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Counseling Seeking Behavior Prediction: Role of School Connectedness, Emotional intelligence and academic adjustment in a Nigerian Polytechnic

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Abstract

The thrust of this investigation was determination of School Connectedness, Emotional Intelligence and Academic Adjustment as predictors of Counseling Seeking Behavior in a Nigerian Polytechnic. Four research questions cum null hypotheses guided the study. This research adapted correlational research strategy. The target population consisted of all students enrolled at Kaduna Polytechnic's in the 2023/2024 session in various academic programs, and a sample size of 300 drawn from six College units using stratified random selection approach. The data collection tools are structured questionnaires adapted from similar researches consisting of parts namely Counseling Seeking Behavior scale (7 items), Students Campus Connectedness Scale (44 items), Emotional Intelligence (37 items) and Students Adjustment scale (23 items) rated on Likert scale pattern all producing high internal consistency reliabilities determined by Cronbach alpha methods. The researcher gathered data personally during lessons and analyzed it using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS. The findings are: Counseling Seeking Behavior and School Connectedness of Kaduna polytechnic students was low and not encouraging, while academic adjustment is indeed very high and interesting. Emotional intelligence is not significant and very low. There is significant and positive relationship between Counseling Seeking Behavior and School Connectedness and Emotional Intelligence, while negative relationships occurred with Academic Adjustment. Recommendations were suggested based on the research findings among which are the Polytechnic Management should sensitize the students on the availability of counseling services and facilities in the institution.

Keywords

School connectedness, Emotional intelligence, academic adjustment, Polytechnic students, counseling seeking behavior

Introduction

Tertiary education students are increasingly encountering a multitude of similar problems in their quest for better opportunities. Several psychological issues need a very effective and efficient response, such as the provision of advice and counselling services. Scholars have provided many definitions for counselling. Ejionueme (2010) defines counselling as a vital process that focuses on students' behavioral contents, moral capacity, and social tolerance. Whitman, C. N., & Han (2017) emphasize the importance of counselling in providing insights into working knowledge, skills, attitudes, and other variables. Therefore, it is essential to assist young individuals, such as students, in cultivating discipline and developing the skills to navigate the daily obstacles and complexities they encounter in their constantly evolving educational setting. This includes fostering self-awareness and comprehending their academic, social, and physical surroundings.

Expanding on this claim, McCammon et al. (2018) describes it as a professional connection that enables a wide range of people, families, and groups to achieve their mental health, wellness, education, and career objectives. Counselling may be defined as a professional association between a proficient counsellor and a pupil. The connection may also include a group of individuals with the purpose of comprehending and elucidating their perspectives and life experiences, in order to achieve their self-defined objectives via informed decision-making and by resolving emotional and interpersonal challenges. Hwang & Chien (2022) provided a definition of counselling as an educational service aimed at assisting students in resolving their academic problems. The aid provided is not just restricted to educational obstacles, but also encompasses occupational, personal-social, recreational, and emotional issues. To put it differently, counselling serves a crucial role in managing or preventing emotional, educational, social, personal, and other associated challenges among students. Undoubtedly, the conduct of the pupils may be effectively regulated by a sequence of counselling sessions.

Counselling seeking behaviour refers to the inclination of a student to seek assistance from a qualified counsellor when faced with complex issues. Therefore, in the context of this inquiry, counselling seeking behaviour may be defined as the combined answer of each student to the questionnaire questions included in the scale. It refers to the good signs of a student's answers when faced with specific obstacles and their efforts to find solutions to the issues. Engaging in counselling seeking behaviour improves comprehension of a person's whole state of being, reduces ambiguity, and enhances the degree of accuracy and coherence within the individual. An individual student's good well-being is determined by their behavioural style. Counselling seeking behaviour refers to the proactive actions taken by students to seek assistance from a competent counsellor on difficulties, problems, and challenges that might negatively impact their academic success and personal growth.

Students get expert counselling to modify or improve any maladaptive behaviour and inclinations. When counselling services are offered, they assist students in developing the skills necessary to take on greater roles and responsibilities for their decisions, as well as enhancing their capacity to comprehend and embrace the consequences of their choices. Cakici (2017) argued that counselling policies seek to provide students with the necessary skills to navigate obstacles inside and outside of the school system. Counselling is a method of supporting pupils in developing self-awareness and enabling them to make informed choices.

Anecdotal evidence has shown a rise in the number of students who are experiencing physical, social, intellectual, and psychological difficulties as a result of the many hurdles they encounter. Seeking counselling might perhaps be a solution to these issues. An effective institution is essential for the organization, coordination, and implementation of any activity inside an organization, including counselling services. Bush (2020) argues that effective administration is crucial for any educational institution to adequately educate students for productive integration into society. According to Beare (2018), management is very important and essential in the context of schools as organizations.

School Connectedness Defined

The key factors for successful school administration, as identified by Azizi et al. (2021), include a robust communication network, access to suitable resources, positive human interactions, a conducive school atmosphere, and strong connectivity, among other elements. A conducive school atmosphere fosters a sense of school connection. Connectedness refers to an individual's perspective of their own surroundings and their emotional attachment to other people, activities, and the organization they are a part of, such as a school (Karacher, 2015). Karacher suggests that individuals who have a feeling of connectedness and belonging with others also develop a strong appreciation for the connections and social structures that foster this sense of belonging and connectedness.

School connection refers to the process of connecting individuals within an educational setting, namely pupils, in order to foster a culture of organizational learning (Stoll & Kools, 2017). Jorgenson et al. (2018) defines school connection as an academic setting where students perceive that the adults in the school are invested in their learning and value them as individuals, thereby providing evidence to support this claim. An interconnected educational environment also enhances the probability of achieving academic achievement. Therefore, in the context of this research, school connection refers to the belief that professionals at the school care about students' learning and their individual well-being within the academic setting. It signifies the degree to which students experience personal acceptance, respect, inclusion, and support from others in the educational setting.

Student connection refers to the degree to which students sense good support and caring from persons within their educational environment (Jorgenson et al., 2018). Chung further elucidates that students who have a strong connection to their institutions are dedicated to their academic tasks. In addition, they possess a strong feeling of affiliation with the school, cultivating a fondness for the institution and embracing its norms and regulations. According to Muthohar (2021), students who have a sense of school connectedness tend to possess positive feelings towards school, a sense of belonging, trust in their lecturers' care and commitment to their learning, belief in the importance of education, friendships at school, perception of fair discipline, and opportunities to engage in extra-curricular activities.

Several factors contribute to the sense of connectedness among tertiary education students. These factors encompass behavioral and academic expectations, a sense of belonging at the institutions, acceptance of diversity, perception of discipline, support from lecturers, institutional climates, and effective institutional policies.

Peer connectedness, institutional safety, motivation, communication, institutional tradition, respect, and institutional engagement, both academically and in extracurricular activities. According to Livari et al. (2020), students' sense of connection to their institutions may be enhanced when they see that both the adults and their fellow students at school demonstrate genuine concern for their academic progress. Students who have a strong sense of connection are more inclined to achieve academic success and make positive choices for their well-being. Empirical research has shown that students who have a favorable perception of their academic institution and maintain strong relationships with their professors likely to get higher marks and perform better academically (Donohoo, 2018). Long and Dowdell (2018) provided evidence to support the claim that students who excel academically are less inclined to partake in high-risk activities, such as carrying hazardous weapons, smoking tobacco, consuming alcohol, and participating in unsafe sexual intercourse. These pupils are more inclined to maintain their concentration and achieve higher academic performance in the classroom due to their stronger sense of connection to the institution.

Conversely, there are also variables that hinder the development of school connection, such as the absence of elements that contribute to a pleasant institutional environment. These factors include peer harassment, physical aggression, relational aggression, students' dissatisfaction with the school or lack

of support and achievement, violence, isolation, absenteeism, insecurity, existence of cultism activities, and students' perception of feeling unsafe at school. According to Wilson (2004), school connectivity not only affects school behavior, attendance, and engagement, but also influences the likelihood of engaging in behavior that might harm one's health. Moreover, the existence of physical violence, relational aggression, and victimization in educational institutions has been associated with school connectivity. Additionally, the greater the prevalence of these harmful influences, the lower the level of school connectedness experienced.

Emotional Intelligence Conceptualized

Academics and consultants in the domains of education, business, and psychology are becoming more interested in the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as it rises to the forefront of modern discourse (Wong, et al., 2007). Multiple professionals and scholars have defined EI. Emmadi (2017) states that emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize and comprehend one's own and other people's emotions, as well as to influence and control one's own and other people's emotional responses and behaviors. Wong and Law (2017) state that it is the ability to control one's emotions and have positive relationships with others. Wong and Law distinguish between IQ and other skills that complement academic intelligence or the IQ test's evaluation of a person's solely cognitive ability. The ability to successfully manage the demands and stresses of one's environment is influenced by a variety of non-cognitive abilities, competences, and skills that make up Wong & Law (Bar-on, 2006). Those who score high on the emotional intelligence (EI) test tend to be very perceptive to other people's moods and feelings. When faced with a variety of situations, they show empathy and respect for other perspectives (Gómez-Leal et al., 2021).

Thorndike first used the term "Social Intelligence" in 1920, and the concept of emotionally intelligent (EI) evolved from it. Thorndike defined social intelligence as the ability to understand and work with people of all ages and genders, as well as to make sound judgements while interacting with others. Using a competency model approach, Bar-on (2006) investigated and defined Emotional Intelligence (EI), as mentioned by Truninger et al. (2018). Among the first to propose the idea of Emotional Intelligence (EI) to characterize a person's ability to control their emotions, Salovey and Meyer were (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017).

According to expert-led research, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is believed to be linked to several interrelated outcomes. Academic achievement (Mallary, 2017), psychological health (Austin, 2018), and mental health (Wong, et al., 2007) are all supposedly influenced by an individual's level of emotional intelligence (EI), according to proponents and researchers of the concept. In addition, it has a positive association with contentment in the workplace (Wong & Law, 2002), as well as with productivity on the job (Wong et al., 2007; Law et al., 2004; Miega et al., 2014). In contrast to the research on occupational stress conducted by Law et al. (2001), Alghamdi et al. (2017) investigates leadership performance. Suleiman and Noor (2018) cite a plethora of empirical studies that link Emotional Intelligence (EI) traits including high motivation, self-confidence, and productive collaboration to an individual's success. Emotional intelligence, according to Kozlowski et al. (2017), is essential in fields that ask for both psychologically focused care and technical expertise. The growth and development of the nursing and allied health fields depend on individuals' levels of emotional intelligence (Raghubir, 2018). Medical professionals' likelihood of becoming the target of legal action is inversely related to their emotional intelligence (EI), according to research by Kim (2018).

Both in terms of general theories and more concrete models and components, Emotional Intelligence (EI) has grown and developed thanks to the work of a number of distinguished academics. Suni

(2020) outlines three interrelated talents that make up emotional intelligence (EI): the ability to assess and express emotions, the ability to manage emotions, and the ability to utilize emotions as a source of inspiration and strategy. Knowledge, ability, and characteristic are the three degrees of EI that have been classified by theoretical frameworks. At this level of expertise, you should be familiar with EI-related strategies that help you focus on the work at hand and keep your emotions in check. The capacity to make good use of this data is not, however, implied. The ability to apply a certain way of emotion management when asked to do so successfully is related to ability level, but it does not imply that the strategy will be used often or universally. Finally, at the characteristic level, we have people's habitual dispositions, or the way they usually react when they're emotionally distressed.

In their 1990 proposal, Salovey and Mayer outlined five separate domains that make up Emotional Intelligence (EI).

Examining oneself and quickly detecting one's emotions as they happen is what the self-awareness domain is all about.

Second, learning to control one's emotions requires getting to the bottom of what's making them feel that way, and then finding ways to fix those problems. In order to motivate oneself, one must be able to control their emotions, show signs of emotional regulation, engage in delayed reward, and control their impulsive conduct.

Being empathetic is not just understanding other people's experiences and perspectives, but also showing genuine concern for their emotional well-being. Fifth, being able to manage one's relationships properly entails being socially competent and able to read and respond to other people's emotions.

Emotional intelligence, according to Salovey and Meyer (1990), stems from these four main sources. Accurately perceiving, assessing, and articulating emotions are the four pillars.

The skill of deliberately inducing or evoking emotions when necessary to deepen one's understanding of oneself or other people. Knowing how to interpret feelings and draw wisdom from that knowledge. The ability to regulate one's emotions in a way that promotes healthy mental and emotional growth.

When it comes to colleges and universities, the typical age range for students is between eighteen and twenty-five. According to Sabbah et al. (2013), this is a time of great personal growth and transformation as people enter adulthood. While going through the physical and mental changes that come with puberty, kids move into a school environment that puts more of a focus on academics and less on offering individualized emotional support (Eccles et al., 2018). The difficulties presented by today's ever-changing job markets are especially felt by students in higher education. They have to deal with rising expectations for skills relevant to the modern workplace, an absence of good career possibilities, and trouble locating appropriate employment. Furthermore, they often do not possess the essential employability skills, which causes them to be unsure about their future paths and causes them to postpone joining the labor.

Academic Adjustment Conceptualized

According to Parker, et al., (2006), adjustment refers to the behavioral process by which people develop the ability to effectively address and resolve long-term challenges. Santrock (2008) argued that adjustment is a complex process in which an individual modifies their own behavior or attempts to modify their surroundings in order to meet their demand for adaptability. Weiten and Lloyd (2006) provided a definition of adjustment as the psychological process by which individuals effectively handle and adapt to the demands and difficulties of everyday life. It refers to the psychological process that postsecondary students undergo in order to deal with the daily problems they face. An

individual's adaptation has repercussions for subsequent adaptation and overall well-being in other aspects of their life.

Proshansky, et al. (2014) define adjustment as the individual's reaction to the physical, psychological, and social challenges presented by oneself, others, and the surroundings. This suggests that individuals have the ability to adapt to various environments, such as educational institutions, familial or marital settings, workplaces, as well as relationships or academic programmes (Kwaah & Essilfie, 2017). According to the above definitions, adjustment may be described as an individual's overall ability to adapt to their surroundings and the challenges of life.

Given the unpredictable nature of life, it is crucial to possess the capacity to adapt one's behavior in order to effectively adjust. In technical terms, it refers to the act of modifying one's behavior in order to establish a connection with one's surroundings. Hence, the alteration of pupils' developmental and academic problems is a pressing worry. It is unsurprising, based on personal experiences, that even students with a high intelligence quotient (IQ) often fail a course, perform poorly, or drop out of school. Vargas, et al., (2019) argued that maladjustment might have severe social and emotional consequences, perhaps leading a kid to withdraw from school due to difficulties in managing academic and extracurricular responsibilities. Supporting this claim, Coe, et al., (2017) provided more evidence indicating a lack of academic adjustment is strongly associated with low academic achievement, a high rate of dropping out, and a lack of success in later stages of life.

Baker, et al., (2007) and Salami (2011) have identified four sub-scales of adjustment, namely academic, social, personal-emotional, and institutional attachment adjustment. Academic adjustment pertains to the extent to which students effectively handle educational expectations, including their drive to fulfil academic requirements, their level of academic effort, and their contentment with the academic environment. Academic adjustment encompasses an individual's capacity to fulfil academic requirements, maintain focus, actively engage in classroom activities, and develop the skills necessary for independent study. Academic adjustment is an essential determinant that ensures the achievement of academic objectives.

The research results suggest that students' failure to adapt to the psychological environment of the school is a significant factor leading to school dropout and academic dissatisfaction (Edward, 2003; Kumar, 2006). Furthermore, Bailey (2020) confirmed that academic adjustment involves managing a range of scholastic requirements while maintaining the motivation to participate in other duties aimed at achieving certain objectives. The transition from secondary school to postsecondary institutions of learning is a significant life transformation for several young individuals. This sequence often entails more duties and obstacles.

Social adjustment pertains to the extent to which students actively participate in social activities and their level of contentment with different parts of their experiences. A student is considered socially well-adjusted to the school if they do not display withdrawal behaviors or other anti-social behaviors that go against the standards of the institution. Conversely, the process of social adjustment may be seen by maladaptive behaviors, such as truancy, absence from class or lectures, examination misconduct, involvement in cults, theft, alcohol consumption, drug addiction, and so on (Auni, et al., 2014).

Personal-emotional adjustment pertains to the level of psychological and physical satisfaction experienced by a learner. Emotional adjustment, as defined by Sharma and Saine (2014), refers to the ability to maintain emotional balance when confronted with both internal and external sources of stress. Institutional connection refers to a student's overall contentment with their college experiences, specifically with the school they are currently attending. Ultimately, students experience anxiety as they adapt to the academic, social, personal-emotional, and lifestyle obstacles posed by the postsecondary school.

Based on available evidence, it is anticipated that the act of seeking counselling has significant and vital implications in preventing personal, emotional, physical, social, academic, and other associated

issues, challenges, and conflicts among students in higher education. The counselling seeking behavior may efficiently and prudently manage the adjustment of pupils in physical, social, intellectual, and emotional aspects. Therefore, the provision of counselling services at higher institutions such as Polytechnics assists in equipping students to take on more responsibility for their decisions and develop their capacity to comprehend and embrace the consequences of their choices. This research investigated the influence of school connection, emotional intelligence, and academic adjustment on the likelihood of Kaduna Polytechnic students in Kaduna State, Nigeria requesting counselling.

Research Questions

The following research questions were framed to guide this study

1. What is the level of Counseling-seeking behaviors among the students?
2. What are the levels of school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment among the students?
3. What is the relationship between Counseling-seeking behavior and the predictors (school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment) among the students?
4. To what extent do school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment jointly and individually predict counseling seeking behavior among the students?

Hypothesis Postulations

The tenability of these four null hypotheses were tested at 5% levels of significance

1. The level of Counseling-seeking behavior will not be significantly high among the students
2. The levels of school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment among the students will not be significantly high
3. Significant relationship does not exist between counseling-seeking behavior and the predictors (school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment) among the students.
4. School connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment do not jointly and individually predict counseling-seeking behavior of the students significantly

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: This research adapted correlational research strategy. According to Gratter and Forzano (2009), the goal of the correlational research strategy is to examine and describe the association and relationship between variables. Specifically, the purpose of a correlational study is to establish that a relationship exists between variables and describe the nature of relationships. To actualize this, two or more variables are measured and recorded to obtain a set of scores (usually two scores) for each individual. In the context of this study, dependent variable is counseling seeking behavior while the independent variables are school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment.

Population of the study: The target population for this study consists of all students in Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna in the 2021/2022 academic session offering different programs. Kaduna Polytechnic is the largest tertiary education Polytechnic located in the West African sub region. The institution started as Kaduna Technical Institute in 1956 and later renamed Kaduna Polytechnic in 1968 by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The main objective of the institution is to provide diverse instruction, training and research in engineering, technology, sciences, commerce, humanities and programs of in-service instruction for members of the public service sectors in Nigeria. Currently, the premier Technical Institute has six Colleges, 56 academic departments and 132 accredited programs with more than 25, 000 students' populations offering National Diploma (ND), Higher National

Diploma (HN D), Institutional Diploma and Certificates as well as post-graduate diploma programs, NCE and B. Technology degrees affiliated under Federal University of Technology Minna, and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The institution operates variety of learning modes such as regular, evening/weekend and Open Distance Flexible e-learning modes (ODFeL) (Academic Affairs Division, 2022).

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques: Considerations such as the required statistical power, alpha level, number of predictors, and estimated effect size were among those that went into estimating the sample size for this research. Citing Green (1991), Tabachnick and Fidell (2005) provided numerous methods for researchers to use for estimating the sample size needed for a multiple regression analysis. $N > 50 + 8(M)$, where M is the number of independent variables, is one way to convey the most fundamental principles among them. Consequently, in order to do the regression analysis, a sample size of at least 74 occurrences is necessary for this study. However, we upped the sample size to 300. Kpolovie (2010:32) states that, all else being equal, a bigger sample will more faithfully reflect the population than a smaller one. Reason being, statistical tests are more robust with an increase in the sample size. One measure of a statistical test's reliability is its capability to detect a statistically significant difference or correlation when one exists. In order to choose an adequate sample of respondents, a stratified random sampling method was used. Part of this process included picking a school and then a department at random from each university.

Instrumentation: The main instrument for collecting data was a well-crafted questionnaire. Multiple parts make up the questionnaire. Respondents' demographic information (such as their name, college, major, age, gender, and marital status) was gathered in Section A. The Counseling-Seeking Behavior Scale, a modified version of the original instrument used in a study in Nigeria by Onijigin (2020), was the instrument used in Section B. The seven items that make up this scale are organized using a five-point grading system, with 5 being the most often used and 1 the least. According to the creator, the Cronbach alpha technique was used to measure the internal consistency dependability, which was .88. A coefficient of .89. was determined for this investigation using a similar approach.

Section C measures the extent to which students are linked. Omenyi and Agu's 2010 research served as the basis for the Students Campus Connected Questionnaire (SCCQ). There were a total of 44 questions on the survey, broken down into the following four subscales: faculty (14 things), students (10 items), support staff (10 items), and administration (10 items). Each item was evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, where 5 signifies "all the time" and 1 means "never" A score of .86 was obtained after verifying the questionnaire and assessing its composite reliability using the test-retest procedure. Panelt (2010) and George and Mallery (2003) both recommend a lower coefficient. Using the Cronbach alpha method, the current research produced a coefficient of .923.

The procedure for calculating the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for a Likert or binary scale was laid forth by George and Mallery (2003). A statistical metric, Cronbach's alpha may take on values between zero and one. The item's internal consistency within the scale is strengthened by a higher coefficient value. According to George and Mallery (2003), a Cronbach's Alpha value more than .90 denotes excellent internal consistency, a value greater than 0.80 is good, a value greater than 0.70 is acceptable, a value greater than 0.60 is dubious, a value greater than 0.50 is terrible, and a value lower than 0.50 is unacceptable.

Part C used the Schuttle et al. (1998) Emotional Intelligence Scale. There are 37 questions on the global scale that were developed to measure emotional intelligence. Ten items measure self-awareness, ten measure self-management, six measure social awareness, and seven measure relationship management. On a five-point Likert scale, 1 signifies "strongly disagree," 2 "disagree," 3 "uncertain," 4 "agree," and 5 "strongly agree." This was the system used to arrange the items. The

developers of this scale noted a reliability coefficient of .90, which means that higher scores indicate a higher level of emotional intelligence, while lower scores indicate a lower level of intelligence.

In Section D, students' academic performance was evaluated by administering a modified version of the Student Adjustment to College Questionnaire (SACQ) developed by Gomez et al. (2014). With a total of 23 questions broken down into five sections, the newly developed International Student Adjustment to College Scale assesses students' personal and emotional adjustment to college, as well as their social adjustment, academic motivation, academic environment, and institutional attachment. Since this updated version of the scale has fewer items than the original 67-item version developed by Baker and Siryki (1989), it is highly recommended. It is very reliable, uses continuous measurement, and is tailored to international pupils. A 9-point Likert scale was used to assess the items, with 1 being the most appropriate and 9 being the least applicable. With a computed Cronbach's Alpha value exceeding .80, the instrument showed internal consistency in many examinations (Baker and Siryki, 1989). Subscale coefficient alpha ranged from .769 to .925, while ISAQ's composite dependability was .802, according to Ahumdi (2016).

Procedures for Data Collection: Each student was individually contacted in their different classrooms. The study's objectives and aims were effectively conveyed to the participants. Participation was optional after the participants were educated on how to answer the questionnaire questions by carefully reading the instructions. The research assistants provided clarification for any inquiries related to the questionnaire. The completed questionnaires were gathered after verifying their thoroughness. All of these measures are used to secure the acquisition of accurate and dependable data and to provide a high rate of return.

Method of Data Analysis: The gathered data was subjected to a process of purification and analysis using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviations to answer the research questions. Furthermore, inferential statistics were used to assess the null hypotheses. The analyses were performed using the computer software package IBM SPSS version 23.

Results Presentation

The 280 participants in this research comprised of 46 (16%) from CST, 53 (19%) from CTVE, 84 (30%) from COE, 57 (20%) from CBMS, 24 (9%), from CES, and 16 (6%), from CASSS. According to the sex breakdown, there are 132 (47%) females and 148 (53%) men. The age distribution of the responses shows that 226 (81%) are between the ages of 21 and 30, 50 (17%) are between the ages of 32 and 40, and 2 (.7%) are each between the ages of 41 and 50 and 61 and over. According to marital status, 106 people (38%) are married, 156 people (57%) are single, and 14 people (5%) are separated. According to the class distribution, 253 (90%) are in HND 2, 6 (2%), 17 (8%), and 4 (1%), are in ND 1.

HO 1: The level of Counseling seeking behavior will not be significantly high among the students

Table 1: One sample t-test analysis of level of Counseling seeking behavior amongst students

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Sample Mean</i>	<i>Sample SD</i>	<i>Reference value</i>	<i>t- T</i>	<i>Sig</i>	<i>Remark</i>
Level of Counseling seeking behavior	18.38	5.457	21	-8.05	<.001	S

When testing the first null hypothesis, the scores of the respondents on the degree of Counselling seeking behavior, as indicated by 7 items, were added together. The study concluded that in order for

the degree of Counselling seeking behavior to be deemed considerably high, the scores obtained on the scale should be notably more than 21. This value represents the midway between always and never, which corresponds to 3 multiplied by 7, the number of items used to measure the construct. The null hypothesis states that the mean score, which represents the amount of Counselling seeking behavior, is not substantially more than 21 (HO: $\mu = 21$, H1: $\mu > 21$). The hypothesis was evaluated using a one-sample t-test, often known as a population t-test.

Table 1 displays the findings. Upon closer examination, the findings demonstrate a statistically significant decrease in the students' inclination to seek counselling (M=18.38, SD=5.457), $t(279) = -8.050$, $p < .001$. The absolute value of the mean difference was -2.625, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -3.27 to -1.98. The effect size, as measured by eta squared, was 0.19, indicating a minor magnitude. Based on these findings, the first hypothesis is not supported and hence discarded in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This suggests that there is a statistically significant, albeit relatively modest, number of students seeking counselling in the research region.

HO 2: The levels of school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment among the students will not be significantly high

Table 2: One sample t-test analysis of levels of school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment among the students

Scale	Item No	Sample Mean	Sample SD	Reference t-value	T	Sig	Remark
School Connectedness	44	116.63	26.69	132	-9.63	<.001	S
Emotional Intelligence	33	98.73	21.47	99	-.209	.835	NS
Academic adjustment	23	125.72	24.11	115	7.44	<.001	S

When assessing the second null hypothesis, the scores of the participants on the scales that measure school connection, emotional intelligence, and academic adjustment were aggregated by summing up the values for each item. The research determined that a very high level of school connectedness is achieved when the scores on the whole-scale are substantially over 132, which is the midpoint between the lowest and highest attainable scores. The midpoint corresponds to three times the number of elements used to measure the whole scale, which is 44. The scales of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Adjustment were assessed using comparable methodologies, but with differences in the number of items. As a consequence, there were many reference t-values, which may be shown in Table 2. The null hypothesis states that the mean score, which indicates the levels of school connection, emotional intelligence, and academic adjustment among the kids, is not significantly higher than the respective reference t-values. The hypothesis was assessed with a one-sample t-test, often referred to as a population t-test. An in-depth analysis shows that when the overall measure of School Connectedness was calculated, the findings suggest a statistically significant but relatively low level among the students (M=116.63, SD=26.69), $t(279) = -9.634$, $p < .001$. The effect size, as measured by eta squared, was 0.2578, indicating a minor magnitude. In contrast, the measurement of Emotional Intelligence shows a statistically negligible level (M= 98.73, SD=21.47), $t(279) = -.209$, $p = .835$. The results of the third Academic Adjustment scale showed a statistically significant high level among the students (M = 125.72, SD = 24.11), with a t-value of 7.44 and a p-value less than .001. The eta squared value of 0.165 was rather tiny. The average discrepancy is 10.72. Based on these findings, the second

hypothesis, which suggests a positive relationship between academic adjustment and school connection, is not supported and thus rejected. Instead, the results indicate that academic adjustment and school connectedness are low rather than high. On the other hand, the results support the hypothesis about Emotional Intelligence.

HO 3: Significant relationship does not exist between counseling seeking behavior and the independent variables (school connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment among the students.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix among the variables

Variables	M	SD	CSB	SCH CONN	EI	AADJUST
1.Counseling Seeking Beh.	18.38	5.46	1			
2. School Connectedness	116.63	26.69	.780**	1		
3. Emotional Intelligence	98.73	21.47	.437**	.632**	1	
4. Academic Adjustment	125.72	24.11	-.405**	-.358**	-.219**	1

**Correlation is significant at the $P < .01$ (two-tailed)

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients were conducted between Counseling Seeking Behavior and other independent variables. Table 3 contains the descriptive statistics and inter-correlations among the research variables. It could be seen that Counseling seeking behavior positively correlated with School Connectedness $r(298)=.780, P<.001$), with Emotional Intelligence $r(298)=.437, P<.001$). and negatively correlated with Academic Adjustment $r(298) = -.405, P < .001$). This means that as Counseling Seeking Behavior increases, there is a corresponding increase in School Connectedness and Emotional intelligence on one hand while Academic Adjustment tends to decrease.

In addition, there was a positive correlation between School Connectedness and Emotional Intelligence $r(298) = .632, P<.001$) while a negative and significant correlation occurred between School Connectedness and Academic Adjustment $r(298)= -.358, P<.001$). Finally, Emotional Intelligence and Academic adjustment were negatively but significantly correlated $r(298) = -.219, P<.001$). Though all the correlations are significant, either positively or negatively, the interpretation is based on Warner (2000) classifications. According to Warner (2000), a correlation coefficient of zero (0) to 0.29 is considered low; correlation of 0 .30 to 0 .69 is considered moderate while correlations between 0 .70 to 1 is considered strong.

HO 4: School connectedness, emotional intelligence and academic adjustment do not jointly and individually predict counseling seeking behavior of the students significantly

Table 4: Analysis of regression summary showing the joint contribution of the independent variables on Counseling Seeking Behavior prediction(CSBP)

Source	SS	df	Ms	F	Sig
Regression	5248.545	3	1749.515	57.847	<.001
Residual	3059.080	276	11.084		
Total	8317.625	279			

$R = .795, R \text{ Square} = .632, \text{ Adjust R Square} = .628, \text{ Std. error} = 3.329$

Table 5: Relative contribution of the independent variables to CSBP

Variables	Unstandardized coefficient B	Std. error	Standardized coefficient Beta	T	Sig
(constant)	6.032	1.761		3.426	<.001

Acad. Adj	-.033	.009	-.144	-3.685	<.001*
Emt. Intell.	-.023	.012	-.092	-1.952	=.052
Sch. Conn.	.161	.010	.787	15.907	<.001*

Both simple linear and multiple regression analysis were employed in testing the null hypothesis four. From the regression analysis in Table 4, it was found that the simple linear regression combination of independent variables (Academic adjustment, Emotional Intelligence and School Connectedness) had significant predictive effect on CSB among the students. It could be seen clearly that the regression analysis had R square = .632 and adjusted R square of .628, which is statistically translated to mean jointly, they made 63.2 percent contribution of the total variance to CSB prediction by the participants.

Furthermore, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the combined effect of the predictors yielded an F-ratio of 57.847 which is also significant at .01 alpha level, thereby confirming the regression analysis.

Table 5 shows each of the predictor variables, the unstandardized regression weight, the standard error of the estimates (SEB), the standard coefficient (Beta), the t-values level at which the t-ratio is significant. Individually, school connectedness made the highest contribution to CSB prediction (B = .787, t=15.967, P<.001), followed by Academic adjustment which contributed (B= -.144, t= -3.685, P<.001), which Emotional Intelligence did not make any significant contribution (B = -.092, t= -1.92, P = .052).

Discussion of findings

This study sought to determine the roles of school connectedness, Emotional Intelligence and Academic Adjustment in the prediction of Counseling Seeking Behaviors among tertiary education students, with particular reference to Kaduna Polytechnic students, in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The findings of this study showed that the Counseling Seeking Behavior of the students was low and not encouraging. The findings of the study further reveals that the level of emotional intelligence among the students is indeed low and not statistically significant. This finding is contrary to the submission of Wong, et al. (2007) whereby people (students) with high emotional intelligence are sensitive to the moods and temperament of others, display empathy, appreciate multiple perspectives when approaching situations.

On the other hand, academic adjustment was very high implying that the students are well-adjusted to their academic and social environment in the campus. This research finding is in support of Wong, et al., (2007), affirming that academic adjustment entails dealing with various scholastic demands, while sustaining the drive to engage in other goal-oriented tasks.

The findings of this research in relation to hypothesis three reveals statistical significant relationship between Counseling Seeking Behavior and School Connectedness and Emotional Intelligence positively, but negatively correlated with Academic Adjustment. The explanations here are that as Counseling Seeking Behavior increases, there is a corresponding increase with School connectedness and Emotional Intelligence on one hand and a decrease with Academic Adjustment on the other hand. The finding of this study tends to support Alemce (2013) submission who found that counseling services were not significantly related to students’ social adjustment. Likewise, this research finding is in support of Auni, et al., (2014) submission who found that Counseling Seeking Behavior was significantly and positively related to student academic adjustment. In addition, the findings of this research reveals academic adjustment and school connectedness are important predictors of Counseling Seeking Behavior among the students, while Emotional Intelligence is not a good predictor. It could be seen from the analysis that School Connectedness is the major contribute towards Counseling Seeking Behavior by far.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that Counseling Seeking Behavior and School Connectedness of Kaduna polytechnic students was low and not encouraging, while academic adjustment is indeed very high and interesting. Emotional intelligence on the other hand is not significant and very low. There is significant and positive relationship between Counseling Seeking Behavior and School Connectedness and Emotional Intelligence, while a negative relationships occurred with Academic Adjustment. All the three independent variables of Academic Adjustment, Emotional Intelligence and School Connectedness predicted Counseling Seeking Behavior jointly, but on the individual basis, only School Connectedness and Academic Adjustment contributed positively.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are made

- 1.The Polytechnic Management should sensitize the students on the availability of counseling services and facilities in the institution.
- 2.There should be orientation towards encouraging students to seek counseling services, thereby helping to improve the level of Emotional Intelligence, Academic Adjustment and School Connectedness for better academic and personal growth and development.
3. Institutional Guidance Counselor should periodically make follow-up at classes and to re-examine those who had been counseled to see the impact of the counseling interventions provided.
- 4.Institutional management and policy makers and implementers should encourage the establishment of Emotional Intelligence training programs and ensure that periodic training are mounted.

Limitation and future studies

This study Is not without its limitations. Firstly, this study is only limited to three independent variables of School Connectedness, Emotional Intelligence and Academic Adjustment, that are psychological in nature. There are other constructs that could be sociological, personal or socio-demographic and environmental not included and could be consider in future researches, which could help to extend the frontiers of Counseling Seeking Behavior researches. In addition, this study made up of quantitative research method, the utilization of qualitative approach leading to a mixed/triangulation method could help reveal some facts which questionnaire alone may not be able to do. Although the population and sample size was large enough and was obtained from one Polytechnic in this study, future investigation should involve other institutions like the University, Colleges of Education and other Monotechnics students whereby different type of comparisons and generalizations would be possible.

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