

COUNSELLOR QUALIFICATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL GUIDANCE PROGRAMME OF ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

The study focused on Counsellor Qualification and the implementation of the secondary school guidance programme of Enugu State. Three research questions and three research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The entire 85 guidance counselors and 190 teacher counselors serving in Enugu State owned secondary school formed the respondents for the study. A self reporting questionnaire developed by the researchers was used to collect data for the study. It had a 4-point response format. It was validated by three experts. A trial test was conducted using 20 school counselors from Anambra State and a reliability coefficient of .87 was obtained. The researchers distributed the questionnaire to the 85 guidance counselors and 190 teachers counselors to collect data for the main study, but was only able to retrieve 82 and 151 from the guidance counsellor and teacher counsellors respectively. Mean, grand mean and standard deviation were used to answer the three research questions at .05 level of significance. It was found that guidance counselors implemented educational, vocational and personal social guidance services better than teacher counsellors with regard to their implementation of educational, vocational and personal social guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State. Based on the findings of the study, some recommendation were proffered.

Introduction

Counselling courses in Nigeria exist in all teacher education programmes. These courses have not been standardized as each teacher training institution uses their initiative and personal experience to produce a programme and associated assessment procedures without reference to the Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON). The association on its own part although has set standards for its members has not been able to practically pursue the benchmarks for counsellor competence. Colleges of Education and Universities offer counseling courses to students with different theoretical orientations, modes of delivery and method of assessment with the view that on graduation they are qualified to register with the association whether or not they can really practice what they have been taught in school. What is more, as a result of shortage of counsellors in Nigeria (National Policy on Education, 2004:14) short duration courses, seminars and workshops are organized for teacher counselors (that is, teachers that have no training in guidance and counselling but are appointed by their school's administrative head to carry out guidance functions) to assist in the implementation of the guidance and counseling programme. One finds that in real life situation, some of these teacher counselors especially those teaching in schools situated in the rural areas have not been exposed to any of these seminars and workshops. In Enugu State, most of the practicing school counselors are teacher counselors (Source: educational Services Department, Guidance and Counselling Unit, P.P.S.M.B, Enugu, Sept. 2008). The researcher therefore doubts the competence of these teacher counselors in the discharge of their duty.

Again, the researcher is also doubtful of the training given to counselors while in school. The training programme of counselors should be theory accompanied with practice, taking the three broad areas of the guidance programme (educational, vocational and personal social guidance services) into cognizance. Most often, the practical aspect is presently not challenging enough as trainee counselors on practicum exercise combine it with regular lecturers in their various universities. The timing for these lecturers coincides with normal school hours of secondary schools where these student counselors do their practicum exercise. This makes it impossible for the counsellor-in training to gain from that aspect of her training. On graduation, this is most likely to affect the way and manner the counsellor handles and implements the guidance programme.

As a result, the researcher was motivated to empirically investigate the extent to which the qualification of the counsellor influences the implementation of the secondary school guidance programme of Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- (1) To what extent does the qualification of the guidance personnel influence the implementation of educational guidance services in Secondary Schools of Enugu State?
- (2) How far does the guidance personnel's qualification influence their implementation of vocational guidance services in Secondary Schools in Enugu State?
- (3) To what extent does the qualification of the guidance personnel influence the implementation of personal social guidance services in Secondary Schools in Enugu State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance-

- (1) There is no significant difference in the mean implementation scores of guidance counsellors and teacher counselors on their implementation of educational guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State.
- (2) There is no significant difference in the mean implementation scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors on their implementation of vocational guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State
- (3) There is no significant difference in the mean implementation scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors on their implementation of personal social guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Method

The study is a survey research. It was conducted in the 256 secondary schools within the six education zones of Enugu State. The population for the study comprised of 85 guidance counselors and 190 teacher counselors. The researcher used the total population (285). Thus, no sampling was done.

A self reporting instrument developed by the researcher called the Guidance Programme Implementation Scale (GPIS) was used to collect data for the main study. It was validated by two experts in guidance and counselling and one in measurement and evaluation. The instrument was amended in line with the corrections given by the experts.

The researcher carried out a pilot study using a similar population -20 school counselors from Anambra State owned secondary school. The data collected were organized and coefficient of 87 was obtained using Kruder Richardson method of establishing the reliability of an instrument. This was regarded as high enough for the study.

The researcher then distributed the instrument to the 85 guidance counselors and 190 teacher counselors with the assistance of six research assistants. She was able to retrieve 82 of the questionnaire from the guidance counselors and 151 from the teacher counselors. The data from these were organized and analysed. Mean, grand mean and standard deviation of the respondents were used to answer the three research questions while the z-test statistic was used to test the three hypothesis at .05 level of confidence. The research questions and research hypothesis that are related were analyzed together.

Result and Findings

Research Question 1

To what extent does the qualification of the guidance personnel influence the implementation of educational guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Research Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean implementation scores of the guidance counselors and teacher counselors on their implementation of educational guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 1 contains the data for answering research questions 1 and research hypothesis 1

Table 1: Mean Rating and z-test Result of Guidance Counsellors and Teacher Counsellors on the Implementation of Educational Guidance Services in Secondary Schools in Enugu State

Item No	Components of the Guidance Programme-Educational Guidance Service	(a) Guidance Counsellor N= 82		(b) Teacher Counsellor N = 151		(c)	Decision		
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂	z-cal	a	b	c
		4.	Assisting student in identify their abilities	3.99	0.11	3.01	8.13	77.23	VGE
5.	Assisting students in choosing their subjects for Junior and Senior Secondary Certificate Examination	4.00	0.00	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
6.	Assisting students in developing effective study habits	3.82	0.39	2.88	0.33	19.57	VGE	GE	S
7.	Giving students tips on how to cope with examination anxiety	3.79	0.41	2.83	0.37	18.12	VGE	GE	S
8.	Helping students to become aware of instruction of higher learning	3.55	0.50	2.60	0.70	10.97	VGE	GE	S
9.	Helping students to apply to institutions of higher learning	3.55	0.50	2.60	0.70	10.97	VGE	GE	S
10.	Organizing orientation service for all newly admitted students to help them adjust to normal school life.	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	0.00	VGE	VGE	S
11.	Helping to keep and up-date individual students cumulative record folder.	4.00	0.00	2.50	0.92	14.85	VGE	GE	S
12.	Providing parents/guardians with information about their children's/ward's progress in school	4.00	0.00	2.60	0.78	16.13	VGE	GE	S
13.	Inviting resource personnel to give students educational information	4.00	0.00	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
14.	Organizing group counseling sessions to help students resolve their academic problems	3.79	0.41	2.80	0.48	15.93	VGE	GE	S
15.	Administering psychological test on students as the need arises.	3.06	0.74	1.42	0.49	20.08	VGE	LE	S
16.	Placing students into their various classes at the beginning of each session	3.79	0.41	1.59	0.59	30.04	VGE	LE	S
17.	Helping slow learners to meet up with the academic demands of the school	4.00	0.00	2.60	0.78	16.13	VGE	GE	S
18.	Rehabilitating the academically backward school child.	4.00	0.00	2.67	0.68	17.70	VGE	GE	S
	N = 223 Overall (Educational Guidance Services)	3.82	0.20	278	0.45	19.88	VGE	GE	S
							Reject H ₀₁		

Significant at P<.05, df= 231; Critical z-Value = ± 1.96

From Table 1 above it was indicated that guidance counselors implementation the 15 items on educational guidance services to a very great extent. Going by the interpretation of the respondents mean scores, teacher counselors in Enugu State owned secondary school implemented four items on educational guidance services to a very great extent, nine to a great extent on two to a little extent. The table showed that the guidance counselors standard deviation score is small, indicating homogeneity in their responses for items on educational guidance services. The table further indicated that guidance counselors and teacher counselors recorded grand mean scores of 3.82 and 2.78 respectively for the implementation of educational guidance services. This means that guidance counselors implemented educational guidance services to a very great extent while teacher counselors did so to a great extent. The table also showed that the standard deviation scores of teacher counselors is large for one item. This shows that their agreement on the issue raised for that item is loose. The answer to research question 1 therefore is that guidance counsellor implement education guidance services better than teacher counselors in Enugu State.

The z-test analysis from the table showed that the z-calculated value is more than z-critical in fourteen out of the fifteen items. Only one item indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors with regard to their implementation of educational guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State as the calculated z is less than the critical z-critical z-value. The z-test analysis also indicated that there is a significant difference in the overall mean score of guidance counselors and teacher counselors in Enugu State for educational guidance services. With regard to the decision rule, research hypothesis, 1 which states that there is no significant different in the mean implementation scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors on their implementation of educational guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State is rejected.

Research Question 2

How far does the guidance personnel’s qualification influence their implementation of vocational guidance services in Secondary Schools in Enugu State?

Research Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean implementation scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors on their implementation of vocational guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 2 contains the data for answering research question 2 and hypothesis 2.

Item No	Components of the Guidance Programme-Educational Guidance Service	(a) Guidance Counsellor N= 82		(b) Teacher Counsellor N = 151		(c) z-cal	Decision		
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂		a	b	c
		19.	Organizing career conference/ day/week/workshop/ seminar for student	4.00	0.00		4.00	0.00	0.00
20.	Taking students on excursion to industrial sites, training institution etc	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	VLE	VLE	NS
21.	Giving career talk to students on the assembly ground	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	VLE	GE	NS
22.	Giving career talk to students in the classroom	4.00	0.00	2.60	0.78	16.31	VGE	LE	S
23.	Being in constant contact with employers of labour	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	GE	LE	S
24.	Assisting teachers in incorporating career information into their normal classroom teaching	2.37	0.49	1.23	0.42	18.54	GE	LE	S

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25.	Collecting and disseminating career opportunities open to students after school	2.37	0.49	1.23	0.42	18.54	GE	LE	S
26.	Inviting resource personnel to give students occupation information	4.00	0.49	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
27.	Organizing group counseling session to help students resolve their vocational problems	4.00	0.00	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
28.	Administering psychological tests on students to ascertain their vocational interest and aptitude	2.37	0.00	1.23	0.42	18.54	GE	LGE	S
29.	Giving students information on the basic requirements for various occupation	4.00	0.49	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
30.	Giving students information on the conditions service of various occupations.	4.00	0.00	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
31.	Giving students information on the job prospects of various occupation	4.00	0.00	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
32.	Giving students information on the job security of various occupation	3.00	0.00	2.80	0.40	4.49	GE	GE	S
33.	Giving students information on the duties of certain occupations	4.00	0.00	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
	N = 233 Overall (Vocational Guidance Services).	2.93	0.00	2.51	0.32	14.11	GE	GE	S
							Reject H ₀		

Significant at $P < .05$, $df = 231$; Critical z -Value = ± 1.96

Of the 15 items on Vocational guidance services Table 2 revealed that guidance counselors implemented nine of them to a very great extent; three items to a great extent and three other items to a very little extent. Teacher counselors on the other hand implemented seven items to a very great extent; two to a great extent; three to a little extent and three others to a very little extent. Table 2 also indicated that guidance counselors and teacher counsellors recorded grand mean scores of 2.93 and 2.51 respectively. This is indicative that the answer to research question 2 is that they implemented vocational guidance service to a great extent. The table showed that the standard deviation scores of both guidance counsellors and teacher counselors is small indicating homogeneity in their implementation of vocational guidance services.

The z-test analysis according to table 2 showed that, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of eleven of the items that make up the vocational guidance services by guidance counselors and teacher counsellors in Enugu State. No significant difference existed in the mean scores of four of the items that make up the vocational guidance services by guidance counselors and teacher counselors in Enugu State. The z-test analysis also indicated that there is a significant difference in the overall mean score of guidance counselors and teacher counselors in Enugu State with regard to their implementation of vocational guidance services. Thus, research hypothesis 2 is rejected.

Research Question 3

To what extent does the qualification of the guidance personnel influence the implementation of personal social services in secondary schools in Enugu State?

Research Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the mean implementation scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors on their implementation of personal social guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 3 contains the data for answering research question 3 and research hypothesis 3

Table 3: Mean Rating and z-test Result of Guidance Counsellor and Teacher Counsellors on the Implementation of Personal Social Guidance Services in Secondary Schools in Enugu State

Item No	Components of the Guidance Programme-Educational Guidance Service	(a) Guidance Counsellor N= 82		(b) Teacher Counsellor N = 151		(c) z-cal	Decision		
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂		a	b	c
		34.	Helping students to understand themselves based on vital social information	4.00	0.00		3.80	0.40	4.49
35.	Helping students to understand other people based on vital social information	3.99	0.11	1.00	0.00	110.12	VGE	VLE	S
36.	Helping students to engage in meaningful interpersonal relationship	3.99	0.11	1.00	0.00	110.12	VGE	VLE	S
37.	Helping in modifying students undesirable behaviour	4.00	0.00	3.80	0.40	4.49	VGE	VGE	S
38.	Visiting parents/guardians to talk about the well being of their children/wards	3.40	0.74	1.88	0.33	21.84	VGE	LE	S
39.	Counselling students individually to help them overcome their interpersonal problems	2.34	0.59	1.52	0.50	11.15	GE	LE	S
40.	Organizing group counseling sessions to help students resolve their personal social problems.	3.00	0.00	1.37	0.49	9.29	GE	LE	S
41.	Organizing vaccination for students and other school personnel during influenza periods.	1.37	0.49	1.00	0.00	9.29	LE	VLE	S
42.	Assisting students with bad habits to break them off	4.00	0.00	1.37	0.49	9.29	LE	LE	S
43.	Teaching students better communication techniques	3.37	0.49	2.00	0.00	9.29	VGE	GE	S
44.	Giving students talk on sex education	3.06	0.24	2.00	0.64	11.45	VGE	GE	S
45.	Giving student talk on civic responsibility	3.02	0.16	2.63	0.49	7.18	VGE	GE	S
46.	Giving students talk on marital responsibility	4.00	0.00	2.80	0.40	27.09	VGE	GE	S
47.	Organizing pre-marital counseling for older students	2.37	0.49	2.00	0.00	9.29	GE	LE	S
48.	Assisting student with home problems	2.37	0.23	2.44	0.18	9.29	GE	GE	S
	N = 233 Overall (Vocational Guidance Services).	3.27	0.56	2.58	0.32	9.29	VGE	GE	S
	Overall (GPIS)	3.27	0.56	2.58	0.32	9.29	VGE	GE	S
							Reject H ₀₃		

Significant at $P < .05$, $df = 231$; Critical z-Value = ± 1.96

From the data on Table 3, it was observed that of the 15 items that made up personal social guidance services, guidance counselors implemented ten of the items to a very great extent, four to a great extent; and the remaining one to a little extent. Teacher counselors on the other hand

implemented two items to a very great extent, five to a great extent; five to a little extent and the remaining three to a very little extent. Table 3 also indicated that the grand mean score of guidance counselors is 3.07 while that of teacher counselors is 2.44 for personal social guidance services. This goes to show that guidance counselors implemented personal social guidance services better than teacher counselors. Following the guidelines on the interpretation of the respondents score, the answer to research question 3 is that the qualification of guidance personnel influence the implementation of personal social guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State to a great extent. The standard deviation showed little variability of the respondents score. This is indicative that there is homogeneity in their responses for items on personal social guidance services.

Taking the three aspects of the guidance programme into consideration the table also revealed that while guidance counselors recorded an overall grand mean of 3.27 on the entire data collected, teacher counselors has 2.58.

The z-test analysis in Table 3 indicated that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of all the 15 items that made up the personal social guidance services by guidance counselors and teacher counselors in Enugu State. The z-test analysis also showed that there is a significant difference in the overall mean scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors in Enugu State.

Taking tables 1, 2 and 3 into consideration, the z-test analysis indicated that there is a significant difference in the overall mean scores of the guidance programme by guidance counselors and teacher counselors with regard to their implementation of the secondary school guidance programme as the calculated z-value is greater than the critical z-value in all the aspects of the programme. With regard to the decision rule there is no significant difference in the mean scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors in Enugu State with regard to their implementation of the guidance programme, is rejected.

Discussion of the Findings

The first research question sought answers to the extent to which the qualifications of guidance personnel influence the implementation of educational guidance services in secondary school in Enugu State. A critical examination of the entire analysed data showed that guidance counsellors implemented the secondary school guidance programme better than teacher counselors in Enugu State. This can be deduced from their overall grand mean scores of 3.82 (very great extent) and 2.78 (great extent) respectively. Following the interpretation of the respondents score, the answer to research question 1 is that the qualifications of the guidance personnel in secondary school 1 is that the qualifications of the guidance personnel in secondary school in Enugu State influenced their implementation of the guidance programme to a great extent.

The first research hypothesis tried to ascertain if there is a significant difference in the mean scores of guidance counselors and teacher counselors with regard to their implementation of educational guidance services in secondary schools in Enugu State. The analysis of the z-test comparison according to Table 1, showed that the computed z ranges from 0.00 to 77.23 while the z-critical at .05 level of significant is ± 1.96 . The result indicated that z-calculated value is more than z-critical in all the 15 items. This shows that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of guidance counsellors and teacher counsellors in the way and manner they implemented these items that make up the educational guidance services component of the guidance programme of Enugu State. The three tables also showed that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of guidance counselors with regard to four items. With regard to the decision rule, research hypothesis 1 which states that there is no significant difference in the mean implementation scores of the secondary school guidance programme by guidance counsellors and teacher counselors in Enugu State is rejected. This is so because the difference in their overall grand mean scores were statistically significant as shown in the z-test analysis (z-calculated is 9.29, df of 231, at $P < .05$ and critical z-value ± 1.96).

This finding is in agreement with the findings of Collison (1982) who found that guidance and counseling is a tailor – made programme and that any programme of guidance must be made responsive to the needs of the people for which the programme is designed to serve and must be duly implemented by trained counselors, if not the input will be nothing to write home about. This finding may account for why the goals, the objectives and the implementation strategies of any programme of guidance must be valid within the context of the society for which is meant and must reflect in the

training given to counselors. Upholding this finding, Herman (1982) found that the training programme a counsellor receives; provide a theoretical base of concepts and framework, upon which the practical aspect of the programme will be based. This may in the long run equip them and enable them to implement the guidance programme in their work places.

Conclusion

Conclusively, one can rightly assert that the qualification of guidance personnels influence the implementation of the secondary school guidance programme to a great extent.

Recommendation

From the findings of this study it is recommended that the use of guidance counselors and teacher counselors for the implantation of the secondary school guidance programme has to be reversed. The use of guidance counselors only is recommended as they are better trained in the art of guidance and counseling.

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