

Counsellor Motivation, Counsellor-Staff Relationship and Effectiveness of Public Secondary School Counsellors in Cross River State, Nigeria

Dominic E. Echeng, Ph.D

*Department of Guidance and Counselling
University of Calabar, Calabar
Cross River State, Nigeria
dominicecheng@gmail.com*

Patricia E. Agbor, Ph.D

*State Secondary Education Board
Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
Patriciaagbor68@gmail.com*

Abstract

*This study investigated the influence of counsellor motivation and counsellor-staff relationship on the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors in Cross River State. The research design adopted for the study was *expost facto* design. Out of a population of 162 counsellors, a sample of 113 counsellors comprising 51 males and 62 females was drawn through stratified and purposive sampling methods. A self designed and validated instruments titled *Counsellor Professional Opinion Questionnaire (CPOQ)* and *Counsellor Effectiveness Questionnaire (CEQ)* with reliability co-efficient of 0.75 and 0.88 respectively were used for data collection. Two hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. Data collected were analyzed statistically using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result showed that counsellor motivation and counsellor-staff relationship significantly influenced the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors in Cross River State. Based on these findings, conclusion was drawn and recommendations made.*

Keywords: Counsellor, Motivation, Counsellor-Staff Relationship, Effectiveness

Introduction

Every organization whether public or private strives for effectiveness in order to achieve set goals, as effectiveness of any profession manifests in the quality and quantity of its services. Fraser in Ogunsanmi (2011) defined effectiveness as “a match between stated goals and their achievement”. Vlasceanu, Grunberg and Parlea (2007) defined effectiveness as an output of specific review/analyses that measure the achievement of a specific goal or the extent to which a school is able to achieve specific requirement .

On his part, Kuenmerle in Echeng (2016) was of the opinion that effectiveness is the attainment of result from usage of resources and organizational operations. Ogbenekohwo (2010) maintained that organizational effectiveness depends on the combination of two factors, the personnel skill factor and the equipment and supplies skill factor which exist within the organization. Ojo, Adeyemo and Fashoyin in Omori (2006) contended that organizations need to develop and harness the talents and commitments of all the employees in order to get the best from them.

Effective school counsellors assist students acquire effective study skills and habit, realize their potentials, select school subjects and enter into courses of their choice. They also provide students with relevant vocational information and skills that will enable them make realistic career decisions and choice (Denga, 2008, Olayinka, 2005). In the counselling profession, aside the Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON), the Ministry of Education through the Director of Counselling and school heads are expected to regulate and supervise the activities of school counsellors to ensure effectiveness (Njama-Abang, 2006).

Studies by Brigman, Campbell and Webb in Nduka-Ozo (2010) showed that counsellor effectiveness helps to improve students' academic performance and behaviour. Also studies by Baker and Gerler, Shaefer-Schiumo and Ginsberg in Nwachukwu (2010) affirmed that effective counselling improves students' personal and social development.

Similarly, Oworojori and Popoola (2010) asserted that productivity of workers is directly related to motivation and that workers who are highly motivated are likely to put in maximum effort thus resulting in high performance and productivity. In the same line of thought, Ozidi cited in Obalim (2011) pointed out that workers in the school system in Nigeria are unhappy, frustrated, uninspired and unmotivated and this adversely affects their performance. Akpeke (2005) and Denga (2008) also noted that the level of motivation in the individual determines whether the set goal will be achieved or not. They noted further that high level of motivation elicits creativity, resourcefulness, punctuality, loyalty, cooperation and understanding from workers.

Further more, Eyo (2012) in a study to investigate the extent to which workers' motivational strategies influence workers' productivity in some selected institutions in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, used the entire staff of 37 banks and 30 insurance companies as the population of the study. 30% of the staff of 37 banks and 62% of the staff of 30 insurance companies were randomly selected for the study. Data collected were analysed using t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result among others showed that motivators such as staff

training, improved remuneration, welfare packages and staff promotion had significant influence on workers' job effectiveness and productivity level. Ukpong cited in Amah (2002) in a study to investigate the allegation that standard of education was falling due to teachers' ineffectiveness in their task performance, dissatisfaction with the teaching job and low motivation, used a sample of 360 teachers from Federal Government Colleges in Nigeria for the study. Data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent t-test analysis. The results of the analyses showed among others that the level of job satisfaction and level of motivation etc significantly influence teachers' level of effectiveness in the performance of their institutional task. Moreso, Mgbekem cited in Udoh and Akpa (2010) in a study found that receipt of motivators such as reorganization, remuneration and rewards to satisfy workers' needs, drives, motivates and spurs them to perform and this maximizes optimal production.

The ease with which an individual succeeds can be traced to the flexibility with which the individual interacts. The seeming confrontational relationship between teachers and counsellors in some schools must be avoided. School counsellors and teachers should relate in a friendly manner with one another and avoid the feelings of hostility, antagonism and jealousy as they need the cooperation and support of each other to succeed in their respective duties (Denga in Echeng 2016). Egbule and Egbule (2006) found that principals' attitude towards school counsellors was positive and this helped the counsellors to perform effectively. Egbo (2010) contended that government, principals, teachers and other school staff alike need to cooperate with the school counsellors as they can contribute immensely to ensure the strengthening of the wholesome performance of counsellors in secondary schools.

In the same vein, Denga (2005) and Njama-Abang (2006) opined that the school principal and school staff have important roles to play as members of the school guidance team in the effectiveness and success of the school guidance programme. Therefore, if there is no cordial and collaborative relationship among school counsellors, administration and other school staff, school counsellors may not be effective in the discharge of their tasks. Also Akpan (2010) in a study to find out the challenges of guidance and counselling services in schools in Akwa Ibom State, used a self designed instrument for data collection and a sample of 45 counsellors out of a population of 55 serving counsellors. Data collected were analysed using independent t-test analysis and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. The results showed that among the items identified as being very serious challenges were jealousy by teachers, lack of

cooperation and resistance by school heads. Akpan (2010) therefore concluded that school counsellors at times do not perform effectively because of the uncompromising attitude of teachers and school heads.

Effectiveness among school counsellors cannot be attained in a vacuum; counsellor's motivation and the nature of relationship among counsellors and staff within the work environment need to be taken into cognizance. This formed the thrust of this study.

Statement of the problem

School counsellors are at the epicenter of most schools and are expected to assist students make worthwhile adjustments academically, vocationally and personal-socially. Unfortunately, it is common to find that many of our secondary school leavers, even when they are in the higher institutions, find it difficult to cope with their academics. This is perhaps because they are not properly counselled. It is also glaring that many of our secondary school students perform poorly in both internal and external examinations. Other social vices such as examination malpractices, drug abuse, cultism, moral laxity and unemployment etc among secondary school leavers have become common features in our school system (Olofu, 2010). These social vices which effective counselling is supposed to address are not only prevalent but are assuming an alarming dimension (Echeng, 2016).

This precarious scenario if allowed to continue unabated, may spell doom for the school system and the nation as a whole. It is against this backdrop that this study was carried out to investigate the influence of counsellor motivation and counsellor-staff relationship on the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Statement of hypotheses

1. Counsellor motivation does not significantly influence the effectiveness of school counsellors.
2. Counsellor-staff relationship does not significantly influence the effectiveness of school counsellors.

Methodology

The study adopted Ex-post facto research design since the effect of counsellor motivation and counsellor-staff relationship on the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors must have presumably occurred before the time of this study. The target population was all practicing counsellors in Cross River State Public Secondary schools numbering 162 counsellors (State Secondary Education and Technical Education Boards 2015/2016 data). The sample size was 113 counsellors

randomly drawn from the study population. To achieve this, names of all the practicing counsellors in each Local Government Area were written in different slip of papers. They were properly wrapped and mixed into a container from where the researcher drew the required number of counsellors for the study from each Local Government Area. In Biase and Obubra Local Government Areas where they had three (3) counsellors each, all were used for the study. At the end, 113 counsellors served as sample for the study.

Counsellor Professional Opinion Questionnaire (CPOQ) and Counsellor Effectiveness Questionnaire (CEQ) were used for data collection. The first instrument (CPOQ) was used to elicit information from counsellors while the second instrument was used to elicit information from SS3 students on the effectiveness of their counsellors. The items in sections A and C of the CPOQ adopted four point Likert Like scale scored from 1-4 while those in section A of the CEQ were scored 1-3. In both instrument, positively worded statements were scored as follows; strongly agree (SA) - 4, agree (A) - 3, disagree (D) - 2, strongly disagree (SD) - 1; very available (VA) - 3, Scantly available (SA) - 2, Not available (NA) - 1. Negatively worded items were scored in reversed order. The instruments were validated by experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Calabar. Test-retest reliability method was used to determine the reliability of the instruments which were 0.75 and 0.88 respectively. These were considered high enough to justify the use of the instruments. The data generated was analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Presentation of results

Ho1: Counsellor motivation does not significantly influence the effectiveness of school counsellors.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used in testing the hypothesis. The results are presented in table 1. The results showed that the calculated F-ratios for appraisal (22.474), information (20.447), counselling (11.131), placement/follow-up services (19.289), and the overall counsellor effectiveness (29.875) are each greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.04 at .05 level of significance using 2 and 110 degrees of freedom. This meant that counsellor motivation significantly influenced the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors. Based on these results the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 1: One-way ANOVA on the influence of counsellor motivation on effectiveness of school counsellors

S/NO	Variable	Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F
1	Appraisal services	Between Groups	408.934	2	204.467	22.474*
		Within Groups	1000.783	110	9.089	
		Total	1409.71	112		
2	Information Services	Between Groups	390.198	2	195.099	20.447*
		Within Groups	1049.607	110	9.542	
		Total	1439.805	112		
3	Counselling services	Between Groups	223.704	2	111.852	11.131*
		Within Group	1105.305	110	10.048	
		Total	1329.009	112		
4	Placement/Follow-up	Between Groups	441.517	2	220.759	19.289*
		Within Groups	1258.943	110	11.445	
		Total	1700.460	112		
5	Overall Counsellor Effectiveness	Between Groups	5759.586	2	2879.793	29.875*
		Within Groups	10603.299	110	96.394	
		Total	16362.885	112		

*Significant at .05; critical F-ratio=3.04

Since the result showed significant influence, a post hoc comparison test among group means was carried out to ascertain the pair wise mean difference responsible for the significance influence. Fisher's Least Significance Difference (LSD) method was used in carrying out the test. The results of the analysis are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Fisher’s LSD for the influence of counsellor motivation on effectiveness of public secondary school counselors

S/N	Variable	Counsellor motivation	Low (n=16)	Average (n=70)	High
1	Appraisal services	Low	11.31 ^a	0.53 ^b	4.87
		Average	0.63 ^c	11.84	4.34
		High	5.11*	6.37*	16.19
		(MSW=9.098)			
2	Information Services	Low	9.70	0.50	4.40
		Average	0.58	11.22	4.35
		High	4.50*	6.24*	14.56
		(MSW=9.542)			
3	Counselling services	Low	12.58	0.33	3.56
		Average	0.38	14.35	3.23
		High	3.55*	4.51*	17.67
		(MSW=10.048)			
4	Placement/Follow-up	Low	9.00	0.58	5.08
		Average	0.62	11.18	4.51
		High	4.75*	5.90*	14.63
		(MSW=11.445)			
5	Overall Counsellor Effectiveness	Low	49.13	1.49	17.91
		Average	0.55	50.61	16.42
		High	5.77*	7.41*	67.04
		(MSW= 96.394)			

*Significant at .05; critical F-ratio=3.07

Results of post-hoc analysis presented in Table 2 showed significant pair-wise group differences as follows: appraisal service – low versus high motivation ($t=5.11$; $p<.05$), and average versus high motivation ($t=6.37$; $p<.05$). Information Services – low versus high motivation ($t=4.50$; $p<.05$), average versus high motivation ($t=6.25$; $p<.05$). Counselling service – low versus high motivation ($t=3.55$; $p<.05$), and average versus high motivation ($t=4.51$; $p<.05$) placement/follow-up service – low versus high motivation ($t=4.75$; $p<.05$), and average versus high motivation ($t=5.90$; $p>.05$). Overall counsellor effectiveness – low versus high motivation ($t=5.77$; $p<.05$), and average versus high motivation ($t=7.41$; $p<.05$). The results indicated that, at all considerations, there was difference in counsellor effectiveness for between highly motivated versus lowly motivated counsellors and between highly motivated versus averagely motivated counsellors. The results showed that, there was no significant pair wise difference in effectiveness between the lowly motivated and averagely motivated counsellors. Results of mean values showed that is was counsellor who admitted they were highly motivated that were more effective in

their counselling job ($X=67.04$), than their counterparts who said they were averagely motivated ($X=50.61$), and lowly motivated ($X=59.13$)

Ho2: Counsellor – staff relationship does not significantly influence the effectiveness of school counsellor.

One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used in testing the hypothesis. The results are presented in table 3. The results show that the calculated F-ratios for appraisal (15.250), information (21.780), counselling (10.274), placement/follow up (16.712) services, and for overall counsellor effectiveness (25.295) are each greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.04 at .05 level of significance using 2 and 110 degrees of freedom. This meant that counsellor-staff relationship significantly influenced the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors. Based on these results, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 3: Summary of One-way ANOVA for the influence of counsellor-staff relationship on effectiveness of school counsellors

S/No	Variable	Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F
1	Appraisal services	Between Groups	306.025	2	153.012	15.250*
		Within Groups	1103.692	110	10.034	
		Total	1409.717	112		
2	Information services	Between Groups	408.423	2	204.211	21.780*
		Within Groups	1031.382	110	9.376	
		Total	1439.804	112		
3	Counselling services	Between Groups	209.281	2	104.591	10.274*
		Within Groups	1119.827	110	10.180	
		Total	1329.009	112		
4	Placement/Follow-up service	Between Groups	396.281	2	198.141	16.712*
		Within Groups	1304.179	110	11.856	
		Total	1700.460	112		
5	Overall effectiveness	Between Groups	5154.774	2	2577.387	25.295*
		Within Groups	11208.111	110	101.892	
		Total	16362.885	112		

* Significant at .05; critical F-ratio=3.04

Since the results showed significant influence, a post hoc comparison test among group means was carried out to ascertain the pair wise mean difference responsible for the significance influence. Fisher's Least Significance Difference (LSD) method was used in carrying the test. The results of the analysis are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Fisher’s LSD for the influence of counsellor-staff relationship on effectiveness of school counselors

S/NO	Variable	Counsellor-staff Relationship	Low (n=13)	Average (n=64)	High (n=36)
1	Appraisal services	Low	10.85 ^a	1.03 ^b	4.32
		Average	0.57 ^c	11.88	3.29
		High	2.13*	5.01*	15.17
		(MSW=10.034)			
2	Information Services	Low	11.38	0.18	4.23
		Average	0.10	11.56	4.05
		High	2.16*	6.38*	15.61
		(MSW=9.376)			
3	Counselling services	Low	14.38	0.68	3.45
		Average	0.41	15.05	2.77
		High	1.68*	4.19*	17.83
		(MSW=10.180)			
4	Placement/Follow-up	Low	10.31	1.54	5.17
		Average	0.78	11.84	3.63
		High	2.34*	5.08*	15.47
		(MSW=11.856)			
5	Overall Counsellor Effectiveness	Low	46.92	3.42	17.16
		Average	0.59	50.34	13.74
		High	2.65*	6.56*	64.08
		(MSW= 101.892)			

* Significant at 0.5; critical F-ratio = 3.07

Results of post-hoc analysis presented in Table 4 showed significant pair-wise group differences as follows: Appraisal service – low versus high relationship ($t=2.13; p<.05$), and average versus high relationship ($t=5.01; p<.05$). information Service- low versus high relationship ($t=1.16; p<.05$), and average versus high relationship ($t=6.38; P.05$). counselling service – average versus high relationship ($t=4.19; p<.05$). Placement/Follow-up Service – low versus high relationship ($t=2.34; p<.05$), and average versus high relationship ($t=5.08; p<.05$). Overall counsellor effectiveness – low versus high relationship ($t=2.65; p<.05$), and average versus high relationship ($t=6.56$). The results indicated that, at all consideration, there is difference in counsellor effectiveness for between high versus low counsellor-staff relationship. The results showed that, there is no significant pair-wise difference in effectiveness between counsellors with low staff relationship and those with average relationship. Results of staff values showed that it was counsellors who admit they have high relationship with staff that were more effective in their counselling job ($X=64.08$), than their counterparts who said they were averagely related ($X=50.34$), and lowly related with staff ($X=46.92$).

Discussion of findings

The finding of the study in respect of hypothesis one showed that counsellor motivation significantly influenced the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors. This could be attributed to the fact that the counsellors were highly motivated in their schools hence they were effective. This result is in consonance with the findings of Akpeke (2005) who noted that high level of motivation elicit creativity, resourcefulness, punctuality, loyalty, cooperation and understanding from workers. Conversely, low level of motivation produces sabotage, industrial actions and decline in workers' effectiveness and productivity. This result is also in support of Amah (2002) who stated that school administrators should ensure that staff are adequately motivated to ensure dedication, effectiveness and achievement of educational goals.

The finding of the study in respect of hypothesis two revealed that counsellor-staff relationship significantly influenced the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors. This may be attributed to the fact that the counsellors have cordial working relationship with the school staff. Both the counsellors and other school staff also recognize and respect the role and position of each other. This makes it easy for the counsellors to enlist the cooperation and support of the staff in their counselling programmes thus making it possible for them to be effective.

This result corroborates the positions of Denga (2005) and Njama-Abang (2006) that the principal, teachers and other school staff have important role to play as members of the school guidance team in the effectiveness and success of the school guidance programmes. Therefore, there is need for collaborative relationship among the staff and the counsellors. This result also lent credence to the findings of Egbule and Egbule (2006) that principals and teachers have positive attitude towards school counsellor and this enhances their effectiveness.

Furthermore, this result agreed with the finding of Egbo (2010) who contended that good working relationship among teachers and other support staff can contribute greatly to ensure the wholesome performance of counsellors in secondary schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that motivation and counsellor-staff relationship have significant influence on the effectiveness of public secondary school counsellors.

Recommendations

Consequent upon the findings of this study, it was recommended that the government, school principals and other stakeholders in the education subsector

should ensure that school counsellors are adequately motivated. Both the government and school principals should also ensure cordial working relationship among counsellors, teachers and other school staff. This will go a long way in enhancing the effectiveness of school counsellors in our public schools.

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