

Counsellors' Utilization of Reinforcement as a Counselling Strategy for Restraining Disordered Behaviours among Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Nweke Okechukwu Fidelis

Department Of Guidance and Counselling Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the extent to which counsellors' utilize reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for the study consisted of 59 school guidance counsellors in the existing 31 public secondary schools in the area. The number is small and manageable so no sampling was done. The instrument used for data collection was a 7-item questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts from Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. Two from guidance and counselling and one from measurement and evaluation. The research question was answered by making use of mean with standard deviation, while t-test statistic was used to test the hypothesis. The study revealed among others that school counsellors' utilize reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State to a great extent. The study concluded that guidance counsellors and teacher counsellors do not differ significantly in their opinions of the utilization of reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary schools students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. The study recommended among others that school authorities should introduce some kind of reward system every term to the students that portray exemplary behaviours

Keywords: Behaviour, Behaviour Disordered and Systematic Desensitization

INTRODUCTION

All men are created equal and unique. Though, some accidentals in life caused some students behaviour to be disordered while for some persons their disorder behaviours are based on the choice they make. Using strategy such as reinforcement (Positive/negative reinforcement) to curtail the disorder behaviours calls for an urgent attention. [1], remarked that reinforcement is used to sustain desirable behaviour that will strengthen or facilitate certain behaviour like given of material tokens such as chocolate. In the same pattern [2] opined that counsellors sometimes, give token economy as symbolic reinforces to

students when they exhibit desirable behaviour. Yet, the need to restrain the disorder behaviours among students as perceived by teachers calls for an urgent attention as outlined by [3] as follows:

there should be a good rapport between teachers and students; reinforcement should be given to students to encourage good behaviour; there should be good communication between teachers and parents; teachers should isolate and punish any disorder behaviour noticed in

students; teachers should plan their lessons very well to interest the students; students should be engaged in activities of interest such as dramatic society, debating club instructional materials should be used in teaching students; good parent-teacher rapport helps to reduce students' disorder behaviour; teachers should report cases of disorder to the students' parents; teachers should make a regular roll call if they want to stop students' regular absenteeism; programme of interest should be introduced in the school to keep students busy; schools should have permanent counsellors who will be counselling students on appropriate behaviours

Reinforcement are consequences that strengthen behaviour. Punishments are consequences that weaken behaviour. Students' behaviours are managed and changed by the consequences of classroom behaviour. For them, to manage behaviour through consequences one must define the problem by count or description, design away to change the behaviour, identify an effective reinforcement and apply the reinforcement consistently to shape or change the behaviour [4]. Reinforcement is any event or stimulus which will increase the probability of a response recurring. It could also be explained to mean a process of strengthening or emphasizing a feeling or idea or a habit to cause a process to increase its intensity [5]. There are basically two types of reinforcement, they are positive and negative reinforcement. Both can be used as corrective measures. However, for it to

be effective in the correction of adolescents' disorder behaviour, the child's background must be seriously taken into consideration.

Meanwhile, the researcher is of the opinion that using the status of the counsellor as a variable, the status of the counsellor may be utilized by guidance and teacher counsellors in reinforcing positive behaviour of students. Since there is no organized training for teachers counsellors in the state, their performances towards reinforcing this students will have some short comings as these teachers are appointed to help in the implementation of the guidance programmes in secondary school in the state. In the same respect, [3] noted in his study that counsellor (Guidance counsellors/teacher counsellors) being a member of staff of the school shares in their responsibilities, contributing their specialized skills, knowledge and experiences in these dimensions. Among the supposed roles they perform in the school setting which ultimately help in the reduction of students' disorder behaviour, include: counselling services, orientation services, information services, diagnostic services, test and measurement services, curriculum planning services, educational and vocational services, continuous assessment, consultation services, placement and follow up services, community services, and referral services. To this end, since the utilization of the services is not feasible the objective of this study is empirically poised to examine the counsellors' utilization of reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu state bearing in mind the counsellors' status as a variable

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of this study is to investigate the counsellors' utilization of reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours

among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State.

Specifically the study was designed to;

1. Ascertain the extent to which school counsellors' utilize

reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary

school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent do school counsellors' utilize reinforcement as a counselling

strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State?

HYPOTHESIS

The following research hypothesis guided the study and was tested at .05 level of significance.

H01: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of guidance counsellors and teacher

counsellors' utilization of reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. The population for the study consisted of 59 school counsellors in the existing 31 government owned secondary schools in the area. Of these 37 are guidance counsellors while 20 are teachers counsellors. The population is small so no sampling was done. The instrument used for data collection was a 7 items self structured questionnaire developed by the researcher called Reinforcement Scale (RS). The instrument had a 4-point response scale with response category of Very great extent (VGE)---4 points; Great extent (GE)-----3 points; Little Extent (LE)---2 points and Very little extent (VLE)—1 point. The instrument was validated by three experts; two from Guidance and counselling and one from measurement and evaluation, all from Faculty of Education, Enugu State university of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate and it

yielded a reliability coefficient of .85 for cluster 1. The study was carried out in all the 31 secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. Fifty nine copies of the questionnaire were distributed but fifty seven copies were retrieved from the respondents representing 96.61 percent return rate. Data collected were analyzed using mean with standard deviation and t-test statistic. Any mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as great extent while any mean below 2.50 was regarded as little extent. The one null hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance using t-test statistic. If the calculated t-value was less than the critical table value of ± 1.96 for the required degree of freedom of 55, the null hypothesis was not rejected but if the calculated t-value was equal to or greater than the critical, t-value, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 1: To what extent do school counsellors' utilize reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State?

Table1: Mean (X̄) Rating with Standard Deviation of the Extent to which School Counsellors' Utilize Reinforcement as a Counselling Strategy for Restraining Disordered Behaviours among Secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State

S/N	Items	Guidance Counsellors N=37		Teacher Counsellors N=22		Overall		Decision
		X ₁	SD ₁	X ₂	SD ₂	X ₃	SD ₃	
1.	There should be good communication between students, teachers and parents	3.03	1.09	2.95	1.21	2.99	1.15	GE
2.	Students should be encouraged to join school clubs and societies	3.54	0.98	2.86	1.25	3.20	1.11	GE
3.	Teachers should isolate and punish any any disorder behaviour noticed in students	2.62	1.51	3.00	1.19	2.81	1.35	GE
4.	Encouraging teachers to plan their lessons to interest the students and arouse their morale	3.05	1.20	3.31	0.89	3.18	1.05	GE
5.	Encourage good parents and teacher rapport	1.81	1.35	1.68	1.29	1.75	1.32	LE
6.	Encourage teachers to report cases of disordered behaviour to parents	1.57	1.19	1.27	0.88	1.42	1.03	LE
7.	Encourage parents to report cases of disordered behaviour to the school	2.89	1.27	3.86	0.63	3.11	0.95	GE
8.	Encourage teachers to take regular roll call to curtail students absence from class/lesson	2.43	1.25	2.00	1.11	2.21	1.18	LE
9.	Encourage teachers to organize and field programmes that are of interest to the students	3.51	1.12	3.72	0.70	3.61	0.91	GE
	Grand Mean	2.71	1.21	2.73	0.91	2.69	1.11	GE

Table 1 indicates that of the 9 items of the extent to which school counsellors' utilize reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, the respondents agreed with

6 items (1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9) as they recorded mean scores of (2.99, 3.20, 2.81, 3.18, 3.11 and 3.61) which are above the cut-off point of 2.50. They however disagreed with 3 of the items (5, 6 and 8) with mean scores of (1.75, 1.42 and 2.21). The standard deviation for all the items

raised is 1.19 which is small signifying that the responses are loosely clustered around the mean. The Table also shows that the respondents grand mean score for the overall items raised is (2.69). Following the guideline for the interpretation of the respondents data, the answers to research question one is that school counsellors' utilize reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in

Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State to a great extent.

H01: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of guidance counsellors and teacher counsellors' utilization of reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of the Mean Rating of Guidance Counsellors and Teacher Counsellors Utilization of Reinforcement as a Counselling Strategy for Restraining Disordered Behaviours among Secondary School Students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Guidance Counsellors	37	2.71	1.21	55	0.07	±1.96	NS
Teacher Counsellors	20	2.73	0.91				Do not reject Ho ₁

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

The t-test analysis of the data in table 2 revealed that the t-calculated value (0.07) is less than the critical t-value of ± 1.96 at degree of freedom (df) of 55 and at .05 level of confidence. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected as guidance

counsellors and teacher counsellors' utilized reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State to a great extent.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The result in Table 1 indicates that that school counsellors' utilize reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State to a great extent. The study is in agreement with the findings of Shertzer and Stone, (1976) who opined

that reinforcement is used to sustain desirable behaviour that will strengthen or facilitate certain behaviour like giving of material tokens such as chocolate. It is also in agreement with the findings of Onwuasoanya (2016) who held that counsellors sometimes, give token economy as symbolic reinforces the

students when they exhibit desirable behaviour

The analysis of the t-test comparison according to Table 2 showed that the t-calculated value (0.07) is less than the critical t-value of ± 1.96 at degree of freedom (df) of 55 and at 0.05 level of confidence. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected as guidance counsellors and teacher counsellors' utilized reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in

CONCLUSION

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

1. School counsellors' utilize reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State to a great extent.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION OF THE FINDINGS

The finding of this study have implications for students, parents, teachers in Enugu Education zone since disordered students often threaten their teachers, school authorities and even parents at home. Most students who are involved do not benefit from schooling because of their demonstrations and destruction of school properties. It affects their academic performance because they are often into one problem or the other losing most vital class lessons.

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2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of guidance counsellors and teacher counsellors' utilization of reinforcement as a counselling strategy for restraining disordered behaviours among secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State

Truant students have poor relationship with their parents. This is because most reasonable parent's withdraw their love and care on their children who exhibit truancy and also most truant children do not like coming closer to their parents because of fear of being reprimanded.

Teachers in the process of teaching and learning should recognize the fact that most learners who are exhibiting truancy or other social menace are out of their

senses. They should make learning very much interesting through using computer and other instructional materials. By implication, teaching and learning should be tailored towards exposing and discouraging disordered acts or conducts.

Government should ensure the availability of guidance counsellors in all the educational levels. This will help in directing students' attention positively and handling issues of personal social problems of students. Counsellors should also help in organizing orientation

programmes and other activities geared towards helping students to live a positive life in and outside the school setting. Government should provide enough recreational facilities in schools across the nation such as table tennis, volley ball. This will help students to channel their energy into meaningful events. Government should ensure that monitoring teams discharge their duties effectively. As this will help in cross examination of activities of teachers and students for optional result in the system.

RECOMMENDATION

To achieve this mission the following recommendation was made based on the findings of this study.

1. Teachers and parents should be re-oriented to apply positive

reinforcement activities in the management of secondary school students' disordered behaviours in Enugu Education Zone

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