

An Examination of Challenges Militating against Development of Guidance and Counseling in Nigerian Schools

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Abstract: This paper examined the challenges facing teaching and learning of Guidance and Counseling programme in the Nigerian schools. The paper concluded that limited funding, shortage of trained counsellors, lack of proper infrastructure, societal and cultural problems, shortage of counseling resources, insecurity problems and poor capacity development of counsellor are challenges facing teaching and learning of Guidance and Counseling programme in the Nigerian schools. Based on this findings, the paper recommends increment in the funding guidance and counseling programme in the Nigerian schools by the government and stakeholders. Employment of more professional guidance and counseling teachers in all the schools in Nigeria by the governments to improve the service delivering of the guidance and counseling in schools across Nigeria. Provision of infrastructure facilities in all the schools by the government to support effective implementation of guidance and counselling programme. The government should provide adequate guidance and counseling resources in the schools. This will help to improve the quality of guidance and counseling services in the public schools across the country.

Keywords: Challenges, Guidance and Counselling, Schools.

1.0 Introduction

Guidance and Counselling as a formal and systematic process of organized services offered in the school system to help an individual know and develop his potentials to the fullest, thereby consciously acquiring proper self-knowledge, understanding of self and situation and skills for appraisal of self in situational relation, for appropriate decision and action in education, the world of work and the society (Nwachuku 2009). Guidance and counselling is a professional field designed to help individuals of all ages and of all works of life. It is not limited to the school system. It is also needed outside schools such as the Hospitals, Workplaces, Prisons, Faith based Organizations, Rehabilitation centres, Families, Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps and all places where living beings are found (Modo,2018). Guidance and Counselling is specialized field of training designed to help people to be properly aware of themselves and be fulfilled in life. This definition makes it clear that in Guidance and Counselling the clients, who

visit the counselor go with the mind of being helped to resolve their personal problems which could be educational, vocational and personal social (Olorungbemi 2013).

Guidance and counselling programmes are expected to supplement school instructional and administrative input into students, develop proper attitude to themselves, values, interests, moral beliefs and disciplines; also helps to promote in students, good sense of awareness, ability to acquire a good knowledge of the world of work, possibility of continuing education and ability to make realistic decision and promote human effectiveness. It is also expected to help in school administration, in creating a close and long lasting relationship between heads of schools, teachers, parents, and students. Guidance and counselling services are services that have been in existence as long as human beings have lived, either formally or informally. Guidance and counselling has been engraved in African traditional society since time immemorial (John (2020 & Owobamigbe, Ohunene, & Ogunode 2021). According to Busari (2012) and Muraina (2018) guidance and counselling was entrusted to the immediate and extended family where individuals confined in and depended upon their relatives for advice when faced with problems. Muhammad (2025) noted that as such in the African traditional society, people of all ages could seek for this service from the elderly or respected people in the society such as fortune-tellers, wizards, astrologers, palmists and future-tellers were thought to be getting information from the gods and could therefore guide and counsel others according to what the gods have counselled.

Essential Guidance Services in School

Guidance and counselling in tertiary institutions should focus on suggested counselling procedure by Busari (2012) as enumerated bellow:

Appraisal Service: Involves the use of psychometric instruments to gather data on individuals to enable both the counsellor and the individuals concerned to understand themselves. Using the appropriate appraisal procedure using the test or non-test techniques, the individual can be opened-up to him. He is thus in a better position to understand his strengths and weaknesses, and consequently can make more realistic and effective choices

Placement Service: Refers to assistance given to an individual to make adjustment to the next stage of life development (Olayinka, in Suleiman, Olanrenwaju, & Suleiman, 2019). In secondary school, student's placement may mean secondary adjustment in further education or adjustment in a job after secondary education. Placement therefore refers to the next steps, either in educational pursuit or in pursuit or in vocational pursuit. Individuals need to be placed in educational or vocational field that relate to their interests, abilities and personalities.

Referral Service: This is the act of transferring an individual to another person or agency providing different kind of assistance. Referral is made for the purpose of specialized assistance. Many referrals occur simply because the problem is beyond the scope of the services provided.

Orientation Service: This is provided to help students adjust better in any new environment. Many new students feel lost socially and psychologically because they no longer enjoy the psychological support of parents, friend and former teachers. Orientation service helps students to adjust during his critical transition period. The students are introduced to the physical plants, administrative setup, rules and regulations governing student conduct use of school facilities, teaching staff, and how the school guidance programme can serve their needs.

Evaluation Service: The entire guidance programme in the school is evaluated in order to see how far the stated objectives and goals have been realized and whether the programme meets the developmental needs of the students. Unlike the other guidance services, evaluation is not a direct service to the student but to the entire guidance programme.

Counselling Service: Is a personalized dialogue or interview between the counsellor and counselee or client during which the client seeks expert assistance from the counsellor regarding the resolution of his problem. The Counselling service is personalized in the sense that usually, the client has a personal problem which requires privacy and confidentiality for discussion with a help expert. Such concerns may include emotional problems, family problems, sexual

difficulties, marriage issues and other psychological problems (Hammed and Muraina, 2016). The Counselling service is the heart of guidance service and the most important central service of guidance.

Information Service: This aims at providing students with better knowledge of educational decisions. Such decision might include whether to go for further education or not, what institution to attend, what courses to offer, what elective to take, which social association to belong etc. The sources of information service include the local community, the national sources as well as source from outside the country.

Follow-up Service: This service is designed to assess the extent to which the guidance programme is meeting the needs for which it was Yusuf Suleiman, established. This service is concerned essentially with successes, failures, problems and feedbacks from those who have benefited from the programme. The ultimate goal of follow-up and evaluation is to improve the programme or make those adjustments that have been indicated by the beneficiaries of the programme as necessary. Individuals need to understand what is required in the situation they are placed. In order to determine the effectiveness of planning and placement, there is need to find out how the individuals are developing in their own place of work, and school, how they are adjusting into their new environment. Follow-up service helps the staff to better understand and improve their curriculum and methods.

Iduwu, (undated) outlined some of the reasons why school children need counselling to include.

(a) An individual's ability, Interest, aptitude are better tapped at the initial stages of life. The practice whereby counselling is not done at the very crucial stages of life is anathema to the development of the child. It has to start at the primary school level.

(b) There is a need to provide special help for numerous primary school children. It is worth knowing that the Nigerian Prisons, and Mental Health hospitals are inhabited by individuals who could have profited from guidance and help in early life. They lead unproductive and unhappy lives because they were not properly guided from the beginning.

(c) There is need to stem the tide of maladaptive behaviours in the school system and in the general public. Many vagabonds, drug abusers, drug peddlers, bullies, hooligans and pimps could have been helped to live better and more useful lives if they have been exposed to counselling services at youth.

(d) There is need to hunt for gifted children in the society with a view to helping them develop their talents fully. This can only be done through counselling strategies.

(e) The present pressure of the society demands the help of counselling and the counsellors.

Many homes are now breeding grounds for social problems. There is need for a change for the better.

(f) The impoverishment of many homes demands the help of Guidance/Counsellors who should embark on outreach counselling.

(g) There is need to provide the child with a sound foundation for future, academic, psychological, and personal growth. The truth has to be recognised that life begins at birth and not at adolescence, in the secondary schools.

3.0 Method

This paper is a position paper with the aims of examine the challenges facing teaching and learning of Guidance and Counseling programme in the Nigerian schools. The paper employed systematic literature review-based report method. It has collected and reviewed the related previous literature from various online sources. It has collected secondary information to generate knowledge on this topic. It has followed the qualitative narrative design. The researcher has visited different online sites to collect the previous literature and analyze universal basic education literature in Nigeria (adapted Ogunode, 2025a).

4.0 Result and Discussion on Challenges facing teaching and learning of Guidance and Counselling

The development of guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools is facing several challenges that hinder its progress. These challenges include:

Limited funding

Limited resources such as funding and trained personnel make it difficult for schools to establish and maintain effective guidance and counseling programs in Nigerian schools. Funding is key for the implementation of guidance and counseling services in educational institutions. Adequate funding of guidance and counseling services in the educational institutions is the only means to the realization of guidance and counseling services objective and programme. Funds are needed for the procurement of human and materials resources for the smooth implementation of guidance and counseling services in schools. It is unfortunate that guidance and counseling programme is underfunded in public educational institutions in Nigeria (Ohunene, Audu, & Ogunode, 2021). Busari, (2012) and David,, Ohunene, and Ogunode(2021) and Ugwuoke (2020), noted that Guidance and counselling is not well funded today, the education enterprise has become a costly venture. Enough funds are not allocated to each school to run its various services. Where funds are available, very little is earmarked for counselling purposes. It seems the various levels of government (Federal, state and Local) do not want to stretch their budgets with extra demands from emerging unit such as guidance and counselling, yet it is known that effective counselling demands adequate funding to purchase items such as psychological tests, journals and various publications, play gadgets, cardboards and various felt pens as well as money to organize activities such as Orientation, Excursions, career clubs and Career Day/week and furnishing a counsellor's office.

Shortage of trained Counsellors

Another significant problem affecting guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools is the inadequate training for Counsellors. In many cases, counselors are not adequately trained in counseling techniques and methods. With this, they may lack the necessary skills to handle complex issues and effectively work with students. Furthermore, due to the rapid changes in technology and society, counselors require continuous training to keep up with the current trends and address emerging issues effectively (Iduwu, n.d; John, 2020). In some schools one may find that there is only one or no counselor handling the guidance and counseling programme and one person cannot effectively perform these functions satisfactorily due to the work load, while in other schools career masters are asked to carry them out (Oye, Obi, Mohd & Bernice,2012).

Lack of proper infrastructure

The problems that hinder efficient teaching of guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools are numerous and significant. These challenges can be categorized into various areas such as lack of proper infrastructure and inadequate resources (Muraina, 2018). One of the major problems that affect guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools is the lack of proper infrastructure. Many schools in Nigeria lack basic facilities such as counseling rooms and well-equipped libraries. This makes it difficult for students to access the necessary resources and support needed for effective guidance and counseling. Without these facilities, it becomes challenging for counselors to deliver quality services to students. Another major challenge facing counselors working in public primary schools across the country is the problem of inadequate infrastructural facilities. Infrastructural facilities refers to those materials resources that support effective delivery of services. They include offices, halls, classrooms, tables, chairs, ICT, electric, water, internet services etc. Many counselors do not have conducive office or room to attend to students. Some of the public school with offices, the offices are not well furnished and lack essential office equipment. The inability of these counselors to access conducive offices to discharge their responsibilities is affecting their productivity. Yirgalem (2013) submitted that most school guidance and counselors reported to suffer from the shortage of private counseling

room as well as most school principals and other officials wanted the Guidance and Counseling program to focus on education related issues like study skills, discipline and late coming. With the absence of clear roles and responsibilities, most visited guidance and counseling officers in the schools were expected to serve as unit leaders.

Societal and cultural problems

There are societal and cultural issues that affect the implementation of guidance and counseling programs in schools. Moreover, societal and cultural issues, such as stigmatization and traditional beliefs, also pose a significant challenge to the implementation of guidance and counseling programs in Nigerian schools. In some communities, seeking help from counselors is still regarded as taboo, leading to students not utilizing the available services. Additionally, cultural norms and beliefs can also affect the effectiveness of counseling sessions, as some students may not be comfortable discussing certain topics with counselors (Ogunboyede, Dada, & Oyewusi, 2013; Ohunene, Audu, & Ogunode, 2021).

Shortage of counseling resources

Moreover, the inadequate resources pose a significant challenge to the effective teaching of guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools. Resources such as books, videos, and other teaching materials are essential for counselors to effectively deliver their services. However, due to limited funding and budgetary constraints, many schools in Nigeria do not have access to these vital resources. As a result, counselors are limited in their ability to provide students with the necessary information and guidance. Ogunode, and Owobamigbe, (2021) submitted that lack of Guidance and Counseling materials is another problem preventing effective Guidance and Counseling services in many public schools in Nigeria. Many Guidance and Counseling teachers are not provided with working materials like records books, pens, charts, ICT facilities to discharge their responsibilities. The inability of the school head to provide the Guidance and Counseling teachers with these resources is affecting the effective delivering of guidance and counseling services in public schools.

Insecurity problems

Insecurity problem in the country is affecting the service delivery of counsellors working in public schools across the country especially in the Northern part of Nigeria. Due to continuous attacks on public educational institutions across the country the academic programme of school are disrupted. ALaebo, (n.d) and Ogunode, and Owobamigbe (2021) observed that Insurgency and security situations has forced many universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, secondary and primary schools to close down in north-east region of Nigeria because the learning environment are no longer safe for learning. Cable (2019), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) says Boko Haram has killed 2,300 teachers in Nigeria's northeast since the start of the insurgency in 2009. In the 2018 UNESCO global education monitoring report (GEM), the UN agency said 19,000 teachers have been displaced in the region, affecting access to education. "In north-eastern Nigeria, as of late 2017, there were 1.6 million IDPs, including about 700,000 school age children, as a result of violent attacks on civilians by Boko Haram, which began in 2009," the report read in part. "Boko Haram has destroyed nearly 1,000 schools and displaced 19,000 teachers. Reports show it had killed almost 2,300 teachers by 2017." The latest education needs assessment found that out of 260 school sites, 28% had been damaged by bullets, shells or shrapnel, 20% had been deliberately set on fire, 32% had been looted and 29% had armed groups or military in proximity." (Thecable 2019)

Poor Capacity Development of Counsellor

Poor capacity development of counsellors is another problem militating against effective delivery of guidance and counseling public schools in Nigeria. Some counselors working in various educational institutions are not constantly been exposed for training and retraining programme and this is affecting the performance of the counselors. Research has it that

counselors that goes for training and retraining programme regularly performs better than those who do not go for training and retraining programme. The poor capacity development programme of counsellors is responsible for poor guidance and counseling service in public schools. This submission agrees with the conclusion of Adaojo (2007) and Olorungbemi, (2013) they noted that most of the personnel used as Counselors in most states in Nigeria do not have the pre-requisites counseling“ qualification and experience. Most of the Counselors lack professional Counseling skills.

4.1 Finding

The study revealed that limited funding, shortage of trained counsellors, lack of proper infrastructure, societal and cultural problems, shortage of counseling resources, insecurity problems and poor capacity development of counsellor are the challenges hindering efficient teaching of guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools.

4.2 Conclusion and Suggestions

In conclusion, the problems that hinder efficient teaching of guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools are complex and multi-faceted. limited funding, shortage of trained counsellors, lack of proper infrastructure, societal and cultural problems, shortage of counseling resources, insecurity problems and poor capacity development of counsellor were identified as the challenges hindering efficient teaching of guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools. It requires a collaborative effort from all stakeholders, including the government, school administrators, and the society, to address these challenges and ensure that students receive the necessary guidance and counseling to reach their full potential. The study suggests the following:

1. Increment in the funding guidance and counseling programme in the Nigerian schools by the government and stakeholders.
2. Employment of more professional guidance and counseling teachers in all the schools in Nigeria by the governments to improve the service delivering of the guidance and counseling in schools across Nigeria.
3. Provision of infrastructure facilities in all the schools by the government to support effective implementation of guidance and counselling programme
4. The government should provide adequate guidance and counseling resources in the schools. This will help to improve the quality of guidance and counseling services in the public schools across the country.
5. The government should ensure adequate security in all the schools across the country. This will help to improve the teaching and learning of guidance and counseling
6. The school administrators should provide capacity building programme for guidance and counseling teachers to improve their capacity in counselling skills and knowledge.

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