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Utilization of Counselling Skills by Counsellors in Improving the Academic Achievements of Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

Okonkwo Clement Maduabuchi

Department Of Guidance and Counselling Enugu State University of Science and Technology, ESUT, Enugu Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The study examined the “utilization of counselling skills by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were: ascertain the extent to which empathy, clapping and listening skills could be utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. 3 research questions and 1 research hypothesis guided the study. The design of the study was descriptive survey. The population for the study was fifty nine (59) school counsellors. No sampling was done since the number is small and manageable. A Self-structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher called Counselling Skills for Academic Achievement Scale (CSF.AAS). It was validated by three experts-one in measurement and evaluation while the other two from Guidance and Counselling department. Its reliability coefficient was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. A coefficient of .87, .71 and .77 was found for the three clusters. Mean and Standard deviation were used to answer the three research questions and the one research hypothesis using z-test statistics. The result obtained from the analysis showed that empathy, clapping and listening counselling skills are utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent. The study also revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean response scores of counsellors in urban and rural schools on the extent to which counselling skills is utilized in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that school counsellor in collaboration with the classroom teacher should identify students who need help and take active role in the implementation of the cognitive, affective and psycho-motor domain required to adjust the ailing students. The study therefore suggests that further research should be replicated with a large sample size/using another instrument in other educational Zone.

Keywords: Counselling skills, Academic achievements and School counselors.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the process of developing the body physically, morally and mentally. That is to say that a balance education is embedded in three domains

namely- cognitive, psychomotor and affective domain. Any student that lacks any of the aforementioned domains may have a problem excelling academically [1]. In order not to perform poorly in academics the need to braze oneself to those counselling skills that enhances academic achievements becomes vital. This is an invitation for school counsellors to expend their counselling skills such as questioning skills, summarization skills, reframing skills, paraphrasing skill, empathy skill, capping skill and reflection skills for improving the academic achievement of their students/clients [2]. This involves activities that help in solving students' learning problems.

The scope of this area of counselling includes development of effective study habits, enhancement of effective examination skills, utilization of various bodies and facilities for placement, and encouraging interaction between staff and students for better understanding of each others' needs. If there is a lack in the aforementioned scope then it means that these inadequacies could be as a result of lack of professional counselling on this crucial issue affecting students, school personnel and the society at large. [3] observes that leaving secondary school students on their own to develop/utilize empathy skills, questioning skills, summarizing skills and reflection skills through self-reliance, self-understanding,

self-direction and problem-solving skills without proper guidance from trained counsellors will not yield lasting results towards enhancing academic achievements. Even if it does, the question is to what extent will the utilization yield to a better academic achievement?

Meanwhile, there are therefore a host of problems which cause students to attain poor academic achievement. Anxiety for instance is when individuals are at odds with themselves [4]; poor self-concept exists when the students view oneself as good for nothing. [5] in his study remarked that since the academic self concept is such a major factor influencing development and learning, the school must assume a prominent role in helping students to develop a more adequate academic self concept., and improved methods of study, improved reading techniques and discipline through proper counselling skills.

In the word of [6], he observed that poor organization, laziness, being easily distracted and lack of self-confidence are among issues that contribute to a student's poor academic achievement. [4], opined that academic counselling through counselling skills is thus a good remedy for students with reading problem by training them to have effective counselling skills. [3], list core counselling skills as empathy skills, capping skills and listening skills for

improving the academic achievement of their students.

Thus, empathy counselling skills is otherwise called reflection of feeling skill where the counsellor demonstrates to his/her clients that he/she is aware of their feelings and emotions. It conveys the counsellor's understanding of the clients' problems and feelings. [7], remarked that empathy implies an attitude in which the counsellor is able to sense the hurt or pleasure as another person sees it; to perceive the causes of a client's problems as he perceives them, but without ever losing the recognition that it is "as if" he was the person involved. [7], maintains that empathy facilitates counselling as it conveys to the client the message that much value is placed on him/her and that the feelings and meanings which he/she attaches to his experiences are respected and worth attending to. It makes the student to be determined to excel academically since the teachers/counsellors understand that he is not isolated in his poor achievements. This no doubt makes a client in a counselling relation to feel a sense of belonging, reassurance, love and relaxation thereby making the student to improve in his academic endeavours. In applying empathy skill, the counsellor needs to let his client understand that he too feels the way he, the client feels about his experience. If a student reports to his/her counsellor that he/she often feels

rejected by his classmates, the counsellor can respond by saying, "it is like you are feeling lonely and isolated each time you are in the class" or "it sounds as if you are yet to make friends in your class".

Subsequently, capping counselling skills is similar to, but different from the skill of reflection of feelings (empathy). Here, the counsellor tries to move his/her client along from emotion-laden situations to cognitively restructured situations. He/She engages his/her clients in discussions that task their cognitions in order to realize themselves. The counsellor can introduce humor here but must be very careful, plain, sincere and natural in the counselling relationships. The counsellor's attribute of genuineness comes to play in this regard as whatever he/she says and feels must be reliable and the same over time. [7], warns that the counsellor trying to demonstrate his/her genuineness should not attempt to be phony as it is very risky to do so.

Listening skills at the other hand is the first skill to be acquired by any practicing counsellor. It involves paying attention to every statement involving body movement or sign that a client makes in a counselling encounter. [8], in his study observed that listening skill is a crucial skill that helps to establish core conditions of counselling like openness, trust, self-confidence, love and worthiness or belongingness. [9], noted that counsellor in the process of listening

attentively to his clients' presentations indulges in paraphrasing his statements, perception checks, reaction to sudden body movement, non-judgmental statements, restatements and clarifications. These are things that ensure the client that his/her counsellor is responsive, empathic, and listening to his/her problems with a view to finding solutions that are appropriate. The counsellor should avoid what the client did not say or omit what he/she said.

Variables such as gender and school location could enhance academic achievement of students. However, location in this context refers to the geographical position of the school which can be rural or urban areas. Nevertheless, the differences in rural and urban areas indicate the differences in the academic achievement of students. Location of schools could also be a factor that affects academic achievement. [8], stated that school location means urban and rural schools. [10], indicated that schools in urban areas have electricity, water supply, more teachers, more learning facilities and infrastructure. To support this, [9],

stated that urban areas are those with high population density, high variety and beauty while rural areas are those with low population subsistence mode of life, monotonous and burden.

Because location is an important issue in teaching and learning, it has received some important attention from different scholars based on their empirical studies in improving the academic achievement of secondary school students in teaching and learning. [11], stresses that, students in rural schools perform better than students in urban schools. The researcher explained further that this could be attributed to the fact that in the rural schools, classes were not as large as those in urban schools. Counsellors should be very meticulous in choosing the best skills in counselling these categories of students. With these literatures and studies, we aimed to determine the extent to which counselling skills could be utilized in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of this study is to examine the utilization of counselling skills by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain the extent to which empathy as a counselling skills could be utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

2. find out the extent to which capping as a counselling skills could be utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.
3. identify the extent to which listening as a counselling skills

could be utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does empathy as a counselling skills utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.
2. To what extent does capping as a counselling skills utilized by

counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

3. To what extent does listening as a counselling skills utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

scores of counsellors in urban and rural schools on the extent to which counselling skills is utilized in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean response

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design for this study because it permits the collection of original data and describes the condition

as they exist in their natural setting. The population for the study consisted of the 59 school counsellors currently serving in the 31 government owned

secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone (Source: Guidance and Counselling Unit, Education Services Department, Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB), Enugu. 2016/2017 Session, November, 2016). The population may not be sample because the population of the study is small.

The instrument for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher called Counselling Skills for Academic Achievement Scale (CSF.AAS). It has 3 clusters with 15 items developed to assist the researcher provide clues that helped raise much needed data that were used to answer the 3 research questions and test the 3 research hypotheses formulated to guide the study. The response format of the instrument is a 4 point scale of very great extent, great extent, little extent and very little extent. Each response option has a numerical value assigned to it as follows: Very great extent (VGE)----4 points; Great extent (GE)-----3 points; Little Extent (LE)---2 points and Very little extent (VLE)—1 point. An introductory letter was attached to the instrument stating the purpose of the study for the respondents easy of reference.

The instrument was validated by three experts (one in measurement and evaluation and 2 others in Guidance Counselling departments) with the estimated overall reliability coefficient of

0.97 for three clusters using Cronbach Alph Reliability tool. Finally the researcher and the research assistants were able to retrieve 57 signifying 86.44% return of dully filled copies of the administer instrument. The three research questions formulated to guide the study were answered using mean, grand mean and standard deviation; z-test statistics was used to analyze the one research hypothesis. The mean rating of the numerical values assigned to the response options will be added and divided by the number of the response options. This formed the basis for the cut-off point. Thus:

$$\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$$

The one null hypotheses were tested using z-test statistics at .05 level of significance and a degree of freedom of ($n_1+n_2 - 2$). From this, the researcher made the required inferences based on the data that were analysed for the study

Decision Rule-For the research questions: Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above will be regarded as great extent while any item whose mean score is below 2.50 will be interpreted to mean 'little extent'. For the hypotheses, the decision rule is that if z-calculated is equal to or greater than the t-critical value at the chosen confidence level (.05) and degree of freedom (n_1+n_2-2) the null hypothesis

of no significant difference will be rejected. If on the other hand, the calculated t-value is less than that of the

z-critical from the table value, the null hypothesis will not be rejected.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Analyzed data were presented in Table 1-4.

Research Question 1: To what extent does empathy as a counselling skills

utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean ($\bar{X}$) Rating with Standard Deviation of the Extent of to which Empathy as a Counselling Skills Utilized by Counsellors in Improving the Academic Achievements of Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

S/ N	Empathy as a Counselling Skills are Utilized in improving the academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in the following ways:	Response Option				$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
		4 VGE	3 GE	2 LE	1 VLE			
1	It helps the counsellor to understand the clients' problems and feelings thereby encouraging the students to strive harder	21	19	13	4	3.00	0.94	GE
2	It makes a students in a counselling relation to feel a sense of belonging in the class	29	11	09	08	3.07	1.12	GE
3	It gives the students reassurance that he can excel academically	43	09	04	01	3.65	0.69	GE
4	It provides a conducive environment where the student can love and relax	33	17	04	03	3.40	0.84	GE
5	Helps the client to know that to whom much is given much is needed	19	17	12	09	2.80	1.08	GE
N = 57		Grand Mean				3.18	0.93	GE

Table 1 indicated that of the 5 items on how empathy as a counselling skills could be utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria; School counsellors agreed with 5 of the items (1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) as they recorded mean scores of (3.00, 3.07, 3.65, 3.40 and 2.80) which are above the cut-off point of 2.50. The standard deviation for all the items are small signifying that the respondents responses are closely clustered around the mean. The table also shows that the respondents grand mean score for the empathy as a counselling skills are utilized by counsellors in improving the

academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria is (3.18). From the foregoing, the answer to research question one indicated that empathy as a counselling skills are utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent does capping as a counselling skills utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean ($\bar{X}$) Rating with Standard Deviation of the Extent of to which Capping as a Counselling Skills Utilized by Counsellors in Improving the Academic Achievements of Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

S/ N	Empathy as a Counselling Skills are Utilized in improving the academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in the following ways:	Response Option				$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
		4 VGE	3 GE	2 LE	1 VLE			
6	Counsellors tries to move his/her client along from emotion-laden situations to cognitively restructured situations	23	15	13	06	2.96	1.03	GE
7	He engages his/her clients in discussions that task their cognitions in order to realize themselves	25	19	11	02	3.18	1.12	GE
8	He introduces humor to encourage learning	41	07	05	04	3.49	0.93	GE
9	Counsellor tried to be genuineness so as to enable the client to be relax and excel academically	37	19	09	02	3.25	0.85	GE
10	Counsellor does not engages his/her clients in discussions that task their cognitions in order to realize themselves	01	02	17	37	1.72	0.99	LE
N = 57		Grand Mean				2.92	0.98	GE

Table 2 indicated that of the 5 items on how capping as a counselling skill could be utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria; School counsellors agreed with 4 of the items (6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) as they recorded mean scores of (2.96, 3.18, 3.49 and 3.25) which are above the cut-off point of 2.50. They however disagreed with one of the items (10) with a mean score of 1.72. The standard deviation for all the items are small signifying that the respondents responses are closely clustered around the mean. The table also shows that the respondents grand mean score for capping as a counselling skills could be

utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria is (2.98). From the foregoing, the answer to research question two indicated that capping as a counselling skills are utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.

Research Question 3: To what extent does listening skills utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Mean ($\bar{X}$) Rating with Standard Deviation of the Extent of to which Listening Skills are Utilized by Counsellors in Improving the Academic Achievements of

S/ N	Listening as a Counselling Skills are Utilized in improving the academic Achievement of Secondary School Students through:	Response Option				$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
		4 VGE	3 GE	2 LE	1 VLE			
11	Paying attention	27	13	09	02	3.25	0.85	GE
12	Restatements and clarifications	31	17	07	02	3.35	0.83	GE
13	Paraphrasing statements	21	16	11	09	2.86	1.09	GE
14	Non-judgmental statements	25	19	11	02	3.88	0.87	GE
15	Personal Interests	05	08	19	25	1.88	0.96	LE
N = 57		Grand Mean				3.04	0.92	GE

Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 3 indicated that of the 5 items on how listening skills could be utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria; School counsellors agreed with 4 of the items (11, 12, 13 and 14) as they recorded mean scores of (3.25, 3.35, 2.86 and 3.88) which are above the cut-off point of 2.50. They however disagreed with one of the items (15) with a mean score of 1.88. The standard deviation for all the items are small signifying that the respondents responses are closely clustered around the mean. The table also shows that the respondents grand mean score for listening skills could be utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria is (3.04). From the foregoing, the answer to research question three indicated that listening skills are utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.

DECISION RULE

If the calculated value is greater than the critical value, we reject the null hypotheses or accept the null hypothesis if the calculated values are less than the critical value.

Research Hypothesis

There are hypothetical statement that could be tested for the purpose of this research work, they are test of hypothesis..The hypotheses are to be tested using the test for correction of data.

$$\text{Formula: } z = \frac{X_1 - X_2}{\sqrt{\frac{S_1^2 + S_2^2}{N_1 + N_2}}}$$

Where:

z	=	test statistics
X_1	=	mean of sample 1
X_2	=	mean of sample 2
n_1	=	sample size for sample 1
n_2	=	sample size for sample 2
S_1^2	=	standard deviation for sample 1
S_2^2	=	standard deviation for sample 2

By substitution

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{X}_1 &= 3.18 ; S_1 = 0.93; N_1 = 37 \\ \bar{X}_2 &= 2.92; S_2 = 0.98; N_2 = 20 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 z &= \frac{3.18 - 2.92}{\sqrt{\frac{0.93^2}{37} + \frac{0.98^2}{20}}} = \\
 &= \frac{0.26}{\sqrt{\frac{0.86}{37} + \frac{0.96}{20}}} \\
 &= \frac{0.26}{\sqrt{0.02 + 0.05}} \\
 &= \frac{0.26}{\sqrt{0.07}} \\
 &= \frac{0.26}{0.26} \\
 &= 1.00
 \end{aligned}$$

(0.05) level of significant= ± 1.96 while z test calculated is 1.00

H_{01} : There is no significant difference between the mean response scores of counsellors in urban and rural schools on the extent to which counselling skills is utilized in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 4: z-test Result of Rural and Urban School Counsellors on the Extent to which Counselling Skills are Utilized in Improving the Academic Achievements of Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Location Decision	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit
Urban	37	3.18	0.93	55	1.00	± 1.96
NS						
Do not reject H_0						
Rural	20	2.92	0.98			

Significant at $P < .05$, $df = 55$, critical t-value = ± 1.96

The z-test analysis in table 4 above indicates that the calculated z- value is 1.00 while the critical z-value is ± 1.96 at .05 level of significance. This implies that the calculated z-value is less than the critical the critical z- value. Hence, there is no significant difference between the mean response scores of counsellors in urban and rural schools on the extent to which counselling skills is utilized in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Discussion of the Study

For the discussion of the findings inherent in this study, research questions and research hypotheses that are related are treated together. Result of data analysis in Table 1 showed that empathy as a counselling skill is utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.

This finding is in consonance with earlier research by [7] who in his study remarked that empathy facilitates counselling as it conveys to the client the message that much value is placed on him/her and that the feelings and meanings which he/she attaches to his experiences are respected and worth attending to. This is an affirmation that makes a client in a counselling relation to feel a sense of belonging, reassurance, love and relaxation thereby making the student to improve in his academic endeavours. [7], also noted in his study that empathy helps the clients' to understand his problems and feelings thereby encouraging the students to strive harder by reassuring students that he can excel academically. This is achievable in a situation whereby a conducive environment is provided to the student where they can love and relax and by having a sense of belonging in the class that encourages learning.

The second research questions showed that capping skill is utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent. This finding agrees with [7] who opined that capping as a skill are utilized by counsellors in a situation whereby the counsellor introduces humor but must be very careful, plain, sincere and natural in the counselling relationships so that it will yield a good academic achievements. [7] warns that the counsellor trying to demonstrate his/her genuineness should not attempt to be phony as it is very risky to do so.

The third research questions showed that listening skill is utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent. This finding agrees with [8] who in his study observed that listening skill is a crucial skill that helps to establish core conditions of counselling like openness, trust, self-confidence, love and worthiness or belongingness. The study is also in agreement with [9] who noted that counsellor in the process of listening attentively to his clients' presentations indulges in paraphrasing his statements, perception checks, reaction to sudden body movement, non-judgmental statements, restatements and clarifications.

The first research hypothesis tried to investigate if there is a significant difference between the mean response scores of counsellors in urban and rural schools on the extent to which counselling skills is utilized in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The analysis of the z-test comparison according to Table 4 showed that the computed z (1.00) is less than the critical z -value (± 1.96) at .05 level of significance. With regard to the decision rule, research hypothesis 1 shows that there is no significant difference between the mean response scores of counsellors in urban and rural schools on the extent to which counselling skills is utilized in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. This is in agreement with the findings of [11], who stressed that students in rural schools perform better than students in urban schools. The researcher explained further that this could be attributed to the fact that in the rural schools, classes were not as large as those in urban schools. The researcher from his study noted that counsellors should be very meticulous in choosing the best skills in counselling students because of their different attributes.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively from the above analysis and interpretations done and the information from related literature, it implies that

1. Empathy as a counselling skills are utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.
2. Capping as a counselling skills are utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.
3. Listening skills are utilized by counsellors in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.
4. There is no significant difference between the mean response scores of counsellors in urban and rural schools on the extent to which counselling skills is utilized in improving the academic achievements of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The finding of this study holds implication for students, teachers, academically -at -risk learners, counsellors and practicing counsellors in Enugu Education zone.

As a result of exposure to poor learning environment, students would no longer want to study in rural areas because rural areas have electricity, water supply, more teachers, more learning facilities and infrastructure.

Academically-at-risk learners would also learn to think logically and scientifically about their thoughts and emotions in

turn, would be prepared to face the challenges that lie ahead of them in a rational and self-helping manner. They will believe in their ability to succeed, develop positive attitude to school and learning, reduce anxiety and improve on their academic achievement.

Hence, efforts must be geared towards ensuring practicing counsellors to update their skills in order to effectively utilize counselling skills for learners in order to make them actualize their academic potentials.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the implications of the study the following recommendations were made;

It is recommended in this study that competent teachers should be posted to rural schools, and as well be motivated to bring out their best.

Also, adequate inspection of teachers and schools is recommended to enhance effective teaching and would increase student academic excellence.

The school counsellor in collaboration with the classroom teacher should identify students who need help and take active role in the implementation of the

cognitive, affective and psycho-motor domain required to adjust the ailing students.

A fourth recommendation involves the standardization of classroom instruments to regularly assess students' academic growth and achievement. Of the numerous instruments available to assess student growth and achievement, few, if any, can be administered consistently by classroom teachers. This lack of ease of instrumentation prevents classroom teachers from objectively assessing their students' academic progress.

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