Students' Perception on the Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling Services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University Katsina, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined students' perception of the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University Katsina, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population was 12,900 undergraduate students of the University, while the sample was 370 respondents randomly selected from all the faculties. The instrument was a questionnaire titled Counselling Evaluation Questionnaire (CSEQ) developed by the researchers, and validated by experts in Guidance and Counselling, and Tests and Measurement units of the university. Using test retest method, the reliability was established as .867. The data collected was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study indicated, among others, that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina. It was therefore, recommended among others that the new incoming students should continue patronising the Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University Counselling centre so as to be benefiting as well.
Keywords: Perception, Effectiveness, Guidance, Counselling, Services

Introduction

Counselling consist of several processes/procedures used in assisting an individual in solving problems which arise in various aspects of his/her life, or in assisting him/her to maximise his overall personal development, so that he could be more effective, satisfied and more useful to the society in which he lives (Akinade, 2012). Arijesuyo (2012) defined guidance and counselling programmes as those educational services that are core and which also compliment instructions, administration and other components. These programmes are specialized and organized activities rendered to students for the dissemination of meaningful and factual information in the area of educational, vocational/career and personal-social needs that assists them to make correct choices, among others.

In line with this, Okobiah and Okorodudu (2006), Akinade (2012), and Denga (2019) outlined some of these programmes as orientation, career day/week, excursion, information service, seminar, as well as workshops for parents, staff and students. Among the listed programmes, Agbajor (2017) opined that counselling emerged as a major service in guidance programme which brings the counsellor and the client into intimate relationship, with a view to establishing confidentiality that enables clients to assess self and available potentials towards effective decision making.

It has been argued that society may not have been plagued with a group of disgruntled, frustrated and unrealistic individuals, if adequate school guidance and counselling services are provided. It was observed by the researchers that many students 'know' the existence of counselling services from the student handbook and not by physical visit to the centre. Their knowledge may not be sufficient enough, this cut across gender, levels and programme of studies. The guidance and counselling services also include the assessment and management of educational, social and behavioural problems in the individual, groups and communities.

Earlier on, the need for guidance and counselling programme was established in the National Policy on Education (NPE), so as to be provided at all educational levels. Furthermore, the NPE outlined the objectives of guidance and counselling programmes in behavioural terms (FRN, 2014; Obidoa, 2010; Ekennia, 2014; FMOE, 2018; Denga, 2019). However, in order to have a functional guidance and counselling service in any setting, it has become necessary to examine and evaluate its implementation processes. Agbajor (2017) made it explicitly clear that evaluation is one of the services that determines the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services, which serves as a means of examining what and how students think, feel and react about the counselling services through the use of valid and reliable techniques in form of observation, rating scale and questionnaire, among others.

In a university setting, guidance and counselling services promote academic, personal-social and vocational progress of students. Some experts posit that counselling is an aspect of guidance, while others consider guidance as an aspect of counselling, and the arguments continue. However, the relevance of both programmes can never be over-emphasized, notwithstanding the divergent views. In Nigeria the National Universities Commission, (2013) stressed that, modern counselling services are highly needed and are very important, because they help to identify, early enough, talents among students. Several studies carried out, including Lannap (2002), Denga (2016), Nuhu, Umar, Aliyu and Dan-inna (2019), indicated that it is good for the students, because many undergraduates face anxieties and stresses and to be able to handle these kinds of problems they need guidance and counselling services. Thus, the provision of the services in a University setting would foster and bring about well guided and properly counselled undergraduates and graduates who would be good ambassadors/alumni of their Universities. It is because of this reason that provision of guidance and counselling services is schools has been acknowledged in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2014).

In Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University Katsina, guidance and counselling services commenced as far back as 2014. Available record shows that in 2014, an acting Director was appointed to man the office of Guidance and Counselling Unit, under the Dean Student Affairs Division. The following schedules of duty were outlined:

    i.   Advising management on policies, regulations and matters affecting students.
    ii. Assisting students in need of academic, social and emotional guidance counselling.
    iii. Working directly with teachers (Staff) and other specialists/professionals to achieve effective services, among others. (University Counsellor, interview, 2018)

It is not an overstatement to assert the fact that the educational system in Nigeria is bedevilled with a number of problems, and students in institutions of higher learning are not immune to these problems. The neglect of orientation programme, field trips/excursion, individual and group counselling among others, often results to maladaptive behaviours among students, such as cultism, kidnapping, delinquency, etc. The increase in the mode and nature of the problems are alarming and may not be unconnected with the developmental stage/processes of the adolescents. The situation has become a great concern to government, parents, and stakeholders and significant others within the educational system; the undergraduates of tertiary institutions are not well fitted into the labour market for lack of required skills which lead to unemployment and underemployment.

This study becomes necessary considering the directive of the Federal Ministry of Education for Universities to establish counselling centres (NUC, 2013). As stated earlier, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University Katsina was established in 2006. As a result of this reason, it has become necessary to evaluate its counselling service delivery, especially if one considers the importance of guidance and counselling services in tertiary institutions. Also, there are many problems prevalent among undergraduate students and it is in view of the enormity of these problems, which made the researchers to take steps with a view to evaluating the counselling services available to students of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina. The outcome of the study will help to correct or improve the service, as it will bring to the fore its strengths and weaknesses and to make adjustment where necessary for better service delivery.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

    1. Is there any difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina?
    2. Is there any difference among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina?
    3. Is there any difference among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested:

Ho1: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

Ho2: There is no significant difference among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

Ho3: There is no significant difference among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

Research Methodology

In this study, a descriptive survey research design was adopted. This is a kind of design that describes situations as they are, without making predictions and without establishing cause-effect relationship. This design was chosen because the study observed and recorded information carefully as they are without answering questions about how, when, and why, and there was no intention of establishing cause-effect relationship. The population of the study comprises all undergraduate students of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina state, Nigeria. As at 2018/2019 academic session, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina had a total number of five faculties, 25 departments, and 12,900 undergraduate students. These students are distributed into various departments and across various levels of study, and they comprise both males and females.

Using Research Advisors (2006) guideline, the required sample size for the study is 370 students as shown in Table 1. In selecting the required sample, simple random sampling technique was used. The students were given the instrument randomly across all the faculties to respond to. The participants were chosen from all levels and about 400 copies of the questionnaire were distributed so as to take care of the missing ones.

Table 1: Sample distribution for the Study

Faculty	Total Population	Sample		Total Sample
		Male	**Female**	
Education	4017	74	41	115
Humanities	1372	28	11	39
Law	278	26	22	48
Natural and Applied Sciences	4883	77	24	101
Social and Management Sciences	2350	43	25	67
Total	**12900**	**248**	**123**	**370**

The data was collected with an instrument called Counselling Services Evaluation Questionnaire (CSEQ). The instrument was developed by the researchers, and has

five subsections. Altogether, the instrument has 50 items (10 items in each subsection). It was validated by experts in Guidance and Counselling and Tests and Measurement units of the Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina. Section A of the instrument sought for the demographic information of the respondents, Section B was on Awareness of the Counselling services in the University, Section C measured Facilities in the Counselling centre, Section D was concerned with the Effectiveness of the Counselling services, while Section E sought to identify the Challenges of the Counselling centre. The instrument was pilot tested with 20 students from School of Basic and Remedial Studies of the university, using test retest method. A reliability coefficient of .867 was established. This figure, according to Dan'inna (2018), indicated that the instrument was reliable for the study.

In testing the stated hypotheses, the researchers employed the use of inferential statistics. In particular, independent samples t-test and analysis of variance were used. All the hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance. All the analyses were carried out with the help of SPSS v.23.0 and the summary of the results are as presented in the next section.

Presentation of results

Ho1: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

To test this hypothesis, the researchers used independent samples t-test statistic, and the result summary is as presented in table 2.

Table 2: Differences between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	p
Males	248	115.02	18.10	368	- .988	.324
Females	122	117.07	20.25			

Table 2 indicated that the calculated t-value for the differences between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina was t = .988, df = 368, and p = .324. Since the p-value is greater than alpha (.05), the null hypothesis is retained. So, the researchers concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

Ho2: There is no significant difference among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

To test this hypothesis, the researchers used one-way analysis of variance statistic, and the result summary is as presented in table 3.

Table 3: Differences among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19592.790	4	4898.197		
Within Groups	111237.700	365	304.761	16.072	.000
Total	130830.489	369			

From Table 3, the differences among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina was F = 16.072, and P = .000. Since the p-value (.000) is less than the alpha value (.05), the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was adopted. So, the researchers concluded that there is a significant difference among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

Ho3: There is no significant difference among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

To test this hypothesis, the researchers used one-way analysis of variance statistic, and the result summary is as presented in table 4.

Table 4: Differences among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6172.451	4	1543.113		
Within Groups	124658.038	365	341.529	4.518	.001
Total	130830.489	369			

From Table 4, the differences among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina was F = 4.518, and P = .001. Since the p-value (.001) is less than the alpha value (.05), the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was adopted. So, the researchers concluded that there is a significant difference among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

Discussions of the findings

The findings from this study revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina. Similarly, the findings also indicated that there is significant difference among students in various levels of study and across various faculties, in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

Looking at these findings, it can be implied that both male and female undergraduates of the university are aware of the guidance and counselling services being rendered by the counselling unit of the university. These are in line with the assertion of Agbajor (2017) who maintained that evaluation is one of the services that determines the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services, which serves as a means of examining what and how students think, feel and react about the counselling services through the use of valid and reliable techniques.

Again, it is important to note that one of the aims of guidance and counselling is to increase awareness of opportunities in relation to interest, values and skills in facilitating effective career exploration and decision making and the need to produce nationally relevant and globally competitive graduates (FMOE, 2018; Denga, 2019). This is owing to the fact that both male and female students, across all levels of study, and across all faculties do not demonstrate appreciative level of awareness about the activities of the centre; they were not also fully aware about the facilities available at the centre, the challenges facing the counselling service delivery at the centre, as well as the measures being taken to improve the services at the centre. This is in line with the recommendations of Akinade (2012) and Agbajor (2017), and also in line with arguments of Denga (2016) which stressed the relevance of guidance and counselling services at all levels of education.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers concluded that the guidance and counselling centre in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University Katsina was functioning as expected. The findings indicated that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina. Similarly, the findings also indicated that there is significant difference among students in various levels of study and across various faculties, in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina.

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommend that the new students should continue patronising the centre, and be getting the derivable benefits in terms of acquiring information regarding their academic and other extra-curricular activities. This will benefit them throughout their stay in the university and also in

career choice, and will lead them to make appropriate decisions during their stay in the university and beyond. Specifically for female students, they should be visiting the centre for marriage counselling. This will enable them to live a successful matrimonial life when the need arise, and it will lead to producing and taking good care of children who would definitely be the leaders of tomorrow. Finally, there is an urgent need for the management of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University, Katsina to come up with appropriate strategies on how to bridge the established differences based on students' year of study, programmes and faculties, so that both new and returning students can be given equal opportunities and services.

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