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Influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on Senior Secondary Students Academic Performance in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
This study examined influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on Senior Secondary Students Academic Performance in Rivers State. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The Population was 4598 teachers and students in senior Secondary School in 12 local government Area of Rivers State. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula (1964) which was 367 Student and teacher counselors. Data for the study were collected by means of questionnaire titled Influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on Senior Secondary Students Academic Performance. The IGCSSSSAP adopted a four point rating scale of Strongly Agreed to Strongly Disagree. Test-re-test method was used for the reliability test which yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.79. Three Hundred and sixty seven (367) Copies of questionnaire were distributed, and 341 were retrieved for analysis. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while z-test was used to test the hypotheses. The finding shows that Counsellor provides information on experiences that increases knowledge of occupation. It was concluded that Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning. Counsellor does not encourage students to visit other teachers as regard other problems. Counsellor always identifies students with special needs which require the services of referral sources. It was recommends that Guidance and counselling coordinators who also teach for long hours as well should be given limited teaching periods so that they have enough time to provide guidance services to students who need their help. Professional guidance and counselling coordinators should be introduced by Nigeria Education Service in senior schools. Governments should give incentives to individuals or schools that perform well in external examination which encourage higher academic performance of students.

Keywords: Guidance and counseling programme, Counseling Services, Information Service and academic performance

INTRODUCTION

Education is a vision of all activities that involves the learners, teachers and content to be learnt or taught. In most of these activities counselling is required to make teaching and learning experiences worthwhile. Counselling has been used to designate a wide range of procedures comprising advice giving, support in times of trouble or need, encouragement, information giving, and test interpretation. Counselling is a process by which a person is assisted to behave in a more rewarding manner. Guidance is done as an effort to manage students' time between learning time and psychological handling. Counselling guidance is carried out on a scheduled basis but remains conditional on problems that occur in the school environment. Guidance and Counseling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities and services aimed at assisting individuals to understand themselves, others, school

environment and attain abilities to adjust accordingly. As individuals develop through stages of life and educational attainment, they encounter problems, challenges and conflict situations.

These services include: student appraisal service, information service, counselling service, placement service, orientation service, referral service, follow-up, evaluation service, and research service. Appraisal service involves the use of tests and non-test instruments to collect, analyze and interpret data on students to understand themselves better. It also affords counsellors and significant others, the opportunity of having insight into the strengths and weaknesses of students. Information service is tailored towards equipping students with the necessary information in the areas of educational, vocational and personal social. These information are very important because they assist students to make wise decisions about life. Counselling service is a face to face interaction between the counsellor and the students, through which students are assisted towards overcoming obstacles to their academic, vocational, personal-social progress and other life needs. Placement service is concerned with assisting students to adjust to the next stage of development whether in school or on the job. Orientation service is designed to familiarize fresh students with their environment. It is a process of initiating an individual to a work or learning situation and of instructing him about rules, regulations and responsibilities, as an introduction to a new situation. Referral service affords the school counsellor an opportunity to refer the cases which he cannot handle to specialists like clinical psychologist, medical practitioner and others. Follow-up, evaluation service are designed to ascertain the extent to which the guidance programme previously carried out by the school is meeting the objectives for which it was established and also to monitor the progress of students in their work places.

Research service helps the school counsellor to discover relevant information that can improve students' learning and understanding. The services should be an on-going process which professional counsellors should embrace and encourage. These services constitute the core of any guidance program and should be organised to facilitate the growth and development of all students from kindergarten through post high school experiences (Erford, 2010; Erford, 2011; Neukrug, 2011). Guidance also helps to facilitate development of effective study habits, motivation, identifying learning or subject related problems, helping students to see the relevance of school years in life and for future, developing skills, right attitude and interests to help making a choice in career. Guidance and counselling , thus, promotes holistic development of every student. This shows the need for every teacher to become a 'guidance minded' teacher in the course of carrying out his/her duties with aim of making impacts in the students' lives.

There are different aspects of guidance and counselling such as family guidance and counselling, marriage guidance and counselling and pastoral guidance and counselling among others. The researcher's concern however, is on school guidance and counselling. The focus of school guidance and counselling is on three major areas namely: educational, vocational, and personal-social. Educational guidance and counselling according to Ifelunni (2013), is aimed at assisting both the students and their parents to develop educational plans that will help them plan their school work such as study habit, examination techniques and how to choose subjects, among others. According to Ifelunni, the planning is such that they benefit from their schoolwork and hence able to progress to the next level of schooling. Ifelunni (2013) also viewed vocational counselling as aiming to assist a person match his personal attributes and his background with suitable jobs and employment opportunities. Personal-social counselling according to Ifelunni (2013), takes care of the problems of the students that may not be educational or vocational such as boy-girl relationship, leisure time activities, personal appearance, social skills, home and family relationship, among others.

Academic performance refers to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies (Scortts, 2012). Grades are certainly the most well-known indicator of academic performance. Grades are the student's "score" for their classes and overall tenure. Grades are most often a tallying or average of assignment and test scores and may often be affected by factors such as attendance an instructor opinion of the student as well. According to Ward, Stocker and Murray-Ward (2006) academic performance refers to the outcome of education; the extent to which the student, teacher or institution have achieved their educational goals. Academic performance is the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate one's knowledge verbally or written on paper (Answers, 2010). Academic performance

refers to the extent to which students have achieved mastery of the objectives of the subjects they are exposed to in school. This study therefore intended to investigate the Perceived influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Counselling programmes plays a vital role in preventing educational, personal, social, mental and emotional problems. Many school's administrators are yet to embrace the programme because they do not see the benefit of appropriate counselling services. Poor academic performance among secondary school students, gives concern, this has a negative influence on the various programmes. It is a great concern for stakeholders to see students still performing poorly in their academics despite the numerous ways in which they are guided either by their teachers or parents which seems to be caused by inability of the students to follow the laid down rules and regulations. Despite the fact that, guidance and counselling programs services are made available in schools, there is still great height of poor academic performance among students. The problem of this study therefore is to determine the influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on development of personal skill of Children with Special Need in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of guidance and counselling services on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Rivers State, Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. Determine the extent which Information Service influence senior secondary school student's academic performance in Rivers State.
2. Ascertain the extent to which counselling services influence senior secondary school student's academic performance in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study;

1. To what extent does Information Service influence male and female senior secondary school students' academic performance in Rivers State?
2 To what extent does counselling services influence male and female senior secondary school students' academic performance in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of Significance

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on how Information Service influence senior secondary school student's academic performance in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on how counselling services influence senior secondary school students' academic performance in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive survey design was used to carry out this study. The comparative analysis was achieved by means of utilizing z-test statistic for the comparison of mean scores at 0.05 level of significance. While, the research questions were answered by descriptive statistics: Mean and Standard deviation.

Population and Sample of the Study

The Population of this study consists of 4598 teachers and students in senior Secondary School in 12 local government Area of Rivers State. 4466 students and 132 teachers' counselor. 367 teachers' counsellor and students using Taro Yamene formula, out of the total population of 4598 was drawn from the study.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for this investigation was A 4-point Modified Likert scale which is an interval scale-ranging from Very High Extent to Very Low Extent, with a numerical value ranging from 4 points to 1 points. The instruments that were used for this study were the questionnaire titled: Influence of Guidance and Counselling Service on Academic Performance of Senior secondary school students Questionnaire"

(IGCSAPSSSQ). The instrument has 10 (ten) items. A weighted average of 2.5 was accepted for research questions.

Validation and Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by Experts in Measurement and Evaluation in the faculty of Education, who ascertained the face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-re-test method, using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool. A reliability coefficient of 0.92 was obtained for the study

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent does Information Service influence senior secondary school students' academic performance in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on how Information Service influence senior secondary school students' academic performance in Rivers State (N = 341)

		teacher Counsellor = 132			students = 209		
S/N	**Item**	$\bar{x}$	**SD**	**Remarks**	$\bar{x}$	**SD**	**Remarks**
1	Students are provided with information on physical changes in their body	3.33	1.03	High Extent	3.19	0.91	High Extent
2	Students receive information on the best way to develop friendship with peers and improve their academic performance	3.25	0.85	High Extent	3.19	0.87	Moderate Extent
3	Students are helped to become aware of the many occupations to consider after leaving school	3.33	0.58	High Extent	3.11	0.89	Moderate Extent
4	Provision of information on existing job vacancies	3.67	0.68	Very High Extent	2.99	1.00	Moderate Extent
5	Provision of information regarding financial aid and scholarship.	3.64	0.71	Very High Extent	3.02	1.06	High Extent
	Grand Mean & SD =	**3.444**	**0.77**		**3.1**	**0.946**	

Source: Field Survey, (2021)

Table 1 showed that all the items were accepted. The respondents agreed that Students were provided with information on physical changes in their body. Students are helped to become aware of the many occupations to consider after leaving school. The confirmation was made with a grand mean of 3.444 and 0.77 while standard deviation of 3.1 and 0.946 for both teachers Counsellor and students.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does counselling services influence Senior secondary school students academic performance in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on how counselling services influence Senior secondary school students academic performance in Rivers State (N = 341).

		teacher Counsellor = 132			students = 209		
S/N	**Item**	$\bar{x}$	**SD**	**Remarks**	$\bar{x}$	**SD**	**Remarks**
1	Counsellor assists students to develop effective interpersonal relationship skills .	3.73	0.60	Very High Extent	3.20	1.00	High Extent
2	Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning and improve their performance.	3.09	1.02	Moderate Extent	3.38	0.84	High Extent
3	Counsellor assists students to develop high aspirations towards their academic performance.	3.10	1.23	Moderate Extent	3.11	0.96	Moderate Extent
4	Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning.	3.41	0.89	High Extent	3.17	0.97	High Extent
5	Students are allowed voluntary visits to counselor and improve their academic performance	3.26	1.17	High Extent	2.99	1.05	Moderate Extent
	Grand Mean & SD =	3.318	**0.982**		**3.17**	**0.964**	

Source: Field Survey, (2021)

Table 2 showed that all the items were accepted. The respondents agreed that Counsellor assists students to develop effective interpersonal relationship skills. Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning. Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning. The confirmation was made with a grand mean of 3.318 and 3.17 and standard deviation of 0.982 and 0.964 as responses of the respondents on both teachers Counsellor and students.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion in this study was done according to the findings of this study. Counsellor introduces new treatment techniques. Students are provided with information on physical changes in their body. Students are helped to become aware of the many occupations to consider after leaving school.

This finding is in agreement with the view of Alabi, (2006) who depicts that the school guidance counsellor provides the students with accurate information on educational, vocational and personal social opportunities facts that are available in order to assist the students in making informed decision and choices. Information service is a vital aspect of guidance and counselling now that the society is growing complex. In agreement with the views of Omeje (2007) opined that Information Service is creating awareness, letting people know of the existence of material or non-material things. Information services have the aim of providing students with better knowledge of educational, vocational and social opportunities that can be used to make better and well informed decisions.

Counsellor assists students to develop effective interpersonal relationship skills. Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning. Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning. This finding is in agreement with the view of Okeke (2003) opined that counselling services is a personalized interaction between the client experiencing a problem and the counsellor who tries to help. Emphasis here is on making the individual to have better understanding of

himself and his world. In agreement with the view of Denga (2001) states that counselling services are regarded as the heart of guidance and counselling since it provides a forum for interaction, a link between the client and the counsellor. Counselling services are very critical for the students because they need it to solve career, study, personal and social problems they encounter in life. Counselling Service is a face to face interaction between the counsellor and the client who has a challenge. Counselling in schools is aimed at assisting the students to live a more productive life and self-satisfying life style.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concludes Counsellor provides information on experiences that increases knowledge of occupation. Counsellor educates students on how to form successful cooperatives after school. Students are provided with information on physical changes in their body. Students are helped to become aware of the many occupations to consider after leaving school. Counsellor helps students discover occupations that suit their abilities through personality traits. Guidance and counselling is very important and that it helps students and when properly streamlined would help curb some of the problems they face in schools. To enhance and improve guidance and counselling services in the schools, more needs to be done to ensure that guidance and counselling units are properly organised to encourage students to patronize their services

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study and conclusion made, the following recommendations were put forward by the researcher:

1. Guidance and counselling coordinators who also teach for long hours as well should be given limited teaching periods so that they have enough time to provide guidance services to students who need their help.
2. Professional guidance and counselling coordinators should be introduced by Nigeria Education Service in senior schools.

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