

COUNSELING STRATEGIES AS INNOVATIVE ANTIDOTES ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION

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Abstract

This study investigates counselling strategies as innovative antidotes on national integration. The research adopted the survey design in which one hundred and fifty (150) students were selected using the stratified random sampling techniques from the population. A twenty (20) item modified likert scale questionnaire tagged counselling for innovation and cultural integration questionnaire (CICIQ) was constructed and used for data collection. Using one sampling population t-test in analyzing the data generated from the variable, the result showed that the calc. t-value of 1.17 was lower than the critical t-value of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis for the third hypothesis was upheld indicating that language as element of culture is suitable for counselling people of diverse inter cultural ethnicity in order to promote national integration. It was concluded that counsellors as extension of their placement role and follow up services should promote the spirit of oneness, loyalty, patriotism and good human relations. These qualities are innovative antidotes on culture and national integration. The study recommends among others, that government at all levels should partner counselling experts to organize counselling programmes, such as public debates, seminars, conferences, talkshops as well as individualize counselling as efforts to promote national integration.

Keywords: Counselling, Strategies, Culture, Innovation and National Integration.

The nobility associated with counselling profession is in the skillful act through which human mind can be studied, influenced and redirected positively. This assertion made Akume (2004) view counselling as a helping service given by professionally trained counsellors to their clients with the aim of assisting the client to better understand himself, his circumstances and environment. This will allow for him to take more rational decisions and improve on the function of the society. This position viewed counselling as promoting effective adjustment process to enable the individual engaged with real life situations.

Notable, Omoni (2009) succinctly put counselling as the ability to face your life, your dreams, to come to a decision and the courage to act on it and to take the risks that living demand. This implies that counselling is a helping programme carried out mainly by interpersonal communication whereby a counsellor helps the clients in using adjustment strategies and skills in gaining insights about himself to maximize his potentialities. In line with this, adjustment strategies and approaches, may vary to include; discussion, mediation and accommodative strategies, because over the years counsellors had used these strategies to enhance innovative achievement in diverse spheres of life. On the same vain Tylor (2002) conceptualizes culture as a complex whole which include knowledge, belief, arts, law, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits such as values, norms, traditions language, race and technology acquired by man as a member of a given society. To

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~~Herskovits (2004) culture is a screen between man and nature. It implies culture as an instrument by which man exploits the environment and shapes it accordingly and it is a continuous and cumulative reservoir containing both material and non-material elements that are socially transmitted from generation to generation. According to Emmanuel (2013), culture is an important system in all human societies connected with sacred, numinous, norms, moral and traditions. Nigeria as a culturally diversified geographical entity reserves values that are preserved from generation to generation. Culture can also be viewed as the mass of behaviour that human beings in any society learn from elders and pass on to new generation. It involves human values, that concern the most sublime of human aspiration, public individual persons and regarded as civilization elements.~~

In the trench of counselling and culture is national integration. It deals essentially to infuse the values that would bring about peaceful social integration which includes, the maintenance of discipline, respect, recognition of the principles of cultural relativity, the effect of cultural ethnocentrism, respect for other people's rights, enforcement of equal right of worship in religious diversity and so on. The absence of national integration made Adesina (2011) assert that non-recognition and inability of people to maintain peace values meant the occurrence and re-occurrence of rancours, turbulence, economic acrimonies, and frustration among other social vices which could mar a nation's existence and threaten national stability.

In espousing the themes vice-sa-vice innovation, culture and education for national integration, counselling provides a myriad of solutions to the challenges these may pose in the quest for Nigeria to attain nationhood. On the foregoing, counselling becomes the integral part through the application of strategies and approaches to best determine innovative out comes between culture and national integration.

Today the clamour for the restructuring of the federation to allow proper integration and a display of true federalism had been an agitation. Buku (2007) observed that, Nigeria was created from a combination of autonomous ethnic groups by the British colonial administration through the processes of trade, monopoly, militant conquest and divide and rule policy. This gave birth to the division and suspicion among the diverse ethnic nationalities and gave rise to the request for disintegration. This imbalance needs redress through different sections and the application of different strategies and approaches in order to promote peaceful co-existence. The word Peace globally, had been considered as the fundamental basis of stability, progress and development in human societies. It connotes tranquility, psychological consonance, physical and environmental stability and the sustenance of enabling circumstance that guarantee freedom from all societal instability. Peace also connotes the absence of war and structural violence which allows respect and tolerance between people of different cultures and creeds to share joy and satisfaction as derived from innate being, (Isitoah, 2009). Hence for culture and national integration to drive innovative achievement, there must be peace. This is achievable through the application of counselling strategies and approaches.

Counselling Strategies

Counselling Strategies are the various methods or techniques used by a counselor to help his clients solve some of his challenges or problems for him to fit up the society. Some of these strategies the counselor uses include:

Systematic Desensitisation, Assertiveness training, Positive reinforcement, Aversive Conditioning, behaviour contract, role play, relaxation, flooding control, modeling and a host of others He can also

use the following to reach out his clients work visit, career conference, New media, Social Media, Government agencies, bulletin, just to mention a few (Oniyama, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

The counselling profession possesses different strategies and approaches that have attracted the attention of social experts in their quest to finding lasting solutions to social problems and challenges (Okorodudu, 2010). This becomes imperative in societies where good models are few to enhance conflict management skills, provide competencies required to make effective national integration. This virtue is necessary and serves as innovative antidotes for inter-cultural and harmonious cooperation that guarantee national integration. Owing to the depth of diversity in the nation, the question remains in search of counselling strategies that will promote national integration.

The challenge remains;

- ❖ What counseling strategy will best promote national integration.
- ❖ Which innovative is best applicable to promoting national integration.
- ❖ What element of culture will be suitable for counselling diversity among people.

Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study the following hypotheses were formulated and tested.

H01: There is no significant difference on the best counselling strategies that will promote national integration as perceived by the research respondents.

H02: There is no significant difference in the perception of respondents on ways in which innovative antidotes will promote national integration.

H03: There is no significant difference on the element of culture that will be suitable for counselling diversity among people for national integration.

Significance of the Study

The study will provide a guide to government and relevant agencies to ascertain the contextual factors such as religion, culture, innovation as they correlate to national integration. It will help professional counsellors, social workers and community development agencies to know the implications of national integration to the multi-diverse ethnicity of the Nigerian state. The innovative outcomes inherent in culture and national integration will help reduce problems of low socio-economic status and invariably improve productivity as a result of the integration among diverse ethnicity. It is against normal justice that people who have lived in a given entity over years be subjected to unhealthy separatist ideas of intimate cultural divide.

Methodology

The design for the study adopted was purely the descriptive survey type. The population for the study comprises all part II counselling students in the NCE programme in Colleges of Education, Warri and Mosogar, Delta State. Using the stratified random sampling techniques, one hundred and fifty (150) students were drawn for the study. The instrument for the study was a questionnaire "tagged Counselling for Innovation and Cultural Integration Questionnaire (CICIQ). It was made up of two (2) sections A and B. Section A consisting of socio-demographic data while section B consists of fifteen questions drawn from the topic under investigation.

Reliability

The instrument was face validated and subjected to reliability test and was found to possess 0.76 reliability coefficient. It is against this backdrop that the author sought to investigate the challenges, difficulties and hindrances to effective inter-cultural and national integration. The statistical techniques employed for data analysis is the sample population t-test which was used to test the null hypothesis earlier formulated.

Results:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference on the best counselling strategy that will provide national integration as perceived by research respondents in the society. Using one sample population t-test analysis the hypothesis was tested with the collated data. The result of the analysis is as shown below.

Table 1: t-test Analysis on Counselling Strategy for Promotion of Culture and National Integration

Variables	N	X	SD	t.calc.	t.crit.
Cultural diversity on national integration.	150	21.60	12.04	17.15	16.8
Pop. Mean.	11.71				

Sign. at 0.05, df = 149.

Table one shows the t.calc. value of 17.15 is greater than the t.crit. value of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance. With the result the null hypothesis is rejected, this signified the relevance of counselling strategies in promoting inter cultural harmony for the purpose of achieving national integration.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference on the perception of respondents on ways in which innovative antidotes will promote national integration using counselling. To test the hypothesis, one sample population t-test analysis was employed and the result is as shown below:

Table 2: t-test Analysis on Innovative Antidotes such as Nomadic Ranches will Promote National Integration

Variables	N	X	SD	t.cal.	t.crit.
Cultural innovation on national integration	150	14.05	11.27	15.71	1.68
Pop. Mean.	11.71				

Sign at 0.05, df = 149.

The table revealed that t.calc value of 15.71 is greater than the t.crit. value of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance. This difference in the result promoted the rejection of the hypothesis. This means that innovative antidotes such as nomadic ranges may not be significant to promoting national integration rather, it may further propel divisive tendencies among diverse socio-cultural affiliation that are in existence in the country.

Hypothesis III

There is no significant difference on the element of culture that will be suitable for counselling diversity among people for national integration. To test the hypothesis one sample population t-test analysis was employed and the result is stated below.

Table 3: t-test Analysis on the Element of Culture

Variables	N	X	SD	t.cal.	t.crit.
Element of culture for counselling diversity among people.	150	10.11	2.01	1.17	16.8
Pop. Mean.	11.71				

Sign. at 0.05, df = 149.

Table 3 shows that, the t.calc of 1.17 is lower than the critical t.crit. of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is upheld indicating that language as element of culture is suitable for counselling people with diverse inter-cultural ethnicity in order to promote national integration.

Discussion of Findings

The result on table one shows t.calc. value of 17.15 is greater than the t.crit. of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance. The respondents differ on the opinion over the best counselling strategies needed to promote national integration. This indicated the disparity on the function of counselling strategies to specific type of problem on national integration. Be that as it may, counselling strategies can solve differences be it in innovation, culture, education or national integration. The result in table II shows t.calc. value of 15.71 which is greater than the t.crit. value of 1.68, thus rejecting the null hypothesis on. Innovative antidotes such as nomadic ranches to promote national integration. This widely corroborated the earlier studies on over arching burden of subjugating the interest of the few over the overriding interest of the majority. The third finding on the relevance of the elements of culture suitable for counselling diversity among people for national integration was upheld in which result showed, t. calc value of 1.17 was less than t.crit. value of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance.

This poses implication of counselling because only through proper education that the mind can be fully liberated and allow nascent potentialities in the individuals to be fully developed and harnessed for the benefit of the society. This is in line with Adesina (2011) on the need for people of diverse culture to maintain peaceful virtues devoid of rancour.

Conclusion

The context of innovation, culture, education and national integration all connote potentials inherent in diversity. The use of elements of culture such as language to promote counselling practices should serve as monumental tasks that can guarantee the integration of culture, religion, beliefs and philosophy. It is therefore the place of the counsellors as an extension of their placement roles and follow up services to promote the spirit of oneness, loyalty, patriotism and good human relation. These qualities are innovative antidotes to culture and national integration.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Counselling services should be employed in all primary and secondary schools to adequately carryout counselling sensitization across the country.
2. Government at levels should partner counselling experts to organize counselling programmes such as public debates, seminars, conferences, talk show as well as individualise counselling on national integration.
3. The violence prone region of the country should be tolerance to accepting counselling experts especially among the traumatized and displaced persons.
4. Counsellors at the national level should equip counsellors-in -training with the skills and strategies to counsel problems with regard to national integration. Counselling psychologists in training should be sensitized on the need to use indigenous languages to promote counselling activities for a proper national integration.

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