

Students and Staff Awareness on Availability and Accessibility of Counselling Resources in Osun State College of Education, Ilesha

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Abstract: *Counseling resources are vital to achieving sustainable counselling services. Counselling services help students and staff meet their needs in several areas of development, such as academic, career, and personal. Counselling resources are broadly categorized as human and materials which include, professional counsellor, filing cabinets, psychological test batteries, career album, information boards, counselling offices, counselling laboratory, projectors, television sets, and other electronic materials to mention a few. This study examined the availability and accessibility of counselling resources in tertiary institutions in Osun State. The study employed a descriptive research design of survey type. A sample size of 180 (150 students and 30 staff) was selected using the stratified random sampling technique from Osun State College of Education, Ilesha. Findings revealed that the top available counselling resources are the information Board, record book/file folder ranks, computer for operations and data storage ranks, reference books, and air condition/fan (AC) while bibliotherapy books, online counseling service, and two-way mirrors ranked low. This indicates that there is a high level of material counselling and a low level of human counselling resources. It is also evident that the staffs have a higher score than the student in the level of awareness on the availability and accessibility of counselling resources and the socio-demographic factors that influence the availability and accessibility of counselling resources include gender, religion, and occupation while age and qualification do not significantly influence the level of awareness on the availability and accessibility of counselling resources. The study, therefore, recommends an urgent need for proper sensitization on the benefits of accessing available counselling resources and that the institution management prioritizes the supply of more human resources in the counselling department.*

Keywords: Counselling Services, Counselling Resources, Awareness, Availability, Accessibility,

Introduction

Resource is anything useful to achieve a particular objective. To achieve the aim and objectives of counselling serves, resources are needed. Counselling resources include all human and material resources that helps qualified social workers, psychologists, guidance counsellors and other qualified personnel to perform effectively. Human resources and material resources are required for effective and standard counseling service functioning. Human resources include the person of professional counselor/therapist to student's ratio, a profession counsellor to 250 students according to American School Counsellor Association (ASCA) recommendation and the counsellors spend at least 80% of their time working directly with or indirectly with the students. Others human resources are school teachers and administrators who work together with the counsellor as committee members for counseling programs. Basically, professional counselors, filing cabinets, psychological test strips, career albums, information boards, counseling centers, counseling labs, projectors, televisions, and other technological devices are all good examples of counseling resources (Anyamene, Nwokolo and Anyachebelu, 2012).

A human resource like a counselor is taught to have the drive to join the difficult client's environment, to self-disclose to the client in a comfortable manner, and he is intended to be disciplined enough to assist the client voice their issues clearly. In order to make it very successful and efficient, there is need to sustainably maintain the counselor-student ratio. Kolo and Adamu (2001) noted that in order to prevent any conflicts of interest, guidance teachers should make sure that other beneficiaries are aware of and understand their obligations. Teachers of guidance should be aware of the best resources and avenues for communicating on the many difficulties impacting their students. Progress may be slowed down by an inability to communicate and refer problems to the appropriate beneficiaries. Ebgule (2002) noted that school counsellors, also known as a guidance counsellors, offer academic, career, college, and social advice and guidance to children in primary schools through tertiary institutions. A school counsellor might assist a student with social challenges such as dealing with bullying, or might help a student find a tutor, or deal with problems at home. Some of the major skills needed by school counsellors include, good listening skills, empathy, genuineness, unconditional positive regard, concreteness etc.

In some instances, alternative counsellors/para-counsellors are made available due to shortage of trained counsellors. In this situation, some teachers who undergo training in some aspects of principles and practice of guidance and counselling are appointed in the secondary schools to perform the duties of a guidance counsellor (Haruna, 2015). Most of these Para-counsellors only offer career guidance to students and not all aspects of guidance and counselling. School psychologists as an important human counselling resources offers services related with their training and experience most especially as related to child development,

learning, learner-evaluation, and interpersonal relationships to help counsellors and teachers gain a greater understanding of their pupils, especially those who are exceptional (Wamocho, Karugu, & Nwoye, 2018). Although in some schools psychologists serve as fulltime members of the guidance department, it is more common for psychological services to be available to individual schools as the need for them arises. The chief responsibility of a school psychologist is to administer, correct, and interpret the results of whatever standardized instrument of evaluation are used to determine the learning readiness of pupils or to discover something about their interests, attitudes, or behavior trends. Other human counselling resources include the psychiatrist who helps students and staff to tackle deep emotional difficulties, and in some specific situations vocational and placement counsellors are available to students to help them clear the air on their interest and aspirations when it come to choosing the right vocation.

The material resources are facilities that help to provide good counselling services. Kolo and Adamu (2001) noted that students will use the counselling service when an adequate, comfortable and private room is available for counseling. Spacious rooms are needed for group guidance. Conference rooms or halls within the establishment could be used for such purposes. Availability of adequate furniture, air condition/fan, two-ways mirror, projector and internet facilities. The availability of the necessary facilities also has a positive impact on teachers and parents, and they should provide adequate space, privacy and accessibility, which are the cornerstones of a good quality counseling service. Some material resources are very important to provide a basic service. Furniture, which includes chairs, tables for both writing and counselling. It also includes shelves for books or magazines and special chairs for special clients like children and handicap clients. Electronic materials are also important of a good counselling experience. Information board which is important for disseminating information could also be used as a psycho-educational instrument for the community especially where the guidance program has specific activities for the school. Since the world is also moving digital which helps data and information easy to store and retrieve, computer for operation and data storage is also important. Besley (2002) opined that computers have become indispensable for the effective functioning of counselling departments, career centres and libraries. Their integration has brought a higher level of service to both staff and users. For staff, word processing, desktop publishing, database management and Internet capabilities have dramatically improved administrative, promotional and client services. For clients, access to software and, of course, to the Internet, has added new dimensions to their career and educational planning. All these resources are important and would help provide desired counselling services in schools and tertiary institutions (Ozioko, 2014). However, it is one thing for the resources to be available and another for the people who needs it to be aware that they are available and that they can have access to it. It has been observed that even in schools where the resources are available; the counselling resources are hardly used or exploited the way it should. This therefore constitutes the need for this paper. Findings in this research will help school administrators and institution management to see the condition of counselling resources most especially in Osun State College of Education and the level of awareness to the availability and accessibility of these resources so that sustainable measures can be taken to correct the problem(s).

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the level of awareness of students and staff level of awareness on availability and accessibility of counselling resources in Osun State College of Education, Ilesha. The specific objectives are to:

- i. highlight the available counselling resources;
- ii. investigate the level of awareness of staff and students on availability and accessibility of counselling resources;
- iii. identify the socio-demographic factors that influence the level of awareness of staff and students on availability and accessibility of counselling resources in Osun State College of Education, Ilesha.

Hypotheses

Socio-demographic factor(s) does not significantly influence the level of awareness of staff and students on availability and accessibility of counseling resources.

Methodology

The descriptive research design of survey type was employed in the study. The population for this study is the staff and students of Osun State College of Education, Ilesha. Primary data was used for this study which was obtained from a total of 180 respondents. The stratified sampling technique was used to obtain the representative sample. The sample is representative and was selected from the 5 schools in the institution (School of Arts and Social Sciences, Education, Languages, Sciences, and Vocational and Technical Education. 36 sample were selected from each school (30 students and 6 staff) which makes a total of 150 students and 30 staff in all. This sample was selected to include both male and female respondents so as to ensure proper representation. A well-structured questionnaire was designed to elicit for data used for the study. Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Simple percentage and frequency counts were used to describe the characteristics of the variables while Analysis of Variance was employed to test the stated hypothesis at at 0.05 level of significance; the results were presented in tables.

Results

Table 1: Available Counselling Resources

S/N	Items	Available		I Don't Know		Not Available		Rank
		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
1	Professional counselors	103	57.2	65	36.1	12	6.7	8
2	Counselling room for one on one	92	51.1	65	36.1	23	12.8	11
3	Counselling room for group counselling	90	50	67	37.2	23	12.8	12
4	Counselling Laboratory	77	42.8	70	38.9	33	18.3	16
5	Online Counselling Service	57	31.7	74	41.1	49	27.2	20
6	Adequate Furniture	102	56.7	58	32.2	20	11.1	9
7	Storage Facilities (filing cabinet where	90	50	57	31.7	33	18.3	13
8	Air Condition/ Fan (AC)	118	65.6	40	22.2	22	12.2	5
9	Information Board	152	84.4	17	9.4	11	6.1	1
10	Tape Recorder	69	38.3	71	39.4	40	22.3	18
11	Consent Form	75	41.7	52	28.9	53	29.4	17
12	Record book/ File folder	144	80	16	8.9	20	11.3	2
13	Reference Books	122	67.8	27	15	31	17.2	4
14	Bibliotherapy Books	66	36.7	59	32.8	55	30.6	19
15	Two-ways Mirrors	49	27.2	71	39.4	60	33.4	21
16	Dictionary and Career Album	116	64.4	34	18.9	30	16.7	6
17	Computer for Operations and Data storage	130	72.2	30	16.7	20	11.2	3
18	Internet Facilities	113	62.8	46	25.6	21	11.7	7
19	Radio, Television and Video sets	83	46.1	73	40.6	24	13.4	15
20	Projector	94	52.2	59	32.8	27	15	10
21	Psychological Test Batteries (Mental Ability tests, Achievement tests, Personality Tests, Aptitude tests etc)	90	50	55	30.6	35	19.4	14

Table 1 shows results on the availability of counselling resources. A close look at the top available resources shows that, availability of information Board ranks 1st with 84.4%, record book/file folder ranks 2nd with 80% on availability, computer for operations and data storage ranks 3rd with 72.2 level of availability, reference books ranks 4th with 67.8% level of availability, air condition/fan (AC) ranks 5th with 65.6% level of availability. Furthermore, the dictionary ranks 6th, internet facilities ranks 7th and professional counsellors rank 8th. At the lower end of the ranking bibliotherapy books ranked (19th) with 36.7% on the level of availability, online counselling service ranks 20th with 31.7% of availability while two-way mirrors had the least ranking (21st) with 27.2% availability. From the foregoing, it is evident that there is a moderate level of availability of material counselling resources in the institution but there is a low level of human counselling resources or professional counsellors.

Table 2: Students and Staff Level of awareness on Availability and Accessibility of Counselling Resources

Items	Students		Staff	
	<i>freq.</i>	%	<i>freq.</i>	%
High (>2.50)	24	16.0	16	53.3
Moderate (1.5 – 2.5)	52	34.7	13	43.4
Low (1.0 – 1.49)	74	49.3	4	13.3
Total	150	100.0	30	100.0
	Mean = 1.73		Mean = 2.57	

The result presented in Table 2 on students' and staff's level of awareness of the availability and accessibility of counselling resources revealed that 16% of the respondents have a high level of awareness of the availability and accessibility of counselling resources, 34.7% had a moderate level of awareness while 49.3% have a low level of awareness on availability and accessibility of counselling resources. On the other hand, 53.3% of the staff have a high level of awareness, 43.4% had a moderate level of awareness and 13.3% have a low level of awareness of the availability and accessibility of counselling resources. Furthermore, the results revealed that students have a mean score of 1.73 on the level of awareness which falls in the moderate level of awareness while the staff had a mean score of 2.57 which falls in the high level of awareness. It implies here that the staffs have a high level of awareness of the availability and accessibility of counselling resources than the students.

Table 3: ANOVA Summary Table on socio-demographic factors influencing the level of awareness of staff and students on the availability and accessibility of counselling resources

Variables	SS	df	MS	F	Prob.
Age	5.3	2	2.65	3.95	.320
Gender	21.6	1	21.6	32.2	.011
Religion	15.7	2	7.85	11.7	.005
Qualification	12.1	3	4.03	6.01	.217
Occupation	34.2	1	34.2	51.1	.012
Error	114.0	170	0.67		
Total	221.3	179			

In Table 3, the ANOVA summary table on the socio-demographic factors influencing the level of awareness of staff and students on the availability and accessibility of counselling resources revealed that gender ($F(1, 170) = 32.2, p < 0.05$), religion ($F(2, 170) = 11.7, p < 0.05$), and occupation ($F(1, 170) = 51.1, p < 0.05$) are factors influencing the level of awareness of staff and students on the availability and accessibility of counseling resources while age ($F(1, 170) = 3.95, p > 0.05$) and qualification ($F(3, 170) = 4.03, p > 0.05$) do not significantly influence the level of awareness of staff and students on the availability and accessibility of staff in Osun State College of Education, Ilesha.

Conclusion

The study examined the level of awareness of students and staff on the availability and accessibility of counselling resources in Osun State College of Education, Ilesha. It was revealed from the findings that the top available counselling resources are information Board, record book/file folder ranks, computer for operations and data storage ranks, reference books, air condition/fan (AC) while bibliotherapy books, online counselling service and two-way mirrors ranked low. This indicates that there is a high level of material counselling and a low level of human counselling resources. It is also evident that the staffs have higher score than the student in the level of awareness on availability and accessibility of counselling resources. This implies that the staff could have more access to the counselling resources than the students. Lastly, it was revealed that the socio-demographic factors that influence the availability and accessibility of counselling resources include gender, religion and occupation while age and qualification does not significantly influence the level of awareness on the availability and accessibility of counselling resources. There is an indication that there is a difference in the level of awareness on the availability and accessibility based on gender (male and female), religion (Islamic, Christianity or Traditional), and Occupation (staff and students). The study, therefore, recommends an urgent need for proper sensitization on the benefits of accessing available counselling resources and that the institution management prioritizes the supply of more human resources in the counselling department.

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