Undergraduate students' differential performance in introductory course to guidance and counselling at Delta State University, Abraka

Ossai, Peter Agbadobi Uloku

Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.
Email: agbadobipeter@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examined the differential performance of guidance and counselling and non-guidance and counselling students. The two categories of students received tuition in EDUCATION 402, an introductory course in guidance and counselling. Additionally, guidance and counselling students took other counselling courses in pursuance of their bachelor's degree. The counterparts from the departments of Educational Management and Foundations as well as Library and Information Science, relied on the knowledge of the introductory course in guidance and counselling. Descriptive survey design was employed in the study. A sample size of 121 students (50 from guidance and counselling department, 32 from Educational Management and Foundations, 39 from Library and Information Science) was drawn from the population of final year students (2020/2021 session) Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka, A 3-item essay test items was the instrument the students responded to. The statistical tool was the independent samples t-test. The data analysed showed statistical significance in favour of guidance and counselling students. This is attributable to their knowledge of other courses in guidance and counselling. It is hereby recommended that students from other departments should be encouraged to take more courses in counselling to enhance their academic performances.

Keywords: Course, Differential, Guidance, Introductory, Items, Non-guidance, Performance, Students, Test.

Contents

Contribution of this paper to the Literature
The study contributes to existing literature by examining the differential performance of guidance and counselling and non-guidance and counselling students.

1. Introduction

One of the characteristics of continuous assessment is that it is guidance-oriented, Federal Ministry of Education (1995). In other words, it is diagnostic (Egbule, 2005) since it gradually evaluates learners' attributes and reveals their academic strength and weakness. Apart from academic work, focus is also on non-cognitive learning outcomes such as integrity, punctuality, cleanliness, respect for people and other forms of human behaviour (Okorodudu, 2012).

Ossai (2014) posited that many teachers treat information relating to students' affective qualities with levity and "this will not help in moulding the character of our youths who are the leaders of tomorrow" (p. 24). It is known that the developmental problems of adolescents in Nigerian schools are increasing alarmingly (Obi & Oji, 2014). According to these authors, counselling becomes very important to arrest the situation. This underscores the fact that guidance and counselling has important objectives in our education system. Mishra and Chaudhary (2018) summarised the aims of counselling. According to the authors, counselling geared towards bringing about the desired changes in the individual for self-relisation, assisting in problem-solving through intimate personal relationship, helping students in making the adjustments that are necessary for better academic pursuits and social life, and assisting individuals to achieve positive mental health.

No doubt these objectives are tailored towards making learners succeed in academics and in general, society. It has been reported, (Agi & Okirigwe, 2018; Bello, Yunusa, Yawudima, & Ishaya, 2014; Renuka, Devaki, Madhavan, & Saikumar, 2013; Ugoji, 2008) that guidance and counseling services impact on learners academic performances.

Several studies have also shown that the provision of guidance and counselling services positively influences students' learning outcomes. Tuchili and Ndhlovu (2016) studied the effect of guidance and counselling services on students' interpersonal study, vocational and problem-solving skills in some public universities in Zambia. The objective of the study was to investigate whether students who received guidance and counselling services performed better than those who were denied the services. A sample of 105 students was used in the study. Interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions constitute the instrument employed in the study. Data analysis showed that there was a statistically significant difference between students who received guidance and counselling services and those who did not. The study also showed that students who enjoyed guidance and counselling services were better developed in the interpersonal study, vocational and problem-solving skills than their counterparts in the control group.

Also Salgong, Ngumi, and Chege (2016) examined the role of guidance and counselling in enhancing students discipline in secondary schools in Koibatek District, Kenya. A total of 2624 students, 23 principals, 23 school counsellors and 227 teachers constituted the sample of the study. The descriptive survey design was used in the study which employed questionnaire and interviews as instruments. Data analysis revealed that guidance and couselling services improved students' discipline and academic performance. This finding supports the work of Tuchili and Ndhlovu (2016). Except in the design, the studies used the same instruments (interviews and questionnaire) for data collection.

Other studies were conducted by Eremie and Jackson (2019) and Ibrahim, Bandi, Danyaya, Sahabi, and Abubakar (2021) as well as Lubawa, Ngirwa, and Shavega (2021). Eremie and Jackson (2019) studied the influence of guidance and counselling services on the academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria. A sample size of 664 students was drawn from secondary schools in Port Harcourt. The survey research design was used in the study. A questionnaire was the instrument employed in the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. T-test analysis showed that guidance and counselling services improved the academic performance of students.

Using teachers, principals, counsellors and students as Salgong et al. (2016) and Ibrahim et al. (2021) examined the impact of guidance and counselling services on the academic performance of students in some selected secondary schools in Sokoto State, Nigeria. A causal-comparative (ex-post facto) research design was employed in the study with the same size of 200 subjects (5 principals, 25 class teachers, 10 teacher-counsellors and 160 students from the secondary schools). Four sets of questionnaires were used in the study. Using descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis, the study showed that 80% of the students said their academic performance changed positively after receiving counselling services; 72% of the teachers' perceived students' academic performance as good while 20% perceived students' performance as very good. However, 8% rated students' performance as bad.

Similarly, Lubawa et al. (2021) investigated the influence of psychosocial guidance and counselling services on secondary school students' academic performance, with specific reference to Tanga City in Tanzania. As did some of the authors in the works reviewed in this study, Lubuwa and Ngirwa had a sample of 423 subjects (330 students, 26 heads of schools, 33 guidance counsellors, 33 academic teachers and one city educational officer). A correlational research design was used. The instrument used was questionnaire. Data analysis at .01 level of significance showed that there is a significant positive relationship between students' access to psychosocial guidance and counselling services and their academic performance.

All the studies reviewed showed the significant role that guidance and counselling services play on the academic performance of learners. The present study by this researcher is similar but the focus in on undergraduate students. The study sought to find out students' differential performance in an introductory course in guidance and counselling (EDUCATION 402). This is a core two-unit course taken in the final year (400 level students) at the Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka Nigeria. The aim of the course is to popularize guidance and couselling, create awareness about its usefulness and its role in the school and non-school settings (Oghounu, 2021). Students were categorized into those with additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services and those without. The former category of students have taken all the necessary guidance and counselling courses in the 3-year or 4-year teacher-education programme, in addition to the introductory course earlier mentioned. This category of students is in the department of Guidance and Counselling of the University. On the other hand, the latter comprises students in other departments of the university; these students were exposed to the introductory course only.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Exposure to principles of guidance and counselling in school setting appears to enhance students' academic performances. This is clear from literature on the influence of guidance and counselling activities on secondary school students' academic performances. Is this the same at the institutions of higher learning? This study is geared towards finding out the students who perform better in EDU402 (Introductory course in guidance and counselling). Is it students who are in the department of guidance and counselling (who have taken this course in addition to their courses in guidance and counselling) or students who were just taught the introductory course?

1.2. Research Questions and Hypothesis

Two research questions and one null hypothesis were addressed in the study as follows: Research question one: What is the mean performance of students with additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services?

Research question two: What is the mean performance of students without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services?

Hypothesis: Mean performance in introductory courses in guidance and counselling services does not differ significantly between students with additional knowledge and those without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services.

2. Methodology

The study examined students' differential performance in an introductory course in guidance and counselling at Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was employed in the study. The population comprised 1000 400-level (final year) students in the faculty of education. The faculty is made up of ten departments. Three departments (Department of Guidance and Counselling, Library and Information Science, Department of Educational Management and Foundations) were chosen for the study. Through simple random and sampling technique, a sample size of 121 students was selected. This was distributed as follows: Guidance and Counselling (50), Library and Information Science (39) and Educational Management and Foundations (32). Students from guidance and counselling department had additional knowledge of guidance and counselling courses, besides knowledge of the introductory courses in guidance and counselling; the other two departments were simply taught the introductory course in guidance and counselling, that is they had no knowledge of the courses offered in the department of guidance and counselling. A three-item test (See Appendix 1) was constructed by the ten lecturers and professors who taught the introductory course. A student had the opportunity of obtaining a maximum score of 100% (hundred percent). This was made up of 30% (pre-examination assessment) and 70% (examination). The significance of the 30% component lies in the fact that it controls discipline in the classroom (Ossai, 2013) and it lays emphasis in affective qualities (Ossai, 2014). For the purpose of data analysis, the sample was categorized as students with additional knowledge of guidance and counselling and students without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services. Students' scores in the introductory course (EDUCATION 402), were analyzed using independent samples t-test. Since this study made use of essay test questions, there was no need to apply correction for guessing as done by Ossai and Enwefa (2020). There was no room for guess work as reported by Ossai (2015).

3. Data Analysis and Results

The two research questions raised in the study were answered as follows:

3.1. Research Question One

What is the mean performance of students with additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services?

3.2. Research Question Two

What is the mean performance of students without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services?

Table 1. Mean performances of students with additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services and those without the additional knowledge.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	MD
Additional knowledge	50	63.76	8.53	12.01
Without additional knowledge	71	51.75	7.98	

Note: N=Number, SD=Standard deviation, MD= Mean deviation.

Table 1 showed that students with additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services had a mean score of 63.76 and a standard deviation of 8.53; their counterparts without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services obtained a mean score of 51.75 and a standard deviation of 7.98. This shows a mean difference of 12.01 scores in favour of the latter group.

3.3. Hypothesis Test

The only null hypothesis generated in the study was tested as follows:

Hypothesis: Mean performance in introductory course to guidance and counselling services does not differ significantly between students with additional knowledge and those without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services.

Table 2. Independent samples t-test of analysis of mean performances of students with additional knowledge and those without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.	Result
Additional knowledge	50	63.76	8.53	119	7.925	0.000	Sig.
Without additional knowledge	71	51.75	7.98				

From Table 2, the t-value is 7.925 while the p-value is 0.000; the p-value is less than the alpha level of .05; this prompted the rejection of the null hypothesis at 119 degrees of freedom. This implies that mean performance in introductory course to guidance and counselling services differs significantly between students with additional knowledge and those without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services.

4. Discussion of Findings

This study was geared towards examining the differential performance of students with additional knowledge and those without additional knowledge of guidance and counselling services.

Table 1 clearly showed that guidance and counselling students who had additional knowledge of courses in guidance and counseling services did better than their counterparts who just relied on the knowledge acquired from the introductory course to guidance and counselling services. This is amply demonstrated by the huge mean difference of 12.01 points. Judging by the University's grading system of five-point scale, the mean score of guidance and counselling students' correspondents to 8 grade points while the mean score of students from other departments is equal to 6 points grade. One expects that the performance of the two categories of students would not differ since they were both exposed to the same knowledge of the introductory course to guidance and counselling services.

The significant result from the hypothesis test further confirms the superiority of guidance and counselling students over their counterparts from other departments who did not take other courses in guidance and counselling services. The finding from this study is similar to results from earlier studies (Eremie & Jackson, 2019; Lubawa et al., 2021; Salgong et al., 2016; Tuchili & Ndhlovu, 2016) that reported improvement on students' academic performance as a result of influence of guidance and counselling services.

The study is, however, not in full agreement with the works of Ibrahim et al. (2021). In the study carried out by Ibrahim et al. (2021) 20% of the students studied did not show any positive change in their academic work after receiving counselling services. The study also indicated that 8% of the teachers rated students' performance as poor after receiving counselling services.

5. Conclusion

Knowledge of other courses in guidance and counselling services must have influenced the superior performance of guidance and counselling students compared to their counterparts who only relied on knowledge of the introductory course. The significant result amply demonstrates this. Knowledge of concepts from other courses must have given guidance and counselling an edge over their counterparts from other departments.

References

Agi, W. C., & Okirigwe, N. U. (2018). Teachers' perception of counsellors' role and students academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Innovative Education Research, 6*(4), 79 − 92.

Bello, A. M., Yunusa, A., Yawudima, A. B., & Ishaya, A. (2014). The need for guidance and counselling in post-primary institutions: A way forward for a sustainable development in Nigeria education. *International Journal of Innovations in Educational Methods, 6*(1), 96 − 102.

Egbule, J. F. (2005). *Continuous assessment: A comprehensive guide for schools* (Revised ed.). Lagos: Functional Publishing Company.

Eremie, M., & Jackson, S. (2019). Influence of guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students in Rivers State. *Journal of Education and Practice, 7,* 14-21. https://doi.org/10.7176/jep/10-29-13

Federal Ministry of Education. (1995). *A handbook on continuous assessment.* Ibadan: Heinemann Press.

Ibrahim, S., Bandi, I. I., Danyaya, J. A., Sahabi, M., & Abubakar, I. (2021). Impact of guidance and counselling services on academic performance of students in some selected secondary schools in Sokoto Metropolis. *International Journal of Applied Guidance and Counseling, 2*(2), 22-30. https://doi.org/10.26486/ijagc.v2i2.1926

Lubawa, D., Ngirwa, C., & Shavega, T. (2021). Influence of psychosocial guidance and counselling services on secondary school students' academic performance: A case of Tanga City, Tanzania. *East African Journal of Education and Social Sciences, 2*(2), 144-156. https://doi.org/10.46606/eajess2021v02i02.0085

Mishra, R., & Chaudhary, P. (2018). Guidance and counselling at secondary school: A review of literature. *BPAS Journal of Education, 1*(1), 71-89.

Obi, F. C., & Oji, J. (2014). Counselling for human development and adjustment of secondary school students in Delta State: A panacea for proper transition into adulthood. *Delta Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 2*(1), 40 − 51.

Oghounu, A. E. (2021). *Unpublished lecture notes in guidance and counselling.* Abraka, Nigeria: Delta State University.

Okorodudu, R. I. (2012). *Understanding psychological measurement and evaluation.* Abraka: University Printing Press.

Ossai, P. A. U. (2013). Using continuous assessment to curb bullying in schools. *International Journal of Advancement in Educational Methods and Management, 3*(3), 94-100.

Ossai, P. A. U. (2014). Reporting affective scores in school assessment: Implications for counselling. *Delta Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 2*(1), 24 −31.

Ossai, P. A. U. (2015). Gender differences in guessing tendencies in mathematics. *British Journal of Education, 3*(8), 78-85.

Ossai, P. A. U., & Enwefa, C. (2020). Undergraduate students' achievement in GST 101 using corrected scores and uncorrected scores. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 10*(2), 126-133.

Renuka, D. M. R., Devaki, P. R., Madhavan, M., & Saikumar, P. (2013). The effect of counselling on the academic performance of college students. *Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research, 7*(6), 1086 − 1088. https://doi.org/10.7860/JCDR/2013/5247.3054

Salgong, V. K., Ngumi, O., & Chege, K. (2016). The role of guidance and counselling in enhancing student discipline in secondary schools in Koibatek District. *Journal of Education and Practice, 7*(13), 142-151.

Tuchili, A., & Ndhlovu, D. (2016). Effects of guidance and counselling services on students interpersonal study, vocational and problem-solving skills in selected public Universities in Zambia. *International Journal of Humanities, Social Services and Education, 3*(12), 14 − 20. https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0312002

Ugoji, F. (2008). The impact of counselling on the academic performance of secondary school students. *Africa Journal for Inter Disciplinary Studies, 8*(2), 67-73.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Delta State University, Abraka, faculty of education, department of guidance and counselling first semester examination question for 2020/2021 academic session.

COURSE TITLE: Introduction to Guidance and Counselling
COURSE CODE: EDU 402
TIME ALLOWED: 2 Hours
INSTRUCTION: Answer all Questions

1.   (a) Every profession is guided by its code of ethics and principles. As a counsellor, discuss five ethical issues that will guide you in relating with your clients and five principles which guide Guidance and Counselling practice in Nigeria.
(b) Explain the functions of the school counsellor and that of any other guidance personnel.
(c) Write short but meaningful note on either Educational Services OR Vocational Services.

2.   (a) The basic foundations of the theory and practice of Guidance and Counselling tend to affect the practice of counselling. Therefore, the counsellor should be conversant with them. Explain the psychological and educational foundations.
(b) Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Individual and group counselling modes.

3.   (a) As a classroom teacher who has done EDU 402, you are posted to a school where there is no guidance and counselling unit, explain the steps you will follow in trying to set up one.
(b) Choose any one theory either from Behavioural or Trait and Factor Counselling theories and discuss it under each of the under-listed subheadings.
(i) Proponents of the theory.
(ii) Major postulation of the theory.
(iii) Goals of counselling.
(iv) Assumptions of human nature/personality.
(v) Methods and techniques of application.