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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The Journal of Professional Counselling (JPS) is devoted to advancing knowledge, practice and theory of Guidance and Counselling. The journal receives and publishes papers or articles on diverse areas relating to guidance and counselling. It encourages original research efforts contributing to the advancement of counselling in and outside Nigeria. Fundamental practical problems and challenges in the society are synthesized and solutions proffered from counselling perspective.

The present volume is the second edition essentially published to promote the contributions of seasoned professional counsellors nationwide on Transforming the Educational System through Counselling in the 21st century. The papers are expository and expression of serious concerns about the state of our educational system in Nigeria. They cut across five sub-themes.

The Editorial Board appreciates all the contributions of dedicated members towards the actualization of the aims of the Association, particularly in the production of this edition of the journal. Special tribute is paid to one of the founding 'fathers' of CASSON and APROCON in the person of Late Professor Jonathan OSIKI of blessed memory. He passed on in the course of producing this edition. Professor Osiki contributed in no small measure to the course of counselling before his death. The Fight and Birth of a National Policy on Counselling approved by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2018 was one of his relentless and selfless services to Guidance and Counselling Profession and humanity. This is vividly captured in the acknowledgement of the policy written by the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education.

Elders and all dedicated APROCON Members well done, let us keep the flag of APROCON and counselling flying in Nigeria and the world.

Professor (Mrs.) Mary G. Fajonyomi
Editor

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ROLES OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMMES AT BASIC LEVEL OF EDUCATION AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper investigated the roles of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of all 1,750 teachers at basic level of education. The descriptive survey method was used and data were collected through the administration of instrument entitled: Role of guidance and counselling programme questionnaire (RGCPQ). Simple and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select a total of 200 basic school teachers from ten different basic schools in Ilorin. Face and content validity of RGCPQ were ascertained by five experts from the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. Pearson's Product Moment correlation was used for the reliability. Coefficient value of 0.78 was obtained and adjudged reliable. Three hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data were analyzed using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings showed that there was no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers on the basis of gender, educational qualification and years of teaching experience. Recommendations were made that teachers should work hand in hand with professional counsellors in order to help learners develop better study habit skills. Also, guidance and counselling programmes should be encouraged at the basic level of education irrespective of gender.

Keywords: Guidance, Counselling Programme, Basic Education and Professional Roles

Introduction

Guidance is defined as a developmental process which helps an individual understand his or her abilities, interest, aptitude and attitudinal construct in relation to his or her aspiration. Guidance can also be defined as an umbrella term used to describe the process of assisting an individual to develop his/her maximum potentials (Idowu, 2016). Furthermore, for guidance to be meaningful, it is important to see it as a series of programmed activities which will eventually help the school child understand him/herself as an individual, becomes more aware of his/her person, experience his/her world and those of people he/she relates with. Guidance, therefore involves series of events, steps or actions which are geared towards the general development of an individual. Moreover, Egbo (2015) defined guidance as a programme of service meant to enhance the ability of clients to cope with circumstances and be useful to themselves and the society.

Counselling on the other hand is perceived differently by various authors. Salawu and Abdulkadir (2011) defined counselling as the process by which the helper expresses care and concern towards the person's personal growth and bring changes through self-knowledge. Egbo (2015) defined counselling as the soul of the guidance programme and the wheel upon which guidance rotates. It is a process in which a professional counsellor undertakes to assist another person in a person to person or face to face encounter. Bolu-Steve, Itodo, Adegoke and Ogungbade (2015) also sees counselling as an applied psychology which involves the relationship of trust between the counsellor and the client. They asserted that counselling entails a more personalized relationship between a professionally trained counsellor and an individual seeking help. The authors concluded that counselling is a learning oriented process which stresses on rational planning, problem resolution, decision making and prevention of problems. Furthermore, Idowu (2016) described counselling as the heart of core guidance, the hub of guidance, wheel, the pivotal or specific service around which the wheel of guidance revolves. Professional counsellors play vital roles in the 21st century educational sector, one of such educational sector is the basic education which spans from Basic one (Primary 1) to Basic Nine (JSS 3). This period of life is essential because of developmental stages that the learners at basic level and students at Upper Basic level passed through. It is important to state that there are several problems or concerns that learners experience at these stages of their academic cutting across all areas of development namely, personal/social, educational and vocational areas. Also, problems in these three areas may be displayed by learners such as faulty study habits, problems in the family, transitional problems, peer influence, negative use of social media, indiscipline or maladaptive behaviours common among the learners. One of such maladaptive behaviours is aggressive behaviour which include bullying one another, yelling at fellow learners, fighting e.t.c (Ogungbade, Fajonyomi, Olajide & Fajonyomi, 2017).

Basic level of education in this study is regarded as Universal Basic Education (UBE) which was introduced by the then President, Olusegun Obasanjo on 30th September, 1999 in order to provide free basic education for every Nigerian child of school going age. The Federal Government of Nigeria gave priority to this stage of education; this was followed by the launching of Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) which replaced National Research Education Commission (NPEC). One of the objectives of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) is to ensure that every school going child in Nigeria have an un-interrupted access to nine (9) years formal education by providing free, compulsory basic education to every child of school age (6-15 years) (Obong, 2006 & Tahir, 2006). Universal Basic Education provides greater access to the children of ages 6-15 and ensures its quality throughout the country (Anaduaka & Okafor, 2013). Learners at this level of education could be problematic because of developmental challenges such as aggression, anger, restlessness, hyperactivity, poor self-esteem, truancy, depression, perception deficit among others (Durosaro, 2016). Guidance and counselling programmes are essential for the total development of learners at basic level of education in Nigeria, thus, it becomes imperative to examine the roles of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria.

The roles of professional counsellors cannot be over-emphasised, thus, guidance and counselling programmes become a component of the entire system. This basic school guidance programmes can not exist without the counsellor as its primary driver or facilitator who provides specialized services to learners. The counsellor offers services through face to face relationship with the learner(s). This counselling service is expected to contribute to the child's development. The counsellor works to enhance learner's emotional development and education by promoting self-understanding, encourage the use of special services in school, and locating and referring the students to other services outside the school, where necessary. Egbo (2015) suggested that professional counsellors could use behavioural modification strategies and techniques in operant, classical and modelling theories, observational techniques and play therapy techniques to counsel learners. The counsellor does this in collaboration with teachers who are his/her colleagues in the school and other school personnel, thus, for the purpose of this paper, perception of the teachers are sought to identify the roles of guidance and counselling programmes in the schools.

ROLE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMMES AT BASIC LEVEL

The counsellor being professionally trained staff, carry out his/her responsibilities, contribute specialised skills, knowledge and experiences, through the provision of these services:

Appraisal Services: This service involves collecting, organizing and interpreting information about the learners with the intention of understanding the problems of the learners better so as to assist him/her solve and take decisions wisely.

Information Service: Guidance programmes provide information to the learners, parents and the public. Also, this is provided to enable learners become well informed and is capable of making and taking wise decisions and choices that will assist the learners perform optimally in the areas of academic/education, occupational and personal-social pursuit in the school.

Orientation Service: This is normally given to new or transferred learners when they are coming to school for the first time or anyone who finds him/her self in a new environment. It is given so that a learner would be physically, emotionally and socially stable and get adjusted to the new environment so as to contribute to the environment

Counselling Service: This serves as soul of the guidance programmes and is the wheel upon which guidance rotates. The counsellor personally handles the counselling services in the school with the intent of providing professional assistance to the learner and staff members in order to cope with the academic/educational, occupational and personal-social matters. It could be individual or group counselling. Also, different strategies can be used to handle issues, problems and challenges.

Placement Service: When new learner arrive counsellor share in the administrative staff's decision in the initial placements of the new learner, and the placement of learners requiring specific programmes especially between basic 6 (Primary 6) and upper basis level (JSS1). The counsellor is expected to be the person in charge of the placement of learners into different classes by virtue of his/her role and also is in custody of the Cumulative Records of the learners.

Research and Evaluation: Counsellors conducts research on guidance and counselling programmes and evaluate the programmes while equally drawing the attention of members of staff to useful and important researches, which the teachers require to have and understand at the basic school. Also, counsellors conduct classroom guidance sessions, counsel the learners individually and in small groups, consult with parents, teachers and administrators, as well as coordinates seminars and workshops in the school with the assistance of other school specialists such as Nurses, Cooks and teachers. Also, he/she is expected to carry out research on contemporary issues that affect the lives of the learners and proffer solution. (Fajonyomi, 2006).

The basic school education as it is operated today has not realized the importance of having counsellors in most schools in Nigeria. The good news is however that there are professional school counsellors at the upper basic level of education in Ilorin, Nigeria. The school teachers cannot play the role of the school counsellors since they do not have training in this specialized profession. Although, a teacher may be naturally gifted in offering advice to the learners, but without the required expertise, it is impossible to handle problems that professional counsellors handle.

It is however observed that little or no attention is given to the guidance services at the basic level of education in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The neglect of guidance and counselling programmes have been the reason why some Headmasters/Headmistresses of basic schools especially basic 1-6 (Primary school) usually think they could advise students on poor academic performance even when they don't have the knowledge. Therefore, the paper investigated the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic

level of education as perceived by teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria. It also considered the influence of gender, educational qualification and years of teaching experience on the respondents' perception.

Research Question

The following research questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study. These include:

1. What is the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by basic school teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Based on the research questions raised, three hypotheses were generated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers on the basis of gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers on the basis of educational qualification.
3. There is no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers on the basis of years of teaching experience.

Methodology

The population of this study consisted of all 1,750 teachers at basic level of education in Ilorin, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The data were collected through questionnaire entitled: Roles of guidance and counselling programmes questionnaire (RGCPQ). The questionnaire consisted of two sections A and B. Section A comprised demographic data of the respondents and section B had 20 items. Four point likert-type rating scale of response which had strongly agree (4points), agree (3points), disagree (2points) and strongly disagree (1point) was used. The instrument was tested for its reliability by administering 20 copies of the instrument twice, at an interval of four weeks to the basic school teachers who did not form part of the final respondents used for the study. Face and content validity of RGCPQ were ascertained by five experts from the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The two scores were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation; coefficient value of 0.78 was obtained and adjudged reliable. Simple and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select 200 basic school teachers from 10 different basic schools within Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. Permission was sought from the headmasters/mistresses and principals of upper basic schools. The instrument was administered on the basic school teachers and the questionnaire form was collected immediately, yielding hundred percent returned rates. The data were analyzed using t-test for hypothesis 1 and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for hypotheses 2 and 3. All the three hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The information gathered was statistically presented using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test to test the generated hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What is the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers in the study area?

Table 1: Mean and Rank Order of the roles of guidance and counselling programmes as perceived by teachers

Item No	Guidance and counselling programmes serve the following	Mean	Rank
	by teachers in the study area		
1	Provide the importance of guidance services	3.75	1
2	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
3	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
4	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
5	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
6	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
7	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
8	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
9	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
10	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
11	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
12	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
13	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
14	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
15	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
16	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
17	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
18	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1
19	Help learners develop positive attitude	3.75	1
20	Help learners develop positive self-concept	3.75	1

Table 1 shows the responses of basic school teachers on the role of guidance and counselling programmes in basic level of education. Results shows that the role of "helping learners develop better study habits" has the highest mean of 3.75 and was ranked first while the role of "helping learners develop positive attitude" has the lowest mean of 3.18 and was ranked last. It is important to note that because all the roles listed are all above the intermediate mean of 2.50, thus, all the respondents considered all the roles of guidance and counselling programmes at the basic level of education very essential. Thus guidance and counselling programmes are very important at this level of education.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers in the study area.

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and t-test value showing the role of guidance and counselling programmes as perceived by teachers on the basis of gender.

Techniques	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
Male	78	69.1	9.27	.61	196	.54	Do not Reject
Female	122	68.7	9.01				

$P > 0.05$

The result of t-test value (0.61) yielded .54 which was not significant with P -value $.54 > 0.05$. This shows a no significant difference. Hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes as perceived by teachers on the basis of gender.

Hypothesis Two: *There is no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by Teachers on the basis of educational qualification.*

Table 3: ANOVA results showing the role of guidance and counselling programmes as perceived by teachers on the basis of educational qualification.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	1887.847	2	943.924	12.82	.002	Do not Reject
Within Groups	14732.873	197	74.786			
Total	16620.720	199				

$P > 0.05$

Table 3 showed the F value (12.82) yielded 12.82 which was not significant with P -value $.002 > 0.05$. This showed a non-significant result. Hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes as perceived by teachers on the basis of educational qualification.

Hypothesis Three: *There is no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers on the basis of teaching experience.*

Table 4: ANOVA results showing the role of guidance and counselling programmes as perceived by teachers on the basis of years of teaching experience.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	428.348	2	213.174	2.60	.08	Do not Reject
Within Groups	16194.372	197	82.205			
Total	16620.720	199				

$P > 0.05$

Table 4 shows the F -value (2.60) yielded 2.60 which was not significant with P -value $.08 > 0.05$. This showed a non-significant result. Hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference in the role of guidance and counselling programmes as perceived by teachers on the basis of teaching experience.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study revealed that role of guidance and counselling programmes was essential as perceived by teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria. The most important role as indicated by the respondents was the role of helping learners develop better study habit skills. This is in agreement with the findings of Agbajor (2017) who examined guidance and counselling programmes in Delta State and the result showed that in both private and public schools, guidance and counselling programmes helped learners develop better study habit which eventually assisted the learners perform excellently in their academics. The finding of this study contradicted the study conducted by Afande (2015) on the effect of guidance and counselling on pupils in public primary schools in Makadara division of Nairobi province, Kenya which found that guidance and counselling was very impactful on pupils' social life of the pupils especially helped the pupils to resolve social and behavioural problems. The study of laying emphasis on academic performance of the pupils.

The study also revealed that there was no significant difference in the perceived roles of guidance and counselling programmes on the basis of gender. The outcome of this finding is in support of the findings of Odoelama and Okafor (2005) on family and nation building who found that guidance and counselling was needed for the emotional, academic and vocational development of children in the family irrespective of gender. The result of the finding also showed no significant difference in the perceived role of guidance and counselling programmes on the basis of educational qualifications of the teachers. The possible reason for this result might be due to the fact that teachers who responded to the questionnaire were qualified teachers who have teaching qualifications which is the basic requirement for anyone to teach at the basic level of education in Kwara State. Additionally, the result of the study showed no significant difference in the perceived role of guidance and counselling programmes on the basis of years of teaching experience. The possible reason for this result might be due to the fact that majority of the respondents have been teaching for a number of years, and are thus familiar with the positive impact of guidance and counselling on pupils'/students' academic performance.

Conclusion

The study concluded that there was no significant difference in the roles of guidance and counselling programmes at basic level of education as perceived by teachers on the basis of gender, educational qualification and years of teaching experience.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings:

- Teachers should work hand in hand with the professional counsellors in order to help learners develop better study habit skills.
- Guidance and counselling programmes should be encouraged at the basic level of education irrespective of gender.
- Guidance and counseling programmes should be allowed to thrive at the basic level of education irrespective of educational qualification of the teachers.
- Irrespective of years of teaching experience of teachers at basic level of education, Association of Professional Counsellors in Nigeria (APROCON) should collaborate with teachers in making sure that guidance programmes are fully operational at basic level of education in Nigeria since counsellors cannot function in isolation.

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