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Awareness of Teachers on the Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling Services in Primary Schools in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the awareness of primary school teachers toward the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in primary schools in Nigeria. The purpose was to find out the awareness of teachers in primary schools in Nigerian toward the effectiveness of each of the guidance counselling services with a view to understanding their level of knowledge of the services when fully introduced into the primary school system in Nigeria. A research hypothesis was postulated and tested using t-test analysis. Results revealed that there was no significant difference in the awareness of male and female teachers towards the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in primary schools. The implications of the findings were discussed.

Introduction

Education is undoubtedly a process by which children and young people also are trained and instructed in order to discover their talents and potentials. It is a process of change and national development, through which a society meets her ends. In order to meet the socio-economic, political, cultural and technological changes of the modern world, the Federal Government of Nigeria saw the need for a clear statement of objectives or policy guidelines (Nigeria Policy on Education, FGN, 1981). The objectives suggest the direction in which the country is supposed to move educationally

Thus, primary education forms the bedrock upon which the entire system of education depends. The rest of the educational system is built upon it and this becomes the key to either success or failure the whole system (FGN, 1981, 2004). This implies that the system needs to be greatly effective in its operations. Unfortunately, the system, has a lot of hindrances. As observed by Owoeye (2008), poor standard of personal living, poor public utilities, poor health delivery, pathetic and unhealthy school environments, ignorance, poverty, diseases, poorly trained teachers and political mismanagement are some of the factors affecting children's academic pursuits. It is pertinent to note that it seems that these militating factors against primary education can only be overcome in an educational system powered and controlled by guidance services. The present day society and its crises, changing values and general development of the child have been observed as what cause children's problems, even in early childhood education (Thompson, Rudolph & Henderson, 2004). Most primary schools in Nigeria do not have established guidance and counselling units for

now (Okeke & Ani, 2006). However, somehow, most Nigerian educators, parents, politicians, church and mosque groups are aware that something significant is missing in the process by which children are being brought up nowadays (Okeke & Ani, 2006)

There is no gain saying the fact that primary education grooms up the child psychologically and eventually, moulds him into a good citizen. (Ogunsanmi, 2001). Also, for the form of education pupils receive during their elementary education to be total, physically and psychologically rewarding, guidance and counselling units must be established by trained counsellors in primary schools in Nigeria (Ogunsanmi, 2001).

However, causal observations have also shown that the primary school system in Nigeria is still faced with the problem of non-availability of guidance and counselling units that could help the Nigerian child to have the right physical, psychological and social setting for growth. Section 10, sub-section 84(11) of the National policy on Education (FGN, 2004) had emphasized the training of interested teachers in guidance and counselling and the fact that it would feature in teacher education programmes in an attempt to highlight the importance of educational services in the educational system. Hence, the Grade II Teachers' Colleges, Advanced Teachers Colleges, Colleges of Education, Institutes of Education, National Teacher institutes and teachers' Centers have outlined professional training for teachers to equip them for effective performance of their duties (section 9, sub-section 59, FGN, 2004). By and large, the curriculum of these teacher training organizations has taken care of general introduction and specific training in guidance and counselling at various levels.

Therefore, this study was an attempt to find out the level of awareness of teachers towards the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools. Furthermore, it was an attempt to find out teachers' level of preparedness to the reception of the establishment of effective guidance and counselling units in primary schools in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

With the failures of the earlier primary educational programmes, especially, the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme of 1976, which probably occurred because of bad planning and implementation and the fact that the present society of Nigeria seems to be more technologized, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) should be on a sound footing. Primary education in Nigeria lacks formal guidance and counseling services which could help the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of child development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the level of awareness of teachers towards the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services if established in primary schools.

Research Question

Is there a difference between the level of awareness of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools.

Research Method

The study was a descriptive research of the survey type. The design enabled the researcher to observe and measure the awareness of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in primary schools. A total of 200 teachers made up the sample (44 males and 166 females). They were drawn from Ondo, Ogun, Ekiti, Edo, Kwara and Lagos states.

The design did not involve manipulation of variables and control or treatment on groups.

Instrument

The instrument was a self –constructed questionnaire, which measured the sample’s awareness towards the effectiveness of counselling services if introduced into the primary school system formally in the country.

The instrument consisted of 25 items on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools. The validity co-efficient of the instrument was found to be 0.81 while the reliability co-efficient was 0.79. Thus, the instrument was found to be reliable for the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The instrument was personally administered on the subjects and the data generated were analyzed, using frequency counts, means, percentages and t-test analysis.

The Results and Discussion

Research Question

Is there a difference between the level of awareness of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools?

Table 1

Comparison of mean scores and percentages on awareness of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools

SERVICE		Male		Female	
		Mean score (x)	Percentage (%)	Mean score (x)	Percentage (%)
1.	Information service	2.8	93	2.20	74
2.	Counselling service	2.02	67	2.24	75
3.	Co-ordination service	1.60	80	1.8	90
4.	Consultation service	1.40	70	1.54	77
5.	Planning service	1.94	97	1.60	80
6.	Orientation service	2.44	81.3	2.20	73
7.	Placement service	1.36	68	2.00	100
8.	Follow-up service	1.64	82	2.20	73
9.	Referral service	2.60	87	2.20	67
10.	Appraisal service	3.00	100	2.20	73

Results on table 1 revealed that male teachers in the primary school had mean scores and percentages in relation to effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in primary schools thus: information service: 2.8 and 93%, counseling service: 2.02 and 67%, co-ordination service 1.6 and 80%, consultation service 1.40 and 70%, planning service: 1.94 and 97%, orientation service: 2.44 and 81%, placement service:1.36 and 68%, follow-up service:1.64 and 82%, referral service:2.6 and 87% and appraisal service:3.0 and 100%.

Female teachers awareness towards the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools when established indicated mean scores and percentages thus: information service: 2.22 and 74%, counselling service:2.24 and 75%, co-ordination service :1.8 and 90%, consultation service:1.54 and 7%, planning service:1.6 and 80%, orientation service:2.2 and 37%, placement service: 2.0 and 100%, follow-up service:2.2 and 73%, referral service: 2.0 and 67%, and appraisal service : 2.2and 73%.

Results revealed that teachers had mean scores and percentages (3.0 and 100%) (Males) (2.0 and 100%) (Females) on the average.

Results from table 1 showed that there were differences in the mean scores and percentages of the male and female teachers concerning their awareness towards the effectiveness of individual guidance and counseling services.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the awareness of male and female teachers on the effective of guidance and counseling services in primary schools.

Table 2**T-test analysis of the awareness of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools**

Guidance and counselling service.	Male teachers N=44		Female teacher N=166		t –cal	t -crit	df
	X	SD	X	SD			
Information service	2.80	0.3	2.22	0.06	0.6	1.96	198
Counselling service	2.02	0.51	2.24	0.06	0.22		
Co-ordination service.	1.6	0.06	1.8	0.02	0.02		
Consultation service.	1.4	1.40	1.54	0.04	0.7		
Planning service	1.94	0.01	1.6	0.03	0.34		
Orientation service	2.24	0.08	2.2	0.06	0.24		
Placement service	1.36	0.01	1.0	0.08	0.36		
Follow-up service	1.64	0.002	2.2	0.06	0.56		
Referral service	2.60	0.06	2.0	0.08	0.06		
Appraisal service	3.00	0	2.2	0.06	0.08		

Table 2 revealed that male teachers had a mean score of 2.8 and standard deviation of 0.03 on information services while the female teachers had a mean score of 2.22 and standard deviation of 0.06. The t- test showed a non- significant difference between the awareness of the male and female teachers towards the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services with a calculated value of 0.6 at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$. Concerning counselling services, male teachers had a mean score of 2.02 and $SD = 0.06$. The t –calculated was 0.22, which showed no significant difference in the awareness of male and female teachers concerning counselling service at $p > 0.05$ with $df = 198$. Regarding coordination service, male teachers had a mean score of 1.6 and $SD = 0.06$ while female teachers had a mean score of 1.8 and $SD = 0.2$ with a critical value of 1.96. Thus, there was no significant difference in their awareness towards the effectiveness of co-ordination service in primary schools at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$.

Concerning consultation service, male teachers had mean score = 1.4 and $SD = 1.40$ while female teachers had mean score = 1.54 and $SD = 0.04$. The t- calculated was 0.7, which showed no significant difference in the awareness of the male and female teachers towards the effectiveness of consultation service at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$. On planning services, male teachers had mean score = 1.94 and $SD = 0.01$ which female had mean score = 1.6 and $SD = 0.03$. The t- value was 0.34 which showed no significant difference in the awareness of male and female teachers towards planning service in the primary school at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$.

Regarding orientation service, male teachers had mean score = 2.44 and $SD = 0.08$, while female teachers had a mean score of 2.2 and SD of 0.06. The t- calculated was 0.24 while the crit- value was 1.96. The results showed no significant difference in awareness of male and female teachers concerning the effectiveness of orientation service in primary schools at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$. The mean score for male teachers concerning placement service in primary school was 1.26 while the $SD = 0.01$.

Female teachers' mean score was 1.0 and their SD = 0.08. The t- calculated was 0.36, which was not significant at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$.

Therefore, there was no significant difference in the awareness of male and female teachers towards the effectiveness of placement service in primary schools. Regarding follow-up service, male teachers had mean score = 1.64 and SD = 0.02 while female teachers had mean score = 2.2 and SD = 0.06. The t- calculated was 0.06 while the t-crit was 1.96. This result showed no significant difference in the awareness of male and female teachers towards the effectiveness of the follow-up service in primary schools at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$.

Results on referral service indicated that male teachers had mean score = 2.6 and SD = 0.06 while female teachers had mean score = 2.0 and SD = 0.08. The t- crit showed a value of 0.06, which was not significant at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$. Thus, there was no significant difference in the awareness of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of follow-up service in primary schools. Finally, the results in table 2 showed that, concerning appraisal service male teachers had a mean score = 3.0 and SD = 0 while female teachers had mean score = 2.2 and SD = 0.06. The t- calculated was 0.08 and the t-crit was 1.96. Thus, the results showed no significant difference in the awareness of male and female teachers towards the effectiveness of appraisal service in primary schools at $p < 0.05$ with $df = 198$.

Since the calculated values above were all less than crit-value of 1.96, the null hypothesis which says that there is no significant difference between the awareness of male and female teachers towards the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools is accepted.

Discussion

The result of this study indicated little variations in the mean scores and percentages of the male and female teachers concerning their awareness on the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in primary schools. The percentages were high on the average too, which indicated good awareness.

The little variation in mean scores and percentages could be due to bits of misconception on the effectiveness of the services. Generally, the high percentage supports and shows that the policy statements of the FGN (1981, 1988 & 2004) have been implemented to a substantial degree in teacher training programmes in Nigeria. This result also supports the view of Adediran (1995) that before the organization and administration of guidance and counselling units in schools, the counsellor must be fully aware of the functions of the services and other significant programmes of the school like pupil personnel services.

The non- significant result between the awareness of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools showed that there is no disparity in awareness of male and female teachers. A reason that could be given for this result could be the fact that everyone who has gone through the basic teacher training programmes in Nigeria must have had lessons on guidance counselling services and principles. The curriculum of the training programme had been designed to cater for the policy statement which says that in pursuance of the goals of primary education in Nigeria, counseling shall be provided as an educational service (Section 3, sub –section 17c, iii). The subjects were all teachers, who had been trained professionally. They all have knowledge of the use of guidance and counselling principles and skills.

Implications for Counselling and Recommendations

The level of awareness of teachers on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling service in the primary school is both positive and encouraging. The implications are, therefore, that teachers are aware of the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in primary schools.

Therefore, if counsellors are posted to primary schools in Nigeria, to establish guidance and counselling units, the implementation, running and execution will be very smooth as knowledge and awareness of the services have already been established. This will, no doubt, help the UBE programme to record a success towards the development of primary education in this millennium in Nigeria.

On the basis of the findings of the study, it is recommended that the Federal Government of Nigeria, in conjunction with the Federal Ministry of Education establishes without delay, guidance and counselling units in all primary schools in the nation as envisaged by FGN, 2004. This should be made an essential part of the UBE programme. Trained counsellors should be posted to schools according to enrolment on 1:200 ratio of teacher-pupil against the recommendation of 1:300 ratio of teacher-pupil. This is necessary because counsellors will be able to relate better than teachers with pupils and at the same time, be able to carry out all guidance programmes effectively. All necessary assistance towards the establishment and progress of a solid primary educational system should be given by the Federal, State and Local Governments. For example, funds should be made available for the running of guidance programmes and units. The laying of a solid foundation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) that emphasises the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of the Nigerian child in the primary school will relatively guarantee an encouraging and good output of primary education in Nigeria.

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