

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING AS A MAINTENANCE MEASURE OF DISCIPLINE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MINNA METROPOLIS OF NIGER STATE

BY

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Abstract

The study investigated guidance and counselling as a maintenance measure of discipline in public primary schools in Minna Metropolis of Niger State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 139 primary schools with a population of 3,284 teachers. Twenty head-teachers and eighty teachers were sampled; making a total of one hundred respondents randomly selected for the study. The study employed purposive and simple random sampling techniques. The instrument was a researchers-designed questionnaire tagged "Guidance and Counselling as a Measure to Maintain Discipline in Primary Schools Questionnaire" (GCMMDPSQ) with four point modified Likert scale and thirty-seven (37) items that were used to collect data for the study. The data collected were analysed using t-test statistical tool to test the four null hypotheses. The results showed that there was no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding the training of teachers in guidance and counselling and provision of physical facilities, there is no significant difference between male and female teachers regarding the role of guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools, regarding the importance of guidance and counselling services in maintaining discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis. It was recommended that guidance and counselling training should be made for head-teachers and teachers in public primary schools, there is need for administrative support, financially and materially for guidance and counselling unit of public primary schools in Minna Metropolis.

Keywords: Guidance and counselling, Measure, Discipline, and Public primary schools

Introduction

Guidance and counselling have served as a measure to maintain discipline dated back before Nigeria's independence. Its inception in Nigeria in 1959 was prompted by the realization that young nation needed to prepare herself for manpower development. For this reason, vocational guidance was virtual in important for her citizens. Consequently, guidance and counselling was carried out throughout life from the nuclear family, extended family, clan family and to the wider community which there was specific time, venue and a person to carry it out. According to Okumbe (2001) discipline is the epicenter of success of a school and students academic functioning. Most parents, most especially in urban areas are employed and spending most of their time away from home and from their children; the issue of discipline is hence left to the teachers in our schools to handle. Schools thus have to ensure those who go through it come out as disciplined members of the society (Okumbe, 2001). In many schools today, student's indiscipline is a serious problem facing the nation's educational system. According to Clerke (2002) who asserted that each month approximately three percent of teachers and students in urban schools and one-two percent in rural areas are robbed or physically attacked. Nearly, 17,000 students per month experience physical injuries serious enough to require medical attention resulting from violence among learners (Clerke, 2002).

High incidences of school discipline problems like drug abuse, cheating, insubordination, truancy and intimidation result to countless school and classroom disruptions reaching to nearly two million suspensions per year (Harvard Education Letter, 1997) about 45% of teachers who resign from the teaching profession cited indiscipline as one of the reasons for doing so (Clerke, 2002). The incidences imply that

appropriate disciplinary measures must be put in place on undisciplined students and pupils. Okumbe (2001) in Africa the case has not been different. Conversely, according to Garagae (2008) violence and misbehaviour exists in many public and private schools in Africa that need attention of guidance and counselling. Garagae (2008) further reported that in 2003 students in one senior school in Botswana broke into a biology laboratory to steal ethanol which is a clear indication that students' abuse drugs, some of these students lost their lives and others lost their sight. In Senegal, a primary school went on strike following embezzlement of school funds which resulted into violence, in which secondary schools and universities students joined the pupils in a show of solidarity (Wright, 2008).

In Nigeria, the increase in the number of schools experiencing student indiscipline has been on the increase. This has been evidenced from the rampant strikes and destruction of school properties. Ireri (2004) asserts that the disturbances are not only confined to secondary schools but also to primary schools, middle level colleges and the universities. Students interpreted their grievances as having their root within the school (Ministry of Education, 2008). The problem of indiscipline in Nigerian schools has been traced to various possible reasons. These include poor parenting, drug abuse by students, political influence and the mass media (Kariuki, 2000; & Mandi, 2001). However there is an emerging view that this phenomenon could be emanating from the exclusive management approaches applied by school heads which limits teachers and parental input in discipline issues. It was reported that several teachers of primary school were summoned to appear over an allegation reported by parents at the State Universal Basic Education Board Minna, the allegations was that teachers were recipients of money, a son to a parents stole and shared money with some teachers (Ministry of Education, 2008). Similarly, a Basic Six pupil was caught with substances with intent to sell them to other pupils. Many studies have been done on the role played by guidance and counselling to enhance pupils' discipline. For example, Ngumo (2003) conducted a study on role of guidance and counselling in controlling indiscipline but the study was based in Benue State of Nigeria. Ireri (1992) did another research on pupils' indiscipline which was based on a primary school.

Okama (2003) did an investigation on implementation of guidance and counselling programmes in Butere-Mumias district and Gatune (1990) conducted a research on the role of guidance and counselling in helping students to be well-adjusted based in Meru south district. However, guidance and counselling is based on the assumption that every individual in any society has had, is having and will have a problem that he/she alone could not solve (Makinde, 1983). Mwiria (2004) and Ananda (1996) observed the need for guidance and counselling as follows:

"In our schools today, we have students who are nervous and have emotional problems, psychological problems, educational, vocational, social, alcohol, drug abuse, smoking cannabis sativa, sex perverts, reading disabilities, students born out of wedlock, others from unstable homes and those students are in the adolescence stage. All these require guidance and counselling to ensure discipline in our institutions of learning".

Idowu (2016) noted that the major task of the guidance and counselling unit is to deal with problems of psychological maladjustment of pupils in schools and hold seminars for teachers on vocational guidance and counselling. Nevertheless, various government reports have recommended provision of guidance and counselling in learning institutions in their various policy documents since Nigeria got her independence. Some of these documents include development plans, policy papers, educational commission's reports and seasonal papers. The reports of Idowu (2016) and Task Force Report (1988) recommended that counsellors should be allowed to practice on full-time basis in schools and because of its impact in maintaining discipline, separate budgetary allocation should be reflected in both federal, states and local government area budget for guidance and counselling at the Ministry of Education. Sub-Committee on Implementation of Guidance and Counselling (1989) recommended that guidance and counselling deserved more than the little prominence given to it in the policy and contributions of guidance and counselling services to educational development and to other issues which have guidance implications should be scattered all

through the policy (Idowu, 2016). Federal Ministry of Education (2001) recommends that, first edition blueprint on guidance and counselling for educational institutions in Nigeria should be printed so as to assist schools develop high attitude towards discipline and management of time (Idowu, 2016). At about the same time, Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) published its 2001 National Policy on Counselling (NPC) which was revised in 2018. In the document, government endorsed its total commitment and support to the counselling movement by stating that:

In view of the ignorance of many young people about career prospects, and in view of personality maladjustment among school children, career officers and counsellors will be appointed in post-primary institutions...Guidance and counselling will also feature in teacher education programme (National Policy on Counselling, 2018 p. 1)

It is with this background that guidance and counselling of students and pupils in public schools must become top priority despite that Nigerian government has not institutionalized guidance and counselling as a vital component of the education system. Idowu (2016) expressed that many schools in Nigeria have embraced guidance and counselling despite lack of full legal backing on its operation. This study adopted Adlerian theory which states that an individual is a unique chooser and reflector. Adler stresses on social psychology and positive view of human nature. An individual creates a distinctive life style at an early age. It tends to remain relatively constant and defines beliefs about life and ways of dealing with life. Rogers (1991) expressed that people are in control of their fate, not victims of it. The theory stresses that the individual has positive capacities to live fully in society. It is characterised by seeing unity in the personality. Understanding a person's world from subjective vantage point and stressing life goals that give direction to the behaviour. Social interests or sense of belonging and having a significant place in society motivates human beings feelings of inferiority and often serves as a wellspring of creativity, motivating people to strive for mastery, superiority and perfection (Rogers, 1991). The theory is mainly concerned with challenging client's mistaken notions and faulty assumptions that help them develop on the useful side of life. The victims are encouraged to develop socially useful goals. Clients are helped overcome feelings of discouragement. The relationship between the client and therapist is based on mutual respect and equality and both client and counsellor are active. A demonstration on the connections between the past, the present and the future of the client is distinctively shown. The theory thus provides a vehicle for a holistic approach to learning comfortably and successfully.

A well organized guidance and counselling programme should assist in making learners disciplined, prudent, self-controlled human and right thinking individuals. Rogers (1991) summarized the aim of guidance and counselling as helping an individual (client) attains a self understanding of special talents and abilities. It is against this background that the researchers intended to find out whether guidance and counselling have helped to maintain discipline in public primary schools in Minna Metropolis of Niger State.

Statement of the Problem

Primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State continue to perform poorly in national examinations and hence do not produce many children to join national, provincial and even day school of quality (Ministry of Education, 2008). A number of children drop out of school due to teenage pregnancies, truancy suspension, intimidation, violence, bullying among other misconducts. Many pupils are stubborn, defy authority and are destructive causing harm to human life. There seems to be a gap in containing students' discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State. However, lack of or inappropriate guidance and counselling programme in public primary schools in the state have resulted into indiscipline problem in the public primary schools metropolis of the state. Hence the study set to find out whether guidance and counselling can serve as maintenance of discipline in public primary schools in Minna Metropolis of Niger State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate guidance and counselling as a measure to maintain discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.

Specifically, the following objectives guided the study:

1. To ascertain if there is difference in perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding on the training of teachers in guidance and counselling in primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.
2. To establish if there is difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding provision of physical facilities for guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.
3. To determine if there is difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding the importance of guidance and counselling services in maintaining discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.

Research Hypotheses

To achieve the objectives stated above the following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding the training of teachers in guidance and counselling in primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.
2. There is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding provision of physical facilities for guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.
3. There is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding the importance of guidance and counselling services in maintaining discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive-survey research design. The study was conducted in Minna Metropolis of Niger State, Nigeria which consists of Chanchaga and Bosso Local Government Areas respectively. The population comprised of 3,284 teachers from 139 primary schools in Minna metropolis (Niger State Universal Basic Education Board, 2019). Purposive sampling technique was used to select the two local government areas i.e. Chanchaga and Bosso Local Government due to its accessibility and diversity. A sample of 20 head teachers and 80 teachers totalling of 100 respondents was selected using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Thus, researchers-designed questionnaire titled “Guidance and Counselling as a Measure to Maintain Discipline in Primary Schools Questionnaire” (GCMMDPSQ) was used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into five sections (A to E). Section A contained information on the personal data of the respondents, section B contained 10 items on the training of teachers in guidance and counselling in primary schools, section C contained 8 items eliciting information on provision of physical facilities for guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools, section D contained 9 items on the role of guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools while section E contained 10 items that solicit information on the importance of guidance and counselling services in maintaining discipline in public primary schools. The responses were weighted on a modified four point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1) respectively.

To ensure the validity of the instrument, guidance and counselling experts assisted in the examination of the content and the degree to which the instrument was able gather the intended information and it was confirmed that the instrument has content and face validities which was good for the study. The instrument’s reliability was established through test- re-test method and the instrument was administered twice within two weeks interval to the same group of respondents that were not part of the sample size used in the study. Data collected during pilot-testing was analysed using Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation

Coefficient Formula. A reliability index of 0.80 was obtained which was considered reliable and good for the study. The researchers sought permission to administer the research instrument to head-teachers and teachers in the sampled primary schools. The copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents and the researchers assured the respondents of the confidentiality of the given information. The independent t-test statistical tool was used to test the research hypotheses formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The data collected from the study were presented and analysed accordingly. These were done according to each research hypothesis formulated.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the perception of head teachers and teachers regarding level of training of teachers in guidance and counselling in primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.

Table 1: Showing Result of Analysis in Respect of t-test Difference Between the Perception of Head-Teachers and Teachers Regarding the Training of Teachers in Guidance and Counselling in Primary Schools

Group	No of Sample	Df	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Sign. Level
Head-Teachers	20	98	10.030	1.08	1.78	1.96	0.05
Teachers	80		26.018	5.04			

Not Significant at 0.05 Level

The result in table 1 above indicates that the t-calculated value of 1.78 was less than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance; thus the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding level of training of teachers in guidance and counselling in primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State was accepted.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding provision of physical facilities for guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.

Table 2: Showing the t-test Analysis Result in Respect of the Difference Between the Perception of Head-Teachers and Teachers Regarding Provision of Physical Facilities for Guidance and Counselling in Maintaining Discipline in Public Primary Schools

Group	No of Sample	Df	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Sign. Level
Head-Teachers	20	98	11.071	1.081	1.88	1.96	0.05
Teachers	80		25.621	6.013			

*Significant at 0.05 Level

The result shows that the t-calculated value of 1.88 was less than t-critical value of 1.96 at degree freedom of 98 and 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding provision of physical facilities for guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools and the null hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers regarding the role of guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State.

Table 3: Showing the t-test Analysis Result in Respect of the Difference Between the Perception of Head-Teachers and Teachers Regarding the Importance of Guidance and Counselling Services in Maintaining Discipline in Public Primary Schools

Group	No of Sample	Df	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Sign. Level
Head-Teachers	20	98	14.21	2.012	1.89	1.96	0.05
Teachers	80		23.46	2.039			

Not Significant at 0.05 Level

The result shows that t-calculated value of 1.89 was less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at degree freedom 98 and 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis four which states that there is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding the importance of guidance and counselling services in maintaining discipline in public primary schools was accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The result of hypothesis one indicated that the t-calculated value of 1.78 was less than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance; thus the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding level of training of teachers in guidance and counselling in primary schools in Minna metropolis of Niger State was accepted. The finding of this study was in congruent with Gatune (1990) found that there is no significant difference between the two categories of their respondents regarding level of training of teachers in guidance and counselling in schools. However, the findings of this study was in disagreement with that of Mwiria (2004) in which the findings revealed that there was a significant difference in the responses of participants regarding the level of training of teachers in guidance and counselling in some schools in Africa countries.

The result of hypothesis two showed that the t-calculated value of 1.88 was less than t-critical value of 1.96 at degree freedom of 98 and 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding provision of physical facilities for guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools and the null hypothesis was accepted. The findings of this study was in disagreement with that of Ngumo (2003) which shows that their respondents reported a significant difference in their responses regarding provision of physical facilities for guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline in public primary schools. This finding supports earlier assertion of Idowu (2016) that guidance and counselling is very prompt in our institutions of learning looking at the fact the most parental responsibilities are now shouldered on the school counsellors and teachers; one may not expect any significant difference between the head-teachers and teachers regarding provision of physical facilities for guidance and counselling in maintaining discipline among primary school pupils.

The result of hypothesis three showed that t-calculated value of 1.89 was less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at degree freedom 98 and 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis four which states that there is no significant difference between the perception of head-teachers and teachers regarding the importance of guidance and counselling services in maintaining discipline in public primary schools was accepted. This result of this study was in line with the findings of Okumbe (2001) and Clerke (2002) in their research found no significant difference in the response of the two categories of their respondents regarding importance of guidance and counselling services in maintaining discipline among students. They noted that guidance and counselling have helped students that were affected in academic achievement progress and other anti-social behaviours in primary and post-primary schools respectively. However, the findings of this study was in disagreement with that of Wright (2008) who reported that teachers, learners and head-

teachers showed a significant difference in their responses regarding importance of guidance and counselling services in maintaining disciplinary measures in the study area.

Conclusion

In order to help maintain discipline problems by the head-teachers and teachers, the following implications for counselling should be implemented in public primary schools. School counsellors will need to provide interventions to head-teachers and teachers so as to improve their level of compassion and empathy. These include activities that foster sensitivity for the feeling of others that can enhance discipline among pupils. Counsellors can develop a process that integrates self-esteem activities with life skills development. The counsellor discusses with head-teachers and teachers the value of all people and their uniqueness. The counsellor goes on to tell them that because all people are special, valuable and unique, all people have a responsibility to be help and not hurt others. If you choose to hurt someone, then you are forgetting how special and valuable you are. The school counsellors should conduct training for the head-teachers and teachers on how to help pupils to be assertive to avoid being victim of other social vices in the society.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

- i. The school administration should ensure allocation of more guidance and counselling time on the timetable so that there is a routine guidance and counselling programme for the schools.
- ii. There is need for Counselling Association of Nigeria to create awareness for the public on the need for full implementation of guidance and counselling at primary school level through seminars, conferences, workshops and enlightenment campaigns.
- iii. Niger State Civil Service Commission and Niger State Universal Basic Education Board should ensure availability of enough counsellors to help in disciplinary problems in primary schools in Minna Metropolis.
- iv. There is need for administrative support, financially and materially for guidance and counselling. The schools should have specific rooms where individual and group guidance and counselling can be done.

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