

## VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING THEORY: REVIEW AND CHALLENGES IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This paper critically reviewed Vocational Counselling Theory: Review and Challenges in Kano State, Nigeria. Effective vocational counselling can substantially impact adolescents' growth and development in a dynamic socioeconomic environment by offering clear pathways for both professional and personal development. The major challenges facing Vocational Counselling among Adolescents in Kano State, Nigeria are Sociocultural Factors, Educational System, Economic constraints, Infrastructure and Resources, Awareness and Attitudes. Based on the discussions of this study, it was suggested that; Educational policy makers should include vocational counselling in the curriculum since it can offer ongoing directions and expose students to a wide range of job alternatives.*

**Keywords:** Vocational Counselling, Review, Application, Challenges and Adolescents.

### Introduction

Particularly in developing areas like Kano State, Nigeria, vocational counselling is essential in helping teenagers make decisions about their schooling and careers. Effective vocational counselling can substantially impact adolescents' growth and development in a dynamic socioeconomic environment by offering clear pathways for both professional and personal development. The importance of counselling as a profession is increasingly recognized as society becomes more urbanized and contemporary. In many nations, including Nigeria, interest in counselling has increased over the past decade. This is seen in the value placed on counselling in homes, businesses, medical facilities, and educational settings. The Ministry of Education has sent counselors and para-counselors to the majority of secondary schools to offer pupils professional assistance and realize the value of counselling services. A crucial

component of counselling that cannot be overlooked is vocational counselling.

Coming up with a single definition of counselling is difficult. This is because a theoretical orientation influences the definition of counselling. Counselling is a learning-focused process that typically takes place in an interactive relationship. Its goals are to assist individuals in gaining a better understanding of themselves and using that insight to help them become contributing members of society. Through the process of counselling, a helper can show concern and care for an individual who is struggling, as well as support their personal development and assist them in making changes by understanding themselves better. A concerned individual and a person in need of assistance form a relationship known as counselling. Although it occasionally involves more than two people, this relationship is mostly person-to-person. It is intended to assist individuals in comprehending and refining their points of view, as well as teaching them how to make meaningful, informed decisions, resolve emotional or interpersonal conflicts, and achieve their own goals (Thomas, 2020). These definitions demonstrate how counselling can signify several things. Counselling is offered by many different names. For instance, counselling may be provided even when the main focus of the relationship is on non-counselling issues. Teachers can be trusted by students as someone they can confide in with their issues. In this scenario, the instructor applied counselling techniques without entering into a counselling relationship. Although they offer advice, teachers are not counselors (Ali, 2008).

### **Vocational Counselling**

In vocational counselling, people recognize their abilities, passions, and potential careers. Although the phrases "vocational counselling" and "career counselling" (also known as "career guidance" or "career education" career education') are not always synonymous, they are sometimes used interchangeably. The phrase used before referring to information-giving and directive employment counselling was vocational counselling, which was often a spin-off of the vocational guiding movement. However, as creative theories of vocational choice emerged, the field of vocational counselling quickly expanded to include not only providing information, but also organizing and making decisions regarding careers and educational paths (Agbaje & Agbaje, 2014).

The term "career guidance" (also known as "career education" or "career counselling") is used to indicate the theme's actual breadth and, more specifically, to highlight how the "whole person" is involved in the process of choosing a vocation rather than focusing solely on the decision-making process. It was further argued that career counselling included discussing the "Road Life" roles that clients engage in. Career counselling interventions have implications for other aspects of life functions; they go beyond providing information about careers, as was initially intended when the term "vocational guidance" was used. According to Agbaje and Agbaje (2014), the phrase "career guidance" refers to the occurrence of specific experiences and understanding throughout life's stages that have significance for laying the right foundation for

career planning and decision making. Although the phrase "vocational guidance" has historical relevance, Makinde and Alao (2007) pointed out that some individuals still prefer it. However, the term is less descriptive of the field it is meant to represent. The phrase "career guidance" is increasingly being used to describe the wide range of actions that make up career intervention practices more accurately.

Naturally, this does not argue that information plays a small role in job guidance. School guidance programmes that do not give young people a profile, information, or a chance to learn about themselves and their surroundings shortchange them (Shertzer & Stone 2004). In addition to providing knowledge about various vocations, career guidance also includes several additional personal elements that are very important when making decisions about one's career. Career guidance is very similar to other types of guidance, which is why it is described as a unified approach and as integrated efforts in what have traditionally been termed educational and vocational counselling (Belkin, 2004). This is because career guidance practice incorporates all the different aspects of counselling and guidance, including the group approach, information-giving services, the interaction between counselor and client, and the evaluation and appraisal functions.

The phrase "educational and vocational guidance," which is now included under the umbrella term "career guidance," refers to specific counselling programmes intended to give clients psychological support and information that may have an immediate impact on their decision-making regarding finding employment now and in the future. Educational and vocational guidance is ongoing support provided to students/clients both inside and outside the classroom to help them better understand who they are, their strengths and weaknesses, and how to move forward, adapt to changing circumstances, and make the most of their abilities in the workplace. In light of this, career guidance entails sufficient and pertinent self-knowledge, including understanding one's interests, skills, aptitudes, values, and attitudes in relation to the workplace. Furthermore, facts and information are still highly important, and are much more important in career guidance than in personal guidance.

### **Holland's Theory of Vocational Personality**

John L. Holland is a career counselor who works in psychiatric, military, and educational settings. Holland claimed that a person's career choice in the business world is a reflection of their personality. Holland contends that people choose a career that fits one of the six personality types because they exhibit characteristics of at least one of these types. Holland's theory is associated with a theoretical perspective that has a lengthy history of characterizing the distinctions between different personality types. Because it organizes crucial information about people and professions and offers an explanation for the relationships between different personality traits and associated professions, Holland's theory is referred to be structural-transactional. According Adigüzel, et. al. (2022), this theory is based on four main approaches:

1. Many people in American culture fall into one of the six categories: artistic, social,

- investigative, realistic, enterprising, or conventional.
2. There are six different types of work environment: conventional, artistic, social, investigative, realistic, and enterprising.
  3. People seek settings that allow them to demonstrate their aptitudes and qualities, communicate their attitudes and moral principles, and take on the tasks and duties assigned to them.
  4. An individual's behaviour is shaped by the way his personality interacts with his surroundings.

According to Holland, a person's work interests are mostly manifestations of their personality. Personality traits are determined by an individual's chosen leisure activities, academic disciplines, interests, and career decisions. Each person was characterized by varying degrees according to one of the six personality types. Each person resembles one of the six personality types to varying degrees. Below is an explanation for these personality types (Adigüzel et. al, 2022).

#### **Holland's Personality Types**

**Realistic Type:** This personality type dislikes educational and therapeutic pursuits and is more interested in activities that allow him to make things, tools, machinery, and animals in a methodical and regular manner. A realistic person is mechanically inclined; however, his/her social skills may be lacking. A realistic person would work as an electrician, farmer, cadastral engineer, or auto mechanist. Easygoing, humble, outspoken, materialist, obstinate, kindhearted, headstrong, headstrong, natural, shy, honest, and frugal are characteristics of realistic types (Adigüzel, et. al., 2022).

**Investigative Type:** To understand and influence certain events, an investigative personality type favors tasks requiring observational, symbolic, methodical, and creative investigations of physical, biological, and cultural phenomena. Inquisitive people dislike persuasive social activities and repetitive tasks. These inclinations lead to deficits in leadership abilities, even though they present opportunities for proficiency in science and math. The investigative types prefer professions such as biologists, chemists, physicians, anthropologists, geologists, and medical technicians. Analytical, independent, open-minded, cautious, intellectual, pessimistic, introverted, rigorous, critical, systematic, curious, and shy are the general characteristics of the investigative types (Fiona, et. al., 2020).

**Artistic Type:** The artistic personality type is one that values adaptability, independence, and spontaneous activities that call for the creation of tangible, intangible, and human-related elements in order to produce works of art and other things. People who are artistic dislike organized and methodical pursuits. These tendencies can lead to deficits in office jobs and managerial skills, even when they offer the potential for artistic skills in language, art, music, theater, and writing (Rusu, 2016). The careers of composers, musicians, stage directors, writers,

interior architects, and actors/actresses are preferred by artistic type. Artistic people are typically described as complex, idealistic, introspective, messy, impractical, intuitive, emotional, irritable, independent, free-spirited, and inventive.

**Social Type:** People with social personality types enjoy tasks that include leading others to inform, better, treat, educate, and enlighten them. They disliked organized, methodical tasks involving supplies, equipment, or machinery. These tendencies might lead to inadequate mechanical and scientific skills, even though they offer potential in human connections such as interpersonal and educational competences. Social types prefer careers such as teaching, religious leadership, clinical psychology, psychological counselling, psychiatric nursing, and speech therapy. Persuasive, idealistic, social, cooperative, courteous, sensitive, pleasant, patient, fine, generous, responsible, understanding, helpful, and warm-hearted are general characteristics of social people (Natalie, 2014).

**Enterprising Type:** People with an enterprising personality type enjoy tasks that require them to guide others for financial or organizational advantage. Observational, symbolic, and methodological activities can irritate this. These tendencies can lead to weaknesses in scientific skills, even as they present opportunities for growth in leadership, interpersonal skills, and persuasion competencies. Professions such as marketing, management, business executives, television producers, sports coaches, and purchase specialists are preferred by enterprises. Grateful, domineering, optimistic, adventurous, high-spirited, ambitious, energetic, affable, extroverted, quick-tempered, self-assured, popular, and quick-tempered are characteristics of enterprising people.

**Conventional Type:** People with a conventional personality type, such as tasks that require systematic, planned, and accurate data formation. Examples of these tasks include using computers to accomplish organizational and financial goals, planning how to organize texts and numerical data, reproducing materials, and recording. Activities that are not independent, flexible, systematic, or focused on discovery are disliked by the conventional types. These tendencies can lead to limitations in artistic competence even when they present potential in office work, math, or operating systems. Professions such as accounting, stenography, financial analysis, brokerage, and taxation are preferred by the conventional types. Conventional people are typically described as artistic, economical, cautious, obedient, conscientious, introverted, sensitive, or literal-minded.

### **Challenges in Vocational Counselling among Adolescents in Kano State**

According to Garba (2022), the following are some of the main obstacles that Kano State adolescents face when receiving vocational counselling:

**Sociocultural Factors:** Adolescents' job options may be restricted by conventional gender norms and expectations. For instance, girls may face discouragement in certain communities if they choose to pursue jobs that deviate from their traditional positions.

**Educational System:** Many teenagers may not acquire the information or assistance

necessary to make wise job decisions because schools do not have formal career advice programmes.

**Economic constraints:** Families who struggle financially may put short-term financial requirements ahead of long-term career planning, which may limit their children's access to career counselling.

**Infrastructure and Resources:** The quality and accessibility of vocational guidance services may be hampered by the lack of counselling centers and professionally educated vocational counsellors.

**Awareness and Attitudes:** Parents and students frequently lack comprehension of the advantages of career counselling, which causes them to oppose or disregard these programmes.

### Suggestions

Among other things, this study suggests the following:

1. Educational policy makers should include vocational counselling in the curriculum since it can offer ongoing directions and expose students to a wide range of job alternatives.
2. In Kano State, community involvement through awareness campaigns can aid in attitude changes and boost local populations' acceptance of vocational counselling.
3. Government, Professional counsellors and Non-Governmental organizations should initiate counselor training courses and public-private collaborations to raise the caliber of services and availability of resources.
4. Professional counsellors and Non-Governmental organizations should understand that; culturally aware counselling initiatives can guarantee that career counselling upholds regional customs, while encouraging contemporary job options for young people in Kano State and throughout Nigeria.

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