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THE RELEVANCE OF COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGISTS' PROFESSIONAL DUTIES TO BROADCASTING CORPORATION OF OYO STATE

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Abstract

This descriptive survey study investigated the relevance of Counselling Psychologist professional duties to broadcasting corporation. The participants consisted of one hundred and two purposively selected staff of Oyo State Broadcasting Corporation. A self developed instrument was used to generate data from the participants. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data collected. The results at $X = 3.00$ revealed that the participants agreed that sixteen out of the seventeen professional duties of Counselling Psychologists stated in the questionnaire are relevant to broadcasting corporation. Further analysis showed that these professional duties are relevant at diverse intensity. The most relevant duty to the broadcasting corporation is making crucial decision for organizational development ($X=3.45$; $SD=1.34$). This is closely followed by motivating superior performance ($X=3.40$; $SD=1.30$) and making accurate prediction of job performance ($X=3.31$; $SD=1.33$) respectively. Consequent upon this result it was recommended that public enlightenment programmes should be sponsored by counselling psychologists to create adequate awareness of their relevance to other work settings apart from educational and clinical traditional work settings.

Introduction

Counselling psychology as a field of study was founded in 1946. The Academy of Counselling Psychology (1994) describes the discipline as a psychological specialty which facilitates personal and interpersonal functioning across the life span with a focus on emotional, social, voca-

tional educational, health-related developmental and organizational concerns. It also encompasses a broad range of practices that help people improve their well-being, alleviate distress and maladjustment, resolve crises, and increase their ability to live more highly functioning lives. In this same vein, Akinboye (2002) refers to it as an area of applied psychology which helps to improve client's well being, alleviate distress, resolve crisis, and increases human ability to solve problems as well as to make decisions.

On the premise of the fact that it encompasses a broad range of practices, the practitioners work in a variety of settings depending on the type of services demanded and the client population involved. Some of their work settings include community mental health centres, teaching in institution of learning, employment agencies, research centres, marriage and family centres, rehabilitation agencies, industrial organization, consulting firms and private practice.

Whenever the counselling psychologists are employed Gelso and Fretz (2001) maintain that they are singularly employed to perform three main roles which are not mutually exclusive. These are remedial, preventive and educative-developmental. While the remedial role involves working with individuals, couples, families, or groups in a way that assist in remedying problems the preventive role involves anticipating or preventing problems from occurring. The educative – developmental on the other hand, is designed to enhance clients' skills. It is, however, the contention of Adeyemo (2002) that counselling psychologists' major responsibility in organisational settings is the provision of human resources services which embraces:

- ❖ designing an effective organisational structure
- ❖ staffing the structure with suitable people
- ❖ defining work roles and relationship and
- ❖ securing optimum working arrangement.

When these are clearly spelt out in terms of role and functions they are expected to perform the following: vocational selection and adjustment; planning for organisational need; placement function; training and development; career development; outplacement services and retirement and

leisure planning. Other professional duties include equal employment opportunity; labour and industrial relations managing occupational health and safety; research and development; helping work-performance-impaired employees; and development of marketing skills.

Although the training of counselling psychologists gives them the opportunity to practice in diverse work settings traditional practice mostly favour educational sector. As a matter of fact not few people perceive counseling as closely tied to educational management. Without doing any disservice to the profession, one can conveniently say that counselling has recorded success in the educational sector as evident from research reports.

For instance, when Gesinde (2004) investigated the perception of teachers on the roles performance of counsellors in schools it was revealed that the following percentage of subjects agreed that counsellors indeed carried out there roles in their schools – placement (93.6%), information provision (90.9%), counselling (90%), orientation (90%), referral (84.6%), appraisal (81.89%), record keeping (80%), testing (80%), career guidance (76.42%) and research (70%).

In this same vein did Obidoa and Onwurah (2006) in their survey study asked school principals to assess counsellors in the job areas they perform best and poorly. The analysis of data obtained revealed the following mean scores for each of the duties – vocational service (79.01%), orientation (69.29%), information (60.62%), educational service (57.71%), follow up (57.42%) personal-social (48.88%) and referral (31.4%).

The performance of counselling psychologists in school settings has, however, beclouded people from understanding the fact that they could also function effectively in some other settings apart from educational institution. The available relevant literature has shown that a lot of research works have been documented on different perception of people about counselling.

However, a critical look at all these studies revealed that they are mostly restricted to educational institution. Little or no extensive work has been carried out to relate counselling functions to other work set-

tings. This is the more reason why this peculiar research work shifts counsellor's attention from educationally related research and aims at finding out the perception of counselling in other work setting. Adeyemo (2002) observes that unlike in the past when counselling psychologists are restricted to educational and clinical settings the call for the extension of counselling psychologist services to business and organisational settings has gained momentum for quite a long time. He further point out that the negative perception of the field is waning as a result of recognition being accorded it by government and non government organizations.

With this increasing recognition this study is, therefore, designed to generate appropriate data base so as to permit judgment on the relevance of counselling psychologists' functions in a broadcasting corporation company. It is hoped that the outcome of the study would enable the general populace realise the relevancies of counselling psychologists to different settings thereby enabling them to maximize the advantages therefrom. It would equally help professional counsellors identify areas in which they require their professional services.

Research Question

With a view to attain the stated objectives of this study a single but multidimensional research question is posed to give direction to the study:

(a) To what extend would the following professional duties of Counselling Psychologists relevant to the broadcasting corporation activities?

- ❖ making decisions that are crucial to organizational development;
- ❖ making accurate prediction of job performance and work relationship;
- ❖ motivating superior performance and improve substandard work;
- ❖ solving matrimonial related problems that could hinder productive enterprise;
- ❖ management of workers welfare;
- ❖ resolving conflict situations;

- ❖ positively influencing employer and employee behaviours that are detrimental to productivity;
- ❖ humanizing organizational life in management;
- ❖ assisting in research and feasibility work;
- ❖ using psychological principles to prepare workers for redeployment and retirement;
- ❖ determining the appropriate in-service training for employer and employee;
- ❖ providing educational and vocational information to employer, employee and their dependant;
- ❖ placement of individual in different job aspects;
- ❖ refer workers to professionals who can be of help in solving their problems;
- ❖ heading a psychology clinic in the corporation;
- ❖ communicate management decisions to employee effectively;
- ❖ assist new employee adjust to self and others in the corporation;

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The study consist of 102 subjects (54 male and 48 female) purposively selected from Broadcasting corporation of Oyo State which comprises of A.M. Radio Station, F.M. on Radio Station and television station. The participants were used for the study because they are not less than level 12 officer in the broadcasting house and have knowledge of counselling psychology duties. Their age ranged between thirty-eight and sixty years with the mean age of 37.32 and standard deviation of 9.11.

The measuring instrument was an investigative inventory designed by the researcher. It consists of two page form requiring approximately ten minutes to complete. Section A sought demographic information such as age, gender, qualification, marital status, place of study, knowledge of counselling,. Section B, consists of a 17 – item on 5 point Likert rating scale. Each item on the rating scale represented an activity that could be performed by counselling psychologists. The reliability index of the instrument was 0.85 determined by using the split-half reliability

method.

The instrument used for the study was physically administered to the respondents by the researcher with assistance from a colleague. Two hundred inventories were distributed out of which a total of one hundred and twenty-three were returned. Out of those returned only one hundred and two were adequately filled.

Data Analysis

The responses from the respondents were subjected to descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and rank- order of items. The decision point was put at 3.00. Consequently, a mean rating of less than 3.00 signifies disagreement with the statement while a mean rating of 3.0 or more is regarded to be an agreement with the item. Differently put, a mean rating of 3.0 or more implies that the participants agree that the stated professional duty of the Counselling Psychologists is relevant to broadcasting corporation.

Results

In accordance with the research questions which guided the study the result of the data analysis is presented in the Table 1 below:

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Relevance of Counselling Psychologists Professional Duties to Broadcasting Corporation

(N = 102)

S/N	ITEM	X	SD	REMARK	RANK
1.	Counselling Psychologists assist in making decisions that are crucial to organizational development like promotion of employee, rewarding employee and relieving employee of their job.	3.45	1.34	Agreed	1 st
2.	Counseling psychologists make accurate prediction of job performance and work relationship about individuals in a professionally ethical way.	3.31	1.33	Agree	3 rd
3.	Counselling Psychologists motivate superior performance and improve substandard work.	3.40	1.30	Agree	2 nd
4.	Counselling Psychologists assist in solving matrimonial related problems that can hinder individual from performing effectively.	3.20	1.34	Agree	6 th
5.	Counselling Psychologists can adequately handle workers welfare because they are well acquainted with their problems.	3.18	1.32	Agree	7 th
6.	Counselling Psychologists assist in resolving conflict in any establishment.	3.00	1.25	Agree	15 th

S/N	ITEM	X	SD	REMARK	RANK
7	Counselling Psychologists assist in changing and influencing undesirable behaviour of the employer and employee that can be detrimental to productivity.	3.05	1.20	Agree	10th
8	Counselling Psychologists are tools to be used in humanizing organizational life in management.	3.00	1.32	Agree	15 th
9	Counselling Psychologists can assist in research and feasibility work.	2.75	1.30	Disagree	17 th
10	Counselling Psychologists can use psychological principles to prepare workers for redeployment and retirement.	3.03	1.22	Agree	13
11	Counselling Psychologists can determine the appropriate in-service training needed by the employer and employee.	3.02	1.28	Agree	14
12	Counselling Psychologists can provide necessary educational and vocational information to the employer, employees and their dependants.	3.12	1.30	Agree	8 th
13	In performing vocational responsibilities Counselling Psychologists can plan, place an individual in different job aspects and make necessary follow-up.	3.10	1.24	Agree	9 th
14	Counselling Psychologists can identify and refer workers to other personnel such as medical doctor, audiologists, lawyers, etc who can render invaluable services.	3.04	1.19	Agree	12 th
15	Counselling Psychology clinic should be in all establishments headed by a Counselling Psychologist and dealing with psycho-social problems of employers and employee.	3.26	1.32	Agree	5 th
16	Counselling Psychologists can communicate effectively the management decisions to workers because of their interpersonal relations with them.	3.28	1.28	Agree	4 th
17	Counselling Psychologists assist new employee adjust to self and others in the world of work.	3.05	1.33	Agree	10 th

*Decision Point X= 3.00

It is evident from Table 1 above that the participants agreed that all the professional duties of Counselling Psychologists identified by this study are relevant to broadcasting corporation except item nine which focuses on research function. Further analysis showed that these professional duties are relevant at diverse intensity. The most relevant duty to the broadcasting corporation is making crucial decision for organizational development. This is closely followed by motivating superior performance and improves substandard work and makes accurate prediction of job performance respectively. It is however the consensus of the partici-

pants that research work (item 9) is not relevant to broadcasting corporation.

Discussion

The primary purpose of the study is to determine counselling psychologist duties that are directly relevant to broadcasting corporation. The analysis of the data indicated that sixteen of the seventeen duties were relevant to organizational set up of broadcasting corporation. This outcome confirmed the fact that counselling psychologists work settings extended beyond educational and clinical settings (Adeyemo, 2002). Counselling is a helping profession and as such their services would be relevant to organizational set up. A helping profession in the words of Gibson and Mitchell (1986) is described as one in which the members are not only specially trained but also licensed or certificated to perform unique and needed services for fellow human beings. Since broadcasting corporation is made up of human beings it is not surprising that the services of counselling psychologists would be relevant.

The fact that the ability of the counselling psychologists to make accurate decision; motivate superior performance at work; and make accurate prediction on job performance in that order top the hierarchy of the duties that are relevant only support the role definition of psychology practitioners (of which counselling psychologist is not excluded) proposed by American Psychological Association (1967). The association stated that the practice of psychology is:

rendering to individuals, groups, organizations, or the public a psychological

*service involving the application of principles, methods, and procedures of understanding, predicting and influencing behaviour such as the principles pertaining to learning, perception, motivation, thinking, emotions and interpersonal relationships...*p1098

The analysis of the data also shows that the participants did not agree that carrying out research is relevant to their organizational set up. The reason for this result might be that they viewed research as academic matter which has no direct link with their operations. The contributions of research could not be underestimated if accurate decisions, motivation and prediction are to be made by the counselling psychologists.

Recommendations

On the premise of the outcome of this study the following recommendations are made:

- Counselling psychologists should intensify their efforts at educating the general populace on their relevance to other work settings apart from educational setting. This could be achieved via sponsor programmes on print and electronic media outlet.
- Government and non government agencies to employ counselling psychologists in other work settings apart from educational and clinical settings.

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