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Implementation of Student Personnel Services in Federal and State Colleges of Education in South-east Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

Over the years, institutions of higher learning, including colleges of education have been grappling with problems of students' unrests, or riots, or demonstrations. Some students are known to protest on issues that encroach upon their welfare from both within and outside of their institutions. Personal observations from tertiary institutions of higher learning appear that these personnel services are inadequate. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the extent of implementation of student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in South-East Nigeria. The problems associated with student personnel services can be attributed to some factors; poor funding of the education sector, progressive increase in student enrolment without proportionate increase in facilities, non-participation of the private sector in the provision of student personnel services and poor supervision of personnel services administrators etc. As part of recommendations, the school authority should organize seminars, orientations and talks on how to manage the student personnel services for students and staff of federal and state colleges of education. The method adopted in this research is the survey design method.

Keywords: Implementation, students, learning and developments

INTRODUCTION

The teaching and research functions of higher educational institutions play a very important role in national development, especially in the development of high-level manpower. However, in most cases, the societal expectations in terms of goals are hardly met and part of the explanation is linked to the absence of adequate and conducive environment for effective

learning. To achieve this objective, adequate provision of certain services to students should be fostered for effective teaching and learning process. Among these are the student-personnel services. Student personnel services in this context, refers to all the non-academic services rendered to the students at the schools setting outside the formal classroom instruction, for the purpose of healthy, physical, emotional, social and moral development as part of their preparation for a responsible and productive adult life. Societies all over the world, according to Mgbodile (1986) [1], have established schools for achieving a wide variety of educational goals. They commit a great deal of resources towards the achievement of these goals. Unfortunately, in most cases, social expectation in terms of goal achievement is hardly ever met due to the absence of student personnel services. Over the years, institutions of higher learning, including colleges of education have been grappling with problems of students' unrests, or riots, or demonstrations. Some students are known to protest on issues that encroach upon their welfare from both within and outside of their institutions [2]. Personal observations from tertiary institutions of higher learning appear that these personnel services are inadequate. For instance, in "The Guardian Newspaper" of 24th January, 2010, there was a reported case of rioting of undergraduates of University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where the students revolted against the school authority because of an alleged increment in school fees [3]. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the extent of implementation of student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in South-East Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- To what extent are student personnel services available in federal and state colleges of education in south-east Nigeria?
- How adequate are the available student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south-east Nigeria?
- What are the constraints to the effective implementation of student personnel services in these colleges?
- 4.What are the strategies for improving the implementation of student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south east Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 probability level.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students of both federal and state colleges of education on the extent of student personnel services available in federal and state colleges of education.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students of both federal and state colleges of education on the adequacy of these services in these colleges of education.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students of both federal and state colleges of education on the constraints to the effective implementation of student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south-east Nigeria.

H0₄ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students of both federal and state colleges of education on the strategies for improving the implementation of student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south-east Nigeria.

Concept of Student Personnel Services

According to Ezeocha (1992) [4], student personnel services in the schools, involve all the activities and services that are rendered to the students for the achievement of the educational objectives which are not the normal classroom instruction. Student personnel services involve supervision of students in whatever they do so that the objectives of the school will be achieved. It therefore means the activities of directing, organizing and teaching the students in such away as to ensure the attainment of the desired objectives of education. It involves decision-making and implementation of polices of a school with regard to students' education. Student personnel administration is responsible for decision-making, organising and execution of policies relating to the teaching and learning situations and the general welfare and discipline of the students. The main purpose of student personnel services, as Mgbodile (2003) [1] observed, is the integration of the personnel functions with instruction, and co-ordination of the personnel services.

According to Oboegbulem (2003:165) [5], "pupil personnel services involve all the activities and services, apart from the normal classroom instruction, rendered to students by the principals/headmasters, staff (tutorial and non-tutorial), the students themselves and even the community that are geared

towards making an individual in the school an all-round educated, law-abiding citizen of his community". To Campbell *et al.* (2000) [6], the main role of the administrator in pupil personnel services is one of integrating these services with instruction and coordinating the various kinds of personnel services provided. The type of pupil-personnel services provided at the school level and their functions depend on: the level of the school, whether primary or secondary, the size and complexity of the school, that is, the number of students with cases requiring special attention, and the allocation of services within the district or zone, that is, whether there are specialists personnel and facilities within the area to provide the needed services.

Area of the Study

The study was carried out in South-East Nigeria. South-East Nigeria is bounded by South-South, South-West and North - North of Nigeria. These states that comprises of the South-east geopolitical zone are: Anambra, Abia, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo states. They are the Igbo speaking part of Nigeria.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of the seven (7) colleges of education in the geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The population of the study comprised of all the senior administrative staff of student affairs department of federal and state with Grade level 8 (eight) and above, and all final year students of both federal and state colleges of education in South East Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample of the study was 770 respondents. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample. 10% percentage of the total population of each was used. This is made up of; federal 330 (30 staff and 300 students), while that of state is 440 (40 staff and 400 students).

Instruments for Data Collection

The instruments that were used for collecting data for this study were “Questionnaire on Implementation of Student Personnel Services” (QISPS) and an observation schedule known as Student Personnel Services Observation Schedule” (SPSOS).

Method of Data Analysis

Mean scores and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions. Real limit of numbers 0.50 - 1.49, 1.50 - 2.49, 2.50 - 3.49, and 3.5 - 4.00 were used to interpret the results. The null hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistics.

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis based on the four research questions, and the four null hypotheses that guided the study. The major findings of the study were also presented in this chapter.

Research Question One

To what extent are student personnel services available in federal and state colleges of education in south-east Nigeria?

The data for answering the above research question are contained on Table I.

Table I: Mean ratings and standard deviations of staff and students of federal and state colleges of education on the extent of student personnel services available in federal and state colleges of education. (Federal = 330 - State 440)

S/N	Questionnaire items	Federal n = 330		State n = 440		Total	Dec
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
1.	Hall of residence for students	1.77	0.45	1.81	0.44	1.79	LE
2	Information materials to students	1.57	0.51	1.57	0.50	1.57	LE
3	Regular water supply	1.51	0.55	1.58	0.53	1.55	LE
4	Enough classroom block	1.66	0.53	1.58	0.55	1.61	LE
5	Regular supply of electricity	1.59	0.5	1.62	0.53	1.60	LE
6	Adequate security for student	1.50	0.55	1.55	0.53	1.53	VLE
7	Admission Exercise	2.13	1.02	2.23	1.03	2.19	LE
8	Students' rules and regulation	1.68	0.54	1.64	0.55	1.66	LE
9	Regular meetings with the students	1.41	0.55	1.30	0.55	1.40	VLE
10	Teaching facilities like equipment and instructional materials	1.46	0.55	1.46	0.56	1.46	VLE
11	Financial assistance	1.27	0.52	1.29	0.55	1.28	VLE
12	Medical services	1.36	0.55	1.40	0.5	1.38	VLE
13	Counselling services	1.35	0.55	1.35	0.56	1.35	VLE
14	Co-curricular activities	1.42	0.58	1.39	0.61	1.41	VLE
15	Library services	1.32	0.54	1.35	0.54	1.34	VLE
16	Registration and monitoring of students organization/clubs	1.61	0.64	1.53	0.61	1.57	LE
	Cluster mean	1.54	0.24	1.55	0.26	1.54	LE

Key: \bar{x} = mean, SD = Standard deviation, DEC = Decision, VGE = Very great extent, GE = Great extent, LE = Little Extent, VLE = Very little extent

Data presented on Table I above show the mean ratings and standard deviations of both staff and students of federal and state colleges of education with regard to the extent of availability of student personnel services in colleges of education in South-East Nigeria. Based on the data, the items have mean scores that range from 1.28 to 2.19. This showed that all the services are available but to a very little extent. The cluster mean for

both students and staff of federal is 1.54 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.24, while the cluster mean of both staff and students of state is 1.55, with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.26.

Research Question Two

How adequate are the available student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south-east Nigeria?

The data for answering the above research question are contained in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviations of staff and students of federal and state colleges of education on the adequacy of student personnel services in these colleges of education. (Federal 330-State 440)

S/N	Questionnaire items	Federal n = 330		State n = 440		Total	Dec
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
17	Student academic and personal records	2.18	0.73	2.21	0.75	2.19	LE
18	Medical facilities	1.87	0.79	1.94	0.76	1.91	LE
19	Hostel accommodation for student	2.01	0.8	2.05	0.82	2.03	LE
20	Maintenance of roads on campuses	1.89	0.79	1.95	0.77	1.92	LE
21	Counselling centre for students	1.89	0.85	1.93	0.87	1.92	LE
22	Library services for students	1.64	0.86	1.72	0.92	1.69	LE
23	Classroom blocks	1.77	0.84	1.76	0.80	1.76	LE
24	Information materials	1.72	0.78	1.68	0.81	1.70	LE
25	Sports facilities/equipment	1.82	0.92	1.85	0.87	1.84	LE
26	Transportation services	1.81	0.90	1.81	0.93	1.81	LE
	Cluster mean	1.86	0.67	1.81	0.69	1.88	LE

The data presented on Table 2 above show the mean ratings and standard deviations of students and staff of both federal and state college of education regarding the adequacy of student personnel services in colleges of education in south-east Nigeria. The table showed that the mean ratings

of the students and staff of federal colleges of education for items 17 to 26 are 2.18, 1.87, 2.01, 1.89, 1.64, 1.77, 1.72, 1.82, and 1.81 respectively with corresponding standard deviations of 0.73, 0.79, 0.81, 0.79, 0.85, 0.86, 0.84, 0.78, 0.92 and 0.90. The mean ratings of both staff and students of state college of education for the same items 17 to 26 are 2.21, 1.94, 2.05, 1.95, 1.93, 1.72, 1.76, 1.68, 1.85 and 1.81 respectively with corresponding standard deviations of 0.75, 0.76, 0.82, 0.77, 0.87, 0.92, 0.80, 0.81, 0.87 and 0.93.

Based on the response by the students and staff of both federal and state colleges of education, services like hostel accommodation for students and student academic and personal records, medical facilities, maintenance of road on campus, counselling centre for student, library services for students, classroom blocks, information materials, sports facilities/equipment and transportation services are to a little extent.

Research Question Three

What are the constraints to the effective implementation of student personnel services in these colleges? The data answering the above research question are contained in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviations of staff and students of federal and state colleges of education on the constraints to the effective implementation of student personnel services in colleges of education in south- east Nigeria. (Federal 330 - State 440)

S/N	Questionnaire items	Federal n = 330		State n = 440		Total	Dec
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
27	Poor funding of the education sector	3.53	0.78	3.59	0.73	3.52	SA
28	Poor maintenance culture	3.69	0.55	3.66	0.61	3.67	SA
29	Inadequate communication	3.68	0.58	3.68	0.64	3.58	SA
30	Careless use of facilities by students	3.61	0.59	3.66	0.59	3.64	SA
31	Mismanagement of funds by college administrators	3.43	0.71	3.41	0.75	3.41	SA
32	Poorly executed projects	3.41	0.59	3.39	0.58	3.30	SA
33	Non-participation of the private sector in the provision of student personnel services	3.48	0.59	3.46	0.61	3.47	SA
34	Poor housing situation in the college/urban cities	3.42	0.56	3.40	0.58	3.41	SA
35	Increase in enrolment without proportionate increase in student personnel services	3.48	0.59	3.43	0.63	3.45	SA
36	Poor supervision of student personnel services administrators	3.41	0.60	3.44	0.63	3.43	SA
	Cluster mean	3.51	0.37	3.51	0.41	3.51	SA

Key: \bar{x} = Mean SD = Standard deviation, SA=Strongly agree, A= Agree
D = Disagree SD = Strongly disagree

The data presented on Table 3 above showed the mean ratings and standard deviation of staff and students of both federal and state college of education with regard to constraints to the effective implementation of these services. The data showed that the mean ratings of students and staff of federal college of education are: 3.53, 3.69, 3.68, 3.61, 3.42, 3.41, 3.48, 3.42, 3.48, 3.41 and 3.54, with corresponding standard deviations of 0.78, 0.55, 0.58, 0.59, 0.71, 0.59, 0.59, 0.56, 0.59, 0.60, and 0.66; while the mean

ratings of the staff and students of state college of education are 3.59, 3.66, 3.68, 3.66, 3.41, 3.39, 3.46, 3.40, 3.43, 3.44 and 3.52, with a corresponding standard deviations of 0.73, 0.61, 0.64, 0.59, 0.75, 0.58, 0.61, 0.58, 0.63, 0.63, and 0.68.

Based on the mean ratings presented above, the students and staff of both federal and state colleges of education have the same view on the constraints to the effective implementation of these services. Therefore, there are some factors that hinder the effective implementation of these services.

Research Question Four

What are the strategies for improving the implementation of student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south-east Nigeria?

The data answering the above research question are contained on Table 4.

Table 4: Mean ratings and standard deviations of staff and students of federal and state college of education on the strategies for improving the implementation of student personnel services . (Federal 330-State 440)

S/N	Questionnaire items	Federal n = 330		State n = 440		Total	Dec
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
37	The government giving special grants to colleges for hostel	3.61	0.52	3.66	0.63	3.67	SA
38	Involving the private sector in the provision of student hostels	3.51	0.56	3.43	0.73	3.50	SA
39	The school authorities completing all abandoned projects.	3.47	0.51	3.42	0.73	3.44	SA
40	Students admission should be guided by available hostel accommodation	3.51	0.75	3.45	0.73	3.48	SA
41	The school management approaching individuals/ philanthropists	3.39	0.61	3.41	0.63	3.40	SA
42	The student affairs department should be more effectively supervised.	3.46	0.54	3.44	0.67	3.45	SA
43	The school authority raising loans.	3.32	0.63	3.36	0.67	3.35	SA
44	The colleges establishing guidance and counselling centres in the colleges.	3.42	0.59	3.33	0.68	3.36	SA
45	Effective organization of orientation programme by the colleges.	3.41	0.51	3.39	0.67	3.40	SA
46	Digitalization of records units.	3.44	0.53	3.45	0.51	3.45	SA
47	Appointment of sanitary inspectors	3.61	0.61	3.56	0.60	3.54	SA
48	Individuals and organizations should be approached to donate books/materials to the colleges.	3.51	0.55	3.54	0.62	3.52	SA
49	Attention to maintenance facilities.	3.51	0.64	3.54	0.65	3.53	SA
50	Privatization of facilities.	3.39	0.62	3.40	0.70	3.30	SA
51	Financial assistance to students.	3.36	0.55	3.37	0.67	3.36	SA
	Cluster mean	3.47	0.28	3.45	0.31	3.46	SA

The data presented on Table 4 showed that the staff and students of both federal and state colleges of education strongly agree that the government should give special grants to colleges for hostels, involve the private sector in the provision of student personnel services that the school

authorities should complete all abandoned projects using task forces. These items have mean ratings of 3.44 and above in a four-point rating scale.

Discussion

Availability of student personnel services

With reference to research question one which dealt with the extent of availability of student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south-eastern Nigeria, evidence from the study shows that the students and staff of federal and state colleges of education share the view that most of these students personnel services are available to a very little extent - like financial assistance to students, counselling services for students, road maintenance, classroom blocks and teaching facilities. In other words, they exist in the colleges of education.

Adequacy of student personnel services

Regarding the second research question which dealt with adequacy of the available student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south-eastern Nigeria, it was the opinion of students and staff of federal and state colleges of education, that all the student personnel services like: student academic and personal records, medical facilities, maintenance of roads on campus, counselling centre for students, library services for students, classroom blocks, information materials, sports facilities/equipment and transportation services are inadequate. The staff and students of federal and state responded similarly to adequacy of admission exercise and hostel accommodation for students. The findings agree with Ezeocha (2000) [7] that adequate students' records are necessary

for students guidance, transfer of students, promotion, classification, health services, provision of school facilities and recruitment of staff.

Constraints to the effective implementation

With reference to the third research question that dealt with the constraints to the effective implementation of student personnel services in these colleges of education, the respondents share the view that the constraints to effective implementation of these services include factors like poor funding of the education sector, poor maintenance culture of college administrators, inadequate attention to communication between students and management, mismanagement of funds by college administrators.

Strategies for improvement

Regarding the fourth research question which dealt with strategies for improving the implementation of student personnel services in federal and state colleges of education in south-eastern Nigeria, the students, and the staff of student affairs department are of the view that some of the measures to be adopted are government giving special grants to colleges for hostel, involving the private sector in the provision of student personnel services, the school authorities completing all abandoned projects, students' admission to be guided by existing student personnel services, the school management approaching individuals / philanthropist to help provide hostels for students, the students affairs department being more effectively supervised by the chief executives, the school authority raising loans from commercial institutions to provide facilities for students, the colleges establishing guidance and counselling centres in the colleges, financial assistance to students should be given attention by the colleges.

Conclusion

On the basis of the major findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Student disciplinary measures, monitoring of student activities and organizations, supply of water, security services for students co-curricular facilities, medical services, financial assistance and other services are of poor quality in federal and state colleges of education in south eastern Nigeria.
- Student records, counselling services, maintenance of roads on campus, transport services for students, classroom blocks and teaching facilities, information materials, sports facilities, and transport services are inadequate except admission exercise and hostel accommodation for students .
- The problems associated with student personnel services can be attributed to some factors; poor funding of the education sector, progressive increase in student enrolment without proportionate increase in facilities, non-participation of the private sector in the provision of student personnel services and poor supervision of personnel services administrators etc.
- The problem associated with student personnel services can be controlled if some measures are adopted such as: allowing students' admission to be guided by existing student personnel services, supervising the Student Affairs Personnel of the colleges more effectively, establishing guidance and counselling centres, government giving grants to colleges for hostels, involving the private

sector actively in the provision of student personnel services and school authority completing all abandoned projects using task force.

- Other measures include: encouraging individuals and corporate bodies to participate in the provision of student personnel services, digitalizing record-keeping and establishing counselling centres.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made in the light of the findings;

- The school authority should organize seminars, orientations and talks on how to manage the student personnel services for students and staff of federal and state colleges of education.
- The funds allocated to these colleges of education and internally generated funds should be judiciously used by the college administrators for the provision of facilities and services in the colleges.
- Non-governmental bodies like alumni associations, the private sector, and philanthropists should be appealed to by these college administrators, to assist in the provision of these services.
- The federal and state governments should allocate adequate funds to the education sector, especially the tertiary institutions to enable them provide some essential services to students.
- Special grants should be given to these institutions for the provision of student personnel services in these colleges of education.
- College administrators should be guided by available student personnel services in admitting students for different programmes.

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