



Demographic Variables influencing Public Senior Secondary school Teachers' Attitude Towards Guidance Counsellors in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the Demographic variables influencing Public Senior Secondary School teachers' attitude towards Guidance counsellors in Rivers State. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. To achieve the purpose of the study 3 research questions and 3 null hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study consist of 6956 teachers in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample of 1256 (teachers) was drawn through a multi-stage sampling procedure. The teachers' attitude towards guidance counsellors' questionnaire (TATGCQ) was the outcome measure. Its validity was ensured by test and guidance and counselling experts while its reliability was ensured through the internal consistency method with Cronbach alpha statistics which yielded an alpha of 'a' 0.79. The direct delivery method was used to administer the instrument. Data was analysed using the criterion mean to answer the research questions and the Z-test statistics to test the 3 null hypotheses. The results shows that teachers generally exhibited negative attitude towards Guidance counsellors in their various categories (male/female, urban/rural and below 10yr and above 10yrs). Hypotheses testing revealed significant statistical difference in all categories. It was recommended amongst others that orientation programmes should be organised for teachers to enable them appreciate the complimentary roles of the Guidance counsellor in the development of students.

Keywords: Attitude, Demographic Variables, Guidance Counsellor, Public schools, Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

The School Guidance Counsellor is a school personnel who is professionally trained to assist students to understand themselves in order to achieve their potentials for a healthy living. Olusakin (2011) described a professional counsellor as an expert in his field who cultivates skills in helping people to understand their situation, clarify their values and make informed decision for which they assume responsibility.

The counsellor is a new comer in the Nigerian educational system hence the counsellor and his services are strange to many but the teacher has been a major actor, a constant figure since the inception of western education and his attitude towards the guidance counsellor and his services has been that of hostility. The attitude of teachers towards the counsellor has direct impact on the guidance and counselling services in the Nigerian schools. Anagbogu (1988) observed that teachers feel jealous of counsellors because they find it difficult to accept the need to accept other specialist

because to admit that other specialists are necessary is to imply that teachers have certain limitations. Again Osiki (2018) revealed in his investigation of school-based counselling in Nigeria: the counsellor and teachers controversies that teachers' discrimination against the professionally trained counsellor is glaring because of teachers' ignorance of what the scope and multi-dimensional components of school based counselling is. These observed negative attitude towards guidance counsellor is very true because one of the researchers as a guidance counsellor in one of the schools in Rivers State suffered antagonism and lack of co-operation from teachers who think the counsellor's presence in the school is unnecessary, they attempt to frustrate any programme initiated by the counsellor.

Guidance and counselling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities and services aimed at assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world at large (Lunenburg, 2010). Ali (2011) sees guidance and counselling in school as "services available to each student to facilitate his academic success in school, to help him better understand his strengths and limitations, to identify his interests, to aid him in his planning for attaining realistic goals. Ali went further to say that it is a process of helping the individuals to be aware of their personal identity, perceive themselves in relation to environmental and interpersonal relationships such as attitude.

There are several services rendered by the counsellor under the guidance programme of the school which includes the following amongst others;

1. **Counselling service:** This is the heart of guidance services; it is the core guidance programme around which other services revolve. Through counselling the client is assisted in learning to understand his/her problem relating it to the situation of the bigger community with a view to finding ways of solving it (Olusakin, 2011). Counselling helps clients to understand and clarify their views, and learn to reach their self-determined goals through meaningful, well-informed choices and through the resolution of problems of an emotional or interpersonal nature.
2. **Orientation service:** This services aims at integrating students into their new environment while easing the stress associated with the transitions.
3. **Information service:** This service is aimed at disseminating information about various academic activities, available services, possible career options, and job opportunities for specific courses, work-study options, work values and dignity of labour.
4. **Planning service:** This service requires a process of thinking about the activities required to create the desired goal of the guidance programme. It involves calling meetings of the stakeholders to discuss the important issues to be addressed, the objectives to be met and the strategy to be followed.
5. **Referral services:** The counsellor is not all knowing but works in collaboration with other agencies. This service aims at facilitating the process of referring clients to other relevant personal/office who can further assist them with their concerns.
6. **Appraisal service:** This service involves the use of test and non-test instruments in helping the client to understand his or her potentials. The clients' potentials and limitations are properly diagnosed. In appraisal service, test instruments such as intelligence test, attitude test etc and non-test instruments like observation, case studies etc are used.
7. **Placement service:** helps the client to be allocated to the appropriate group to achieve their educational, vocational and personal goals.
8. **Evaluation service:** This service aims at finding the extent to which the objectives of the guidance programmes are being attained.

The teacher is the primary actor in a school. The teacher has been a key player since the inception of Western education. A school exist because there are teachers. A teacher is a facilitator, an instructor, resource person, learning enabler, initiator or whatever contemporary nomenclature one chooses to go by to teach the learner irrespective of type of school, type of learner and type of learning (Nwachukwu, 2007). A good teacher affects eternity, he can never tell where his influence stops. Every teacher inspires to be a good teacher but what is myth about being a good teacher? Teaching jobs are often lucrative and satisfying for people who love to teach. With the following characteristics identified by Meer (2018) a teacher can become a good teacher;

- (1) Friendliness and congeniality – This is a very important quality a good teacher should possess. It is a plus if his/her students can confide in him without being hesitant. If your students count you as an enemy then they can never come close to you.
- (2) A good personality – Students are always attracted to teachers with good personality which leads to better communication, understanding and ultimately good results. A teacher should endeavour to have a good, decent, likable and presentable personality. Dress sensibly well, smell good and be a little gentle and kind that's all.
- (3) Deep knowledge and a great education – A teacher should not lack knowledge of what he/she is teaching. Teacher can never make a name for himself if he lacks knowledge of subjects he teaches. No education system can rise above its teachers. So only teach the subject you can have good knowledge of.
- (4) A good communicator - Without good communication skills, a teacher cannot convey his lectures with better skills and results.
- (5) A good listener – A good teacher must have a listening ear, he must be a good listener because a good teacher will always have many friends and fans listening are a patient quality when you develop it, you become a great teacher.
- (6) A good sense of humour – Learners most often love fun in class. A good teacher must have a good sense of humour to ease of stress and tension in the class but with his good communication skills, personality and sense of humour he still maintains the discipline in the class.
- (7) Kindness – A teacher should be gentle and kind and benevolent. When a teacher is kind heartedly he earns his students respect, which will prompt them to do their homework and this will eventually bring greater outputs and results.

The teacher as a key player in the school system should have the qualities spelt above to become a good teacher. When good teachers are found in the school system the counsellor will be more empowered to discharge his guidance and counselling services and programmes through the cooperation of good teachers. The reverse is the case in most cases because teachers' attitude towards guidance counsellor is that of rivalry. The entrance of the counsellor into the school system makes the teacher feel less important and so displays hostility towards the Counsellor. Moindi and Nyandema (2018) investigated students' and teachers' perception of guidance and counselling services in secondary schools and its effects on Academic Performance in Eldoret municipality, Kenya with a sample of 310 teachers and 250 students using ex-post facto and correlation research designs. The results indicated there was a statistically significant correlation among the students perception on guidance and counselling services and effect on academic performance. Teachers gender on teachers perception on guidance and counselling service effect on academic performance. There was no statistically significant correlation among the teachers' qualification and teachers' perception on guidance and counselling services' effect on academic performance.

Egenti (2018) investigated teacher's perception of guidance counsellors' task performance in secondary schools in Anambra state in a survey research design using a population of 6,857 teachers and a sample of 685 drawn through a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The outcome measure was a 30 items teachers' perception of guidance counsellors' task performance questionnaire (TPCTPQ). The findings revealed among others that teachers' perception towards guidance counsellors, task performance is high. Male and female teachers' perception towards guidance counsellors' tasks performance is high. Teachers in urban and rural areas did not differ significantly in their perception of guidance counsellors' task performance. It was recommended that professionally trained school counsellors are needed for effective delivery of guidance and counselling services in the schools.

Charema (2008) in his study of school counsellors' perception of guidance and counselling in secondary school in Botswana he focused on their needs, the problems they meet and what they think should be done to improve the counselling situation. In addition perceptions of the administration's attitudes, support from other members of staff and the counsellors' workload as well as their overall assessment of the programme are discussed. Results indicated that although most of the teachers are not qualified in counselling, they are of the view that counselling keep pupils to change in behaviour

and perform better in school work by sharing their problems and difficulties with counsellors, thereby devoting more time to their studies than personal problems.

The entrance of the counsellor into the school system makes the teacher feel less important and so displays hostility towards the Counsellor. The researchers finds it necessary to investigate the attitude of teachers in public senior secondary schools towards guidance counsellors, it is against this background that this study is conceived.

Statement of Problem

The squabble or controversies between teachers and school counsellors has been an age long issue since the entrance of guidance and counselling services into the school system in the 20th century. The attitude of public secondary school teachers towards Guidance Counsellors has been that of hostility, the counsellor was basically seen as an intruder because he was not there right from inception of western education into Nigeria. The teachers played the teaching and counselling roles before the arrival of the professional counsellor. The teacher is not happy that part of his role has been usurped by the counsellor hence his negative attitude towards the counsellor. The importance of the counsellor in the school system cannot be overemphasized because the success of our educational system depends largely on the proper implementation of guidance and counselling services. The major focus of a school counsellor is to facilitate required educational growth among students for improved academic performance and character development in a professional manner which the teachers cannot convey professionally. Why do teachers hate to see the counsellor performing his professional roles? This issue is indeed worth investigating empirically, to the best of the researchers knowledge no study has been undertaking on the attitude of teachers towards guidance counsellors, most of the studies conducted were on perception of teachers towards guidance and counselling services hence, the need to investigate the demographic variables influencing attitude of public senior secondary school teachers towards counsellors in Rivers State, this is the problem of the study.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the demographic variables influencing attitude of senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance counsellors in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

- (1) What is the attitude of male and female senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance counsellors?
- (2) What is the attitude of urban and rural senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance Counsellors?
- (3) What is the attitude of senior public secondary school teachers with below 10 years' experience and above 10 years' experience towards Guidance Counsellors?

Hypotheses

- (1) There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance Counsellors.
- (2) There is no significant difference between the attitude of urban and rural senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance Counsellors.
- (3) There is no significant difference between the attitude of senior public secondary school teachers with below 10 years' experience and above 10 years' experience towards Guidance Counsellors.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design adopted for the study was the survey research design. Specifically, the descriptive survey study was used.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consist of all the teachers in senior public secondary schools in Rivers state numbering 6,956 for 2019/2020 academic session (**source:** Rivers State senior secondary school board, state summary of academic staff).

Table 1 shows total number of respondents as 1256, a breakdown of this figure shows, 526 male teachers representing 42% and 730 females representing 58%. It also shows a total number 688 urban

teachers representing 55% and 568 rural teachers representing 45%, with a total number of 825 as having below 10years experience representing 66% and 431 as having above 10 years' experience representing 34%. This will give us a basis for proper data analysis.

Research Question 1: *What is the attitude of male and female senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance counsellors?*

Table 2: Responses of male and female teachers on their attitude towards Guidance Counsellors

s/n	Items	Gender	SA=4	A=3	D=2	SD=1	Mean	SD	remark
1	What the counsellor is employed to do in the school is what the teacher has always done.	Male-526	208 (832)	198 (594)	65 (130)	55 (55)	3.1	0.90	Negative attitude
		Female-730	311 (1244)	299 (897)	50 (100)	70 (70)	3.2	0.93	
2	I think counsellors are ignorant of how students are groomed to pass their exams.	Male-526	M=255 (1020)	235 (705)	12 (24)	24 (24)	3.4	0.97	Negative attitude
		Female-730	285 (1140)	380 (1140)	30 (60)	35 (35)	3.3	0.95	
3	Counsellors are big distraction to students learning,	Male-526	190 (760)	297 (891)	19 (38)	20 (20)	3.2	0.93	Negative attitude
		Female-730	325 (1300)	289 (867)	66 (132)	50 (50)	3.2	0.93	
4	Counsellors are just employed to monitor teachers' lapses in schools I avoid them.	Male-536	287 (1148)	199 (597)	12 (24)	28 (28)	3.4	0.97	Negative attitude
		Female-730	365 (1460)	220 (660)	70 (140)	75 (75)	3,2	0.93	
5	Counselling periods are just for gossips, I'm convinced.	Male-526	202 (808)	178 (534)	106 (212)	40 (40)	3.0	0.89	Negative attitude
		Female-730	287 (1148)	311 (933)	62 (124)	70 (70)	3.1	0.90	
6	Students visit the counsellor to dodge learning.	Male-526	201 (804)	196 (588)	50 (100)	79 (79)	2.9	0.88	Negative attitude
		Female-730	301 (1204)	179 (537)	150 (300)	100 (100)	2.9	0.88	
7	I think counsellors are attracting students to themselves	Male-526	172 (688)	195 (585)	69 (138)	90 (90)	2.9	0.88	Negative attitude
		Female-730	250 (1000)	187 (561)	190 (380)	103 (103)	2.8	0.86	
8	Information from the counsellor is not in any way different from what we give to students.	Male-526	192 (768)	213 (639)	50 (100)	71 (71)	3.0	0.89	Negative attitude
		Female-730	203 (812)	242 (726)	180 (360)	105 (105)	2.7	0.71	
9	Teachers were doing well with students and parents I don't know the	Male-526	156 (624)	215 (645)	105 (210)	50 (50)	2.9	0.78	Negative attitude
		Female-							

	difference the counsellor will make.	730	205 (820)	189 (567)	200 (400)	136 (136)	2.6	0.68	
10	The teacher, teach, set, mark grade scripts and decide students to be promoted, the role of the counsellor is irrelevant	Male-526	213 (852)	161 (483)	50 (100)	102 (102)	2.9	0.78	Negative attitude
		Female-730	197 (788)	290 (870)	83 (166)	160 (160)	2.7	0.71	
11	The test administered by the counsellor is uncalled for, it is not used for promotion.	Male-526	177 (708)	277 (831)	22 (44)	50 (50)	3.1	0.90	Negative attitude
		Female-730	411 (1644)	153 (459)	66 (132)	100 (100)	3.2	0.93	
12	There is nothing positive about orientation of students, it makes us lose a lot of teaching periods	Male-526	200 (800)	154 (462)	102 (204)	70 (70)	2.9	0.78	Negative attitude
		Female-730	207 (828)	295 (885)	118 (236)	110 (110)	2.8	0.76	
13	There is no other professional that knows the job better than teachers, employment of counsellors is a waste of scarce resources.	Male-526	189 (756)	298 (894)	9 (18)	30 (30)	3.2	0.93	Negative attitude
		Female-730	430 (1720)	242 (726)	8 (16)	50 (50)	3.4	0.97	
14	There is nothing special about counsellors, teachers are counsellors too.	Male-526	194 (776)	212 (636)	42 (84)	78 (78)	3.0	0.88	
		Female-730	243 (972)	291 (873)	96 (192)	100 (100)	2.9	0.78	
15	I don't appreciate a counsellor in my school.	Male-526	311 (1244)	105 (315)	40 (80)	70 (70)	3.2	0.93	Negative attitude
		Female-730	404 (1616)	188 (564)	58 (116)	80 (80)	3.3	0.95	
	Grand mean	Male-3.1, SD-0.90, Female- 3.0, SD- 0.88 Urban-2.4, SD-0.72, Rural-3.3, SD- 0.95 Below 10yrs- 3.0, SD-0.88,Above10yrs-3.3,SD- 0.95					3.0	0.81	Negative attitude

Table 2 provides answers to all the research questions through the gleaned field data provided. For research question 1 the mean response of all the items for both male and female teachers is above the criterion mean of 2.5. This simply answers research question 1 which is: the attitude of male and female teachers towards guidance counsellors is negative.

Research Question 2: *What is the attitude of urban and rural senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance Counsellors?*

The gleaned data on table 2 still supplies the answer to research question 2. The summary of gleaned data shows a grand mean of 2.4 for urban teachers with a standard deviation of 0.72 which shows a positive attitude while that of the rural teachers shows a grand mean of 3.3 with a standard deviation of 0.95 which represents negative attitude. This data answers research question 2 which is: The

attitude of urban teachers towards Guidance counsellors is positive while that of their rural counterparts is negative.

Research Question 3: *What is the attitude of senior public secondary school teachers with below 10 years' experience and above 10 years' experience towards Guidance Counsellors?*

The gleaned data on table 2 shows a grand mean of 3.0 and SD of 0.88 for teachers with below 10yrs of experience representing negative attitude while their counterparts with above 10yrs experience had a mean score of 3.3 and SD of 0.9 which also represents negative attitude. The answer to research question 3 therefore is: Teachers with below 10yrs experience and above 10yrs experience had negative attitude towards Guidance Counsellors.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance Counsellors in Rivers State.

Table 3: Summary of Z-test statistics testing Hypothesis 1 male and female teachers' attitude towards Guidance counsellors

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Sig	Z-cal	Z-crit	Decision
Male	526	3.1	0.91	1254	0.05	2	1960	Reject H01
Female	730	3.0	0.88					

Table 3 shows that the calculated Z-test value of 2 is higher than the table value of 1.960 with a degree of freedom of 1254 at 0.05 level of significance, this gives us a basis to reject null hypothesis 1 and accept the alternate hypothesis which means, There is a significant difference between male and female teachers attitude towards Guidance counsellors in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the attitude of urban and rural senior public secondary school teachers towards Guidance Counsellors in Rivers State.

Table 4: Summary of Z-test statistics testing Hypothesis 2 Urban and Rural teachers' attitude towards Guidance counsellors

Location of teachers	N	Mean	SD	Df	Sig	Z-cal	Z-crit	Decision
Urban	688	2.4	0.95	1254	0.05	14	1960	Reject H02
Rural	568	3.3	0.77					

Table 4 shows that the calculated Z-test value of 14 is much higher than the table value of 1.960 with a degree of freedom of 1254 at 0.05 level of significance, this calls for the rejection of null hypothesis 2 and the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis, this therefore means that: there is a significant difference in attitude of urban and rural teachers towards Guidance Counsellors.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the attitude of senior public secondary school teachers with below 10years' experience and above 10years' experience towards Guidance Counsellors in Rivers State.

Table 5: Summary of Z-test statistics testing Hypothesis 3 teachers with below 10yrs experience and those with above 10yrs experience attitude towards Guidance counsellors

Experience	N	Mean	SD	Df	Sig	Z-cal	Z-crit	Decision
Below 10yrs	431	3.3	0.9	1254	0.05	6	1960	Reject H03
Above 10	825	3.0	0.88					

Table 5 shows that the calculated Z-test value of 6 is higher than the critical value of Z-test which is 1.960 with a degree of freedom of 1254 at 0.05 level of significance, on this basis we jettison null hypothesis 3 and accept the alternate hypothesis; which means there is a significant difference between teachers with below 10 years' experience and that of their counterparts with above 10yrs experience in attitude towards Guidance Counsellors.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first finding in this study reveals that both male and female teachers' attitude towards Guidance Counsellors was negative but when their mean differences were subjected to the Z-test statistics a significant difference was noted in attitude between male and female teachers. This result is not

surprising but expected because the emergence of the professional counsellor into the educational system was greeted with hostility. This finding is consistent with that of Osiki (2018) who investigated School based counselling in Nigeria: the counsellor and teachers' controversies unveiled that teachers discrimination against the professionally trained counsellor is glaring because of teachers ignorance of what the scope and multi-dimensional components of school based counselling is. Moindi and Nyandema (2018) investigated students' and teachers' perception of guidance and counselling services in secondary schools and its effects on Academic Performance in Eldoret municipality, Kenya with a sample of 310 teachers and 250 students using ex-post facto and correlation research designs. The results indicated that, Teachers' gender on teachers' perception on guidance and counselling service has effect on academic performance.

The second finding reveals that both urban and rural teachers' attitude towards Guidance Counsellors was negative but when their mean differences was subjected to the Z-test statistics significant difference was found between the urban and rural teachers, the urban teachers displayed a better attitude than the rural teachers towards Guidance Counsellors. This is however not surprising because most urban teachers are beginning to appreciate the good works of the counsellor because most schools in the urban area has guidance counsellors while counsellors are lacking in the rural areas. This result however is inconsistent with that of Egenti (2018) who investigated teachers' perception of guidance counsellors' task performance in secondary schools in Anambra state in a survey research design using a population of 6,857 teachers and a sample of 685 drawn through a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The findings revealed among others that teachers in urban and rural areas did not differ significantly in their perception of guidance counsellors' task performance. The difference might be as a result of the instrument used or the environment.

The third finding of the study reveals that those teachers with below 10yrs experience and their counterparts with above 10yrs experience had a negative attitude towards Guidance Counsellors. However, when their mean differences were further subjected to the Z-test statistics a significant difference in attitude was found between them. This result was also not surprising but expected because the teachers with below 10yrs experience had a more positive attitude towards guidance counsellors because they came in to see every staff as complimentary to each other unlike their senior colleagues who saw the counsellor as an intruder from onset. This study agrees with that of Manderu (2013) who examined the perception of students and teachers towards guidance and counselling service in secondary schools in Ngong and Ongata Rongai zones with a sample size of 150 respondents comprising 120 students and 24 teachers and 6 principals participated in the study. The study revealed that teachers and students have wrong perception towards guidance and counselling services.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that;

- (1) Male and female teachers had negative attitude towards Guidance Counsellors in Rivers State based on their grand mean score of 3.0 but when the mean differences were further subjected to the Z-test statistics a significant difference was found between male and female teachers' attitude towards Guidance Counsellors in Rivers State.
- (2) Urban and Rural teachers had a negative attitude towards Guidance Counsellors in Rivers state based on their grand mean score of 2.9. However, when the mean differences were further subjected to the Z-test statistics a significant difference was found in attitude between urban and rural teachers in Rivers State.
- (3) Teachers with below 10yrs experience and those with above 10yrs experience had negative attitude towards guidance Counsellors in Rivers State judging from their grand mean score of 3.2. However, when their mean difference were subjected to the Z-test statistics a significant difference was found in attitude towards teachers below 10yrs experience and their counterparts with above 10yrs experience. On the whole all the 3 hypotheses were rejected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusion of the study it was further recommended that;

- (1) Teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State male/female should be well orientated on the complementary role the counsellor plays to achieve educational objectives.
- (2) Urban and rural teachers should be given the opportunity to work with counsellors for a better appreciation of the counsellor by posting counsellors to both rural and urban schools, it was observed that the rural schools used for the study were without counsellors no wonder the negative attitude.
- (3) Experienced teachers who have experienced the invaluable roles the Guidance Counsellor plays in the development of the child should accept the counsellor and educate their inexperienced counterparts to accept the counsellor with positive attitudes.

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