

# Guidance and Counselling: A Remedy for Community Development

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**Abstract:-** This paper discussed how Guidance and Counselling is a remedy to the challenges that pose serious detriments to the development of a community such as unemployment, inadequate productivity among others, types of community development is also discuss in theses paper such as food security, health care among others and suggested ways to fix them. The remedy to all these issues are embedded in an effective guidance and counselling services. It was suggested that counsellors should be more committed to their work and voluntary offer cognitive behavioural therapy to youths during career talks and PTA meetings in schools and during orientation of youth corps at camp (NYSC). Government should come to the aid of guidance and counselling in Nigeria by making the services available, effective and sustainable across all the educational institutions and other social institutions.

**Keywords:** Guidance and Counselling, Community development, Panacea, Society, Youths, Nigeria.

## I. INTRODUCTION

"An idle mind is a devil's workshop". Unemployment of young graduates is no longer a question in Nigeria. Inadequate productivity, redundancy, corruption and poverty are fatally eating up our nation. It is a sad reality that a country of over 170 million people produces only a handful of manufactured goods and imports almost everything from other countries. Nigeria is a country blessed with abundant natural and human resources that if all these resources are channeled to production, will raise the nation to a greater height. But the question is: are the youths willing to embark on production? Do they know what to study? Which skill to acquire? How to develop a rewarding career? Situation of the labour market? Some individuals are confused right from school; they lack guidance on how to study, prepare for examinations, what to study, what to major in, which tertiary institution to seek, and lots of other related issues.

Others have problems from home which makes it hard for them to concentrate in school. Some are challenged by personal and social pressures, making it difficult for them to adapt well and bring positive change in the society. These problems are impediments for our community to develop. Shaffer cited in Oladele (2005) defined community development as the capacity of the local socio-economic system to survive and persist in generating employment, income, and wealth and to maintain or improve its relative

economic position. It seeks to improve the quality of life of the people (Goldar, 2015). These impediments are addressed by guidance and counselling, which is a service that is designed to help each individual adjust to his/her environment, develop the ability to set realistic goals through a series of actions or progressive steps (Salawu & Abdulkadir, 2011). It assists in solving personal and social problems and leads to self-development and self-direction to aid individuals achieve success and happiness (Pal, 2011).

Egbochuku (2008) categorized guidance and counselling services into three: educational/academic, vocational/career and personal/social. These problems of ours all lie within these three components. But the subject matter is: are these services in existence? If they are, how sufficiently are they offered? The paper discussed how guidance and counselling services are a panacea (remedy) to achieve community development.

## II. CONCEPT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Egbochuku (2008) defined guidance as a developmental process that continues throughout adolescence and the whole life, during which individuals explore and then implement educational, personal/social and vocational plans. Guidance helps individuals to reconcile hopes and aspirations with reality in all aspects of the life of an individual. Salawu and Abdulkadir (2011) looked at guidance as a process, development in nature, by which an individual is assisted to understand, accept and use his/her abilities, aptitudes and interests and attitudinal patterns in relation to his/her aspirations. According to Pal (2011), guidance is defined as a continuous process of helping the individual develop to maximum of his capacity in the direction most beneficial to himself and to society. All these definitions agree that guidance is a continuous process, which means it is a service needed from cradle to grave. Also, guidance seeks to help individual develop himself to the maximum of his capacity, which is most useful to him as well as his society.

Counselling on the other hand is defined as a relationship between a concerned person and a person with need. This relationship is usually person-to-person, although sometimes it may involve more than two people. It is designed to help people to understand and clarify their views, learn how

to reach their self-determined goals through meaningful, well-informed choices and through the resolution of emotional and interpersonal problems (Salawu & Abdulkadir, 2011). Hahn and Maclean cited in Pal (2011) opined that counselling is a process which takes place in a one to one relationship between an individual beset by problems with which he cannot cope alone and a professional worker whose training and experience have qualified him to help others reach solutions to various types of personal difficulties.

Guidance and counselling are interrelated fields that both aim at helping an individual attain self-direction and are both oriented towards co-operation and not compulsion. Guidance and counselling involve a process that encourages dialogue through discussions and understanding. They assist the individual to acquire a better knowledge of the opportunity and prospects in different fields of work (Egbochuku, 2008).

### III. AIMS OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

According to Ramakrishna and Jalajakumari (2013) guidance and counselling aim at orienting individuals to face the ever-changing challenges in today's fast-moving technological world. The guidance counsellor has to visualize the needs of future generations in facing these unknown realities and suggest ways and methods of developing built-in resources for this purpose. The world of work is changing fast and much more research is required to help the traditional worker to switch over to new technological gadgets and learn to be independent of others. Agrawal (2006) argue that guidance and counselling is needed wherever there are problems. He added that the aims of guidance and counselling involves; self-understanding and self-direction, helps in understanding one's strength, limitations and other resources. Guidance and counselling is helpful not only for student and teacher in an educational institution but also to the parents, administrators, planners and the community as a whole. Egbochuku (2008), added that the aims of counselling are broad and may depend on the situation, environment and training. Of which she include, altering maladjusted behaviour, assisting students to move in the direction of fulfilling their potentials among others. Basically, guidance and counselling aims to promote individual's wellbeing and thus promotes human development.

### IV. SITUATION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN NIGERIA

Guidance and counselling began in Nigeria in 1959 at St. Theresa's secondary school, Oke-Ado- Ibadan by the Irish Rev, Sisters who were majorly concerned about what their final students will be engaged in after graduation. So they invited some influential and knowledgeable people to advice students on the existing careers (Sambo, 2014). Then, the area of emphasis was basically career counselling. With time, Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) was launched in 1976, it aim to promote all the areas of guidance and counselling in Nigerian schools (Sambo, 2014). Presently,

guidance and counselling services are not in existence in many Nigerian institutions, where they do exist, the situation is mostly a pitiful one.

Tambawal (2011) opined that the problems that beset the establishment of guidance and counselling services in Nigeria are of three basic sources which are; psychological, personnel and financial problems. The psychological problems are the attitude of the school administrators who sees the counsellor as someone who pries into sensitive areas of the school; as such they give little or no cooperation to the counsellor. Another problem categorized under psychological is the mentality of pupils who have a very wrong notion of thinking that pupils who consult the guidance counsellor are not normal. The issue of personnel is that there are no many trained counsellors as in comparison to the number of pupils and sometimes these few counsellors are not committed, they move further away from the classrooms to ministries and wherever the pasture is greener. Financial problems include inadequate funds to purchase materials like books, consultation cards, tests among others. And the provision for office space for the counsellor (which is a basic requirement) is also at stake.

Egbochuku (2008) also highlighted similar situation of guidance and counselling in Nigerian institutions. She said when compared to other professions in existence, it could be said that guidance and counselling is still in its rudimentary stage in Nigeria. Some of these problems are high ratio of students to counsellors, poor physical facilities, misconception of the profession, African tradition, counsellors in classrooms, insufficient funding among other problems. Through contact with the society, the researcher found guidance and counselling services to be available only in the hospitals (apart from schools). And the counselling is being administered by nurses not counsellors. However other social institutions like prison, rehabilitation homes and many tertiary institutions, guidance and counselling services are non-existing.

### V. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Communities in terms of geography, however, is only one way of looking at them. Communities can also be defined by common cultural heritage, language, and beliefs or shared interests. Community development according to Yosts' in Ahamed and Olatunji (2014) is defined as an integrated, holistic process which deals with the whole person: physical, spiritual, and mental. It is owned and managed by the people of the local community and the process is continuous and self-generating. Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community development is about building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about changing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives (Goldar, 2015). Oladele (2005), also defined community development as the capacity of the local

socio-economic system .to survive and persist in generating employment, income, and wealth and to maintain if not improve its relative economic position. According to a community development report in Enugu (2015), community development builds people's ability to overcome barriers that lead to low income and unemployment, makes services related to employment better able to reach people and work with them helps to develop the social economy - businesses that trade for the benefit of the community, helps groups that suffer from discrimination to have the strength to challenge it and play a full part in the life of the wider community.

According to the same report too, community development gets people involved in learning by delivering it where people are, as part of their chosen activities, builds skills by relating learning to real experiences gives people the confidence that changes possible and builds public engagement. Community development seeks to improve quality of life (Goldar, 2015). Community development helps communities to understand the factors that affect their health and take part in delivering their own solutions, participate in decision-making on health services and policies making, empowers people to take responsibility for changing their own health-related behaviour and increases mental well-being through the experience of effective action and the building of social links (Shaffer cited in Oladele, 2005). Community development is about community building as such, where the process is as important as the results. One of the primary challenges of community development is to balance the need for long-term solutions with the day-to-day realities that require immediate decision-making and short-term action (Chigbu, 2015).

#### *Types of Community Development*

According to Chigbu, (2015:14), there are five (5) types of community development. These are: Food Security, Health Care, Water and Sanitation, Education and Literacy, Microenterprise/Microfinance among others.

1. *Food security*: This could be agriculture related projects that help people produce food, store food, use food more economically, or grow/produce marketable products. These generate income that can be applied to purchasing food. Food security could also be job skills training or small business startups to help increase overall individual and family income.
2. *Health care*: Health care in the form of health care education, health extension work, and development of local health care capacities. A community development framework is utilized to gather and engage communities and individuals in topics and issues of health care particular to their situation. Examples are mother/child health classes, nutrition education, community level first aid, or wellness/sickness recognition programs.

3. *Water and sanitation*: A common development oriented project is helping people with clean water. This can be done through the development of local sources such as gravity-fed spring systems, well drilling, rainwater harvesting, etc. It is also commonly accomplished through community-based filtration/purification systems. However, water development projects can manifest themselves in other types of projects such as water for agricultural use (irrigation/food production) or sanitation/hygiene needs (hand washing stations, water sealed sanitary toilets, etc.).
4. *Education and literacy*: For children and youth, education can include child sponsorship projects, accrual of necessary materials for attending school (books, supplies, uniforms, etc.), or even simple things such as healthy school lunches. For adults, this is often seen in adult literacy and training programs. An interesting side note is that there seems globally to be a positive correlation between adult female literacy and the overall development and health of a community.
5. *Microenterprise/Microfinance*: This is a growing strategy for many development organizations, seen by some as the "silver bullet" to all the development issues of a community. It isn't. However, projects that utilize good community development principles and work mainly from the resources generating in the local community do have great potential for helping groups overcome poverty

#### VI. HOW GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IS A REMEDY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In this era, Nigeria continues to undergo changes occupationally, socially and economically. These changes are creating challenges for students, staff, parents, leaders and the entire society. The end results of these problems are counter to community development. Therefore, to have community development, these problems need to be solved. These solutions are embedded in having an effective guidance and counselling services. Egbochuku (2008) isolated three major scopes which are educational/academic, vocational/career, and personal/social guidance. All the problems hindering our community development lies under these three scopes.

##### *Educational/Academic*

Odhiambo (2014), observed in his research that 42.9 % of the teacher counselors attributed average academic performance of their students to poor self-concept. Poor reading/study habits among students also contribute to low level of academic performance. 28.5 % of the teacher counsellors noted that some of their students did not have good study habits. The students did not know how to concentrate and utilize well their limited study time. In the same research, he found that 14.3% of the teacher counsellors

reported that most secondary schools in the area are also characterized by frequent cases of indiscipline among its students which affect their academic achievements.

Sambo (2014) pointed out these problems as feeling of being unwanted at school, poor teaching facilities, study problems, inability to concentrate, problems associated with thinking and remembering, lack of interest in a particular school subject, disliking a particular teacher and examination malpractices. Egbochuku (2008:60) identified ways through which educational guidance should be given to the young people so that they pursue the right type of education that will meet the human resource needs of a nation. These are;

- i. To help the students understand appropriate combination of school subjects or courses so that they choose courses that will be useful to them rather than sending students to schools based on quota system, as the later may lead to failure and frustration.
- ii. Assist students in developing good study habits or skills to improve upon their academic performance.
- iii. Assist students in developing their own initiatives and how they can maximize their potentials in a given environment.
- iv. Assist students in developing realistic plans for the future.

#### *Vocational/Career*

Kiprop, Bomett, Kiprulo and Michael cited in Odhiambo (2014), found out that guiding students on career choices is also the work of the Guidance and Counselling department. This strategy was supported by 94.4 % of the teachers, 87.6 % of the parents, and 90 % of the students. This shows the importance teachers, parent and students attach to career guidance as an essential component of education, which all students are entitled to.

Odhiambo (2014), study shows that the level of attitude of the students toward career closely reflected the effectiveness of guidance in addressing academic challenges facing students. There is a significant relationship between students' attitude toward career and academic performance. This suggests that the higher the level of attitude of the students towards career guidance in their schools, the higher was their level of academic performance, and vice versa. Based on the findings, the study concludes that there is low academic performance by majority of the students. However, guidance and programme has a positive impact on the academic performance of students.

Abdullahi and Atsua (2015) reported from their research findings that unemployment is the second cause of youth restiveness, others are vicious circle of poverty, economic exploitation, inadequate and training programmes. Arinze and Ilomuanya (2009) reported that the issue of unemployment has become a bane to Nigeria's economic and national development as the unemployed are not only unable to feed, house and clothe themselves but constitute tinder box

of social unrest, sense of hopelessness and helplessness. Sambo (2014) postulated vocational problems as lack of information on job requirements, conditions of work, reward offered and parents' authoritative involvement in students choice of occupation. It has become evident that a university certificate does not guarantee a job ticket in Nigeria nowadays, Muhtar cited in Arinze and Ilomuanya (2009) noted that the easy connection between the world of learning and the world of work is now history as each job that appears in the labour market is chased by at least a multiple of graduates.

The remedy to rectify these problems of inadequate employment, underemployment, lack of productivity, unmotivated work force, poverty among others, lies in vocational guidance and counselling which is a process of helping individuals to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter it and develop it (Egbochuku, 2008). Vocational happiness requires that a person's interests, aptitudes and personality, be suitable for his/her work. The following are some of the purposes of vocational guidance and counselling as stipulated by Egbochuku (2008:64):

- i. To help students become aware of the many occupations to consider by relating the concept of education to practical aspect of life.
- ii. To increase the relevance of educational process to employment need of the society.
- iii. Testing and interpreting of tests for their right application in solving academic and vocational problems.
- iv. Organizing seminars and conferences relating to the students' areas of interest so as to help them make wise occupational decisions.

Another approach to address these problems of vocations, particular') unemployment and lack of productivity is cognitive behavioural therapy. Cognitive behavioural therapy builds a set of skills that enables an individual to be aware of thoughts and emotions; identify how situations, thoughts, and behaviours influence emotions; and improve feelings by changing dysfunctional thoughts and behaviours (Cully & Teten, 2008). Cognitive behavioural therapy involves the use of cognitive skills to imbue the youths with relevant skills and capacity to develop behaviours which will help them deal more effectively and cope better with the enormous challenges. The strategy would bring to fore their sense of value, strength, capacity and readiness to face and handle life's challenges adequately without infringing on other people's right and property (Arinze & Ilomuanya, 2009).

Arinze and Ilomuanya (2009) conducted a research on the impact of cognitive counselling on young graduates employment challenges and they found that graduates are better placed and are more ready to cope and face employment challenges through the provision of cognitive counselling intervention. They found out at pre-test stage only 5% accepted they had the skills to enable them become gainfully self-employed, at post-test 95% acknowledged the



fact. Again, at pre-test stage, 90% of the respondents were in agreement they had inner turmoil whenever they think of employment challenge but at the post-test stage it was only 5% that indicated they still felt the same.

#### Personal/Social

According to a research conducted Anagbogu (2005), they found out that guidance and counselling is the solution for managing discipline in secondary schools. The strategy received a high support from the teachers (89.9 %), parents (93.8%), and students(75 %).

Sambo (2014) highlighted problems under this component as being extremely shy, lack of self-knowledge and identity, interest, personality adjustment, inappropriate sexual relationships, moral decadence and indiscipline among youths, drug abuse, unstable families and broken homes. In a nutshell, he pointed a dire need for personnel to direct youth to achieve or attain their personal -social goals within the society.

Personal/social guidance and counselling aim at assisting individuals to understand themselves and other people around them. It assists the individual to understand himself, know how to get on with others, learn manners and etiquette, pursue leisure time activities, practice social skills, develop family and family relationships and understand social roles and responsibilities (Egbochuku, 2008). In sum, personal/social guidance and counselling aims to develop the self-concept of individuals. And when individual have agood concept of themselves, they contribute to the society; thus, community development.

### VII. SUGGESTIONS

To achieve sustainable community development, guidance and counselling services need to be effective and viable. Unfortunately, that is not the situation of these services in Nigeria. The following are the suggestions of this paper:

1. Counsellors should be contented with their work and they should be committed.
2. Counsellors should inspire youths to be self-reliant and not to redundantly wait for white-collar jobs which are not readily available. This should be done through cognitive restructuring using cognitive behavioural therapy to imbue the youths with relevant skills and capacity to develop behaviours which will help them deal more effectively and cope better with the enormous challenges that may confront them. Counsellors should voluntarily launch awareness campaigns to sensitize children, youths, teachers, administrators, parents and the entire populace about the roles and responsibilities, aims and needs of guidance and counselling.
3. Government should come to the aid of guidance and counselling in Nigeria by making the services

available, effective and sustainable across all the educational institution in the country.

4. Government should make guidance and counselling services readily available at other social institutions so that uneducated populace should have access to such services.

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