

EFFECT OF COUNSELLING SERVICES ON DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR TENDENCIES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN IKOM EDUCATION ZONE OF CROSS RIVER STATE

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Abstract

This study adopted Correlational research design to examine the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services as it relates to the prevention of deviant behaviour tendency in secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone in Cross-River State. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The selection was carried out using multi-stage sampling procedure. A questionnaire titled "Counselling services and deviant behaviour tendency questionnaire (CSDBTQ)" The instrument was subjected to face validity by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation from the Faculty of Educational Foundation Studies, University of Calabar. Cronbach Alpha Reliability technique was used for estimating the degree of consistency of the sub scales and the coefficients ranging from .77-.89 were obtained. Pearson product moment correlation was adopted to test hypothesis at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed that, orientation Service, Counselling service and placement service does relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended, among others, that Counsellors Federal government should expand and equip existing counselling centers in schools and make them functional so that they can cater for staff and students alike.

Keywords: *Guidance, Counselling, Deviant, Behaviour*



Introduction

A country's overall development is inseparably attached to its system of education, since education is a light that shows mankind the correct path to bedrock for the development and progress of a nation. Education does not just bestow information, aptitudes and instils values, however it is additionally liable for building human capital which breeds, drives and sets mechanical development and monetary development. Education in its broadest significance is any means by which an individual gains knowledge, information and understanding or acquires attitudes and skills. As a foundation for human capital development, the educational system in Nigeria has faced dynamic and rapid changes that have had overwhelming effects on the learner, learning institutions and society at large.

Since independence in 1960, there have been numerous changes in policy formulation and directives. One of these is the introduction of Guidance and Counselling services provision at all levels of the education system. The policies on Guidance and Counselling are aimed at preparing young people to face challenges they may encounter in and out of the educational system. The function of educational Counselling is to provide opportunities for each student to reach his or her full potential in the areas of educational, vocational, social-personal, and emotional development. In order for students to realize this function, the secondary schools are expected to provide Guidance and Counselling Services (GCS) as an integral part of their education. Guidance and Counselling is an initiative that is aimed at

providing information services, orientation services, behavioural and discipline counselling as well as skills to impart self-awareness, career exploration and optimal use of students' potential for holistic growth and development.

Based on the definition, it can be deduced that Counselling is a process of utilizing professional skills by a person (Counsellor) to assist another (client) in a person to person relationship to achieve the resolution of general life problems, in order to attain proper development and functioning. General life problems here, refers to all aspects of the individual's life which include; personal, social, educational and vocational among others, as no single individual is said to be free from trouble or problem. When guidance and counselling services are provided they help prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the results of their choices and to be well-adjusted individuals capable not only of living productive lives, but are also prepared to contribute their quota to the development of their society, assisting both the students and their parents to develop educational plans that will help them plan their school work such as study habit, examination techniques and how to choose subjects, among others. The ability to make such intelligent choices is not innate but, like other abilities, must be developed for harmonious and secured school system.

According to Amadi, Okoroma-Asa and Anthony (2024) Deviant behaviours or acts can be described as acts or behaviours which negate the acceptable norms, values and standards of any given society. In every society, certain ways of life are unacceptable basically because they constitute impediments to the normal functioning of that society. Hence, everyone is expected to behave in a particular way that does not clash with recognized and acceptable standards and expectations. These are acts which in many societies are prohibited, some in public places, such as smoking. In some cases, possession of harmful weapons, such as knife, gun and other sharp objects with the intention to hurt, murder and generate violent reactions are referred to as more serious deviant behaviours. However, what constitutes deviant behaviour depends on a particular society. For instance, what is usually referred to as indecent dressing in Africa may not be in the western world. Among young persons, the tendency to commit deviancy is usually common due to several reasons such as youthful exuberance, delinquent tendencies, and poor youth culture. In Nigeria for example, poor youth culture has been responsible for cultism among youths, robbery, sexual harassments, rape, and most rampant is examination malpractices.

Zuković and Slijepčević (2020) mentioned that guidance and counselling ought to form a crucial part of any country's education system. It aids to shape a learner's behaviour and instill proper discipline in them. Good guidance assists them attain their targets, well directed and counselled learners know what to do and how to do things in the best possible way (Paul et. Al, 2019; Opara et al., 2020; Ihekoronye et al., 2020; Maree & Che, 2020). Several students are restless and have the tendency to stir up strife or violence at every slight provocation and do not have the appropriate orientation from family and the society.

Onyekpa, (2021), carried out a study aimed at ascertaining the utilization of orientation service for handling problem behaviours of undergraduates in public universities in South East, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study consisted of all the 80 counsellors comprising of 25 male counsellors and 55 female counsellors currently serving in all the ten public owned universities in South East, Nigeria. The hypotheses were tested using t-test statistic. The findings showed that school counsellors utilize orientation service for handling problem behaviours of undergraduates in public universities in South East, Nigeria to a great extent.

Also, Nwobodo and Nnadi, (2019), carried out a study aimed to investigate the impact of counselling services on the deviant behaviour tendency of secondary school students in Udi Education Zone. The study adopted survey research design. Simple random sampling

technique was used in selecting 253 SS2 students from 4 intact classes in 6 randomly selected schools. Out of the 253 students used for the study, 101 are males while 152 are females. A questionnaire instrument developed by the researcher and validated by experts was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha technique and its reliability index was found to be 0.88. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significant level. One of the results of the finding showed that guidance and counselling has great influence on the improvement of students study habit. More so, it influences the ability of students to manage their time effectively in order to enhance their deviant behaviour tendency. State Ministries of Education and school principals should ensure that guidance and counselling units are established in schools and also guidance counsellors should apply all necessary skills and techniques during counselling sessions.

In a different study carried out by Rashed, Ashraf, Osman, and Ashraf, (2019), aimed to diagnose the mediation effect of placement between program quality, industrial link, student satisfaction, deviant behaviour tendency and service quality in the circumstance of tertiary education in Malaysia. Using the Cue Utilization theory, the proposed model is tested employing data collected from 173 international students who are pursuing study at University Utara Malaysia through the convenient sampling approach. The analysis is conducted through the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The goodness of fit model is ensured through RMSEA (< 0.08), CFI (> 0.90), and Chisq/Df ratio (< 5.0) fit indices. The findings reveal that placement mediates fully between industrial link and service quality of education. However, placement does not confirm any significant mediation effects between program quality, student satisfaction deviant behaviour tendency, and service quality. Results give the impression to suggest that program quality and student satisfaction are influencing service quality directly and significantly. The findings of this study have potentially valuable implications for service quality improvement in higher education context of Malaysia by reinforcing placement, program quality, industrial link and student satisfaction. The results signify amply by approving the mediating influence of placement about industrial link and service quality of education respecting international students.

Deviant behaviour is gauged by the level of the learners' conformity to the rules, regulations, and adherence to constituted authority. It is the leading priority for the school administration. Stakeholders in education have insisted that the objective of education might not be attained without the incorporation of well trained counsellors. Elbedour, Alqahtani, Rihan, Bawalsah, Booker-Ammah, and Turner (2020) reported that counselling programmes plays a crucial role in preventing educational, individual, social, psychological and emotional issues. In some cases, there is conflict between the school heads, teachers and the students and these risks the consideration of security in various schools. Learners who display restiveness and who are always quick to disturb the peace are tough to manage. Lack of proper discipline, substance use, non-challant mindset of the learners has been observed to be the characteristics of these group of students. Because of this, learners require the services of specialist counsellor in school.

The most important outcome of a guidance programme is desirable change in the behaviour of students, such as improved school attendance, better study habits, better scholastic achievement, lesser involvement in violence, fewer scholastic failures, lower drop-out rate, better educational planning, and better home-school relations (Nedelev & Anjum, 2022; Ogunode et al., 2024).

Effective guidance and counselling programmes balance corrective, preventive and developmental functions. In collaboration with parents, school administrators and teachers, the school counselor can effectively achieve the goals of counselling. It aids to shape a learner's behaviour and instill proper discipline in them. Good guidance assists them attain their targets, well directed and counselled learners know what to do and how to do things in

the best possible way (Ogunode & Paul, 2023; Maree & Che, 2020). Several students behave poorly due to the lack of appropriate attitude to study and do not have the appropriate orientation from family and the society. This prompted the study to investigate the effect of Counselling services on deviant behaviour tendencies among secondary school students in Ikom education zone of Cross River State.

Statement of the Problem

Today's children will be the leaders of tomorrow. Children are generally expected by society to be of good moral values and character within and out of school, this goes a long way to guarantee their success in school and in life. Unfortunately, one of the major social problems in our schools is the reported increase in the number of students involved in aggressive and violent behaviours daily. From the researcher's observation of some schools, it is very common to find students nowadays engaged in deviant acts such as stealing, drug abuse, dodging from classes, violence, fighting with their teachers and even with the school administrators.

A recent case reported on national television (2021) happened in Cross-River where a female, teenage senior secondary school student almost killed her teacher. Despite the government efforts to enforce discipline in schools such as the increase in the number of discipline masters, mistresses and Counsellors per school, unrest has continued in secondary schools with a new dimension such as killing. There seems to be lack of effective alternative strategy to contain students' disruptive behaviour. Students fighting with teachers, among themselves, and all sorts of deviant acts are common phenomena in Nigeria schools nowadays. It has been seen among students in schools that deviant students suffer disproportionate numbers of suspension and expulsions and have poor academic performance. The researcher also observed that deviant students avoid academic engagements; have low completion rates and exhibit decreased school attendance. Some end up being dismissed and become nuisance to our communities by indulging in acts such as armed robbery and scamming thus threatening the peace and security of the communities. Some of these deviant acts such as smoking, drunkenness, arm robbery and scamming are claiming the lives of our future leaders. This thus motivated the researchers to carry out this study on the role of guidance and counselling services in the fight against deviant behaviour in schools.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to find out the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services as it relates to the prevention of deviant behaviour tendency in secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone in Cross-River state, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought;

- i. To investigate the role of the orientation service as it relates to the prevention of deviant behaviour in secondary schools.
- ii. To determine the role of the Counselling services in secondary schools.
- iii. To find out the role of the Placement service as it relates to the prevention of deviant behaviour in secondary schools.

Research questions

- i. What is the role of the orientation service as it relates to preventing of deviant behaviour in secondary schools?
- ii. What role does the Counselling service play as it relate in preventing of deviant behaviour in secondary schools?
- iii. What is the role of the Placement service as it relates in preventing of deviant behaviour in secondary schools?

Statement of hypotheses

The following hypotheses were stated to guide the study:

Ho1: Orientation Services does not significantly relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour.

Ho2: Counselling Services does not significantly relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour.

Ho3: Placement Services does not significantly relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour.

Methodology

The study adopted Correlational research design. The population for this study consisted of four thousand, nine hundred and fifty - two (4952) JSS 3 students, multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted in selecting seven hundred and fourteen (714) students from 27 schools comprising of three hundred and fifty three (353) male and three hundred and sixty one (361) female representing 24.25% of the total population. Firstly, the stratified sampling method was used to divide the study area into six strata in accordance with the number of local government educational authorities (LGEA's). By implication, Abi is stratum 1, Boki 2, Etung 3, Ikom 4, Obubra 5 and Yakurr 6. The six (6) strata has a total of 112 public secondary schools. This technique takes into accounts all heterogeneous unit of the population in selecting the sample. The base of stratification was the local government areas (LGAs) in the study. The researcher further purposely selected 10% of the schools in the selected LGAs for the study. A questionnaire titled, "Counselling services and deviant behaviour tendency questionnaire (CSDBTQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was divided into three (3) sections (A, B and C). Section A generates information on personal data of the respondent such as age of student, name of school and gender. Section B was made up of items "Guidance and counselling services" having seven sub sections with six (6) items each covering the effectiveness of the Guidance and counselling services present in the schools. While section C elicited information on deviant behaviour tendency of the students which is made up of ten (10) items. Data was analysed using Pearson product moment correlation. The instrument was subjected to face validity by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation from the Faculty of Educational Foundation Studies, University of Calabar, Calabar. Cronbach Alpha Reliability technique was used for estimating the degree of consistency of the sub scales and the coefficients ranging from .77-.89 were obtained; the instrument was adjudged as reliable.

Presentation of results

Ho1: Orientation Services does not significantly relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour.

Data in table 1 present the results of Pearson product moment correlation analysis showing the relationship between orientation service and students' tendency to deviant behaviour in secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Table 1:

Pearson product moment correlation analysis showing the relationship between orientation service and students' tendency to deviant behaviour (N=714)

Variable	X	sd.	r-Cal	P-Value
Orientation service	19.50	3.31	.283	.000
Students' tendency to deviant behavior	36.15	2.20		

Significant at .05 level, r- Critical = .123607, df= 712

The result of the analysis in table 1 shows that the calculated r value .283 is greater than the r critical or table value of .123607 at .05 level of significance with 712 degree of freedom, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant weak positive relationship existing between orientation service and students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. That is the better the orientation service provided, the more improved the students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria, and vice versa. By this result, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was upheld. This therefore, shows that orientation service has a positive relationship with students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Ho2: Counselling service does not significantly relate with students' tendency to deviant behaviour.

Data in table 2 present the results of Pearson product moment correlation analysis showing the relationship between counselling service and students' tendency to deviant behaviour in secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Table 2

Pearson product moment correlation analysis showing the relationship between counselling service and students' tendency to deviant (N=714)

Variable	X	sd.	r-Cal	P-Value
Counselling service	20.47	2.19	.730	.000
Students' tendency to deviant behavior	36.15	2.20		

Significant at .05 level, r- Critical = .123607, df= 712

The result of the analysis in table 2 shows that the calculated r value.730 is greater than the r critical or table value of .123607 at .05 level of significance with 712 degree of freedom, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significantly strong positive relationship existing between counselling service and students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. That is the better the counselling service, the more improved the students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria, and vice versa. By this result, the

null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was upheld. This therefore, shows that counselling service has a positive relationship with students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Ho3: Placement service does not significantly relate with students' tendency to deviant behaviour.

Data in table 3 present the results of Pearson product moment correlation analysis showing the relationship between placement service and students' tendency to deviant behaviour in secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Table 3

Pearson product moment correlation analysis showing the relationship between placement service and students' tendency to deviant behavior (N=714)

Variable	X	sd.	r-Cal	P-Value
Placement service	21.54	1.59	.788	.000
Students' tendency to deviant behavior	36.15	2.20		

Significant at .05 level, r- Critical = .123607, df= 712

The result of the analysis in table 3 shows that the calculated r value.788 is greater than the r critical or table value of .123607 at .05 level of significance with 712 degree of freedom, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significantly strong positive relationship existing between placement service and students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. That is the better the placement service rendered to the students, the more improved the students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria, and vice versa. By this result, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was upheld. This therefore, shows that placement service has a positive relationship with students' tendency to deviant behaviour in Ikom Education Zone Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The results of this study in relation to the three hypotheses were discussed herein: In table 1, the result of the first hypothesis indicated that, orientation Service does relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour. This study agrees with the findings Onyekpa, (2021), that aimed at ascertaining the utilization of orientation service for handling problem behaviours of undergraduates in public universities in South East, Nigeria. The findings showed that school counsellors utilize orientation service for handling problem behaviours of undergraduates in public universities in South East, Nigeria to a great extent, The finding also revealed also that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female school counsellors utilization of orientation, services for handling problem behaviours of undergraduates in public universities in South East, Nigeria.

In table 2, the result indicated that, counselling Service does relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour. This study agrees with the findings Nwobodo and Nnadi, (2019), carried out a study aimed to investigate the impact of counselling services on the deviant behaviour tendency of secondary school students in Udi Education Zone. The

study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. One of the results of the finding showed that guidance and counselling has great influence on the improvement of deviant behaviour tendency of secondary school students. This study also disagrees with the findings of Anaeto and Ajiibo (2023), that carried out a study aimed to examine the influence of counselling services on the deviant behaviour tendency of Secondary School students in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State. The findings from the study showed that; School counsellors assist students to relate the subjects they offer to their career choice. There is no a relationship between deviant behaviour tendency and the level of effectiveness of guidance and counselling offered in school.

The result in table 3 shows that placement service does relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour. This study agrees with the findings McCann, and Hewitt, (2022), examined the influence of deviant behaviour tendency on students' willingness and ability to complete work placements. Design/methodology/approach. The results indicate that deviant behaviour tendency has a significant influence on the decision to include a work placement option at enrolment.

The result agrees also with the findings of the study Rashed, Ashraf, Osman, and Ashraf, (2019), aimed to diagnose the mediation effect of placement between program quality, industrial link, student satisfaction, deviant behaviour tendency and service quality in the circumstance of tertiary education in Malaysia. Results give the impression to suggest that program quality and student satisfaction are influencing service quality directly and significantly.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study it was concluded that counselling services does relate to preventing students' tendency to deviant behaviour. This can be done by improving on the orientation, counselling and placement services given to students in other to reduce or prevent deviant behaviours.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Federal government should expand and equip existing counselling centers in schools and make them functional so that they can cater for staff and students alike.
- ii. Government should build a supportive schooling environment for students in secondary schools through mentorship and modeled learning strategy to reduce their tendency to deviant behavior.
- iii. Frequent orientation programme with improved quality should be organized for students alongside the provision of suitable school environment and motivation such as modern learning strategy, it is to reduce their tendency to deviant behaviour.

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