

---

**PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL COUNSELLORS IN  
COUNSELLING: ANAMBRA AND ENUGU STATES OF NIGERIA IN FOCUS**

**Dr. John O. E. Egbo**

Department of Educational Foundations Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University,  
Abakaliki

---

**ABSTRACT:** *The study sought to determine the performance assessment of counsellors in counselling as a school guidance service in Nigerian secondary schools. One research question and one hypothesis were formulated to guide the descriptive survey study. The population of the study was 47010 respondents out of which multistage sampling technique was used to select a sample of 739 respondents, being 45 supervisors and 675 SS II students. A 4 point researcher made 7 items questionnaire tagged Performance Assessment of School Counsellors in Counselling (PASCIC), with a reliability index of 0.73, Cronbach alpha was used to elicit responses after which 720 copies were duly filled and returned. Mean and t-test at 0.05 level of significance were used to test the research question and the hypothesis respectively. Findings reveal that Nigerian counsellors, in the face or all odds are proficient in counselling which would be traceable to cultures and traditions of counselling by elderly people in Nigeria to the younger ones.*

**KEYWORDS:** Performance, Assessment, Counsellors, School – Guidance and Counselling

---

## INTRODUCTION

Counselling is the wheel upon which guidance programs rotate. It is the nucleus of all guidance services and is principally a tool through which ideas and principles are shared between clients and counsellors in order to induce maximum adjustment among people. The implication is that without counseling, all school guidance programmes may have been grounded. Counseling could be individualized or in group and goes a long way to signify the essence and success of any guidance programmes. It involves a one-on-one or one-on-group interaction between client/s and the counsellor; though Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has now made it possible for people to counsel across distances. It is principally designed to orchestrate the adjustment of clients through related assistance meant to bring the desired wholesome functionality of the troubled clients. This assistance may be in forms of vocational, educational, social, recreational, emotional and or moral. In effect, it connotes a relationship of confidence, trust and dependence between two people: the counsellor and the client.

Thus, Roux in Anagbogu (2002) defines counselling as a dynamic and purposeful relationship between two people in which procedures vary with the nature of the students' needs but in which there is always mutual participation by the counsellor and the students with the focus of self clarification and self determination by the students. It is a personalized process of guidance programmes. And that is why Olayinka (2003), describes counselling as a relationship characterized by mutual respect, effective communication, genuine and complete acceptance of

the client by the counsellor, and concentration on the ideals, problems and feelings of the client. Chauhan (2009) listed out the major characteristics of counselling to include:

- i. Counselling is a person- to- person relationship with interaction both between a counsellor and a counsellee and is highly confidential.
- ii. There is mutual participation in the process of counselling
- iii. The counselling process is structured around the self needs of the counsellee. (and)
- iv. The main emphasis in counselling is on self-direction and self acceptance.

It is highly believed that the process of counselling involves internal and external variables. Internal aspects of a counsellee's life like beliefs, values, attitudes and needs greatly account for his behaviour. The external variables include the total environmental influences like home, school, society and persons like the counsellor also, influence people's behaviour (Chauhan, 2009). This forms the basis for the mutual interaction between a counsellor and a client called counselling. Varieties of ideas and concepts have been used to explain what counselling is all about. Patterson in Egbo (2009) excluded and delineated what counselling is not:

- Giving information (though information may be given in counselling)
- Influencing attitudes, beliefs or behaviour by means of persuading, leading or forcing.
- Giving advice, suggestions and recommendations.
- Influencing behaviour by compulsion: the use of force or coercion
- Selection and assignment of individuals' interviewing while interviewing is involved, it is synonymous.

On the hand, Shertzer and Stone (1981) identified exclusively what counselling is all about:

- a process in which the counsellor assists the counsellee to make interpretations of facts relating to a plan or adjustment which he needs to make
- a process which takes place in a one-one-one relationship between an individual, troubled by problems that he cannot cope along with and a professional worker whose training and experience have qualified him to help others reach solutions to various types of personal difficulties.
- the interaction which
  - ❖ occurs between two individuals- counsellor and a counsellee which takes place in a professional setting
  - ❖ is initiated and maintained as a means of facilitating change in the behaviour of the client.
- A process by which a troubled person (the client) is helped to feel and behave in a more personally satisfying manner through interaction with an uninvolved person (the counsellor), who provides information and reactions that stimulate the client to develop behaviours which enables him to deal more effectively with himself and his environment.

In all, counselling is a helping process involving human interaction that ensues between the counsellor and the client, meant to bring about a more fulfilling; and satisfactory living of the client. Ifelunni (1997) maintains that the counsellor must be a trained expert who is exposed to enough psychology; test construction, practicum, as well as theories that are needed to understand clients' problems and give assistance. Accordingly, the counsellor is a ready, patient and sympathetic listener, (Sofenwa, 1992); an engineer of human relationships (Patterson in Ipaye, 1992): must be able to understand and predict human behaviour (Ifelunni, 1997); is a

professional who through diagnosing, planning, predicting, interpreting and evaluating, provides, educational, personal and vocational assistance to clients (Anagbogu, 2002); and is reserved as a term for those with professional trainings with skills in helping people understand their situations, classify their values and make informed decisions for which they assume responsibility (Emenogu in Ofojebe, 2003).

Guilford in Egbo (2009) listed a ten point behaviour and important attributes of counsellors to include regularity to school, devotion to duty, friendliness, empathic understanding, moral uprightness, readiness to learn, adaptability, dynamism and ability to accommodate, respectable appearance and keeping of secrets. Uba in Ofojebe (2003), wrote that school counsellors embark on varieties of roles and functions; diagnoses, assessment of individuals potentialities, information services, students orientation, counselling, individual counseling, group listeners, career education remediation, in-service training, research programmes and drop out. The school counsellors function on the school guidance services which include orientation, information counselling, appraisal placement, referral, evaluation, research and community services.

In the face of these life ideals, roles and functions of counsellors, it is feared as it is speculated that students leave school as moral bankrupts and people who cannot defend their academic standards. There is need therefore to really assess the proficiency of the secondary school counselors whose tasks include to run and organize the school guidance services, as the programmes are as good as those that man them. This brings to mind inferences that bother on both the appointed supervisors of Guidance and Counselling services in schools, the principals as well as the students who are not only beneficiaries, but through whom the impact of counselors roles and functions could be determined. These processes run across rural as well as urban areas; and, are experienced by both supervisors as well as students of various ages and sexes.

### **Statement of Problems**

Students who graduate from our secondary schools appear to show not enough successes with regards to the broad goals and objectives of the school system under the nose of the school counsellors. One would then ask, "What is the performance assessment of counsellors as maladjustment abounds in our students in areas of academics, vocational orientation, and personal social spheres of life?" Ofojebe (2003) writes that counsellors lack of skills, experience and knowledge obviously run counter to the overall objectives of Nigeria's guidance and counselling oriented new educational system. This gives academic impetus that counsellors should be assessed as to ascertain their proficiency in the business of counseling in our schools.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Specifically, the purpose of the study is to assess the performance assessment of counsellors in counselling in the study area.

### **Significance of the Study**

This assessment of the competencies of school counsellors would be highly advantageous to the society, school administrators, Ministry of Education, Students, parents, schools, churches and even the counsellors themselves. Results of this study will help in recommending means of

enhancing and complementing both training and professional practices by counsellors in our secondary schools, and to the benefit of the wider society.

## Research Questions

What is the performance assessment of counsellors in counselling as a school guidance service?

## Hypothesis

Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant difference in the mean responses of counsellor supervisors and students on the performance assessment of counsellors in counselling services.

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted an evaluation based descriptive survey design aimed at examining the performance assessment of practicing school counsellors in Anambra and Enugu states of Nigeria. Nineteen (19) and thirty (30) counsellor supervisors are based in Anambra and Enugu states respectively while forty seven thousand (47,000) SSII students, 2014/ 2015 academic session, in Anambra and Enugu states also join to make up the population. Multi stage and simple random sampling techniques were used to draw 700 students in the study area in addition to the 39 counsellor supervisors. Thus 730 becomes the sample. A four point validated instrument with a reliability alpha coefficient of 0.73 was used to collate responses. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data generated while t-test at 0.05 level of significance was used to analyze the hypothesis.

## RESULT

### Research Question

What is the performance assessment of counsellors in counselling as a school guidance services?

**Table 1: Mean rating of supervisors and students on the performance assessment of secondary school counselors in counselling**

S/N	Questionnaire Items	X	SD	Decision
1	Assistance to students in providing solutions to their academic problems	2.94	0.84	Good
2	Provision of assistance in solving students' personal-social problems	3.01	0.82	Good
3	Assisting students in resolving vocational cases/problems	3.10	0.78	Good
4	Proficiency in the use of groups in counselling	2.94	0.84	Good
5	Proficiency in individualized counselling	3.08	0.96	Good
6	Application of good counselling techniques	2.90	0.96	Good
7	Creating friendly relationships	3.13	0.87	Good
<b>Grand mean</b>		<b>3.01</b>		

With a grand mean of 3.01, **table 1** shows that the performance of school counsellors in counseling, as a school guidance service is good.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>** There is no significant difference in the responses of supervisors and students on the performance assessment of counselors in counselling as a school guidance services.

**Table 2: T-test analysis of supervisor and students mean responses on the performance assessment of school counselors in counseling.**

S/N	Items	Respondents	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
1.	Assistance to students in providing solutions to their academic problems	Supervisors	39	3.07	0.95	718	1.12	1.96	<b>Not significant</b>
		Students	681	2.92	0.84				
2	Provision of assistance in solving students' personal-social problems	Supervisors	39	2.94	0.94	718	1.23	1.96	<b>Significant</b>
		Students	681	3.10	0.77				
3	Assisting students in resolving vocational problems	Supervisors	39	2.94	0.94	718	1.23	1.96	<b>Not significant</b>
		Students	681	3.10	0.77				
4	Proficiency in the use of groups in counseling	Supervisors	39	2.38	1.35	718	4.30	1.96	<b>Significant</b>
		Students	681	3.12	0.92				
5	Proficiency in individual counseling	Supervisors	39	2.38	1.35	718	4.69	1.96	<b>Significant</b>
		Students	681	3.12	0.92				
6	Application of good counseling techniques	Supervisors	39	2.66	1.30	718	1.69	1.96	<b>Not significant</b>
		Students	681	2.91	0.87				
7	Creating friendly relationships.	Supervisors	39	3.33	0.66	718	1.47	1.96	<b>Not significant</b>
		Students	681	3.12	0.88				

**t – test value 2.58**

**Significant**

Since the obtained mean of t-calculated is 2.58 which is more than the t-critical of 1.96, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean responses of supervisors and students in the performance assessment of secondary school counsellors in counselling, as a school guidance service is therefore rejected.

## DISCUSSION

Findings from table 1 which has a grand mean of 3.01, reveal that counsellors are good in counselling as a school guidance programme. Attahiru in Egbo (2009) lends credence to the above, when he revealed that Nigerian school counsellors are good in supervising the studies of individual students, monitoring their academic progress at regular interval, functioning as resource persons to teachers in handling deviant behaviours met in the classrooms, assisting teachers in identifying students with special abilities and needs and keeping records of students

progress. Arbukle in Anagbogu (2002), points out that the broad objectives of counselling hinges on helping the individual to develop more realistic views of self.

With a grand mean of 3.01 as shown in **table 1**, the school counsellors were assessed and adjudged to be good in providing solutions to personal and social problems of students (3.01); resolving vocational problems (3.01), proficiency in the use of groups in counselling (2.94); individual counselling (3.08); use of and application of good counselling techniques (2.90) and, in increasing good counselling relationships (3.13). In line with the above, Ofojebe (2003), affirms that Nigerian counsellors easily develop specialized kinds of human relationships, that enable the goals of counselling and other related objectives to be reached. This is as a result of the fact that he views counselling as a helping process by which individuals or groups are assisted by competent counsellors in solving their problems; some of which may be personal, or in groups involving social educational, health, financial vocational and recreational activities. In all, the result is indicative of the zeal and willingness to perform counselling duties in the face of Nigeria's distressed economy has counselling is recognized as an instrument for personal development, actualization and adjustment. Olayinka in Ogunyemi (2003) infers that Nigerian school counsellors excel in helping the client to take honest look at self; become aware of the potentials and weaknesses, compare alternatives in the light of existing facts and information, and then reach decisions. This is because, counselling is instituted in schools to guide human activities of thinking and responding, in a bid to make the concerned people fully adjusted and functional.

## CONCLUSION

Counselling is an instrument for change that transforms an individual or group to desired behavioural trends and characteristics. It is for self development in areas of academics, vocational and personal social spheres of life. Hence, the significant good performance of counsellors in counselling is an emphatic way to show that counselling is the wheel upon which other school guidance activities revolve.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is feared that many school principals feel threatened by the presence of counsellors. This should change for co-operative work schedules and relationships. Support should therefore be given to school counselling in all ramifications.

## REFERENCES

- Anagbogu, M.A. (2002) *Foundations of guidance and counselling for colleges and universities*. Awka: Ikenga Publishing Company.
- Chauhan, S.S. (2009) *Principles and techniques of guidance*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, Pvt Ltd.
- Egbo, J.O.E (2009) Performance assessment of secondary school counsellors in Anambra and Enugu states of Nigerian. *An unpublished Ph.D thesis*: Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki.

- Ifelunni, I.C.S.(1997).*Psychometrics and ethical considerations in counselling*.  
Enugu:Autocentury Publishing Company
- Ipaye, T. (1992) *Guidance and Counselling practices*. Ile-Ife. UNIFE Press.
- Ofojebe, C.C. (2003) Assesmentof competencies possessed by school guidance consellers in Anambra State. *A Ph.D dissertation*: NAU, Awka.
- Ogunyemi B. (2003). The counsellor and other school personnel: practical collaboration for quality education. *The counsellor* 19 (2)103-112.
- Olayinka, M.S. (2003) Activation of guidance and counseling and their roles in education. *Readings in career guidance and counselling*. Lagos. Federal Ministry of Education, Press.
- Shertzer, B. and Stone, S.C. (1981) *Fundamentals of guidance*. Boston: Houghton Muffin Company.
- Sofenwa, L.A. (1997). The role of a counsellor in disciplinary problems in secondary schools. *Careers* 4 (1 &2) 1-10.