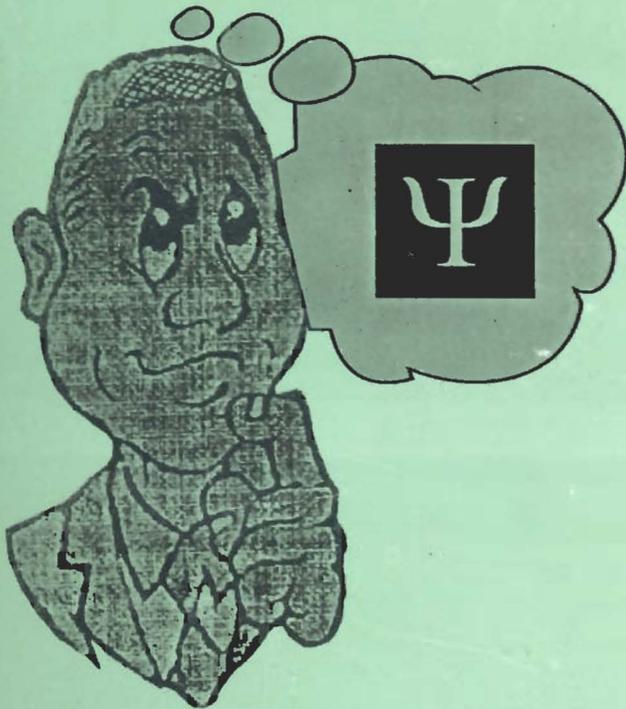


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Gender, Educational Qualification, and Workplace as Predictors of Hindrances to Effective Guidance and Counselling Practice in Nigeria.

Abiodun M. Gesinde, Ph.D

Department of Educational Psychology
Federal College of Education (Special),
Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria

E-mail: abigesh@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract

This study examined the predictability of gender, educational qualification and workplace on the effective deliverance of guidance and counselling perspectives in Nigeria. The participants are 300 professional counsellors randomly selected at the 29th Annual Conference of Counselling Association of Nigeria. Questionnaire on factors militating against Guidance and Counselling developed and validated by the researcher was employed to generate data. The multiple regression analysis procedure was adopted to test the two research questions posed for the study. The findings indicated that the three variables account for 1.4% of the observed variance ($R^2 = 0.14$; $F(3, 296) = 143$; $P > 0.05$) in hindrances to effective guidance and counselling practice in Nigeria. The study further confirmed that workplace contributes ($B = .107$, $t = 1.75$; $P > 0.05$) more to the prediction of hindrances to effective guidance and counseling than gender ($B = .033$, $t = .57$; $P > 0.05$) and educational qualification ($B = .027$, $t = .44$; $P > 0.05$). On the premise of this result, it was recommended that further research should be conducted with a view to identifying other variables predicting hindrances to effective counselling practice in Nigeria.

Keywords: Gender, educational qualification, workplace, predictors, guidance and counselling, hindrances, effective, Nigeria.

Introduction

Guidance and Counselling is an integral part of educational programmes in developed and developing nations of the world. The term "Guidance and Counselling" is a twin concept that has inseparable stance for a very long time. Although the two different words are married together to form the term, it is also practicable to separately explain them and expose their interdependence.

Quite a number of definitions have been offered to separately and jointly define the concept of Guidance and Counselling in schools. For instance, Aremu (2000) sees guidance as “an all embracing concept which facilitate better understanding of an individual or group of individuals with a view to rendering skilled assistance to the individual(s) to have a balanced or an adjusted life “(P2). On the other hand, counselling has been described by Olayinka (1993) as “a learning oriented process which stresses more rational planning, problem solving, decision making, intentionality, prevention of severe adjustment problems, and support for situational pressures arising in the everyday lives of normal people” (p9).

Guidance and Counselling could also be jointly defined as a professional assistance rendered by guidance counsellor to client(s) in order to have a clear picture of integrated abilities, interest, attitudes, and needs vis-à-vis the environment and there from make realistic decisions that facilitate efforts aimed at becoming a full functioning individual(s) (Gesinde, 2008).

Historically, the origin of modern day Guidance and Counselling practice in Nigeria dated back to 1959 when a number of Catholic Reverend Sisters invited renowned professionals to their school at St. Theresa, Oke Ado, Ibadan to guide students on future career after the expiration of their study at the secondary school (Ahmadu, 2007; Alutu, 2007).

There are certain reasons for the inclusion of Guidance and Counselling in Nigerian educational system. These reasons are clearly spelt out in paragraph 83 (1) of the National Policy on Education (1981) thus: “In view of the apparent ignorance of many young people about career prospects and in view of personality maladjustment among school children, careers officers and counsellors will be appointed in post-primary schools”.

In fulfillment of the above, government has appointed a number of guidance counsellors not only in post-secondary schools but also in tertiary institutions. The guidance services to be performed by the counsellors in Nigerian institutions of learning according to Counselling Association of Nigeria as stated by Adegoke (2004) include:

Orientation of new students

Educational counseling

Vocational Counselling

Personal Counselling

Referral services

Follow-up services

Liaison and placement services

Keeping student records– especially Continuous Assessment and other features of the National Policy on Education.

References and transcripts services

Research, Planning, Student statistics and consultancy services.

School examinations
Community services.

In an attempt to substantiate the performance of these roles, a number of studies have seen embarked upon by scholars in the field of guidance and counselling. One of such was a study conducted by Gesinde (2004) among one hundred and ten teachers from five randomly selected secondary schools in Ibadan North East Local Government in Oyo State, Nigeria. The findings of the study indicated that majority of teachers agreed that counsellors perform the following roles in the school:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------|
| (a) Placement | - | 93.6% Agreement |
| (b) Information | - | 90.9% Agreement |
| (c) Orientation | - | 90% Agreement |
| (d) Counselling | - | 90% Agreement |
| (e) Referral | - | 84.6% Agreement |
| (f) Appraisal | - | 81.8% Agreement |
| (g) Psychological Testing | - | 80% Agreement |
| (h) Record Keeping | - | 80% Agreement |
| (i) Career Guidance | - | 76.4% Agreement |
| (j) Research | - | 70.9% Agreement |

It is however worthy of mention that as counsellors are performing these roles so also are they combating with a number of challenges hindering their optimum performance. Quite a number of psycho-socio-economic factors have been identified as hindrances to effective guidance and counselling practice in Nigerian schools. For instance, Hassan (1991) listed philosophical problem; depressed economy; wrong perceptions of counsellors role; problems inherent in providing counselling services such as lack of basic facilities, the counselling approach in relation to the clients expectation, lack of adequate diagnostic instrument and the problem relating to information collection and dissemination as problems facing counselling practices in Nigeria. Similarly, Olajide (1991) on his part recognized lack of enough and uneven distribution of personnel; resistance from the principal or staff; office accommodation; time-table problem; lack of fund; and unstable government policy as problems facing guidance and counselling in Nigeria.

Omideyi, Abiola and Oyewo (2001) in their own contribution highlighted hindrances to guidance and counselling to include differing perception of counsellors; parents' misconception of guidance and counselling; resistance of principal to innovation; lack of cooperation from other members of staff; cultural factors in counselling; inadequate number of qualified personnel; the problem of confidentiality; attitude of Nigerian students toward seeking help; and attitude of the government. Yahaya (2004) has also identified cultural barriers and ignorance as factors which confront counseling practice

in Nigeria. The problems of establishing and organizing guidance and counselling in Nigeria in the submission of Gesinde (2008) include relative newness of guidance and counselling; insufficient or lack of fund; inadequate or lack of guidance counsellors; and uncooperative attitude of personnel within and outside the school.

It is, therefore, glaringly evident that numerous factors combined together to militate against effective guidance and counselling practice in Nigeria. In his attempt to empirically confirm the existence of these psychosocio-economic factors across the country, Gesinde (2009) carried out a study among 300 (149 males and 151 females) professional counsellors who attended the 29th Annual Conference of Counselling Association of Nigeria in Niger State, Nigeria and found that:

- (1) Inadequate number of counsellor
- (2) Inadequate/lack of other personnel like cleaner, typist, messenger etc
- (3) Inadequate/lack of offices for counselling
- (4) Insufficient infrastructures
- (5) Excessive administrative work
- (6) Counselees uncooperative attitude
- (7) Poor attendance of students for Counselling
- (8) Uncooperative attitude of the head of Institution
- (9) Non-availability of resource persons
- (10) Absence of sponsors for counselling Programmes
- (11) Unhealthy rivalry from teachers
- (12) Lack of enough time for counseling because of teaching assignment.
- (13) Insufficient/lack of psychological tests and other materials
- (14) Inadequate/lack of funds
- (15) Too many maladaptive behaviours to solve

were the major factors responsible for ineffective guidance and counselling in Nigeria. The outcome of Gesinde's (2009) study therefore led credence to the fact that scholars theoretical postulations about the existence of factors militating against effective guidance and counselling practice in Nigeria is not a figment of imagination but a reality in most institutions of learning. While attempt has been made to theoretically and empirically identify factors culminating into a stumbling block for result-oriented counselling, there is lack of empirical information on demographic variables predicting these factors from the review of relevant literature and studies.

Consequently, this study is principally designed to determine the combine and relative effects of gender, educational qualification, and workplace on hindrances to counselling in Nigerian schools. The determination of this would give room for adequate assessment of the problem and at the same time give direction to the development of remediative techniques.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the conduct of this study:

What is the combine contribution of gender, educational qualification, and work place to the prediction of hindrances to effective guidance and counselling practice in Nigeria?

To what extent would each of the independent variables stated above predict hindrances to effective guidance and counselling practice in Nigeria?

Methodology

Research Design

The ex-post facto research design was adopted for this study because the research is meant to determine the predicting influence of three independent variables (gender, educational qualification, and work place) on the dependent variable without necessarily manipulating the dependent variable.

Participants

Three hundred counsellors who participated in this study were randomly drawn from professional counsellors who attended the 29th Annual Conference of Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) held in Minna, Niger State, Nigeria. They consisted of 149 males (49.67%) and 151 females (50.33%). The demographic information also indicated that 23 of them are PhD holders, 146 masters degree holders, and 121 bachelors degree holders. 185 (61.67%) of the participants are working in the secondary schools while 115 (38.33%) are working in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Instrumentation

An instrument tagged "Questionnaire on Factors Militating Against Guidance and Counselling Practice in Nigeria" designed by the researcher was used for the study. The instrument is sub-divided into two sections. While section A was designed to tap demographic information such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, work place and work experience. Section B contains 15 items of factors hindering effecting counselling practice in Nigeria rated according to 4 point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree = 4; Agree = 3; Disagree = 2; and Strongly Disagree = 1. The maximum score obtainable is 60 while the minimum is 15. The instrument was validated using the Kuder Richardson KR 21 with a coefficient reliability index of 0.68.

Procedure

The instrument was administered and collected on the same day by the research and three research assistants. The average time for the completion of the questionnaire was 12 minutes. The instrument for the study was collected from the participants on the day of administration.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed. The study employed multiple regression for the purpose of analysis of data. This gave room for the determination of relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Results

The result obtained after the analysis of the two research questions formulated in the study are shown in Tables I and II below:

Table 1: Summary of Regression Analysis on Hindrances to Effective Guidance and Counselling Practice in Nigeria

Multiple R	.119				
Multiple R2	.014				
Adjusted Multiple R2	.004				
Standard Error	6.15				
Source of Variation	Df	SS	M.S	f-Ratio	Sig P
Due to Regression	3	161.37	53.79		.236
Due to Residual	296	11183.55	37.79	1.42	
Total	299	11344.92			

Table I shows the summary of regression analysis on factors militating against effective guidance and counselling in Nigeria. It is evident from the table that three independent variables (gender, educational qualification, and work place) jointly give a multiple regression coefficient of $R = .119$ and multiple R^2 of .014. Further analysis reveals that the multiple regression data yielded an F-ratio of 1.42 which is not significant at 0.05 level. Consequently, when the multiple R-squared is translated into percentage it implies that the three variables jointly contributed only 1.4% of the total variability in factors militating against counselling practice in Nigerian schools.

Table II: Relative Contribution of Independent Variables to the Prediction of Hindrances to Effective Guidance and Counselling Practice in Nigeria.

Variable Description	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig P
	B		Beta		
Gender	.408	.713	.033	.572	.568
Educational Qualification	.268	.604	.027	.443	.658
Work Place	1.348	.771	.107	1.748	.081
Constant	41.766	1.729		24.152	

The result display in Table II indicates the regression coefficients (standardized and unstandardized), standard error of estimate, t and the level at which each of the independent variables is significant. The Table further shows that unstandardized coefficients (B) ranged from .408 to 1.348 while the standardized regression coefficients (Beta) ranged from 0.27 to 1.07. On the other hand, the standard error of estimate ranged from .604 to .771 while the t-ratio ranged from .443 to 1.748. However, none of the variable was significant at 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the t associated with three variables (gender, educational qualification, and work place) reveals that work place is the most potent contributor to the prediction of hindrances to effective guidance and counselling practice in Nigerian schools (Beta=0.107).

Discussion of Findings

The computation of the data obtained for the first research question revealed the extent of multi-co-linear relationship between the three independent variables and hindrances to effective counselling practice ($R=0.119$). When the three variables are combined they could only account for 1.4% of the variance ($R^2 = .014$). This implies that the combination of the three variables cannot explain a large proportion (98.6%) of the variance in hindrances to effective counselling in Nigeria. Consequently, the three independent variables are weak predictors of the dependent variable is concerned. They seem to be ineffective in the prediction of the dependent variable probably because some of the fifteen factors identified by this study are gender and educational qualification biased or sensitive. It is therefore evident that some other variables apart from these three variables used by this study have greater potential of predicting the independent variable.

The result obtained from the second research question showed that each of the three independent variables predicted the dependent variable at diverse level. The value of standardized regression weight associated with these variables indicated that workplace was the most potent contributor to the prediction of the dependent variable. This was followed by gender and educational qualification. It is not surprising or unexpected that workplace was the most potent contributor out of the three variables. Work place as used in this study represents where the participants are operating or carrying out their professional responsibilities. This may be in the secondary or tertiary institutions. It is not even unlikely that some of the participants have worked in the secondary schools before moving to the tertiary institutions. It is at the work place that most of the hindrances identified by this study are operational.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study had amply demonstrated that gender, educational qualification and workplace variables are capable of explaining hindrances to effective counselling practice in Nigeria. Although only three of these numerous variables namely gender, educational qualification and workplace are tested in this study, there is the need for further research on other predicting variables for the purpose of an all embracing diagnosis and development of pragmatic remediative plan that will keep at bay hindrances to effective guidance and counseling practice in Nigerian schools.

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