

Assessing Counselling Needs of Students With Emotional Disorders in Public Secondary Schools in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the counselling needs of students with emotional disorders in public secondary schools in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. A sample of 89 emotionally disordered students were drawn through purposive sampling method in public secondary schools in the area were used for the study. Two instruments titled "Students Needs Assessment Questionnaire" (SNAQ) and Students Disorders Questionnaire" (SDQ) were used for data collection. Face and content validities of the instruments were ensured by experts. Test-retest method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument and the reliability coefficient of (SNAQ) was 0.81 and (SDQ) was 0.79 respectively. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while independent t-test and one way ANOVA which were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance were used to test the hypotheses. It is found that female students are more emotionally disordered and also need counselling than their male counterparts. Male and female students do not differ significantly in the counselling needs with different emotional disorders including depression, anxiety, trauma and stress. Based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations were made.

KEYWORDS: *Counselling needs, emotional disorders and counselling.*

INTRODUCTION

Counselling services are needed in secondary schools to take care of students' personality disorders and apparent ignorance about careers. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2008) counselling services are seen as assistance given to individuals or group of individuals in dealing with common and recurring personal, educational, vocational needs and problems.

It is in realization of the needs of counselling services in schools that government organized a national seminar of educational experts in 1973 to deliberate on national education, using the national curriculum conference objectives of 1969 and 1970 as basis and guiding spirit to make recommendations which were later made to undergo some modification by the three major national bodies responsible for educational matters in the country. These bodies are the joint consultative committee on education (J.C.C), and the federal Ministry of Education of education (F.M.E). The result of the modification brought about the national policy on education issued in 1977 and revised in 1981. In that policy the Federal Government made the importance and needs of guidance and counselling clear.

Chukwu (2019), Isaac (2021), Nwanfor(2019), Karen (2011), Naayaana (2020), Stone (2014), and Ihiegbulem (2000) and other psychologists have also stressed the need for counselling services in schools. They opined that such services will help the nation to curb the excess of our young school

children today. Against this background, school counsellors must be actively engaged in the systematic efforts of molding and redirecting the values and attitude of children as they pass through school or other institutions of learning. It is evident in our Society today that there are people who could have one thing or the other but failed because they were not exposed to guidance and counselling. Guidance is the process of an individual to understand themselves and the world. Counselling is the help given to a client. Guidance is directives that provide equal information for students about education, vocation and themselves. The purpose of guidance and counselling in meeting the needs of the individual is based on the assumption that individuals who understand themselves and their world will become more effective, more productive and human being.

Essentially, guidance is seen for the adolescence as a greater degree of self-discovery and fulfilment through educational experience that are meaningful to them. Expressed differently, guidance in education aims to strengthen the uniqueness of the students by realizing the need and native potential to react freely and individually to the knowledge and opportunities transmitted by his school and non-school environment. Guidance and counselling should be seen as a specialized helping profession that constitutes an important aspect of educational services. Many educators have expressed opinions that is other for today's secondary school student to grow-up meaningfully. There must be help for them to cope with their social and emotional problems. These problems play an enormous role in our day-to-day lives and can contribute in major ways to the development or the underdevelopment of the student's behavior. This is why the need for counselling is a necessity.

In fact, counsellors should be trained and posted to secondary schools to help the students identify their various needs especially their academic and emotional problems. It should be noted that student needs and their emotional disorders do not start automatically, however, these needs are often neglected at the early stages in the secondary schools. Sometimes there is a buildup which could be traced back to the family/home and early childhood. In support of this view, psychologist Herber (2018), Duane and Sydney (2021), Clement (2017) described child growth as a continuous process that must be free from emotional tussles thereby making the needs of counselling vital in schools.

Against this background, a situation where most secondary schools have no trained counsellor to help the adolescents identify their needs is therefore pathetic. This study therefore aims to identify the counselling needs of the students as a panacea to emotional disorder. Counselling needs is the process of helping the individual to discover and develop their educational, vocational, and psychological potentialities. Again, this study also asserts that the students require counselling to meet up their needs because counselling at the secondary school level is heavily orientated towards vocational guidance, occupational information and educational decisions.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Counselling is a guidance service that every student (whether bright or dull) needs. For a school system to function very effectively the need of a counsellor is paramount. It is expected for the counsellor to meet the different types of students counselling needs and emotional problems. The challenges faced by students are enormous and these impede their academic achievements. Most students in secondary schools need to be counselled appropriately in terms of their needs and emotional problems for optimum academic achievements. Considering the challenges associated with learning, the counsellor need to work with the teachers in order to identify the students with different emotional disorders and counselling needs.

Therefore, the counsellor ought to create awareness by letting the students know the importance of the counselling unit, so that students with counselling needs and emotional problems can see the counsellor for counselling. It is expected that the counsellor will engage the students on one-on-one or group discussion to resolve the challenges faced by the students on a daily basis. But

unfortunately, most of the students are ignorant about this fact that counsellors are there to meet their needs. It was as a result of this problem that National Policy on Education emphasized guidance and counselling in secondary schools to be provided by trained counsellors.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to find out the counselling needs of students emotional disorders. In specific terms, the study achieved the following objectives:

1. To identify the various counselling needs of students emotional disorders.
2. To identify the extent counselling needs of students with emotional disorders differ based on their problems: Depression, Anxiety, Trauma and Stress.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the counselling needs of students with emotional disorders?
2. To what extent do counselling needs of students with emotional disorders differ based on their type of disorders: Depression, Anxiety, Trauma and Stress?

HYPOTHESIS

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the counselling needs of students with emotional disorders based on their gender.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the counselling needs of students different emotional disorders (Depression, Anxiety, Trauma and Stress).

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all the 89 emotional disordered students in the (13) Junior and Senior public secondary schools in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. A sample of 89 emotionally disordered students were drawn through purposive sampling techniques and used for the study. Two instruments titled "Students needs Assessment Questionnaire "(SNAQ) and "Student's Disorders Questionnaire" (SDQ) were used for the data collection. Three experts in measurement and Evaluation determined the face and content validities of the instruments: using test-retest method with a sample of 20 emotionally disordered students. The reliability coefficients of (SNAQ) was 0.81 and (SDQ) was 0.79. The researcher personally administered the instruments with the assistance of two school teachers in each of the schools, who were trained on what to do. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using independent t-test and one way ANOVA at 0.05 Alpha level of significance. All the scores that fell within and above the Criterion mean of 2.50 were accepted while those that fell below the Criterion mean of 2.40 were not accepted.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the counseling needs of students with emotional disorders?

Table 1: Mean scores of respondents for the various counselling needs.

S/N	TYPES OF COUNSELLING NEEDS	MALE (X)	STANDARD DEVIATION STD	CRITERION MEAN	RESULT
A	EDUCATIONAL NEEDS				
1	I must do my class work or examination on my own.	3.529	0.624		Accepted
2	I have to concentrate while studying.	3.235	0.562		Accepted
3	I need to develop interest in school work.	3.588	0.507		Accepted
4	I need to know all federal and state owned universities in my state.	3.765	0.437	2.5	
5	I must learn to cope with examination anxiety.	3.882	0.332		Accepted
B	VOCATIONAL NEEDS				
6	I need to know all the skill acquisition centers in my area.	3.706	0.470		Accepted
7	I like a career that has a bright future.	3.530	0.514		Accepted
8	I always want to know about industries; firms and factories in my area.	3.411	0.712		Accepted
9	I need to know my abilities.	3.941	0.243		Accepted
10	I need to earn money immediately after my secondary school.	3.471	0.717		Accepted
11	I need to know the type of work I would like to do.	3.824	0.529		Accepted
12	I need to identify the type of local trades in my area.	3.765	0.562		Accepted
C	PERSONAL NEEDS				
13	I do not have enough time to relax.	4.000	0.000		Accepted
14	I value myself as an individual no matter the condition.	3.176	0.957		Accepted
15	I like to be bold.	3.353	0.606		Accepted
16	I need to move together with people.	2.706	1.047		Accepted
17	I like to share things or feelings with others.	4.000	0.000		Accepted
18	I need to increase self-confidence.	3.882	0.332		Accepted
19	I like to form positive concepts about myself.	3.588	0.618		Accepted
D	SOCIAL NEEDS				
20	I like to be very effective anywhere I find myself.	3.882	0.332		Accepted
21	I like to express myself.	3.353	0.493		Accepted
22	I like to make suitable friends.	3.294	0.920		Accepted

23	I need to accept people the way they are.	3.941	0.243		Accepted
24	I need to develop healthy personalities/interpersonal relationships.	3.647	0.243		Accepted
25	I like to appreciate and recognize good people.	4.000	0.000		Accepted

Table 1: It reveals educational, vocational, personal and social needs, and attracted mean scores that were above the criterion mean of 2.5 from all the categories of respondents. The results indicates that the respondents expressed a high level of need for educational, personal and social counselling. Again table 1 also shows the major areas of students counselling needs and they include personal counselling needs and social counselling need. On the items of personal counselling, their major interest is in "I do not have enough time to relax" and "I like to share things I'm feeling with others" with a mean score of 4.000.

Research question 2:

To what extent do counselling needs of students with emotional disorders differ based on their problems: Depression, Anxiety, Trauma and Stress?

S/ N	ITEMS	DEPRESSION			ANXIETY			TRAUMA			STRESS		
		X	ST D	R/C	X	ST D	R/C	X	ST D	R/C	X	ST D	R/C
1.	I cannot tackle a piece of academic work with the usual speed	2.9 20	1.0 38	Accept ed	3.3 23	0.9 45	Accept ed	3.1 54	0.9 87	Accept ed	2.9 00	1.1 19	Accept ed
2.	I usually experience some shoddiness in the ability to think or concentrate	3.1 20	1.0 54	Accept ed	3.3 87	0.6 07	Accept ed	2.3 85	1.3 25	Reject ed	2.6 00	1.2 31	Accept ed
3.	I cannot sleep at will, always having some feelings of restlessness	2.3 60	1.1 86	Accept ed	2.8 06	1.1 95	Accept ed	2.7 69	0.9 27	Accept ed	3.0 00	1.1 46	Rejecte d
4.	I am always sad even in the face of things that could excite me	2.8 80	1.0 13	Accept ed	2.1 61	1.1 28	Accept ed	2.0 77	1.1 88	Reject ed	2.6 50	1.2 26	Accept ed
5.	I often relapse into a feeling of low esteem	3.0 40	0.9 78	Accept ed	2.5 48	1.1 50	Accept ed	2.3 08	1.2 51	Accept ed	2.1 50	0.7 67	Accept ed
6.	I cannot stand the thought of failure	3.8 00	0.4 08	Accept ed	3.8 71	0.4 28	Accept ed	4.0 00	3.0 00	Accept ed	2.8 00	1.0 56	Accept ed
7.	I am always	3.2	0.9	Accept	3.2	0.9	Accept	3.1	0.8	Accept	2.1	1.0	Rejecte

	tensed up or disturb when asked to answer a question or when asked to address the public	80	80	ed	90	38	ed	54	99	ed	50	21	d
8.	I am always afraid that something dangerous may happen	2.1 20	1.3 64	Accept ed	2.3 87	1.2 02	Rejecte d	3.6 92	0.6 30	Accept ed	3.0 00	1.0 26	Accept ed
9.	I am always worried about self esteem	3.2 00	1.0 00	Rejecte d	2.7 42	1.1 54	Accept ed	3.3 08	0.9 47	Accept ed	2.4 50	1.2 76	Rejecte d
10.	I cannot relax if a problem is still pending	3.9 60	0.2 00	Accept ed	3.9 68	0.1 80	Accept ed	3.9 23	0.2 77	Accept ed	3.0 50	1.0 50	Accept ed
11.	I often broad over a past shocking experience	2.7 00	1.0 91	Accept ed	2.1 94	1.1 38	Rejecte d	3.7 69	0.5 99	Accept ed	2.8 00	1.1 52	Accept ed
12.	I get easily frightened whenever I remember a dangerous experience	2.4 80	1.2 29	Rejecte d	3.7 10	0.4 6	Accept ed	3.3 85	0.9 61	Accept ed	2.7 00	1.0 31	Accept ed
13.	I often relapse into a state of physical and mental alertness	2.0 40	1.2 07	Rejecte d	2.3 23	1.1 66	Rejecte d	2.8 46	1.2 14	Accept ed	3.2 50	0.8 51	Rejecte d
14.	I cannot be left alone over a period of time (it is usually advised that people should be in my company).	2.0 80	1.1 87	Rejecte d	1.9 35	1.1 53	Rejecte d	3.5 38	0.7 76	Accept ed	3.2 00	0.8 94	Rejecte d
15.	I often get irritated while walking with my peers.	3.8 08	1.0 38	Accept ed	2.0 97	1.0 12	Rejecte d	2.4 62	1.2 66	Reject ed	2.8 50	0.9 33	Accept ed
16.	I feel uninterested in almost all school activities most of the day nearly	3.3 20	0.8 52	Accept ed	1.7 42	0.9 30	Rejecte d	2.2 31	1.1 66	Reject ed	3.1 50	0.8 13	Rejecte d

	every day												
17	I feel a significant lack of appetite most of the day for nearly everyday	1.960	0.935	Rejected	3.645	0.486	Accepted	2.385	1.044	Rejected	2.950	0.887	Rejected
18	I feel highly agitated at the slightest distraction	2.840	1.068	Accepted	2.323	1.166	Rejected	1.615	0.768	Rejected	2.350	1.137	Accepted
19	I often experience lack interest in peer activities tiredness, fatigue, gloomy feelings: that cannot be traced to any perceivable reason	3.480	0.779	Accepted	0.357	0.769	Accepted	3.231	0.832	Accepted	2.500	1.255	Accepted

Table 2 above shows all the different types of emotional disorders faced by students. It also segments the disorders into groups and show how the students are affected by each of the disorders. Again, the table also reveals the student's major areas of counselling needs. On the table of depression, the following items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18 and 19 were all accepted by the students and their areas of counselling needs. But items 3, 9, 12, 13, 14 and 17 were rejected and they do not need counselling in such areas.

However, the table of anxiety shows that the following items 1,2,3,5,6,7,9,10,13,17 and 19 were also accepted by students and their areas of counselling needs. While items 4, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 18 were rejected that they do not need counselling in such areas.

Then, the table of trauma have identified 13,6, 8, 9 ,10, 11, 12, 13 ,14 and 19 as the areas that the students need counselling and items 2,4,5, 15,16, 17 and 18 as areas that they do not need counselling.

Again, the table of stress shows that the following items were accepted 1, 2 ,3, 4, 5, 6 ,8 ,10 ,11, 12,15, 18 and 19 as areas that the students need counselling and items 3,7,9, 13, 14 ,16 and 17 as areas they do not need counselling.

HYPOTHESIS 1

H₀1: There is no significant difference in the counselling needs of students emotional disorders based on their gender.

VARIABLES	N	X	SD	DF	T-CAL	T-CRIT	RESULT
MALE	30	3.511	0.299	87	0.650	1.980	Sig
FEMALE	59	3.630	0.288				

Table 2.3 present the t-test analysis of the mean score of male and female students. The table shows the calculated t-value 0.650 as against the critical t-value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance with 97

degree of freedom. Since the t-value of 0.650 is less than the critical t-value of 1.980 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is therefore, accepted. There is no sufficient evidence to reject it. It follows then that male and female students do not differ significantly in their counselling needs.

HYPOTHESIS 2

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the counselling needs of students with different emotional disorders (Depression, Anxiety, Trauma and Stress).

Table 2.4 One-way analysis of variance summary table of counselling needs of students with different emotional disorders (Depression Anxiety Trauma and Stress).

SOURCE	SUM OF SQ.	DIFFERENCE	MEAN SQ	F-CAL	F-CRIT	DECISION
Between Group	298.6309	3	99.5436	0.3292	2.70	Rejected
Within Group	24192.9287	80	302.4116	-	-	
Total	2449.15595	83	-	-	-	

Since the calculated F-value of 0.3292 is less than the critical f-value of 2.70 at 0.50 level of significance, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of students with different emotional disorders (Depression, Anxiety, Trauma and Stress).

DISCUSSION

The study sought to examine the counselling needs of students with emotional disorders. The result indicated that all the areas of educational, vocational and personal/social counselling needs of students were all accepted by the emotional disordered students. This finding corroborated the view of the following experts: Nwanfor (2019), Karen (2011), Naayaana (2020), Stone (2014) and Ihiegbulem (2000), they highlight areas of educational, vocational and personal/social counselling needs of secondary school students which are in consonance with the opinion of some other experts.

As a result, research question two was posed to examine to what extent do counselling needs of students with emotional disorders differs based on their problems: Depression, Anxiety, Trauma and Stress. On the issue of depression, the students accepted that they need counselling in the listed areas. This is strongly supported by Herber (2018) that says depression is manipulated by misery, sleeplessness, social withdrawal, loss of interest and lack of concentration which may lead to under achievement and persistent physical complaints. Anxiety, all the accepted items, indicates their counselling needs. This supports Duane and Sydney (2005) that says anxiety serves as a warning signal to the person that all is not as it should be within the personality. This is why some experts called anxiety the Shadow of intelligence.

On traumatic items, the areas of acceptance were their areas of counselling needs. Clement (2017) supported the claim that mood disorder in students be more of irritability than sadness.

CONCLUSION

The paper assessed counselling needs and types of emotional disorders among students in public secondary schools in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. The needs are educational, vocational and personal/social in nature. Each need has its unique role to play in the overall success of the students and school programs. The emotional disorders of the students were identified to be depression, anxiety, trauma and stress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings of the study the following recommendations are made:

1. Counsellors should organize programmes for the students that will enable them to overcome their emotional challenges.
2. Government should setup guidance and counselling units in schools that will take care of the needs of students especially when they emotionally down.
3. Teachers should work to have a good relationship with their students so that they can know when the students need counselling.
4. The educational system should try ensure that every students should make the best of himself by giving him the help he needs to bring about his fullest development. This perhaps, will be basis on which the society will be organized.

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