



## **The Challenge of Motivation and Performance of Guidance Counsellors in Post-Primary Schools in Makurdi, Benue State**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The research is on the challenge of motivation and performance of Guidance counsellors in post-primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis. Four research questions were set to be answered with three hypotheses to be tested. The research questions were answered using percentages while the hypotheses were tested with chi-square ( $X^2$ ) test statistics. The research design was survey type. The population is the Guidance counsellors, career masters and Para-counsellors in Makurdi Metropolis. The sample size was fifty of the counsellors. The Motivation and performance of Guidance Counsellors Instrument (MPGCI) made by the researcher was used to collect data. The research conducted revealed that specialization in Guidance and counselling, the environment in which counselling holds, and being a full-time Guidance counsellor are among the challenges. Therefore, it recommended that stakeholders in education rise to the challenge of helping to motivate the Guidance counsellors to perform optimally.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Performance, Guidance, Counsellors, Post-primary

### **INTRODUCTION**

The main objective of guidance and counselling as pertain to the students is to assist all students in making appropriate and satisfying personal-social, educational and vocational choices. The guidance counsellor provides professional services such as information services, placement services and numerous other services in the school setting.

The guidance counsellors have so much to do for the society, so they need conducive atmosphere and empowerment to perform optimally. Else their situation will be likened to that of a professional farmer who is given a farm to cultivate without the necessary implement (Ikegbunam, 2000).

Guidance and Counselling is a helping relationship. The services are carried out by professionals referred to as Guidance Counsellors. There are different types and settings for Guidance and Counselling. Educational, vocational and persono-social counselling are mostly carried out in school settings where the majority of clients (counselees) are students (Egbe-Okpenge, 2012).

Motivation on the other hand is concerned with stimulation of interest or what induces a person to act in a particular way. There have been some concerns regarding the performance of Guidance Counsellors in the schools. This is due to the observation that some students in secondary school are not offering subjects they should offer, and some in SS3 do not know the courses to read in higher institutions like University et cetera. The word Guidance and Counselling are always used together because of their close affinity. Though, they are different, with their different meanings. Some writers like Shertzer and Stone (1981) states that guidance is to direct, pilot or guide while Kolo (1992) define guidance as a form of assistance that involves many activities that will help the individual understand himself or herself and their problem more. On the other hand, Akinade, Sokan & Osarenren (1996) asserts that guidance refers to a more directive or prescription form of assistance. That is the assistance is based on providing information that enables you to give instructions to the person being helped. Idowu (1998) states that guidance is a family name for all the helping service within the general educational and community system. Another writer Oladele (1998) defined guidance as a broad term usually applied to a total school

programme of activities and services aimed at assisting pupils to make and carry out adequate plans to achieve satisfactory adjustment in life. Guidance is quite a complex process because it encompasses the total needs of the individual student to be guided. Bulus (2000) have defined guidance as assistance given to students to achieve self-knowledge and direction. Therefore, guidance is the process of helping an individual understand himself and his world.

Guidance, however, does not function in a vacuum, it has many services. The counselling service has been identified as the focus of guidance programme. It is the major service of all the guidance services such as information, placement, orientation, appraisal, planning, follow-up, research and evaluation services referral and counselling. Hence Bulus (2000) observes that guidance and counselling are two sides of the coin. Fuster (2000) clearing the erroneous belief about counselling, asserts counselling is a helping relationship entered into by the counsellor and a counsellee mainly to help the individual shapen his perception of the issues at hand with a view to facilitating his getting into grips with the issue. Therefore, when a counsellee comes for help with a personal issue, he has to change something in himself to solve it. This could be a change of attitude of perception of self or of others, of habits or in general a change in behaviour. Many think of counselling as giving advice or offering solutions to problems, but there is no permanent solution to any issue without some change in the counsellee.

How this is done, is the exclusive preserve of the trained or professional counsellor. Hence, it is a good thing to ensure motivation of the counsellor.

The objectives of Guidance and Counselling in Nigerian schools as authored by Makinde (1976) are to assist all students in making appropriate and satisfying personal, social, educational and vocational choices; to assist students acquire as early as possible a positive image of self through self-understanding, self-direction and skills in problem-solving and decision-making and to assist teachers, other school-staff members, and parents in understanding the needs and problem of each and every student; to assist school administrators in improving educational opportunities and programmes of inter-personal relationship; to mobilize all available resources of the school, home and community for the satisfaction of students, educational, vocational and psychological needs, and to contribute to the on-going educational planning which examines the conditions under which learning takes place and which seeks improvement in the learning climate.

Ikegbunam (2000) asserts that the guidance counsellor has so much to do for the society yet he is not given the opportunity as seen in the constraints in the motivation of counsellors in Nigeria. The constraints to effective functioning include poor counselling environment, lack of sufficient funds, rivalries between the counsellor, principal, teachers and Ministry officials, students' problems, ratio of counsellors to students, lack of time allotment on the time-table, mobility and non-provision of psychometric tests. There is no provision of physical facilities like accommodation, furniture, stationary et cetera necessary for the counselling environment. A school counsellor should have an office with a waiting room, a receptionist, bookshelf, table, chairs that ensures confidentiality.

The term motivation is derived from a Latin word "*moreve*" which means to move to action (Adepoju, 2002). Motivation makes us kick like an engine leading to action and performance. Authors like Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert (2000) states that motivation is a human psychological characteristic that contributes to a person's degree of commitment. Motivation is measured by manipulating certain conditions and observe how behaviour changes.

According to Nongo (2005) motivation is a set of forces that initiate behaviour and determine its firm direction, intensity and duration. He asserts that, motivation is a set or activities that induce or encourage the workers to put in their best efforts towards the attainment of the goals of the organization. He further says a worker with ability has the capability to perform, but performance is a function of both ability and motivation. He reiterates that without motivation, the most capable worker performs poorly.

Since performance is a function of both ability and motivation, to achieve organizational goals, those heading the organization must understand what motivates people to work hard. The understanding of this will enable the head to satisfy these needs thereby improving performance of the workers. A ground-breaking study proves that incentive programs can boost performance by anywhere from 25 to 44 percent, but if only conducted in ways that address all issues related to performance and human motivation

(Katusak, 2009). The key findings of the study shows incentive programs with awards in the form of money or tangible awards, increase performance by an average of 22 percent while team incentives can increase performance by as much as 44 percent. The research found that incentive programs can increase interest in work, “thinking smarter”, attract quality employees.

It is in the light of this that this research was carried out to investigate the challenge of motivation and performance of guidance counsellors. What do the guidance counsellors want or need from work? What are the constraints to their optimum performance of their roles as guidance counsellors? Therefore, the research investigated the motivation and performance of Guidance Counsellors.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The investigation into the issue of challenge of motivation and performance of the Guidance Counsellors is the main objective of this study. It is to reveal what motivates the counsellors to perform their professional roles optimally.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were answered by the study:

1. What is the effect of educational qualifications on performance of Guidance Counsellors in post-primary schools?
2. What is the relationship between environment and performance of Guidance Counsellors in post-primary schools?
3. What motivates a Guidance Counsellor in the performance of his/her duties?
4. What should be done to increase performance of Guidance Counsellor?

### **Research hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested:

Ho1: Educational qualifications has no significant effect on performance of guidance Counsellors in post-primary schools in Makurdi Metropolis.

Ho 2: There is no relationship between environment and performance of Guidance and performance of Guidance counsellors in post-primary schools.

Ho2 Motivators do not increase the performance of guidance Counsellors

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The survey type of research was used. The population is the guidance counsellors, career masters or Para-counsellors in Senior Secondary Schools in Makurdi metropolis. The population size is one hundred guidance counsellors, career masters or Para-counsellors since there are one hundred and thirty secondary schools in Makurdi metropolis and not all schools have counsellors. The purposive sampling method was used. So fifty of the counsellors is the sample size.

Motivation and performance of Guidance Counsellors Instrument (MPGCI) developed by the researcher was used for data collection. MPGCI was made up of three sections A, B & C with four questions in section A which is the bio data. Section B consists of fifteen questions where the respondents ticks the box that agrees with their opinion of ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. Section C has only one question where the respondent is expected to suggest what can enhance effective and efficient discharge of the duties of a Guidance Counsellor. The Instrument was administered directly to the respondents.

The Chi-Square test analysis and percentages was used. The percentage was used to answer the research questions while the Chi-square statistics was used to test the research hypotheses.

## **RESULTS**

Table 1 shows the responses to items which reveal the results to the research questions.

Research question one showed that 70% (35) of counsellors had educational qualifications in guidance and counselling, so they are well equipped professionally for performance.

Results of research question two revealed that the response to items relating to the environment on counselling office which is the environment shows only nine (18%) counsellors have good environment that is a counselling office or place for counselling.

The results of research question three revealed things that motivate a Guidance Counsellor as shown by responses to items 10 and 13 which relates to the duties of a counsellor are only 16% and 00% respectively.

Research question four results revealed that 92%(42)of the respondents included the provision of funds, well-ventilated office with fans/Ac, allotment of time on the timetable for Guidance and Counselling and Guidance and Counselling being made full time, that is, without teaching load or other administrative duties as what to be done to increase performance of Guidance counsellors.

**Table 1:Frequency table showing responses to items of the Questionnaire**

	Yes	No
1.Area of specialization in Guidance and Counselling	35	15
2.There is counselling office	9	41
3.Multi-purpose room for group counselling is available	10	40
4.I attend in-service programmes for counsellors	2	48
5.The School counsellors have a receptionist/typist	2	48
6.The counselor’s office has chairs and tables	5	45
7.A waiting room, book shelf and filing cabinet is provided	1	49
8.Guidance and Counselling unit is provided with funds	0	50
9.Time is allotted on the time-table for counselling	1	49
10.Placement of students is done by the Guidance Counsellor	8	42
11.Principal refer students for counselling	46	4
12.Teachers refer students for counselling	48	2
13.Psychometric tests are available in the school	0	50
14.Guidance counsellor is full time ( <i>no teaching load</i> )	4	46
15.School bus is available for counsellor’s use.	1	49

**Research Hypothesis One (Ho<sub>1</sub>)**

*Educational qualifications have no significant effect on performance of guidance counsellors in post-primary schools in Makurdi metropolis.*

Chi-square test ( $X^2$ ) statistics was used to analyze this hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The responses of the respondents to the Yes or No are analyzed.

**Table 2: Chi-square test analysis of the effect of Educational Qualification on Performance of Guidance Counsellor**

	Observed (O)	Expected (E)
Educational Qualification	35	50

$$\text{Chi-square } (X^2) = \frac{(\text{Observed (O)} - \text{Expected (E)})^2}{\text{Expected (E)}}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= \frac{(-15)^2}{50} \\
 &= \frac{225}{50} \\
 &= 4.5
 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore  $X^2$  calculated = 4.50

$X^2$  tabulated = 3.84 at 1 df 1 and 0.05 level of significance (critical value)

Since the critical value 3.84 is lower than calculated value of 4.5 we reject our  $H_{o1}$  ( $P < 0.05$ ) and conclude that educational qualification has effect on performance of Guidance counsellors.

**Research Hypothesis two ( $H_{o2}$ )**

*There is no relationship between environment and performance of Guidance and performance of Guidance counsellors in post-primary schools.*

**Table 3: Chi Square Test analysis of relationship between environment and performance of Guidance counselor**

Observed (O)	Expected (E)	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
17	50	-33	1089	21.78

Therefore  $X^2$  calculated = 21.78

$X^2$  tabulated (critical value) = 3.84 at df 1 and 0.05 level of significance.

Since the critical value 3.84 is lower than critical value is lower than calculated we reject our  $H_o$  ( $P < 0.05$ ) and conclude that here is a relationship between environment and performance of Guidance counsellors.

**Research Hypothesis Three ( $H_{o3}$ )**

*Motivators do not increase the performance of Guidance counsellors.*

**Table 4: Chi-square Test analysis of effect of motivators on performance of Guidance counsellors**

Observed (O)	Expected (E)	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
33	15	17	289	5.78

Therefore  $X^2$  calculated = 5.78

$X^2$  tabulated (critical value) = 3.84

Therefore  $H_o$  ( $P < 0.05$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted; so motivators do increase the performance of Guidance counsellors.

The results shows that the main findings of the research as deduced from the interpretation are:

- 1 Educational qualifications, that is specialization in Guidance and counselling is necessary for a professional counsellor to be able to perform his or her duties well.
- 2 The environment in which counselling takes place in the post-primary schools is very important for effective Guidance and counselling.
- 3 The privilege and opportunity to carry out the professional duties of a counsellor motivates a counsellor.
- 4 The provision of funds for the counselling unit, allotment of time for counselling on the school time-table and being made a full-time, that is, without teaching load or other administrative duties enhances the performance of the Guidance counsellor.

**DISCUSSION**

The study investigated the challenge of motivation and performance of Guidance Counsellors in post-primary schools in Makurdi metropolis. The findings of the results of this research revealed that motivation positively influence the performance of Guidance Counsellors. Research question one showed that 70 % (35) of counsellors had educational qualifications in guidance and counselling, so they are well

equipment that motivation means to move to action thereby leading to performance.

Results of research question two revealed there is relationship between environment and performance of Guidance Counsellors. The response to items relating to the environment on counselling office which is the environment shows only nine (18%) counsellors have good environment that is, a counselling office or place for counselling. Respondents having a receptionist/typist shows only two (4%) have receptionist/typist while responses to item 6 about the counsellor's office having chairs and table is only five (10%) and that on item 7 about provision of a waiting room, book shelf and file cabinet is two (4%). This corroborates with the findings of Ikegbunam (2000) which states that the lack of provision of physical facilities like accommodation, furniture, stationary et cetera, necessary for the counselling environment is a constraint in the motivation of counsellors. A school counsellor should have an office with a waiting room, a receptionist, bookshelf, table, chairs that ensures confidentiality.

The results of research question three revealed things that motivate a Guidance Counsellor such as duties of a professional counsellor include the placement of students, counselling and the use of psychometric tests in proper diagnosis. Responses to items 10 and 13 which relates to the duties of a counsellor are only 16% and 00% respectively. Since the counsellor is not encouraged nor allowed fully to perform his duties, this is a constraint to motivation as reiterates Ikegbunam (2000). Invariably this will affect performance according to Stoner et al (2000) who stated performance is a function of both ability and motivation.

Research question four results revealed that 92% (42) of the respondents includes the provision of funds, well-ventilated office with fans/Ac, allotment of time on the timetable for Guidance and Counselling and Guidance and Counselling being made full time, that is, without teaching load or other administrative duties as what to be done to increase performance of Guidance counsellors. This is in line with the findings of Ikegbunam (2000) about things that increase motivation.

The null hypotheses tested were three. The results of the Chi-Square test statistics between educational qualifications, environment, motivators and performance of were found to be significant at  $p < .05$  for all the three hypotheses.

The findings from Hypothesis One agree with Stoner et al. (2000) that performance is a function of ability and motivation, and ability comes through professional training and support.

Hypothesis Two results are in line with the findings of Ikegbunam (2000) that the lack of provision of physical facilities like accommodation, furniture, stationary and other items necessary for the counselling environment is a constraint in the motivation of counsellors. A school counsellor should have an office with a waiting room, a receptionist, bookshelf, table, chairs that ensures confidentiality. The findings of Hypothesis Three are in line with the study on human motivation and performance (Katusak, 2009) which showed that motivation increased performance by an average of 22%.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The research discovered the challenge of motivation on the performance of Guidance counsellors in Makurdi Metropolis. Therefore, all stakeholders in education should do all within their position to ensure counsellors are well motivated.

It is therefore recommended that :

- 1) Stakeholders in education rise to the challenge of helping to motivate the Guidance counsellors thereby enabling them perform optimally. The Federal Government should ensure there are professional counsellors in all schools including state and private schools.
- 2) The Ministry of Education in Benue State should try to increase the number of full-time counsellors without teaching load or any other administrative duties in schools.
- 3) The Benue State Government should ensure there is more than one counsellor in large schools with population of two thousand and more (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).
- 4) The Teaching Service Board should encourage Principals to allot at least a period per class per week for guidance counselling.
- 5) Conducive environment for counselling should be created in post-primary schools by providing office for the school counsellor.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted it is concluded that: The environment in which counselling takes place in the post-primary schools is very important for effective Guidance and counselling. Also the privilege and opportunity to carry out the professional duties of a counsellor motivates a counsellor. Therefore, all stakeholders in education should do all within their position to ensure counsellors are well motivated.

The professional ethics of the guidance counsellor includes confidentiality, so it is important that the environment, that is, the office provided for counselling ensures that there is confidentiality. Guidance and Counselling in post-primary schools is at the critical stage of psychosocial personality development which needs the full attention of a full-time school counsellor. The roles of a guidance counsellor and those of class/form teachers are different, so being a class teacher and equally a guidance counsellor won't be very helpful to the counsellee at this level of education and stage of personality and career development. About 70% of the counsellors in Makurdi are professionally qualified to do counselling work. The provision of funds for the counselling unit, allotment of time for counselling on the school time-table and being made a full-time, that is, without teaching load or other administrative duties enhances the performance of the Guidance counsellor

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