

Counsellors' Perception of Orientation Service as a Counselling Strategy for Enhancing Self-Esteem among Secondary School Students in Enugu State, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

Secondary school students do not assert themselves. They have no confidence in themselves and they lack focus in whatever they do. This eventually leads to low self-esteem. By implication, the victim suffers from inferiority complex and this affects adversely his/her academic performance and interpersonal relationship with his/her peers and significant others. The problem of this study is therefore, put in a question form, "what are counsellors' perceptions of orientation service as a strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State?" One research question and one null hypothesis guided the study and was tested at 0.05 level of confidence. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. This was done with particular reference to the location of the respondents. The population of the study was 105 Guidance Counsellors currently serving in the 291 government owned secondary schools in Enugu State. Out of 105 copies of questionnaire developed by the researcher and distributed, 96 copies were returned signifying 91.43%. The 96 copies were used to collect the data for the study using self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher called Counsellors Perception of Orientation Service Scale (CPO OSS). The instrument was face validated by experts. Cronbach Alpha Reliability estimate was used to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument. Data collected for this study was analyzed using mean, grand mean and standard deviation, to answer the one research question. The hypothesis was tested using t-test statistic. The finding showed that counsellors perceive orientation service as a strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State. Thus, no significant difference was found between the mean scores of male and female guidance counsellors' perception on orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State. Based on the findings, a recommendation and suggestions for further studies was made.

Keywords: Self-Esteem, Guidance Counsellors and Orientation Service

INTRODUCTION

Orientation service is a service that is used by a counsellor to make provision for new intakes in any set up. The students are given orientation on how to manage their affairs and excel in their new environment. Information of what to do and what not to do are made available to them. Orientation service is given to students to enable them know school

courses, rules, regulations, different facilities given to them by school [1]. On the same line school also keeps record of the students about their bio-data including identification, socio-economic background, capacities and abilities, interest for courses etc. This service gives scope to students to make them get familiar with the unfamiliar situation of

the school. It is also meant to develop student's abilities and scholarships, a sense of responsibility and integrity, abilities for citizenship, social and vocational skills etc. The service is such a service that develops relationship

It assists new students to know the information's about school, its history and traditions, its rules and regulations, its strength and weaknesses, facilities available for them etc. It helps students to adjust with school situations and enables students to develop academic standard, personal qualities, high moral values as well as ethical standards from rich experiences of the school. It assists students to achieve success in academic life by learning to study carefully, developing interest in study, taking examinations and notes sincerely and utilizing time properly. It helps students to know the almost all useful information's regarding physical plant, library, hostels, class-rooms, laboratories, workshops, gardens, play grounds, different teaching aids and other facilities. It assists students to provide remedial reading, language programme, projects and clubs and different financial help by schools.

Thus, orientation service is seen as a coping strategy utilized through individual counselling or/and group counselling. It is grouped under the client-centered theory of Carl Rogers, (1967). The Student Counselling Services, (2013) stated that counselling services are provided in order to help students build their self-esteem and manage any difficulties they meet in the new environment they find themselves. For instance, if a client enters into a relationship with a counsellor who sufficiently accepts the client to freely express his or her emotions and feelings. This will enable clients to perceive themselves as persons with the power and freedom to change. Usually in the one to one counsellor's relation, we stress the issue of hard work and staying focused as well as desisting from evil association and a host of other vices while students seek support for a variety of situation, like anxiety, stress, sadness, depression and eating problems. [3], stated that guidance can be seen in three ways: as a tool, as an alternative or as an agent of change. Orientation service is one of the guidance services offered in schools. [3], held that orientation service is capable of,

- *acquainting secondary school students with the evil of low self-esteem upon arrival to school*

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between school and students and vice versa and it is organized systematically in the beginning of the new sessions. The orientation service is highly needed due to following reasons according to [2].

- *creating awareness over the importance of higher self-esteem*
- *getting secondary school students to be willing to check stressful moments*
- *encouraging students to eliminate fear in their lives*
- *teaching students to crave for personal fulfillment in their academic pursuit.*
- *students' rules and regulations concerning setting realistic goals should be made available to them on admission*
- *organizing group guidance periodically to enable counsellors identify secondary school students that are manifesting low self-esteem*

A child's self-esteem changes as he or she grows up, [4]. One of the signs of low self-esteem that parents, teachers and counsellors should look out for in secondary school students is withdrawal from others. This can become a source of anxiety for children with self-esteem problems. Such children are usually easily frustrated. They easily want to give up, make negative statements about themselves and could be pessimistic to an extent. They would not want to try out new things and are highly critical of themselves [4]. Some of these traits can easily be noticed by counsellors during orientation.

Resource persons are invited during orientation to take up career talks and teachings on other fields of interest. Such workshops engage students positively. The counsellors use questioning techniques to ensure student's participation during counselling. The students' mannerisms, verbal and non-verbal communications including their facial expressions are observed. Those who need special attention are also identified. The main talk for the day is expected to be delivered by a professional counsellor. Students who are in need of follow up are attended to at the end of the orientation activities. The duration of the follow up depends on the needs identified in such students. The study sought to look in-between these interactions to see how counsellors perceive orientation services for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu state. Apart from the above, the question begging for an answer is, "what then can be done to salvage these young people and channel them towards the right direction in life? If truly children's vulnerability requires adult's intervention, protection and support and if one of those needs is the capacity to develop 'self'; which group of adults can be entrusted with such responsibility? This topic however is simply directing the responsibility of guiding and counselling these young people out of the depleting state of vulnerability they find themselves to counsellors in schools as re-echoed in the Federal Government in her National Policy on Education. [5]. This exercise is restricted to secondary schools in Enugu State. The counsellors as it is, operate in schools which is the 'gateway', where almost every child is expected to pass through in order to become respectable citizens in the society. These schools are found in urban and rural environments. The counsellors in the schools are both males and females. By implication, the study is focused on counsellor gender. During orientation services which can be done either in group or individual counselling) students would likely not want to go to their

Ani opposite sex because of likely abuse ask questions make clients of the opposite sex not go to him/her for help. [6] observed that gender issues play a role in hindering delivery of the services to students to adjust in their academic endeavour with the hope of excelling. Their study found out that counsellors in schools handle more female than male clients. Possible explanations towards this have been offered: gender socialization processes where, from an early age, women are encouraged to seek help when they have problems while men are discouraged from it.

[7], opined that another possible reason to this disparity has done with orientation services. A woman is likely to refer another woman to a counsellor during orientation service, but a man will not refer another man to a counsellor. [8], confirm that male students are more negative towards seeking for counselling than female ones. Most men think it is an indication of personal weakness if one seeks for psychological counselling. This does not mean however that male students experience fewer problems than females. Sometimes a female student may be afraid of having a session with a male counsellor because of rape or fear that the male counsellor she is coming to see is a serial rapist. Sometimes, a female counsellor can be a serial abuser too. In that case most students who are supposed to go to her for a counselling session avoids her. This is not helpful at all because of the consequences of their actions. Most of all those who perceive their professionals to be abusers may be wrong. The extent to which they must have dented the image of therapist can be very devastating just because of their negative perception about a person which is traceable to low self-esteem. It is against this background that the researcher is propelled to ascertain counsellors' perception of orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State bearing in mind counsellors' gender as a variable.

Statement of Problems

There seems to be a serious neglect of orientation services for new intakes. This may have resulted to our students performing poorly, making wrong career decisions and not able to ascend from secondary to higher education. Worst still, lukewarm support for orientation services emanating from lack of self-confidence for new intakes affect this students to the extent that some students now have low self-esteem. When self-esteem is not developed, the victim suffers from inferiority complex and this affects adversely their academic performance and interpersonal relationship with their peers and significant others. The current technology driven society, where ICT dictates the pace of development of a nation, Nigeria cannot but have assertive, confident and focused students to enhance its national development. The worries of all and sundry is that if the school system is not equipped with a professional therapist to educate the new intakes through orientation services the culture of self-esteem in their students, the nation will in no distant time be at risk. The argument has been that guidance counsellors have not come to grip on orientation services as a strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students. In this regard, two schools of thought emerged. One school, argued that guidance counsellors are well at home with good orientation services

for enhancing self-esteem but the problem is that they are handicapped by the high dearth of guidance counsellors in schools that utilizes it. The other school has argued that guidance counsellors have vague perception of orientation service strategy that enhances self-esteem among secondary school students as their employees (P.P.S.M.B, Enugu) have only organized two workshops since the inception of guidance and counselling in schools in 1982. This group has argued strongly that it is because of this ambiguous perception of orientation services as a strategy that makes it difficult for them to inculcate self-esteem traits among students.

Consequently, students leave secondary schools with low self-esteem of themselves. This, according to this group fits into the adage that you do not give what you do not have. Most students aspire to excel in their academic pursuit but this might become an illusion unless it is equally nursed and nurtured by counsellors who have a clear cut perception of orientation service as a strategy that enhance self-esteem. It is against this background that this study is being undertaken. The problem of this study is therefore, put in a question form, "what are Counsellors' perceptions of orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State?"

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to find out counsellors' perception of orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State. Specifically the study aims at;

1. determining whether counsellors' perception of counselling strategies for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State is influenced by orientation service.

Research Questions

- i. Do counsellors perceive orientation service as a counselling strategies for enhancing self-

esteem among secondary schools in Enugu State?

Hypothesis

One hypothesis guided the study and was tested at .05 level of significance.

HO₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female. Guidance counsellors perceiving orientation service as a counselling

strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive the survey research design. The area of the study was Enugu State, Nigeria. The population for this study comprised 105 practicing guidance counsellors in all the 291 government owned secondary schools in the 6 Education Zones of Enugu State. Of these 59 lived in urban areas while 46 lived in rural area [9]. The population is small so no sampling was done. The instrument used for data collection was a 7 items questionnaire called Counsellors' Perception of Orientation Service Scale (CPO OSS). The instrument had a 4-point response scale with response category of Strongly Agree (SA)----4 points; Agree(A)-----3 points; Disagree (D)----2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD)—1 point. The instrument was validated by three experts; two from Guidance and counselling Department 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 .73. The study was carried out in all the 291 secondary schools in Enugu State. One hundred and five copies of the questionnaire were distributed but ninety-six copies were retrieved from the respondents representing 91.43 percent return rate. Data collected were analyzed using mean with standard deviation. Any mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as Agreed while any mean below 2.50 was regarded as Disagreed. The one null hypothesis were 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 94, 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.

Data Analysis and Results

This section presents the results of the study according to the research question and hypothesis that guided the study. The data analyzed were presented in Tables 1-2

Research Question 1: Do counsellors perceive orientation service as a counselling strategies for enhancing self-esteem among secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean Perception Scores (\bar{X}) and Standard Deviation (SD) of Guidance Counsellors' on perceive Orientation Service as a Counselling Strategy for Enhancing Self-Esteem among Secondary School Students in Enugu State = 96

S/N	Orientation Service as a strategy for Enhancing Self-Esteem among Secondary School Students are based on:	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	\bar{X}	\bar{SD}	Decision
1	Acquaint the secondary school students about self-esteem challenge upon arrival in school	5	21	29	41	1.89	0.92	Disagree
2	Create awareness over the importance of healthy self-esteem,	48	39	6	3	3.37	0.74	Agree
3	Get the adolescents to be willing to check stress	13	23	29	31	2.18	1.03	Disagree
4	Encourage fear elimination	41	34	19	2	3.18	0.82	Agree
5	Teach adolescents to crave for personal fulfillment in their academic pursuit	51	27	11	7	3.27	0.93	Agree
6	Provide adolescents with rules and regulations that will enable them set realistic goals on admission	3	9	27	57	1.56	0.79	Disagree
7	Get counsellors to periodically organize group guidance for easy identification of adolescents manifesting low self-esteem	55	35	5	1	3.50	0.64	Agree
Grand Mean						3.02		Agree

Results from Table 1 showed that the respondents agreed with 4 out of the 7 items raised (2, 4, 5 and 7) of Guidance Counsellors' perception of orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among Secondary School Students in Enugu State. The respondents mean scores for these items are 3.37, 3.18, 3.27 and 3.50. They were accepted as agree based on the decision that their mean ratings are more than the cut-off point of 2.50. The Table showed that the respondents disagreed with the

remaining 3 items (1, 3 and 6) with 1.89, 2.18 and 1.56 as their mean scores. Their standard deviation is small signifying that the respondents' responses are homogenous. The table also indicated a grand mean score of 2.71. Based on the guideline for the interpretation of the respondents' data, the answer to research question 7 indicates that orientation service is a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among Secondary School Students in Enugu State.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female guidance counsellors perception on

orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of the Difference between the (\bar{X}) Mean Scores of Male and Female Guidance Counsellors Perception on Orientation Service as a Counselling Strategy for Enhancing Self-esteem among Secondary School Students in Enugu State..

GENDER Decision	N	\bar{X}	s ²	df	t-cal	t-crit
Female Guidance	59	3.02	0.29	94	1.11	±1.96
NS						
Do not reject						
Male Guidance	37	2.63				
Total	96	5.30				

Significant at $P < .05$, $df = 94$, critical t -value = ± 1.96 . The t -test analysis in table 2 above shows that the calculated t -value is 1.11 while the critical t -value is ± 1.96 at .05 level of confidence. This implies that the calculated t -value is less than the critical t -value. Thus, going by the guideline for the interpretation of the

respondents data, there is no significant no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female guidance counsellors perception on orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State.

Discussion of the Findings

The research question sought to determine whether guidance counsellors' perception of orientation service is a strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State. The result in Table 2 showed that orientation service is a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State. The finding is consistent with the findings of [3] who found that orientation service is a strategy used in schools to acquaint new arrivals of the evil of low

self-esteem and the like. This findings agreed with those of [2] that found orientation service as a counselling strategy grouped under orientation theory which is a coping strategy. The findings is also not at variance with those from [4] whereby in guidance services, a guidance counsellor adopts orientation services as a strategy to help new students upon arrival. The foundation has discovered that adolescents' self-esteem changes as he or she grows up.

CONCLUSION

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

1. Guidance Counsellors perceive orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of female and male guidance counsellor's perception on orientation service as a counselling strategy for enhancing self-esteem among secondary school students in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Educational Implication of the Findings

The findings of this study have far reaching implication for students because good orientation services enable students navigate through schools with the assurance of adding value to themselves through improvements in their academic performances. This will likely spur

students up into becoming more focused. Being successful will become a priority resulting from a positive shift in students' study habit. At the end of the day the findings could help place students on top of their circumstances by enhancing their self-esteem.

RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the implication of the study, this recommendation was made:

1. There should be general awareness exercise by the Ministry of Education

to the public about the need for orientation service in all secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

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