

## Effective Counseling and Behavior Control in Secondary Schools in Kano State, Nigeria.

BASHIR SANI, KENNEDY IMBUKI  
Kampala International University

**Abstract.** This article investigates the effectiveness of counseling services at some selected secondary schools in Kano State, Nigeria. The objectives are to, identify the adequacy of counselors, to determine their quality in terms of professional skill acquisition, and examine their roles in the schools. The study is survey, descriptive design was use, and the samples were obtained systematically. The instrument use in data collection is school counselor appraisal questionnaire (SCAQ) made by the researchers, the instrument has face and content validity and 4 Likert scale was use in the scoring. Descriptive statistics (Mean and standard deviation) were used in the analysis. The findings reveal that, the overall counselling services were low (Mean=1.311). The study concluded that, the counseling services rendered at secondary schools in Kano State is inadequate. Based on that, recommendations were proffered which suggests that, all secondary schools in Kano State should have functional counseling units, which is adequately equipped.

### 1. Introduction

Over the years, there was a growing interest in the field of counseling in so many countries of the world. These happen because of the understanding that people differ in so many ways, experienced different problems and respond in a different ways. The recognition of counseling as a helping strategy for people in coping with and adjusting to a new or

unwelcome circumstances made some countries including USA, Canada, China , Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Nigeria adopted school counseling in order to help youth (students) adjust and fulfill their potentials in academics and personal-social endeavor,( Paisely 2001).School counseling aimed at pushing out the traditional pastoral role that teachers practice despite lack of adequate counseling training, (Bridgeland and Bruce 2011). Currently, in Nigeria, especially in Kano state which the largest population (Census 2006), the demand of school counseling is high because population's population increases which posed pressure on teachers in their teaching, record keeping and attending student's problems. The current problems experienced in the state which includes hooliganism, drug abuse, dropout and many others have arisen as a result of lack of effective counseling in secondary schools. Lapan, (2012) showed correlational evidence of the effectiveness of fully implemented school counseling at secondary schools and academic success and attitude change. While Olaley, Florence and Omotayo (2009) discloses that healthy intellectual, social and emotional development of youth require the formation of stable and loving relationship with their parent and teachers, and through effective school counseling students will understand their potentialities and be decisive in dealing with their problems.

### 2. Statement of the problem

High school or senior secondary school is the most challenging level of education considering

the nature of students by their age and stage of development. Been an adolescent period, student are likely to experience more problems due to the physical, social and emotional changes which befuddle them, arisen in their effort of searching for their identity, (Akos, Milson and Gilbert 2007). At this moment, school counseling could play a significant role in helping the person to fully understand himself and adjust properly. Academic failure is one of the major issues of concern in education sector that lead to dropout and paved way to other behavior problems, some of the predicaments are drug abuse and hooliganism which are serious threat to national stability and integration. Effective counseling will significantly help the matter, but it requires professional counselors. The services are needed more at secondary school level, but unfortunately, it was observed that the proportion of highly skillful counselors in Kano State are centered at the universities and tertiary institutions in the State, which might have connection with salary, contrary to what is currently obtainable in United State, Canada, Philippines etc, where counselors at elementary and high schools are receiving an attractive package in consideration of their task, this study attempt to explore the current counseling situation at secondary schools in Kano State.

### **3. Objectives of the study**

This study aimed at:

- Identifying the adequacy of counselors at secondary schools in Kano State.
- Determine the quality of counselors at secondary school in Kano State.
- To examine the role of school counselors

### **4. Methodology**

The design for this study is a descriptive survey, 30 secondary schools in Municipal, Rano and Wudil zones were examine. And 10 schools were selected systematically from each zone, making a total of 30 respondents. The data was collected by the researcher and other research assistance that were adequately trained.

Purposive sampling was use to obtain the subjects who are those in charge of counseling from each selected school. The instrument for data collection is school counselors appraisal Questionnaire (SCAQ) develop by the researcher, and have a face validity and the content validity of 0.86, the instrument have 10 items that address the qualities, role and effectiveness respectively. Likert scale was used in measuring the data, with rating (1 as very inadequate, 2- inadequate, 3- adequate and 4- very adequate) and the overall mean was used for taking decision.

## **5. Literature Review**

### **5.1 Concept of School Counseling**

School counseling is an integral aspect of education system, and it emerged as a critical support for elementary, middle and high school learning. Guidance was the term used in the past, but later it was realized that the two differs in terms of its delivery, as counseling is seen as an aspect of guidance which tend to stress positive individual strength and its use in personal and social situation, (Alao 1990). The aim of counseling is to increase the client's self-awareness and insight, and to marshal the new found strength in working towards an action plan that will help a person cope more effectively with life, (Stewart 1983). School Counseling is also seen as a process of helping students to think independently, make their own decision and value their own integrity, (Mosely 1993), while McGuines (1998) describe it as emotional support given to pupils in order to keep them focus on their particular concerns and development issues, making choice, coping with crises and working through feeling of inner conflict. This views show what school counseling geared toward helping an individual realize his/her potential, equipt with skills of dealing with the issues related to education, persona/social and career development and other matters which may hinder their success and healthy development.

### **5.2 History of school counseling in Nigeria**

The 1959 marked the beginning of school counseling in Nigerian high schools. The

practice was more reached in those schools funded by the federal government, and it was done mostly in the form of traditional pastoral way. The emergence of the Counseling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) in 1976 has promoted the practice into a more professional way. However, the concentration of professional counselors is based at the tertiary institutions and Universities in the State, with very few working with secondary schools and others as administrators in various sectors.

**5.3 Need for effective counseling service at secondary school**

Students at secondary school are at the stage of adolescent who are seen as confusion stage, usually became befuddle as a result of physical, physiological, social and emotional changes. The period is characterized with risk taking, experimentation, wishing to escape the limit of

the authority in order to achieve freedom, interest in sexual relationship, experiment with alcohol and drugs and other potentially risky activities, (Akos, Lambie, Milson and Gilbert 2007). Counseling of secondary school students can be effectively delivered by an experienced and well trained counselor because it require tact and sensitivity in order to sufficiently engage them to be attentive and enlist their co-operation. According to Gelderd and Gelderd (1999), the progress of school counseling could be jeopardizing by lack of skills or sufficient understanding of psychotherapeutic theories. Holcomb (2007) discloses the key areas focused by school counseling as transitional issues to ensure successful transition to college, other post-secondary options, and career development. And for effective delivery, the focus should be on the student’s developmental growth which includes the needs, task, and interest related to the stages, (Schmidt 2003).

**6. Findings of the study**

**Descriptive Statistics showing the strength of counseling services at secondary schools in Kano**

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
counselors qualification	30	1.00	3.00	1.8000	.66436
Area of specialization	30	1.00	3.00	1.9667	.55605
Nature of appointment	30	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000
Office facilities	30	1.00	2.00	1.1333	.34575
Clients records	30	1.00	2.00	1.3000	.46609
Students awareness	30	1.00	2.00	1.3000	.46609
Parent involvement	30	1.00	2.00	1.1667	.37905
Monitoring the session	30	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000
Counselors supervision	30	1.00	2.00	1.0667	.25371
Counselors satisfaction with the job	30	1.00	2.00	1.2000	.40684
Total	30			1.3433	

**7. Discussion**

The results of this study show that, the overall means obtained is 1.311, which means the entire counseling services provided at secondary schools investigated is very inadequate. This happen because out of the 30 schools used in this study, only 5 schools have professionally trained counselors practicing in a traditional

pastoral way, and acute lack of facilities was observed, no up to date record in all the schools, students and their parent are not fully aware about the service and its importance as it was done mostly in a disciplinary form.

**8. Implications of the findings**

School counseling is not a compromise able service as it directly geared towards youth who are the backbone of the any society and whose National stability and integration relied on them. Through effective counseling, students or youth could be able to develop self-awareness, and understand their potential which will make them to be contributing members of their society. When those responsible for delivering the service lack adequate skills and knowledge, and where appropriate facilities required are lacking, and when the stake holders fail to recognize its importance, it will not yield positive result. And it will add to the number of dropout, hooliganism, drug abuse and sexual promiscuity among the youth in all the corners including students.

## 9. Conclusion

The major issue concerning secondary schools students' adjustment in Nigeria particularly in Kano State were the inability of students to fully understand themselves as adolescents, which seriously affect their behavior and was caused by lack of effective school counseling, which calls for the immediate need of professionally trained and skillful counselors in all the secondary schools.

## 10. Recommendations

Following the findings of this study, the need to improve school counseling at secondary schools in Kano state has been presented. In view of that, the following suggestion could help tremendously in helping the situation, government should:

- Provide a functional counseling unit in all secondary schools in Kano State.
- Equipped the unit with required resources eg office and stationaries
- Ensure that only professionally trained counselors are providing the service, preferably master degree holders.
- Provide an attractive remuneration so as to retain the counselors.

- Enlighten the students, teachers and parent on the importance of counseling service, so as to give their full support for effective delivery.

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