



doi 10.5281/zenodo.7940547

Vol. 06 Issue 05 May - 2023

Manuscript ID: #0857

## COUNSELLING SERVICES IN SECONDARY SCHOOL AS COPING STRATEGY FOR IMPROVED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

EGBULE, Elizabeth Osita (Ph.D.)

DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING, DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY, ABRAKA

*Original Article*

### ABSTRACT

This study concentrated on the usage of counseling services by teenagers in secondary schools as a coping mechanism for better academic achievement. All SS3 pupils in Delta State's public secondary schools made up the population. 252 students made up the sample size and answered the questionnaires. For the investigation, three null hypotheses were posed and evaluated. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire created by researchers called the "Vocational Counselling Services and School Academic Performance Instrument" (VCSSAPI) and using the respondents' results of the SS2 promotion test, a standardized state-wide test, to assess their academic performance. The t-test was used to evaluate the data at 0.05 alpha level. When the results were computed, it became clear that pupils who used the counseling services fared better than those who did not. It was recommended that all schools should be provided with professional counselors to help and guide the students.

### KEYWORDS

Educational, Vocation, Counselling, Coping Strategy, Services.



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License.

## Introduction

Most secondary schools around the nation, including Delta State, provide counseling as one of their instructional offerings. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria's national policy on education from 2013, the purpose of educational services is to "facilitate the implementation of the educational policy, the attainment of policy goals, and the promotion of the effectiveness of the educational system." "Make learning experiences more meaningful for children" is the third objective of the educational services. Based on these objectives, guidance and counseling programs in schools are helpful because they provide students in secondary schools with extensive assistance to support their success in their academic endeavors.

Okobiah and Okorodudu (2006) claim that guidance and counseling encompasses relevant service activities as well as methods for assisting people within and outside of schools in realizing their full potentials in terms of their emotional, moral, social, academic, and career development. In this essay, the focus is on maximizing students' academic potential via effective use of guidance and counseling programs in secondary schools. The Delta State government sponsors its students for the WAEC or NECO examinations because the government of the day needs to ensure that SS3 students can take their National Examination Council (NECO) or West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) tests without interruption as much as feasible. This led the authors of this paper to investigate whether the government's goals are being met in schools with or without counselors in order to assist in formulating the necessary recommendations for greater achievement in the state's educational sector, particularly with the free and compulsory education scheme in place.

## Concept of Guidance and Counselling

In the words of Akpan (2010), guidance and counseling are "an educational service that seeks to provide the school child opportunity to obtain holistic educational development that prepares him for functional life." According to Ipaye, who was mentioned by Egbule (2013), from the perspective of education, guiding and counseling are those activities that assist students in coming to terms with who they are, accepting who they are, and becoming productive members of society. According to Esen, who was mentioned by Egbule and Egbule in 2008, advice and counseling are largely intended to help the recipient uncover his or her own latent abilities and eventually develop the independence and capacity to make judgments, make choices, or make modifications on their own. Additionally, Nwachuku (2007) and Egbule (2013) summarize the definition of guidance and counselling as a systematic and organized educational helping service, professionally provided to a learner of any age, inside or outside the school walls, at an appropriate level, by a professionally trained counsellor or therapist. According to each of them, the goal of education should be to help students better understand themselves, their circumstances, and their surroundings. They should also learn to identify their interests, potential, and opportunities in life, as well as how to make the most of both their strengths and their weaknesses in order to lead the most fruitful lives possible. Because of these academics' ideas, guidance and counseling is now a human-oriented program that focuses on assisting each person in defining and redefining their objectives and ambitions in order to increase productivity and self-reliance (Egbule & Egbule, 2008). The professional counselor provides the school and the host community with a variety of services in the field of guidance and counseling, but in this research, three key services will be covered. Education, employment, and private social services are among them. The educational service in guidance and counseling deals with all matters pertaining to education as they relate to the physical environment of the school, the structural make-up of the school, activities within the school, students' participation,

students' progress, and students' adaptability within the school. In order to do this, academic counseling, according to Olayinka (1999), helps students make the best use of their educational possibilities. Additionally, Egbule & Egbule (2008) and Egbule (2006) view educational advice as support provided to students to help them succeed in school and in society at large. Egbule & Egbule made the observation that it helps learners comprehend who they are and how their potentials might be realized. With these concepts, it is possible to state that educational counseling and assistance for teenagers is essential if they are to achieve everything that matters to them.

According to Egbule (2006), referenced in Egbule and Egbule (2008), vocational service in guidance and counseling is the process of aiding the persons to pick employment, prepare to enter into it, and make advancement. The following are only a few of the reasons given by Egbule & Egbule (2008) regarding the need for career advice and counseling in the educational system. They are:

1. To assist learners appreciate themselves in terms of their abilities, interests and aptitudes
2. To supply learners with broader views about the world of work.
3. To augment learners awareness of the diverse options opened to them and given them the confidence that they can make a reasonable choice from alternatives.
4. To develop the spirit of job satisfaction and motivation as well as self actualization in the students after a choice of career has been made.

According to Egbule's (2006) detailed explanation, vocational guidance and counseling is the service offered by the counselor to help students start early enough to plan for the right vocation in terms of their interest, abilities, and aptitude as well as the length of training and the sponsors, family, and societal needs. According to Egbule (2008), personal social advice and counseling is a service that aids students in resolving socio-personal issues related to personality maladjustments both within and outside of the classroom. The following were listed by Ugwueblem and Igbokwe (1996) as the purposes of personal-social guidance and counseling services:

- (a) To make learners happy, well adjusted and self confident.
- (b) Identify learners' feelings and attitudes towards others and improve on the feelings and attitude especially if they are negative.
- (c) Help the learner to assess and accept himself.

A pilot serves as the counselor in guidance and counseling events and programs. This counselor has received academic training to provide assistance in both school and non-school contexts, enabling him to support his clients' maximum success despite any obstacles. According to Modo and Inaja (2010), a counsellor is a person who has received professional training in counseling and who provides assistance to clients or students who may be in need of it. Once more, according to Denga (2001), the counselor is the project manager for a client project. According to him, the counselor controls the client's educational, professional, and personal-social potentials in a way that makes the person valuable to themselves as well as the larger society. The counsellor uses a variety of professional techniques, including listening, speaking, empathizing, probing, questioning, interpreting, confronting, restating, silence, catharsis, assurance, immediacy, encouraging, clarifying, self-disclosure, concretizing, homework, and summarizing, to manage his clients effectively (Okobiah, 2006; Egbule, 2013).

## Hypotheses

Three null hypotheses were formulated and tested for this study:

- i. There is no significant difference between secondary school students exposed to educational counselling service and those not exposed to it in their academic performance.
- ii. Secondary school students are not influenced significantly in their academic performance whether they are exposed to vocational counselling service or not.

## Methodology

The ex-post-facto approach used in this study allowed the researchers to infer correlations between variables without having to directly account for coexisting variables. In other words, the researchers were interested in figuring out the impact guidance and counseling services had on secondary school pupils both when those students are exposed to counseling services and when they are not, without the researchers manipulating the results. Results were extrapolated based on the sample size considered, illustrating population disparities. 2,520 senior secondary school students from 14 public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria, made up the study's target group. The sample was chosen using stratified and purposive random sampling procedures. Two secondary schools were chosen from among the 14 schools, one with a counselor and the other without. 252 respondents, or 10% of the total population of 2,520, made up the sample size. The 252 sample was divided into two groups, with 126 students in each. The "Vocational Counselling Services and School Academic Performance Instrument" (VCSSAPI), a validated instrument, was chosen for this study and put through a pilot test, yielding reliability co-efficient of 0.95.

## Results

### Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between secondary school adolescents exposed to educational counselling service and those not exposed to it.

**Table 1: t-test for difference in academic achievement between students exposed to educational counselling service and those not exposed**

Group	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit
Students exposed to educational counselling services in school	69.89	13.09	2.03	1.96
Students not exposed to educational counselling services in school	43.14	10.67		

Significant at p.0.05, t-cal = 2.03, t-crit =1.96

At 0.05 levels of significance, Table 1's estimated t-test of 2.03, which is higher than the table value of 1.96, is significant. The alternative hypothesis, according to which there are substantial differences between adolescents exposed to educational guidance and counseling services and those who are not, is supported, was thus accepted whereas the null hypothesis was rejected. Additionally, it was found that those who received educational guidance and counseling had a mean score of 69.89, compared to those who did not, who had a score of 43.14; as a result, the group receiving educational guidance and counseling outperformed those who were not.

## Hypothesis Two

Secondary school adolescents are not influenced significantly in their academic performance whether they are exposed to vocational counselling service or not.

**Table 2: t-test Table of difference in academic achievement between students exposed to vocational counselling services and those not exposed to it**

Group	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit
Students exposed to vocational counselling services in school	65.91	15.06	2.28	1.96
Students not exposed to vocational counselling services in school	43.14	10.67		

Significant at  $p.0.05$ ,  $t\text{-cal} = 2.03$ ,  $t\text{-crit} = 1.96$

Table 2 shows that the computed t-test, which is 2.28, is higher than the table value, which is 1.96, and is thus significant at 0.05 levels. The alternative hypothesis, which maintains that there is a substantial difference between adolescents exposed to vocational guidance and counseling service and those who are not exposed to it, is supported whereas the null hypothesis was rejected. The table also showed that the group receiving vocational guidance and counseling had a mean score of 65.91 while the group not receiving such services had a score of 43.14, indicating that the group receiving such services outperformed the latter group in terms of academic achievement.

## Discussion of Findings

The outcome of the statistical study comparing the performance of pupils who received educational advice and counseling to those who did not indicated that the former students outperformed the latter. This discovery is consistent with the works of several writers. According to Egbule (2006) and Egbule and Egbule (2008), educational counseling and guidance aid students in making the best possible use of their educational possibilities. This explains why students in schools with counselors do better than children in schools without counselors. Once more, the results demonstrated that pupils in schools with vocational guidance and counseling services outperformed those without such services in terms of their academic achievement. This is significant because it demonstrates the value of guidance and counseling services in the educational system, according to Egbule (2013), who believes that these services aid students in understanding their own skills, interests, and aptitudes. Academic performance will be extremely successful when an individual's concepts, ability, aptitude, and interests are determined, and this is what guidance and counseling attempts to expose the clients (students) to.

## **Conclusion**

As a result of the study's findings regarding the role of guidance and counseling services in secondary schools, it paper stands to reason that, these services herewith should be properly implemented in schools if students are to successfully manage the challenges of their academic work and the world of works.

## **Recommendations**

From the findings of this research the following recommendations were made;

- i. Every secondary school should have a functional guidance and counseling section with experienced counselors serving as the heads to support and guide students correctly in order to improve academic performance.
- ii. The counselor should not ignore any component of guidance and counseling services since they all work together to ensure that students perform perfectly in class and make wise post-secondary career decisions.

## REFERENCES

- Akpan, N.U. (2010). The challenges of guidance and counselling service in primary schools in Akwa Ibom, Nigeria. *Ibom Journal of Counselling*. 1(1), 97 – 106.
- Denga, D. I. (2001). *Guidance and Counselling in school and non school settings* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Port Harcourt: Double Diamond Publications.
- Egbule, E. O. (2013). Counselling for appropriate dressing on campuses of institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. *Delta Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 1(1), 77-83
- Egbule, J. F. & Egbule, E. O. (2008). *Clinical counselling: A psychotherapeutic approach*. Real choice Concept
- Egbule, J. F. (2006). Guidance services In O. C. Okobiah and R. I. Okorodudu (editors) *Issues, concepts, theories and techniques of guidance and counselling Benin-City: Ethiope Publishers*, 76 – 110.
- Esen, A. J. A. (1998). *Guidance and counselling for socio-political stability in Nigeria*. An inaugural lecture delivered at the University of Uyo on 29<sup>th</sup> of April, 1998.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Ipaye, T. (1990). *Guidance and counselling practices*. Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press.
- Modo, F.N. & Inaja, A.E. (2010). Rebranding skills for counselors toward curbing personal-social problems in the school system *Ibom Journal of Counselling* 1(1), 40 – 46.
- Nwachuku, D.I.(2007). *The teacher counsellor for today's school*. Calabar: University of Calabar Press.
- Okobiah, O. C. and Okorodudu, R. I. (2006). Concepts of guidance and counselling. In O. C. Okobiah and R. I. Okorodudu (editors) *Issues concepts, theories and techniques of guidance and counselling Benin-City: Ethiope publishers*, 24 – 54.
- Okobiah, O.C.(2006). *Practicum in counselling*. Lagos: Malthouse Press.
- Olayinka, M. S. (1999). *Guidance and counselling for Nigerian schools*. Lagos: Lantem books.
- Ugwuegbulem, C. N. and Igbokwe, O. O. (1996). Dimensions of guidance and counselling of guidance and counselling. In F. J. Nwachukwu and C. N. Ugwuegbulem *Guidance and counselling on introductory survey*. Benin-City: Barloz Publishers, 24 – 49.