



## **Teachers' Perception Of Counsellors' Role And Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools In Rivers State**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study examined teachers' perception of counsellors' role and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher formulated four objectives of the study, four research questions and four hypotheses. The researcher used descriptive survey design for the study. The population of the study comprises male and female teachers in fourteen selected secondary schools with a total population of one thousand two hundred teachers. Simple random sampling technique was used with a sample size of four hundred teachers. The instrument used for the data collection is a structured questionnaire titled "Teachers' Perception of Counsellors' Role Questionnaire". The researcher used frequency table and weighted mean score for the data analysis while z-test statistical tool was used for the test of hypothesis with 0.05 level of significant. Based on the analysis, the findings reveal that teachers' perception on counselling orientation service in secondary school can affect the academic performance of the students. It also shows that the attitude of the teachers towards guidance and counselling has been repulsive and that guidance and counselling constraints can affect information and awareness service. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that: government and school management should organize awareness or sensitization campaign to enlighten the principals, teachers, counsellors and the students on their work relationship, school management should integrate counselling service into the school academic timetable and government and school management should provide office space and equipment for the counsellors.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Perception, Counsellors, Role, Students, Academic, Performance, Public, Secondary, Schools

### **INTRODUCTION**

At the introduction of education in Nigeria as Fafunwa (2010) explained, there was no effort to counsel the learners on area best suitable to their interests or inclinations. Hence the products were more of those who were literary minded than scientists. With the advent of science and technology, the need to counsel and guide students in choosing their future career prospects became more important in the educational system. Perhaps that was the reason why Macrae (2011) stated that recently a number of schools have appointed career masters who in addition to their normal work are charged with the duty of helping boys to obtain suitable employment.

This has led to an increasing number of counsellors in the schools in recent times to counsel students not only in their career prospects but also in their day-to-day dealings in the society. In Nigeria, the introduction of the 6-3-3-4 educational system established guidance and counselling as a basic educational requirement in the school curriculum. In order to meet up with the aims and objectives of the

Nigerian National Policy on education, more guidance counsellors are now being trained and employed in the school system to work with the regular classroom teachers.

The role of the school counsellor has long been debated by different scholars, various models, and means of accountability have been presented tried and evaluated over the past several decades. Comprehensive counselling and guidance programmes that incorporate academic, career development and social/emotional domains have been decried in the professional literature for many years. School administrators, teachers, and parents often may view the counsellor's role from their own perspective. There has been a recent belief/conception in the perception of the school counsellor as an educational leader, student advocate, and social change agent. (Clark & Stone, 2013, House & Martin, 2010 and Stone & Clark, 2011). This leadership role entails increase collaborative interventions with those people who are significant in the lives of students (Cooper & Sheffield, 2012).

The duties of the school counsellors have traditionally been expected to fill diverse school activities. They have been called to act in the capacity of confidant, disciplinarian, consultant, scheduler, politician, administrator, psychologist and academic helper. The ambiguity about counsellor's roles and expectations has created confusion among teachers, staff, parents and students. Effinger, Lambert & Rudolf (2012) noted that in some schools, counsellors are told to focus much of their time on record keeping, administrative responsibilities or crisis interventions with students. There is little time for comprehensive career exploration and planning for life after graduation. In addition, facilities and resources for planning and implementing career guidance and counselling programmes are sadly lacking. The student-to-counsellor ratio in most schools limits the services that counsellors can deliver.

Today there is a general agreement among counsellor educators that the guidance programme refers to a comprehensive, developmental programme designed to benefit all students in their journey through school. The counsellor is there to design and address the developmental needs of students appropriate to their age group. In that light the function of a guidance counsellor is not easily defined. Myrick (2013) suggested that function definition was dependent upon the group of people creating the definition. For example, students may see the function of guidance counsellors much more differently than other teachers. In turn, teachers may perceive the function of counsellors much differently than administrators, who may view their function much differently than the counsellors themselves. Other variables come into place when trying to determine the role of school counsellors, for instance, the role a counsellor performs at the high school level may differ greatly from the role of an elementary counsellor. Additionally an established and veteran counsellor may very well perform different roles than a first year counsellor. Teachers' perception of counsellors roles in secondary schools abound. Some teachers perceived the guidance counsellors as a colleague therefore should teach like other teachers in the school. Darley (2012) confirmed this negative perception of the roles of guidance counsellors by the teachers in his summary of some of the teachers' attitude to guidance counsellors as administrators. As Darley (2011) put it that the nicest thing to say about them is that they are necessary evil which may be tolerated but never eradicated. Most teachers think that the role of guidance counsellors is contradicting to teaching and is auxiliary to administrative functions of the school. Teachers perceive the counsellors as a helper who impact positively to the overall development of the school programmes. And some believe that counsellor do not have any function in the schools the complexity of the roles nature conflicts between the teachers and the guidance counsellors. Therefore this created different teachers perception of counsellors roles in the school.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Many schools now have counsellors alongside other teachers. However, within this short period of the introduction of counsellors in our schools, the researcher has observed that there appears to be suspicion between the counsellors and the other teachers which has created underlying educational problems such as being a confidant to students in school; an academic helper, guidance to student in career choice career exploration and planning for students after graduation just to mention a few for the counsellors. Indeed like any other new innovation, or programme, the introduction of counselling services has not been warmly received by various groups of people in Nigeria and their role and meaning not also well

understood particularly by teachers. As a result, the attitude of teachers towards guidance and counselling has been negative.

Nwoye (2010) pointed out that one of the teething problems of the effective Guidance and Counselling profession in Nigeria is the ignorance of the real “length and breath” of the counselling job by a good number of Nigerian counsellors, the public, parents, teachers, principals and students. In recent times, teachers’ perception of counselling role in creating unnecessary dust or attention in public secondary schools in Rivers State. this perception is even affecting the academic achievement or performance of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Nwankwo (2011) also pointed out that the efforts of a genuinely active counsellor to organize and administer a guidance programme are at times wanted by the un-co-operative attitude of the school principal. In fact, some school principals and teachers are not often happy to see a guidance counsellor posted to their schools. Teachers feel jealous of counsellors as a result do not often refer problem students to them. In most schools the time-table is so congested and rigid, that students who might even wish to consult a counsellor find it extremely difficult to do so. Students are placed in a conflicting position of trying to decide whether to go to the counsellor and have their problems resolved or to miss their lessons. More often it is very difficult for them to see the counsellor because students are usually afraid of missing their lessons.

School administrators on the other hand appear not to be in agreement with professional counsellors with regards to their roles and functions. Principals are more concerned with inculcating conforming behaviour. To that, principals would like counsellors to be firmer, more aggressive and assertive than they are. As a result, principals view the counsellors’ role as an assistant. The principals have therefore flooded the counsellors with various kinds of administrative and disciplinary functions which make it virtually impossible for the counsellors to perform their real functions counselling. A recent cross assessment of how counsellors feel about their relationship with other teachers by the researcher revealed that it is shrouded with conflicts and problems. For instance in such discussions one counsellor of Government Girls Secondary, Harbour Road, Port Harcourt, said: My colleagues (that is teachers) in this school don’t even appreciate my role here.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the teachers’ perception of counsellors’ role and students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Specifically, the study is to achieve the following objectives:

1. To investigate teachers’ perception on counselling orientation service in secondary schools and the extent such perception is affecting the role of counsellors.
2. To examine the extent guidance and counselling research and follow-up service conflict with the students learning activities.
3. To identify how guidance/counselling constraints affect information or awareness service of the counsellors in secondary schools.
4. To examine how teachers’ perception of counselling role affect students’ academic performance.

### **Research Questions**

The researcher developed the following research questions that guided the conduct of the study:

1. To what extent does teachers’ perception affect orientation service of counsellors in secondary schools?
2. How does guidance and counselling research and follow-up service conflict with the students learning activities?
3. How does the guidance and counselling constraints affect information and awareness service of the counsellors in secondary schools?
4. To what extent does teachers’ perception of counsellors’ role affect students’ academic performance?

### **Hypotheses**

The researcher formulated the following hypotheses to guide the study:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significance difference between teacher's perception and orientation service of the counsellors in secondary schools.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significance relationship between guidance and counselling research and follow-up service and conflict with the students learning activities.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between teachers' perception and information and awareness service of the counsellors in secondary schools.

Ho<sub>4</sub>: There is no significance relationship between teachers' perception of counselling role and students' academic performance.

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **Concept of Guidance and Counselling**

Many authors have devoted time in defining guidance and counseling. Shertzer & Stone (2012) defined guidance as a process of helping individuals to understand themselves and their world. This definition underpins the fact that guidance is an interrelated action that continues for a lifetime, aimed at achieving certain desirable goals. In this direction with guidance, the individuals will understand themselves, their strengths, weakness and those characteristics that make them unique with this understanding they interact better with themselves and the world around them. Guidance is the purposeful direction of the growth of an individual in his five worlds. These five worlds in which individuals live are the physical, mental, social, emotional and psychological worlds which lead to how a person perceives the world.

According to Denga (2010), guidance aims at, maximizing the intellectual potentials of the students so that they may live up as learners of subject matter. In a more elaborate definition, Peters & Farewell (2012) stated that it is the assistance given to pupils individually and through group techniques to help them function more effectively in their school progress. Educational guidance assists pupils to know and to act in terms of their present and future educational needs and opportunities. At the Senior Secondary level, the role of the counsellor as Unachukwu (2011) puts it is that the students should be properly channeled to their interests, aptitudes and abilities, and proper adjustments among their colleagues. In all levels of education as Akinboye (2013) succinctly stated, the role of counsellors is to effectively utilize all the basic counselling principles to support their learner to overcome their development and maturational problems including guidance and counselling so that the learners can make better decision on personal, social, educational, career and family marital issues.

Though guidance and counselling are not synonymous, they are similar in the sense that they have as their basis a relationship that aims at assisting the individual in attaining self-direction. While guidance is a broad term usually applied to a total school programme of activities and services geared towards assisting student's .to make and carry out adequate plans and to achieve satisfactory adjustment in life, counselling is usually regarded as a part of guidance services. As Shetzer & Stone (2012) explained, both guidance and counselling usually deals with situational and environmental conditions. Both guidance and counselling stress rational planning problem solving and support in the face of situational problem.

#### **The Role of Counsellors in Secondary Schools**

Following the rapid changes in our society which has affected educational development, the role of counsellors has become manifest in our school system. This has become ever more pronounced with the 6-3-3-4 system. As Amadi (2001) put it, during the first three years of secondary school career every student is expected to carry all the subjects in the school curricular. This is irrespective of individual differences in ability, background, experience, social status, maturation, motivation, interest, attitudes, aptitudes etc.

Consequently there is continuous assessment that constantly reminds them that they are lacking in some areas. This type of situation creates frustration and feeling of inadequacy in these students who are affected and hence the need for guidance and counseling. Also hinting on the importance of guidance and

counselling in schools, Fafunwa (2012) stated that guidance and counseling, particularly at the junior secondary school level, would play an important role in the education and social growth of individuals. While Awokeye (20013) stated that the purpose of the 6-3-3-4 system of education would not be achieved without academic and career guidance and counselling especially in junior secondary schools. As Oladele (2013) observed that guidance services are professional and to individuals and small groups in dealing with common personal, educational and vocational needs and problems.

These services as put by Amadi (2011) include:

- a) Orientation services
- b) Placement services
- c) Information services
- d) Counselling services
- e) Research and follow-up services
- f) In-service programme
- g) Appraisal services.
- h) Evaluation services
- i) Public relations services

### **Perception of Teachers on the Role of Counsellors in the Secondary Schools**

Denga (2012) states that, the introduction of guidance counselling services have not been warmly received by various groups of people in Nigeria. Guidance and counselling services are measures oriented towards helping the individual understand and cope with his educational, vocational and personal needs and problems. Anagbogu (2012) says “like any new innovation or programme, the introduction of counselling services has not been warmly received by various groups of people in Nigeria. Many, up till today, still question the usefulness of counselling in the Nigerian setting”. That guidance and counselling is new in the society (Nigeria) and its importance will take some time to be universally accepted.

In addition, the attitude of teachers towards guidance and counselling have been repulsive some principals might not even be happy to see a guidance counsellor posted to their schools. They might not even recognize the intricacies of the counsellor thereby giving him equal amount of credit hours with other teachers in the school. Confirming this also, Denga (2013) noted that a principal who knows little about counselling will not in any way appreciate the need for counsellors to be released from the heavy teaching chores so that he can tackle the guidance tasks with at least a little success. He will encumber the counsellor to capacity with teaching and extra-curricular activities to make it impossible for the counsellor to counsel. Such a principal will not even make any budgetary allocation for counselling activities such as educational and occupational hours, the testing programmes, continuous assessment activities, etc. Central to the present discussion is the fact that guidance and counselling is an innovation in most of the nation’s schools. As such, it constitutes a change in the existing order of organization of the schools. Change of this kind cannot be effected without a complimentary rearrangement of status, power, associations, skills and so on. Those who may suffer as a result of the change may understandably be unwilling to readily accept it. As in a therapist client, a trusting positive relationship is needed to overcome the resistance of those most threatened by the prospective change.

According to Ekeruo (2012), teachers regard counsellors as administrators and the nicest thing you can say about administrators is that they are a necessary evil which may be tolerated but better yet eradicated. They believe that counsellors provide ancillary services and are therefore expandable. Teachers find it difficult to accept the need for human relations specialist in schools. To admit this means that teachers have certain weakness or short comings that they are reluctant to face. These are however noticed negative attitude towards guidance and counselling as a result of their increasing participation in the school.

Today, guidance and counselling is being offered as a course in some colleges of education and universities for both sandwich and regular programmes. However, guidance and counselling has not been given its appropriate position and status in the society. Besides, the educational policy makers at the top

level have professed interest in the introduction of counselling services, but the various political changes affect its effective establishment. However, a lot of awareness has been created in Nigerian society as regards the need for counselling in our society.

Fortunately, the National Policy of Education (2013) and several seminars and workshops held all over the country, have stressed the need for this guidance and counselling services. They have consistently tried to alert principals and teachers that the Education their school offers especially with the current 6-3-3-4 system will be better off with the implementation of the guidance and counselling services. Although limited research work have been conducted to understand better, the processes of teaching and counselling as well as the relationship of teaching to counselling in education. In this study, an attempt is made to define each of these distinct professional areas, and their relevance, to educational development. Though the fundamental function of the school is to provide instruction, all other activities in the school are designed to help accomplish this function with maximum effectiveness. According to Tuel (2012), the purpose of education are transmission 'of knowledge and skills, the preparation of the learner to actively and effectively appropriate new knowledge and skills as well as, prepare the learner to effectively apply his skills, to practical problems or new learning situations.

Kenneth & Adams (2014) argued that as a member of the school staff, the counsellor supports the educational philosophy of the school, even when he disagrees with it personally. Above all the school has a right to expect that the counsellor will be proud to be known as an educator that he will make no pretences, either publicly or privately of being something better than just an educator. Those counsellors who want to hold a primary identification with either clinical or counselling psychology should not seek employment in the public school. Mime (2010), identified that one of the most striking differences in counselling activity concerns the "reality gap" between what is taught in the universities and what, is practiced in the schools.

At this point, according to the National Survey on Guidance and Counselling Practice, it becomes crucial that a counsellor must be very skillful and diplomatic in performing his functions. He must be able to relate well with the principals, teachers and students. Liaison work between classroom teachers and counsellors aids the growth of educational guidance. Personal and emotional conflict of students can also be resolved if teachers and counsellors work together amicably. The existence of good relationship between the school authorities and counsellors enable counsellors function effectively in schools. One approach, suggested by Gesinde & Supo (2012), form increasing participation of the school authorities is through education as to roles and functions of Guidance and Counselling in the school system. To be successful, this technique must involve the counsellor as well. The counsellor should be educated about the basis of the perceived resistance of the school authorities to understand their reactions. The counsellor must attempt to reassure the school authorities that his role is not necessarily at odds with others. He must try to help them through the anxiety and disruption attendant upon change. According to Patterson (2010) fortunate is the counsellor who has a knowledge of the professional nature of counseling. Such an administrator will understand the goals of the counsellor and will accept the need for the establishment of the conditions necessary for professional counseling. He will recognize the importance of privacy in interview and confidentiality of information and records.

Hart & Prince (2013) reported that conflict exists. Between counsellor's perceptions of their, roles and that which administrators expect them to do. Administrators do not believe that counsellors are particularly competent to assist students with personal and emotional problems. In relation to this perception, Boller (2010) quoted one administrator as saying "we hear a lot about his non-directive counseling, it seems that all my counsellors do it. Can't counsellors give a little more direction to these kids?" Central to the present discussion is the fact that guidance and counselling are seen as two sides of the same coin. Counselling is a primary tool of guidance and pivotal procedure of guidance, and should posit on objective definition in contrast to the various over lapping definitions.

Guidance and Counselling has often been defined depending on each writer's opinions and views. This is one of the reasons why the word is sometimes rendered virtually meaningless thereby causing confusion in terms of classification, utilization and functionality. Majority of the principals and teachers alike,

professed ignorance as to the purpose and nature of guidance and counseling. Many were openly unimpressed about its usefulness. This is poignantly blamed on the biased and objective less definitions of guidance and counseling. There is a lack of clarity about the new role. For instance, some principals of schools are not too clear about the role of guidance counsellors. In fact, some vice principals and deputies have considered counsellors to be rivals for promotion to higher office, whereas, infact, there is a clear line of demarcation between the guidance office in schools and the principals or vice principal's office.

Okon (2010) and Makinde (2012) are of the opinion that where there is a professional leadership, the principals, vice principals and other deputies are psychologically threatened and therefore consider the counsellor to be rival for promotion to higher office. The way innovation is introduced could have a critical bearing on staff reactions and their motivation to support counselling implementation. If the counsellors do not involve teachers and the administrators thoroughly, there is a possibility of failure. Kenneth & Adams (2012) said that if the counsellor is seen in a supervisory relationship or, even worse, as a "spy" for the principal, his chances of being included as an active participant in such discussion are slight. They improve little, if at all, where the counsellor is viewed as one who is a logical candidate to replace the principal in and when the principal leaves the school.

Another desirable teacher perception is that the counsellor should be viewed as a consultant to the classroom teacher. This in no way should be taken to imply that the counsellor is more of a specialist in a different field. We also have those aspects dealing with the administrators' perceptions of the counsellor's availability. Counsellors should be considered as available and no more so as any other staff member for special assignments which became necessary during the school day. Because the counsellor is not teaching need not cause the administrator to feel he is therefore available to perform such assignments as substitute teachers, taxi driver for sick students, official host for school visitors, acting principal, hail monitor, or ticket taker whenever an emergency arises. Neither should the counsellors be considered as one who has been hired to listen to the principal's complaints about teachers. To use the counsellor's time routinely for such purposes is to misuse it. No wonder, in Steward's paper and Adams (2012), written in defense of school counsellors, where a secondary school counsellor made verbatim statements during the discussion meeting .at which the writers spoke on neglected Aspects of counseling. "I have had such a frustrating job in all my life. I have no time to do real counseling. I am primarily a clerical worker".

### **Academic Performance**

Academic performance gives us a view of how a student has performed in academics in the course of studying, giving the number of years. It involves the assessment of students' learning progress in task that is required of them (Anene, 2005). Adewale (2003) described academic performance as a means of academic progress not only to indicate readiness for next step but to evaluate students' progress towards educational goals. In universities, the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is used to give a sum total of a students' academic performance.

According to Steinberger (2005), academic performance is seen as the sum total of students' ability and performance. In our Nigerian Universities today, the CGPA is used as a parameter for grading students giving the highest point of score from 4.00 to 5.00 and the lowest from 1.0 downwards. Students who fall within the lowest categories are often times issued WAF (Withdrawal for Academic Failure). It is possible to learn and at the end of the day perform poorly in a given test, assignment or examination, however, the learning process has the tendency to influence students' performance in a given task and this performance is graded using scores to indicate their various levels of performance. A good performance outcome shows that learning has taken place and a low performance may indicate that there might be inadequacy in the learning process or other factors may be involved like loss of concentration due to a student's marital crisis at home.

According to Smith and Naylor (2001), students' performance in tertiary institutions vary from school to school due to some factors that includes; course taken, previous performance, marital status, parental influence on students' academic work, age, full time studies and citizenship. A peaceful environment can influence a student's performance positively. Married students having a positive self-concept and conflict-free home can achieve positive academic performance than students with poor self-concept

(Berger, 2005). Marital conflict can pose a lot of stress for students, forming emotional maladjustment overtime hence the student may not effectively function during the learning process hindering the flow of the lecturer/teacher which could be quite frustrating. Marital conflict is not always destructive but can be of benefit when it happens moderately and scarcely with a purposive inclination behind thereby opening a way for couples to study themselves rightly.

When married students face these marital crises caused by sexual dissatisfaction, financial constrain and poor communication with their spouse, their concentration level may drop to the minimal as they begin to think and seek for solution in order to find peace at home and also try to keep up with their academic work, a divided attention causes stress both to the mind and body.

### **Factors that Affect Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

**Personal/Behavioural:** This states that people's mental decrease in rate of change or the extent to which something is delayed or held back, financially, materially and otherwise, can affect the academic performance of students in Port Harcourt. Bernard (2000) also opined that high rate of drug abuse, drunkenness and recklessness could also affect one academically.

**Emotional:** Bane (2006) is of the view that any emotional wound or shock often having long lasting effects or any physical damage to the body caused by violence or accident or fracture can affect students' academic performance. Psychological problems which change our state of mind, reasoning, and death of relation or shocks are major factors that could affect our academic performance in schools.

**Health:** Bane emphasizes that our state of health is a major problem. He viewed illness and poor breastfeeding of any child as also factors that could affect their academic performance in school.

**Environment:** Factor such as the school setting and bad teachers are factors that could affect students. The atmosphere of the school, learning deficiencies and lack of discipline and orderliness also affect the academic performance of students.

**Disabilities/Physically Challenged Persons:** According to Bane (2006), visual and physical impairment affect students. He further states that damage that results in a reduction of strength or quality will definitely affect the students' academic performance. **Rebellion:** Refusal to accept some authority or code or convention. A fight back mentality, students drop out syndrome, bad adolescent behaviour and limited factors that affect the academic performance of students in the area. According to Hughes (1991), depression could also be a problem. He opined that reserved, introverted, high risk behaviourism, risky sexual behaviours, low academic grade, failure in exams, suicidal tendencies are major problems that affect academic performances of the students. To Bernard (2000), "Extended family is simply a family unit that extends past the nuclear family to include other relatives such as aunts, uncles and grandparents". There is more to an extended family, however than just a list of relatives, and understanding the structure of an extended family and why it can be a valuable type of family unit can help people have better understanding of their own family structure.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

In carrying out this research, the researcher used descriptive survey design. The essence of this design is to elicit information from the respondents on the above topic. This design was adopted because of its ability to ensure a representative outlook and provide a sample approach to the study of opinions, attitude and values of individuals.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study comprises male and female teachers in fourteen (14) selected secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas of Rivers State with the population size of one thousand two hundred (1,200) teachers.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The researcher used simple random sampling technique. Ezinwa & Okoye (2015) reveal that simple random sampling is the basic sampling technique where we select a group of subjects for study from a

larger group or a population. Therefore, the total sample size of the study was four hundred (400). This figure was generated using Taro Yamane formula;

**Instrument**

The instrumentation that was used in this study is a structured questionnaire. This instrument was designed after extensive study of related literature. The instrument (questionnaire) was titled: “Teachers Perception of Counsellors Questionnaire (TPOCQ)”. The questionnaire was divided into 2 parts. The first part is the information on the demographic variables of the respondents while the second part is on the research questions proper. The questionnaire was rated on 4-point Likert-scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

**Data Analysis Technique**

The data collected was analysed using frequency table and weighted mean score for the research questions. While the null hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. The criterion rule is that any mean score that is from 2.50 and above is accepted while the mean score that is less than 2.50 was rejected.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** *To what extent teachers’ perception affect orientation service of counsellors in secondary schools?*

**Table 1: Responses on How Teachers’ Perception Affect Orientation Service of Counsellors in Secondary Schools**

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Responses				N	ΣX	Mean (X̄)	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD				
1.	Some teachers perceived the counsellor as a helper and guide and do not have major functions or role to play in school settings.	110 (440)	250 (750)	30 (60)	10 (10)	400	1260	3.15	Accepted
2.	Teachers perceive counsellors with teaching experience to be more effective than counsellors without teaching experience.	90 (360)	230 (690)	50 (100)	30 (30)	400	1180	2.95	Accepted
3.	Some teachers view counsellors orientation role as unnecessary in school system or setting.	115 (460)	255 (765)	20 (40)	10 (10)	400	1275	3.19	Accepted
4.	Teachers’ view towards counselling orientation programme has reduced the regards for counsellors.	90 (360)	230 (690)	50 (100)	30 (30)	400	1180	2.95	Accepted
5.	Guidance and counselling orientation services is not warmly accepted by some teachers and school management.	130 (520)	240 (720)	20 (40)	10 (10)	400	1290	3.22	Accepted

From the data presented in Table.1 above, it shows that the respondents accepted that some teachers perceive the counsellor as a helper and guide and do not have major functions or role to place in school setting. It also reveals that the respondents accepted the view that teachers perceive counsellors with

teaching experience to be more effective than counsellors without teaching experience. It was also observed from the table that the respondents accepted that some teachers view counsellors' orientation role as unnecessary in school system or setting. The table indicates that the respondents accepted that teachers' view towards counselling orientation programme has reduced the regards for the school counsellors. The table shows that the respondents accepted that guidance and counselling orientation programme is not warmly accepted by some teachers and school management.

**Research Question 2:** *How does guidance and counselling research and follow-up service conflict with the students' learning activities?*

**Table 2: Responses on How Guidance and Counselling Research and Follow-up Service Conflict with the Students' Learning Activities**

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Responses				N	$\Sigma X$	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD				
6.	Some teachers perceive counselling research and follow-up services as threat to what is taught in the home regarding moral values.	120 (480)	240 (720)	30 (60)	10 (10)	400	1270	3.17	Accepted
7.	Some teachers see guidance and counselling programme as a distraction to their academic activities.	110 (440)	210 (630)	50 (100)	30 (30)	400	1200	3.00	Accepted
8.	Guidance and counselling research and follow-up services conflict with the learning period and other academic activities of the students.	110 (440)	250 (750)	30 (60)	10 (10)	400	1260	3.15	Accepted
9.	Counselling students in secondary schools is built in the school academic time table	30 (120)	60 (180)	120 (240)	190 (190)	400	730	1.82	Rejected
10.	Some students preferred going for counselling service or programme than going to the class to learn.	120 (480)	230 (690)	30 (60)	20 (20)	400	1250	3.12	Accepted

Table 2 reveals that the respondents accepted the view that some teachers perceive counselling research and follow-up services as threat to what is taught at home regarding moral values. It also indicates that the respondents accepted the item that some teachers see guidance and counselling programme as a distraction to their academic activities. It was observed in the same table that the respondents accepted the point that guidance and counselling research and follow-up service conflict with their learning period and other academic activities of the school. The table shows that the respondents rejected the view that

counselling programmes is not built in secondary school academic calendar or time table. It was also reveals in the table that the respondents accepted the item that some students preferred going for counselling service or programme than going to class to learn.

**Research Question 3:** *How does the guidance and counselling constraints affect information and awareness service of the counsellors in secondary schools?*

**Table 3: Responses on How Guidance and Counselling Constraints Affect Information and Awareness Service of the Counsellor in Secondary Schools**

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Responses				N	$\Sigma \bar{X}$	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD				
11.	Office space has become a major problem faced by counsellors in public secondary schools in Rivers State.	130 (520)	250 (750)	20 (40)	- (-)	400	1310	3.27	Accepted
12.	Government and school management do not provide mirror, recording tape, video tape, television for counsellors to perform their duties.	110 (440)	260 (780)	20 (40)	10 (10)	400	1270	3.17	Accepted
13.	Counselling time conflicting with academic time table is one of the problems confronting counsellors in secondary schools.	30 (120)	60 (180)	120 (240)	190 (190)	400	7.30	1.82	Rejected
14.	Students' negative attitude towards school counsellors is a constraint to the unit.	50 (200)	70 (210)	110 (220)	170 (170)	400	800	2.00	Rejected
15.	Teachers' character towards school counsellors has become a threat to the counselling unit.	110 (440)	260 (780)	20 (40)	10 (10)	400	1270	3.17	Accepted

From the data presented in Table 3 above, it indicates that the respondents accepted the points that office space has become a major problem faced by counsellors in public secondary schools in Rivers State and that government and school management do not provide mirror, recording tape, video tape, television etc. for counsellors to perform their duties. But in the other way round, the respondents rejected the views that counselling time conflicting with academic timetable of the students is one of the problems confronting counsellors in secondary schools and that students' negative attitude towards school counsellors is a constraint to their academic performance.

**Research Question 4:** *To what extent does teachers' perception of counsellors' role affect students' academic performance?*

**Table 4: Responses on How Teachers' Perception of Counsellors' Role Affect Students' Academic Performance**

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Responses				N	$\Sigma \bar{X}$	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	Remarks
		SA	A	D	SD				
16.	Disagreement between teachers and school counsellors in secondary schools can affect students' study.	120 (480)	240 (720)	30 (60)	10 (10)	400	1270	3.17	Accepted
17.	Student living his or her classes or lessons for counselling activities can be affected academically.	140 (500)	210 (630)	30 (60)	20 (20)	400	1270	3.17	Accepted
18.	Some teachers sometimes relax in the staff room not going to class because counsellors are not teaching.	130 (520)	240 (720)	20 (40)	10 (10)	400	1290	3.17	Accepted
19.	Some students use counselling as an excuse for not attending classes or lessons.	90 (360)	230 (690)	50 (100)	30 (30)	400	1180	2.95	Accepted
20.	Some students fail their exams or perform very poor because of going to counselling unit for counselling.	50 (200)	70 (210)	110 (220)	170 (170)	400	800	2.00	Rejected

Table 4 shows that the respondents accepted the view that disagreement between the teachers and the school counsellors can affect the students' study or academic performance. It reveals that the respondents also accepted that student living his or her class or lesson for counselling service or activity can be affected academically. It was also observed in the table that the respondents accepted that some teachers sometimes relax in their staff not coming to teach because the school counsellors are not teaching. And that some students use counselling service as an excuse of not attending or going for lessons or classes. However, the table still reveals that the respondents rejected the fact that some students fail their exams or perform very low or poor because of going to counselling unit for counselling.

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between teachers' perception and orientation service of counsellors in secondary schools.

**Table 5: t-test Analysis of Significant Difference between Teachers' Perception and Orientation Service of Counsellors in Secondary Schools**

Variables/Status	No. of Respondents	Mean Score ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	DS	t-cal	t-crit	LS	Decision
Teachers' perception in secondary schools	145	2.92	0.27	273	1.20	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Teachers' Perception Counsellors	130	2.96	0.26					

Analysis on Table 5 reveals that the t-cal (1.20) is less than the t-crit (1.96). Therefore, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is smaller than the given critical value of t-ratio. So, the hypothesis 1 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significant difference exists in the mean response scores of teachers' perception and orientation service of counsellors in secondary schools.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between guidance and counselling research and follow-up service and conflict with the students' learning activities.

**Table 6: t-test Analysis of Significant Relationship between Guidance and Counselling Research and Follow-up Service and Conflict with Student' Learning Activities**

<b>Variables/Status</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Mean Score (<math>\bar{X}</math>)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>DS</b>	<b>t-cal</b>	<b>t-crit</b>	<b>LS</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Guidance and counselling research and follow-up service	155	2.96	0.25	253	0.52	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Conflict with students' learning activities	100	1.97	0.17					

Analysis on Table 6 indicates that the t-cal (0.52) is less than the t-crit (1.96). So, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is less than the given critical value of t-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 2 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significant relationship exists in the mean response scores of guidance and counselling research and follow-up and conflict in students' learning activities.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' perception and information and awareness service of counsellors in secondary schools.

**Table 7: t-test Analysis of Significant Relationship between Teachers' Perception and Information and Awareness Service of Counsellors in Secondary Schools**

<b>Variables/Status</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Mean Score (<math>\bar{X}</math>)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>DS</b>	<b>t-cal</b>	<b>t-crit</b>	<b>LS</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Teachers' perception	130	2.99	0.25	228	0.49	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Information and awareness service of counsellors	1000	2.97	0.17					

Analysis on Table 7 shows that the t-cal (0.49) is less than the t-crit (1.96). So, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is less than the given critical value of t-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 3 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significant relationship exists in the mean response scores of teachers' perception and guidance and counselling information and awareness service.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' perception of counselling role and students' academic performance.

**Table 8: t-test Analysis of Significant Relationship between Teachers' Perception of Counsellors' Role and Students' Academic Performance**

Variables/Status	No. of Respondents	Mean Score ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	DS	t-cal	t-crit	LS	Decision
Teachers' perception of counselling role	105	2.68	0.23	0.24	1.89	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Students' academic performance	195	2.54	0.25					

Analysis on Table 8 reveals that the t-cal (1.89) is less than the t-crit (1.96). Therefore, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significant since it is less than the given critical value of t-ratio. So, the hypothesis 4 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significant relationship exists in the mean response scores of teachers' perception of counselling role and students' academic performance.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study reveals that teachers' perception on counselling orientation service in secondary schools can affect the academic performance of the students. This view is in line with Denga (2012). He states that, the introduction of guidance and counselling services have not been warmly received by various groups of people in Nigeria especially the teachers. Teachers in public secondary schools still question the usefulness of counselling service in Nigeria setting. It was also observed in the study that the attitude of teachers towards guidance and counselling have been repulsive hence some principals might not even be happy to see a guidance counsellor posted to their schools. The study indicates that guidance and counselling research and follow-up service sometimes conflict with the students learning activities. This view is in accordance with the respondents who accepted that guidance and counselling research and follow-up services conflict with the learning period and other academic activities of the students hence counselling students is not built in the school academic time-table.

The study shows that guidance and counselling constraints can affect information and awareness service of the counsellors in secondary schools. This view is in collaboration with Hart (2000). He reveals that office space, mirror, recording tape, video tape and television are not available for the counsellors to do their work effectively. These constraints in most cases affect the effective delivery of counselling service in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings also indicate that teachers' perception of counselling role can affect students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Ibowu & Supo (2012) state that the staff (teachers) see the counsellor as a threat to the peace of the school for colluding with hot heads and revolutionists who are welcomed like everyone else into the confidentiality of the counselling interview. This view can also affect students' thought, attitudes towards the counsellor.

### CONCLUSION

Teachers' perception of counsellors' role and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State cannot be over-emphasized. The evidence from the study indicates that teachers' perception affects orientation, awareness and information service of the counsellors in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The teachers, counsellors, students and school management should have good working relationship. Lack of counselling tools or equipment will affect the effectiveness of the counsellors in the state. The findings have also shown that government and the school management do not provide good office space, mirror, video tape, recording tape, television, etc for the counsellors.

Counsellors are not yet warmly welcome by the school management, principals, teachers and students. The students also hide under the umbrella of counselling service instead of going for lesson or class.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are hereby put forward to ensure that this study achieve its objectives or purpose.

1. Government and school management should organize awareness or sensitization campaign to sensitize the principals, teachers, counsellors and the students in public secondary schools in Rivers State on their working relationship.
2. School management should make out time for counselling service and integrate it into the school academic time table to avoid research and follow-up service conflicting with the students' learning or academic activities.
3. Government and school management should provide good office space and well equipped in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
4. School management should provide mirror, video tape, recording tape, television etc for the counsellors to ensure effective counseling service in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
5. Students should make adequate use of the counselling service in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
6. Teachers should be oriented not to disperse the school counsellors rather should have a good working relationship.

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