

Challenges of Guidance and Counselling Services as Expressed by Counsellors in Armed Forces Schools Nigeria

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Abstract

The study was conducted to determine the challenges of guidance and counselling practices as expressed by counsellors in armed forces schools in Nigeria. The research design adopted for the study is the descriptive survey, it was done by employing the multistage sampling procedure to draw two hundred samples across all armed forces schools in Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed that all hypotheses tested were accepted as no significant difference exists among the variables. Based on the findings, it was recommended that counsellors in armed forces schools require further training so as to enhance their performance, it was also recommended that counsellors in armed forces schools should be relieved of other duties so as to enhance their performance.

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1. Introduction

The term guidance have several definitions due to the fact that it is an encompassing discipline which has influence in every aspect of human endeavour (Bedu, 2000) also asserts that guidance is a term with several meanings; it is a group or services and a field of study. It can thus be concluded that guidance seeks to help individuals understand self, the environment and it demands and to bring a reasonable harmony between himself and his environment.

Counselling on the other hand is defined by Mitchell (2015) as a “one to one” relationship which focuses on perusal growth and adjustment, problem solving and decision making. In the view of Taylor (2016) counselling is a definitely structured permissive relationship which allows a client to gain an understanding of himself to a degree which enables him/her to take positive steps in the light of a new orientation. It is also regarded as a relationship between a professionally trained personae, and an individual seeking help in gaining better self-understanding, improved decision-making skills, behaviour change and skills for problem solving.

From these definitions, it can be concluded that guidance and counselling seek to focus on problem solving and assorting individuals in adjusting properly to his/her environment this bringing about increased understanding of self, abilities, attitudes, interrupts, strength, weakness etc which facilitates intelligent choices and maximized personae development. These process are achievable though the implementation of guidance and counselling services which focus basically on education, information and persona-social aspects or living.

Nigeria Armed Forces School were establishment through the orders of the various military services (Army, Navy and Airforce) as the case may be, with the primary objective or providing a broad based academic and technical education to post primary school children. The institutions are in different categories; some are co-educators, all boys, all girls day and fully residential. The administrative and operational control of the schools rest on the headquarters of the respective services. The schools have Boards of Governors (BOGs) that meet from time to time with a view to deliberating on issue affecting the schools. However, the day to day administration of the school is handled by the commander who serves as the school head. Furthermore, the organisational structure or the school is slightly different from the conventional secondary schools. The schools are structured in such a way that all the specialized areas in the school work in vision in other to achieve the objectives of the school. Admission into the schools is through a competitive common entrance examination, selection of candidates is basically on merit but in some cases it is also determined by quote system, this is to ensure high standard as well as to afford equal as well as to afford equal representation of all states in the federation.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The Federal Ministry of Defense was established to cater for the well-being of the three sister forces namely the Army, Navy and Airforce (Ewuru, 2011). The primary role of the military is to protect the country from external aggression, maintain peace and order within and outside the country and to perform all other regimental duties. However, the military established schools to cater for the children of their personnel while on official duties or engagement.

Due to the nature of the school which lays big emphases on discipline, and strictness as against the aims of counselling which bothers on personal choice and persuasion, there could be conflict which could affect counselling practices. More so because counsellors are trained to maintain a friendly attitude and atmosphere. Thus, counsellors could face challenges in discharging their professional duties. It is therefore the aim of this study to determine the challenges of Guidance and Counselling Services as expressed by counsellors and students in Nigerian Armed Forces Schools, this is with a view to providing solutions to the problems identified and to provide an improved counselling services which will not conflict with the aims and objectives of the Armed Forces Schools.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is basically to determine the challenges of Guidance and Counselling Services as expressed by Counsellors in Nigerian Armed Forces Schools, it is with a view of providing solutions to the problems identified.

1.3. Research Questions

To guide the conduct of the study, the following research questions are raised:

- a. What are the challenges of guidance and counselling services as expressed by counsellors in Nigerian Armed Forces Schools?
- b. Is there any difference in the challenges of guidance and counselling services as expressed by students in NAFs based on Gender?
- c. Is there any difference in the challenges of guidance and counselling services as expressed by students in NAFs based on Educational Qualification?

1.4. Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated for testing in the course of the study:

- a. There is no significant difference in the challenges of guidance and counselling services as expressed by Counsellors in NAFs based on Gender
- b. There is no significant difference in the challenges of guidance and counselling services as expressed by Counsellors in NAFs based on Religion
- c. There is no significant difference in the challenges of guidance and counselling services as expressed by counsellors in NAFs based on Educational qualification.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

The research design that was adopted for the study is the descriptive survey. The descriptive survey method entails the collection of data from representative sample of a population on which inference can be drawn on the entire population. Based on this, the method was used to investigate the challenges of guidance and counselling services as expressed by counsellors in Nigerian Armed Forces Schools.

2.2. Sample and Sampling Procedure

The target population for this study consists of all Guidance Counsellors in Armed Forces Schools in Nigeria. However, because of constraints, two hundred respondents were selected using the simple random sampling procedure. The simple random sampling procedure is a sampling method which gives all members of a target population an equal opportunity to be selected for a study.

2.3. Psychometric Properties of the Instrument

The psychometric properties of the instrument lie in its validity and reliability.

2.4. Validity

An instrument is considered valid when it adequately measures what it was designed to measure (Oyebanji, 2013). To ensure the validity of the research instrument, it was given to experts in the field of counselling with a view to establishing the content validity of the research instrument.

2.5. Reliability

Reliability entails the consistency of a research instrument, a research instrument is termed reliable if it measures what it is designed to measure consistently. To ascertain the reliability of the research instrument, the test-retest method of reliability was adopted; it was done by administering the test instrument to forty respondents at an interval of three (3) weeks, the two test results were then correlated with a view to determining the reliability coefficient; it thus yielded a coefficient of 0.71

2.6. Instrumentation

The instrument used in collecting data is a researcher developed instrument tagged “challenges of counselling practices questionnaire (CCPQ). The questionnaire has two sections (A and B); section ‘A’ sought the demographic data of respondents while section ‘B’ contains items on the challenges of counselling practices. The questionnaire was scored on a four-point Likert-type scale of :

Table 1. Questionnaire Scoring Scale

Strongly Agree	– 4 points	
Agree		– 3 points
Disagree		– 2 points
Strongly Disagree	– 1 point	

2.7. Method of Data Analysis

In analyzing data collected for the study, both the descriptive and inferential statistics was adopted. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse the demographic section of the questionnaire while the t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Statistical Procedure was used to test the hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents the result of data collected for the study; it presents the demographic data of respondents, ranking of items in the questionnaire and testing of hypotheses. The result in Table 2 shows that on the distribution of respondents based on gender, 78 respondents which represents 39.0% of the total respondents are male; while 122 respondents representing 61.0% of the total respondents are females.

Table 2. Demographic Data of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	78	39.0
Female	122	61.0
Total	200	100
Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
ATR	04	0.2
Christianity	112	56.0
Islam	84	42.0
Total	200	100
Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
B.Ed	102	51.0
M.Ed and Above	98	49.0

On the distribution of respondents based on religion, the result shows that 4 respondents which represents 2.0% of the total respondents are of the African Traditional Religion, 112 respondents which represents 56.0% of the total respondents are Christians while 84 respondents representing 42.0% of the total respondents are of the Islamic religion. However, on the distribution of respondents based on educational qualification, the result shows that 51% of the respondents holds a bachelor's degree in counselling while respondents with master's degree and above represents 49% of the total respondents.

Table 3. Mean and Rank Order of Items on the Challenges of Guidance and Counselling Services

S/N	Items	Mean	Rank
1.	There are no competent counsellors in my school	3.19	20 th
2.	Counsellors in my school do not have office	3.22	16 th
3.	Counsellors' office in my school is not conducive	3.25	12 th
4.	There are no counsellors in my school	3.18	21 st
5.	There are no sufficient counsellors in my school	3.33	3 rd
6.	There is no awareness about the activities of counsellors in my school	3.28	8 th
7.	Counsellors in my school are busy with other school activities	3.26	11 th
8.	Counsellors in my school require further training	3.40	1 st
9.	We are not encouraged to visit counsellors in my school	3.20	18 th
10.	I am too engaged with other activities to visit a counsellor	3.25	12 th
11.	I prefer to seek spiritual help than to see a counsellor	3.32	5 th
12.	My school counsellors are not friendly	3.24	14 th
13.	My religion does not support seeking help from counsellors	3.24	14 th
14.	I do not believe counselling can proffer solution to my challenges	3.27	10 th
15.	Location of counselling office in my school does not encourage confidentiality	3.28	8 th
16.	The impact of Guidance counsellors are not felt in my school	3.22	16 th
17.	We rarely have counselling programs in my school	3.30	6 th
18.	Career choice concerns among students are not addressed by the school authority	3.33	3 rd
19.	Academic problems among students are not addressed by the school authority	3.30	6 th
20.	Students don't know where to seek help in solving their academic and personal problems	3.20	18 th
21.	Students seek help from fellow students to solve their problems and concerns	3.14	22 nd
22.	I cannot discuss personal issues with my school counsellors	3.11	23 rd
23.	Counsellors in my school don't organise programmes for students	3.39	2 nd

Table 3 depicts the result of the items in the questionnaire which are ranked according to their mean scores. It shows that item 8 which states that "Counsellors in my school requires further train" has the highest mean score of 3.40 and ranked first; item 23 which states that "Counsellors in my school don't organise programmes for students" has a mean score of 3.39 and ranked second, while item 5 with a mean score of 3.33 ranked third, the item states that "There are no sufficient counsellors in my school".

However, item 4 which states that "there are no counsellors in my school" has a mean score of 3.18 and ranked 21st, item 21 which states that "students seek help from fellow students to solve their problems and concerns" has a mean score of 3.14 and ranked 22nd. While item 22nd which states that "I cannot discuss personal issues with my school counsellors" has the lowest mean score of 3.11 and ranked last.

3.1. Hypotheses Testing

3.1.1. Hypothesis 1: There Is No Significant Difference in the Challenges of Guidance and Counselling Services as Expressed by Counsellors in NAFs Based on Gender

The result in Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of 2.46 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96, based on this result, hypothesis 1 is rejected because a significant difference exists.

Table 4. Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of Respondents on the Challenges of Counselling Services Based on Gender

Gender	N	x	SD	df	t-critic	t-cal
Male	78	45.26	67.1694	198	1.96	2.46
Female	122	78.48	8.2766			

3.1.2. Hypothesis 2: There Is No Significant Difference in the Challenges of Guidance and Counselling Services as Expressed by Counsellors in NAFs Based on Religion

The result in table 5 shows that the calculated f-value of 2.46 is lower than the critical f-value of 3.00, based on this, hypothesis 2 is accepted because a significant difference does not exist.

Table 5. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Result Comparing Responses on the Challenges of Counselling Services by Respondents Based on Religion

Source of variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Critical f-value	Calculated f-ratio
Between Groups	2631.32	2	1315.66	3.00	1.94
Within Group	45895.48	197	22947.74		
Total	48526.8	199			

The result in Table 6 shows that the calculated t-value of 2.06 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96, based on this result, hypothesis 3 is rejected because a significant difference exists.

Table 6. Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of Respondents on the Challenges of Counselling Services Based on Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	N	x	SD	df	t-critic	t-cal
B.Ed	102	62.26	67.1793	198	1.96	2.06
M.Ed	98	87.42	8.2896			

3.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- Counsellors in Nigerian Armed Forces schools need to be retrained in the rudiments and current trends in modern counselling practices with a view to improving their activities.
- Counsellors in Nigerian Armed Forces schools should be encouraged to organise periodic programmes for students and should be trained on how to do same.
- Awareness on counselling services should be created more in Nigerian Armed Forces schools.
- School administrators should be encouraged and educated on the need to relieve school counsellors from other duties so as to be able to face counselling activities squarely.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research, it was concluded that counsellors in Nigerian Armed Forces require further training because the item which relates to that ranked first in the questionnaire, it is also concluded that, counsellors in Nigerian Armed Forces Schools should be encouraged, trained and provided with required paraphernalia to organise regular programmes for students which could help in sensitising them on counselling services and opportunities.

Author Contributions

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