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**CAREERS IN COUNSELLING:
OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE BEGINNER**

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ABSTRACT

As one of the services rendered in counselling is Career counselling, the student counsellor as a beginner in addition to knowing the "world of work" in other professions, needs to be familiar with options available to him within his choice. Many areas of speciality are becoming available in countries where counselling as a career had been long established. Countries just embracing counselling are also becoming aware of the meaningful impact counselling services could make to their nations. This article, through literature review and library research explores the various settings in which counselling as a career could be offered, functions likely to be performed and possible requirements for qualifications. The research revealed that choices in this area is becoming more prolific with forecast as to the trend of counselling as a career in the future.

Such awareness of career options to the student counsellor could make him fulfill his own potentials if we assume that the art of helping demands that the helper needs to be able to help himself.

INTRODUCTION

The urge and desire to be productive or gainfully employed in an activity can be said to be as old as mankind himself. The primitive man, because of survival and physical security needs engaged in such activities out of necessity. His work most of the time was laborious and unpleasant. With increasing awareness, man became identified with the search for a more comfortable and more productive activities. Employment trends have been observed to change with changing trends in every society.

The Nigerian Situation:

New occupations in the present-day Nigeria are emerging to meet the needs of this country's economic, social and political environments. Counselling as a career could be regarded as a new area being explored in the "world of work" even in the developed countries. Increasing emphasis is also being placed as to the need of counselling in Nigeria. Courses in counselling are now available in some of the Nigerian Universities. Counsellors are being trained largely for the school setting while most if not all the school counsellors still teach one or two subjects.

Career Options in Counselling:

The literature on career option in the "world of work" generally seem to be abundant.

The student counsellor, making use of National, State and Local sources, dictionary of occupational titles, books, occupational briefs and guides or computers, could easily come-up with occupational informations to help his client. However, the literature on the specialities available in counselling as a career appears scanty. The student counsellor, sometimes, seem not to be aware of the choices available in his own setting. Whereas the occupation of a counsellor is found mostly in the school setting, they are also engaged in other settings. Counselling as a service touches every facet of our life as counselling services are rendered in our homes, schools, communities, business industries and governments.

Career Counselling:

Perhaps, it appears logical to begin with career counselling as an area of speciality. Vocational guidance or career guidance are sometimes used synonymously to mean the same thing while others differentiate between the two and career counselling.

The career counsellor helps an individual to choose, prepare for and succeed in a given occupation, he clarifies vocational objectives with the client. Other functions include helping people understand their options, helping them to cope with changes related to their work and helping people to find their place in the changing world of work.

A master's degree in counselling with concentration in courses related to career will be helpful. The career counsellor can function in settings such as schools, universities, military, correctional institutions, business, community agencies, public or private institutions.

Rehabilitation Counselling:

The rehabilitation counsellor is concerned with the less fortunate individuals in the society, the handicapped. Ogg (1966) enumerated some disabilities which are of concern to the rehabilitation counsellor, which are physical disability, emotional handicap, mental retardation and unemployment. The rehabilitation counsellor is concerned with the socially handicapped, the under employed because of alcoholism, drug addiction and prison record. The rehabilitation counsellor serves as a link between the isolated world of his client and the community, between his capacities and the jobs he is capable of doing. The rehabilitation counsellor helps the individual to identify his needs and co-ordinates and integrates a rehabilitation plan for and with the client.

He may work in a team including physicians, nurses physical and occupational therapists, social workers and others concerned with the handicapped. The rehabilitation counsellor may work in hospitals, counselling centres, insurance com-

panies, alcoholism treatment centre, rehabilitation centres, courts, prisons, speech and hearing clinics.

The vocational rehabilitation counsellor as a professional case worker handles the client's problem from the initial interview to satisfactory placement and follow up. He needs to be familiar with medical and psychiatric terminology and community service agencies.

Counsellors in Prisoner Rehabilitation may work in correctional institutions, evaluating prisoners with vocational potential and at the same time co-ordinating their training, helps in the personal and social adjustments of prisoners. A master's degree in counselling with emphasis in Rehabilitation or a doctorate in counselling will be ideal.

School Counselling:

The school counsellor is engaged in pupil service work, pupil's welfare, the creation of healthy learning environment, promotes positive interpersonal relationships, among students. The school counsellor also performs educational counselling through educational planning and provision of remedial help to students.

The school counsellor is also diagnostic in function. The educational counsellors may be professionals with roots mainly in teaching with part time counselling. Such counsellors primarily gives information and suggestions. Some educational counsellors have professional affiliation primarily in education with special training in counselling. Some of the school counsellors in our institutions in Nigeria function as Educational Counsellors as they teach some classroom subjects thus unable to engage in full time counselling. A bachelor's degree in counselling is required for a school counsellor.

Sex Counselling:

Sex counselling is becoming the first truly multidisciplinary profession in the health care services, especially in the United States. The sex counsellor or Therapist deals with sexual concerns, sexual dysfunctions with various options for treatment. The sex counsellor or therapist also deals with issues of sex education, human sexuality and homosexuality. The goal of counselling is helping clients to become more comfortable about their sexuality. Requirements expected of a sex counsellor according to the American Association of sex Educations and Counsellors (AASEC) among other things, include preparation in sex education, sex therapy skills and studies in human sexuality.

Pastoral Counselling:

Pastoral counsellors are usually clergy men trained in psychological counselling. They are usually concerned with the problems of morals, guilt, belief, life-crisis and marital conflicts. The method of counseling is mainly supportive and informational. Problems are investigated from the spiritual point. The pastoral counsellors incorporate values, theological, philosophical and ethical considerations

and principles in their counselling activities. In addition to B.D. degree. The pastoral counsellor is expected to have had training in personality and counselling theory with supervised experience in a clinical setting.

Marital Counselling:

Marital counselling was performed in the past by clergymen and social workers. The development of marriage assistance as a speciality Brammer and Shostrum (1977) dates back to that of Stone who established the first marriage consultation centre in 1929. Marriage and family counselling which formerly go together now seem to be considered as two separate areas of speciality. Marriage, marital or couples counselling includes pre-marital counselling, marital communications, marital conflicts, divorce, emotional, legal and social issues involved, the issue of children in divorce and issue of reconciliation. At least a Master's degree in counselling with clinical experience is required.

Family Counselling:

The family counsellor or therapist is concerned with intensive treatment of family problems. The services include counselling children, conflict resolution. Family counselling is also performed by the social worker.

Group Counselling:

The group counsellors or specialists in group work provide services through the group medium to prevent problems, and remediation of disabling behaviour. Specialists in group work are found in schools, clinics, universities, mental health institutions and private practice. A master's degree in counselling will be required with concentration in group procedures, group dynamic, leadership styles and application of group counselling in many problem areas.

Mental Health Counselling:

The mental health counsellor and the clinical mental health counsellor maintain and improve the quality of mental health of the individual and also engage in prevention practices. A master's degree in counselling with clinical experience and exposure will be helpful. Mental health consultation can be in private practice or prevention oriented settings.

Counselling Psychology:

Super (1955) observed that in recognition of the growing discreteness of the counselling branch of psychology, the American Psychological Association at the Conference of Psychologists held at North-Western University in 1951, changed the designation of the devision, guidance and counselling to counselling psychology. The counselling psychologist assumes that it is people not problems that need help through counselling. He is concerned with improving the normal functioning of his client and improving the decision making skills of the client among

other things. The counselling psychologist would need to have an M.Phil or Ph.D in counselling. The counselling psychologist can function in counsellor education and supervision where he is engaged in the professional preparation of counsellors, or could be responsible for the supervision of counsellors. The counselling psychologist may also function in a variety of settings including schools, rehabilitation centres and hospitals. Brammer and Shostrum (1977) however observed that, counselling may be absorbed into clinical psychology in future and these two areas eventually absorbed into community psychology.

Employment Counselling:

The employment counsellor focuses on the employability of the client, manpower needs and general employment trends. The National Employment Counsellors Association further encourages the professional development of employment counsellors through the association. The employment counsellors are found in employment and placement settings, in business and industry, colleges and universities. A master's degree in related area of counselling will be required of an employment counsellor.

Testing and Evaluation Researcher:

Another area of speciality available is in Testing and Evaluation (Psychometrics). The testing and evaluation researcher provides test scoring services, interpretes and uses test results. The testing and evaluation researcher also develops evaluation instruments to serve the individual and society. He designs instruments and interpretes them to help us understand problems. A master's degree or doctorate will be required with knowledge in statistical analysis and issues connected with Testing.

Some of the other occupational designations for counsellors found in the Literature include that of Hahn (1950) who wrote on General Clinical Counselling as a speciality, Porter (1950) who wrote on Therapeutic Counselling.

With these options discussed and others, available to the student counsellor, professionals in counselling seem to predict (Brammer and Shostrum 1977) that counselling may, in the future become absorbed in clinical psychology or these two areas being absorbed into community psychology or counselling.

Community Counselling:

Lewis and Lewis (1977) argued that whereas community counselling, at present, is still far from being a new job title or speciality, it represents an innovative set of approaches for delivering helping services to human beings. The community counsellors may work in educational institutions, mental health facilities, community agencies, crisis prevention centres, employment rehabilitation agencies.

Psychiatric social work is recognized as another counselling speciality. The psychiatric social worker functions most of the time on a psychiatric team. Psychiatry itself is regarded as a psychotherapeutic counselling speciality. The psy-

chiatrist on the other hand holds an M.D degree and employs medical therapies as well, in the treatment of severe emotional problems. Counselling services are also becoming available to the bereaved, the terminally ill, the aging or elderly while retirement counselling and cross-cultural counselling are also offered.

Counselling as a career has its own many options, the knowledge of which could enable the student counsellor help himself as he prepares to help others in different areas and in the world of work.

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