseling is a person to person process in which one person is helped by another person to develop, increase in understanding and ability to solve his adjustment problems. They explained further that counseling require a wide range of activities which start from the infant stage of the child designed to aid individuals in solving their problems. The problem referred to counseling are those of decision making and development problems. One of the benefit of counseling is that it helps the individual to develop, sustain a career and be adjusted in life. One of the major problems facing Professional College students is the task of making an appropriate and realistic occupational choice. This then implies that it behavior on the educationists to ensure that proper steps and measures are taken in order for the students to make the right choices occupationally. Denga (2001) posited that, choosing an appropriate career is one of the most difficult or serious decisions which a man or woman makes. Similarly, Bakare (1970) asserts that the most insistent problem confronting young people today involves choosing an appropriate occupation, preparing for it, liking it, and keeping it. In the olden traditional system in according to Agbor (1990), occupational preference was not often a problem since an individual had to take on an occupation thrust on him/her by his elders in the society. Such decisions by the elders were made after a comprehensive review of the situation surrounding the individual and the identified interest pattern of both parents and the individual as well as that of the society in which he/she lives. Agbor (1990) further explained that in the present day, such practices of dictating careers by parents and elders to their young ones has ceased to be functional and effective.

Statement of the Problem

It seems many students lack adequate knowledge about the available marketable occupations in their environment, their job demands and skill requirements. There is no doubt that it is the lack of adequate knowledge of career counseling and occupational choice and





also occupational consistency which are responsible for some of the irregularities and the incongruencies observed in workers in the field of work. It is as a result of this fact that the researcher would like to investigate into the consistency of occupational choice between counseled and uncounseled Professional College students.

Purpose of the Study -

The study specifically seeks to find out the consistency in the occupational choice pattern of counseled and uncounseled students and the influence of gender on occupational preferences of counseled and uncounseled Professional college students.

Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were posed in order to help investigate into the consistency of occupational choice between counseled and uncounseled students.

1. There is no significant difference in consistency in the occupational choice pattern of counseled and uncounseled students.
2. Gender has no significant influence on the occupational preferences of counseled and uncounseled students.

Significance of the Study.

The study would be of importance in the following areas:

1. **Counselling** - It would serve as a reference material to counselors in secondary schools and other institutions of learning. It shall be used by counsellors in counseling situations, thereby freeing those students who would have been trapped in occupational preference misfits.
2. **Parents, Teachers and other Family Members** – It would inform parents, teachers and other family members not to force or pressurize their wards to choose careers they want but allow them a freehand in choosing an occupation of their own interest, ability, qualification and capability, which shall subsequently usher them to an appropriate and realistic life occupation.
3. **Government** - It would be of help to the government planning strategies for improving on career counseling service in schools; also make government see the need to include career counselling into the school curriculum and timetable, to provide a conducive atmosphere and infrastructures for counselling.
4. **Students** - They will be the overall beneficiary; freeing them from detectional careers by parents and enjoying good and appropriate subject combination which shall eventually lead them to a realist occupational choice.

Review of Literature

Ifenwanta and Gardener (1980) carried out a study on the relevance of career development in youths. They used 120 subjects, these subjects were subjected to chi-square statistical analysis. The findings showed among others need for well planned career information for the students. This is because the result further revealed that many of them left the educational system without making any conscious and realistic career decisions. This handicap condition was attributed by them, as being due to little or no career counseling going on in the secondary schools. Their study further, showed that due to this lack of career counselling in schools, many of the students would graduate from schools with little or no knowledge of the basis requirement in the labor market and job demands; hence, they were not given any initial career counselling in relation to their subjects combination that will eventually usher them to their area of specialization. According to Ifenwanta and Gardener (1980), there is an urgent need for well planned career guidance and counseling services in schools; as these would go a long way to improve the apparent high rate of unemployment



and misplacement of work in the work field, as well as shifting from one work situation to the other.

Hassan (1986) in his study of discriminate analysis of personality characteristics and occupational preferences of adolescents, identified that the making of a rational vocational decision has always been a major concern of guidance counselors as career educators, but a great impediment of achieving this objectives has always been that of inability to identify the personal characteristics of people that would be suitable to a particular job. Hassan's work revealed that most students preferred professional occupations like medicine, law, mechanical engineering and agriculture to trading, teaching, broadcasting, laboratory technology and town planning.

Also, Asagwara (1986) carried out an experimental study on the effect of vocational guidance on occupational preferences and value on Professional College student in Calabar. The findings showed that parents and peer group were influencing factors to students' vocational aspirations. Results from the pre and post treatment test showed that there was no significant difference in the consistency of the students' occupational preferences; though there was great vocational maturity in the consistency of experimental Group I and II about occupations like teaching, medicine and law. Their consistency in the chosen vocations was explained in terms o/early socialization from parents, peer and significant differences in the number of changes on vocational preferences of the males and females despite the guidance session given. Atsu (1989) using a sample of 150 students in municipality, in her experimental study on career guidance and occupational preferences of Senior Professional College students found out that the level of counseling an individual receives, generally determines how realistic and appropriate his occupational choice is based on self-knowledge derived from the counseling situation more than those who were not counseled. The instrument used for eliciting responses from the students was a self-defined occupational preference inventory (OPI). The data was analyzed by the use of chi-square statistical • analysis.

Early socializations as well as self-efficacy have been identified as major influencing factors in promoting gender or male and female differences in occupational preferences (Farmer & Bohn, 1970). In a study by Bojuwoye & Imouokhome (1984) on gender role in occupation decision findings showed that both male and female workers considered their decisions to take to professions such as law, engineering, pharmacy, medicine, nursing, police force, army, teaching, lecturing and secretaryship, as a ifesult of their early socialization on sex-role stereotyping. Although the result showed that there was no significant difference in the perception of both males and females to taking to non-traditional occupation, the male workers did not view in favour of the female worker having to become pharmacists and secretaryship, non-traditional occupations. Also, the male workers who were nurses had a higher mean score than the female nurses, with respect to their perceptions of early socialization influences, as being an influencing factor to their choices.

The study in addition found out that poor-self-efficacy on the part of female workers made them to take decisions into occupations. This study revealed a great need for career guidance and counseling to help the female identify and develop their talents as well as plan life goals which are commensurate to their male counterparts. Moreso, such a measure would enable them shade off femininity and inferiority complex in their occupational preferences.

Finally, Singer (1974) investigated into gender difference and similarity in job preference factors in Colorado State University undergraduates. His findings were that the strong differences in their. preferences was not due to sex stereotyped, but then in general, both sexes preferred occupations that offered them the opportunity to study so that they can



achieve something tangible in the future. In addition, they all wanted jobs in which the workers. would exhibit friendly co-existence. However, gender differences were observed in factors such as salary, job security and social recognition.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design for this study was purely -experimental in nature. An experimental design is one which allows for variable (independent) to be manipulated and their effect on some other variables (dependent) observed or measured. Thus, to enable the appropriate study of this problem.

Population of the Study

The population of this study consisted of all Professional college students (IT, Management and Engineering) in Meerut City Region. The researcher selected subjects for the study from Ten Professional colleges randomly. Another reason was that the distance between these Colleges was such that could help in controlling interaction between the controlled group and the experimental groups, a sample 450 students consisting 225 males and 225 females drawn for research.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for the study was Students Occupational aspiration scale which was designed by J.S. Grewal to elicit the respondent's opinion on their occupational preferences and elicit information on the students' occupations. The instrument was certified to be appropriate for use by experts in the field.

Administration of the Instrument The researcher obtained a former permission from the authority of each of the college in the administration of the instrument. The administration of the Students Occupational aspiration scale was responded to by students in each of the ten professional college selected.

Data Analysis Procedure

The aim of the experiment was to assess the consistency of counseled and uncounseled students' occupational choice. The research hypotheses formulated guided the process of data analysis.

Results and Discussions

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 states that, there is no significant difference in consistency in the occupational choice pattern of counseled and uncounseled students. In order to test this hypothesis, two categories of sampled students were identified, the experimental group (those who receive treatment) and the controlled group (those who did not receive any treatment). The sampled elements responses on pre-treatment and post treatment instrument regarding their occupational choice pattern were noted and grouped into congruence or incongruence (i.e. those who retained or changed their careers). The resulting frequencies of these two classes of variation were used to compute the chi-square value which from the basis for testing the hypothesis.

Table A: Chi-square Analysis of the Difference in Career Choice among Counseled and Uncounseled Group of Students

Groups	Congruence	Incongruence	Total	x2
Counseled	49(92.67)	251(207.33)	300	



Uncounseled	90(46.33)	60(103.67)	150 450	89.34*
Total	139	311		
*significant at $\alpha=0.05$;df=1				

It is observed that the calculated value of chi-square resulting from the effect of counseling is 89.34. This value is greater than the critical chi-square of 3.84 at one degree of freedom $\alpha = 0.05$. The implication of the test is the rejection of the null hypothesis. To this end, the test is significant and therefore it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the consistency of the occupational choice of counseled and uncounseled students.

Hypothesis 2

Gender has no significant influence on the occupational preferences of counseled and uncounseled students. To test this hypothesis, the sampled students were classified into two groups, consisting of those in experimental group I and II. The groups were further subdivided into counseled males, counseled females, uncounseled males and uncounseled females. The responses of each of the students in each of these subgroups were enclosed as congruent - incongruent (those who retained and changed their occupation) based on the pretreatment and post treatment responses. The resulting frequencies formed the basis for the chi-square statistical analysis for the testing of the hypothesis under consideration

Table B: Chi-square Analysis of the influence of Gender on the Occupational Preferences of Counseled and Uncounseled Students

Groups	Congruence	Incongruence	Total	χ^2
Counseled males	35(46.33)	115(103.67)	150	
Counseled females	14(46.33)	136(103.67)	150	
Uncounseled males	49(23.17)	26(51.83)	75	
Uncounseled females	41(23.17)	34(15.830)	75	98.17*
Total	139	311	450	

*significant at $\alpha = 0.05$; $df = 3$.

The calculated χ^2 value is 98.17 whereas the critical chi-square is 7.815 at $df = 3$, $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level. Since the calculated chi-square value is greater than the critical chi-square value, the test is significant. The implication is that the null hypothesis is rejected. To this end, gender significantly influence students' occupational preferences of both counseled and uncounseled students.

Discussions

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 states that there is no significant difference in consistency in the occupational choice pattern of counseled and uncounseled students.

The findings showed that significant difference exists in the level of consistency in occupational choice between the counselled group and the uncounseled groups. This results implies that irrespective of the depth of counseling given, those privileged to be counseled will always manifest self understanding and career awareness as well as possess the decision making skills necessary for effective career selection than those who did not receive career counselling.

This difference could be traced to the counselling process where exposure of individual's interest, values, aptitude, self-concept, personality, projection and socio-cultural realities were evaluated vis-a-vis the work requirements, demands, prospect and status



ascription. Such exposure consequently fortified the individual with enough skills to synthesize his/her option from all categories of profession. Such understanding was often or almost absent or lacking in situations where such information was not given but was not appropriately matched. This could account for the difference between counseled and uncounseled groups in their choice of occupation.

Hypothesis 2

Gender has no significant influence on the occupational preference of counseled and uncounseled students. Results showed that there was a significant difference existing in occupational preferences of both counseled and uncounseled groups due to the influence of gender. This implies that being a male or female to a larger extent determines how an individual chooses an occupation despite the state of enlightenment or information provision made. Correspondingly, it could be observed that gender influence was exerted between counseled groups' rate of consistency in occupational selection as well as within the counseled groups.

It could be implied that as the gender of an individual tends to have an impact on occupational selection made through 'ignorance' or relevant factors in occupational process before counseling variation obviously would exist in occupational selection made after counseling process and consequent information provision.

However, the pattern of occupational selection could be observed to be loaded with gender bias. This finding was in consonance with some scholars' postulation that distinct difference existed between male and female occupational choice patterns.

Conclusion

On the basis of the experiment, the following conclusions were made

1. Counseling services help students in their career choice.
2. Teaching of occupations in schools give students more information about each occupation in terms of nature or work, prospect and risk.
3. With more effective career counselling strategies, Professional College students would be able to widen their occupational preferences.

Recommendations

In the light of the research findings of this study, the following recommendations were made for the improvement of career counselling of students and their occupational preferences:

1. Career talk seminars and career days should be organized regularly in schools to help students gather reliable occupational information on different work types from different professionals. This would curb the youth unsteadiness on jobs.
2. Posting of trained, qualified and professional guidance counselors to schools: the State Ministry of Education in collaboration with the College board and science and technical board should ensure that at least guidance counselors are employed and posted on full time basis to man each of the college. With this measure, the counsellors will devote more time to effective career counselling strategies which would enable the students' realistic occupational preferences.
3. Provision of equipment and counsellor's offices: each school should have equipment such as audio and audio-visuals like radio, tape recorders, television, overhead projectors with occupational films for a more effective career counseling of the students. Also, career bulletin boards be provided where information about different career can be displayed for the students.
4. Helpful in curriculum construction

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