



Roles of School Counselling on Academic Activities of Secondary School Students in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State.

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Abstract

The study investigated roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State. It also investigated the influence of age, gender, years of experience and school type on the perception of the participants. Descriptive survey was adopted. The sample of 200 secondary school teachers were used. The respondents were selected through purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Instrument for data collection was researchers' self-designed instrument tagged 'School Counselling Roles and Academic Activities Questionnaire' (SCRAAQ). The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation. Test re-test was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. One research question and four hypotheses guided the conduct of the study. Data collected were analysed with mean, t-test and analysis of variance. Findings from the study showed that the respondents perceived that counselling helps students to achieve good academic record, prevents them from dropping out of school, providing information on career options among others. It is recommended that counselling should be taken very serious in schools, counsellors should be employed for counselling only and the counsellors should be given periodic training and re-training for effectiveness.

Keywords: Roles, School counselling, Academic, Activities, Students.

Introduction

Counselling has been considered as being necessary for management of students' behaviours in school over some decades in Nigeria. National policy in education recommended school counselling as a veritable tool for smooth running of various activities in school. School counselling is designed to handle student problems that bother on academic issue, socio-personal issues, psychological issues among other issues. Counselling is a one-on-one relationship between a professional counsellor and the client with aim of helping the client come out of problem bothering him or her. Bakare (2012) sees counselling as a number of procedures employed in helping the individual in overcoming his/her problems for overall personal development and effectiveness. Idowu (2020) conceived counselling as being all embracing as it is termed the heart of core of guidance. Idowu (2020) went further to explain that counselling is concerned with the feelings, attitudes and emotional dispositions of an individual and the situation facing him. Counselling services support teachers in the classroom and enable teachers to provide quality instruction designed to assist students in achieving high standards.

One of the areas school counselling focuses is academic counselling. The counselling is geared toward assisting the students with the problems that can affect their academics. Students face a lot of

academic problems in the school and also at home. These problems range from inability to take notes in the class, concentrating when teaching is going on, imbibing good study habit, attending classes on time-some are perpetual late comers, having time to study, avoiding examination practices of all sorts among other academic problems. It is a truism that some students come to school without knowing why they are in school, that's why some make noise in the class when teaching is going on, some see it as the time to discuss with their friends, to some it is time to eat their food and other eatables, while some stay away from classes. Toilets in the school have become hidden joints to students to dodge classes particularly when there is monitoring for students roaming about in the school and out of school compound. At the slightest opportunity in the lapse in monitoring students' movement by the school authorities some of them sneak out of school and probably will never come back till the closing time not minding the repercussion it will have on their academic performance. During tests and examinations students who do miss classes and those who are not serious with their studies find it difficult to answer examination questions which probably they take with high examination anxiety because they are not prepared for the examination.

Through school counselling, the counsellor counsel the students so as to inculcate in them discipline and sense of seriousness in their academic activities.



Proper counselling on academic activities helps to reduce test anxiety. Buttressing this statement Shoffner and Williamson (2012) noted that school counselling interventions reduce test anxiety among students. With reduced test anxiety students could do better in their examinations. Timely counselling intervention is very necessary (Harris & Jeffrey, 2010) in the sense that it reduces crises among students and prevent the risk of dropping out of school. Through enlightenment campaigns and talks the school counsellor teaches students how to overcome academic issues. School counsellors are the leaders in creating a healthy environment for academic and other activities in school (Bethany, 2016)

Students that have academic problems sometimes constitute nuisance in the school and the general public. Some of them drop out of school, some join cult and commit various crimes. The importance of school counselling cannot be overemphasized.

Statement of the problem

School counselling is yet to be given the recognition it deserves in school settings in Nigeria. Some school counsellors are given subjects to teach thereby denying them the zeal and enthusiasm to practice their profession and to deliver effectively as school counsellors.

The full time they ought to utilize in counselling is shared between counselling and teaching not minding the number of students each counsellor attends to on daily basis in school. School counselling is not an easy job giving the number of counselling activities involved.

Students have a lot of problems which bother on career, emotional issues, psychological issues and academic problems which the counsellor should assist them in overcoming. The academic problems which is the focus of this study range from inability to take notes, pay undivided attention in the class when the teacher is teaching, imbibe good study habits, obey stipulated school rules and regulation to avoided distraction that could come through punishment, among other academic problems. ASCA (2010) argued that school counsellors help students to develop academically in school, help children gain their confidence as learners and raise their achievement test scores (ASCA, 2010). When the school counsellor fails to assist the students to overcome these issues there is likelihood that students will not do well in their academic work. Poor academic performance has a lot of negative consequences such as dropping out of

school, suicidal thought and suicide, shame, rejection, neglect, drug abuse just to mention but few. Due to the problems stated earlier there is need to investigate the roles school counselling plays on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis. This is the rational of this study.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis. The study also examined influence of moderating variables of age, gender, years of experience and school type on the participants' responses. Based on the purpose the following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis?
2. What are the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students based on age?
3. What are the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students based on gender?
4. What are the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students based on years of experience?
5. What are the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students based on school-type?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study.

1. There is no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis on the basis of age.
2. There is no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of years of experience.
4. There is no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of school type.

Method

The research design adopted in the study is descriptive survey. The population comprised teachers in secondary schools in Kwara State. Purposive and



simple random sampling techniques were used to select 250 respondents that participated in the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select schools in Ilorin Metropolis to participate. Simple random sampling was used to select teachers from some schools to participate.

Instrument for data collection was the researchers' designed questionnaire titled 'Roles of School Counselling on Academic Activities (RSCAA). It was a Four-point-Likert type instrument with responses of SA= Strongly agree (4 points), A = Agree (3 points), D =Disagree (2 points) and SD = Strongly disagree (1 point). The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation and test re-test was used to ascertain the reliability. The instrument was

personally administered to the respondents and retrieved back by the researchers. The decision was any item in the questionnaire whose mean is 2.50 and above is attested to be role of counselling on academic activities and any item whose mean is less than 2.50 is not attested as the role of counselling on academic activities of the students.

Data collected was analyzed with mean and rank order, t-test and analysis of variance. Mean was used to analyze the data collected with questionnaire while t-test and analysis of variance were used to analyze the data collected for hypotheses testing. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: mean analysis and attestation of respondents on roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students

S/N	Roles of school counselling on academic activities are	Mean	Remark
1	school counselling helps students to achieve good academic record	3.89	Attested
2	helping to provide sense of belongingness of students and the community	2.55	Attested
3	creating and maintaining safe and inclusive school culture to enhance academic activities	2.81	Attested
4	organizing in-service training for teachers	2.14	Not attested
5	spearheading parent outreach through corroboration with the school	2.64	Attested
6	counselling them on socio-emotional behaviour that could mar their academic progress	2.96	Attested
7	creating a healthy school environment for academic activities	2.51	Attested
8	through systemic and programmatic methods school counselling prevents students from dropping out	3.29	Attested
9	reduces bullying in school	3.21	Attested
10	making teachers and administrators to work in teams to enforce policies	2.12	Not attested
11	helping students learn strategies and coping skill for use in different academic situations	3.20	Attested
12	counselling students on disciplinary matters	2.85	Attested
13	providing guidance on personal issues such as academic stress, anxiety and financial issues	2.86	Attested
14	making referral to outside agencies when need be	2.86	Attested
15	proving career information and exploration	2.74	Attested
16	helping teachers to schedule students and compute their grade point average	2.9	Not attested
17	proving counselling to students about post- secondary education	2.66	Attested
18	providing counselling to students regarding their academic program and progress	3.00	Attested
19	proving information to students about career options and opportunities	3.23	Attested



20	helping students that experienced traumatic events that could mar their academic activities	2.55	Attended
21	helping students to overcome academic problems in the school and out of school settings	2.79	Attended
22	assisting students in issues that could mar their academic academic work.	3.18	Attended

Table 1 shows the mean of each of the items. All the items except items 4, 10 and 16 had means that are below 2.50 bench mark, hence they are not attended as roles of school counselling on academic activities of the secondary school students in Ikorin Metropolis

Hypotheses Testing

Table 2: Analysis of variance on the Roles of School Counselling on academic activities of secondary school students on the basis age.

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	Cal. F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	3.717	2	1.858	.615	.542	Accepted
Within Groups	595.303	197	3.022			
Total	599.020	199				

The formulated null hypothesis is accepted because $p(2.197)=0.615$ $p=0.542$. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school

In the study, four null hypotheses were formulated in line with the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The results of tested hypotheses are presented as follows:

students on the basis of age. This indicates that age did not make the respondents differ in their responses on the roles of school counselling on the academic activities of the students.

Table 3: Mean, SD and t-test on the Roles of School Counselling on academic activities of secondary school students on the basis of gender.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal.t	Crit.t	p-value
Male	76	13.46	1.68	198	-3.48	1.97	0.001
Female	148	12.60	1.69				

Table 3 shows that for degrees of freedom (df) of 198, the calculated t-value of -3.48 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.97, with a corresponding p-value of 0.01 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance,

therefore the hypothesis is rejected. Gender influenced participant's responses on the roles of school counselling on academic activities of the students.

Table 4: Analysis of variance on the Roles of School Counselling on academic activities of secondary school students on the basis of years of experience

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	8.584	2	4.292	1.432	.241	Accepted
Within Groups	590.436	197	2.997			
Total	599.020	199				

The formulated null hypothesis is accepted because the significance p-value 0.241 is greater than 0.05 alpha level of (0.241 > 0.05). This indicates that there is no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students.

Therefore, years of experience has no significant influence on the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school in Ikorin metropolis.

Table 5: Mean, SD and t-test on the Roles of School Counselling on academic activities of secondary school student in Ikorin Metropolis based on school type

School type	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t	Crit. t	p-value
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Private	88	12.9545	1.687
Public	112	12.9107	1.778
		198	0.18 1.97 0.860

Table 5 shows that for degrees of freedom (df) of 198, the calculated t-value of 0.18 is less than the critical t-value of 1.97, and p-value of 0.860 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis is not rejected since the result is so. School type did not make the participants differ in their responses on the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that the roles of school counselling on academic activities are: helping students to achieve good academic record, preventing them from dropping out of school, exposing them to career opportunities, helping them to acquire skills and strategies to cope in different academic situations, assisting students to deal with issue that could mar their academic pursuit, providing them counselling on their academic progress, counselling them on socio-emotional issues that could mar their academic activities, making outside referral for them when there is need for that, among other roles. The finding might be so because these students understand their problems and know what should be done through counselling to assist them out of those problems. The finding of (Aluede & Imonikhe, 2002) supported the findings by discovering in a research that student's expectations of school counsellors are to assist in solving academic problems through developing study skills. Corroborating the finding Bethany (2016) argued that school counsellors are the leaders in creating a healthy academic environment.

The finding in hypothesis one showed that there is no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis on the basis of age. Age did not make the respondents differ in their responses on the roles of school counselling on academic activities. The finding might probably be so because irrespective of age teachers are aware that counselling assists students to do better in their academic activities. This finding seems to buttress the assertion of Marchetta (2011) who asserted that teachers and staff who had been in the field for longer periods do value certain role responsibilities, therefore know that school counsellors carry out these important roles of counselling based not only on age, but competence. Aluede and Imonikhe (2002) further supported this

finding through study that students reported that they expect school counsellors to assist them in solving academic problems by developing study skills. Students view the school counsellor's role as someone who has knowledge about the school curriculum and can provide information about educational and career opportunities. Students also confide in their school counsellors regarding personal/social problems.

Further finding in hypothesis two showed that there is a significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of students based on gender. This indicates that the respondents differed in their responses on the roles of school counselling on academic activities of the students based on gender. The finding might probably be so because though the respondents were teachers but being males and females may view issues differently due to different psychological dispositions. This finding is not supported by Okeh, (2006) who found in a study that there was no significant difference in the responses of participants in problems that hinder effective implementation of guidance and counselling service in a state in Nigeria.

The finding in hypothesis three showed that there was no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of the students based on years of experience. The finding might be so because teachers, irrespective of years of experience in teaching know that school counselling could make students do better in their academics. This finding is in tandem with (Aluede & Imonikhe, 2002) who discovered that teachers perceived that the roles of school counsellors are not based on years of experience.

Finding in hypothesis four revealed that there was no significant difference in the roles of school counselling on academic activities of students on the basis of school type. This indicates that respondents did not differ in their response on the roles of school counselling based on whether they teach in private or public school. Probably the finding was so because despite the fact that they teach in different school types, roles of school counselling are the same, so the same thing is obtainable in the schools.

Conclusion

The study investigated the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students in



Ilorin Metropolis. The study also examined influence of variables of age, gender, years of experience and school type. Findings of the study revealed that the roles of school counselling on academic activities of secondary school students are: making students to achieve good academic record, preventing them from dropping out of school, giving them information regarding information and options, providing with coping skills for use in different academic situation, providing them information regarding their academic progress, counselling them on socio-emotional behaviours that could jeopardize their academic pursuit, among other roles. Findings also showed that there was no significant difference in the roles of counselling on academic activities of the students based on age, years of experience and school type while there was significant difference based on gender.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. School counselling should be taken very serious in schools particularly nowadays when students see a lot of things that distract them from academic activities.
2. Enough school counsellors should be employed in schools to meet up with teeming population of students admitted in secondary schools.
3. School counsellors should not be given subjects to teach in addition to counselling because teaching will take part of the time required for counselling the students.
4. There should be periodic training and retraining of school counsellors for them to be effective in their profession.
5. Counsellors should not limit their counselling only to school environment but also out of school environment where the students retire after school hours.

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