

An investigation into the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students of Federal College of Education, Zaria: Implication for College Counsellors

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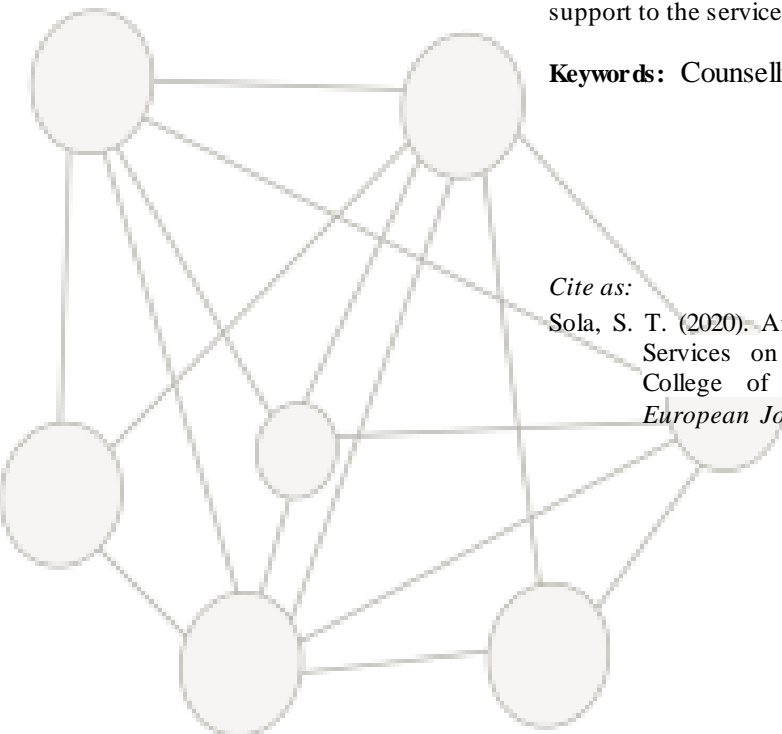
Abstract

The main thrust of this study was to investigate into the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students of Federal College of Education, Zaria. Descriptive research design was employed for the study. The population comprised all the female students in Federal College of Education, Zaria. Two hundred (200) female students were selected through simple random sampling from five out of seven schools in the college. Using researcher's designed questionnaire titled Guidance and Counselling Services and Psychosocial Behaviour Questionnaire (GUCPBEQ) as the instrument for data collection, the instrument was validated by an expert from the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Ahmadu Bello University and an expert in Measurement and Evaluation from the Federal College of Education, Zaria which was pilot tested using test-re-test method. The data obtained were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) which yielded coefficient of 0.72 to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. Mean and Standard deviation were used in analyzing data for the study. The findings of the study revealed that different Guidance and Counselling services are being offered in the College and that the programmes have benefited female students a lot in their psychosocial behaviour. The paper recommended that counsellors in the College should intensify more efforts in the organization and delivery of Guidance and Counselling services and that the management of the College should give more support to the services among others.

Keywords: Counselling, guidance, psychosocial behavior

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INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

According to Tambuwal (2010), Guidance means to direct, pilot, manage, steer, aid, assist, lead and interact; while Counselling can be seen as the process by which a person with problems is helped by a professional counsellor to voluntarily change his behaviour, clarify his attitude, ideas and goals so that his problems may be solved. From the two definitions, guidance is a combination of services, while counselling is just one service under guidance.

Lunenburg (2011) identified the roles of the counsellors in order to promote personal growth and to prepare students to become motivated workers and responsible citizens. Educators recognize that in addition to intellectual challenges, students encounter personal, social, educational, and career challenges. School guidance and counselling programmes need to address these challenges and to promote educational success.

School counsellors provide counselling programmes in three critical areas: academic, personal/social, and career. Their services and programmes help students resolve emotional, social or behavioural problems and help them develop a clearer focus or sense of direction. Effective counselling programmes are important to the school climate and a crucial element in improving student achievements.

To effectively achieve this objective, some services have to be rendered efficiently. Some of these services include the following as given by Adebowale (2012):

- i. **Orientation service:** Students who are newly admitted into a school need advice and guidance to familiarize with a new environment. There is lots of information to familiarize, a new student on his/her arrival in a new school. The student needs to know the rules and regulations of the school, the school layout, how to locate each room, office and other facilities. Generally, he has to know his way within the school compound.
- ii. **Appraisal service:** Personal records of the child are to be written down in the cumulative folder. The cumulative records apply to all records that make provision for the accumulation of the significant and comprehensive information about an individual student over a period of years for which he is in the school.
- iii. **Information service:** Information is not stable there are changes from time to time. There is need therefore for the counsellor to provide and be a source of information for educational and vocational guidance, information about various institutions of higher learning and the courses available in them.
- iv. **Counselling service:** Counselling service includes the client to understand himself better. Counselling involves something more than a solution to an immediate problem. Counselling itself is supposed to maintain a personal stability interview of repeated challenges and repeated changes.
- v. **Placement service:** Placement service deals with appointing a student into an office in a company or hospital to work. A confidential report is usually written by the counsellor to the manager about the student indicating his confidence in the student.

- vi. **Follow up service:** Follow up means monitoring drop-out or a graduate of the school. The counsellor will have to see the result of the counselling after the counselee must have left the school or counselling sessions.
- vii. **Referral services:** When a student is proving difficult, there is the need to refer him elsewhere. If the problem is beyond the counsellor's ability, there is need to make a referral. The counsellor needs to have a list of resource persons that will be useful for the clients, for example, Doctors, Lawyers and so on. There should be telephone facilities in order to reach the resource persons easily. Even when there is no client to refer, there is the need for the counsellor to renew the relationships with the resource persons.
- viii. **Liaison with the community:** Guidance personnel can also help the administration in providing liaison between the school and the local community. As a result of counsellor's interaction with the parents, employers, government official, private humanitarian organization and so on, counsellors occupy a vantage position in interpreting the entire school programmes to these various groups as well as the community in general.

According to Cheek, Bradley, Reynolds and Coy (2002) School counselling interventions have reported success for helping students reduce test anxiety. School counsellors in collaborative efforts can implement both systemic and programmatic changes in schools and communities to prevent students from dropping out of school (Standard, 2003). Studies on high school attrition indicated that preventive counselling, occurring before students are in crisis, reduces the risk of these students dropping out later. This is because Counselling decreases classroom disturbances. Counseling services support teachers in the classroom and enable teachers to provide quality instruction designed to assist students in achieving high standards. Students in schools that provide counselling services indicated that their classes were less likely to be interrupted by other students, and that their peers behaved better in school. . After removing the variables of school enrollment size, socioeconomic status, and percentage of minority students in attendance, positive program effects were identifiable. Results highlight the important roles school counselors play in promoting the central educational goals of their schools and support a comprehensive guidance program focus for university counseling faculty who train school counselors.

Bemak and Cornely (2002) observed that school counsellors help connect the family as a whole to the educational process. School counselling programmes have significant influence on discipline problems. Baker and Gerler reported that students who participated in a school counselling programmes had significantly less inappropriate behaviours and more positive attitudes toward school than those students who did not participate in the programme. Another study reported that group counseling provided by school counsellors significantly decreased participants' aggressive and hostile behaviors (Baker and Gerler, 2001)). Research indicates that school counsellors are effective in teaching social skills Students who have access to counselling programmes reported being more positive and having greater feelings of belonging and safety in their schools.

From the above discourse, it has been revealed that there is dearth of study that has examined the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students. Therefore, this study examined the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial

Behaviour of female students with in Federal College of Education, Zaria: Implication for College Counsellors.

Statement of the problem

Academic accomplishment is one of the important aims of education. It is a critical factor in life as it is groundwork to ambition and advancement. College students who are refused by their companions make academic problems. Challenges faced by students in tertiary institutions necessitate the need for repackaging their personality. The challenges may be educational, vocational or personal social. Such challenges will impact significantly on the students' psychosocial behaviour. Better academic achievements and extracurricular activities can help in the prevention of negative behaviours, better adolescents' performances, future well-being and success. Therefore it is important to examine the roles which Guidance and Counselling Programmes may have on the psychosocial behaviour in our colleges.

Objectives of the study

The study investigates into the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students. Specifically, the study intends to find out:

- i. The Guidance and Counselling Services being offered in the College.
- ii. The roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students.

Research Questions

To be focused on the study, two research questions were formulated for the study thus:

- i. What are the Guidance and Counselling Services being offered in the College?
- ii. What are the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students?

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study since a sampled opinion was needed to warrant generalization of the findings. The population comprised all the female students in Federal College of Education, Zaria. Two hundred (200) female students were selected through simple random sampling from five out of seven schools in the college.

The study used researcher's designed questionnaire titled Guidance and Counselling Services and Psychosocial Behaviour Questionnaire (GUCPBEQ) as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of three sections A, B and C. Section A contained demographic information about the respondents such as School in the College, Course Combination, Level of study. Section B of the instrument consisted of ten (10) items on various Guidance and Counselling programmes being offered in the College. Responses were based on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1) while Section C contained ten

items on the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students of Federal College of Education, Zaria. Copies of the questionnaires were given to an expert from the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Ahmadu Bello University and an expert in Measurement and Evaluation from Federal College of Education, Zaria. With their inputs, the experts agreed that the instrument measured what it purported to measure. The instrument was pilot tested using test-retest method by administering the questionnaire to twenty female students who was not part of the selected sample on two different occasions at two weeks interval. Data obtained were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). Coefficient of 0.72 was obtained indicating high coefficient value and a pointer to the reliability of the instrument. The instruments were administered to the respondents by the researcher with the assistance of other lecturers in the College.

Data Analysis

Data collected gathered from the questionnaires subjected to descriptive statistics. The research questions were answered using mean scores and Standard Deviations of the respondents. In the analysis, a cutoff point of 2.50 was an acceptance of an item while anything less than 2.5 indicated rejection of the item as a Guidance and Counselling Services being offered in the College or a role of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students in the college.

RESULTS

Table 1: Mean scores and Standard Deviations of respondents on the Guidance and Counselling Services being offered in the College

S/N	Item statement	Mean	S.D	Decision
1	I have been offered one on one counselling in the College	3.49	0.52	Accept
2	I was referred to another professional by the counsellor for further assistance	2.38	1.15	Reject
3	My issue was diagnosed by the counsellor through the use of psychological tests.	2.56	0.98	Accept
4	Orientation programme is usually organized by counselling unit for new intakes	3.45	0.50	Accept
5	Counsellors in the college sometimes serve as Public Relation Officers	2.27	1.21	Reject
6	Counsellors in the college are involved in the placement of students into courses	2.82	0.72	Accept
7	The counsellors use to observe the result of the counselling after the counselee must have left the programme	3.18	0.57	Accept
8	Counsellors are sources of information in the College	2.55	0.78	Accept
9	Counsellors keep record of every student in the College	2.12	0.18	Reject
10	Counsellors do liaise with parents of their students	2.82	0.83	Accept
Grand Mean= 2.76				

The students used for the study agreed on most of the items in the instrument as Guidance and Counselling Services being offered in the College having scored 2.50 and above on the items and with the grand mean at 2.77. However, they disagreed with item 2 as to referred to another professional by the counsellor for further assistance. Other items disagreed with as Guidance and Counselling Services being offered in the College were 5 and 9.

Table 2: Mean scores and standard deviations of respondents on the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students in the College.

S/N	Item statement	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	Guidance and counselling programmes make one to be creative	3.00	1.41	Positive impact
2	I am emotionally stable through the assistance of Guidance and Counselling programme of the college	3.67	0.47	Positive impact
3	Providing regular opportunities for hands-on experimentation, problem solving, discussion and collaborative work.	4.00	0.00	Positive impact
4	Guidance and counselling programmes have assisted individuals to identify their special aptitudes and abilities and to make realistic choices	3.33	0.47	Positive impact
5	Guidance and counselling programmes have assisted students to cope with and alleviate personal and emotional problems	2.67	1.24	Positive impact
6	Behavioural maladjustments as a result of influence from the peer groups are being reduced due to Guidance and counselling programmes.	2.00	1.41	No impact
7	Students learn how to live in peace and harmony with others in the school community through Guidance and Counselling programme.	2.67	1.24	Positive impact
8	Guidance and counselling programmes make me keeping an open mind with colleagues and friends	3.00	1.41	Positive impact
9	Counsellors are promoting personal growth and are preparing students to become motivated workers and responsible citizens.	2.67	1.24	Positive impact
10	Being encouraged to share ideas with others and to talk about issues is as a result of Guidance and counselling programmes.	1.33	0.47	No impact

Grand Mean= 2.83

In table 2 above, eight out of ten item statements were accepted as roles of Guidance and Counselling Services which have positive impact on the Psychosocial Behaviour of female students in the College because their mean scores were above 2.50. However, the mean scores

for items 6 and 10 were below the acceptable mean and were thus rejected as having no impact on the Psychosocial Behaviour of female students in the College.

DISCUSSION

Research question one sought to find out Guidance and Counselling Services being offered in the College. The result showed that the students accepted that they are been offered one on one counselling in the College (individual counselling), their issues are being diagnosed by the counsellor through the use of psychological tests, that Orientation programme is usually organized by counselling unit for new intakes, Counsellors in the college are involved in the placement of students into courses, that counsellors use to observe the result of the counselling after the counselee must have left the programme (follow up), that Counsellors are sources of information in the College and that Counsellors do liaise with parents of their students.

However, the respondents disagree that counsellors do refer clients to another professional for further assistance. They equally rejected the statements that Counsellors in the college sometimes serve as Public Relation Officers and that Counsellors keep record of every student in the College.

Research question two sought to know the roles of Guidance and Counselling Services on Psychosocial Behaviour of female students. Responses from the students shown that Guidance and Counselling Services have positive impacts in their lives by making them to be creative, making them to be emotionally stable, provided them with regular opportunities for hands-on experimentation, problem solving, discussion and collaborative work, assisted them to identify their special aptitudes and abilities and to make realistic choices and that they have assisted them to cope with and alleviate personal and emotional problems. Other positive impacts include making them to learn how to live in peace and harmony with others in the school community, made them to keep an open mind with colleagues and friends and that Guidance and Counselling programmes are promoting personal growth and are preparing students to become motivated workers and responsible citizens.

However, respondents believed that Guidance and Counselling programmes do not have impacts in the reduction of Behavioural maladjustments in the college and that being encouraged to share ideas with others and to talk about issues is not as a result of Guidance and counselling programmes.

CONCLUSION and COUNSELLING IMPLICATION

It's obvious that different Guidance and counselling programmes are ongoing in Federal College of Education, Zaria especially for female students. In addition the services being rendered by the counsellors in the College are yielding great impacts in the psychosocial lives of the female students. The implication of this conclusion to counselling profession is that counsellors should be up and doing in assisting students to cope with challenges being faced due to in the pursuit of

their academic career. Their intervention will reduce the effects of the challenges being faced in their education to the barest minimum if not completely eradicated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- i. More Guidance and Counselling programmes should be floated and supported by the management of the College.
- ii. Students should be encouraged to participate more in various Guidance and counselling programmes available in the College in order to enjoy the benefits to the fullest.

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