



Influence of Guidance and Counseling Programme on Academic Performance of Public Secondary School Students in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the Influence of guidance and counseling Programme on academic Performance of Public Secondary School Students in Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guide the study. Survey research design was used for the study. The population of Four Thousand Four Hundred and Sixty three (4,463) Principal, teacher counselor, SS1 students. The sample size of 20 percent with a total of 893 respondents was studied. The instrument used was Guidance and Counseling services on Academic Performance Questionnaire (GCPAPQ) of A 4-Point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Test-re-test method was used for the reliability test which yielded reliability co-efficient 0.92. The mean and standard deviation were used in analyzing the research questions, while the z-test was used in testing the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that guidance and counselling when properly streamlined would help curb some of the problems students face in schools. The challenges the students face include inability to manage their time, peers influence, family factors, poor study habits and lack of information on the part of guidance and counselling officers and non-existence of counselling units in some schools. To enhance and improve guidance and counselling services in the school, more needs to be done to ensure that guidance and counselling is properly accepted and patronised by students. It was therefore recommended that Professional guidance and counselling coordinators should be introduced by Nigeria Education Service in senior high schools. Governments should give incentives to individuals or schools that perform well in external examination which encourage higher academic performance of students. Parents should ensure that their wards are exposed to guidance and counselling services for greater academic Performance.

Keywords: Guidance and Counselling, counseling services, Placement service and Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

Education is regarded as the bedrock of any national development and the issue of technological application in teaching and learning is considered a priority for other resource areas to tap into. According to Adeyemi and Adu (2010), it is widely accepted that education is one of the leading instruments for promoting economic development as it encompasses some processes individuals go through to help them develop and utilize their potentials. Further, Okeke (2014) points out that, through education, individuals acquire knowledge, skills and attitude that are necessary for effective living. This is the reason why in all modern nations, investment in education of the youth is considered most vital.

Guidance plays a vital role in removing the educational, personal, social, mental, emotional and other similar problems of the students. Guidance as a term refers to a broad area of educational activities and services aimed at assisting individuals in making and carrying out adequate plans leading to achievement of desired life, Gibson, 2008. It is meant to equip the individual (student) with knowledge and techniques that will enable him or her to identify and find ways of anticipating and solving problems. 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 counseling, 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. Counselling is the skilled and principled use of relationships that self-knowledge, emotional acceptance lead to personal growth. It is more concerned with addressing and resolving specific problems such as making decisions, coping with crises, working through feelings and inner conflicts or improving relationships with others. It is a process in which the helper expresses care and concern towards the person with a problem so as to facilitate that person's personal growth and positive change through self-understanding.

Guidance and counselling is concerned with individuals' behavioral processes. However, the two terms can be looked at differently. Many authors have defined counselling differently though they all agreed on some basic facts. Kiriswa (1988), renowned counsellor defines counselling as an enabling process designed to help an individual come to terms with his or her life as it is, and ultimately reach a greater maturity through learning to take responsibility and to make informed decisions for self. 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 individuals also need to develop value systems, make decisions, set goals and work towards them. All these cannot be achieved without self-understanding and decision-making skills, which are not innate, but need to be developed. The need to address these challenges and to promote educational success and healthy life therefore, call for exposure to guidance and counselling programs by individuals/students.

Guidance and counselling is therefore designed to help individuals/students in their different problems and concerns, so that they grow up well-adjusted individuals capable not only of living productive lives, but are also prepared to contribute their quota to the development of their society. Gibson, 2008 states that Guidance and counselling services prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the results of their choices. 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 primary mission of a school's guidance and counselling program is to provide a broad spectrum of personnel services to the students. Denga (2011), referred to these services as "cluster of formalised educational services designed by the school to assist students to achieve self-knowledge or self-understanding which is necessary for them to attain the fullest self-development and self-realization of their potential". 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).

Academic performance refers to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies (Scott's, 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. According to (Aremu and Sokan 2003) Academic performance has been observed in school subjects especially mathematic and English language among secondary school students. The blame for poor academic performance among secondary school students could be attributable to a variety of factors such as student inability to manage their time, peers influence, family factors and the likes. Parents, teachers, curriculum, experts and evaluators have expressed considerable concern over the deteriorating students' performance in public secondary schools. Guidance is a rudimentary ingredient that plays a crucial role in school system and insists on upholding the social and moral values of students. It is intended to suppress, control and redirect behavior. This study therefore intended to investigate the influence of Guidance and Counseling Programme on Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Guidance and Counselling as a concept has existed since the beginning of human society. Guidance and counselling programmes in educational institutions are designed to provide professional relationships between counsellors and students and intended to guide, direct and assist students to solve their problems as well as develop their potentialities. Poor academic performances 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 counseling 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 influence of Guidance and Counseling Programme on Academic Performance of public Secondary schools Students in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the Influence of Guidance and Counseling Programme on Academic Performance of public Secondary schools Students in Rivers State, Nigeria, Specially, the objectives were to:

1. ascertain the extent to which counseling services influence male and female secondary schools students on their academic performance.
2. Determine the extent which Placement service influence male and female secondary schools students on their academic performance.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study;

1. To what extent does counseling services influence male and female secondary schools students on their academic performance?
2. To what extent does Placement service influence male and female secondary schools students on their academic performance?

Hypotheses

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

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference between counseling services and male and female secondary schools students on their academic performance.
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference between Placement service and male and female secondary schools students on their academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was used in conducting the study. The study was carried out in four local Government in Rivers State. The Population of this study consists of Four Thousand Four Hundred and Sixty three (4,463) Principal, teacher counselor, SS1 students in four selected Local Government in Rivers State. The sample for this study consisted of 20 percent of the total population making a total of 893 drawn from the selected secondary school under study. Simple Random Sampling Techniques was used in this study. The used for this study was self structured 10 item questionnaire, titled : Guidance and Counseling Programme and Academic performance Questionnaire. The researcher adopted a- four point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. To validate the instrument, the researcher adopted the face and content validity. The instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor and two experts in the Department of Educational Measurement and Evaluation. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, the instrument was administered to twenty (20) undergraduate students of Niger Delta University in Bayelsa State who were not part of the population. Test-re-test method was used through the Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula. The computation yielded correlation coefficient of 0.92. This result revealed that the instrument that was employed in this study is reliable. This result revealed that the instrument was reliable for the study. For the data Analysis Mean and Standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. While z-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significance level.

RESULTS

The results obtained from the respondents is shown below:

Research Question 1: *To what extent does counselling services influence academic performance of secondary schools students?*

Table 1: mean responses on counselling services influence academic performance of secondary schools students (N=788)

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	S.D	Decision
1 Counsellor assists students to develop effective interpersonal relationship skills.	306	456	19	7	3.35	0.57	Accept
2 Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning.	197	543	32	16	3.17	0.58	Accept
3 Counsellor assists students to develop high aspirations towards their academic pursuits.	37	50	526	175	1.94	0.68	Reject
4 Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning.	29	53	522	184	1.91	0.66	Reject
5 Students are allowed voluntary visits to counsellor	217	511	47	13	3.18	0.60	Accept
	868	1533	94	13			
Grand mean					2.71		

The response in Table 4.1 on research question three revealed that item 11 had a mean score of 3.35 and standard deviation of 0.57, item 12 had a mean score of 3.17 and standard deviation of 0.58, and item 15 had a mean score of 3.18 and standard deviation of 0.60 which are all above the range mean of 2.50, hence they were accepted. While statements item 13 had mean and standard deviation scores of 1.94 and 0.68, item 14 had mean and standard deviation scores of 1.91 and 0.66, which informs their being rejected. The results indicates that Counsellor encourages students to have positive attitude towards learning. With a grand mean of 2.71, it can be reported that Guidance helps students and other people in the school to feel happy about themselves.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does Placement services influence academic performance of secondary school student?*

Table 2: mean responses on the Placement services influence academic performance of secondary school student (N=788)

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Total	\bar{X}	S.D	Decision
6	Counsellor provides information on experiences that increases knowledge of occupation	273	426	52	37	788	3.19	0.75	Accept
		1092	1278	104	37	2511			
7	Counselor assists students to enroll in the most appropriate academic course work.	312	392	72	12	788	3.27	0.68	Accept
		1248	1176	144	12	2580			
	Counsellor educates students on how to form successful cooperatives after school	297	407	68	16	788	3.25	0.69	Accept
		1188	1221	136	16	2561			
9	Provision of information in the selection of institution of higher learning	187	499	73	29	788	3.07	0.68	Accept
		748	1497	146	29	2420			
10	New students are not assisted in any way in the choice of subjects.	212	335	182	59	788	2.89	0.88	Accept
		848	1005	364	59	2276			
Grand mean							3.13		

The responses in Table 4.2 on research question two revealed that all items are above the criterion mean of 2.50 as follows, item 16 had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.19 and 0.75, items 17 had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.27 and 0.68, item 18 had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.25 and 0.69, item 19 had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.07 and 0.68, while item 20 had mean and standard deviation scores of 2.89 and 0.88, hence all statements were accepted. The results indicates that Counsellor provides information on experiences that increases knowledge of occupation. Counsellor educates students on how to form successful cooperatives after school.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between Counseling *services and* academic performance of secondary school students

Table 3: z test analysis on Counseling services do not significantly influence academic performance of secondary school students

Schools	N	Mean	Std. Dev	DF	z-cal	z-cri	α	Remark
Male	394	2.24	1.20	786	-2.80	1.96	0.05	Rejected
Female	394	2.66	1.08					

The Table 3 above presents the z-test analysis of the significant difference in the mean ratings of responses from respondents in public (Government) schools in Port Harcourt city Local Government Area. The mean and standard deviations of the responses from respondents in Public secondary school students was (2.24) 1.20 and that of the Principals and counsellor was (2.66)1.08. From the table 4.8, it is indicated that the calculated t-value is -2.80 at 368 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant since

the calculated is less than the t-calculated, the null hypothesis will Rejected stating that there is no significant difference between in the mean ratings of Public secondary school students and Principals and counsellor based on the influence counseling services and academic performance of secondary school students

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between Placement service and Academic Performance of public Secondary schools Students in Rivers State.

Table 4: The z-test analysis of the mean and standard deviation on the Placement service do not significantly influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State

Variables	N	\bar{X}	STD	Std Error	df	t-crit	t-cal	P	decision
Male	394	7.2	0.83	0.6572					
					786	1.96	2.78	0.05	rejected
Female	394	4.2	0.85	0.6134					

The data in table 4.5 revealed that the calculated Z-test value of male student and female students was 2.78, while the critical t-value was 1.96 at a degree of freedom of 198 at 0.05 significant levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there was no significant different of male and female students on the Placement service and Academic Performance of public Secondary schools Students in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion in this study was done according to the findings of this study. Findings from table two which was for research question one showed that appraisal services according to respondents revealed that counsellors help students discover occupations that suit students' abilities through personality traits; test are conducted before promotion to the next class; and that school records of students are well kept for further use. The findings supports the view of Okeke (2003) who stated that appraisal services of guidance and counselling affords the counsellors the opportunity of having insight into the strength and weakness of students. In line with the view of Okeke, (2003). Opined that Appraisal services involves the use of tests and non-test instrument to collect, analyze and interpret data for students to understand themselves better. It also affords counsellors and significant others the opportunity of having insight into the strength and weakness of students.

Based on the findings from research question two indicated that Referral Services does not imply the helper might have failed, but signifies strength on the part of the helper, who recognizes his limitations, and explores opportunities to maximize the help he/she can offer. The professional should therefore, be well informed about referral services, which include social workers, doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, priests and the police among others. In agreement with the view of Idowu (2004) opined that Referral Service is the transferring a client to another professional counsellor or agency where their problem can be appropriately handled. These services are the fundamental basis of counselling programmes. In line with the view of UNESCO, 1990 opined that 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. Referral Services some problems and concerns are beyond the capability of the school counsellor or guidance teacher, it is important to establish a referral network.

CONCLUSIONS

From the data analysis and findings, conclusions are drawn as follows: Guidance and counselling is a learning-oriented process, which occurs usually in an interactive relationship, with the aim of helping a person learn more about the self, and to use such understanding to enable the person to become an effective member of society. Counselling is a process by means of which the helper expresses care and

concern towards the person with a problem, and facilitates that person's personal growth and brings about change through self-knowledge. Counselling is a relationship between a concerned person and a person with a need. This relationship is usually person-to-person, although sometimes it may involve more than two people. It is designed to help people to understand and clarify their views, and learn how to reach their self-determined goals through meaningful, well-informed choices, and through the resolution of emotional or interpersonal problems

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the study recommendations that:

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
3. Guidance counsellors in public secondary schools in Rivers State should be encouraged to go for in service training, workshops, seminars and conferences to update their knowledge on current trends and innovations in their area of service. This will equip them with essential skills in achieving the programme stated objectives

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