
Effects of Counselling Psychology Exploration Intervention in Identifying Universal Basic Education Needs of Secondary School Adolescents in Uyo Metropolis

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Abstract

The study investigated the effects of Counselling Psychology intervention in identifying Universal Basic Education needs of the Secondary School Adolescents in Uyo Metropolis. Two hundred Senior Secondary School Two Students (SS II) and fifty teacher counsellors from thirteen public schools were randomly selected and this constituted the sample of the study. Their age ranged between 17-19 years with a mean age of 14.9 years and the standard deviation of 0.75 while the teacher counsellors age ranged between 23-35. There hypotheses were formulated to guide the study, Guidance and Counselling factors Inventory (GCFI) and Universal Basic Education Self Efficacy Scale (UBESS) were the two instruments employed in the study. Data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results showed that there was no significant main effects of treatment on Guidance and Counselling. The results indicate that Universal Basic Education self-efficacy could not moderate the causal link between treatment and criterion measure. Based on the findings it was suggested that conscious efforts should be made by the school counsellors and relevant shareholders to adopt. Guidance and Counselling exploration intervention as tools for handling adolescents' problem solving for successful implementation of Universal Basic Education Programme.

Counselling Psychology is the field of science that focuses on the emotional, social, vocational education health-related, developmental and organizational concerns

as they promote personal and interpersonal functioning throughout life. It is a psychological specialty that encompasses research and applied work in several broad domains. Counselling process; outcome supervision; training; career development; counseling prevention and health. Some unifying themes among counselling psychologists include a focus on assets and strength, person-environment interactions, educational and career development, brief interactions and a focus on intact personalities. Ayeni (2006) defined Guidance as being based on the altruistic philosophy and everyone at one time or the other needs help and that this should be rendered unconditionally with empathy under a threat-free atmosphere.

The guidance philosophy is rooted in the acceptance of any client seeking the counsellor's professional service unrespective of race, creed, social-economic background, ethnic affiliation or political inclination. Guidance and counselling is also based on the philosophical assumption that man is a master of his own destiny with a right to choose and control his interest, he thinks, reasons and rationalizes values to boost his actions. These constitute the basis for his aims and objectives for human behaviour. If counselling psychologists understand the clients value systems they would be in a better position to tackle and to solve their problems effectively.

Guidance and Counselling Services

Counselling services are usually needed when a student faces a problem he feels he cannot solve either by himself or with the assistance of parents, teachers, relatives and friends, Oyinlola (2009) posited that certain issues such as study habits, choice of subjects, note taking, necessary information, use of library calls for guidance and counselling services. Similarly adjustment to school environment, sex education, admission requirement, low academic achievement and interpersonal relationship with friends also demand guidance and counselling services. The UNESCO module on guidance and counselling (2000) also posited that counselling is a programme of services to individuals based on their needs and the influence of environmental factors.

It is a professional field which has a broad range of activities, programmes and services, geared toward assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world and also to develop adequate capacity for making wise choices and decisions. Thus, the goal of guidance and counselling services is to enable each learner to derive optimal educational benefits so also actualize his or her potentialities. The highlights of the Nigerian National Policy on Education (1998) states "in view of the apparent ignorance of many young people about career prospects and in view of the personality adjustments among school children, career officers and counselling psychologists would be appointed in post-primary and tertiary institutions".

Need for Guidance and Counselling Services in the Universal Basic Education

Prior to three decades ago, little attention was paid to Guidance and Counselling Services in Nigerian Schools, undoubtedly, this trend was detrimental to both the recipients of education and the society. The Nigerian education system devoid of Guidance and Counselling was sick. Failure of Universal Primary Education launched by government in 1975 could be traced to this problem. To check-mate such re-occurrence, the Federal Government through the National Policy in Education stressed and amplified the need for guidance and counselling services in the Universal Basic Education. In this policy, the federal government declares that every student needs Guidance and counselling services which would be rendered at all levels of education.

Uba (2003) expressed that Universal Basic Education (UBE) programmed is packed to equalize education and equip the learner with skills to eradicate poverty in Nigeria within the shortest possible time. Universal Basic Education is functional in the sense of equipping the learner with manipulative skills as well as taking care of school drop outs. The programme is prominently relevant in that learners are to acquire positive values, attitudes, skills and knowledge for functional living in a dynamic society. Mallum (2004) and Aluede (2006) strongly maintained that acquisition of skills that span from primary through post-primary to tertiary levels of education require much counselling services.

Adamaechi and Romaine (2006) expressed that functional educational system ought to be qualitative in terms of responding to the needs and aspirations of the learners as well as projecting culturally approved behaviour and skills for economic reconstruction of Nigeria. Ideally, functional education is aimed at empowering the child to fit into a competitive society with progressive use of his mental ingenuity and productive capacity for the advancement of the nation.

Students' Orientation and the Universal Basic Education

Orientation Counselling Services is designed to assist the client to adjust properly to his new school environment. Transiting from one school environment to a completely different and new school setting can be quite traumatic to some students because human beings are generally are generally aversive to any kind of change. Young people in particular do not like being uprooted away from their friends and teachers who they were used to in their former schools. this could culminate into a psychological problem if the students are not received properly and integrated into the new school environment. Students' orientation services, therefore is the introduction of clients to new and different level of education. the aim is to enable the clients feel welcome, safe, relaxed and get properly set for desired new academic activities in their new academic environment.

Agbaje, (2006) pointed out that orientation is an awareness of the objective world in relation to one's self. Students orientation is necessary because the impression a student has about his new school environment goes a long way to determine the success or failure in the new school.

The first specific goal of the Universal Basic Education 'shall be a 9-years duration comprising of 6 years of Primary Education and 3 years of Junior Secondary Education (FME, 2006). This by implication means that pupils who have completed primary six would transit uninterruptedly to junior secondary 1 without any Entrance Examination. Since Universal Basic Education is free and compulsory, it offers wide access to education of children from different background.

This has led to increase in number of learners in Junior Secondary School, (Arisi, 2002). For effective integration into the school system and for successful interpersonal relationship with fellow students and members of the school community, orientation services stand to be one of the necessary tools in the Counselling programme. Orientation service is ultimately designed to help the client meet the challenges of new academic environment, Agbaje, (2006) enumerated the benefits of orientation services to students as follows:

1. Orientation Counselling service enables new students to know themselves and the old students of the school and enables both new and old students to understand their roles in the school.
2. The Counselling service enables new students to know members of staff of the school so as to know who to meet for a particular problem.
3. Through the counselling service, students become aware of the history, rules, policies and traditions of their new school.
4. The Counselling orientation services would also acquaint new students with vast range of opportunities within the school.

Students Appraisal and the Universal and the Universal Basic Education

Appraisal service is referred to as a process of collecting, gathering, organizing, analyzing, evaluating and interpreting information or data about the characteristic of the individual. It presents a general picture of the individual in more clinical approach and thus aims at helping the individual to have clear view about his strengths and weaknesses in a way that realistic choices and decisions could be made specially when presented with different alternatives, (Anagbogu, 1988). Denga (1996) defined appraisal as measurement and evaluation of human attributes or characteristics. These attributes include intelligence or general abilities, aptitudes or specific ability, interest and other personality characteristics which could be assessed by the use of tests. But appraisal also subsumes the assessment of human behaviour and characteristics using non-test instruments like interviews, autobiographies, observational techniques and so on. These non-test instruments measure affective and psychomotor aspects of

individual. Appraisal is one of the Guidance and Counselling services that are used to assess students general behaviours.

Ekanem and Eneh (2005) maintained that appraisal can help the counselling psychologist to develop a comprehensive picture of the students and in return, the students can be helped to gain better understanding of themselves through the counselling experts assistance. They noted that appraisal data show how an individual is similar to and different from others. These similarities and differences are known through series of appraisal exercise conducted by the counselling in the school. Such data aid in meaningful transition from one class to another and in decision-making.

Through appraisal exercise, selection of students for employment or admission purposes can be done easily. It makes it easier for those misfits for a particular area to be sent to areas they are better fitted for. Appraisal classification purposes are used to group students according to certain personality traits. It may involve vocational interest groups or class groupings, the counselling expert has to decide which of the group students should be assigned to. Through appraisal, programmes are assessed and evaluated to ascertain whether or not they are achieving the goal for which they had been established. Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme laid emphasis on continuous assessment. Nigerian National Policy on Education (1996) stated that “Educational assessment and Evaluation will be liberated by basing them in whole or in part on continuous assessment of the progress of the individual”.

The counselling expert does not only use this tool to assess the traits and ability of his clients, but he also recognizes on-service courses on continuous assessment for the staff member, (Nwachukwu, 2000). In Guidance and Counselling, appraisal instruments are used by counselling experts to estimate clients’ potentials such as interest, abilities, aptitudes, personality traits, attitudes, self-concept, motivation and others for appropriate placement in educational, vocational programme aid for counselling. These in essence help the individual in decision-making and to a realistic upward transition. This points to the fact that appraisal service is an important tool which must be used effectively if the current Universal Basic Education values must be achieved.

The Use of Information Service in the Universal Basic Education

Information service involves the process of collecting and collating facts and figures that are essential for decision making (Denga, 1989). Information is a vital tool in any human endeavour, in education for example; its services are well priced for the useful purpose it serves. As quoted by Ipaye (1984), educational information is “valid and useable data about all types of present and probable future educational or training opportunities and requirements, including curricula and co-curricula offerings, requirements for entrance, conditions and problems of students life”.

The world we live in is a complex and dynamic one since it constantly throws new challenges at the young individual. The understanding of the complex changes in the society and better handling of the present and future challenges are essential if young people are to be relevant to their society. The informational service helps to fulfill or accomplish this mission of understanding complex change and handling challenges. With the introduction of the Universal Basic Education programme in Nigeria, it has become mandatory on children to acquire basic education up to senior secondary level. Before this time at the end of primary education children were expected to take common entrance examination into government secondary schools. According to Uba (2003) students who do not do well in school are most likely to choose vocational subjects that will lead them to useful living. Information service is therefore an important tool to counselling experts because the data is used to assure that students have confidence in the appropriateness of their decisions, that is, counselors use informational data to help students assured that his decision and choices are congruent (Iweh, 1985 and Mallum, 2005). Oladele (1986) and Onyejiaku (1986) at their different researches have cited three major reasons why an informational component is a vital part of an organized school guidance programme:

1. That an informational service is fundamental if students are to be equipped with the basic knowledge needed to think through important issues such as extent of education, choice of occupation, maintenance of individually and such in which they are confronted.
2. That an informational service is fundamental if students are to become self regulatory since present day youths are expected to assume more autonomous responsibility than their predecessors. Self regulation can only be attained with good planning along with correct action based on known facts and data.
3. That an informational service is fundamental if students are to explore and become aware of the contingencies of stability and change that mark their development. This rationale of the informational service rests on failure, rejection and defeat and that knowledge of self-development leads to positive images and encourages individually.

This informational service is therefore seen as a useful tool that could be utilized in helping individuals grow up in a complex and competitive world, go further in education as well as assume autonomous responsibilities.

Purpose of the Study

Considering the centrality of counselling psychology services in the Universal Basic Education, the present study sought to enhance the extent of counselling experts' utilization of orientation services; utilization of appraisal services and utilization of information services so as to present a general picture of the individual student in a more clinical approach, have clear view about his strengths and weakness in a way that

realistic choices and decisions could be made. Also of interest to this study is the possible influence of career self-efficacy and gender on the causal relationship between independent and the criterion variable.

Statement of the Hypotheses

Based on the objectives of this study, the following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 Alpha level.

- 1) There will be no significant difference in the students and teachers perception on Counsellors utilization of orientation services in the Universal Basic Education.
- 2) There will be no significant difference in the students and teachers perception on counselors utilization of appraisal services in the Universal Basic Education.
- 3) There will be no significant difference in the students and teachers perception on counselors utilization of information services in the Universal Basic Education.

Design

The researcher employed a correlation design because it seeks to establish whether teachers and students differ significantly in their opinion about guidance and counselling and Universal Basic Education programme. Nwachukwu (2000) Correlational studies include all those researches in which attempts were made to discover whether any relationship existed between two or more variables and the scope of such relationship. Correlational studies enable researchers to make predictions with some degree of certainty.

Participants

A sample of 250 participants were involved in this study. The participants were randomly drawn from 3 public comprehensive secondary schools in Uyo. Both sexes were equally represented in this study. The participants were senior secondary class two students who had spent some years in the schools and who could appreciate the relevance of Guidance and Counselling within their environments while fifty counsellors from the thirteen (13) public comprehensive schools were also participants in the study. The students age ranged between 17 – 19 years with a mean age of 14.9 years and standard deviation of 0.75 years while the teachers age ranged between 23-35 years. All the participants (Students and Teachers) participated fully in the training programme.

Instrumentation

Two instruments used in the study are – Guidance and Counselling factors Inventory (GCFI) and Universal Basic Education Self Efficacy Scale.

Guidance and Counselling factors Inventory was developed by (Isakon and Mink, 1963). It is a four factor inventory with a total of 21 items. The need for counselling orientation, the need for appraisal service and need for counselling information subscales which represent Guidance and Counselling factors were utilized

for the study. Typical items on the subscales are (1) Before entering or choosing a particular career are “I still need to talk to people in one or more various occupations and counselling experts (2) “Before choosing or entering a particular career area, I still need to attempt to answer who am I”. The response format of the scale ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The two subscales have a total of eleven items. The whole instrument has a test-re-test reliability values ranging between .79 and .84 and Cronbach Alpha index of between .73 and .86. The internal consistency for the total inventory was .87.

As sincerely indicated by the researchers, a client’s GCFI profile confirmation might suggest specific intervention for enhancing Guidance and Counselling information seeking behaviour. This suggestion provides the rationale for adopting the scale for the use in this study. The second scale used in this study is Universal Basic Education self-efficacy scale (UBESS) developed by Ukeje (2000). The instrument has five subscales, namely (a) self-appraisal (b) Counselling Information (c) Making plans (d) Problem-solving and (e) Goal-setting. It has a total of thirty-eight items with response format ranging from “(1) Not sure, (5) to Very Much Sure”. The instrument has theoretical values of between 38 and 190. The self-efficacy subscale has a total of nine items with a coefficient Alpha of .75. Counselling Information subscale has eleven items (= .85); Problem-solving subscale has six items (= .77) Making plan subscale also has six items (= .85) and Goal-setting subscale has five items (= .77). The overall scale has a Cronbach Alpha value of .70. The instrument was used to identify levels of self-efficacy of the participants.

Procedure

Having obtained the permission of the school authority, the students were addressed at the assembly spot while the counselors were addressed at the counselling clinic. The focus of the speech was on the importance of Guidance and Counselling in Universal Basic Education. sequel to this, interested students were asked to indicate their willingness to participate in the programme. Ballot method – a kind of random sampling technique was used to select participants for the study.

The study was carried out over a period of nine weeks in three different comprehensive secondary schools in Uyo Metropolis. The training came up once in a week and each session lasted 45 minutes, which fell in line with their change of subject period. The instruments namely; Guidance and Counselling factor Inventory and Universal Basic Education Self-efficacy scale were administered to the participants as pre-test. The Guidance and Counselling factory inventory was administered to the participants to ascertain their levels of self-efficacy. Universal Basic Education scale was also used as post-test.

Data Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze data. It was so used because of its capacity to take care of the initial differences among the participants.

Results

The result of data analysis for the hypothesis which stated that therefore is no significant difference in the students and teachers' perception on counsellors' utilization of orientation services in the Universal Basic Education needs of the participants is shown below:

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) on Orientation Services and Universal Basic Education Needs

Variables		N	X	SD	Df	“r” Calculated	“r” Critical
Students	X	200	16.95	1.29	199	0.17	0.50
Teachers	Y	50	17.80	2.17			

** Significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level

As indicated in table 1, all the items on students and teachers responses on counsellors' utilization of orientation services had t-values 0.17 less than the critical t-value of 0.05 alpha level of significance and 199 degree of freedom.

Consequently the null hypothesis was retained from the observed result it could be accepted that the students and teaches do not differ significantly on their perception on counselors utilization of orientation services. Denga (1986) maintained that the effective integration into the school system and for successful interpersonal relationship with few students and the members of the school community, orientation services stand to be one of the necessary tools in the Guidance and Counselling programme. Again, in support of this finding, Ihiegbulum (2000) posited that orientation services enable new students to understand themselves as well as become aware of the history, rules and regulations, policies and traditions of their new school.

Table 2 presents the results of the second hypothesis which postulated that there is no significant different in students and teachers, perception on counsellors' utilization of Appraisal services in Universal Basic Education needs of the secondary school adolescents in Uyo Metropolis.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on students and Teachers Perception on Counsellors Utilization of Appraisal Services in the Universal Basic Education Needs of the Participants

Variables		N	X	SD	Df	“r” Calculated	“r” Critical
Students perception	X	200	17.99	2.03	199	0.203	0.250
	Y	50	17.36	2.26			
Teachers perception							

** Significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level

The result in table 2 shows that counsellors’ utilization of appraisal services had t-calculated of 0.203 value less than the critical t-value of 0.25 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was upheld, the result showed that there is no significant difference between the students and teachers’ perception on counsellors’ utilization of appraisal services in the Universal Basic Education. The hypothesis revealed that appraisal services are one of the important services in which counselors must render in the school community. This finding openly agrees with (Okafor, 1991), the scholar posited that appraisal serves general purpose such as prediction, selection, classification, evaluation as well as guidance and counselling. Similarly, Ekanem and Eneh (2005) also supported that appraisal can help the counsellor to develop a comprehensive picture of the students and in return, the counsellors can help the students to gain better understanding of themselves. They noted that appraisal data show how an individual is similar to and different from others.

In table 3, the results of the data for hypothesis three which, posited that there is no significant difference in the counsellors’ utilization of information service in the Universal Basic Education needs of the participants.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on Information Services and Universal Basic Education

Variables		N	X	SD	Df	“r” Calculated	“r” Critical
Students perception	X	200	16.23	1.05	199	0.127	0.250
	Y	50	12.7	1.0			
Teachers perception							

** Significant at $p < 0.05$ alpha level

As shown in Table 3, the computed “r” was 0.127 while the critical r was 0.30. Since the calculated value is less than the critical value, the null hypothesis was retained. Therefore there is no significant difference in students and teachers perception on counsellor utilization of information service in Universal Basic Education. the finding is supported by Villard (1986) who posited that information, be it educational or occupational plays an indispensable role in a meaningful and realistic choice of any career. The level of understanding an individual has about any career is determined by the amount and quality of information he has obtained of the career.

Discussion

The study seriously tried to find the extent of utilization of Guidance and Counselling services in the Universal Basic Education in Uyo Metropolis. The finding corroborates the assertion of (Ekpo, 2007) that orientation is an awareness of the objective world in relation to one’s self. Student orientation is necessary because the impression a student has about his new school environment goes a long way to determine his success or failure in the new school. It also concurs with the of (Arisi, 2002) who posited that effective integration into the school system and for successful particular interpersonal relationship with fellow students and members of the school community, orientation services stand to be one of the necessary tools in the guidance programme.

One possible explanation for the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling in improving Universal Basic Education needs is that it exposed the participants to various avenues through which they could seek for career information, thus effort has gone a long way to remove the veil of ignorance of the participants. This finding corroborates the assertion of (Agbaje, 2006) that orientation is ultimately designed to help the client meet challenges of new academic environment; he enumerated the benefits of orientation services to students thus:

1. Orientation guidance service enables new students to know themselves and the old students of the school;
2. It enables both old and new students to understand their roles in the school.
3. The service enables new students to know members of the teaching and non-teaching staff so as to know whom to meet at a particular occasion.
4. Through the service, students become aware of the history, rules, policies and traditions of their new school.

Similarly, the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling could be attributed to the fact that it is characterized by good teacher-student interaction where all the participations were free to express their opinions, had their misconceptions corrected and new information was given to broaden their knowledge about what counselling is all about. The effectiveness of counselling and enhancing good Universal Basic Education was supported by the study of (Oladele, 1986) who discovered that high

school students who took counselling had less career-related indecision at the end of the course.

In the second hypothesis, the result indicates clearly that appraisal service is an effective tool in the Universal Basic Education. The finding is in line with the previous studies of (Nwachukwu, 2000, Oyinlola, 2009 and Ukeje, 2020) that appraisal service produces favourable result in terms of Universal Basic Education, mainly when individuals explore significant and useful information in relation to their proximal career development task. The finding was also in agreement with (Mezieobi 2008, Nnaka 2000, and Igwei, 2006) who asserted that counselling has a significant impact on Universal Basic Education, they further explained that counselling has an impact on the decision-making process, in job search and placement and on occupation satisfaction and attainment. Onyejiaku (1987) reported that appraising guidance enables the counsellors in the placement and group of students in order to provide a learning situation of maximum benefits to them.

The third hypothesis further proved that there was no significant difference in the counsellors utilization of information services in the Universal Basic Education. The finding corroborates the assertion of (Mallum 2004, Ekpo, 2007 and Aleudo, 2006) who established that providing informational services to students help the learners to meet their educational, vocational and socio-personal needs, besides it is the duty of counsellors to create awareness among students of what facts and figures are available about this information. This was also supported by (Uba, 1983, Igwe, 2006 and Ekpo, 2007) who discovered that information service is an important tool to counsellors because the data is used to assure that students have confidence in the appropriateness of their decisions, that is, counsellors use informational data to help student get assured that his decision and choices are congruent (Adamaechi and Romaine, 2000, Ayeni, 2006 and Ekanem and Eneh, 2005). The present findings is therefore an affirmation of the influence of Guidance and Counselling on Universal Basic Education.

Educational and Counselling Implications of the Findings

The findings have multifaceted implications. For the purpose of effective integration in the school climate, new students should be exposed to meaningful facilities and resources available in the school system. The school principals and the teachers should be involved in the orientation services must especially at the beginning of each school session.

The result has clearly indicated that guidance and counselling information seeking behaviour of students could be enhanced. The implication therefore is that the curriculum planners, educational administrators and policy-makers should fully integrate these two techniques in secondary school curriculum either as a subject or major topics in the existing subjects because looking critically at the secondary school curriculum there is no subject dealing with the issues of orientation, appraisal and information services all of which are incorporated in Guidance and Counselling.

Students admitted in the middle of the term should not be allowed to float but should be directed to the school counsellor for effective integration. This study discouraged the aspect of parental pressures which push a child to attain classes not relevant to his mental abilities. This is observed as being harmful and damaging to the child's potentials and the final analysis may be a sheer waste of time and effort.

The present study has again shown us the cruciality of Guidance and Counselling in Universal Basic Education. It is therefore important for school counselling psychologist to develop intervention programmes, such as orientation, appraisal, and information services and similar others to enhance Guidance and Counselling for the self-efficacy of the students and transparent actualization of Universal Basic Education.

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