

Knowledge and ability of early childhood teachers in delivering career guidance to preschoolers

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Abstract

The level of knowledge and ability of teachers in delivering career guidance is very influential on the child's self-development process, especially in the aspects of career orientation and career attainment. In this regard, this study aims to identify the knowledge and ability of Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers in delivering career guidance to preschoolers. The descriptive-analytic method was used to collect data through observation and survey. During the survey, self-report questionnaires were distributed to twelve early childhood teachers in Serang City, Banten. The data obtained were then analyzed using the qualitative approach. The data were categorized based on levels of knowledge and ability of ECE teachers in delivering career guidance services that include five areas, namely needs assessment, program development, selection of guidance and counseling methods/techniques/strategies, guidance and counseling content selection, and accountability measures. Based on the generalized results of research data, it was found that an adequate level of knowledge and ability (expert level) was not found in any area, an adequate level of knowledge and ability (moderate level) was found in areas 3 and 4, and an inadequate level of knowledge and ability (novice level) was found in areas 1, 2, and 5. Research recommendations are formulated to serve as considerations for policymakers, school principals, early childhood educators, children counselors, and future researchers.

Keywords: *descriptive-analytic method, preschoolers, teacher competence.*



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Introduction

Whether or not it is too early for preschoolers to be involved in career guidance activities has been an issue lately. Several studies reported that is necessary to equip children with knowledge and skills about 'how to live, 'how to learn', and 'how to earn' since childhood. The

first five years of human life are known as the golden period because most brain development occurs during the period.

Like other kinds of development (e.g., intellectual, physical, social, and emotional), career development is a lifelong process that involves constant growth, change, and adaptation. Career development is not just about jobs, work, or professions, because it is more about someone's life stories. Children constantly explore their worlds and construct possibilities for their present and future selves. Therefore, life stories presented in career guidance should include several essential attributions, for example, a sense of self (self-identity), life roles, skills, and knowledge, which are developed by daily events and experiences, as well as interests, attitudes, beliefs, and role models (Hidayat & Ningrum, 2017; Cahil & Furey, 2017; Rasmani, Wahyuningsih, Pudyaningtyas, Nurjanah, 2019; Sasmita, Yusuf, Iswari, & Afdal, 2021).

Today's world of work is very challenging, dynamic, and demanding, so adaptive, creative, and innovative problem-solvers are required. Moreover, this post-pandemic situation demands children to become original thinkers. They need to learn to stimulate imagination, use discovery-based thinking, as well as synthesize and embrace the waves of information conceptually. Various efforts should be made to help children face the world of work earlier. The necessity of providing career guidance at the ECE level is pointed out by Hidayat & Ningrum (2017) in their study. It is explained that kindergarten is the starting point for young children to start learning and preparing for career development in adulthood.

Early childhood education, in this case, aims to assist and direct the child's growth and development process to be more focused and integrated. The main purposes of early childhood education are a) to train children to better adapt to various learning situations; b) to improve verbal communication skills; c) to introduce children to the world around them, such as people, objects, plants, and animals; and d) to provide the basics of subsequent learning, such as remembering, reading, writing and simple arithmetic (Syaodih & Agustin, 2008).

However, the early childhood education system in Indonesia, in particular, does not aim to give children as much cognitive knowledge (intellectual intelligence) as possible. It rather prepares children mentally and physically to know the world around them more adaptively (friendly). The nature of the education in ECE is more familiar, communicative (fun), and most importantly more persuasive. During the learning process, there are no known terms of coercion, pressure, or threats that can disturb the child's psyche. Situations and conditions like this are deliberately engineered and created with the aim that children get peace of mind in learning so that they can express themselves more responsibly.

Kindergarten and *Raudhatul Athfal*/Islamic Kindergarten are part of the formal education system in Indonesia. However, there is no special structural position for counselors at these educational institutions. At this educational level, the function of guidance and counseling is more preventive and developmental. Developing components of the guidance and counseling curriculum for kindergartens take longer than making the same curriculum for the higher level of education. On the other hand, at the preschool level, the component of individual planning (which consists of appraisal, advice, and transition planning services) and responsive services (in the form of counseling and consulting services) requires a smaller time allocation.

Until recently, preschoolers' needs for self-development are almost completely handled by classroom teachers. They, by the context of the task and performance expectations, mostly use the spectrum of the children's developmental characteristics as a play context that facilitates the development of the children's personality as a whole (Mashudi & Rusmana, 2019). In another country, like the United States, the guidance curriculum has been arranged in stages starting from K (Kindergarten) to grade 12 (High School). This guidance curriculum is called the K-12 Guidance Curriculum (Gysbers & Henderson, 2010). It was developed as a guide for counselors at the formal education level to provide services based on an analysis of student needs at each stage of development.

The inability of classroom teachers to provide adequate guidance services by the K-12 guidance curriculum, or child counseling services that are needed immediately but can only be carried out by professional experts such as counselors, makes the need for a counselor position in the early childhood education level increasingly urgent. At the kindergarten level, counselors should be able to act as Roving Counselors who are appointed to each school/madrasa to assist teachers in developing integrated guidance programs with the learning process and overcoming disruptive behavior in children as needed. One of the approaches that they may use is Direct Behavioral Consultation.

Without a structural position of guidance and counseling at the level of early childhood education, educators have a dual role, namely as classroom teachers or organizers of learning activities, and supervising teachers or organizers of guidance activities. This makes the role of ECE teachers more essential. Lack of knowledge and the inability of early childhood educators in carrying out guidance activities according to applicable rules will hinder the development of children in various aspects, one of which is the development of a career.

Guidance activities are assistance services that can be provided by anyone who meets the requirements as a party who is more expert, more knowledgeable, and more capable of those who need the assistance. Thus, the teacher, in this case, should meet the qualifications as a party who guides students, without exception for career guidance. Crow & Crow (1960, in Surya, 1988) stated that guidance is the assistance given by a person, male or female, who has a good personality and adequate education, to a person (individual) of any age to help him develop his point of view, make his own choices, and carry his burdens.

Therefore, in general, the teacher is eligible in delivering guidance services to children. Regarding career guidance, in 1951, Donald Super proposed a revision of the definition of job guidance as a process of assisting individuals to accept and develop themselves and their roles in an integrated manner in the world of work and testing their concepts with reality and satisfaction for themselves and society. Hence, the concept of vocational choice was replaced with vocational development (Herr and Cramer 1979: 6).

On the one hand, Conny Semiawan (1984) provides a broader definition of career guidance, as “a means of fulfilling individual development needs which must be seen as an integral part of an educational program that is integrated into every learning experience in the field of study. Career guidance is related to the development of cognitive and affective abilities, as well as one's skills in realizing a positive self-concept, understanding the decision-making process as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills that will help him enter life, the way of life from events in life that are constantly changing; not solely limited to job guidance or task guidance.”

Lastly, the insight about career guidance was given by Indonesian education figure, Mohamad Surya (1988:31) who states that it is one type of guidance that seeks to help individuals in solving career problems, to obtain the best possible adjustment between abilities and their environment, to gain success and self-realization in the course of their lives. Given that description, a consideration implies that career guidance should be delivered by a professional or people who understand the theory of individual development and career theory.

The implementation of career guidance should be carried out in a structured way starting from planning, implementation, and evaluation, but for some teachers, this poses certain challenges due to the limited ability and expertise possessed. Besides, the dual tasks that must be carried out are usually quite time-consuming. It is a concern that these limitations will hinder the implementation of career guidance so that it does not run ideally and does not meet the needs of children.

Thus, if career guidance is carried out by ECE teachers, it will be better if the teachers have adequate knowledge and abilities in carrying out guidance activities based on individual development theory and career theory. In relation to the practice of career guidance in early childhood education, a study was carried out to examine the knowledge and ability of ECE teachers in delivering career guidance services for preschoolers.

Method

This research employed a descriptive-analytic method which identified the knowledge and ability of ECE teachers in delivering career guidance for preschoolers. Participants in this study were teachers who teach in some kindergartens in Serang, Banten, Indonesia. As many as 16 teachers (female n=14, male n=2) voluntarily participated in this study.

The questionnaire used in this study was a modified self-report version (with open-ended questions) based on conceptions stated by Gysbers & Henderson (2010). As the instrument partially meets the specific needs of the present study, modifications were made to find answers to the research objectives. The questionnaire consisted of five items, which each contained subcategories and requires additional responses. The items were developed from five core activities in guidance and counseling, including (1) needs assessment which includes the activity of analyzing student needs for guidance and counseling services; (2) program development which is related to the preparation of guidance and counseling service programs; (3) selection of methods/techniques/strategies that includes the process of selecting the most prospective guidance and counseling methods/techniques/strategies and conducting each step of guidance activities based on selected method; (4) content selection that involves the selection of guidance and counseling materials; and (5) accountability measures that include the evaluation of guidance and counseling service activities. Anonymity was assured, as names or other information were not used on the questionnaire. The interactive model of data analysis that included data reduction, data display, and data verification was adopted from Miles and Huberman (2002).

Findings and Discussion

Early childhood education teachers' knowledge about the implementation of guidance and counseling services in general

As stated by Notoatmodjo (2003), knowledge in the cognitive domain has six levels. The description of each level is presented below.

- a. Knowledge is interpreted as remembering a material being studied previously. Included in this level of knowledge is recalling something specific from all the material studied or stimuli that have been received.
- b. Comprehension is interpreted as an ability to explain correctly known objects and interpret the material correctly. For example, conclude and predict the objects being studied.
- c. Application is interpreted as the ability to use the material that has been studied in real (actual) situations or conditions. Application can also be defined as the application or use of laws, formulas, methods, and principles in the problem-solving cycle.
- d. Analysis is an ability to describe a material or an object into components, but they are still within an organizational structure, and there is still a relationship between one another. Analytical ability is presented by how someone describes an object, distinguishes one object from another, separates one object from another, groups objects according to categories, and so on.
- e. Synthesis refers to the ability to put or connect parts into a new whole object. This ability is related to how someone arranges, plans, summarizes, and adjusts theories or formulations that already exist.
- f. Evaluation is related to the ability to justify or evaluate a material or object. Evaluation is carried out using own criteria or existing criteria.

The six levels of knowledge become benchmarks in revealing the knowledge of early childhood educators regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling activities in general. As stated in the previous part, the guidance and counseling activities being examined covered five main areas, namely needs assessment, program development, selection of guidance and counseling methods/techniques/strategies, guidance and counseling content selection, and

accountability measures. These five areas were chosen because they are the most essential areas and are the core activities that determine the success of guidance and counseling services in the field of education (Gysbers & Henderson, 2010). Data regarding the description of ECE teachers' knowledge of the implementation of guidance and counseling activities in general (in formal education, in this case including kindergarten) were obtained through the distribution of open questionnaires and in-depth interviews with respondents. The collected data were then analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model (2002).

The results of the data analysis show a description of the knowledge of ECE teachers regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling activities at the level of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation related to the five main areas in the implementation of guidance and counseling in the formal education. The collected data imply the level at which most or on average ECE teachers demonstrate their knowledge of guidance and counseling activities in the schools where they work.

ECE teachers' knowledge about the implementation of guidance and counseling, in general, shows the comprehension level of knowledge. Most of the ECE teachers had received various materials regarding guidance and counseling services when studying at college, and they still remembered them to this day. They knew the definition of guidance, the definition of counseling, the people qualified to carry out guidance activities, the people qualified to deliver counseling activities, the definition of case referral, the definition of needs assessment, the purpose and function of needs assessment, differences in the duties of counselors and classroom teachers, various methods/techniques/strategies of guidance and counseling both based on psychology and education and things related to guidance and counseling program management.

Respondents were also able to accurately explain matters related to the implementation of guidance and counseling services in general but only limited to junior high school, high school, and college levels. They did not know about its implementation in elementary school and children with early childhood education levels. In terms of application, only a small proportion of respondents who have participated in training and preparation for institutional accreditation could apply their knowledge regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling in general to a real situation or to solve problems in real life. Most respondents only knew the theory but did not understand how it works, so they could not describe it even by just telling stories.

Likewise, at the analysis level, only a small number of respondents were able to describe matters related to the implementation of guidance and counseling services in academic, career, personal, and social areas. Most of the explanations presented are only speculations and predictions of the results of the abstraction of the knowledge previously owned by the respondents regarding guidance and counseling.

At the synthesis level, none of the respondents could explain how to draw conclusions from the five areas in the implementation of guidance and counseling services and what to do with these conclusions. What is the final result of the needs assessment activities? What is the final result of guidance program development? What is the final result of using the guidance method/technique/strategy? What is the final result of selecting guidance content? What is the final result of the evaluation of guidance service activities? What are all these results used for? are questions that remain unanswered questions in the process of collecting research data.

Evaluation can be carried out only after the entire activity process has been carried out properly. Therefore, without an understanding of what must be done, evaluation cannot be carried out. Likewise, in this case, the respondent's limited knowledge regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling services, in general, would have an impact on the respondent's ability to evaluate the things they know about the material.

After going through the verification and generalization process, the data can also be presented as an indicator of the level of knowledge of ECE teachers regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling services in general. This indicator can later be used as

a benchmark in revealing the level of knowledge of ECE teachers based on information collected from questionnaires used in this research.

Early childhood education teachers' knowledge in delivering career guidance for preschoolers

Data were obtained from the results of distributing open questionnaires and conducting interviews with respondents. The data collected were then analyzed and compared with the mapping table for the duties of teachers and counselors as in the guidelines for the implementation of guidance and counseling in the Indonesian formal education system. The comparison was made to find out things related to the implementation of guidance and counseling that teachers need to know, and things related to the implementation of guidance and counseling that are only known by counselors or are not required to be known by teachers in the practice of guidance carried out in a certain area in the formal education level.

By identifying the extent of the knowledge of ECE teachers regarding the five areas of implementation of career guidance at the early childhood level, it can be seen at what level the knowledge of ECE teachers is just knowing and understanding, or has reached the level of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Based on the data, the knowledge of ECE teachers regarding the five areas of implementation of career guidance at the early childhood level cumulatively is actually at a lower level compared to the knowledge of ECE teachers regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling in general.

This shows that ECE teachers have so far been unfamiliar with more specific work mechanisms (referring to certain service areas, in this case, the career aspect, and referring to the age range of students who are younger than teens). Some of the materials received at the lecture only revolve around the implementation of guidance and counseling at the junior high and high school levels. Most of the ECE teachers who became research respondents already knew that guidance and counseling were an inseparable part of the education process, and that guidance and counseling could only be carried out by guidance and counseling teachers. Guidance services should not be carried out only by counselors or guidance and counseling teachers but also by class teachers, homeroom teachers, school principals, community leaders, and parents/guardians of students.

Most respondents also assume that guidance and counseling activities can only be carried out in junior high schools and senior high schools, even though guidance services are intended for all ages and from various levels of education. "Guidance for All" is the underlying principle that such services are intended not only for high school students but also for elementary school students, and even children at the early ages.

Most ECE teachers already know that needs assessment activities require instruments. In junior and senior high schools, needs assessment instruments used by teachers include aspects, for example, Developmental Task Inventory, Students Problem Check List, sociometry, and so on. Meanwhile, at the early childhood education level, there is no standardized needs assessment instrument. The needs assessment instrument is somehow flexible and can be modified according to the instrument developer's interests. By referring to the guidance curriculum from ASCA (American School Counseling Association), a set of competencies is obtained in each service area, namely academic, career, personal, and social aspects which are the basis for student self-development. These competencies can be used as a reference to develop a needs assessment instrument that can be used in the process of analyzing student needs for guidance services.

Competencies related to career aspects at the kindergarten level consist of 18 items of competencies. By referring to these items, an instrument for assessing student needs for career guidance services at the early childhood education level can be drawn up. However, none of the respondents were aware of the existence of competencies related to this career aspect.

This has an impact on the area of career guidance program development. Without accurate needs assessment results, career guidance programs will be arranged sporadically and have no empirical basis. The program implemented is merely a formality that is not on target. Regarding

the area of using career guidance methods/techniques/strategies, most ECE teachers were familiar with various methods/techniques/strategies originating from the education and learning science family, such as role-playing, storytelling, group discussions, games, and projects, and so on. However, in terms of the methods/techniques/strategies that come from psychology and are psychotherapeutic in nature, the respondents were not familiar with them, let alone the methods/techniques/strategies of guidance that were commonly used to deliver career guidance and counseling services.

In the area of selection of guidance materials, most ECE teachers showed knowledge at the comprehension level. The themes, characteristics, and prerequisites of the material were more emphasized on the 'feasibility' to be taught in early childhood, instead of emphasizing whether the material was needed or not by preschoolers. Finally, in the area of evaluating career guidance activities, respondents still associated their understanding of evaluation with one type of method, namely SWOT analysis. Respondents also were not able to explain precisely how the evaluation of the activity process and activity results was carried out and how the evaluation results were used to provide better guidance and counseling services for students. Thus, it can be concluded that in delivering career guidance, ECE teachers show knowledge at the comprehension level.

Early childhood education teachers' ability in delivering career guidance for preschoolers

The description of the ability of ECE teachers in delivering guidance activities related to career aspects for early childhood is obtained based on the results of observations and surveys. In this study, the ability of ECE teachers in delivering career guidance services is divided into three, namely: (1) planning career guidance services activities; (2) implementing career guidance service activities; and (3) evaluating career guidance service activities. The table below shows the overview of ECE teachers' level of mastery of career guidance delivery to preschoolers.

Tabel 1. An overview of ECE teachers' ability in delivering career guidance for preschoolersl

No.	Ability in delivering career guidance	Mastery level	Description
1	Planning career guidance services	Expert	The teachers are able to carry out needs assessment activities (using needs assessment instruments) and use data to develop career guidance programs.
		Moderate	The teachers are able to carry out needs assessment activities (using a needs assessment instrument) but are not able to use the data to develop career guidance programs.
		Novice	The teachers are not able to carry out needs assessment activities (using needs assessment instruments) and use the data to develop career guidance programs.
2	Conducting/ delivering career guidance services	Expert	The teachers are able to develop career guidance programs and deliver appropriate career guidance services using career guidance methods/techniques/strategies that are adjusted to children's characteristics and problems.

No.	Ability in delivering career guidance	Mastery level	Description
		Moderate	The teachers are able to develop career guidance programs but are not able to deliver appropriate career guidance services using career guidance methods/techniques/strategies that are adjusted to children's characteristics and problems.
		Novice	The teachers are not able to develop career guidance programs and deliver appropriate career guidance services using career guidance methods/techniques/strategies that are adjusted to children's characteristics and problems.
3	Evaluating career guidance services	Expert	The chosen technique of evaluation is in accordance with guidance objectives. The teachers are able to process career guidance evaluation results to increase the accountability of career guidance programs in the future.
		Moderate	The chosen technique of evaluation is in accordance with guidance objectives. However, the teachers are not able to process career guidance evaluation results to increase the accountability of career guidance programs in the future.
		Novice	The chosen technique of evaluation is not in accordance with guidance objectives. The teachers are not able to process career guidance evaluation results to increase the accountability of career guidance programs in the future.

From table 1, it can be seen ECE teachers' ability in delivering career guidance for preschoolers is divided into three mastery levels. Data regarding the ability of ECE teachers in delivering career guidance for preschoolers is obtained using a description of each indicator of mastery level in observing activities. In terms of the ability to plan career guidance services, almost all respondents are still in the Low category. Meanwhile, in general, their ability to deliver career guidance service is in the Moderate category. Then, most of the respondents are in a low ability to evaluate career guidance services. Based on the previous description, the research findings are summarized as follows.

1. ECE teachers' knowledge in delivering career guidance is described in five areas, needs assessment, program development, selection of guidance and counseling methods/techniques/strategies, guidance and counseling content selection, and accountability measures.

2. Based on the generalization of research data, an adequate level of knowledge (expert level) is not found in any area, an adequate level of knowledge and ability (moderate level) is found in areas 3 and 4, while an inadequate level of knowledge and ability (novice level) is found in areas 1, 2, and 5.
3. The ability of ECE teachers in delivering career guidance is divided into three types of abilities, namely planning of career guidance services, implementation of career guidance services, and evaluation of career guidance services.
4. Regarding the ability to plan career guidance services, almost all respondents are still at the novice level. Meanwhile, the ability to implement career guidance services, most of the respondents are at the Moderate level. Then, in terms of the ability to evaluate career guidance services, most of the respondents show novice ability. By paying attention to these findings, it can be concluded that in general the knowledge and ability of ECE teachers in delivering career guidance for preschoolers is still in the Low category or Novice level. The low level of knowledge and ability can be caused by various factors. According to Notoatmodjo (2003), two factors influence a person's knowledge, namely internal and external factors. These factors are further described below.

Internal factors that affect knowledge

1. Education
Education is every effort, influence, protection, and assistance given to children aimed at maturity. In other words, education is a basic effort to shape one's personality and abilities.
2. Interest
Interest is defined as a tendency or high desire for something. With high knowledge, supported by sufficient interest, someone may behave wisely in accordance with what is expected.
3. Experience
Experience is a series of events experienced by a person at a certain time. If there is no experience at all, a person tends to have a negative attitude towards an object. To be the basis for forming attitudes, the personal experience must leave a strong impression.
4. Age
The individual's age is calculated from the time of birth to the latest birthday. The more mature the level of maturity and strength of a person will be more mature in thinking and working. In terms of public trust, someone who is more mature will be more trusted than someone who is not yet mature enough. This is a result of the experience and maturity of the soul. The older a person is, the more conducive it is to cope with the problems at hand.

External factors that influence knowledge

1. Economy
Regarding primary and secondary needs, individuals from families with good economic status are more easily fulfilled than individuals from families with low economic status. Economic conditions will affect the need for information, including secondary needs. Good economic conditions can influence a person's access to certain information, and it can certainly affect a person's knowledge of various things.
2. Information
Information can be interpreted as someone's awareness of something that provides a new cognitive foundation for the formation of attitudes towards it. Suggestive messages are carried by the information with the purpose of changing a certain attitude. This approach is usually used in mass media to raise public awareness of an innovation that affects behavior change.
3. Culture/ Environment
The culture in which a person lives and is raised has a major influence on the knowledge possessed. A culture that has a foundation of love for science will make someone in that culture like the process of gaining knowledge.

It can be concluded that by considering those internal and external factors, the level of knowledge of ECE teachers is mainly influenced by education, experience, and information factors. Educational factors greatly affect the level of knowledge of ECE teachers in carrying out career guidance activities. ECE teachers who have a bachelor's education degree in the field of early childhood education are more likely to show a higher level of knowledge to provide career guidance for preschoolers than those who do not have the degree. Moreover, teachers having bachelor's degrees in other fields also show a lack of knowledge of career guidance for preschoolers. One of the courses taught to pre-service early childhood teachers is Guidance and Counseling. Therefore, respondents graduating from the Early Childhood Education department must have received enough material regarding the five areas of implementation of guidance and counseling informal education system (Mashudi and Rusmana, 2019).

Another factor influencing the teachers' knowledge experience. The experiences of studying and participating in training on early childhood education are the factors that affect the level of knowledge. Preparing for accreditation, teacher professional development, and organizing guidance activities for early childhood are the materials taught in most training.

The last factor influencing the teachers' knowledge is information. Access to good information will also determine the high level of someone's knowledge about a thing. Some schools that are partners with universities in terms of implementing the Preservice Teacher Program or known as the Intern Teacher Program, research, and community service are more likely to have access to more up-to-date information. Besides, the availability of adequate technology such as computers, the internet, and television is also a factor that supports teachers or institutions in obtaining the up-to-date information. Teachers from schools with complete information technology facilities tend to have a higher level of knowledge regarding the implementation of career guidance activities than teachers from schools with limited information technology facilities.

Knowledge is something that comes from the five senses and experience that has been processed by the mind and arises spontaneously. Meanwhile, the nature of knowledge is spontaneous, intuitive, and subjective. Knowledge is also true because it is by the existing reality (Notoatmodjo, 2003). Thus, one's knowledge can be used as a motivation to behave and act. A series of knowledge possessed during the process of interaction with the environment produces new knowledge that can be useful for someone and others. Knowledge is a basis for doing things when finding answers to existing questions.

In Mashudi and Rusmana's research (2019), it was explained that the perspective of ECE teachers on the urgency of implementing guidance and counseling services is formed from knowledge, understanding, opinions, beliefs, and experiences related to the implementation of guidance and counseling services at the early childhood education level. The main knowledge of ECE teachers regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling services is generally obtained from what they have learned in higher education, especially from Guidance and Counseling courses taught at the university or high school where they studied. Likewise, the teachers' understanding of the implementation of guidance and counseling services is largely influenced by the knowledge gained when pursuing undergraduate education in higher education.

ECE teachers' opinions regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling services generally arise as a result of the appreciation of the experience of receiving guidance and counseling service in secondary school. Likewise, teachers' opinions regarding the image of guidance and counseling teachers who are considered as 'school police' affect their perspective on the context of the duties and responsibilities of counselors at the ECE level. The perception that Guidance and Counseling teachers are "school police" emerged because they are dealing with troublemaker students and delinquents. ECE teachers' beliefs regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling services are influenced by the success in helping to change children's behavior or solve children's problems. Most teachers believe that guidance and counseling are more curative than preventive developmental.

ECE teachers' experiences related to the implementation of guidance and counseling services are mostly personally gained when they were in high school and received services from teachers. The service provided is related to the selection of science or social studies majors in high schools and the plan to continue the study. The teachers also have vicarious experiences obtained from observing other people, for example, relatives who are guidance and counseling teachers in secondary schools. It is knowledge, understanding, opinion, belief, and experience that shape and influence the perspectives of ECE teachers on how the guidance and counseling implementation model has been carried out at the school or ECE institution where they work. The perspective built serves as ideal guidance and counseling practice to be applied within the scope of early childhood education.

A study conducted by Eremie (2015) investigated teachers' perceptions of the role of Guidance Counselors in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. A simple random sampling technique was adopted to select three hundred and seventy (370) male and female secondary school teachers from a population of five thousand three hundred school teachers. The assessment instrument, "Teacher Perception Scale on Guidance Teachers in Schools", was distributed to respondents to collect the necessary data. A statistical t-test was used to test the three null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that there was no significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the role of Guidance in Rivers State secondary schools. Therefore, the three null hypotheses were accepted.

In the study, it was stated that guidance activities in schools should refer to Frank Parson's theory which focuses on the purpose of guidance services to guide individuals in making choices of teaching and learning activities in the classroom and to prepare individuals to get into a particular world of work. Guidance counselors are tasked with helping individuals make choices in selecting and planning course options in the school environment (Eremie, 2015). The teachers who were respondents in the study were more likely to view school counselors as helping students solve problems related to socio-emotional issues while classroom teachers themselves were the ones who helped students, especially in cognitive or learning-related matters.

Studies show the importance for ECE teachers to have adequate knowledge about the implementation of guidance and counseling at the early childhood education level because it can affect their perspective and perception of the guidance activity itself (Nassar-McMillan, Karvonen, Perez, & Abrams, 2009; Agramovich, Hoskins, Gutierrez, & Bartlett, 2013; Fan, Carey, Martin, & Lijuan, 2019). Therefore, guidance and counseling activities are important things in the context of education so that in its implementation it cannot be carried out by an individual, but it requires cooperation with other implementing parties.

Several studies pointed out that teachers are the most important counselors in running an effective mentoring program. Mentoring would not be successful without their support. There are various expectations and misconceptions about the function of guidance and counseling that are understood by teachers. Reviews of various studies show that teachers view guidance and counseling as an administrative function (counselors serving as a deputy principal, and vice-principal for student affairs, or taking care of disciplinary regulatory matters). Ambiguity arises when the teacher acts as a teacher-counselor and the actual role of the counselor). Some studies show that teachers who act as counselors tend to be biased and lazy. At the same time, research has also found that teachers need a real school counselor and a general intention to cooperate (Stelzer, 2003; Ekin & Oksal, 2012).

ECE teachers cannot be blamed for the low level of knowledge and abilities related to the implementation of career guidance activities. Because the emphasis on the importance of guidance activities to be carried out at the ECE level is minimal. Policymakers need to rethink the importance of the structural position of counselors or guidance and counseling teachers at the levels of elementary and early childhood education. Gencoglu et.al (2019) stated that Counselors can provide needed psychological assistance, particularly for parental education, prevention, and development. Therefore, counselors and teachers can work together to carry out guidance activities that will have a positive impact on the development of early childhood competencies, in academic, career, personal and social aspects

Conclusion

As the world of work keeps on providing new opportunities, there are increasing necessities for career guidance at every level of education. Career development is a lifelong process that involves constant growth, change, and adaptation which requires early stimulation. Putting up the urgency of career guidance in early childhood education level, ECE teachers as the providers of guidance need to demonstrate adequate knowledge and ability in delivering career guidance. Lack of knowledge and the inability to carry out guidance activities according to applicable rules will hinder the development of children in various aspects, one of which is career development. This lack of knowledge and ability of ECE teachers is mainly influenced by education, experience, and information factors.

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