

EVALUATION OF COUNSELLING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION IN SOME SELECTED NIGER DELTA NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

The extent of institutional compliance with the minimum standard requirements (standard performance indicators) for the implementation of counselling and human development programmes in Nigeria Universities, vis-a-viz, Niger Deltan Universities was carefully evaluated using the set of the NUC minimum standard requirements. To illicit the expected information the institutional self-assessment for universities (NUC instrument for the institutional self-assessment) was used. For the data analysis, descriptive statistic was used. Revelation from the results showed deficiencies in the provision of required manpower and equipment materials. This means that there is no effective or efficient service delivery in the counselling centres. Again, in most of the surveyed universities, the NUC standard minimum requirements were not met. As such NUC was enjoined by this study to enforce compliance of the minimum standard through accreditation exercise for better counselling and human development programmes in these Niger Deltan Universities in particular and similar institutions nation wide.

Key word: *NUC (National Universities Commission), OPI (Operational performance Index), RPI (Resource Performance Index) and CSR (Counsellor Students Ratio).*

During the 12th and 13th centuries, the earliest universities, especially Paris, Bologna and Oxford, there were medieval standard set up and they were maintained. More yearning for reforms came in the 1800s through the 1900s when the revolution of science became the order of the day globally. However, these reforms were not peculiar to universities alone, but all spheres of life generally.

Of course, the educational sector was not left out in terms of structuring and restructuring and so a more expedient means of attaining these restructuring gave birth to other better objectives of education.

Guidance and Counseling Programme and the National Policy on Education.

The national policy on education of 6-3-3-4 took the place of the former called 6-5-2-3 after the civil way. According to NERC, (1980) in Emiloju (2012)” the new senior secondary school proposed in the federal republic of Nigeria national policy on education is an innovation of the present system which is a five year course followed by a 2-year higher school certificate course, neither of which is employment oriented. Both aspects appear to prepare for the higher institutions in a number of disciplines providing university graduates with no supporting intermediate personnel, therefore limiting their productivity. Furthermore, the range of disciplines the students could pursue in the university is equally restricted and particularly deficient in mathematical, scientific, technological and agricultural disciplines. To redress the situation both at the higher institutions and the secondary schools, students into the senior secondary schools as well as into teacher training and crafts (NERC:29).

The aim of this policy was to create the structure of 6-3-6 system so as to diversify the educational structure of the old and to make the Junior secondary vocational and technical and that of the senior secondary academically inclined. Then, the restructuring of the educational systemic came with the 6-3-3-4 with the inclusion of guidance and counseling as a compulsive curriculum.

Infact, the critical role and inclusion of guidance and counseling in the national policy of education (NPE, 2013) was paramount so as to attain qualitative and functional education across the country. It was expected that the implementation of guidance and counselling programme will grease the overall success of Nigeria educational system. This was highly corroborated by the NPE (2013) which states that, “the national policy on education appreciates that fact that for our educational system to succeed guidance and counselling has a major role to play. That the transition from one stage to the next stage of the system will be made easier by the assistance of guidance counsellors. The educational system has continuous assessment as its bedrock and it is essential that adequate cumulative records must be kept. The keeping of these cumulative records is one of the major functions for the counsellors. These and other several functions are expected to be performed by the counsellor for the successful implementation of the 6-3-3-4 system of education.

Therefore, for the country to have quality education, the introduction of guidance and counselling programme in the school systems as an educational service is a necessity.

The Policy Implementation Guidelines in Nigerian Universities and the National Universities Commission (NUC)

In 1985, the Federal Military Government Decree No. 16 says that “Education National Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institutions” should establish national Universities commission. The body was a financial co-ordinator between the government and the universities. That is, it should also lay down minimum standards for all universities and other institutions of higher learning. The decree also empowered NUC to accredit degree programmes of all universities, i.e harmonization of programmes.

The NUC was necessary so as to yield to the 1998 world declaration on higher education (WDHE) which opted for a global effort to improve on the delivery of higher education in every country of the world; (Arijesuyo, 2012).

As a result of the above, NUC in March, 2007 established the “department of student support service” charged with the responsibility of developing and deploying career management initiatives so that students can develop critical life skills, make informed future decisions and plan/implement social responsibility and advocacy programmes. That this will eliminate the current social ills in Nigerian Universities system (NUC; 2011). This department, after consultation with relevant bodies came out with operational guidelines and institutional assessment instruments for monitoring, evaluation and accrediting “Counselling and Human Development Programmes” and other support services in all Universities nationwide.

This research work therefore is mapped out to assess the extent to which Nigerian Universities are coping with the minimum guidance (performance indicator), for counselling and human development programmes in these selected universities in the Niger delta region of the country.

Statement of the Problem

So as to enforce compliance of Nigerian Universities in line with the National policy on Education (2013) because of the importance of guidance and counselling, NUC made some benchmark statements for monitoring and evaluation of counselling and human development programme implementation nation-wide. Hence this research work investigated the extent of compliance by Nigerian

Universities with the policy guidelines (quality assurance) laid down by the National universities commission.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this research work;

1. Does the available manpower resource fulfils the minimum standard requirements for counselling and human development programmes in the universities?
2. Do the facilities for effective counselling and human development meet the required standard?
3. Does the implementation of the programme in the universities meet the NUC minimum benchmark standard?

Methodology.

The descriptive survey research design was used to examine/assess the quality and adequacy of the material and human resources in Niger Delta Universities for the implementation of counselling. Sixteen (16) universities (six federal and ten state) were randomly selected for this research work using the stratified random technique. So, two universities each were selected from seven states while one each was selected from two states making up the nine Niger delta states of the country. The states are; Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross Rivers, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers.

The (2011) NUC evaluation of students support services and facilities (self-Assesment Instrument) was used for this research. Idowu (2002) prescribed the standard CASSON counsellor student ratio of 1:2500. This was used in determining the manpower resource adequacy. In data analysis, the descriptive statistics was used in analyzing the generated data.

Results and Discussion

Research question one

Does the available manpower resource fulfills the minimum standard requirements for counselling and human development programmes in the universities?

Table 1: **Evaluation of Human Resource Performance Indicators in the Universities.**

S/N	University	Student Available	Available counsellors	Counsellor Student Ratio	Minimum Requirement	Decision
1.	Akwa-Ibom State University	14,600	5	1:2920	1:2500	Deficient
2.	Abia State University	15,620	6	1:2603	1:2500	Deficient
3.	Niger Delta University Bayessa	13800	8	1:1725 -	1:2500	Adequate
4.	Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa	1,130	2	1:565	1:2500	Adequate
5.	Delta State University Abaka	16,000	8	1:2000	1:2500	Adequate
6.	Federal	1,200	3	1:400	1:2500	Adequate

	University of Petroleum effurum, Delta State					
7.	Cross River University of Technology	13,100	4	1:3275	1:2500	Deficient
8.	University of Calabar, Cross River State	15,210	6	1:2535	1:2500	Deficient
9.	University of Benin, Edo State	17,000	8	1:2125	1:2500	Adequate
10.	Ambrose Ali University Ekpoma, Edo State	15,500	7	1:2214	1:2500	Adequate
11.	Rivers State University of Sc. & Tech.	14,000	5	1:2800	1:2500	Deficient
12.	University of Port-Harcourt	16,300	6	1:2717	1:2500	Deficient
13.	Imo State University	13,700	4	1:3425	1:2500	Deficient
14.	Federal University of Tech. Owerri	12,400	4	1:3100	1:2500	Deficient
15.	Ondo State University of Tech. Okitipupa	10,900	3	1:3633	1:2500	Deficient
16.	Fed. University Akure	11,160	5	1:2232	1:2500	Adequate

N/B Minimum standard specification of counsellor-student ratio 1:2500

Table 1 Above shows that only Seven (7) out of the sixteen (16) universities in this study met the required numbers of human resource specification for professional implementation of counselling programme in the Niger-Delta Nigerian Universities. These include Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State, federal University of petroleum resources, Otuoke Bayelsa State, Delta State University, Abraka; University of Benin, Edo State University, Ekpoma, Ondo State University of Technology,

Okitipipa and Federal University of technology Akure. Possible remediations are included in the recommendations of this study.

Research Question Two

Do the facilities for effective counselling and human development meet the requirement standard?

Table 2: Evaluation of material/equipment resource for universities

S/ N	Universities	No of Variable	NUC Stand ard Indicat or	Mea ns Scor es Obta ined	Resou rces Perfor mance index (RPI)	Rank ing
1.	Akwa Ibom State University	8	5	2.62	0.41	13 th
2.	Abia state university	8	5	2.76	0.49	8 th
3.	Niger Delta University Bayelsa	8	5	2.81	0.53	6 th
4.	Fed. University of Petroleum, Otuoke, Bayelsa	8	5	2.55	0.37	16 th
5.	Delta State University, Abraka	8	5	2.85	0.57	3 rd
6.	Federal University of Petroleum Effurum, Delta State	8	5	2.57	0.39	15 th
7.	Cross Rivers University of Technology	8	5	2.74	0.46	9 th
8.	University of Calabar, Cross River State	8	5	2.97	0.61	2 nd
9.	University of Benin, Edo State	8	5	2.99	0.65	1 st
10.	Edo State University Ekpoma	8	5	2.82	0.54	5 th
11.	Rivers State University of Sc. & Tech.	8	5	2.71	0.44	10 th
12.	University of Port-Harcourt	8	5	2.83	0.55	4 th
13.	Imo State University	8	5	2.68	0.43	11 th

14.	Federal University of Tech. Owerri	8	5	2.60	0.40	14 th
15.	Ondo State University of Tech. Okitipupa	8	5	2.78	0.52	7 th
16.	Fed. University of Tech. Akure	8	5	2.66	0.42	12 th

Table 2 above shows that for the 16 universities, there were 8 variables and 5 NUC standard indicators. For each of the universities, the mean scores, response performance indexes and the rankings were shown on the table above. The university of Benin, Edo state came first on the ranking with a mean of 0.65. The second and third rankings go to university of Calabar, Cross River State and Delta State University, Abraka respectively. While the last on the ranking list is the federal University, Otuoke, Bayelsa State, with a mean of 0.37 as the 16th of them all.

Research Question Three

Does the implementation of the programme in the university meet the NUC minimum benchmark standard?

**Table 3: Programme Implementation in The Universities!
Evaluation of Operational Practices.**

S/N	Evaluation Operational Criteria	No. of University	Standard Indicators	Scores Obtained	Operational Performance Index (OPI)	Ranking
1	Entrepreneurial/Vocational skills acquisition programme and services	16	5	2.43	0,41	7 th
2	Students work-study schemes and services for students with special needs	16	5	2.87	0.59	1 st
3	Student social reengineering programmes towards acquisition of national values and ethos	16	5	2.64	0.51	3 rd
4	Monitoring evaluation and feed back services	16	5	2.57	0.46	6 th
5	Adequate documentation services and event	16	5	2.62	0.50	4 th
6	Interdisciplinary support services through partnership collaborative and referral services	16	5	2.68	0.53	2 nd
7	Type and scope of service provide by the centre	16	5	2.60	0.48	5 th

From the table 3 above, the university selected for the study barely satisfied the NUC standard requirement. Only four (4) out of the seven (7) evaluated operational criteria with average score of 0.59, 0.53, 0.51 and 0.50 hardly met minimally the requirements. Indeed, the result revealed that the universities are yet to fully comply with the operational practices contained in the benchmark statements for the implementation of counselling programmes in the Niger Delta Universities.

Conclusion

The study revealed that the Niger Delta Universities hardly fulfilled the counsellor student ratio of 1:2500 minimum standard specifications of NUC. For example, in table 1 only eight (8) out of the sixteen (16) selected universities for this study hardly met the standard.

- Table 2 shows that even the Federal universities did not satisfy NUC standard in material/equipment and resource standard. Out of the seven (7) federal universities in the study, only three (3), i.e university of Benin, Calabar and Port Harcourt barely met the average of NUC standard.
- For programme implementation in table 3, deficiencies abound in nearly 11 the parameters that were measured for the universities. Thus, it is a truism that the universities in the area have not complied fully with the operational practices compatible with the NUC benchmark statement on programme implementation for counselling.

Recommendations

- ❖ Arising from the results of the study, this researcher earnestly recommend that more counsellors should be employed into the Niger Delta Universities and other universities in the nation so as to meet the manpower deficiencies.
- ❖ Secondly, for effective and qualitative counselling service delivery to be attained in the universities, the needed counselling resources should be provided by the government (Arijessujo, 2012).
- ❖ Lastly, for counselling and human development service to be effective in these universities, NUC and her accreditation panel should be very forceful so that standards are met in these universities counselling centres.

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