Influence of Guidance and Counseling Services on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
This study examined the Influence of Guidance and Counseling Services on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State. Four research questions were posed to guide the study and three hypotheses was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance and the researchers used the Survey research design for the study. A sample size of of 664 respondents was studied. The instrument used was Influence of Guidance and Counseling Services on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students Questionnaire (IGCSACSCSQ). A 4-Point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) was used and the respondents were requested to select one of the four (4) options. Test-re-test method was used for the reliability test. The instrument had 16 items which was validated with a reliability coefficient of 0.92 which shows that it was reliable for the study. The mean and standard deviation was used in analyzing the research questions, while the z-test was used in testing the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that: HO1 was accepted, HO2 was rejected, while HO3 was accepted. It was therefore recommended that Guidance and counselling programme should be strengthened in order to improve the academic performance of secondary schools in the area. School counsellors should pay more attention to the male students during counselling session. This will help increase their academic performance and transition rate into tertiary institutions. Ministry of Education in each state should enforce the establishment of counselling centers in both public and private secondary schools.

Keywords: Guidance, Counseling Services and Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION
Guidance and Counseling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities and services aimed at assisting individuals to understand themselves, others, school environment and attain abilities to adjust accordingly. As individuals develop through stages of life and educational attainment, they encounter problems, challenges and conflict situations. Braddock (2011), states that the purpose of guidance and counselling in schools is to improve academic performance, foster positive study attitudes and habit, increase acquisitions and application of conflict resolution skills and decrease school dropouts. According to Herman (2009), guidance and counselling services are designed to help individuals with psychological problems to voluntarily change their behavior and to enable them make wise future decisions, clarify their ideas, perceptions, attitudes and goals. The primary mission of a school’s guidance and counselling program is to provide a broad spectrum of personnel services to the students. Denga (2011), referred to these services as “cluster of formalised educational services designed by the school to assist students to achieve self-knowledge or self-understanding which is necessary for them to attain the fullest self-development and self-realization of their potential”. These services include: student appraisal service, information service, counselling service, placement service, orientation service, referral service, follow-up and evaluation service, and research service.
Appraisal service involves the use of tests and non-test instruments to collect, analyze and interpret data on students to understand themselves better. It also affords counsellors and significant others, the opportunity of having insight into the strengths and weaknesses of students. Information service is tailored towards equipping students with the necessary information’s in the areas of educational, vocational and personal social. This information’s are very important because they assist students to make wise decisions about life. Counselling service is a face to face interaction between the counsellor and the students, through which students are assisted towards overcoming obstacles to their academic, vocational, personal-social progress and other life needs. Placement service is concerned with assisting students to adjust to the next stage of development whether in school or on the job.

Orientation service is designed to familiarize fresh students with their environment. It is a process of initiating an individual to a work or learning situation and of instructing him about rules, regulations and responsibilities, as an introduction to a new situation. Referral service affords the school counsellor an opportunity to refer the cases which he cannot handle to specialists like clinical psychologist, medical practitioner and others. Follow-up and evaluation service is designed to ascertain the extent to which the guidance programme previously carried out by the school is meeting the objectives for which it was established and also to monitor the progress of students in their work places.

Academic performance refers to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies (Scortt’s, 2012). According to Ward, Stocker and Murray-Ward (2006) academic performance refers to the outcome of education; the extent to which the student, teacher or institution have achieved their educational goals. Academic performance is the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate one’s knowledge verbally or written on paper (Answers, 2010). Academic performance refers to the extent to which students have achieve mastery of the objectives of the subjects they are exposed to in school. According to (Aremu and Sokan 2003) Academic performance has been observed in school subjects especially mathematic and English language among secondary school students. The blame for poor academic performance among secondary school students could be attributable to a variety of factors such as student inability to manage their time, peers influence, family factors and the likes. Parents, teachers, curriculum, experts and evaluators have expressed considerable concern over the deteriorating students’ performance in public examinations.

Guidance also helps to facilitate development of effective study habits, motivation, identifying learning or subject related problems, helping students to see the relevance of school years in life and for future, developing skills, right attitude and interests to help making a choice in career. Guidance and counseling, thus, promotes holistic development of every student. This shows the need for every teacher to become a ‘guidance minded’ teacher in the course of carrying out his/her duties with aim of making impacts in the students’ lives. This study therefore intended to investigate the Guidance and Counselling Services on Academic Performance of Secondary school students in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Poor academic performances among secondary school students, gives concern, this has a negative influence on the various programmes. It is a great concern for stakeholders to see students still performing poorly in their academics despite the numerous ways in which they are guided either by their teachers or parents which seems to be caused by inability of the students to follow the laid down rules and regulations. Despite the fact that, guidance and counseling programs are made available in both homes and in schools, there is still great height of indiscipline among students which contributions has influence on their academic performance. The problem of this study therefore is to determine the influence of guidance and counseling services on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the Guidance and Counseling Services on Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specially, the objectives are to:

1. Examine the student appraisal services on Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State
2. Identify how counseling services improves the Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.
3. Examine orientation services on academic performance of secondary school students?
4. Examine evaluation services on academic performance of secondary schools students

**Research Questions**
The following questions were posed to guide on the study:
1. To what extent student appraisal services influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State?
2. To what extent information services influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?
3. To what extent orientation service influence academic performance of secondary school students?
4. To what extent of evaluation services influence academic performance of secondary schools students?

**Hypotheses**
1. Appraisal services do not significantly influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State.
2. Information services do not significantly influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.
3. Orientation service do not significantly influence academic performance of secondary school students.
4. Evaluation services do not significantly influence academic performance of secondary schools students

**METHODOLOGY**
**Research Design**
Survey research design was used to carry out this study. The comparative analysis was achieved by means of utilizing z-test statistic for the comparison of mean scores at 0.05 level of significance. While, the research questions were answered by descriptive statistics: Mean and Standard deviation.

**Population and Sample of the Study**
The Population of this study consists of three Thousand three Hundred and Ninety One (3391) Principal, teacher counselor, SS1 students’ secondary school in two selected Local Government in Rivers State. The simple random sample of 664 Principal, teacher counselor and students was drawn from the study.

**Instrumentation**
The instrument used for this investigation was A 4-point Modified Likert scale which is an interval scale-ranging from Very High Extent to Very Low Extent, with a numerical value ranging from 4 points to 1 points. The instruments that were used for this study were the questionnaire titled: Guidance and Counseling service on Academic performance of secondary school students Questionnaire (GCAPSCSQ). The instrument has 16 (Sixteenth) items. A weighted average of 2.5 was accepted for research questions.

**Validation and Reliability of the Instrument**
The instrument was validated by Experts in Measurement and Evaluation in the faculty of Education, who ascertained the face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-retest method, using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool. A reliability coefficient of 0.92 was obtained for the study.
RESULTS
Research Question 1: To what extent does student appraisal services influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State?

Table 4.1: Mean on student appraisal services influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>VHE</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>VLE</th>
<th>$\bar{z}$</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Personal information about students are not always collected</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Counsellors help students discover occupations that suit their abilities through personality traits</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>School records of students are well kept for further use</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tests are conducted before promotion to the next class</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Mean/S.D 11.89 3.73
Grand Mean/S.D 2.97 0.93

The results of table 4.1 which is for research question one, shows that all the items in the table indicates a positive response with mean scores of 3.24, 3.51, 2.55 and 2.59 respectively. The response of the respondents shows that Personal information about students are not always collected and Counsellors helps students discover occupations that suit their abilities through personality traits. This confirmation was made by the grand mean of 2.97

4.3 Research Question 2: To what extent do information services influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Table 4.2: Mean on how information services influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>VHE</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>VLE</th>
<th>$\bar{z}$</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>develop and maintain good interpersonal relationship that enhances my academic pursuit</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>use various study method techniques I learnt during group counselling.</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>develop self-motivation technique for positive academic performance</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>deal with my family problem in order not to lose concentration on my academic pursuit</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Mean/S.D 13.07 1.99
Grand Mean/S.D 3.26 0.49 Accepted

Table 4.2 which is for research question two, shows that all items were accepted by the respondents with a mean scores of 3.12, 3.45, 3.22 and 3.28 respectively. The response of the respondents shows that the develop and maintain of good interpersonal relationship enhances students’ academic pursuit. Develop self-motivation technique for positive academic performance. This confirmation was made by the grand mean of 3.26.
4.4 **Research Question 3:** To what extent does an orientation service influence academic performance of secondary school students?

**Table 4.3:** Means responses on how orientation service on academic performance of secondary school students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>VHE</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>VLE</th>
<th>(\bar{z})</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Students receive information on rules and regulations of the school</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Orientation is organized for students who come into the school for the first time</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>New students are not always shown the physical layout of the school</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Students receive information on daily functions of the school</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Mean/S.D** 10.58 4.46

**Grand Mean/S.D** 2.645 1.115

The results of table 4.3 depicts that two items in the table indicate a positive responds as they are above (2.50) the cut off points. They are items I and 4 with mean scores of (2.88) and 3.45, while two items in the tables indicate a negative response with a mean score of (2.21) and (2.04) respectively. A total mean of (10.58) above the cutoff point which indicates a positive response that Orientation is organized for students who come into the school for the first time. New students are not always shown the physical layout of the school.

4.5 **Research Question 4:** To what extent do evaluation services influence academic performance of secondary schools students?

**Table 4.4:** Mean of responses on the follow-up and Evaluation services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>VHE</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>VLE</th>
<th>(\bar{z})</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Counsellors visit students after counselling sessions</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Counsellors visit students after resolution of their problems</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Counsellors develop plans to trace former students after leaving school</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>There is no contact with former students at any point in time</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>Strongly Agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Mean/S.D** 11.6 2.65

**Grand Mean/S.D** 2.9 0.66

The results of table 4.4 depicts that three items in the table indicate a positive responds as they are above (2.50) the cut off points. They are items I, 3 to 4 with mean scores of (2.69), (3.45) and (3.22), while item 2 indicate a negative response with mean score of (2.24) respectively. A total mean of (11.6) above the cutoff point which indicates a positive response that Counsellors visit students after resolution of their problems.

**Hypotheses**
H₀₁: Appraisal services does not significantly influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State
Level of significance: 0.05

Table 4.5 t-test: Analysis on how Appraisal services influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t=cal</th>
<th>t-tab</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.243</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>1.417</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.162</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 revealed that t-cal value of 1.417 is less than the t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with 301 degree of freedom. From this empirical result, the null hypothesis, which stated that Appraisal services do not significantly influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State was accepted. This means that Appraisal service do not significantly influence Academic Performance of Secondary schools Students in Rivers State

Hypotheses 2
H₀₂: Information services do significantly influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State?
Level of significance: 0.05
Decision rule: reject H₀ if p-value is less than the level of significance. Accept H₁ if otherwise.

Table 4.6 t-test analysis on how information services influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t=cal</th>
<th>t-tab</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>18.17</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td></td>
<td>HO² Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>14.24</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>196</td>
<td>HO² Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result indicate that Counseling services does significantly influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State with t-cal 2.38 greater than t=crit196 and p= 0.000, p<0.05. Thus, second null hypothesis is rejected. It meant Counseling services does significantly influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. It was found that Counseling services do not significantly influence Academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State in enhancing the students' personal, academic and career competencies with Mean= 18.17 and standard deviation= 3.09 as compared to public school teachers with Mean = 14.24 and Standard deviation = 2.91.

Hypotheses 3: Orientation service does significantly influence academic performance of secondary school students?

Table 4.7: t-test table analysis on how orientation service does significantly influence academic performance of secondary school students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-Crit</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>20.3512</td>
<td>3.16065</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>.24385</td>
<td>0.277</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers Counsellor</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>20.4600</td>
<td>3.02988</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>.30299</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Field Survey Data, 2017

From table 4.18, it revealed that the Students mean is 20.3512 while for the Teachers Counsellor was 20.4600 and the standard deviation of 3.16065 and 3.02988 for Students and Teachers Counsellor
responses respectively, while a standard error mean was .24385 for Students and .30299 for Teachers Counsellor and df value of 301 and p-value of 0.782 and the observed t-cal of 0.277 less than t-value 1.97. Thus means that the null hypothesis which stated that Orientation service do not significantly influence academic performance of secondary school students is accepted. By implication, the test revealed that the respondents agreed on Orientation service does significantly influence academic performance of secondary school students.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**
The discussion in this study was done according to the findings of this study. The findings supports the view of Okeke (2007) who stated that appraisal services of guidance and counselling affords the counsellors the opportunity of having insight into the strength and weakness of students. Finding from table 4.1 indicated that counselling services in school has influenced their perceived academic performance. Makinde (1994) emphasized that the role of school counsellors cannot be overemphasized in schools. The findings is in line with the views of Oluremi, Esere, Omotosho and Eweniyi (2010) who opined that orientation services help new students to adjust when admitted newly in secondary schools because they feel socially and psychologically lost in their new environment. The findings also support the view of Obidoa and Onwurah (2006) who stated that orientation services are planned to assist both new students and staff get acquainted with their new school, adapt to their new environment and the people in it.

**CONCLUSION**
It was also concluded that guidance and counselling services play a major role in enhancing social and emotional adjustment among the students in secondary schools. Also, guidance and counselling unit helps in promoting prosaically behaviour among the students in secondary schools. In addition, it can be concluded from the findings that guidance and counselling services in secondary schools are paramount in modifying students behaviour through assisting students control their emotions such as fear and anger thus creating a harmonious environment for students to stay and learn Thus, Zunker (2008) points out that secondary school require intensive and frequent guidance counselling services in order to overcome students’ antisocial behavior Characterized by conflicts, fighting anger fear of uncertainties and possible massive destruction of property and loss of innocent lives. Guidance and counselling services influence students’ academic achievement in Rivers State. Guidance and counselling services also influence the transition rate of secondary school students into tertiary institutions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**
From the above conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. Ministry of Education in each state should enforce the establishment of counselling centers in both public and private secondary schools. The principals should employ professional counsellors and discard the use of career masters in schools.
2. The school administrators should give necessary support to the counsellor by creating awareness on the importance of guidance and counselling programmes in the school.
3. There is need for the teacher counsellors to implement all the services required for a guidance and counselling programme.
4. Teacher counsellors should take advantage of the positive attitude of the students to enhance career counselling in their schools.
5. Guidance and counselling programme should be strengthened in order to improve the academic performance of secondary schools in the area.
6. For better academic performance of students in secondary schools, every school should have a functional guidance and counselling unit with the services of professional counsellors as the heads.
7. Government should employ more professionally trained counsellors to fill the current gaps in schools.

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