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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COUNSELING APPROACHES AND ECONOMIC LIFE ADJUSTMENT AS PERCEIVED BY COUNSELORS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated Relationship between Counseling Approaches and Economic Life Adjustment as perceived by counselors in Secondary Schools in Anambra State. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted descriptive correlation design. The population of the study consisted of about 256 counselors in 256 secondary schools in Anambra State. The sample of the study constituted 150 counselors drawn from the entire population using stratified random sampling technique. The researchers developed an instrument titled 'Counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors Questionnaire (CAELAPCQ)' was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts who were lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha technique and obtained a coefficient of 0.79. The instruments were administered using a direct approach method and 150 were returned and recorded. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the Null Hypotheses. The findings indicated among others that there is a positive and significant relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings it was recommended among others counselors should establish positive counseling approaches that will enable students to embrace and develop vocational skills and career enhancement models, enterprising businesses amongst others for economic life adjustments in Anambra State.

Keywords: Relationship, Counselors, Counseling Approaches, Perceived, Economic Life, Adjustment.

Introduction

The desire for a high standard of living has always been the focus of every family and the society at large. Various strategies are usually put in place by those concerned to improve the economic life of the members of the society for a better living. Every nation adopts necessary approaches and measures to ensure increase in the country's gross domestic product by encouraging

national growth and development. This can be achieved through organized efforts and modern approaches for human capital development, encouraging commerce, trade and industry, creativity and innovations with the aid of technological advancement as well as skill enhancement, thus education is one of those crucial sectors that form structure and foundation for such achievement. Ojiah and Rinji (2013), opined that when students are properly equipped with career information, they are empowered to choose for themselves what they would want to engage in, in the future. In view of this opinion, teachers in Nigerian secondary schools should be represented in the Guidance and counseling team as facilitators mostly in programmes related to vocation and career development of their students. The policy of 9-3-4 System of Basic Education and introduction of Entrepreneurial studies in Nigerian education was apt in the system and to that effect, skills related to work performance have been introduced in the curriculum and made compulsory for students so as to help them become enterprising, self-sufficient and reliant at the end of their secondary education.

Individuals are expected to maximize every possible creative potentials to support their economic life and by extension cater for the economic needs of the society. However, approaches for economic life adjustment seem unclear to quite a number of individuals who would have explored the available opportunities to improve their economic life through possible and effective approaches. According to National Policy on Education (2014), Education enables individuals to develop appropriate skills, mental, physical, social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to the society. In situations where individuals are unable to trace their root on personal capabilities, counselors play a vital role in assisting the individual to identify their strength and explore their God given talents to establish themselves. Counselors at different points guide the individual and encourage them towards a positive moral, social and economic life adjustment aimed at improving the standard of living of the society. According to Oramah (2015), the flexibility of the school counselor facilitates counseling relationships, hence different approaches are expected from school counselors to maintain the required counseling relationship. This emphasized that, as expertise in the field counselors should adopt various approaches devising appreciative means for enlightenment, especially students at different institutional levels the need to trade the right route to package life for future and quality living.

Obumneke-Okeke, Anyachebelu and Anyamene (2015) in their opinion stressed that schools need to have guidance and counselors who will help the students thereby assisting teachers and administrators in directing learners to discover themselves, the purpose and motivation help them to seek independently or collectively the informative skills and competences that will help them achieve their educational, vocational, personal social and economic needs. They also indicated that Guidance and counseling is needed for the development of social, moral and economic

life adjustment of the students to enable them confront the problems that may hinder their progress. Through guidance and counseling approaches, counselors impact life consciousness on students which enables them to see reasons to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and competencies that will enable them to explore and improve their economic life and life activities.

According to Agbajor and Alordiah, (2014), the guidance and counseling process remains one of the exclusive ways of sustaining the age-long system of education that has been nurtured to build useful and self-productive citizens that can transfer a nation into an acceptable level of economic development with positive influence on security development of the country. Thus, counselors perceived their professional services as a way to encourage and guide individuals towards a better economic life adjustment and not just mere awareness of the hardship. Awareness of problems perceived should be communicated and solutions proffered through counseling approaches for quality and higher standard of living enhancing life adjustment and development. This supports Baji and Muhammad (2020), which asserts that guidance and counseling offers motivational services which enhance environment with maximum potentials for welfare and protection of people.

Research Questions

The study was guided by two research questions.

1. What is the relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses were tested for the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State.

Research Method

The study compared counseling approaches adopted by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State in relation to economic life adjustment. The study adopted descriptive correlation design, this is to ensure capturing and exploring of the inner experience of the population in their natural environment. The population of the study consisted of about 256 counselors in 256 secondary schools in Anambra State. The sample of the study constituted 150 counselors drawn from the entire population using stratified random sampling technique. The researchers developed an instrument titled ‘Counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors Questionnaire (CAELAPCQ)’ was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts who were

lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha technique and obtained a coefficient of 0.79. The instruments were administered using a direct approach method and 150 were returned and recorded. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer the research questions while t- test was used to test the Null Hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rules that if the calculated value is greater than the critical value, the Null Hypothesis will be rejected. On the other hand if the calculated value is less than the critical value, the Null Hypothesis will be accepted.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Pearson correlation analysis on relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	Remarks
Counseling Approaches	150	0.754	Strong positive Relationship
Economic life adjustment			

As shown in Table 1, a Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) of 0.754 was obtained. This shows that there is a strong positive relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State. This indicated that the increase in counseling approaches will strongly facilitate economic life adjustment in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson correlation analysis on relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	Remark
Counselors' mere Perception	150	0.348	Weak Relationship
Economic life adjustment			

As shown in Table 2, a Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) of 0.348 was obtained. This shows that there is a weak relationship between counselors' perception of life

challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State. This indicated that mere perception or awareness of the economic life challenging situations by counselors do not facilitate economic life adjustment in Anambra State.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 3: Summary of t-test of the relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State

Variables	N	df	t-cal	t-crit	alpha level	Decision
Counseling Approaches	150	148	6.284	1.976	0.05	Significant
Economic life adjustment						

Data on table 3, showed that the calculated value of 6.284 is greater than the critical value of 1.976 at the alpha level of 0.05, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore there is a significant relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State.

Table 4: Summary of t-test of the relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State

Variables	N	df	t-cal	t-crit	alpha level	Decision
Counselors' mere Perception	150	148	1.526	1.976	0.05.	Not Significant
Economic life adjustment						

Data on table 4, showed that the calculated value of 1.526 is less than the critical value of 1.976 at the alpha level of 0.05, thus the null hypothesis was accepted . Therefore there is no significant relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State.

Based on the data analysis, the summary of the findings is presented as follows:

1. There is a positive and significant relationship between counseling

approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State.

2. There is no significant relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study showed that there is a strong positive relationship between counseling approaches and economic life adjustment as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State. This indicated that the increase in counseling approaches will strongly facilitate economic life adjustment in Anambra State. This finding agreed with Ojiah and Rinji (2013) which indicated that Guidance and counseling is a professional practice and an educational process that offers individuals services to help them achieve various educational objectives and career goals through basic counseling approaches.

However, the findings also showed that there is a weak relationship between counselors' mere perception of life challenging situations and economic life adjustment in Anambra State. This indicated that the mere perception of life challenging situations or awareness of the economic hardship by counselors do not facilitate economic life adjustment in Anambra State. Thus, when counselors perceive a life challenge or awareness of a situation affecting economic life of the members of the society, they should employ their counseling professional approaches and services to salvage the situation by enlightening the individuals with possible solutions to the problems through embracing career development, skill acquisition, self-development as well as engaging in enterprising businesses for economic life adjustment and better living. This supports Nwankwo and Okekeaji (2015), who opined that counseling clinics should take advantage of intranet and extranet technologies to improve service delivery and collaborations.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that counseling approaches as perceived by counselors in secondary schools in Anambra State have a positive and significant relationship with economic life adjustment while mere perception or awareness of life challenging situations does not have a positive relationship on economic life adjustment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings the following recommendations were made:

1. Counselors should establish positive counseling approaches that will enable students to develop and embrace vocational skills, career enhancement programs, entrepreneurship approaches and models for economic life adjustments in Anambra State.
2. Counseling approaches and models should endeavor to enlighten students on the need to perceive economic life challenges and employ possible solutions for adjustment

other than mere perception without action.

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