Abstract
The study investigated the relationship between the utilization of basic psychological skills as correlates of Guidance and Counselling Services in Uyo Metropolis' Nursery and Primary Schools. Three hundred randomly selected Nursery and Primary school pupils of the State Universal Basic Education constituted the sample of the study. The sample consisted of one hundred and fifty five (155) boys and one hundred and forty five (145) girls. Their age ranged between 3 - 5 and 11 – 13 years respectively with a mean age of 102 years and a standard deviation of 0.44 years. A twenty structured questionnaire, "The need for counseling services at primary school level" was employed in the study. Data were collected and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The results show significant main relationship between the utilization of Guidance and Counselling services, information, placement, appraisal, follow-up, evaluation which are the psychological skills and at the time Guidance and Counselling Services and pupils perception. Based on the findings it was suggested that conscious efforts should be made by the school counselors and relevant stakeholders to adopt Guidance and Counselling Services as tools for handling pupils related concerns. The Counsellors should adopt admired and effective planning measures by seeking help through the State Universal Basic Education Board. Besides, the Education Board should be asked to allocate more trained teachers to the schools due to free education population explosion for effectiveness and productivity. Such planning should be comprehensive, proactive and consultative in nature.

The common purpose of all helping professions is attainment of the desired positive behaviour change through a process of preventive, remedial or curative services. Carl Rogers (1966) in his view summed up the purpose of all helping professions as that of enhancing the personal development and the psychological growth towards a socialized maturity of its clients. Generally, Guidance and Counselling Services is very crucial because needs and their attending problems are unique to age cohorts types of settings and the index audience of the setting, that is, environmental uniqueness is a primary activator of human needs. Appropriate approach to the needs indicates that solution requires appropriate understanding of the setting and the people. Children make up a unique group in their different age cohorts and the corresponding level of education from pre-primary to primary.

Consequently, every human problem starts with a need that was not met either because there was not enough attention given to the need or due to constraining factors prevailing in the circumstances of the need, its demands could be met at the time or even later, otherwise the person suffers crisis, these are individual difference in human approach and need management; (Nwachukwu, 2009). He further opined that in this perspective, the Nigerian Education Policy Statement (2004) on Guidance and Counselling in schools has come under severe criticism as being grossly inaccurate. It states as follows:
“In view of the apparent ignorance of many young people about career prospects and...
in view of personality and adjustment among school, children, career officers and counselors will be appointed in post primary institutions”.

Emphasis in this statement is on curative counseling correct ignorance and maladjustment of youths on school. A comprehensive counseling centre should normally run preventive, curative as well as educational and personal social programmes. Attention should turn to Guidance Service formally in the school system across the school age where most growing children manifest multi-dimensional needs and problems that could be arrested with prompt and adequate counseling interventions. Naturally the infants (0 – 2 years) need Guidance, the totality of attention paid is normally referred to as “child care”. Traditionally child care is done in the home by experienced caregivers usually called grandmothers and old aunts who assist when the biological mothers are away to their works places. With increasing education and paid employment opportunities, many mothers are away from homes for many hours. A public spirited school Guidance Counsellor can bring a meaningful preventive Guidance Interventions to help this segment of children in the community.

The nursery school pupils in the next few years would necessarily become part of the local primary school population. By implication the nursery is the counsellor’s perspective clientele in the formal school system. Ipaye (1983) observed that formal education has been grossly neglected in offering education services in general such as school, health care, school Guidance and Counselling Services, school library services, seminars, workshops and training in primary schools throughout the nation. In private school sector, even the most sophisticated does not have a fully established school Guidance and Counselling Service managed by a trained counsellor. Due to the stage of growth and development in which the pupils are, services are more of Guidance than Counselling, primary school children are still at a very formative stage and are still building values and concepts of life. The most essential need at this time is to provide the child with appropriate models which will guide him into proper selective behavior, good and desirable habit formation. Therefore school Guidance at this level is more educative and preventive than curative. However in the upper primary classes, there are mixtures of age groups reflecting children in the childhood as well as adolescence, this implies a mixture of needs requiring Guidance and Counselling wherever behavior maladjustment is noticed, help intervention is given as the case may be.

In Nigeria, people critically look into the quality of the programme and the gains it will yield to its citizenry. This is due to the myriads of challenges facing the programme namely, students population explosion, lack of space, inadequate facilities like writing materials, textbooks, laboratory equipments and so on. Agbaje (2010) added that lack of proper guidance and counselling as well as instructional materials has not truly made school attractive to the young ones. Ekpo (2007) pointed out that Universal Basic Education brought about population explosion in schools and with such came a lot of problems such as lack of space, lack of trained teachers and the pupils would not receive enough attention from the teachers because the teachers have too much to do than to listen to individual child’s problem. Children should be listened to if the purpose for which they are in school must be accomplished, hence there is the need for Guidance and Counselling Services for the pupils in Universal Basic Education; the main goal of the new national policy on Education (2004) is wholesome and maximum education for all Nigerians. It is further stressed to overcome these goals, educative activities will be centred on the learners for maximum self-development. It is through Guidance and Counselling that the much talked about
maximum development of the individual could be facilitated.

Freud (1933) identified four universal stages of psychosexual development responsible for personality development, the oral (0 – 1 year old), the anal stage of (1 - 3 years old) the phallic stage (4 -5 years old) the latency stage (5 – 6 years old) the genital stage (12 years old) that these stages must be properly checked in children through a helping process of Guidance to attain a fullest self-development that will affect their later life as adults. William Glasser (1990) contended that there are two basic psychological needs: the need to love and the need to feel worthwhile to oneself and others, with these factors a man’s behavior would be admired or frowned at. He stressed that people are not endowed with natural ability to satisfy needs but must be learned, this learning process begins early. Those who develop success identity do so through a loving relationship with responsible parents. These parents establish an involvement with their children through love, teaching, discipline and modeling. Adler (1975) identified that the aspect of order of birth, viewed that lifestyles often develop as a function of person’s ordinal position within the family. According to him, children do not have similar social environment even though they came from the same parents and family background. The child’s perceptions of his situation and meaning attached to such situation accompany his occupied position, determines the his/her ordinal position, that is, first born, second born, the youngest and the only child will affect or influence his or her lifestyle. It is thus, proper to use guidance services to help those with abnormal lifestyle to develop social interest.

Bandura (1971) identified that man by nature watches what others do and then repeats their actions. Technically, man is also said to have acquired behavior through observational learning, Bandura and other proponents of social learning approach have shed much light on the ways in which man acquires, maintains, and modifies his behavior through emulation of models.

Reisburg Fridlud and Gleitman Henry et al (2004) Meltzoff, Gopink and Repacholi (1999), Ekpo (2007) are in agreement to imitation learning of Bandura by children. Ekpo (2007) spoke that learning involves imitation through modeling, that guidance and counselling need to provide the behavior in a real life situation or symbolic models that demonstrate the behavior to be acquired in segmental steps so that his client may learn the said behavior by using reinforcement in conjunction with his techniques for it to be effective. Denga (2001) explained that in the early stages of education children should be well guided or assisted because what they learned in the early years lays foundation for what they would learn in life. Habits of such formative years are therefore likely to determine their orientation towards later day to day living and preferences since children learn through imitation, they therefore need assistance to direct them during their formative days in school. Ihiegbulum (2000) defined Guidance in Nigerian traditional society as the assistance given to the younger persons by older people to enable them develop maturity of mind. Thus, this implies that a person who is matured in mind is able to take wise and realistic decision on his or her own.

Agbale (2009) said that philosophy is primarily concerned with the critical analysis of concepts, issues, and problems of guidance and counselling. He further added that while principles of guidance like “theories” of any discipline serve as a scientific shorthand that facilitates the understanding of philosophy of the discipline. In helping the client to build and develop self-understanding that is essential for self-fulfillment and self-clarification, the counsellor needs to base his practice on certain philosophical assumptions or principles of Guidance, (Uwe, 2005 and Ekpo, 2007).
Bakare (1990) saw Guidance services as an umbrella term that subsumes several services, all aimed at facilitating the resolution of educational, vocational, personal and social-psychological problems. Salient among these are the counselling services, the information service, the placement service, follow-up, and evaluation service. These services complement one another and are not separated by a wide gulf.

Socially, the child spends great deal of time at the playground, since he is in the company of others, chances of interpersonal conflicts become greater and greater. The self-contredness of early childhood increases his areas of conflict with parents, peers and caregivers while at the same time his high need of attention and approval comes into conflicts with his own self-desires, processiveness, curiosity, sense of approval and need for care and attention. His excitement about his increasing vocabulary makes him repeat by role play, by imitative behavior, sounds and new words. These multi-dimensional development areas of early childhood call for the attention of the parents, child psychologists and child Guidance Counsellors and guidance at this stage is primarily educative, preventive and directional (Denge, 2001, Nwachukwu, 2007).

Makinde (1983) confirmed that counselling services help facilitate the intellectual development of all the pupils who vary widely in terms of social and emotional dimensions of their personalities. This will be of greater assistance to the pupils who find it difficult to achieve sense of personal identity and it would similarly help them to make decisions of their own so as to find life’s work, (Mallum, 2004). The Counsellor will help the teachers to assist the children with reading and perpetual problems through developing programmes. In the present study, Guidance and Counselling services are employed as moderating variables, the essence was to see if these services would facilitate the resolution of educational, vocational, personal and social-psychological problems.

**Purpose of the Study**

Identifying the centrality of Guidance and Counselling services to self-development. The present study sought to enhance guidance and Counselling services of Nursery and Primary pupils by applying some psychological skills to manifest counselling services. Also of interest to this study is possible influence of Guidance and Counselling self-efficacy and gender on the causal relationship between independent and criterion variables.

**Statement of the Hypotheses**

Based on the objectives of this study, the following hypotheses were tested at .05 alpha level.

1. There is no significant relationship in the utilization of Guidance and Counselling services and the pupils perception
2. There is no significant relationship in the informant – seeking-facts and placement services and the pupils perception.
3. There is no significant relationship in the appraisal, follow-up and evaluation services and the pupils perception.

**Design**

A survey research design was adopted to carry out this study, this technique is preferred because it is to describe systematically, the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest factually and accurately (Ipaye, 1983).

**Participants**

A sample of 300 participants were involved in this study. The participants were randomly drawn from six public co-educational primary schools in Uyo metropolis. Both sexes were equally represented in the study. Each of
the six schools has a sample size of fifty (50) participants, twenty five (25) boys and twenty five (25) girls respectively. The participants were nursery and primary pupils. Their age ranged between 11 and 13 nursery and primary years with a mean age of 10.2 years and the standard deviation of 0.44 years 3-5 and 11-13 years.

Random sampling method was similarly used for the teachers who were gathered in each school hall, that is, of the selected experimental schools. They were asked to pick a piece of paper each with inscription “Yes or No” respectively and at the end a total of one hundred and eighty (180) pupil - respondents were used for the study.

Instrumentation

The Guidance and Counselling Services Intervention, GCSI, was developed by the researchers (2009). It was a two factor inventory with a total of twenty items. This was used to obtain relevant information from the respondents for the study. The response format of the scale ranges from strongly agreed to strongly disagreed. The subscales have a total of eleven items. The whole instrument has a test-retest reliability values, ranging between .79 and .89 and a cronbach Alpha index between .73 and .85. The internal consistency for the total inventory was .87. The instrument was used to identify the levels of effectiveness and productivity.

The second scale used in this study is Decision Making Self-Efficacy (DMESS) scale developed by (Adeyemo, 2001). The instrument has five subscales, namely: (a) Self-appraisal; (b) Occupational Information (c) Making plans (d) Problem-solving and (e) goal-setting. It has a total of about thirty eight items with response format ranging from “Not sure (1) to very much sure (5). The instrument has a theoretical values between 38 and 190. The Self Appraisal subscale has a total of nine items with a Co-efficient Alpha of .75; Occupational Information subscale has eleven items (=85), problem-solving subscale has six items (=77) making plans subscale also has six items (=85) and goal-setting subscale has five items (=77). The overall scale has a Cronbach Alpha value of .79.

Procedure

Having obtained permission from the relevant school authority, pupils were addressed at the assembly point. The topic of the speech was on the importance of Guidance and Counselling services. Sequel to this, pupils were asked to indicate their willingness to participate in the programme. Ballot method which is a form of random sampling was used to select the participants for the study. The study was carried out in different primary schools in Uyo metropolis. The training came up once in a week and each session lasted for only one hour. Four schools served as experimental groups whole the other two schools were used as control groups. Two instruments namely: Guidance and Counselling services scale (GCSS) and Decision-making and Self-efficacy Scale (DMSES) were administered to the participants as pre-test to ascertain their levels of knowledge and to alert their aware.

The experimental group one was exposed to Guidance and Counselling Services training while the experimental group two was treated with Decision-making and Self-efficacy. However the control group was not treated with anything but was given a brief skill of counseling after the post test. A post-test in Guidance and Counselling Services” was administered later to the three groups.

Data Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to analyze the data. It was used because of its capacity to take care of the initial differences among the participants.
Results

The result of the data analysis for the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between the utilization of Guidance and Counselling Services and the pupils perception is presented below:

**HO₁:** There is no significant relationship in the utilization of Guidance and Counselling Services among the pupils perception.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation on Utilization of Guidance and Counselling Services and Pupils Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>( \sum X )</th>
<th>( \sum X^2 )</th>
<th>( \sum XY )</th>
<th>( r_XY )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Utilization of Guidance and Counselling Services, X</td>
<td>603.9</td>
<td>236259.5</td>
<td>17761.6</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pupils perception, Y</td>
<td>515.9</td>
<td>135667.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significance P < 0.05, df = 298. Critical r = 0.88

As indicated in Table 1, the computed \( r \) (0.52) is greater than the critical \( r \) (0.88) at the degree of freedom which is 298 at .05 level of significance thus the hypothesis shows that there is a significant main effect of treatment. Consequently, the null hypothesis which posited that there will be no significant relationship between the utilization of Guidance and Counselling Services and the pupils' perception, the experimental participants and the control group was rejected. The inference that could be drawn from this result is that significant relationship existed in the utilization of Guidance and Counselling services of the treated participants and the control group.

**HO₂:** There is no significant relationship in the information-seeking facts and placement services and the pupils perception.

Table 2: Presents the Results of the Second Hypothesis which Postulated that there is no Significant Relationship in the Information-Seeking-facts and Placement Services and the Pupils’ Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/No</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>( \sum X )</th>
<th>( \sum X^2 )</th>
<th>( \sum XY )</th>
<th>( r_{XY} )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Utilization of Information Seeking facts and placement Services, X</td>
<td>6144</td>
<td>2368095</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pupils perception, Y</td>
<td>5150</td>
<td>1336223</td>
<td>161661</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significance P < 0.05, df = 298. Critical r = 0.88

The result in Table 2 shows that there was significant effect between the utilization of information-seeking-facts, placements services and pupils perception, calculated \( r \)-value was 0.17, this is greater than the critical \( r \) (0.88) at the degree of freedom 298 and at 0.05 level of significance. With the result of this analysis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate was accepted. Furthermore both gender and utilization of information-seeking-facts and placement services influence the relationship between the causal variable and the criterion result.

In Table 3, the result of the data analysis for hypothesis which posited that there is no significant relationship in the appraisal, follow-up and evaluation services and the pupils perception.
Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation on Utilisation of Appraisal, Follow-Up and Evaluation Services and the Pupils Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$\Sigma X$</th>
<th>$\Sigma X^2$</th>
<th>$\Sigma Y$</th>
<th>$\Sigma Y^2$</th>
<th>$\Sigma XY$</th>
<th>$r_XY$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Utilisation of Appraisal, Follow-up and Evaluation Services, X</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>2363214</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18711</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pupils perception, Y</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>135613</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significance P < 0.05, df = 298. Critical $r = 0.88$

The computed $r$ (0.26) is greater than the critical $r$ (0.88), degree of freedom 298 and 0.05 level of significance. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate was retained. This implies that there is a significant relationship between utilization of appraisal, follow-up and evaluation services and the pupils’ perception.

Discussion

Considering the utilization of Guidance and Counselling services and pupils perception, the finding was in consonance with the works of Dengar (2001), Makinde (1983) and Uwe (2005). They were in agreement that Guidance and Counselling services relate significantly to the pupils general performance or perception and this would enable them to have an understanding of themselves, their environment and their later life as adults. Besides, the finding of this study is in conformity with the work of Koohhar (2001) who described the Guidance as the assistance made available by the competent counsellor as well as teachers to an individual of any age to help him direct his own life, develop his own point of view, make his own decision and carry his own burden. The implication of this is that teachers of both pre-primary and primary schools must initiate Guidance and Counselling services, that would facilitate effective the growth of the pupils, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

On the information-seeking-facts and placement-services, the results showed a significant relationship between the use of information service and pupils perception. This was in line with Ipaye (1983) Olayinka (2005), Dengar (1983) and Mallum (1990), they supported that the provision of information to pupils in areas of Education, Vocation and interpersonal relationship would assist the pupils to understand their environment and plan for the future. Dengar (2001) agreed that the implication of information service does not only inculcate in pupils the habit of remaining open to information but more knowledge and experience in handling problems in a stress-free manner. Therefore there is greater need for the teachers to be cordial and friendly to gain trust and confidence from the pupils to get closer and obtain information from them which would be of great effect within adolescent age and eventually into adulthood.

In considering the placement service and pupils perception a significant relationship was shown between them. The finding agreed with the research work of Esu in Dengar (2001), that through placement, service, the teachers and the school would be assisted to realize the importance of mental health and to recognize the fundamental needs of children. Unachukwu and Igborbor (1991), Hoose and Carlson (1973) saw that through placement service, that when the bright and dull pupils are mixed in a class, this would help develop the dull pupils, decrease delinquent behaviours as well as drop-out in school by children. Unachukwu (1991)
posited that ‘as the nation becomes increasingly alarmed with the school dropouts juvenile delinquents and drug abusers, primary school Guidance and Counselling becomes important as a sound foundation for future academic vocational, psychological and personal growth.

The third hypothesis further proved that there was a significant relationship in the utilization of appraisal, follow-up and evaluation services and the pupils perception. The significant difference is rooted in the fact that the treated participants were exposed to a comprehensive utilization of appraisal follow-up and evaluation treatment programme. The finding corroborates the assertions of Anagbogu (1988), Denga (1996), Abiri (2006), Akinpelu (2004) and Kolo (2001) whereby appraisal was seen as measurement and evaluation of human attributes or characteristics. These attributes include intelligence or general abilities, aptitudes or specific ability, interest and other personality characteristics which could be assessed by the use of tests. The finding was also supported by Okafor (1991) who discovered that appraisal service serves a general purpose such as prediction, selection, classification evaluation as well as Guidance and Counseling. Ekanem and Enge (2005) similarly asserted that appraisal service can help the counsellor to develop a comprehensive picture of the pupils. Ekpo (2007) and Denga (2001) asserted that appraisal service would help relate children experiences to the staff for curriculum improvement and deeper understanding of the pupils needs. The implication of the finding is that tests or assignments should be given to pupils especially on discovery learning to know the level of their intelligence and to seek to address which area of a student needs remediation and referrals.

One other important aspect of the present study is the moderating influence of follow-up and evaluation services and the pupils perception and the causal link between the Guidance and Counselling services and the criterion measures. The findings is in line with the previous studies of (Essuman, 1985 and Hanson 1971) that concluded that follow-up and appraisal services are needed for the emotional, social, physical, moral, academic and vocational development of the pupils in elementary schools. This finding was also in agreement with (Sacvickas 2004 and Igborbor, 1991) who asserted that Guidance and Counselling services have a significant impact on vocational maturity and self-concept crystallization. They further explained that Guidance and Counselling services have an impact on the decision-making process, in job search and placement and on occupation satisfaction and attainment. Ipaye (1983) in line with the findings asserted that follow-up serve involves monitoring of pupils progress even after the completion of primary education. He concluded that follow-up provides opportunity for teachers to continually assist their pupils and assess their performance in areas of life. Denga (2001) further added that the counsellor through evaluation of the school programme identified the needs of the pupils and the work towards it for a positive result.

Furthermore, the result has clearly indicated that Guidance and Counselling services could enhance pupils behavior. The implication therefore is that curriculum planners, educational administrators and policy-makers should fully integrate these techniques into pre-primary, primary and secondary schools curriculum either as a subject or major topics in the existing subjects because looking critically at the nursery and primary school curriculum, there is no subject dealing with the issue of Guidance and Counselling Services neither counseling education of these pupils.

The present study has really shown us the cruciality of psychological skills in counseling decision process. It is therefore important for school counseling psychologists to develop intervention programmes to enhance
these psychological skills, information seeking facts, placement (classification), appraisals, follow-up, and evaluation of the pupils. A viable counselling programme can ill-afford to ignore the role of decision-making and self-efficacy in counseling development process. Today counseling is spreading to every nook and cranny of Nigeria, gender for a very long to come would still an issue in counseling, decision-making and career identification. Counseling psychologists would therefore need to be gender sensitive right from the school girl-pupils, grown-up, girl and women in the course of performing their professional duties.

References


