



ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLORS IN NIGERIA (APROCON)

ISSN: 2645-2308

eISSN: 3043-5625

Vol. 8, No. 2, September 2025



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ISSN: 2645 - 2308

eISSN: 3043 - 5625

Published in Nigeria by:

Association of Professional Counsellors in Nigeria (APROCON)

Printed in Nigeria by:
TIM-SAL & BIM GLOBAL LTD.
Printing & Publishing Dept.
Plot 6&7 Odota, Lagos Road,
Ilorin, Kwara State.
Tel: 08077787630
Email: otimothysalako@gmail.com

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The Journal of Professional Counselling (JPC) serves as the official publication of the Association of Professional Counsellors in Nigeria (APROCON). It is dedicated to advancing the theory and practice of Guidance and Counselling in Nigeria and worldwide through publishing well-researched and original articles. The journal welcomes submissions from authors in the field of counselling psychology and related disciplines, aiming to enhance knowledge and skills in counselling practice. Each article undergoes a blind peer-review process and plagiarism tests to ensure a high level of originality prior to publication.

This volume presents a diverse range of contemporary empirical studies that illuminate critical issues at the intersection of psychology, education, counselling, and social development in Nigeria. It captures the changing landscape of youth behaviour, family dynamics, and educational experiences, offering fresh insights and practical guidance for mental health professionals, educators, and policy stakeholders.

Highlights of this Issue include:

- ◆ **Adolescent Behaviour and Therapeutic Interventions:** The issue tackles behavioural challenges among youth, such as truancy and kleptomania. It highlights the success of cognitive-behavioural approaches like Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) and relapse prevention in reshaping behaviour and restoring self-control.
- ◆ **Mental Health and Academic Achievement:** Studies explore the interrelations between academic performance and psychological factors such as test anxiety, self-regulated learning, and reading comprehension. Findings from multiple Nigerian states point to the urgency of integrating mental health support within school systems.
- ◆ **Family Structure and Adolescent Development:** Several contributions investigate how family settings—especially those marked by instability, conflict, or violence—influence the moral and emotional development of children and adolescents. The significance of family-based counselling interventions is a recurring theme.
- ◆ **Career Guidance and Youth Empowerment:** This edition places a strong emphasis on the role of counselling in shaping career aspirations, with a focus on parental influence and structured mentorship. It draws connections between effective guidance and long-term socio-economic mobility for Nigerian youth.
- ◆ **Technology and the Digital Age:** The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic revealed a new wave of digital learning and behaviour. Studies in this volume investigate the implications of e-learning and digital behaviour on students' academic adjustment and

mental well-being.

- ◆ **Social Cohesion and Conflict Management:** The volume addresses counselling strategies for promoting national unity, emotional healing, and conflict resolution. It presents practical tools for managing trauma—especially among vulnerable groups like police officers and internally displaced persons—and enhancing the emotional intelligence of trainee counsellors.

This collection underscores the transformative power of professional counselling in navigating today's complex personal and societal challenges. With data-driven insights and culturally responsive recommendations, Volume 8, No. 2 offers timely contributions to the advancement of counselling practice and national development in Nigeria.

The Editorial Board expresses her gratitude to all contributing authors and peer reviewers for their valuable efforts and time. The Board remains committed to continuously improve the quality of The Journal of Professional Counselling (JPC) to meet globally expected standards. The association maintains a functional journal website, www.aprocon.org.ng where published articles are available online, ensuring increased visibility and readership.

Professor Mary O. Esere

Editor-in-Chief,

JPC.

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILL TRAINING ON PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AMONG SPOUSES OF CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN ABIA AND IMO STATES

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Abstract

Couple relationships are described as having an intimate nature that is defined by close interdependence, continuous interaction, and reciprocally reinforcing strong feelings. Most of the married spouses in the Catholic, Orthodox, and Pentecostal churches have serious conflicts in spite of regular church going and prayers for harmony and love. The current study therefore examined the effectiveness of conflict resolution skill training on peaceful co-existence among the spouses of the Catholic Churches in Abia and Imo State. Quasi-experimental design was used. Conflict Resolution Skill Questionnaire (CRSQ) was used to collect responses from the participants. 46 spouses (23 men, 23 women) received six weeks of structured CRST. Outcomes were measured with the Marital Peaceful Coexistence Questionnaire (MPCQ, $\alpha = 0.72$) at pre-test, post-test, and four-week follow-up. The tool was pilot tested among 20 SPOUSES, and Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.79 was utilized to test the results. To answer the research question, means and standard deviation descriptive statistics were employed to provide data analysis and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) utilized to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Results showed improved peaceful coexistence (pre-test $M = 2.10$; post-test $M = 3.42$) and willingness for conflict resolution in the experimental group (pre-test $M = 2.05$; post-test $M = 3.50$), and the effects were still sustained during the follow-up period ($M = 3.35$ and 3.40 , respectively). ANCOVA confirmed statistically significant group differences (post-test $F(1,43) = 37.59$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.46$), whereas the control condition showed no substantive change ($M \approx 2.10$ – 2.15). It is concluded that CRST significantly improves marital harmony and recommends inclusion of it in premarital counselling programmes. Recommendations are institutionalizing CRST in religious organizations, government-funded community workshops, and culturally adapted expansions for diverse populations.

Keywords: Counselling, Conflict Resolution, Skill Training, Communication Problems and Spouses.

Introduction

Marriage is a sacrament that promotes companionship, love, and harmony for husband and wife. It provides emotional support, stability, and happiness at its best. In the recent past, though, most marriages have been marred by conflict, dissatisfaction, and unhappiness. Most families today are not equipped to manage marriage conflicts amicably because of inadequate communication skills and the absence of good marriage counselling. Disagreement is a natural process in any relationship, and resolving it involves both of them listening and honoring each other's views and finding common ground.

Gottman (2012) argues that love alone cannot sustain a marriage; inability to forgive and metabolize conflicts can lead to critical breakdowns in relationships. Baucom, Shoham, Mueseer, Daiubo, and Stickle (2013) assert that all spouses experience differences, yet some perceive these differences as incompatible, thereby leading to marital instability.

The majority of SPOUSES marry assuming their marriage will automatically work out by yet they spend more time planning weddings than preparing for communication on how to make their marriage successful (Farooq & Butt, 2012).

Marriage entails intimate interaction, whereby a spouse affects and gets emotionally connected to the other, resulting in long-term interaction and reliance. Marital quality may, however, be affected by issues like anxiety, extramarital sex, frustration, and mistrust, thus driving conflicts (Abu, 2015). Effective communication is one of the most significant determinants in solving marital problems. Differences are inevitable in everyday life, but spouses with volatile relationship styles are more tolerant of disagreements compared to those who suppress conflicts. Spouses must practice empathy and understanding to maintain a healthy emotional climate. Finch man and Beach (2014) note that spouses must avoid becoming stubborn when attempting to persuade their spouses, as flexibility in conflict resolution results in harmony in the relationship.

Marital disagreements also escalate as spouses encounter practical challenges like budgeting, child care, and career growth. Although underlying differences like value sand communication pattern scan be present, surface problems like money, sex, and household chores tend to be deep-rooted sources of conflict (Obidoa,2013). The perception of disparity in these are as causes emotional distance between the spouses, resulting in over-withdrawal from each other, which further destabilizes the marriage relationship Stability is one of the pillars of marriage. Sakotic-Kurbalija, as quoted in Islami (2017), believes there is a range of stability and instability in marriages. Stability, however, is not a constant quality—it changes over time based on how the spouses handle problems. The growing rate of marriage conflict today is primarily a result of the decline in fundamental human values and social norms, and thus profound changes in marriage and family institutions. A good marriage enables SPOUSES to manage conflict in a positive manner, be happy, and create an emotionally supportive atmosphere. Conflict-resolving partners who remain optimistic are more likely to

enjoy healthy relationships, whereas partners who allow conflicts to persist may become resentful and disillusioned (Fincham & Beach, 2014).

Emotional maturity is required to ensure a healthy marriage. Thornton (2012), as cited in Yohanna and Joseph (2020), warns that persistent marital issues assume repetitive, unproductive cycles that can spiral out of control if unchecked. Ironically, releasing over-control can enhance relational satisfaction. Individuals with persistent grievances or control problems may seek individual therapy to address underlying issues (Gottman, 1999). Additionally, some conflicts can never be completely resolved, and SPOUSES need to master the art of compromise and negotiation when no solution is readily forthcoming.

While each couple varies in their attitudes (Orubo, 2015), the use of effective conflict resolution skills can promote long-term relational wellness. Such skills involve developing a cooperative spirit, promoting interpersonal development, understanding the causes of conflict, using active listening, and seeking solutions together. The main goals of conflict resolution in marriage are to enhance partnerships, establish trust, and enhance mutual understanding.

Conflict resolution training, as promoted by John Gottman (1999) and Susan Heitler (2001), provides step-by-step procedures for terminating disputes in a positive way. This training typically includes:

1. Emotional Regulation Skills – How to teach others to control anger and frustration while in conflict.
2. Active Listening Skills – Promoting empathetic listening to learn from one another's viewpoints.
3. Problem-Solving Models – Introducing systematic methods of negotiating agreements.
4. De-escalation Techniques – Minimizing hostility by not blaming or criticizing.
5. Compromise and Collaboration – Encouraging mutual concessions and joint problem-solving.

These skills are instrumental in fostering harmonious relationships by reducing conflict and encouraging positive interactions. By incorporating such training, spouses can shift from conflict-driven interactions to constructive problem-solving, ultimately enhancing marital stability.

Gilbert (2015) confirms that conflict resolution skills—learning to listen, communicate, and respond positively—actually enhance marital relationships. spouses therapists are instrumental in helping SPOUSES learn to be assertive, actively listen, and establish effective feedback mechanisms (Olson, 2014). Happy spouses ultimately communicate openly and honestly to resolve conflicts, express feelings, and establish mutual respect, tolerance, and honesty. Unhappy marriages shun conflict resolution, hence the persistent misunderstandings and resentment.

The purpose of this research was to equip Catholic Church spouses in Abia State and Imo

State with effective counselling and conflict resolution techniques and impart skills that can help them achieve long-lasting marital harmony.

Statement of the Problem

It is clear that in most churches, whether Catholic and Orthodox churches, or other Pentecostal churches, despite their frequent attendance to church activities and hearing God's word, and praying for love, peace, and harmony for fellow human beings, many married spouses still live like rats and cats in their respective homes. It is just as clear that the common incidence of marital incompatibility and lack of stability amongst most of the spouses has seen the filings for divorce multiply at most Magistrate courts of choice in the two (2) areas under research due to marriage dissatisfaction as well as a lack of love within the husband and wife relationship. A valid question arises here: were hateful spouses offered therapeutic sessions or designed counselling interventions before the marriage ceremony?

The answer reflects a systemic lack—therapeutically trained functional counselling centers are scarce. Most premarital counselling efforts are conducted by organizations that lack the proper qualifications, and few Catholic churches even try to incorporate professional marriage counselors into their preparation courses. Despite this, attendance does not always equate to participation; the majority of spouses attend only to fulfill ceremonial requirements or gain approval for marriage, barely listening to the counsel given (Yohanna & Joseph, 2020).

The study identifies broader institutional and social barriers undermining the efficacy of marriage counselling interventions. Economic insecurity, competing financial demands, consumerism, and warped perceptions of marriage all diminish the reach and impact of such interventions. More basic relational problems—e.g., communication disintegration, commitment, inherited polygamy expectations, and childbearing based on gender expectations—contribute to marital distress. Left unchecked, such problems ensnare spouses in cycles of strife, continuing emotional pain (loneliness, worry, sorrow) that spreads beyond the couple to destabilize families, communities, and societal institutions.

The critical problem is the absence of empirical links between premarital counselling strategies and the outcome variable: peaceful coexistence in marriages. Existing programmes are most often free of standardized, evidence-based conflict resolution training—a major deficit, given that unresolved conflicts highly predict the failure of marriages (Gottman, 1999). While studies acknowledge socioeconomic and cultural barriers to marital harmony (Yohanna & Joseph, 2020), few assess the potential benefit of organized therapeutic interventions, notably conflict resolution skill acquisition, in overcoming such barriers.

This study sought to fill that gap by investigating the efficacy of formal conflict resolution training—drawing on proponents like Markman et al. (2010) and Johnson (2008)—to foster peaceful coexistence. The training (treatment) focuses on equipping married adults with practical skills for de-escalation, active listening, and problem-solving through collaborative effort, skills that are not adequately covered in conventional premarital therapy. By quantifying

and separating these competencies, the research aims to demonstrate their immediate impact on conflict minimization and maintenance of relational stability, thereby offering a replicable model for counselling programmes.

The aforementioned information therefore led the researcher to conduct a study to determine the value of counselling for effective conflict resolution skills training and communication among Catholic Church spouses in Nigerian states of Abia and Imo.

Objectives of the Study

Generally, the objective of this study was to examine the conflict resolution skill training on peaceful co-existence among spouses of catholic church in Abia and Imo state. Specifically, the study sought to investigate:

1. The impact of conflict resolution skill training on peaceful co-existence of spouses of Catholic Church in Abia and Imo State,
2. The difference in the post-test mean scores of spouses effective communication exposed to conflict resolution skill training and control group in their willingness for peaceful co-existence.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered in the study:

1. What is the impact of conflict resolution skill training on peaceful co-existence of spouses of Catholic Church in Abia and Imo States?
2. What are the difference in the post-test mean scores of spouses effective communication exposed to conflict resolution skill training and control group in their willingness for peaceful co-existence?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the post-test mean scores of spouses (participants) exposed to conflict resolution skill training and control group in their willingness for peaceful co-existence

Methodology

This study used a quasi-experimental design, i.e., 2 x 2 factorial matrix with non-random pre-test, post-test, and control groups. Nworgu (2015) describes quasi-experimental design as the use of intact or existing groups rather than assigning randomly to experimental and control groups.

The study was conducted in Abia and Imo States, where the target population was 1,189,000 Catholic spouses in both states. 46 wives were assigned at random to the treatment group (experimental), and a comparable control was maintained. Sampling was done in multiple stages to make it representative.

A simple random sampling technique was initially employed to select the two study states (Abia and Imo). Later, a stratified sampling technique was used to choose two high-turnout Catholic cathedrals—Mater Dei Cathedral in Umuahia, Abia State, and Maria Assumpta Cathedral in Owerri, Imo State—so that there would be gender-balanced samples.

Finally, purposive sampling was used in the recruitment of spouses with marital issues so that 46 participants (23 men and 23 women) were placed in the experimental group and an equal-sized matched control group. The experimental group was given an exposure to a systematic Conflict Resolution Skill Training (CRST) programme, with the purpose of promoting harmonious coexistence (the dependent variable). The training, which lasted for six weeks and was administered by licensed marriage counselors experienced in cognitive-behavioural and Gottman-based conflict resolution techniques, consisted of weekly 90-minute sessions covering key elements of active listening, emotional control, de-escalation, and problem-solving together. The control group received no intervention, which allowed for comparison of treatment effects.

Gender was employed as a moderating variable to establish differential effects for male and female participants. In order to measure the dependent variable (peaceful coexistence), the researcher developed the Marital Peaceful Coexistence Questionnaire (MPCQ), a 25-item instrument with two parts. Section A gathered biodata, and Section B quantified marital harmony using a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree = 4; Agree = 3; Disagree = 2; Strongly Disagree = 1). A score of ≥ 2.5 mean indicated satisfactory conflict resolution skills, and < 2.5 indicated deficiency.

MPCQ was extensively tested and validated by three experts in Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, and Measurement and Evaluation at Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. Their feedback was utilized to enter the revisions. The instrument was pilot-tested on 15 SPOUSES in Anambra State, and it indicated a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.72, which is an indication of internal consistency. Data collection was in a four-stage sequence:

Pre-treatment: Baseline administration of MPCQ,

Treatment: Six-week CRST for the treatment group,

Post-treatment: Re-administration of MPCQ to both groups and

Follow-up: Delayed post-test after four weeks to assess retention.

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were used to address research questions, while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test null hypotheses at $p < 0.05$ after adjusting for pre-test differences.

Results

Research Question One: What is the impact of conflict resolution skill training on peaceful co-existence of Spouses of Catholic Church in Abia and Imo States?

Table 1: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Peaceful Coexistence Across Groups

Group	Phase	Mean Score (MPCQ)	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Experimental	Pre-test	2.10	0.45	Low peaceful coexistence
Experimental	Post-test	3.42	0.38	High peaceful coexistence
Experimental	Follow-up	3.35	0.40	High peaceful coexistence (retained)
Control	Pre-test	2.08	0.47	Low peaceful coexistence
Control	Post-test	2.15	0.43	No significant improvement
Control	Follow-up	2.12	0.41	No significant change

Table 1 compared the experimental group (receiving Conflict Resolution Skill Training, CRST) and the control group (receiving no intervention) on three stages: pre-test, post-test, and follow-up. The results revealed a notable boost in peaceful living among the experimental group after training. Their mean score increased from 2.10 (pre-test) to 3.42 (post-test), an indication of very strong positive impact of the CRST programme. The 3.35 follow-up score then confirmed that these gains persisted over the long term. On their part, the control group had no significant change, with mean scores varying around 2.10 during all phases. The stability of the control group then confirms that any gains realized by the experimental group could only have been due to the CRST intervention and not to some other variable. The significant effect size (mean difference of 1.32 points) also highlights the practical significance of the training.

Table 2: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Willingness for Peaceful Coexistence

Group	Phase	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Experimental	Pre-test	2.05	0.42	Low willingness
Experimental	Post-test	3.50	0.35	High willingness
Experimental	Follow-up	3.40	0.38	High willingness (retained)
Control	Pre-test	2.03	0.45	Low willingness
Control	Post-test	2.10	0.40	No improvement
Control	Follow-up	2.07	0.41	No change

Table 2 assessed participants' readiness for peaceful coexistence before and after intervention. The experimental group's mean score rose considerably from 2.05 (pre-test) to 3.50 (post-test), reflecting a high level of readiness to settle conflicts after training. The follow-up score of 3.40 indicated that the readiness was maintained. The control group's scores remained at approximately 2.00, reflecting no natural readiness development without intervention. The group difference was significant ($p < 0.05$) and the effect size was large ($\eta^2 = 0.42$), reflecting the efficacy of the CRST programme for the development of a proactive style of marital conflict resolution. The absence of gender differences suggests that the training was

effective for both women and men.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the post-test mean scores of participants exposed to conflict resolution skill training and control group in in their willingness for peaceful co-existence.

Table 3: ANCOVA on Post-test Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups

Source of Variation	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F-value	p-value	Partial η^2
Pre-test (Covariate)	12.45	1	12.45	10.33	0.003*	0.19
Group (CRST vs. Control)	45.28	1	45.28	37.59	<0.001*	0.46
Error	52.17	43	1.21	-	-	-
Total	111.90	45	-	-	-	-

Note: $p < 0.05$ indicates statistical significance.

The ANCOVA results provided strong statistical support for the effectiveness of the intervention. After pre-test differences were controlled, the experimental condition significantly outperformed the control condition on post-test willingness measures ($F[1,43] = 37.59$, $p < 0.001$), with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.46$). This suggests that 46% of post-test variance was explained by the CRST intervention alone. The significant covariate effect ($F[1,43] = 10.33$, $p = 0.003$) justified the application of ANCOVA for adjusting for differences at baseline.

Discussion

The findings of the study agree with earlier research on the efficiency of formal conflict resolution training in promoting the harmony of marriage. Previous study by Markman et al. (2010) have established that Spouses receiving targeted interventions make notable improvements in the constructive resolution of conflicts. Pre- to post-test change in experimental group mean scores (2.10 to 3.42) captures results of Fincham and Beach (2014) studies, where SPOUSES exposed to methods for resolving disputes showed higher relational satisfaction. Long-term persistence of these gains at follow-up (mean = 3.35) supports long-term benefits identified in Johnson (2008) studies, giving priority to continuity of conflict resolution skills over time. Conversely, the control group's stagnant scores (approximately 2.10) affirm that in the absence of intervention, SPOUSES are trapped in vicious conflict circles, as emphasized by Yohanna and Joseph (2020). This necessitates evidence-based programmes to break such cycles and attain enduring marital harmony.

The evidence presented with theoretical constructs that relate desire for peaceful existence with positive abilities to resolve conflicts behaviour. The marked enhancement in the experimental group (mean = 2.05 to 3.50) finds a place within concepts in the cooperative

conflict resolution model by Heitler (2001), wherein training creates an adversarial to cooperative problem-solving frame shift in an individual. This is in agreement with Orubo's (2015) assertion that marital stability is contingent upon the readiness of partners to practice resolution rather than avoidance. The control group's scores not changing (around 2.00) is in line with studies by Thornton (2012, as cited in Yohanna & Joseph, 2020), where untreated spouses exhibited enduring resistance to resolving conflicts, further exacerbating relational dispute.

Conclusion

This study's findings, drawing on previous research, confirm that having the ability to resolve and training is a transformative intervention for marital balance. In bridging the gap between theoretical concepts and empirical outcomes, it offers an implementable template for averting marital dispute in similar sociocultural settings. The alignment of these findings with global scholarship enhances the international applicability of the principles of conflict resolution and their central role in peaceful coexistence. In conclusion, this study brings to the fore the transformative potential of conflict resolution training and skills in fostering marital harmony. With theory-practice connection, it provides a working model for the prevention of marital conflicts in comparable sociocultural arrangements.

Recommendations

In view of this present research, the following recommendations are made, there is:

- i. Due to the improvement in peaceful coexistence and willingness to resolve conflicts among spouses who were given the Conflict Resolution Skill Training (CRST) was observed, religious and secular marriage counselling institutions—particularly within Catholic dioceses and other places of worship should include structured modules of conflict resolution into their premarital course curricula.
- ii. Since economic uncertainty and lack of access to professional counselling were obstacles to marital harmony, local governments and NGOs should fund subsidised or free community-based counselling workshops on how to resolve conflict for married spouses.

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IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON SELF-RELIANCE AND WEALTH CREATION AS PERCEIVED BY CORP MEMBERS IN SOKOTO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study; Impact of Education on Self-Reliance and Wealth Creation as perceived by serving Corp members in Sokoto State, Nigeria focused on investigating the extent to which graduates of tertiary institutions in Nigeria are self-reliant and their ability to create wealth. It was survey research with two objectives and corresponding questions guided the study. The population used comprised graduates from different tertiary institutions in Nigeria, who are serving Corp members in Sokoto State as at August, 2024. A total of 74 Corp members voluntarily participated in this exercise, and by convenient sampling, all 74 of them constituted the sample used. A 33 item instrument titled; Self-reliance and Wealth Creation Ability Scale (SRWCAS) was adapted by the researchers. It has 0.76 validity index and $\alpha = 0.75$ coefficient of reliability using Cronbach alpha. Statistics used for data analyses include mean, standard deviation, and chi-square. Among the results obtained are; tertiary education in Nigeria equips graduates with skills and knowledge to a very high extent but promotes more self-reliance than it equips learners with wealth creation skills. Also, all category of graduates who responded to the instrument had high self-reliance ability however, graduates of specialized Universities scored a bit higher than their counterparts from other tertiary institutions in wealth creation ability. It was therefore concluded that lecturers in tertiary institutions across Nigeria should intensify efforts in helping learners understand how to translate the knowledge they acquire to real life wealth creation competences that translate to economic independence/self-reliance.

Keywords: Education, Self-Reliance, Wealth Creation, and Corp-Members

Introduction

The aim of education in Nigeria and globally revolves around preparing learners at all levels of Education to be self-reliant. This goal however seems unrealistic particularly in Nigeria as students graduate yet lack employability skills and the ability to be economically independent. More so, proper Education equips learners with employability skills or capacity to successfully start a new business and grow it. Thus, Education enhances, improves and reinforces self-sufficiency in life. Past decades in Nigeria according to Oladipo et al (2010) were characterized by graduates with high-level competences that transformed the Nigerian economy. Similarly, World Bank (2009) holds that Education is crucial to the development of knowledge economy globally. Unfortunately, the present reality is at variance with what use to be.

Presently, institutions graduate thousands of students yearly who end up unemployed and without any self-reliance competence (Agi & Arikawei, 2011). Literatures revealed that the education system in Nigeria is a failure if graduates lack practical skills and competences required in solving real life problems, through which they become self-reliant.

Self-reliance is the ability one has to be self-sufficient and economically independent. It is therefore necessary according to Akinola (2001) to ensure that while in school, students are empowered with the requisite skills and competences that make them self-reliant and independent hence, curtailing hardship, dependence, and unemployment among graduates. Kareem et al (2015) reported the outcome of a study in Abeokuta Ogun State that graduates of Technical and Vocational Education turn out being self employed by establishing their own businesses as a result of the practicality of the education they gained. This could be capital intensive as Kareem et al (2001) graduates with start-up ventures arising from the entrepreneurial training/education gained while in the University showed high proportion of the respondents (43%) opined to startup businesses with above One million naira, followed by (37%) with funds ranging between five hundred thousand naira to One Million and the least (20%) with funds less than five hundred thousand naira. This result implies that majority of the respondents proposed to start up business with funds that would not be less than One million naira. Furthermore, the findings shows that majority of the respondents (95%) preferred to source funds from family, friends and personal savings and (5%) from bank. This result indicates that family, friends and personal savings would constitute the bulk of sources of startup funds.

The results also show information on problems encountered and suggestions for improvement on entrepreneurial education at undergraduate level, it revealed that 64% of the respondents' complaint was lack of modern equipment, (34%) encountered problem of crowdedness, and the least with (2%) encountered none. The implication is that lack of modern equipment is the most observed problem during entrepreneurship education at Crescent University. Therefore (80%) of the respondents suggested purchasing or provision of modern equipment for the entrepreneurial class despite being given the basic practical knowledge,

(15%) suggested creation of more periods for practical class and (5%) did not give any suggestion which might mean being satisfied with the training they receive. Meaning that entrepreneurship is a viable tool for self-reliance and strong attendant implication for sustainable development. This is in conformity with the findings of various scholars on entrepreneurship education as enhancer of self-employment among graduates (Okiti 2009; Uche & Adesope 2009).

Education is meant to equip with adequate useful knowledge that enable meaningfully contribution to personal and societal development (Sagagi, 2010). Graduates of tertiary institutions in Nigeria however seem unable to translate theory to real-life practices that will change the narrative of dependence and unemployment, making an endless vicious cycle. This is possibly the outcome of the existing gap between the education curriculum and the employability requirements of the labor market (Diajomal & Orimolade, 1991). These deficiencies in critical skills among graduates keeps them completely dependent, leading to all kinds of vices. Despite efforts by Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM) in training fresh graduates to gain Knowledge, Attitude and Skills (KAS) that work places require from employees to function effectively and efficiently, complains about unemployment seem inevitable. As a result, this study aimed to determine education impacts on self-reliance and wealth creation ability as perceived by serving Corp members in Sokoto State Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The study focused on achieving these objectives;

- i. Find out the extent to which education equips graduates for self-reliance and wealth creation
- ii. evaluate the difference in self-reliance between graduates of University and other tertiary institutions?
- iii. Evaluate the difference in wealth creation ability between graduates of University and other tertiary institutions?

Research Questions

These questions guided the realisation of set objectives:

- i. what level does tertiary education in Nigeria equip graduates for self-reliance and wealth creation?
- ii. How different are graduates of University and those from other Tertiary Institutions in self-reliance ability?
- iii. what is the difference in wealth creation ability between graduates of University and other Tertiary Institutions?

Methodology

This study is a descriptive survey research. The population of this study comprised of 74

serving Corp members in Sokoto State, Nigeria August, 2024 who voluntarily participated in the exercise. These are graduates from different Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. By convenient sampling, all 74 of these Corp members answered the questionnaire hence, same formed sample for the study.

A questionnaire adapted by the researchers was used for data collection. It was a 33 item questionnaire titled; Self-reliance and Wealth Creation Ability Scale (SRWCAS). First section had 7 items on respondents’ demographics, the second section contained 21 items which measured self-reliance, while the third section had 5 items measuring wealth creation ability. The instrument is a four-point scale ranging from Always=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, and Not at All=1. This questionnaire was experts’ validation which yielded validity index of 0.76. It was equally pilot-tested and a reliability index of $\alpha= 0.75$ was realized. This confirmed that it’s usage in this study.

The administration of the instrument coincided with security challenge in the country (#End bad government Protest) hence, the instrument was transformed to google forms, distributed electronically, completed and also retrieved via same means. Distribution of the questionnaire was done by research assistants who were serving Corp members. The essence of the research was explained to them and they distributed to their fellow Corp members through their CDS WhatsApp platforms. This study is therefore based on the forms filled and submitted, totaling 74. Statistics used for analyses are Mean and standard deviation.

Results

Research Question 1: what level does tertiary education in Nigeria equip graduates for self-reliance and wealth creation?

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of the extent to which Education Equips Graduates Self-reliance and Wealth Creation Ability.

Variables	N	Sum %	Mean X	Std σ	Decision
Self- Reliance	74	83%	3.33	0.31	VHE
Wealth Creation		73%	2.93	0.43	HE
Aggregate Score			3.13	0.37	VHE

Scale: 1.50 – 2.49HE; 2.50 – 5.00VHE

Table 1 above revealed that participants scored an aggregate $X= 3.13$ and $\sigma = 0.31$ above the bench mark of 2.50, indicating that tertiary education in Nigeria equips graduates to very high extent with self-reliance skills. The result also revealed that the education promotes self-reliance skills slightly more than wealth creation skills with a mean of 3.33 for self-reliance and 2.93 for wealth creation.

Research Question 2: How different are graduates of University and those from other Tertiary Institutions in self-reliance ability?

Table2: Descriptive Analysis of the Difference in Self-reliance between graduates of Specialized University and Other Tertiary Institutions.

Variables	N	%	SUG \bar{X}	S	OUG				
					Dec.	%	\bar{X}	S	Dec.
Self-Reliance	74	83	3.33	0.24	VH	83	3.33	0.33	VH

Scale: 1.50 – 2.49H; 2.50 – 3.50VH

Table 2 showed that both graduates from Specialized University, and Other Tertiary Institutions scored very high in self-reliance. Respondents from both groups had equal mean score of 3.33 in self-reliance skills as indicated in the table.

Table3: Descriptive analysis of the Difference in Wealth Creation ability between graduates of Specialized University and Other Tertiary Institutions.

Variables	N	%	SUG			OUG			
			\bar{X}	S	Dec.	%	\bar{X}	S	Dec.
Wealth Creation	74	74	2.95	0,53	VH	73	2.93	0.41	VH

Scale: 1.50 – 2.49H; 2.50 – 3.50VH

Table 3 showed that both graduates from Specialized University, and other University scored very high in Wealth creation ability. The graduates of specialized universities scored a bit higher than their counterparts from other tertiary institutions in wealth creation ability with X= 2.95 and 2.93 respectively.

Discussion of Findings

This study revealed that tertiary education in Nigeria equips graduates with skills and knowledge to a very high extent but promotes more self-reliance than it equips learners with wealth creation skills. This could be so because of the disconnect between theory and real life practice that require skills that make one employable. This supports Olaleye (2009) who noted that efforts at eradicating fails because graduates lack self-reliance skills. Similarly, Nwaoga and Omeke, (2012) and Baba (2013) found that 80% of graduates in Nigeria own certificates but lack employability skills hence, remain unemployed.

The study also revealed that all category of graduates who responded to the instrument had high self-reliance ability however, graduates of specialized Universities scored a bit higher than their counterparts from other tertiary institutions in wealth creation ability. This is likely due the practicality embedded in specialized University education for learners. The result

supports Gerald (2013) who is of the opinion that skills and competences prepare students to be self-reliant and economically independent.

Another finding indicated that tertiary education makes significant impact on self-reliance and wealth creation ability of graduates in Nigeria. This could be the outcome of the compulsory entrepreneurship education embedded in tertiary education programme. This supports the views of various scholars that entrepreneurship education enhances graduates' self-employment through job creation (Ogumu, 1999, Okiti 2009; Uche & Adesope 2009). Similarly, Kareem, Ademoyewa, Jolaosho, Ojenike, and Sodi, (2015) opined that skills are tools that encourage self-reliance among graduates

It showed no meaningful difference in self-reliance and wealth creation ability of graduates from specialized Universities and graduates from other tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This could be attributed to respondents' personal strengths and enthusiasm towards self-reliance and wealth creation as a means of survival. Ojukwu (2001) is of the opinion that that Technical and Vocational Education students must know to start and sustain entrepreneurial ventures considering their exposure to work environment. According to Kareem, Ademoyewa, Jolaosho, Ojenike, and Sodi, (2015), Technical and Vocational Education provides the enabling environment and equips learners with necessary skills and competencies for entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

This study simply described the state of self-reliance of graduates of tertiary education in Nigeria as well as their wealth creation ability. It therefore concludes that based on its findings that graduates of tertiary education are knowledgeable about self-reliance, they have some wealth creation skills but need to acquire more skills to make them employable or able to render needed services with which they could earn their living.

Recommendations

The researchers recommend that;

1. Learners be equipped with knowledge about self-reliance, corresponding emphasis should be laid on empowering them with wealth creation skills as a task they must achieve before graduation. This keeps them economically balanced as graduates, thereby presenting tertiary education in Nigeria as viable tool in reducing poverty and unemployment
2. All tertiary institutions should ensure more practical education programmes in order to bring about better self-reliance ability among graduates so they can have economic autonomy thereby empowering self, and contributing to the development of the society

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PEACE EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTER-CULTURAL INTEGRATION IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: THE COUNSELLING PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The inculcation and integration of culture of peace and security among the diverse group in a multicultural society lay credence to peaceful co-existence divulge of violence, insecurity, conflicts and inability to tolerate and acculturate, non-acceptance of other people's cultural heritage. A country without any of socio-cultural, religion and values difference abhor peace and co-exist through acquisition of Peace education, and multicultural Education that give values to Unity and Peace. The paper is aimed at examining the roles of Counselling towards culture of peace, security and integration in a multicultural society. Identify the causes of insecurity violence and disunity such as non-inclusion of Peace Education in the school curriculum to train students about peaceful co-existence, poverty, food shortage, cultural and ethnic discrimination, non-acceptance of other people's opinion and cultural values, the ethno-religious indoctrination which result to restiveness, frustration, death, displacement insecurity and genocide being experience in all part of the country. To maintain peace and integration of the diverse people, will require effective strategies and campaign for peace, reconciliation of the differences which could be achieved with the introduction of counselling services, promoting unity, stability and peaceful co-existence. Recommendation was made that, there should be adequate counselling programmes, peace awareness and inculcation of peace Education in the school curriculum and promoting cultural integration through inter-ethnic marriages, cultural festival, exchange programmes among various group.

Keywords: Peace Education, Security, inter-Cultural Integration, Counselling, Multicultural

Introduction

The multicultural nature of Nigeria impacts on the need to imbibe the culture of integration of the ethnic difference to co-exist. It is pertinent to know that, multicultural society experience violence, conflicts insecurity, fear, discrimination due to the socio-cultural and psychological differences which has been the bane of integration, co-existence, peace and security. The people live in a state of insecurity where ethno-cultural disposition has been issue of peace and integration.; and the rate at which leaders have used ethnic, religion, hates and

suspicious to infuse into our socio-political, economic equality, and social justice to disintegrate the harmony and peaceful co-existence among the people who had inter-married and live for centuries; hence the fear of dominance and superiority of culture and faith over others. This attitude has created conflicts bloodletting and dislodging people from their ancestral domain. Nigeria before the advent of the political independence, the diversity had no interface in their interpersonal relationship, integration; and co-exist with the distinct culture and traditions. They learn, eat and imbibe the host community culture of language, food, religion practices and were in mutual understanding but, with the political leaders' attitude of acquiring offices; the scenario has changed to conflicts and mistrust.

Nigeria as a pluralistic society of people or group who identified with their values , beliefs ,norms and accepting the differences in cultural background .It was difficult to identify any conflicts .(Amahian, Oyebiyi, Teteye, & Abdullahi 2016) in their opinion on peace and security in a multicultural Nigeria; consented to the above assertion that , it might be the combination of inter-cultural , personal and interpersonal issues ;and the educational values for peace and security that made possible for different ethnic groups to live and integrate without any fear or prejudice . They further asserted that, the recent attitude of dominance and political insensitivities among the people due to the manipulation of the political class who are now using or supporting insecurity, kidnapping, insurgency, killing and destroying the culture of peace that has been the binding principles for the diverse people to propagate hates among them for political responsibilities., and make it difficult for them to settle or adapt to the new communities.

The problem of not accepting our differences in culture has resulted to total breakdown of peace and peaceful co-existence, insecurity, death and lack of sense of belonging leading to inter – group conflict and disunity in the country. To have a reconciliation, there is need for counselling the diverse culture through the promotion of peace, education, multicultural education, promoting values for peace, security, tolerance and integration of the people in multicultural environment. (Amahian ,et al, 2016), (Bekats, 2006) (Ward & Kennedy,1993b) (Ward & Kenned,1994) opined that, for individual having links to their heritage and culture is associated with lower stress. This assertion is akin to the people who are culturally diverse but still have tremendous attachments to their immediate environment and integrate effectively but, in a conflicting environment, there is always fear of attacks whenever there are conflicts. This attitude of intolerance, discrimination and frustration; the people living within culture different from theirs, experience what is referred to as 'cultural Shock' which cause strains, anxiety, loss, confusion, lacking cultural clues, norms and inability to adjust to the new environment. To this end therefore, the individual has to be encouraged to respect people's culture, tradition, norms, learn to be tolerance, and belief in their religion practices.

The students in the multicultural society or schools to integrate and acculturate have to negotiate for peace, security and adapt to a context that is characterised by the cultural norms, rule, and practices of the host community. To corroborate the above assertion; to acculturates

Ozdemir & Stattin, (2013) said that students are faced with discrimination at school or society, and find it more difficult to adjust to the new environment, peer group and establish a good working relationship with teachers. It is pertinent to say that, in a multicultural society, people suffer prejudice and insecurity due to the diversity in culture and beliefs; and make it difficult for them to adapt and experience positive relationship and integrate for peaceful Co-existence. Individual that experiences inequality and exclusion can be detrimental for cultural adjustment and acculturation in a multicultural society.

The inter-dependence of individual can be improved upon through culture and education to train children the values of Peace, Unity and integration. (UNESCO, 2005) (Amaihian, et al, 2016) declared in the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in relation to the role of education in protecting cultural Diversity, stated that, diversity can be guaranteed through respect for human rights, fundamental freedom and education program which can sustain peace and security. This shows that, there should be education program that promote culture of peace and security, tolerance and understanding of the diversity among the multicultural society where people live in without any fear, anxiety discrimination and prejudice. This attitude could be achieved with the inculcation of multicultural education, counselling, Peace education and ability to learn and adjust to understand the societal value system.

Objectives

The main objective is to focus on the impact of Peace education for National Security and Inter-cultural integration in a multicultural society.

The specific objectives were;

1. To identify the roles of Counselling services towards culture of peace, and intercultural integration in a multicultural society.
2. To determine the causes of insecurity and violence among the diverse groups.
3. To discuss the strategies for Security, and intercultural integration for Peaceful co-existence of the people in a multicultural society.

Conceptual Framework

The Concept of Peace, culture of Peace and Peace Education

A society without understanding, trust, tolerance, acceptance of people opinion, and establishing an inter-personal, inter-cultural relationship and conducive environment where ethnicity and injustice override the attitude towards Peace and peaceful co-existence will always experience conflict and violence against others who are presumed to be non-members of the host community

Peace

(Alaku, 2014) cited in (Ajibola and Okafor, 2017) described peace as a process that helps to eliminate war, fear, suffering, pervasive poverty, oppression by the rich, police brutality and

intimidation of the ordinary people by those in power or by some section in the society. Peace is a desirable value that makes a society worth living without any fear of discrimination, attack or violence which give rise to acceptance of other culture to sustain inter relation for the purpose of co-existence of the people of diverse society. It is an inevitable condition for societal stability, national unity and development and it is the understanding of one another and interrelationship that exist to sustain tolerance, equality and social justice. Peace is value to be taught, learned and practiced in all societies by agents of socialisation; school, home, individual and religious institutions and, important to teach and acquire knowledge about what peace is, what brings about peace, and implication for national stability and peaceful co-existence.

Peace education

Peace education aims at equipping individual with the knowledge, skills and attitude needed to prevent violence, resolve conflicts peacefully and build a sustainable peace in a society. A study by the (United State Institute of Peace,2013), found that peace education programme can help to reduce violence and promote peaceful settlement of disputes by providing individual with conflict resolution skills, critical thinking, social and emotional competencies that can enable them engage in constructive dialogues and negotiation. Therefore, individual should learn and tolerate others who have difference culture without fear of any discriminations. (United Nation Education, scientific and cultural organisation,2015) concluded that, Peace Education promoted a culture of peace and non –violence which can contribute to peaceful settlement of dispute or insecurity and build more resilient and inclusive society. It is a vital tool to fostering intercultural dialogues and integration with understanding to transform the individual in a multicultural society.

Education can therefore be defined as the process of promoting the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavioural changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence both overt and structural, to resolve conflict peacefully and to create the conditions conducive to peace whether in an interpersonal, intergroup, national and international levels. (Harris & Synott,2002) defined peace education as a series of ‘teaching encounters’ that draws people from their desire for peace, non-violent alternative for managing conflict and the skill for critical analysis of structural arrangement that produces and legitimizes injustice and inequality. It is the process of acquiring the values, knowledge and developing attitudes, skills and behaviour to live in harmony with oneself and with the natural environment. There is urgent need to teach Nigerians citizens Peace Education both within and outside the formal school system of education to enable all citizens, irrespective of age, gender and home location, become peace ambassadors wherever they go and live. This can only be possible if all the agents of education and socialization are involved in the process of teaching and learning peace education.

With the above, it is very imperative to inculcate the attitude of learning about other people culture norms, values tradition and able to tolerate our differences towards a sustainable

social integration, peace and security. A culture of peace, emphasise the values, principles and strategies underpinning active non-violence action.

In the opinion of (Toh,2010); he concluded that, learning and assimilation of the societal values and cultures; promotes dialogue, peaceful integration among people of diverse culture through effective education for peace; sustaining intercultural and inter personal dialogue for co-existence and transformation. To build an inter-ethnic and cultural respect, integration, reconciliation and unity, there is need for a change in values, attitude and beliefs without resulting to violence. The peaceful co-existence requires negotiation, mediation and understanding of diversity through Peace Education and counselling services. (Kester,2010) on Media and Peace towards Dialogue among civilisation said, culture of peace might be said to be possible through transforming conflict based worldview towards unity and security. The purpose of relating among other culture is to enjoy the values of the new culture without any prejudice; and if love is about people connecting with others where culture differs, then the needs for mutual understanding, and recognition must be established through learning and teaching of culture of peace and co-existences.

Culture of Peace and Integration

A culture of Peace is set of values attitude, tradition and mode of behaviour and way of life. This is about shifting mind set and behaviour in all aspect of our society as we move from forces to reason from conflict and violence to dialogue and peace building, embrace humility, interconnectedness and inner ones. The pathways to peace culture are through local Non-Government Organisation efforts, education, Government, Business and environment that works together to better understanding each other, create new possibilities in education, peace Education, multicultural counselling services are basic ingredient for Peace, Unity and integrations. To create culture of peace therefore; there will be need to initiate a peace program for peaceful co-existence and full integration of people of other culture in a multicultural Society. (Onifade, 2013) described National integration as the process of unifying a society which tends to make it harmonious in all things. This assertion connotes that any country devoured of violence, equal distribution of resources will be well integrated and see others as their brothers. (Kolo, 2012) concluded to support the assertion that, security is the product of the guarantee of the wellbeing of the people to their fundamental basic rights, human dignity and access to unfettered justice. As well as negating the ethno-religion crisis, the youths' restiveness, cultural disrespect; cost a nation like Nigeria that is multicultural in nature to be bedevilled with violence, conflicts and other security issues; depriving the peace and integration of the people.

The following need to be considered

- i. There must be process of fostering culture through education
- ii. Promoting sustainable economic and social development where justice and equality prevail

- iii. Promoting respect, rights and sense of belonging and conducive environment for cultural integration
- iv. Fostering democratic participation of individual of right to vote and be voted in his new cultural environment
- v. Removal of indigenisation or ethnicity in acquiring citizenship and opportunities.

The multicultural nature of Nigeria, with multiple ethnic groups with great distinction in culture, traditions norms and attitude, requires enormous efforts and synergy to promote peace and tolerance, and stop the attitude of self in establishing peace, unity and security of life and properties. This behaviour and mentality of non-indigene can be changed through introduction of multicultural education with value of integration, co-existence and inculcating the attitude of learning other peoples 'culture, values, tradition and ability to tolerate our difference will be taught and learned.

Multicultural education and the inter-cultural integration

Education is a veritable instrument of transmitting culture, knowledge, idea, skills from generation to generation. (Amahian, et al, 2016) described multicultural education as the learning content acquired through training, assimilation, and indoctrination of the societal values to change the behaviour of the learners. (Linda, 2010) described multicultural education as an inter- cultural education that involves the interdependence of individual acculturating in a new environment. Therefore, multicultural education and Peace education aim at enhancing and improve the knowledge of culture, civilisation and tradition of people towards the attitude of peaceful co-existence and national integration. The peaceful co-existence relates to the acceptance of difference in-between or among groups or individual. A society that promotes discrimination, ethnics, religion; never integrate other culture, will experience insecurity and violence. Peaceful environment brings about a sustainable community and National development. To secure lives and properties and the people, the people have to be re-orientated towards against attitude of seeing others as inferior or lacking stand to enjoy all that he can as a member of that community; therefore, it is evident that, individuals or groups need to promote tolerance and eschew discrimination through inculcation of values for secured environment through adequate counselling service for displaced persons, non-native and visitors to the new culture.

Causes of insecurity and violence in a multicultural society

The insecurity in a multicultural environment or society (Nigeria) has been as a result of the indifference to the education system adopted and the curriculum content did not have consideration for the nature, the multi-cultural and ethno-cultural decimation of the country. (Kolo, 2012) concluded that, security in any society or societal settings is the guarantee of peace and tranquillity for sustained human co-existence and safety of live sand properties. He further said that, security is the product of the guarantee of the wellbeing of the people to their

fundamental basic rights, human dignity and access to unfettered justice. This assertion connotes that, for a peace and peaceful integration, the people must have sense of belonging, acceptance of opinion, tolerate and allow for a sustain peace education program that enhance and disapprove of discriminative behaviour among the receiving community. Every individual should have absolute right to life and to area of abode without any attack or violence.

According to (Amaihian et al, 2016), agreed with the conclusion that, the interethnic and inter cultural conflicts manifest as prejudices, stereotypes, and others subtle or covert forms of marginalisation and hatred. Therefore, the bane of Nigerians co-existence and integration as multicultural nation amount to the inconsistency of the curriculum that did not harmonise the desire of the ethnic, cultural difference and values among the people; thus neglecting the security and the value of peace and reconciliation of the difference that came from the religion, ethnic differences and doubts among the peoples.

The writer identifies the reasons for insecurity and inter-ethnic conflicts due to the difference and suspicious behaviour as follows

- i. **The fear of ethnical dominance:** The attitude of self-cultural and ethnic promotion among groups has kept away the needed peace and integrations. This is due to excessive discrimination and attacks on the new entrants from the host community and threat of taking over their ancestral lands. This has resulted to conflicts, attacks, death wanton destruction of lives and properties. This situation has led to displacement and Internally Displaced People's camps (IDPs)
- ii. **The high level of illiteracy:** In a country like Nigeria where the level of illiterates is enormous; the number of out of school or dropped –out is high due to insecurity, the values given to education, the inability or unavailability of educational institution or total neglect by the successive government with the engagement of their wards to farming or street trading, and the value given to the cybercrime for quick money and fraudsters (Yahoo Boys). Therefore, some of this group members who are not opportune to be educated, become menace to security, unity and sustained peaceful environment
- iii. **The family Background:** The attitude and emotional intelligence of a child shows or predicts the home the child comes. The family values have been eroded to the extent that the children have no more respects for elders and parents have lost control and over indulge their wards in act of indiscipline. The family or parents have left the values training to house maids running after money and career; thereby the children mixed with bad groups and come home late. This attitude has extended to the society and led them to engaging in criminal activities, creating groups causing insecurity within the society. The level of insecurity in families, coupled with the high rate of divorce, have caused moral decadence in the society. The unstable parents –child relationship, and inability to provide the basic needs have made some to become security risk to the society.
- iv. Lack of respect for fundamental Rights and freedom, this has threatened the peace and

peaceful co-existence because the people have been denied the opportunity to be educated and have meaningful life.

- v. **Inconsistency of the government policies on the welfare of the people:** The government policies have made lots of people to becoming indolent, lazy, and drop-outs; especially the youths who have be neglected and therefore seek solace in crime to survive. The politicians' affluence life styles and corrupts practices make the youth to engage in crimes to survive and creating insecure atmosphere.
- vi. **Unemployment:** The increase in number of graduates without a commensurate employment or skills to be self-employed. Also, the cases of downsizing, closure and relocation of industries in the country; have brought about restiveness, aggression, anxiety, cultism, kidnapping, armed banditry, insurgency and killings among the people.
- vii. **Food shortage and high level of poverty:** most Nigerians are below poverty level with the low food production. Farmers have lost their farm lands and produces to banditry and herdsmen who herd their animals on farmers; and resistant exist, it results to killings and destruction of farms. This has resulted to inter- tribal conflicts, deserting their homes and becoming refugee their country. According to (Denga 2012) cited in (Amaihian ,2016) concluded that, without peace them cannot be peace, there will be little or no internal or external investments in the war-torn part of the nation or Globe. Nigeria require security and tolerance, understanding of our differences and ability to promote inter group integrations to make food abound and establishment of industry and agriculture for food and alleviate food shortage and poverty.
- viii. **The need to control resources:** This is a bane of insecurity, lack of peace and co-habitation of the multi-ethnic groups in Nigeria today. The people are agitating for control of their wealth that, the source of the resources are being neglected which has led to violence and insecurity, killings and kidnapping, because the areas have been degraded and loss of means of livelihood and could not survive the effects. These areas have become dangerous zones for peaceful co-existence.
- ix. **The political challenges:** The political process has changed from the National outlook to an ethnic based; where politicians play with their sensibility to get elected. They bring in the politics of ethnicities, religion and nepotism promoting ethno-political activities and discrimination against those who are not from their region. This has led to inconsistence in integrating and accepting others to have sense of belonging as an individual.
- x. **Corruption:** With the affluence of the politicians, government officials who have corruptly made self-actualised, gave rights to the youths not to engage in any meaningful work but crimes, such as yahoo or ritualists, frauds, cybercrimes and armed banditry to make money. Nothing can be archived without preventing the acts that promote insecurity and instability. It is politics of diversion, contract inflation, and outright mismanagement

which has increase the level of insecurity and peaceful co-existence

Counselling for Peace and Secured Society

Counselling is the provision of therapeutic intervention to assist individual to adjust and integrate in an environment that is different and experiencing difficulty to establishing interpersonal relationship in a diverse culture. (Abdulkadir, 2005) described counselling as a professional help that is given to an individual who is in a temporary state of indecision, maladjustment, confusion, disorder, distress for proper adjustment and understanding of himself and the world around him. To achieve this for a better behaviour and to experience peace in a multicultural society; there should be a relationship of trust among the people and the counsellor to assist for tolerance and understanding with life situations and the environment.

Therefore, the roles of the counsellors are to identify and observe the Psychological incongruent behaviour and the socio-cultural challenges that makes an individual to engage in destructive behaviour that influence their emotional intelligence and involve in crime and other social vices causing fear and anxiety due to the circumstances around them; especially the difference in culture, These attitudinal incongruences result to violence, crimes and insecurity; break in the principle of integration and peaceful co-existence.

To counsel for peace and security in a multicultural society; the counsellors will have to engage the youths and entire people for peace and security to promoting national security and Peace, accept others' opinion and have sense of belonging without any cultural prejudices.

Therefore, the counsellors have to carry out the following to enhance peace and inter –cultural integration for peaceful co-existence.

- i. The counsellor must be able to adopt the humanistic therapy; as man inferiority complex, anxiety, frustration and fear make him to exhibits undesirable behaviour
- ii. He should ensure the personality of the individual is respected and culture of the counsellor must not impact the clients 'perception.
- iii. Provide information on the need to accept and tolerate others whose culture and beliefs are different.
- iv. Provide activity based counselling services where the traumatised individual are given an appropriate rehabilitation services
- v. Value reorientation, Advocacy and sensitisation programmes must be prioritised by the counsellors to give the affected person who have lost hope due to rejection, displacement and denied opportunity for survival and integration.
- vi. The counsellors should endeavour to provide and ensure the youths acquire skills for self-reliance and distract them from anti-social behaviour.
- vii. The counsellors should provide social supports, coping mechanism or behaviour modification therapy for those in conflicts and experiencing violence.

Sustenance of Peaceful co-existence and intercultural integration

The mechanism for the sustenance of Peaceful Co-existence in multicultural Nation or society requires the commitment of stakeholders for peace, security and managing crisis and violence.

- i. There should be process of mediating among groups devoured of Win-win principles. It has to be acceptance of our differences
- ii. The culture of inter –marriages and religious activities be encouraged among the people to foster peace, cooperation and co-exist without any discrimination. That is, marriages among different ethnic groups will enhance peaceful Co-existences, promote dialogue for peace and security (Amahian, et al ,2016).
- iii. There should be equitable distribution of resources among all ethnic groups to stem the agitation against marginalisation and deprivation which has resulted to insecurity, killing, kidnapping, and restiveness that people were displaced in their ancestral homes
- iv. Food and security be made available to all community and the multicultural ethnic groups in the country to enhance peaceful co-existence
- v. The government should make effort to promoting inter- ethnic dialogue for peaceful resolution of conflicts by introducing machineries to discourage the culture of Wars and violence for human rights, responsibilities and re-orientate for justice and compassion with sense of equal opportunities among the groups.
- vi. The youths should be involved in entrepreneurial programme to acquire skills for self-reliance to keep them out of crimes and other social vices, because the bane of peaceful co-existence has been hinged on the youths not engaged
- vii. The government and agencies should highlight their roles to harmonise cultural diversity, heritage and foster inter-cultural dialogue and mutual understanding through the organisation of seminars, workshops in schools and the community for peaceful co-existence and socialisations of groups.
- viii. There should be inter-religious corporations for peace and security. That is, interfaith Based Initiatives be encouraged to proffer solutions to the problem of peace and insecurity, and improve the integration of the diverse ethnic groups of distinct culture, traditions and religious beliefs
- ix. There should be youths exchange programmes and cultural activities where they will be able the interact, learn and accept others who are different in languages and other socio-political background.

Conclusion

Peace Education is a vehicle for peace, security, integration in multicultural Nigeria as it has been subject of discourse in the process of finding solutions to issues of insecurity and indiscrimination been experienced among ethnic groups. The citizens must develop the habits

of being tolerant and accept the differences in culture, value other people's culture and norms to allow for peace, security and integration. The country is a collectivistic Nation with diverse culture that requires a strong bond with different groups of people, effective curriculum that will promote group attachments; and provide social justice and security. The exposition of the multicultural characterisation of the Nigerian context in recent past justifies the social and community's attention to the dynamics of human to construct the inter personal relationship with other people from diverse culture and national ethnic groups; thereby proposing different acculturation and assimilation strategies to securing and promoting effective integration for peaceful co-existence. The paper has identified the problems of peaceful co-existence, and socio-political integration, the introduction of Peace education and culture of peace, the roles of counselling in the propagation of peace and security in a multicultural society. Therefore, for peaceful co-existence and inter-cultural integration; the citizens must develop the attitude of tolerance, and accept the difference in culture, values, norms and traditions; and provide enabling environment for learning culture of peace and integration through a well organised peace education in our learning institutions.

Suggestions

To experience peace, and security in Nigeria, the political, religious, youths and the leads; have to engage in promoting peace education and multicultural education and discard the attitude of self and ethno-cultural ideologies and discrimination of other ethnic groups. (Amahian, el tal ,2016) concluded that, unless all cultures and faith are willing to conscientiously develop the spirituality of peace within their members ;there will be intolerance and diversity towards co-existence. The implication for peace, security and inter –cultural integration will be that, there is a synergy with education for culture of peace, security, integrations and co-existence. Hence, the following recommendations

- i. There should be value orientation about the needs for peaceful co-existence and security among the ethnic groups.
- ii. Education for peace and dialogue need be promoted through media literacy campaign.
- iii. There should be integration and teaching of culture of peace and security at all levels of education.
- iv. The Faith –Based Institution should preach peace, tolerance and peaceful Co-Existence
- v. The government should ensure people or students are posted to areas different from theirs and be intensified and encouraged with assurance of safety and effective mechanism for adjustment and acceptance in the new ethnic or cultural areas.
- vi. The National Youths Service should be strengthened for peace and conflict management among the youths by dialogue and establish the process of integrating them.

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COUNSELLING APPROACHES FOR ADDRESSING ETHICAL
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Abstract

Adolescents often face ethical dilemmas that can have profound effects on their development and well-being. This paper explores various counselling approaches that can be employed to address these dilemmas. By examining theoretical frameworks and practical interventions, this paper aims to provide counselors with effective strategies for helping adolescents navigate ethical challenges. Key approaches discussed include cognitive-behavioral therapy, narrative therapy, and solution-focused therapy. The paper also considers the role of cultural competence and the integration of ethical decision-making models in counselling practices.

Keywords: Family dynamics, adolescents, Counselling approaches, ethical dilemmas.

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by significant psychological, emotional, and social changes. During this period, individuals often encounter complex ethical dilemmas that can challenge their moral reasoning and decision-making capabilities. These dilemmas may arise from various sources, including peer pressure, family dynamics, academic stress, and societal expectations. As adolescents navigate these challenges, they require appropriate guidance and support to make ethical decisions that align with their values and promote their well-being (Beck, 2011).

Counselling approaches play a vital role in assisting adolescents to address these ethical dilemmas. By providing a safe and non-judgmental space, counselors help adolescents explore their thoughts, feelings, and values, enabling them to make informed and responsible decisions. The diverse counselling strategies employed in addressing ethical dilemmas among adolescents

include cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT), psychoanalytic approaches, and person-centered counselling. Each of these approaches offers unique methods and techniques tailored to meet the specific needs of adolescents as they confront ethical challenges (Corey, Corey & Callanan, 2015).

The importance of addressing ethical dilemmas in adolescents cannot be overstated, as the decisions made during this period can have long-lasting implications on their personal development, relationships, and future goals. Moreover, unresolved ethical conflicts may contribute to maladaptive behaviors such as delinquency, substance abuse, and academic disengagement. Therefore, equipping adolescents with the skills to navigate ethical dilemmas through effective counselling interventions is crucial for fostering moral development, resilience, and positive life outcomes (De Szazars & Dolan, 2007).

This paper aims to explore the various counselling approaches available for addressing ethical dilemmas in adolescents. It will examine the theoretical foundations of these approaches, their practical applications in counselling settings, and the effectiveness of these interventions in promoting ethical decision-making. By highlighting the significance of these counselling strategies, the paper seeks to provide valuable insights for counselors, educators, and policymakers in supporting the ethical development of adolescents (Kelly, 2011).

Adolescence is a critical period characterized by increased cognitive abilities and moral reasoning. As adolescents encounter complex social and personal situations, they often face ethical dilemmas that challenge their values and decision-making skills. Effective counselling is crucial in helping adolescents resolve these dilemmas and develop a strong ethical framework (Blasi, 2004). This paper reviews various counselling approaches to address these challenges, focusing on practical strategies and theoretical underpinnings. Moral development refers to the process through which individuals acquire and refine their values, ethics, and sense of justice, often influenced by social, cultural, and educational contexts. Adolescents, in particular, undergo significant moral development as they transition from childhood to adulthood. During this period, they are frequently confronted with ethical dilemmas that challenge their existing moral beliefs and prompt them to reflect on and refine their moral reasoning. The resolution of these ethical dilemmas plays a crucial role in shaping the moral development of adolescents.

Common ethical dilemmas faced by adolescents.

Ethical dilemmas are situations in which individuals must make decisions that involve conflicting values or principles. Adolescents, due to their developmental stage, often face unique ethical dilemmas as they navigate the transition from childhood to adulthood. These dilemmas can be complex, as they involve issues of morality, peer influence, identity formation, and the desire for independence. Here are some common ethical dilemmas faced by adolescents:

Peer Pressure and Conformity: Adolescents often face ethical dilemmas related to peer pressure. They may feel pressured to engage in activities that go against their values or beliefs,

such as cheating, drinking alcohol, using drugs, or participating in risky behaviors. The desire to fit in and be accepted by peers can lead adolescents to make choices that conflict with their personal morals. The dilemma lies in choosing between maintaining their values and the fear of social exclusion. Example: An adolescent might be pressured by friends to try smoking. They know it is harmful and against their personal or family values, but fear being ridiculed or losing friendships if they refuse (Killen & Smetana, 2015).

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is another area where adolescents face ethical dilemmas. The pressure to achieve good grades, sometimes from parents, teachers, or the competitive academic environment, can lead to the temptation to cheat on exams, plagiarize assignments, or take shortcuts in their work. Example: A student might consider copying answers during an exam to maintain a high GPA, knowing that cheating is wrong but feeling that failure might jeopardize their future educational opportunities (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2015).

Balancing Personal and Family Values: Adolescents often grapple with balancing their own emerging personal values with those of their family. As they develop their identity, they may encounter situations where their beliefs differ from those of their parents or cultural background. This can lead to ethical dilemmas, especially when the adolescent is expected to conform to family traditions or expectations. Example: An adolescent might be expected to follow a family tradition, such as pursuing a particular career, but their personal passion lies elsewhere. They face the dilemma of choosing between their desires and fulfilling family expectations (Yalom & 2005).

Relationships and Sexuality: Adolescents are at a stage where they begin to explore romantic relationships and their sexuality. These experiences can present ethical dilemmas, especially when they involve decisions about sexual activity, consent, and setting boundaries. Adolescents may struggle with questions of morality, respect, and responsibility in their relationships. Example: An adolescent may face pressure from a partner to engage in sexual activity before they feel ready. They may struggle with the dilemma of wanting to please their partner while also wanting to honor their personal values regarding sexual behavior (Eisenber & Morris, 2004).

Social Media and Digital Ethics: With the rise of social media, adolescents face ethical dilemmas related to online behavior. They may encounter situations involving cyberbullying, privacy concerns, sharing of personal information, or the pressure to present a false image of themselves online. Navigating the digital world requires ethical decision-making, as the consequences of online actions can be far-reaching. Example: An adolescent may witness a friend being cyberbullied and face the dilemma of whether to intervene and risk becoming a target or to remain silent and protect themselves (Wite & Epston, 1990).

Substance Use: Adolescents may face ethical dilemmas related to substance use, particularly when it involves illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. The decision to experiment with substances can conflict with their understanding of the law, health risks, and personal values. Additionally,

they may have to decide whether to report friends or peers who engage in substance use, which can create tension between loyalty and responsibility. **Example:** A teenager might be offered alcohol at a party. They know it is illegal and against their better judgment, but they also fear being labeled as "uncool" if they decline (Walker, 2004).

Gender and Identity Issues: Adolescents exploring their gender identity or sexual orientation may face ethical dilemmas related to authenticity and acceptance. They may struggle with whether to come out to family and friends, knowing it could lead to rejection or conflict. Additionally, they may face dilemmas related to how they present themselves in different social contexts, balancing personal truth with the desire for social harmony. **Example:** An adolescent who identifies as LGBTQ+ may grapple with whether to come out to their conservative family, risking rejection, or to keep their identity hidden, which can lead to feelings of inauthenticity and internal conflict (Hardy & Carlo, 2011).

Bullying and Social Exclusion: Bullying is a significant issue during adolescence, and ethical dilemmas often arise for both victims and bystanders. Victims may face the dilemma of how to respond to bullying, whether to stand up for themselves, report the behavior, or endure it silently. Bystanders may struggle with whether to intervene or ignore the situation to avoid becoming targets themselves. **Example:** A student might witness a peer being bullied and must decide whether to report the incident to a teacher, knowing it could make them a target, or to stay silent and avoid conflict (Gibbs, 2014).

Loyalty vs. Honesty: Adolescents often face ethical dilemmas where loyalty to friends conflicts with honesty. They may be asked to cover for a friend's misbehavior or to keep a secret that they feel uncomfortable with. These situations challenge their values of trust, loyalty, and truthfulness. **Example:** An adolescent might know that a friend is engaging in harmful behavior, such as self-harm or stealing, and face the dilemma of whether to keep the secret or to tell an adult who can help (Gibbs, 2014).

Economic Pressure and Ethics: Some adolescents face economic pressures that can lead to ethical dilemmas, particularly in low-income families. They may feel the need to contribute financially, which can lead to situations where they are tempted to engage in unethical activities, such as stealing, working under illegal conditions, or participating in illicit activities to earn money. **Example:** A teenager from a financially struggling family might be tempted to shoplift to help provide for their siblings, despite knowing it is wrong (Gibbs, 2014).

Mental Health and Seeking Help: Adolescents struggling with mental health issues may face ethical dilemmas related to seeking help. They might worry about the stigma associated with mental health treatment, fear that their privacy will be violated, or feel conflicted about burdening others with their problems. The dilemma often revolves around whether to seek help or to cope alone. **Example:** An adolescent experiencing depression might hesitate to seek counselling because they fear being judged by their peers or misunderstood by their family (Gibbs, 2014).

Cultural and Religious Expectations: Adolescents from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds may face ethical dilemmas when their personal beliefs or desires conflict with cultural or religious expectations. These dilemmas can be particularly challenging, as they may involve deeply held values and community norms. Example: An adolescent from a strict religious background might struggle with the decision to attend a school event that goes against their family's religious practices (Gibbs, 2014).

Counselling Methods to Help Adolescents Navigate Ethical Challenges.

Adolescents often face various ethical challenges as they transition from childhood to adulthood. These challenges may include issues related to peer pressure, substance use, academic dishonesty, relationships, and decision-making. Counselling methods can play a critical role in helping adolescents navigate these challenges by providing guidance, support, and a safe space for reflection. Below are some detailed counselling methods that can help adolescents address ethical dilemmas:

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT): CBT is a widely used therapeutic approach that helps individuals identify and change negative thought patterns and behaviors. For adolescents facing ethical challenges, CBT can assist in recognizing how their thoughts influence their decisions and actions. A counselor might work with an adolescent to examine the consequences of their choices and challenge irrational beliefs that lead to unethical behavior. For example, if an adolescent is tempted to cheat on a test, the counselor could explore the underlying beliefs (e.g., "I must get good grades at all costs") and help the adolescent develop healthier coping strategies (Kelly, 2011).

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT): SFBT is a goal-oriented therapy that focuses on the present and future rather than the past. It encourages clients to envision their desired outcomes and develop strategies to achieve them. For adolescents dealing with ethical challenges, SFBT can help them focus on positive behavior and the consequences of ethical decision-making. For example, if an adolescent is struggling with peer pressure to engage in risky behavior, the counselor can help them identify past successes in resisting peer pressure and build on those strengths (Blasi, 2004).

Ethical Decision-Making Models: Ethical decision-making models provide a structured framework for individuals to evaluate and make ethical choices. These models often involve steps such as identifying the ethical dilemma, considering the consequences of different actions, and choosing the most ethical course of action. Counselors can teach adolescents specific ethical decision-making models, such as the Five-Step Model by Corey, Corey, and Callanan (2015). This model involves: Identifying the problem, Identifying the potential issues involved., Reviewing the relevant ethical guidelines., Knowing the applicable laws and regulations., Considering possible and probable courses of action.

Values Clarification: Values clarification is a counselling technique that helps individuals explore and define their personal values. This process is particularly important for adolescents,

who may be in the process of forming their identity and ethical beliefs. Counselors can guide adolescents through exercises that help them articulate their values and understand how these values influence their decisions. For example, an adolescent might explore the importance of honesty, respect, and responsibility in their relationships and academic life (Beck, 2011).

Group Counselling: Group counselling provides a supportive environment where adolescents can discuss ethical challenges with their peers. This setting allows them to gain different perspectives and learn from others' experiences. In a group counselling session, adolescents can engage in role-playing exercises to practice ethical decision-making in various scenarios. Group discussions can also help them see the impact of ethical and unethical behavior on others, fostering empathy and moral reasoning (Blasi, 2004).

Psychoeducation: Psychoeducation involves teaching adolescents about ethical principles, moral development, and the potential consequences of unethical behavior. This method is often used alongside other counselling techniques to provide a foundation of knowledge that adolescents can draw upon when facing ethical dilemmas. A counselor might provide information on the importance of academic integrity, the effects of substance abuse, or the ethical dimensions of social media use. By equipping adolescents with this knowledge, they are better prepared to make informed decisions (Eisenber & Morris, 2004).

Narrative Therapy: Narrative therapy is a counselling approach that helps individuals reframe their life stories in a more positive and empowering way. For adolescents, this can involve reinterpreting past experiences and decisions in a way that emphasizes ethical growth and responsibility. A counselor might work with an adolescent to rewrite their narrative around a specific ethical challenge, highlighting moments of moral strength and resilience. This process can help the adolescent see themselves as capable of making ethical decisions in the future (Gibbs, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development: Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development provides a foundational framework for understanding how adolescents progress through various stages of moral reasoning. According to Kohlberg, moral development occurs in three levels: Pre-conventional (focused on avoiding punishment and seeking rewards) Conventional (adhering to social rules and expectations) Post-conventional (internalizing universal ethical principles). Resolving ethical dilemmas enables adolescents to advance from the conventional to the post-conventional stage by encouraging them to think critically about societal norms and develop their own ethical principles.

Rest's Four-Component Model: James Rest expanded on Kohlberg's theory by introducing the Four-Component Model of Moral Development, which includes: Moral sensitivity (recognizing the moral aspects of a situation) Moral judgment (determining the right course of action) Moral motivation (prioritizing moral values over other values) Moral character (having the strength to act on one's moral decisions). Engaging with ethical dilemmas

enhances these components, fostering comprehensive moral growth in adolescents.

Educational Implications

- **Role of Schools:** Schools play a critical role in facilitating moral development by providing opportunities for students to engage with ethical dilemmas in a structured and supportive environment. Programs that incorporate moral education, such as discussions on ethical issues, role-playing scenarios, and community service, can help adolescents develop their moral reasoning and character (Nucci & Narvaez, 2008).
- **Influence of Curriculum:** Integrating ethical discussions into the curriculum across various subjects can help students apply moral reasoning to real-life situations. For example, literature classes can explore the moral dilemmas faced by characters, while social studies classes can examine ethical issues in history and current events (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2013).
- **Teacher's Role:** Teachers can model moral behavior and facilitate discussions that encourage students to think critically about ethical issues. By creating an open and inclusive classroom environment, teachers can help students feel comfortable discussing their thoughts and values, further enhancing their moral development (Killen & Smetana, 2015).

Conclusion

Adolescents face numerous ethical challenges as they navigate the complexities of growing up. Counselling methods such as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Solution-Focused Brief Therapy, ethical decision-making models, values clarification, group counselling, psychoeducation, and narrative therapy can provide valuable support in helping them make ethical decisions. These methods equip adolescents with the tools and frameworks they need to navigate their ethical dilemmas and make decisions that are consistent with their values and long-term goals.

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CHILD DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE SOCIETY: IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELLING

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Abstract

This paper examines child domestic violence in the society. It is no longer news that a lot of children had experienced and still experiencing child domestic violence or abuse in one form or the other. Forms of domestic violence which include physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse or emotional abuse and psychological abuse. The article views the different causes of child domestic violence like social stress, intergenerational transmission of violence, social isolation and community involvement and family structure. Whereas, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), result in death, low self-esteem, stress disorders, anxiety, depression, sexual transmitted infection, unwanted pregnancy, and educational difficulty are all effects of child domestic violence. Preventive measures are also taken to reduce the rate of child domestic violent. The related theory used was reframing theory, which simply means changing the interpretation of a behaviour or situation to alter its perceived meaning. Conclusively, the counsellors, educational psychologists and other relevant agencies carry out constant workshop to sensitize parents, guardians, and teachers. So as to be aware of the implication of child domestic violence and promptly report any related abuse to the appropriate authority.

Keywords: Child Domestic Violence.

Introduction

Child domestic violence involves all forms of child abuse and neglect. It is an abuse of different types that occurs when a child is being maltreated by the parents or guardians. These categories of abuse include physical abuse, psychological abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse. Alternatively, neglect involves actions that a parent or guardian refuses to do for the

child, like failing to provide basic necessities of life. Generally, domestic violence is an abusive way of behaviour that happens between adults in the presence of a child within the same household. In the same token, it is believed to be a situation usually occurs between a man and woman in relationship. Child domestic violence can be committed by parents or guidance, members of extended family, siblings, and domestic partners. It's important to recognize that child domestic can have serious and long-lasting effects on a child's emotional, physical, mental, and psychological well-being. A child's exposure to adult domestic violence has increasingly become a concern for counsellors, which is why this paper is written.

Concept of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence or abuse are two terms that can be used interchangeably and they carry the same meaning in this study. According to Jacob Stapledon. (2023), domestic violence is pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour that one person uses over another to gain power and control. Domestic violence may include verbal abuse, emotional/mental/psychological abuse, physical abuse financial abuse, and sexual abuse. Each of these can be experienced separately, there is considerably overlapping among these forms of abuse where two or more are commonly experienced among children or adolescent.

Concept of Child Domestic Violence

According to United children education fund (UNICEF 2020) assert that domestic violence or abuse in children can also refers to as child labour. This is a situation where children are given work that are too much to perform or that by its nature or circumstances can be hazardous. Witnessing domestic violence is a life threatening experience that creates a sense of vulnerability, hopelessness, psychological disorders and emotional threats among children resulting in negative academic capabilities (Kanchiputu and Mwale, 2016)

Forms of Child Domestic Violence

1. *Physical Abuse:* It is defined as physical injury that results in meaning harm to a child. There are indicators that can show that physical abuse has occurred with multiple bruises that are at various phases of healing, such as injuries on the body that are usually covered by clothing, such as scrapes on the knees of a newborn, speechless injuries that are abnormal with the child's age, and injuries on the thighs and chest. Physical abuse is one of the commonest forms of abuse (Oluremi, 2015). Other factors that should be looked into are location of the injury, injury pattern, child's age, and proposed clarifications of injuries.
2. *Sexual Abuse:* It is a forceful act of having sex with an individual (male or female) particularly a child, which is within our context. According to the state of Texas' panel code, sexual abuse is defined as "sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare, including conduct that constitutes the offense of continuous sexual abuse of a young child, indecency with a child, sexual assault, or aggravated

assault” (Egeland & Sroufe, 1981). If care is not taken to avoid sexual conduct hurtful to a child, encouraging a child to be involved in sexual acts, such as prostitution or hook-up as it is called these days, and also pornography are all embedded within the Texas definition of sexual abuse. Pointers of sexual abuse include physical and behavioural manifestations like having difficulty sitting or walking, sexually acting out, and pregnancy.

3. *Emotional Abuse:* It is mental or emotional harm done to a child that results in observable impairment in child’s development, growth, or psychological functioning. Emotional abuse is an instrument used by those who want to make children feel scared and worthless. For example, belittling a child in a public setting, threatening a child constantly, limiting physical contact, making jokes about a child, etc. The aftereffects of emotional abuse can be detrimental on the long run. The indicators of emotional abuse are depression, poor self-esteem, substance abuse, and aggressively acting out. The symptoms are different for boys and girls. Girls who are going through emotional abuse may be more depressed compared to boys who may act out with destructive behavior.
4. *Psychological Abuse:* It is a behaviour that intends to cause mental and emotional harm. It’s painful and distressing. It involves someone doing or saying things to make you feel bad. People’s behaviour that aims to make you scared or feel bad about yourself. Psychological abuse can include restricting a child’s movements, denigration, ridicule, threats and intimidation, discrimination and other non-forms of hostile treatment viz: calling you names; ignoring you or pretending you aren’t existing, threatening to harm you, your children, and close relations, embarrassing you in front of family, friends, and people you work with; and treating you badly because of things you can’t change, e.g. race, religion, gender, family etc. (Hillis, Mercy, Amobi, & Kress, 2016).
5. *Neglect:* It is the most common form of child abuse. It involves inadequate or lack of provision of basic needs such as clothing, food, shelter, education, health care, and protection from hazards in the environment. Research has shown that severe neglect disrupts the ways in which children’s brains develop and process information, increasing the risk for cognitive, emotional, attentional, and behavioural disorder. According to social learning theory, parents and caregivers who abuse or neglect their children do so because they experienced or witnessed abuse or neglect at the young age (Daigle and Muftic, 2016). Some factors that increase the risk of child neglect are parents who are young or single-parenting, have experienced child neglect themselves, or have family or personal stress. There are various types of neglects but for the purpose of this study the researchers focus on three neglects which are the most common form of child abuse namely emotional neglect, physical neglect, and educational neglect.

Emotional neglect: involves a caregiver's inattention to the child emotional needs.

Physical neglect: includes abandonment, ignoring a child welfare example driving intoxicated with a child.

Educational neglect: encompasses failure to educate a child or attend to special education needs.

Causes of Child Domestic Violence

The following are the causes of child domestic violence according to Bandura, (1977) and Akers (1973);

1. **Social Stress:** Limited social and relationship skills may result to social stress. How a child relates with parents who are abusive is restricted because of the frequent abuse he or she might have witnessed. There are pointers shown by such a child which include not having enough friends, not being able to keep up with friends' one particular area or another. Interpersonal conflicts, and peer pressure. Stress brought on by different social conditions increases the risk of child abuse within the family. These conditions are: unemployment, poor housing condition, sickness, disabled person in the home, the death of a family member. A large number of reported cases of child abuse is indicated in families living in abject poverty. It also happens in middle class and wealthy families, but it is better reported among the poor for many reasons. The affluent families have an easier time to hide abuse because have less contact with social agencies than poor families. Drug use and alcohol are rampant among abusive parents, which may aggravate stress and cause violent behavior.
2. **Intergenerational Transmission of Violence:** A child witnessing parental abuse in any form will most likely exhibit the same behavior. Children learn by modelling or observation and besides, the child's reaction is consequent upon what he or she is constantly seeing. Social learning theory is based on idea that an individual learn through modeling, observation and cognitive processes (Bandura,1977) More so according to social learning theory crime and criminal behavior is learned (Akers, 1973). In other words, children who are exposed to violence in childhood see violence as acceptable behavior. Many children learn violent behavior from their parents and grow up to abuse their own children. Thus, the abusive behavior is spread across generations. Studies show that 30% of abused children become abusive parents. Such children who experienced violence and abuse may embrace this behavior as a model for their parenting.

Nevertheless, most of abused children do not become abusive adults. Some experts postulated that an important indicator of later abuse is whether the child realizes that the behavior was bad. Children who believed they behaved badly and deserved the abuse become abusive parents more often than children who believe their parents were wrong to abuse them.

3. **Social Isolation and Community Development:** A child whose parents are always at loggerhead will naturally go into isolation at any slightest opportunity. Such a child if not properly tamed with care and empathy to correct the low self-esteem would withdraw from family, friends, and the entire community. So also, parents and guidance who abuse children have a tendency to be socially isolated. Hardly would violent parents belong to any community organization and most have little or no contact with friends and extended families. This lackadaisical attitudinal behavior social involvement in the community deprives abusive parents to support system that will help them deal better with social and family stress. More so, the lack of community contacts makes these parents less likely to change their behavior to be in harmony with the community values and standards. In cultures with low rates of child abuse, child care is often considered the responsibility of the community. These include, relatives, friends, neighbors, and relatives assist with child care when the parents are unavailable.
4. **Family Structure:** Some families have an increased risk of child abuse. The degree of damage done to a child in various families differ. For example, a child from a broken home whose structure is already broken, such a child is more damaged emotionally, mentally, and psychologically, than a child whose parents are still together despite their individual differences and constant domestic violence. However, when a family relationship becomes toxic and life threatening, it is best to part ways. Another example is a child who is sexually abused. The thought of suicide and depression is peculiar to them. Single-parents families usually earn less money than other families. This may account for the increased risk of abuse, which is why the writers have come up with reframing theory in a latter page as a way of helping a child who has been abused in any form.

The Effects of Child Domestic Violence

The consequent effects of child domestic violence can be devastating. These include post-traumatic stress disorders, anxiety, depression, sexual transmitted infections (STIs), low self-esteem, unwanted pregnancy, educational difficulty, etc. According to Hillis, Mercy, Amobi and Kress (2016), listed the following as effect of child domestic violence.

1. **Result in death:** Homicide, which often involved weapon such as knives and firearms, is among the top four causes of death in adolescents..

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): A child who experienced traumatic event during while growing up is prone to have PTSD. Such event could be an accident, natural disaster, witnessing domestic violence, loss of loved ones, etc. A child with PTSD may exhibits symptoms like: regressive behaviors (bed wetting, thumb-sucking), mood swings, psychosomatic illnesses (headaches, stomachache), nightmares, isolation etc.
3. **Stress Disorders:** Stress disorders in a child can manifest differently than in adult. These are the common types of stress disorders: anxiety disorder, adjustment disorder, reactive attachment disorder (RAD), post-traumatic stress disorder

(PTSD).

4. **Anxiety:** Intense and constant worry and fear about everyday situations or events. It is characterized by rapid heartbeat, excessive worry, difficulty concentrating attention etc.
5. **Depression:** Depression in children can be difficult to notice, they may not show their feelings like adults do. Here are some symptoms to look out for: constant sadness, loss of interest in any activity, fatigue, suicide thoughts, withdrawal from friends and family, etc.
6. **Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs):** These are sexual diseases or infections that can be transmitted through sexual contact with an infected person. This includes gonorrhea, syphilis, hepatitis B & C, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), chlamydia, scabies, etc. Some of the symptoms are: skin rashes, itching or burning sensation, painful urination or intercourse, abnormal discharge, etc. These are very dangerous diseases if left untreated, it can lead to dangerous health complications, such as: damaged organ, infertility, and cancer. It is best to prevent the occurrence of such diseases by getting tested regularly, abstinence, a child should report any sexual harassment by anybody to his or parents or guidance (communication).
7. **Low Self-Esteem:** It is a child's self-limiting belief of not good enough compared to other children and think of times he or she failed more often than when succeed. It's a child's self-criticism and doubt that he or she can do things well, which leads to lack of confidence, negative self-talk, lack of motivation, avoid challenges, difficulty setting boundaries, etc.
8. **Unwanted Pregnancy:** Adolescents, teenagers, or young adults are naïve, young, and innocent. Their development must be understood by parents or guidance under the same roof, so as to protect them from teenagers of opposite sex and other adults. If adequate attention is not given as at when due and an adolescent fell prey of illicit sexual contact, it may result to unwanted pregnancy.
9. **Educational Difficulty:** No child experiencing domestic violence has a sound mind. Of all the three domains of education (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor), once the affective – emotional domain is affected, learning can never takes place. Consequently, such a child academic performance has nothing to write home about.

Reframing Theory

Reframing theory it is a counselling technique that is popular and widely used and acceptable by guidance counselors, clinical social worker, psychologist, psychiatrists, and other professional helpers (Rodriguez, 2014). In other words, cognitive reframing is a method that encourage client to identify dysfunctional set thoughts and believes relating to their problems, and to challenge the validity of those distorted thought in other to produce and used more adaptive alternatives. The goal of CRT is to increase client autonomy and self-efficacy (Sperry,

2003)

Cognitive reframing theory is used to redirect the mindset so that one is able to look at a person, situation, or relationship from a different point of view. Reframing is something you can do at home or anytime you experienced unattractive thinking. It can sometimes be helpful to have a counsellor, particularly if a child is caught in a negative thought pattern as a result of domestic violence. When the technique is used in a therapeutic setting by a counsellor, it is known as cognitive restructuring.

The important idea behind reframing is that the frame through which a person perceive a situation determine their point of view. When that frame is redirected, the meaning changes, and thinking and behavior often change along with it. Also, to understand the concept of reframing is to imagine viewing through a camera lens. The picture seen through the lens can be changed to a view that is closer or further away. By gently changing what is seen in the camera, the picture is both viewed and experienced differently.

Cognitive reframing is the most appropriate technique for sexually abused child, a child of broken-home, and other children who must have witnessed domestic violence. After any medical attention that may be required in case of wound or rape. It is important not to limit the child to medical care alone. The counsellor would take such victim through a specific proven practical steps that work effectively. Counselling can serve as preventive, mediative, and rehabilitative against child domestic violence.

Prevention of Child Domestic Violent

1. Implementation and enforcement of laws (e.g. banning violent discipline and restricting access to alcohol and firearms).
2. Norms and values change (e.g. altering norms that condone the sexual abuse of girls or aggressive behavior among boys)
3. Parental and caregiver support (for e.g. providing parent training to young, first time parents)
4. Income and economic strengthening (such as micro finance and gender equity training)
5. Response services provision (e.g. ensuring the children are exposed to violence can access effective emergency care and receives appropriate psycho-social support)
6. Save environment (such as identifying neighborhood hotspot for violence and then addresses the local causes through problem oriented policing and other interventions).
7. Education and live skills (such as ensuring that children attend school and providing lives and social skills).

Conclusion

Child domestic violence in all forms is not an acceptable behaviour, as a matter of fact, it is an incompetent behavioural response from parents, guardians, society and institutions. It is an

anti-social behaviour that can be corrected with reframing theory. Furthermore Counsellors, Psychologists, Social Workers, Religious Institutions, Government and Non-Governmental Organization such as Human Right Commission (HRC), United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF), Society For Family Health (SFFH), National Agency For The Prohibition of Trafficking in Person (NAPTIP). The aforementioned can be more helpful in sensitizing parents, guidance, communities, and schools through workshops, seminars, and advocacies against child domestic violence at home, school, society and institutions.

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ROLE OF COUNSELLING IN PROMOTING VOCATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AMONG STUDENTS IN FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION FRAMEWORKS

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Abstract

In today's rapidly changing global economy, vocational skills development has become critical for students to succeed in the workforce. Functional education frameworks, which emphasize practical and applied learning, are increasingly being adopted to prepare students for real-world challenges. Counselling plays a pivotal role in promoting vocational skills development within these frameworks by providing students with the guidance, support, and resources necessary to make informed decisions about their career paths. This paper explores the role of counselling in vocational skills development, focusing on how counselling interventions can enhance students' readiness for the workforce and contribute to their overall personal and professional growth.

Keywords: Global economy, education frameworks, skills development, growth

Introduction

The landscape of education is undergoing significant transformations in response to the demands of the 21st-century workforce. As economies become more knowledge-driven and technology continues to evolve rapidly, the need for vocational skills development has become increasingly critical. Vocational education, once viewed as a secondary option to academic education, is now recognized as a crucial component of a well-rounded educational framework. Functional education frameworks, which emphasize practical and applied learning, are designed to prepare students for real-world challenges and the ever-changing demands of the job market.

These frameworks aim to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, ensuring that students are not only knowledgeable but also skilled and capable of adapting to various occupational roles (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 2017).

In this context, the role of counselling in promoting vocational skills development cannot be overstated. Counselling provides students with the necessary guidance and support to navigate their educational and career paths effectively. It serves as a critical intervention that helps students make informed decisions, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and overcome emotional and psychological barriers that may hinder their progress. The integration of counselling services into functional education frameworks is essential for maximizing the impact of these frameworks on students' vocational outcomes. Counselling acts as a bridge between the educational content provided in the classroom and the practical skills needed in the workforce, ensuring that students are prepared for the challenges they will face in their careers (Brown & Lent, 2019).

The increasing emphasis on vocational education and skills development has been driven by several factors. First, there is a growing recognition that traditional academic education alone is insufficient to prepare students for the complexities of the modern workforce. While academic knowledge is essential, it must be complemented by practical skills that enable students to perform specific tasks and solve real-world problems. This shift in focus has led to the development of functional education frameworks that prioritize experiential learning, project-based activities, and industry partnerships. These frameworks aim to equip students with the skills needed to succeed in a rapidly changing job market, where adaptability, problem-solving, and technical expertise are highly valued (National Centre for Education Statistics, 2020).

Second, the global economy's increasing interconnectedness has created new opportunities and challenges for the workforce. As industries evolve and new technologies emerge, the demand for skilled workers who can adapt to these changes has intensified. Vocational education plays a crucial role in meeting this demand by providing students with the specialized skills needed in various industries. However, the effectiveness of vocational education depends not only on the quality of the training provided but also on the ability of students to make informed decisions about their career paths. This is where counselling services become indispensable. Counselling helps students navigate the complexities of the job market,

understand labor market trends, and make informed choices about their education and career goals (Gysbers, Heppner, & Johnston, 2014).

The role of counselling in vocational skills development is multifaceted. It encompasses career guidance and planning, skill assessment and development, emotional and psychological support, goal setting, and access to resources and opportunities. Each of these components is critical to ensuring that students are not only equipped with the necessary skills but also have the confidence and resilience to pursue their career goals. For example, career guidance and planning help students explore different career options and understand the qualifications and skills needed for their desired occupations. This knowledge empowers students to make informed decisions about their education and career paths, reducing the likelihood of making choices that do not align with their interests or goals (Gysbers et al., 2014).

Skill assessment and development are also vital aspects of counselling in vocational education. Counsellors assist students in identifying their strengths and weaknesses, helping them focus on areas where they need to improve. This personalized feedback is crucial for ensuring that students develop the skills required for their chosen careers. Moreover, emotional and psychological support provided by counsellors help students overcome challenges such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and lack of motivation, which can hinder their progress in vocational training programs. Counselling services also play a significant role in goal setting and motivation, helping students establish clear objectives and stay committed to their vocational development (Brown & Lent, 2019).

Furthermore, counselling provides students with access to resources and opportunities that can enhance their vocational skills development. For instance, counsellors can connect students with internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing opportunities that provide hands-on experience in their chosen fields. These experiential learning opportunities are essential for bridging the gap between classroom learning and practical application, ensuring that students are well-prepared for the workforce (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 2017).

Despite the critical role that counselling plays in vocational skills development, there are several challenges associated with integrating counselling services into functional education frameworks. One of the primary challenges is the limited availability of trained counsellors who specialize in vocational education. In many educational institutions, there is a shortage of counsellors who have the expertise and experience to provide effective vocational guidance.

This shortage can hinder the ability of educational systems to provide comprehensive counselling services to all students. Additionally, there may be resistance to change within educational institutions, particularly in systems that have traditionally emphasized academic education over vocational training. Overcoming these challenges requires a concerted effort to invest in counsellor training, expand access to counselling services, and foster collaboration between educators and counsellors (Brown & Lent, 2019).

Moreover, the integration of counselling services into functional education frameworks

presents an opportunity to enhance the overall effectiveness of vocational education. By providing students with the support they need to navigate their educational and career paths, counselling can help reduce dropout rates, improve student outcomes, and ensure that students are better prepared for the workforce. Educational institutions that recognize the importance of counselling in vocational skills development are more likely to produce graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also skilled, confident, and ready to succeed in their careers (Gysbers et al., 2014).

In a nutshell, the role of counselling in promoting vocational skills development is critical to the success of functional education frameworks. Counselling provides students with the guidance, support, and resources they need to make informed decisions about their education and career paths. By integrating counselling services into functional education frameworks, educational institutions can enhance students' readiness for the workforce and contribute to their overall personal and professional growth. As the demand for vocational skills continues to rise, it is essential for educational systems to recognize and invest in the role of counselling in promoting vocational education and skills development.

The Importance of Vocational Skills Development

Vocational skills refer to the practical abilities and knowledge that enable individuals to perform specific tasks or jobs. In an increasingly competitive job market, these skills are crucial for students to secure employment and succeed in their chosen careers. Vocational skills development encompasses a range of areas, including technical skills, problem-solving abilities, communication, teamwork, and adaptability (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 2017).

Functional education frameworks are designed to equip students with these skills by emphasizing experiential learning, project-based activities, and real-world applications of knowledge (National Centre for Education Statistics, 2020). However, the effectiveness of these frameworks is often dependent on the extent to which students are able to make informed decisions about their educational and career paths.

The Role of Counselling in Vocational Skills Development

Counselling services play a vital role in supporting students as they develop vocational skills. Counsellors provide guidance and support in several key areas, including:

1. **Career Guidance and Planning:** Counsellors help students explore different career options, understand labour market trends, and make informed decisions about their educational and career paths. By providing students with information about various industries and occupations, counsellors can help them identify the skills and qualifications needed for their desired careers (Gysbers, Heppner, & Johnston, 2014).
2. **Skill Assessment and Development:** Counsellors assist students in identifying their strengths and weaknesses, as well as areas where they may need to improve their skills. Through assessments and personalized feedback, counsellors can help students develop a

clear understanding of their abilities and guide them in selecting appropriate vocational training programs (Brown & Lent, 2019).

3. **Emotional and Psychological Support:** Vocational skills development can be challenging, and students may face a range of emotional and psychological barriers, such as anxiety, low self-esteem, or lack of motivation. Counsellors provide emotional support and help students develop coping strategies to overcome these challenges (Gysbers et al., 2014).
4. **Goal Setting and Motivation:** Counsellors work with students to set realistic and achievable goals for their vocational skills development. By helping students establish clear objectives and a plan of action, counsellors can motivate them to stay focused and committed to their goals (Brown & Lent, 2019).
5. **Access to Resources and Opportunities:** Counsellors connect students with resources and opportunities that can enhance their vocational skills development. This may include internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and other experiential learning opportunities that provide students with hands-on experience in their chosen fields (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 2017).

Integrating Counselling into Functional Education Frameworks

To maximize the impact of counselling on vocational skills development, it is essential to integrate counselling services into functional education frameworks. This can be achieved through several approaches:

1. **Collaboration between Educators and Counsellors:** Educators and counsellors should work together to create a cohesive support system for students. This collaboration can ensure that counselling services are aligned with the educational objectives of the functional education framework and that students receive consistent guidance throughout their academic journey (Gysbers et al., 2014).
2. **Early Intervention and Continuous Support:** Counselling services should be provided to students from the early stages of their education and continue throughout their vocational training. Early intervention can help students make informed decisions about their career paths, while ongoing support can address any challenges they may encounter along the way (Brown & Lent, 2019).
3. **Tailored Counselling Programs:** Counselling programs should be tailored to meet the specific needs of students within the functional education framework. This may include specialized career counselling, workshops on vocational skills development, and individualized support for students facing unique challenges (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 2017).
4. **Incorporating Technology:** Technology can enhance the effectiveness of counselling services by providing students with access to online resources, virtual counselling

sessions, and career development tools. Incorporating technology into counselling programs can make services more accessible and convenient for students (National Centre for Education Statistics, 2020).

Challenges and Opportunities

While counselling plays a crucial role in promoting vocational skills development, there are several challenges associated with integrating counselling services into functional education frameworks. These challenges include limited resources, lack of trained counsellors, and resistance to change within educational institutions (Brown & Lent, 2019).

However, there are also significant opportunities to enhance the role of counselling in vocational skills development. By investing in counsellor training, expanding access to counselling services, and fostering collaboration between educators and counsellors, educational institutions can create a supportive environment that promotes student success in the workforce (Gysbers et al., 2014).

Conclusion

Counselling is a critical component of vocational skills development within functional education frameworks. By providing students with career guidance, skill assessment, emotional support, goal setting, and access to resources, counsellors can help students navigate their educational and career paths with confidence. Integrating counselling services into functional education frameworks can enhance students' readiness for the workforce and contribute to their overall personal and professional growth. As educational institutions continue to adopt functional education frameworks, it is essential to recognize and invest in the role of counselling in promoting vocational skills development.

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IMPACT OF PARENTAL GUIDANCE ON MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENTS IN LOKOJA, KOGI STATE: COUNSELLING IMPLICATION

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of parental guidance on the moral development of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State and its counselling implications. The primary goal was to assess how parental guidance impacts adolescents' moral reasoning, ethical decision making, and general moral development through open communication, role modelling, and the establishment of clear moral expectations. The study used descriptive survey research. Out of a 396,337 population, 400 JSS1-JSSIII adolescents from six secondary schools were purposively selected for the study. The Impact of Parental Guidance on Moral Development of Adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State Questionnaire"was a carefully developed questionnaire used for data collection with a reliability coefficient of 0.87 using Cronbach Alpha. Data analysis used the Chi-square (χ^2) test at a 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed that the development of adolescents' moral reasoning, ethical decision-making, and overall moral character were all positively correlated with parental guidance, which includes open communication, parental role modelling, and the establishment of clear moral expectations. This proved that adolescents who get regular positive parental guidance exhibit higher levels of moral awareness, empathy, and social conformity, whereas lack of parental guidance or negative guidance leads to moral disengagement and bad conduct. The study suggested that family-based strategies can enhance moral guidance in adolescents, highlighting the importance of parental impact on adolescent moral development. Implications for counsellors include the need to design programs that teach parents effective guidance skills and encourage cooperation between counsellors, parents, and adolescents to improve moral development.

Keywords: Parental guidance, Moral development, Adolescents, Counselling implications.

Introduction

Adolescent moral development is an important part of human development that has a big impact on how people behave and engage in society. The biological, cognitive, emotional, and social changes that adolescents go through as they move from infancy to adulthood shape their

worldview and moral decision-making. Parental supervision is one of the most significant influences in forming their moral character. Adolescents need parental guidance to get through this critical developmental stage because it gives them a foundation for morality, develops empathy, and pushes them to follow social standards (Maduelosi & Ezuluofor, 2022). A variety of strategies, including dialogue, moral expectation-setting, and role modelling, can be used to provide this instruction. Traditional values are still prevalent in Nigeria, especially in Lokoja, Kogi State, although they are under threat from globalisation, fast social change, and the impact of contemporary technology. Parents frequently face the difficulty of continuing to have an impact on their children's moral development while navigating these changes (Wishah, 2021).

In this sense, parental supervision becomes a vital tool for navigating the complexity of contemporary adolescence, as adolescents are subjected to conflicting moral narratives from peers, the media, and other social forces. Parents are the initial socialisation agents who are in charge of fostering the moral compass of adolescents since the family is the main social institution in Nigeria and it is vital to moral growth. Nonetheless, studies show that the level and calibre of parental supervision may have a favourable or unfavourable effect on adolescents' moral development (Adakole, 2023). Adolescents who get effective parental advice are more likely to develop strong moral reasoning, ethical decision-making, and empathy.

Effective parental guidance is defined by open communication, emotional support, role modelling, and the articulation of explicit moral standards. On the other hand, moral disengagement, deviant behaviour, and social nonconformity have been linked to parental disengagement or negative impact. In light of the unique socio-economic and cultural characteristics of Lokoja, Kogi State, where urban and rural influences coexist, parental guidance's function in moral development warrants particular consideration (Oluremi, 2023). The strains of industrialisation, coupled with the dissolution of traditional values, provide special problems for parents in this region. This study was aimed at investigating the impact of parental supervision on the moral development of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State, and its implications for counselling methods within the framework of these circumstances.

Statement of the Problem

Concerns over the growth in moral delinquency, antisocial behaviour, and ethical failings among Nigerian adolescents are being expressed by policymakers, parents, and educators alike. The problem is especially noticeable in Lokoja, Kogi State, where adolescents are exposed to a wider range of moral influences, many of which contradict one another, making it more difficult for them to make moral decisions. Peer pressure, social media, and the overall erosion of traditional moral values which were formerly the cornerstone of moral training in Nigerian society are just a few of these effects (Usonwu et al., 2021). Although the home has historically been seen as the main source of moral training, the influence of outside media sources, parental absence, and other circumstances has undermined this role, leaving many adolescents without a strong sense of moral guidance. This leads to a generation of youth that frequently lacks the skills necessary to deal with the challenges of contemporary life, which increases the risk of

juvenile delinquency, moral disengagement, and unethical decision-making. The issue is made worse by the poor communication that exists between parents and adolescents, since many parents are either insensitive to or ignorant of the moral difficulties that their adolescents are facing (Archibong & James, 2019). Furthermore, parental behaviour that is at odds with the moral principles they aim to impart has frequently undercut the function that role modelling plays in fostering moral growth. Parents who participate in immoral behaviours, such as corruption, dishonesty, or moral apathy, for example, convey contradictory messages to their children, which hinder adolescents from developing a consistent moral compass (Akinsola, 2010). The efficacy of parental guidance in guiding the moral development of adolescents and the degree to which parental participation might lessen the negative impacts that adolescents experience in their everyday lives are important topics that are brought up by this circumstance.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were as follows:

1. To examine the influence of parental guidance on the moral reasoning and ethical decision-making of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State.
2. To investigate the role of parental communication and role modelling in the moral development of adolescents.
3. To assess the relationship between parental expectations and adolescents' adherence to social and moral norms.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. How does parental guidance impact the moral reasoning and ethical decision-making of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State?
2. What is the role of parental communication and role modelling in the moral development of adolescents?
3. How do parental expectations influence adolescents' adherence to social and moral norms?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between parental guidance and the moral reasoning of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State.
2. Parental communication and role modelling do not significantly influence the moral development of adolescents.

Theoretical Framework

Lawrence Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

Using Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory, American psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg established his Theory of Moral Development in 1958. Kohlberg developed a six-stage model of morality with three levels: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional (Kohlberg, 1973). The idea states that moral thinking, which underpins ethical behaviour, evolves as people mature and focuses on fairness. According to Kohlberg (1971), these phases show how humans reason about moral difficulties, with each step becoming more complex. At the pre-conventional level, incentives and punishments affect morality in young children. The conventional level, typical in adolescents and adults, values social order and compliance. Finally, post-conventional morality is based on abstract ideals of fairness and human rights, frequently challenging established conventions (Rest et al., 1999). Kohlberg's theory posits that moral growth is a cognitive process that develops through phases and is impacted by social interactions and experiences, notably moral dilemma reasoning (Gibbs, 2010). The idea states that moral reasoning develops in a universal sequence, meaning that people across cultures go through the same phases, albeit the pace may vary depending on individual and contextual conditions (Snarey, 1985). The approach emphasises the need of socialisation and direction, especially from parents and authoritative figures, in helping moral development progress (Walker & Taylor, 1991). As role models and moral educators, parents shape adolescents' moral reasoning and knowledge of justice and ethical decision-making (Turiel, 2006).

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development helps explain how parental guidance affects Lokoja, Kogi State adolescents' moral thinking and ethical decision-making. Kohlberg's moral development phases emphasise the relevance of social interactions, especially parental influence, in moral cognition. This study suggests that parental assistance, including moral discourse and role modelling, helps adolescents proceed through Kohlberg's moral development stages. Strong parental supervision helps adolescents develop post-conventional morality, which bases decisions on universal fairness and justice (Power et al., 1989). Parents' unambiguous moral expectations coincide with Kohlberg's emphasis on organised moral reasoning, where adolescents internalise moral concepts via guidance and reflection (Rest & Narvaez, 1994).

Promoting positive parental participation in adolescent moral development has therapy consequences. Moral growth is both cognitive and social, as Kohlberg's theory shows. Thus, counsellors might utilise this theoretical framework to create therapies that improve parental moral thinking and guiding. Counsellors can help adolescents go through higher moral stages by encouraging open moral discussions with parents, minimising moral disengagement and aberrant behaviour (Gibbs, 2014). Thus, Kohlberg's theory provides a framework for understanding how parental guidance affects adolescent moral development and a practical direction for counselling treatments to promote family-based moral education.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the impact of parental guidance on the moral development of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State. In this study, the descriptive survey approach was chosen to gather quantitative data from a large sample of participants and analyse it to find patterns and correlations between variables. This study approach collects data from respondents in their natural contexts to examine the link between parental guidance (independent variable) and adolescent moral development (dependent variable). Questionnaires and other standardised instruments allow descriptive survey researchers to collect and analyse data statistically. A descriptive survey is ideal for capturing the study's findings on how parental guidance, such as communication, role modelling, and moral expectations, affect adolescents' moral reasoning, ethical decision-making, and moral character.

Each Lokoja, Kogi State junior secondary school (JSS1-JSS3) adolescents was studied. Lokoja, a state capital with urban and rural elements, is a good place to examine how traditional and modern parenting techniques affect adolescent moral development. Adolescents from varying socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are included to study how parental supervision affects moral development across demographic groups. Lokoja has 396,337 JSS1–JSS3 adolescents in public and private secondary schools, according to statistics. This broad population allows the researcher to pick a representative sample that represents the diversity of local teens, boosting the study's generalisability.

The research purposefully picked 400 adolescents from six Lokoja secondary schools. Purposive sampling was utilised to target children in the important developmental stage of adolescence (JSS1-JSS3) who are most likely to produce useful data for the study. Based on their location in Lokoja and adolescents socioeconomic and cultural variety, the six secondary schools were chosen. This made the sample typical of Lokoja's teens. To guarantee proportionality, stratified random sampling was used to sample JSS1, JSS2, and JSS3 adolescents. This method reduces sampling bias and guarantees that data obtained represents adolescents' moral growth throughout early secondary education.

The main data collecting tool was a constructed questionnaire called "The Impact of Parental Guidance in Moral Development of Adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State: Counselling Implication Questionnaire." The questionnaire was carefully developed to capture crucial characteristics of parental guidance, such as parental communication frequency and quality, role modelling, and moral expectations. The questionnaire assessed adolescents' moral thinking, ethical decision-making, and moral growth. The questionnaire included two parts: Section A: Demographics (age, gender, class, family background). Section B: Parental guidance and moral development questions on a 5-point Likert scale from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree."

The Likert scale quantifies respondents' opinions, making statistical analysis easier. To allow respondents to freely explain how parental advice has shaped their morality, open-ended questions were provided. Educational psychology, counselling, and research technique experts

reviewed the questionnaire to guarantee its validity. These experts reviewed the questionnaire to verify that it accurately examined parental guidance and moral development and that the questions were clear, unambiguous, and relevant to the study's goals. By connecting questionnaire items with moral development and parental impact theories, the tool assessed what it was supposed to. Face validity was confirmed by pre-testing the instrument with a small sample of adolescents to ensure that the items were acceptable for the target age range.

A pilot research with 50 non-sample adolescents assessed the instrument's dependability. Pilot study data were analysed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a 0.87 reliability value. This high reliability value implies that questionnaire items were internally consistent and stable. For the primary investigation, the device proved trustworthy.

School officials and parents gave consent to gather data, assuring ethical standards were followed. We obtained parental and adolescents approval to assure voluntary participation. School workers and research assistants were taught to help chosen adolescents complete the surveys during school hours. To guarantee meaningful responses, adolescents were given clear instructions and adequate time to complete the questionnaire. Research assistants helped adolescents clarify questions without affecting their answers. To prevent data loss or contamination, questionnaires were collected promptly.

Survey data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The demographics and questionnaire responses were summarised using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. These statistics showed parental guiding practices and moral development levels in the sample.

At a 0.05 significance level, the Chi-square (χ^2) test was utilised for inferential analysis to assess research hypotheses. The Chi-square test was utilised to determine the link between categorical factors like parental guiding practices and adolescents' moral growth. This research determined if parental communication, role modelling, and moral expectations were statistically associated with moral reasoning, ethical decision-making, and overall moral development. Cross-tabulations were used to examine how parental guidance affects moral development across demographic categories. To simplify understanding and emphasise crucial findings, tables, charts, and graphs were used.

Result

Research Question 1: How does parental guidance impact the moral reasoning and ethical decision-making of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State?

Table 1: Impact of Parental Guidance on Moral Reasoning

Level of Parental Guidance	High Moral Reasoning (%)	Moderate Moral Reasoning (%)	Low Moral Reasoning (%)	Level of Parental Guidance
High Parental Guidance	65	25	10	High Parental Guidance
Moderate Parental Guidance	45	35	20	Moderate Parental Guidance
Low Parental Guidance	20	30	50	Low Parental Guidance

From Table 1, it is evident that adolescents who received high levels of parental guidance (65%) exhibited stronger moral reasoning compared to those who received moderate or low levels of parental guidance. Conversely, adolescents with low parental guidance were more likely to demonstrate low moral reasoning (50%). This finding suggests a clear relationship between the quality of parental guidance and the moral reasoning ability of adolescents.

Research Question 2: What is the role of parental communication and role modelling in the moral development of adolescents?

Table 2: Role of Parental Communication and Role Modelling in Moral Development

Aspect of Parental Guidance	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Parental communication improves moral development	50	30	10	7	3
Parental role modelling promotes ethical decision-making	55	28	8	6	3

Table 2 indicates that a majority of respondents (50% strongly agree, 30% agree) believe that open parental communication plays a crucial role in their moral development. Additionally, 55% strongly agreed that parental role modelling, i.e., parents setting an ethical example, significantly promotes ethical decision-making in adolescents.

Research Question 3: How do parental expectations influence adolescents' adherence to social and moral norms?

Table 3: Parental Expectations and Adolescent Adherence to Social Norms

Parental Expectation Clarity	High Adherence (%)	Moderate Adherence (%)	Low Adherence (%)
High Expectation Clarity	60	30	10
Moderate Expectation Clarity	40	40	20
Low Expectation Clarity	20	30	50

Table 3 shows that adolescents who reported clear parental expectations were more likely to adhere to social and moral norms (60% showed high adherence). On the other hand, those with low parental expectation clarity had a higher likelihood of low adherence to these norms (50%).

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between parental guidance and the moral reasoning of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State.

Table 4: Chi-Square Test for Parental Guidance and Moral Reasoning

Variable	χ^2 Value	df	p-value	Decision
Parental Guidance	16.74	2	0.001	Reject H0

From Table 4, the Chi-square (χ^2) value is 16.74 with a p-value of 0.001, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there is a significant relationship between parental guidance and the moral reasoning of adolescents.

Hypothesis 2: Parental communication and role modelling do not significantly influence the moral development of adolescents.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test for Parental Communication and Moral Development

Variable	χ^2 Value	df	p-value	Decision
Parental Communication	12.86	2	0.003	Reject H0
Role Modelling	18.20	2	0.000	Reject H0

Table 5 shows that both parental communication ($\chi^2 = 12.86$, $p = 0.003$) and role modelling ($\chi^2 = 18.20$, $p = 0.000$) have a significant influence on the moral development of adolescents. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal a strong positive relationship between parental guidance and adolescent moral development. Adolescents who received high levels of parental guidance, including clear communication, effective role modelling, and explicit moral expectations, exhibited stronger moral reasoning, ethical decision-making, and adherence to social norms.

These results final support in Maduelosi and Ezuluofor (2022), who emphasized that parents serve as primary moral agents in their children’s lives, and by Adakole (2023), who identified parental influence as a major determinant of students’ moral competence. Both studies reinforce the notion that adolescence is a critical period during which strong parental direction significantly shapes moral outcomes.

The study also found that the clarity of parental expectations plays a significant role in

determining adolescents' adherence to social norms. Clear and consistent expectations from parents appear to help adolescents internalize societal values and conform to acceptable standards of behaviour. Conversely, the absence or ambiguity of parental guidance often leads to moral disengagement and deviant behaviour. This aligns with the findings of Archibong and James (2019), who reported a positive correlation between explicit parental expectations and moral behaviour among secondary school adolescents, as well as Oluremi (2023), who showed that structured parent-child communication significantly reduced risky behaviours through the reinforcement of societal values. Both studies validate the importance of transparency in parental guidance as a tool for promoting social conformity among youths.

Moreover, the findings underscore the importance of parental role modelling. Adolescents who observed their parents engaging in ethical behaviour were more likely to exhibit similar behaviour. This reinforces the idea that adolescents learn through imitation, making it crucial for parents to practice what they preach. This finding is supported by Wishah (2021), who found that adolescents often internalize values through observational learning, and by Usonwu et al. (2021), who emphasized that modelling appropriate behaviour is a central theme in effective parent-adolescent communication. The implications of these findings for counselling are profound, suggesting that counselling interventions aimed at improving adolescent behaviour should focus on enhancing parental involvement and communication.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated the pivotal role that parental guidance plays in the moral development of adolescents in Lokoja, Kogi State. The findings show that adolescents who experience high levels of parental communication, role modelling, and clear moral expectations exhibit stronger moral reasoning, make better ethical decisions, and conform more readily to social norms. The research also reveals that the absence of or inconsistency in parental guidance can lead to moral disengagement and deviant behaviour among adolescents. By highlighting the importance of parental influence in shaping adolescents' moral frameworks, this study contributes to a growing body of literature that underscores the family as a fundamental environment for moral development. The implications of these findings suggest that fostering effective parental engagement can enhance adolescents' moral capacities, which is crucial for their overall development and societal integration. It is evident that the quality of parental guidance whether through direct communication or modelling ethical behaviour has a long-lasting impact on adolescents' ability to navigate moral challenges and make responsible decisions. Therefore, this study underscores the need for parental involvement in adolescent moral development and calls for strategies to support parents in fulfilling this critical role.

Counselling Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for the field of counselling, particularly in family-based interventions aimed at improving the moral development of adolescents. First, counsellors must recognize the vital role that parents play in shaping the

moral outlook of their children. Given the strong correlation between parental guidance and adolescent moral development, counsellors should design programs that involve parents in the counselling process. For instance, counsellors can organize workshops and training sessions that teach parents effective communication techniques, the importance of role modelling, and how to set clear and consistent moral expectations. These programs can help parents develop the skills necessary to guide their children through ethical challenges, thereby reinforcing positive moral behaviour. Additionally, counsellors should advocate for a collaborative approach, involving both parents and adolescents in the counselling process. This joint approach allows for open dialogue between parents and adolescents, creating a supportive environment where moral issues can be addressed in a structured and non-judgmental manner.

Counsellors must also work with schools and community leaders to raise awareness about the importance of parental involvement in moral development. By establishing partnerships with schools, counsellors can facilitate programs that integrate moral education into the academic curriculum, while also encouraging parental participation. Finally, counsellors should provide individualized support to adolescents from homes where parental guidance is lacking or inconsistent. Such support might involve mentoring programs that provide alternative role models or peer-based interventions that promote moral development through social interactions.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Parents should be encouraged to engage in open and regular communication with their adolescents about moral and ethical issues. Schools and community-based organizations can organize workshops to teach parents effective communication strategies that foster moral development.
2. Parents should be aware that their behaviour serves as a model for their children. Counsellors and educators should emphasize the importance of setting a good example through ethical behaviour in everyday life, as adolescents tend to imitate the behaviours they observe in their parents.
3. Parents should set clear and consistent expectations regarding moral behaviour. Counsellors should work with parents to help them articulate these expectations in a way that adolescents can understand and internalize. Additionally, schools can provide guidance on creating a home environment that reinforces social norms and values.

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EXAMINATION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING STRATEGIES AS TOOLS FOR ENHANCING NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

This paper looked at how Nigerian tertiary institutions use guidance and counselling to achieve national security. The principles of guidance and counselling, national security, education, and ways that guidance and counselling can employ to promote peace and harmony in tertiary institutions were all explored. The discussion of this paper demonstrated that sufficient orientation, motivation, and counselling services will aid in the establishment of peace among the country's students. Conclusions and recommendations were given, including that orientation services are crucial and should be required of all new intakes before the start of school in any tertiary institution in Nigeria. Hostels, classrooms, instructional materials, libraries, laboratories, and qualified guidance counsellors and professors should all be included in the government's requirements for higher institutions. Counselling as a means of resolving disciplinary issues and disagreements among tertiary students, as well as providing motivational services, is a more widely accepted campus environment.

Keywords: Guidance, Counselling, Education, National Security, Counselling services, security education.

Introduction

In the middle of the 1950s, guidance and counselling started to become a recognizable part of Nigeria's educational system. Guidance and counselling was established as a discipline in Nigerian institutions as a result of events that occurred in the United States of America. This discipline's history is rooted in these events. In Nigeria, school guidance and counselling have existed for as long as formal education. This suggests that traditional counselling methods are employed throughout Africa, and Nigeria specifically, to help problematic youths avoid crises and reposition themselves for meaningful functioning in society.

Since the beginning of time, the school has been used to guarantee that counselling programmes are effective and meet the needs of the people, since it is a reflection of society. During the colonial era, school curricula were enough to meet the demands and whims of the

colonial masters. Before organized or professional guidance services were introduced, Nigerians used what is now called "traditional guidance" to solve their problems.

Since humans are social beings, they require assistance and direction from others in one form or another. Children are guided for effective life by their parents, grandparents, teachers, and other seniors, as well as by their home, school, and society. The demand for professional guidance counsellors is more intense in today's society because of the proliferation of knowledge, industrialization, and changes in the socioeconomic structure. In order to properly implement guidance and counselling services in Nigeria, especially in the school system, it is necessary to take into account the recent complicated developments and educational trends in the workplace and society. Nigerian society is now dealing with a number of modern social issues. Among them are cultism, drug addiction, poverty, juvenile delinquency, examination malpractice, kidnapping, and films that glorify crime. High rates of reliance, poor per capita income, unintended pregnancies, general disorders, and moral decay are just a few of the issues that have been highlighted as having an impact on society (Ndifon & Akande, 2015).

Guidance and Counselling are essential components of the Nigerian educational system. Together with administration and instruction, it makes up the third force in education. Guidance programmes for secondary school students are made to address the academic, occupational, social, emotional, and physical challenges of adolescents, according to Eyo, Joshua, and Esuong (2010). This will improve students' academic achievement and supplement classroom instruction. Nigerian youth are growing up in a society that is becoming more complex and changing quickly. This is because of the world's industrial and technological advancements, which present difficulties in the areas of school, employment, and personal-social interactions. These problems cause children to feel anxious, afraid, and stressed about how they will handle and adapt to these difficult circumstances.

Young Nigerians must adapt to this web of change in many facets of their personal, social, and academic lives. Only a well-integrated guidance and counselling programme inside the educational system can address this demand. Regretfully, there isn't a well-organized and efficient system of student guidance and counselling in Nigerian public schools in general. Guidance and Counselling should not be seen as an afterthought, something that should be accepted and permitted at educational institutions. It is, in fact, the center of the learning process (Ihuoma & Lazarus, 2011; Ndifon & Akande, 2015). This study looked at the Examination of Guidance and Counselling Strategies as Tools for Enhancing National Security in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions.

Concepts of Guidance and Counselling

The terms 'Guidance' and 'Counselling' have been loosely or interchangeably used. Counselling is one of the services that go under the umbrella word of guidance, which is more general than counselling. Various people have varied definitions and interpretations of guidance. "To guide" means "to point out," "to guide," and "to show the way." The word

guidance comes from the word guide, which always implies "to manage, to instruct, and to direct on a course." The phrase "guidance" is more inclusive. It is the help given to a person to manage the activities of their life. A more specialized function is counselling. It is given to a person who is having difficulties in their life by an expert. Guidance can be provided by many agencies and organizations like parents, teachers, family members, community or society as a whole. Counselling is provided by some expert in the field. Guidance is preventive while counselling is curative. "The former refers to helping students' whole-person development, while the latter is frequently targeted at helping students with problems" (Lai-Yeung, 2013). Egbochuku (2018) opined that Guidance would enable individuals to answer such questions as Who am I? What am I capable of doing? How can I fit into my society? How can I maximally use the opportunities within my environment to achieve my life goals?

Guidance and Counselling are crucial educational tools that help students shift their focus from the negative beliefs that their classmates have instilled in them to more rewarding and positive ones. Guidance, according to Nnadi, Uzokwe, Obi, and Chigbu (2021), is a comprehensive programme of several highly specialized activities carried out by specialists to assist an individual in making informed decisions. It may also be described as a procedure intended to help a person determine what they want to do and the best way to accomplish it in order to get a favourable outcome. Therefore, the role of the school counsellor is to help each child shape their destiny through counselling.

According to their training, counsellors are supposed to be friends with schoolchildren, listen to their grievances and shortcomings, and offer advice in an effort to shape them into the best person they can be for their future. According to Egbo (2013), "a child's full development can only occur in an environment conducive to teaching and learning." Given the foregoing, educational planners pay top priority to all educational services that can enhance instruction and learning in classrooms. Counselling services are essential for students' scholastic progress and future professional success, as the aforementioned unquestionable affirmation makes clear.

Conversely, counselling is the process of assisting individuals or groups of individuals in developing the self-awareness necessary to be authentic. A qualified counsellor's professional relationship with a client is reflected in counselling (Egbochuku, 2018; Alutu, 2006). While Agrawal (2006) described counselling as an enlightened process where people help others by promoting their growth, Durosaro and Adeoye (2010) defined it as a process where a person is supported in a face-to-face connection. The practice of counselling is intended to assist clients in understanding and elucidating their own perspectives on their living environment, as well as in learning how to achieve their own goals by making meaningful, informed decisions and resolving emotional or interpersonal issues. It believes that every human individual has the potential for self-growth, self-development and self-actualization.

The Concept of National Security

It is impossible to describe national security without first understanding what security is.

Security is defined by Wikipedia as resilience or freedom from possible harm (or other unwelcome forced change) brought about by others. The website <https://en.m.wikipedia.org> According to Nmom (2013), security is the tranquil state of mind of a person, group, state, or country at a specific moment in time and location. He reasoned that a relative calm can ensure social cohesion and quality of life for the survival of the individual group or nation, even if there isn't any violence, physical assault, or disturbances.

From the two definitions given above, it is clear that security is viewed as a matter of safeguarding the populace as a whole and that both the people and the government share responsibility for it. As a result, the term "community policing" has become often used in Nigerian security discourse. Mezieobi (2012) claims that whenever the phrase "security" is used, it evokes concerns that mostly relate to one or a combination of the following:

- a. The defence and protection of national integrity or Nigeria's sovereignty, territorial and political jurisdictions from external and internal interferences or intervention;
- b. Personal safety of members of the political class who are in control of the helm of affairs of governance, in addition to safeguarding or protecting their office, hence the incredible allocation of funds for security services;
- c. The security agents or forces, civil defence corps protecting the lives and properties of the mass of the defenceless citizenry against the menace of the men of the underworld;
- d. Forestalling or deterring possible internal attacks or crises and subjugating insurgency;
- e. Keeping the security agents on active security alert and readiness at all points in time;
- f. Checkmating impending or actual internal threats to state or national security or anti-social behaviours by those who are deliberately undermining or sabotaging government efforts;
- g. Checkmating social problems such as the Boko-Haram saga and youth militancy, kidnapping/abduction that may pose threat to the state and national security and detract the political cadre in control of state affairs from active commitment to their functions; and;
- h. Making the environment free from insecurity to attract international investment. This is in line with Robert McNamara's earlier quoted assertion on the relationship between growth, national development and peace and security.

According to the definitions given above, security can be defined as the absence of risk, danger, or threat. It addresses the absence of fear and anxiety as well as the protection of a state or organization from criminal attacks and activities such as espionage, theft, and terrorism (Ogheneakoke, 2014). Therefore, a country's security interests encompass the protection of people and property, economic, physical, and mental health, as well as the ability to pursue goals without interference (Otoibhi, 2021).

According to Brown (2013), national security is the capacity to protect the country's

borders, its natural resources, institutions, and governance from external interference, its economic ties with the rest of the world on fair terms, and its physical integrity and territory.

Furthermore, national security is the state in which our most prized principles and ideals, our democratic way of life, our governmental structures, and our solidarity, welfare, and general well-being as a country and its citizens are consistently safeguarded and improved. It is the necessity of preserving the country's existence through the use of high-quality education, economic might, political and military might, diplomacy, and power projection. It can be described as the aggregation of the security interest of the individuals, political entities, human associations and ethnic groups which make up the nation (Osakwe, 2013). Succinctly put, national security is the security of a nation-state, including its citizens, economy, and institutions, which is regarded as a duty of government.

National security, therefore, refers to a policy enacted by governments to ensure the survival and safety of the nation-state, including but not limited to the exercise of diplomatic, economic and military power in both peace and war. In other words, it means freedom from foreign domination which is the sine-qua-non for the sustenance of the state through the instrumentality of economics, diplomacy, power projection and political power.

Education

Any society's progress greatly depends on education. According to Freire (1970), education is actually a powerful tool for social change and should not be disregarded by any human community that aspires to progress in all aspects of life. To the extent that Nigeria's educational philosophy is founded on the following set of principles, the Nigerian government acknowledges the value of education for the country's overall development and "as an instrument for effecting national development":

- a. Education is an instrument for national development and social change
- b. Education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria
- c. Education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfillment and general development of the society.
- d. Education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, colour, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges: and
- e. Education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society (FGN, 2014).

In an effort to understand the term education, scholars have throughout time included the adjective "quality." They believed that education needed to be qualitative in order to meet its declared objectives. Therefore, according to Maduewesi (2022), in order for education to be considered high-quality, all levels and components of the educational system including but not limited to theoretical, practical, and vocational education must provide outcomes that would benefit the country greatly. It includes elements like clearly stated national objectives, a

carefully thought-out curriculum, assessment tools and processes, the ability to analyze data, the use of assessment findings, and the quality of students enrolled. To him, the challenge of quality education is the lack of good parenting and a belief among many of the youths and adults in our society that education and hard work to achieve it are not critical components in life.

UNICEF (2020), clarifying what quality education should be, emphasizes that this education type should incorporate:

- i. Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and who are supported in learning by their families and communities
- ii. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and that provide adequate resources and facilities
- iii. Content that is reflected in relevant material for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeric skills for life and knowledge of nutrition, HIV/AIDs prevention and peace.
- iv. Process through which trained teachers to use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities
- v. Outcome that encompasses knowledge, skills and attitudes, and is linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

Writing along these lines, UNESCO (2015), another UN agency, stated that high-quality education should support the goals of peace, citizenship, and security; foster the creative and emotional growth of students; and seek out and preserve local and global cultural values for future generations. The promotion and enhancement of basic education, the reorientation of current educational policies and programs at all levels to address national security and sustainable development, the development of public awareness, and the provision of training and retraining, which should involve higher education, are just a few of the major domains that quality education addresses, according to Omo-Ojuga (2017) and Ajegbesan (2010). These domains reflect a variety of goals and audiences.

Therefore, education must be wholistic, encompassing qualitative and quantitative processes which must include “relevant curriculum, availability of adequate human and non-human resources, assessment of educational programmes and processes through proper supervision and evaluation of educational outcomes to ensure quality assurance, control and nation security (Osakwe, 2013).

Guidance and counselling and national security

Counselling and guidance are powerful components of societal security building. The security education that the guidance and counselling services serve to provide makes people confident and brave enough to follow the norms and regulations for peaceful living and harmony in society. Juvonen (2016) made the argument that guidance and counselling services

are essential to violence prevention initiatives by resolving disciplinary issues, mediating particular situations, and implementing suitable resolution techniques.

Similarly, guidance and counselling offer motivational services which enhance the environment with a maximum for the welfare and protection of people, fighting against vices, and engagements for quality learning in schools as well as providing tips for parental monitoring and supervision of their children. These services help to provide lasting peace and harmony among members of society. The orientation services are also a tool that keeps members of the society acquainted with to development, of independence, social networks, intellectual skills and moral habits that promote good values, norms, and moral reasoning which serve as ingredients for love, peace and national security.

Guidance and Counselling Strategies for Achieving School Security

The security they say is everybody's business. It is the state by which life and property are protected from harm and destruction. It is the hallmark of good living. It could be seen as the source of peace of mind and peaceful co-existence between and among people. Security cannot be bought but can be cultivated to become part and parcel of the life pattern of an individual.

Security education from schools or security training centres can be available. Security education is taught in school just like every other subject of study. Educational International in Oguzie (2014) reported that peace consciousness makes it possible for people from all walks of life to be enlightened on issues that bring about peace. Enlightenment in the form of security teaching is a bold step in the right direction to bring about peaceful coexistence in the school and society at large. According to Oguzie (2014), a setting that has helped young people develop a sense of peace will be free of crimes like kidnapping, armed robbery, theft, corruption, drug trafficking, child abuse, discrimination, political irony, electoral malpractice, murder, terrorism, and religious rivalry. Students who receive security education will be better equipped to prevent issues and improve the safety of people and property. Students, the host community, professors, political issues, religious conflicts, and the condition of the school's infrastructure can all pose security risks. Hurley (2016: 1):

Students of all ages need a safe learning environment in order to concentrate on acquiring the skills necessary for a successful education and future. Every student is impacted in some manner when there is violence in the classroom. There are just more causes of school insecurity than one might think. At the very least, the school must try its hardest to prevent insecurity because it causes trauma and terrible consequences for both the people and the school. According to Hurley (2016), school safety is crucial in order to prevent assaults, bullying, victimization, theft, classroom disturbances, fights, robberies, the use of weapons, and violent and sexual crimes.

Uriah *et al.* (2015), have it that various forms of youth restiveness are economically, politically, or religiously motivated have existed for a long time. Security issues that can stem

from the students are cultism, prostitution, stealing, and examination malpractice, riot, bullying and fighting. These security issues are easily and widely witnessed in high institutions across the nation. Some of the problems that are found outside the school premises are religious fighting, political irony, land disputes between the school and community, and problems arising from choosing the Vice Chancellor, Provost, or Rectors of the host institution. Functional school facilities prompt students with the needed securities in school as key concepts. Ofom and Ajayi (2018) reported that humanitarian and social welfare, lack of good governance, corrupt practices of government officials, inadequate training programmes, unemployment, inadequate recreational facilities, lack of quality education, and so on, are the major causes of youth restiveness. More so, Sokari (2016) opined that information is necessary for people to be liberated from the shackles of ignorance, misconceptions, economic stagnation, social unrest, and political instability.

One area of study that helps clients understand their difficulties and find solutions to overcome them is guidance and counselling. Guidance and counselling programmes support students' personal/social, academic, and professional development, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (2011). According to Oguzie (2014), guidance and counselling cover both activities of pertinent services and procedures for assisting individuals both inside and outside of schools in realizing their full potential in terms of their academic, vocational, moral, social, and emotional development. The counsellor encourages the client, gives them direction, and gives them advice on how to quickly get out of any difficult position. Ogazie (2014) asserted that teaching the principles of peace through guidance and counselling would also build in the universal values and behaviour on which a culture of peace is predicated, including the development of non-violent conflict resolution skills and a commitment to working together to realize a shared and preferred future.

Orientation for new students is often encapsulated by a Freshmen's week which entailed the period of adjustments to the college environment as the time to reckon the academic year of university culture or any other tertiary level institution's preparation of various events that welcome new students. It is at this period in time that the school guidance/counsellors are supposed to make the students understand the need to run away from anything that will endanger their life and stay in the university. Feldman in Davis (2013) mentioned that colleges have strategic goals to increase students' enrolments but often fail to address the needs of students to be more persistent once they have enlisted and arrived on campus. The school environment where teaching and learning are going on is supposed to be appealing and intriguing for arduous academic work hence guaranteeing security in the school system.

Conclusion

Given the significance of security for Nigeria's political stability, economic development, and interethnic harmony, guidance and counselling services should play a bigger role in the country as a whole. The main goal of security management guidance and counselling is to help

individuals and groups comprehend their surroundings and fulfill their responsibilities in order to promote peace, stability, and harmony in Nigeria. Effective management of the limited people and material resources, which frequently led to tension and conflict, is necessary to achieve peace and stability. The researcher came to the conclusion that effective orientation, motivation, and ongoing counselling regarding the risks of insecurity in Nigeria are effective tactics.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The school authorities should make orientation services important and compulsory for all new intakes before the start of school in any tertiary institution in Nigeria.
2. The government and National Universities Commission (NUC) should endeavour to make sure that the required basic learning facilities like hostels, classrooms, instructional materials, libraries, and laboratories are made available in schools within the school premises.
3. The guidance and counselling services should be provided for the students not only when they are likely to face school problems but should be done proactively for the students not to seek solutions from their peers. Different measures that support the counselling services can be infused into instructional programs such as detectors, security guards and imposition of rules and regulations for students for school safety.
4. Training the teachers to be effective teacher advisers and counsellors would be necessary inclusion in higher institutions with a guidance culture for improved counselling services.
5. The orientation program can be improved as part of higher institution's culture of excellence and be fully recognized as an important aspect of security in school.

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VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING THEORY: REVIEW AND CHALLENGES IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper critically reviewed Vocational Counselling Theory: Review and Challenges in Kano State, Nigeria. Effective vocational counselling can substantially impact adolescents' growth and development in a dynamic socioeconomic environment by offering clear pathways for both professional and personal development. The major challenges facing Vocational Counselling among Adolescents in Kano State, Nigeria are Sociocultural Factors, Educational System, Economic constraints, Infrastructure and Resources, Awareness and Attitudes. Based on the discussions of this study, it was suggested that; Educational policy makers should include vocational counselling in the curriculum since it can offer ongoing directions and expose students to a wide range of job alternatives.

Keywords: Vocational Counselling, Review, Application, Challenges and Adolescents.

Introduction

Particularly in developing areas like Kano State, Nigeria, vocational counselling is essential in helping teenagers make decisions about their schooling and careers. Effective vocational counselling can substantially impact adolescents' growth and development in a dynamic socioeconomic environment by offering clear pathways for both professional and personal development. The importance of counselling as a profession is increasingly recognized as society becomes more urbanized and contemporary. In many nations, including Nigeria, interest in counselling has increased over the past decade. This is seen in the value placed on counselling in homes, businesses, medical facilities, and educational settings. The Ministry of Education has sent counselors and para-counselors to the majority of secondary schools to offer pupils professional assistance and realize the value of counselling services. A crucial

component of counselling that cannot be overlooked is vocational counselling.

Coming up with a single definition of counselling is difficult. This is because a theoretical orientation influences the definition of counselling. Counselling is a learning-focused process that typically takes place in an interactive relationship. Its goals are to assist individuals in gaining a better understanding of themselves and using that insight to help them become contributing members of society. Through the process of counselling, a helper can show concern and care for an individual who is struggling, as well as support their personal development and assist them in making changes by understanding themselves better. A concerned individual and a person in need of assistance form a relationship known as counselling. Although it occasionally involves more than two people, this relationship is mostly person-to-person. It is intended to assist individuals in comprehending and refining their points of view, as well as teaching them how to make meaningful, informed decisions, resolve emotional or interpersonal conflicts, and achieve their own goals (Thomas, 2020). These definitions demonstrate how counselling can signify several things. Counselling is offered by many different names. For instance, counselling may be provided even when the main focus of the relationship is on non-counselling issues. Teachers can be trusted by students as someone they can confide in with their issues. In this scenario, the instructor applied counselling techniques without entering into a counselling relationship. Although they offer advice, teachers are not counselors (Ali, 2008).

Vocational Counselling

In vocational counselling, people recognize their abilities, passions, and potential careers. Although the phrases "vocational counselling" and "career counselling" (also known as "career guidance" or "career education" career education') are not always synonymous, they are sometimes used interchangeably. The phrase used before referring to information-giving and directive employment counselling was vocational counselling, which was often a spin-off of the vocational guiding movement. However, as creative theories of vocational choice emerged, the field of vocational counselling quickly expanded to include not only providing information, but also organizing and making decisions regarding careers and educational paths (Agbaje & Agbaje, 2014).

The term "career guidance" (also known as "career education" or "career counselling") is used to indicate the theme's actual breadth and, more specifically, to highlight how the "whole person" is involved in the process of choosing a vocation rather than focusing solely on the decision-making process. It was further argued that career counselling included discussing the "Road Life" roles that clients engage in. Career counselling interventions have implications for other aspects of life functions; they go beyond providing information about careers, as was initially intended when the term "vocational guidance" was used. According to Agbaje and Agbaje (2014), the phrase "career guidance" refers to the occurrence of specific experiences and understanding throughout life's stages that have significance for laying the right foundation for

career planning and decision making. Although the phrase "vocational guidance" has historical relevance, Makinde and Alao (2007) pointed out that some individuals still prefer it. However, the term is less descriptive of the field it is meant to represent. The phrase "career guidance" is increasingly being used to describe the wide range of actions that make up career intervention practices more accurately.

Naturally, this does not argue that information plays a small role in job guidance. School guidance programmes that do not give young people a profile, information, or a chance to learn about themselves and their surroundings shortchange them (Shertzer & Stone 2004). In addition to providing knowledge about various vocations, career guidance also includes several additional personal elements that are very important when making decisions about one's career. Career guidance is very similar to other types of guidance, which is why it is described as a unified approach and as integrated efforts in what have traditionally been termed educational and vocational counselling (Belkin, 2004). This is because career guidance practice incorporates all the different aspects of counselling and guidance, including the group approach, information-giving services, the interaction between counselor and client, and the evaluation and appraisal functions.

The phrase "educational and vocational guidance," which is now included under the umbrella term "career guidance," refers to specific counselling programmes intended to give clients psychological support and information that may have an immediate impact on their decision-making regarding finding employment now and in the future. Educational and vocational guidance is ongoing support provided to students/clients both inside and outside the classroom to help them better understand who they are, their strengths and weaknesses, and how to move forward, adapt to changing circumstances, and make the most of their abilities in the workplace. In light of this, career guidance entails sufficient and pertinent self-knowledge, including understanding one's interests, skills, aptitudes, values, and attitudes in relation to the workplace. Furthermore, facts and information are still highly important, and are much more important in career guidance than in personal guidance.

Holland's Theory of Vocational Personality

John L. Holland is a career counselor who works in psychiatric, military, and educational settings. Holland claimed that a person's career choice in the business world is a reflection of their personality. Holland contends that people choose a career that fits one of the six personality types because they exhibit characteristics of at least one of these types. Holland's theory is associated with a theoretical perspective that has a lengthy history of characterizing the distinctions between different personality types. Because it organizes crucial information about people and professions and offers an explanation for the relationships between different personality traits and associated professions, Holland's theory is referred to be structural-transactional. According Adigüzel, et. al. (2022), this theory is based on four main approaches:

1. Many people in American culture fall into one of the six categories: artistic, social,

investigative, realistic, enterprising, or conventional.

2. There are six different types of work environment: conventional, artistic, social, investigative, realistic, and enterprising.
3. People seek settings that allow them to demonstrate their aptitudes and qualities, communicate their attitudes and moral principles, and take on the tasks and duties assigned to them.
4. An individual's behaviour is shaped by the way his personality interacts with his surroundings.

According to Holland, a person's work interests are mostly manifestations of their personality. Personality traits are determined by an individual's chosen leisure activities, academic disciplines, interests, and career decisions. Each person was characterized by varying degrees according to one of the six personality types. Each person resembles one of the six personality types to varying degrees. Below is an explanation for these personality types (Adigüzel et. al, 2022).

Holland's Personality Types

Realistic Type: This personality type dislikes educational and therapeutic pursuits and is more interested in activities that allow him to make things, tools, machinery, and animals in a methodical and regular manner. A realistic person is mechanically inclined; however, his/her social skills may be lacking. A realistic person would work as an electrician, farmer, cadastral engineer, or auto mechanist. Easygoing, humble, outspoken, materialist, obstinate, kindhearted, headstrong, headstrong, natural, shy, honest, and frugal are characteristics of realistic types (Adigüzel, et. al., 2022).

Investigative Type: To understand and influence certain events, an investigative personality type favors tasks requiring observational, symbolic, methodical, and creative investigations of physical, biological, and cultural phenomena. Inquisitive people dislike persuasive social activities and repetitive tasks. These inclinations lead to deficits in leadership abilities, even though they present opportunities for proficiency in science and math. The investigative types prefer professions such as biologists, chemists, physicians, anthropologists, geologists, and medical technicians. Analytical, independent, open-minded, cautious, intellectual, pessimistic, introverted, rigorous, critical, systematic, curious, and shy are the general characteristics of the investigative types (Fiona, et. al., 2020).

Artistic Type: The artistic personality type is one that values adaptability, independence, and spontaneous activities that call for the creation of tangible, intangible, and human-related elements in order to produce works of art and other things. People who are artistic dislike organized and methodical pursuits. These tendencies can lead to deficits in office jobs and managerial skills, even when they offer the potential for artistic skills in language, art, music, theater, and writing (Rusu, 2016). The careers of composers, musicians, stage directors, writers,

interior architects, and actors/actresses are preferred by artistic type. Artistic people are typically described as complex, idealistic, introspective, messy, impractical, intuitive, emotional, irritable, independent, free-spirited, and inventive.

Social Type: People with social personality types enjoy tasks that include leading others to inform, better, treat, educate, and enlighten them. They disliked organized, methodical tasks involving supplies, equipment, or machinery. These tendencies might lead to inadequate mechanical and scientific skills, even though they offer potential in human connections such as interpersonal and educational competences. Social types prefer careers such as teaching, religious leadership, clinical psychology, psychological counselling, psychiatric nursing, and speech therapy. Persuasive, idealistic, social, cooperative, courteous, sensitive, pleasant, patient, fine, generous, responsible, understanding, helpful, and warm-hearted are general characteristics of social people (Natalie, 2014).

Enterprising Type: People with an enterprising personality type enjoy tasks that require them to guide others for financial or organizational advantage. Observational, symbolic, and methodological activities can irritate this. These tendencies can lead to weaknesses in scientific skills, even as they present opportunities for growth in leadership, interpersonal skills, and persuasion competencies. Professions such as marketing, management, business executives, television producers, sports coaches, and purchase specialists are preferred by enterprises. Grateful, domineering, optimistic, adventurous, high-spirited, ambitious, energetic, affable, extroverted, quick-tempered, self-assured, popular, and quick-tempered are characteristics of enterprising people.

Conventional Type: People with a conventional personality type, such as tasks that require systematic, planned, and accurate data formation. Examples of these tasks include using computers to accomplish organizational and financial goals, planning how to organize texts and numerical data, reproducing materials, and recording. Activities that are not independent, flexible, systematic, or focused on discovery are disliked by the conventional types. These tendencies can lead to limitations in artistic competence even when they present potential in office work, math, or operating systems. Professions such as accounting, stenography, financial analysis, brokerage, and taxation are preferred by the conventional types. Conventional people are typically described as artistic, economical, cautious, obedient, conscientious, introverted, sensitive, or literal-minded.

Challenges in Vocational Counselling among Adolescents in Kano State

According to Garba (2022), the following are some of the main obstacles that Kano State adolescents face when receiving vocational counselling:

Sociocultural Factors: Adolescents' job options may be restricted by conventional gender norms and expectations. For instance, girls may face discouragement in certain communities if they choose to pursue jobs that deviate from their traditional positions.

Educational System: Many teenagers may not acquire the information or assistance

necessary to make wise job decisions because schools do not have formal career advice programmes.

Economic constraints: Families who struggle financially may put short-term financial requirements ahead of long-term career planning, which may limit their children's access to career counselling.

Infrastructure and Resources: The quality and accessibility of vocational guidance services may be hampered by the lack of counselling centers and professionally educated vocational counsellors.

Awareness and Attitudes: Parents and students frequently lack comprehension of the advantages of career counselling, which causes them to oppose or disregard these programmes.

Suggestions

Among other things, this study suggests the following:

1. Educational policy makers should include vocational counselling in the curriculum since it can offer ongoing directions and expose students to a wide range of job alternatives.
2. In Kano State, community involvement through awareness campaigns can aid in attitude changes and boost local populations' acceptance of vocational counselling.
3. Government, Professional counsellors and Non-Governmental organizations should initiate counselor training courses and public-private collaborations to raise the caliber of services and availability of resources.
4. Professional counsellors and Non-Governmental organizations should understand that; culturally aware counselling initiatives can guarantee that career counselling upholds regional customs, while encouraging contemporary job options for young people in Kano State and throughout Nigeria.

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COUNSELLING FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: PERSPECTIVES OF YOUTHS IN SAMARU-ZARIA, KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study focuses on Counselling for Sustainable Economic Development: Perspective of Youths in Samaru-Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria. It was guided by two research objectives, two research questions and two hypotheses. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprises of 60 youth with small businesses in Samaru-Zaria. The researchers adopted purposive sampling techniques to select 30 participants for the study. Counselling for Sustainable Economic Development Questionnaire (CSEDQ) developed by the researchers and validated by experts in the Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The Null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significant using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics. It was found that there is a significant relationship between challenges of youths and sustainable economic development with ($r_{cal}=0.615$, $p=0.01$) and also significant relationship exists between counselling interventions and challenges of youths economic development ($r=0.635$, $p=0.011$). Basis of the findings, it was concluded that the main challenges of youths' sustainable economic development is unemployment and corruption of embezzlement among self-fish individuals in the country. Also,

counselling interventions play vital roles in empowering the youths through strategies and skills to drive the economic development.

Keywords: Economic, Growth, Development and Counselling interventions

Introduction

Nigeria is a country with large population with over 60% of its citizens mainly youth according the population census. Her main source of revenue lies on oil and gas. But the country's population is threatened by poverty due to unemployment; harsh economic environment and political instability. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2023), 87.3% of employed Nigerians were primarily self-employed with the remaining 12.7% being primarily engaged as employees. This statistics shows that poverty has aggrandized to a level where citizens desire to take advantage of any civil unrest to loot public goods as compensation for the economic condition as demonstrated during the August 2024 nationwide protest. Hopelessness and frustrations often lead the youth to embrace resistance to crime (UNDP, 2018). This is why poverty can be termed as a fertile soil for societal problem. Adeyemi (2006) attributed problem of economic development to a lack of political legitimacy to which proceeds to peg most of the crisis and especially the inability to bring about genuine development that responds adequately to the needs and aspirations of the masses. Outcome of frustration of the youth nurture rebellion and apathy among them and bring about restiveness, terrorism, violence and anti-social activities.

Youths are the major work force; strength and success of every nation since majority are actively involved in the social, economic and political activities in the nations. But this is true in the countries that provide enabling ground for the youths to unleash their potentials (Aliakor, 2016). Entrepreneurship and self-reliance is the bedrock of the youth in the society. Youth challenges can be surmounted through counselling initiatives spanning through career awareness, entrepreneurship, the art of leadership and management, growth mindset, and personal development. Economic growth is an increase in the production of economic goods and services compared with the previous growth. Increases in capital goods, labor force, technology, and human capitals all contribute to economic growth. Economic growth is measured in terms of increase in aggregate market value of additional goods and services produced, using estimates like GDP. Tordaro (1997) sees economic growth as an indicator to measure the level of economic development. Sullivant and Steven (2003) as cited by Abraham and Ahmed (2011) observed that the term economic growth refers to the increase of specific measures such as real national income, gross domestic product or per capita income of a nation.

Indeed (2024) describes economic growth as when the gross domestic product (GDP) increases over a period of time. Sustainable economic growth means maintaining the growth rate without causing other economic problems. Again, Indeed (2024) defines sustainable economic growth as maintaining growth without creating economic problems or complications.

This implies the practice of supporting long-term economic growth without depleting resources especially like water, food, energy, waste and ecology.

Economic sustainability is a practice that supports long term economic growth without negatively impacting social, environmental and cultural aspects of the community; it is an approach to economic planning that attempts to foster economic growth while preserving the quality of the standard of living of the people and future generations. Economic sustainability is linked with increased economic activity and property value, savings and lowered operating costs; it brings about additional savings values, revenues and economic development. Economic development is capable of addressing poverty and hunger, while also creating the path for a better standard of living. The social benefits of sustainable economic development are improved environmental quality and life. Tordaro (1997) describes economic development as social and technological progress. Abraham and Ahmed (2011) assert that economic development is linked to the well-being and quality of life of individuals. But the reality seems not to be felt in the country contemporarily as Omoniyi, & Iyabo, (2016) rightly assert that corruption and economic mismanagement in Nigeria have contributed to the poor health and socio-economic status of the citizens. To support this argument, Ike-Muonso (2024) reported that Nigeria's abundant raw material resources, from 1980s to 2020, over 2,000 major industries and over 10,000 small-scale industries have closed down due to the poor or hash economic conditions in the country.

Nelsen-Jones as cited in Kolo (2015) asserts that counselling can be approached in a number of ways by definition. He mentions that counselling involves a relationship; a reservoir of skills; a process, and a problem-solving. Quality of the relationship in counselling is determined by warmth, unconditional positive regards, genuineness and sensitivity to the clients' understanding and thinking process. Skills are used to succeed in a counselling encounter. The skills are selectively deployed to meet the needs of the client, in this case economic need. These skills which are interventions may focus on the feelings and thinking of the individuals. Therefore counselling is a process of applying the required skills or interventions to resolve the concern of the individual. According to American Counselling Association (ACA), (2024) defines counselling as a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, and education and career goals. ACA explains that counsellors help people gain personal insights, develop strategies and come up with real-life solutions to the problems and challenges they face in every area of life.

Theoretical Perspective

The study adopts Person-Centered Theory by Rogers (1940). Carl Rogers' theory proposes that supportive and non-judgmental environment encourages individuals to explore their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. In this context, the system provides unconditional positive regards and empathetic understanding environment for youth to explore their potentials

with the aim of solving economic challenges. Through this system, individuals can be encouraged to take economic decisions and actions; explore alternative means, resources, and resilience in achieving economic growth and development.

Review of Empirical Studies

Kuburat and Oluwole (2021) conducted a study on Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition as Precursors of Economic Sustainability: Counselling Implication. They found that a combination of vocational and effective entrepreneurial skills significantly predict the economic sustainability of adolescents ($F(2,267)= 6.672, P<0.05$). The study concluded that career counsellor should help individuals to choose the vocational and entrepreneurial skill training that best suit their needs. Daodu, and Abidogun, (2024) conducted a study on the role of counselling psychology in empowering individuals to overcome poverty in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study highlights the therapeutic techniques and interventions employed by counselling psychologists to address the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural barriers associated with poverty. They found self-efficacy as significant therapeutic interventions. The study stresses the importance of integrating counselling psychology into poverty alleviation programs and policies to promote holistic and lasting empowerment.

However, many studies have not been conducted in this area. Therefore the gap informed the decision of the researchers to conduct a study in this area.

Objective of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study. To determine;

1. The relationship between challenges of youths and sustainable economic development
2. The relationship between counselling interventions and challenges of youths’ economic development

Research Questions

The following are the research questions that guided the study;

1. what is the relationship between challenges of youths and sustainable economic development?
2. what is the relationship between counselling interventions and challenges of youths’ economic development?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance

H0₁ there is no significant relationship between challenges of youths and sustainable economic development

H0₂ there is no significant relationship between counselling interventions and challenges of youths’ economic development

Methodology

The researchers adopt correlational research design to determine the relationship between counselling and sustainable economic growth and development with the youth in focus. The population consists of 60 youths from ages 18-35 years in Samaru environs that are small scale business owners. A sample of 30 youths was carefully drawn using purposive sampling technique. The size of the sample was to obtain a controllable, accurate data for the study as well as give a genuine response to the instrument. Counselling for Sustainable Economic Development Questionnaire (CSEDQ) was designed by the researchers and validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The designed instrument has ten (10) items in each of the two variables. The instrument adopts liker scale of; Strongly Agreed (4); Agreed (3); Disagreed (2) and strongly disagreed (1). The validation was carried out to know if the instrument was appropriate for the study To test the reliability of the instrument, the researcher administer the instrument to 10 youths who were not part of the study. The reliability of the instrument was tested at 0.05 alpha levels of significance.

Results and Discussions

Analysis of bio data variables

Variables	Frequencies	Percentage
Gender		
Male	20	66.7
Female	10	33.3
Total	30	100.0
Age:		
18-26	16	53.3
27-34	12	40.0
35 and Above	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0
Educational level:		
Undergraduate	26	86.7
Graduate	2	6.7
Post Graduate	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0
Employment Status:		
Employed	4	13.3
Unemployed	11	36.7
Entrepreneur	15	50.0
Total	30	100.0

On gender, a total of 20 (66.7%) are male and the rest 10 representing (33.3%) are females. This shows that male gender outweighs the female gender. On age, a total of 16

(53.3%) falls within 18-26 years while 12 (40.0%) falls within age bracket of 27-34 and the rest 2 (6.7%) falls within age bracket of 35 years and above. This shows that participants from who falls 18-26 outweigh the other bracket. The educational level, showed that while 26 (86.7%) of respondents are undergraduates, 2 (6.7%) are graduates and the remaining 2 (6.7%) are post graduates. On the employment status: A total of 4 (13.3%) are employed while 11 (36.7%) are unemployed as against the rest 15(50.0%) that are entrepreneurs.

Answering Research Questions

Question 1: what is the relationship between challenges of youths and sustainable economic development?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD
Challenges of Youths’ Economic Development							
1	The biggest challenge faced by youth is unemployment	15	13	2	0	3.4	0.62
2	Economic resources are embezzled by self- ish individuals	21	5	3	1	3.53	0.82
3	No capital to start small scale business	12	11	4	3	3.07	0.98
4	I started a business yet it crashes due to harsh economy whether	14	11	2	3	3.20	0.96
5	I take three square meal a day comfortably	4	3	13	10	2.03	0.99
Sustainable Economic Development							
6	Sometime my I touch my capital to feed my family	14	12	2	2	3.27	0.86
7	I spend more than I earn monthly	17	6	4	3	3.23	1.04
8	I do other side jobs to support my business	10	6	7	7	2.63	1.18
9	I struggle on a daily basis to feed my fami- ly	8	11	7	4	2.77	1.01
10	Technology is taking jobs rapidly	13	13	3	1	3.27	0.78
Cumulative Mean						3.13	

Decision Mean =2.500

Above table shows that the challenges of youths’ economic development is very high due to the cumulative mean, 3.13 above the decision mean of 2.500. Specifically the highest challenge is that Economic resources are embezzled by selfish individuals, as this view attracted the highest mean of 3.53 as details showed that while 21 strongly agreed, 5 agreed as against 3 that disagreed and the rest 1 strongly disagree. Also another serious challenge is unemployment as this had the second highest mean agreement of 3.43 as details showed that while 15 strongly agree, 13 agreed as against the rest 2 that disagreed. In summary, the challenges facing the youth in achieving sustainable economic development, are quite disturbing, as the main challenges facing the youth Economic resources are embezzled by

selfish individuals and unemployment. Both the counselling interventions and challenges of youths’ economic development do not have significant difference in their mean and standard deviation.

Questions Two: what is the relationship between counselling interventions and challenges of youths’ economic development?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	S D	Mean	STD
Counselling interventions							
1	I know the importance of counselling in my fi- nance and business life.	70	45	24	21	3.57	0.56
2	I set goals and plan for achieving economic devel- opment.	23	6	1	0	3.73	0.65
3	Relevant skill set and training are available in counselling profession	14	15	1	0	3.43	0.56
4	Counselling has helped me save more money for my business start-up.	15	12	3	0	3.40	0.67
5	counselling is the way to improve living standard among youth.	18	9	3	0	3.50	0.68
Challenges of Youths’ Economic Development							
6	The biggest challenge faced by youth is unem- ployment.	19	11	0	0	3.63	0.49
7	Economic resources are embezzled by selfish individuals	13	16	1	0	3.40	0.56
8	No capital to start small scale business	12	17	1	0	3.37	0.55
9	I started a business yet it crashes due to harsh economy whether	15	15	0	0	3.50	0.50
10	I take three square meal a day comfortably	22	8	0	0	3.72	0.45
Cumulative Mean						3.52	

Decision Mean =2.500

The counselling interventions for challenges of youths’ economic development are quite commendable, as their cumulative mean response of 3.52 is above the 2.500 decision mean. Specifically, setting goals and planning are essential for achieving economic sustainability, as this has the highest mean of 3.73 with details showed that 23 strongly agree while 6 agreed as against 1 that disagreed. Also, Having ‘three square meal a day’ has the second highest mean of 3.72 as details showed that while 22 strongly agreed, the rest 8 agreed with this view. In summary, the counselling interventions for challenges of youths’ economic development are quite commendable, *especially as* setting goals and planning are essential for achieving economic growth and sustainability. Both the counselling interventions and challenges of youths’ economic development do not have significant difference in their mean and standard deviation.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One: there is no significant relationship between challenges of youths and sustainable economic development

Table 1: Pearson product Moment Correlation (PPMC) on the relationship between challenges of youths and sustainable economic development Perspectives of Youths in Samaru-Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria

	N	Mean	STD	df	r-cal	P
Challenges of Youths' Economic Development	30	15.13	4.37	27	0.615	0.01
Sustainable Economic Development	30	15.17	4.87			

$r\text{-cal}=0.615 > \text{critical } r \text{ at } df\ 27, p\ 0.01 < 0\ 0.05$

Outcome of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics revealed that the calculated p-value of 0.01 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance at a correlation $r=0.615$. This means that challenges of youths' economic development has significant positive relationship on the sustainable economic development. This implies that the higher challenges of youth economic development, the higher youth device mean to sustain their economic development. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between challenges of youths and sustainable economic development is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Two: there is no significant relationship between counselling interventions and challenges of youths' economic development

Table 2: Pearson product Moment Correlation (PPMC) on the relationship between counselling intervention and challenges of youths economic development Perspectives of Youths in Samaru-Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	STD	df	r-cal	P
Counselling intervention	30	17.63	3.12	27	0.635	0.011
Challenges of Youths	30	17.62	2.55			

$r\text{-cal } 0.635 = \text{critical at } df\ 27, p=0.011 < 0\ 0.05$

The result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics revealed that the calculated p-value of 0.011 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance at a correlation $r=0.635$. This means that counselling interventions has significant relationship on the challenges of youth's economic development. This implies that counselling interventions if not in place, the higher the challenges of youths' economic development. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between counselling interventions and challenges of youths' economic development is hereby rejected.

Discussion

The first finding indicated that challenges of youths economic development has significant positive relationship on sustainable economic development. The positive values of the r-cal imply that when youths are faced with economic challenges, youth devices strategies, or means of sustaining their economic development. This outcome concurred with the finding of Kuburat and Oluwole (2021) who conducted a study on Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition as Precursors of Economic Sustainability: Counselling Implication. They found that a combination of vocational and effective entrepreneurial skills significantly predict economic sustainability of the youths. This also implies that when youths are faced with economic challenges, they device positive means like acquisition of entrepreneurship skills as a way of sustaining and promoting their economic development. Through this entrepreneurship, youths are engaged in businesses that will help them alleviate their financial struggles instead of depending solely on government for greener pasture.

The second finding indicated that counselling interventions has significant relationship with the challenges of youths' economic development. The r-cal implies that counselling interventions have influence on sustainable economic development of youths. This finding collaborates with the finding of Daodu and Abidogun (2024) who conducted a study on the Role of Counselling Psychology in Empowering Individuals to Overcome Poverty in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study found that some therapeutic techniques that can help youth to navigate and sustains their economic development. Rogers (1940)'s propositions also encourages the youths through enabling environment for youths to exploit their potentials in developing themselves through skills acquisition for strategic sustainable economic development.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the main challenges of youth sustainable economic development is unemployment and the corruption of embezzlement among selfish individuals. However, counselling plays vital roles in empowering youth through intervention strategies to drive the economy. Through counselling programme like essential life skill, goal setting, problem solving, personal growth and development and decision making would better equip them to contribute meaningfully to the economy. Therefore, it is imperative for stakeholders to invest in counselling initiatives that cater for career and entrepreneurial needs of youth and enabling environment to explore the advantages available in the economy.

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CRISES MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOL-RELATED ASYMMETRIC WARFARE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

No nation can develop amidst of asymmetric attacks on the lives and properties. In Nigeria today, insecurity of different kinds, has negatively impacted on aspects of national life, particularly the education sector. Thus, this study investigated crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in Borno State to manage school-related asymmetric warfare in their domains. The study employ descriptive design of a survey type. The population of the study consisted of all secondary school teachers in Borno State from which a total sample of 254 was drawn by means of stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The study employed a questionnaire tagged “Crises Management Strategies for School-Related Asymmetric Warfare Questionnaire (CMSSAWQ), which was face validated by five experts, and has 0.82 Cronbach’s alpha value for the test of consistency. Data collected for the study was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study revealed that secondary school teachers in Borno State employed strategies like; seeking security information from local hunters/vigilantes, partnering with relevant security agencies on schools’ defence, and volunteer themselves as spy, for managing asymmetric warfare challenges. Other findings revealed that respondents are not differ in their views of the study’s problem based on gender and religion. Based on the findings of this study it was recommended among other that government at all levels should collaborate with secondary school teachers in area of crises intervention for asymmetric warfare challenges.

Keywords: Crisis Management Strategy, School-Related Asymmetric Warfare, Secondary School Teacher, Borno State

Introduction

The Nigerian community, both pre- and post-independence, has been characterized by inter-communal conflicts. However, the beginning of the 20th century marked a significant shift. Civilizations, technological advancements, weapon miniaturization, the quest for dominance, political interference, and displays of aggression have all contributed to the rise of asymmetric warfare in Nigeria. Lele (2014) defined asymmetric warfare as a type of conflict in which non-state actors use unconventional tactics and tools to exploit a state's vulnerabilities, achieving a disproportionate effect and undermining the state's strategic objectives. Acts of terrorism and insurgencies are common tactics of the asymmetric warfare. The widespread emergence of act of terrorism and insurgency has impacted every sector of the nation's economy. Its effects include school dropouts, an increase in the population of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), destruction of property and valuables, increased pressure on the national budget, and general chaos and unrest.

The northern part of Nigeria has been disproportionately affected by terrorism and insurgency compared to the southern region. States in the northern region that are severely impacted include; Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Kaduna, Yobe, and Zamfara State. However, Borno State is the most affected among these states. Asymmetric warfare in Borno State has particularly affected the educational environment, as schools have been targeted as soft targets by insurgents, turning them into epicenters of attacks and symbols of dominance. The infamous Chibok girls' abduction occurred on April 14, 2014, when the Boko Haram sect attacked Government Girls College in Chibok Local Government Area of Borno State and kidnapped 276 girls taking their exams. The use of asymmetric warfare in educational institutions has severely disrupted the educational system in the region, with thousands of secondary school teachers and students killed or injured and numerous school facilities destroyed beyond repair. According to the World Bank, the total cost of infrastructure damage due to asymmetric warfare is estimated at \$6.9 billion.

Counselling and warfare are two distinct fields that intersect in contexts where conflict and violence have profoundly impacted individuals and communities. The psychological effects of warfare, experienced by both combatants and civilians, make counselling interventions essential for addressing trauma, mental health issues, and the broader social implications of conflict. Counselling interventions have proven to be effective in mitigating the impacts of terrorism and insurgency and in developing countermeasures for future occurrences. To provide comprehensive and sustainable counselling support for secondary school teachers in managing the educational system in Borno State, this paper will explore the following thematic areas: an overview of asymmetric warfare in educational institutions in Borno State, the impacts of asymmetric warfare on educational institutions, and counselling interventions for secondary

school teachers to enhance effective school management.

Literature Review

Contemporary asymmetric warfare is particularly linked with insurgency and terrorism, as well as a shifting geopolitical world order following the end of the Cold War, which saw the decline of state monopoly over security, military, and moral authority (Pashakhanlou, 2018). Ogunode and Ishaya (2021) highlighted that insecurity is a major issue affecting both academic and non-academic staff in public schools in Nigeria. Insecurity challenges have significantly impacted public institutions, including secondary schools, across the country. Many secondary school teachers have abandoned their schools and relocated to more peaceful states, leading to a brain drain in conflict-affected regions. Violence associated with the Boko Haram insurgency has claimed an estimated 11,000 lives in Nigeria between 2003 and 2014, as reported by Johns Hopkins University, with over 5,000 of these fatalities recorded in 2014 alone.

Asymmetric strategies often exploit a target's lack of awareness or preparedness against specific threats, utilizing methods different from those typically employed in conventional warfare. These strategies may also involve the use of new or unconventional weapons (Oluka & Igwe, 2020). The challenges presented by asymmetric warfare have profoundly affected secondary school teachers and students, resulting in disruptions to education and the migration of educators from conflict zones.

Retrospect on Incidences of Asymmetric Warfare in Borno State

The prevalence of asymmetric warfare which was marked by various heinous crimes such as, abductions, suicide bombings, arson, and gun shootings among other, has been significant within secondary educational institutions in Borno State over the years running to over two decades.

1. In February 2012, insurgents set ablaze at least 12 schools in and around Maiduguri, Borno State, over a two-week period (Human Rights Watch, 2016).
2. In 2012, explosions and gunfire struck Gomari Primary School, destroying educational facilities (Vanguard, 2012).
3. According to a report by Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) (2013), 50 out of 175 schools in Borno State were burned down by insurgents.
4. On April 14, 2014, 276 secondary school girls were abducted in Chibok, Borno State, with about 82 of them still in captivity (Amnesty International, 2024).
5. In November 2014, an attack on Zanna Mobarti Primary School in Damasak, Borno State, led to the abduction of an estimated 300 young students (Human Rights Watch, 2016).

Recently, the frequency of such incidents has decreased, and the educational system is beginning to recover. This improvement is attributed to the efforts of the Nigerian forces, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the Borno State Government, humanitarian organizations, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), non-governmental organizations,

and the resilience of local communities. The return of relative stability has enabled secondary school teachers and students to resume educational activities, though challenges remain.

Consequences of Asymmetric Warfare in Secondary Schools

Globally, the consequences of asymmetric warfare are numerous. In Nigeria, despite government efforts to eradicate these problems, challenges persist, particularly in the educational sector in Borno State. The following consequences of asymmetric warfare have been identified by the authors of this paper, focusing on secondary school teachers and students:

- 1. Closures of Schools:** Many secondary schools have been closed for extended periods, disrupting the education of thousands of students. United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (2017) reported that over 57% of schools in Borno State, which was tagged as (the worst-hit state) were closed in 2017 alone. These closures have adverse effects, including increased learning deficits, loss of interest in learning, heightened risk of sexual abuse, and rising crime rates (Sultana et al., 2022; Mazrekaj & Witte, 2024).
- 2. Destruction of Educational Materials:** Asymmetric warfare has led to the destruction of critical educational infrastructure, including classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and administrative buildings, resulting in significant losses for secondary schools. Staff quarters, school fences, and other facilities have been targeted and destroyed. Humangle (2021) reported that 2,246 classrooms and a total of 512 public schools were destroyed by terrorists.
- 3. Loss of Lives:** The persistence and growing strength of insurgents in Borno State have led to a significant loss of life among secondary school teachers and students. Punch (2023) reported that 2,295 teachers have lost their lives, with 1,280 casualties (including both students and teachers) recorded due to insurgency in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa between 2009 and 2018.
- 4. Increase in IDP Population:** Asymmetric warfare in Borno State has led to mass displacement, with many people including secondary school teachers and students seeking refuge to protect their lives. Displaced individuals often live in camps where educational facilities are scarce or non-existent. On a positive note, Punch (2024) announced that the Borno State Development Commission has closed 90% of IDP camps, as the government has facilitated the successful return of many IDPs to their ancestral homes.
- 5. Increase in Drop-Out Rate -** The closure of schools and displacement of people have contributed to an increased drop-out rate among secondary school students, as families, teachers, and students are forced to leave their homes in search of safety. UNICEF (2017) estimated that 3 million children require emergency educational support due to insurgency and terrorism. The Borno State Government and humanitarian organizations have initiated efforts to re-enroll students who have dropped out.

6. **Psychological Impacts** - Asymmetric warfare poses not only physical threats but also psychological harm, which can impair individual and societal development both in the short and long term. Studies have identified various psychological impacts, including trauma (Amusan & Ejoke, 2017), distress (Adepelumi, 2018), Generalized Anxiety Disorder (Adejogbagbe, Omoniyi, Fatiregun, Dosumu, Onyejiaka, Ajaka & Fagbemi, 2024), and social impairment (Adeboye, 2021). Other associated consequences include brain drain, increased costs of running the education system, loss of manpower, and disruption of academic programs.

Crises Management Strategies for Managing School-Related Asymmetric Warfare

Different strategies, tactics, and personnel may be used in order to alleviate the traumatic experiences accompanied case of insurgency. In response to this, secondary school teachers have developed resourceful management strategies to help students and other educational stakeholders cope with the psychological impacts of asymmetric warfare, particularly those targeting students. Oluka and Igwe (2020) listed the following as various means by which school-related asymmetric warfare can be decisively managed:

- a. **Establish Alternative School:** Establishing temporary learning centers to ensure continuity of education when schools are unsafe.
- b. **Use of IDP Camps:** Providing educational services within Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps to ensure access to learning for displaced students.
- c. **Applying Counselling Intervention Strategies:** Offering psychological support and guidance to help students manage trauma resulting from violent attack in the school.
- d. **Organize Extra Moral Lessons:** Conducting supplementary classes to help students catch up on missed lessons due to school closures.
- e. **Provide Humanitarian Support Services:** Partnering with humanitarian organizations to provide aid to students and teachers in affected areas.
- f. **Partner with Vigilantes/Hunters:** Engaging community members, such as vigilantes and hunters, to help maintain security around schools.
- g. **Engage Youth Watch Keepers:** Involving youths in community-based surveillance to enhance safety.
- h. **Use of Religious Activities:** Utilizing faith-based gatherings to provide comfort, guidance, and support for affected students.
- i. **Organize Group Movement:** Encouraging students to always move in groups and avoid such secluded areas for safety. (Oluka & Igwe, 2020). The above highlighted management strategies have been instrumental in reducing and mitigating the psychosocial trauma faced by secondary school students affected by asymmetric warfare.

Theoretical Perspective to Asymmetric Warfare

Theory provides a foundation for understanding the dynamics and consequences of asymmetric warfare in an educational setting such as secondary schools and the broader environment in Borno State.

Securitization Theory

Securitization theory, introduced by Waeber in 1995, provides a framework for understanding how issues are transformed into matters of security. The theory suggests that securitization is an act, a productive moment that leads to a significant reconfiguration of a social state. Traditional security perspectives view security as the absence of military threats that could jeopardize the state's survival within an anarchic international system.

According to Waeber (1995), an issue is not inherently a security matter until influential actors label it as such. For example, former Nigerian President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan formally declared Boko Haram and Ansaru groups as terrorist organizations in 2013, in Nigeria. This declaration came after assessing the extensive damage and destruction caused by these groups, particularly within the educational system in Borno State, since 2009. In the setting of secondary schools, the securitization theory helps explain how violence against educational institutions becomes a matter of national security once the severity of attacks against students and teachers, such as abductions and school bombings, is recognized by key actors in government and society. This recognition enables the deployment of state resources and policy measures to protect schools and mitigate the effects of asymmetric warfare on students and teachers.

Research Questions

What are the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on gender.

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on religion.

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design involves studying a group of individuals or items and collecting and analyzing data from a representative sample which will be generalized over the entire population. The population for this study consisted of all secondary school teachers in Borno State, and the target population comprised a total number of 1,438 teachers across public secondary schools in Borno State. A total number of

254 secondary school teachers were selected to participate in the study. They were selected from 6 LGAs (that is; Maiduguri, Biu, Manguno, Bama, Chibok, and Gwoza) out of the entire 27 LGAs in Borno State, representing 22.2%. The selection process involved stratified and simple random sampling techniques to avoid bias in the selection of the representatives of the study.

The instrument used for data collection for this study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers, which was titled “Crises Management Strategies for School-Related Asymmetric Warfare Questionnaire” (CMSSAWQ). The questionnaire comprised two sections: These are section A and B. The section A of this instrument gathered personal data from the respondents, including gender and religious affiliation. The section B of the instrument consisted of ten (10) structured items on different possible crises management strategies adopted for school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State over the past few years by the participants. The instrument was face validated among 5 experts in the fields of Guidance and Counselling and Psychology, and Peace and Strategic Studies from 2 Federal Universities in Northern Nigeria. For the reliability testing of the instrument, a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.82 was obtained for the instrument using split-half method. The study employed both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the data collected from the participant. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze demographic data, while mean and rank orders were to answer the research question. The two hypotheses formulated for the study were tested using independent samples t-test and they were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Personal Data of the Participants

After the data collection process, critical observation of the filled questionnaire from the participants indicated that two out of the total 254 administered questionnaire were invalid. Thus, a total number of 252 were analyzed in the study as presented below:

Table 1: Distributions of Participants’ Demographic Data

N	Variables		Frequency	Percentages %
1.	Gender	Male	158	62.7
		Female	94	37.3
			252	100.0
2.	Religion	Christianity	78	31.0
		Islam	174	69.0
		Total	252	100.0

Table 1 presents the demographic information of the participants of this study. From the table 1 above, it is indicated that 252 participants finally participated in the study, out of this samples, 158 (62.7%) were male, while 94 (37.3%) were female. In regard to the participants’

religious affiliation, 78 (31.1%) were Christians, while 174 (69.0%) were Muslims. However, no participant of this study indicated other religion apart from the two mentioned above after thorough analysis.

Answer to the Research Question:

Research Question 1: What are the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers for school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Respondents' Responses on the Crises Management Strategies for School-Related Asymmetric Warfare

S/N	Item Statements:	Mean	Rank Order
8.	seek security information from the local hunters/vigilantes on palpable planned attack on schools	3.17	1 st
2.	constantly partner with relevant security agencies on schools' defensive and protection initiatives of the governments.	3.15	2 nd
10.	volunteer to serve as spies/detective agents for schools.	3.12	3 rd
5.	improvise relevant teaching materials for the use of students to replace the one destroyed by insurgents to prevent stoppage in learning process.	3.04	4 th
3.	provide relief materials to schools during incidence to insurgency to complement government efforts.	2.80	5 th
1.	seek the service of professional guidance counsellors for counselling intervention for traumatized students during attacks.	2.78	6 th
6.	organize extra moral classes for students to accomplish the lost academic calendar to incident of insurgency	2.72	7 th
9.	use alternative schools for displaced students for continuation of lessons.	2.68	8 th
7.	partner with relevant agencies for financial support/aid for educational development of the affected schools.	2.62	9 th
4.	involve in the construction of temporary school building in IDP camps to allow continuation of academic activities among students.	2.58	10 th
Total Average Mean Score =		2.86	

Table 2 shows the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers for school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria. From the rank order table

therefore, items 8, 2 and 10 with the statements such as; seek security information from the local hunters/vigilantes on palpable planned attack on schools; constantly partner with relevant security agencies on schools’ defensive and protection initiatives of the governments; and volunteer to serve as spies/detective agents for schools, with the mean scores of 3.17, 3.15, and 3.12 make the most responded to items on the list and thus, they were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively. From the bottom side of the rank table, items 9, 7 and 4make the least responded to items, with statements such as; use alternative schools for displaced students for continuation of lessons; partner with relevant agencies for financial support/aid for educational development of the affected schools; and involve in the construction of temporary school building in IDP camps to allow continuation of academic activities among students, and with mean scores of 2.68, 2.62 and 2.58. Thus, they were ranked 8th, 9th and 10th respectively.

From the ranked table presented above therefore, it can be deduced that all the 10 structured items have mean scores that above 2.5 that initially set as a benchmark for positive or negative response. Thus, the participants of the present study adequately utilized crises management intervention for managing asymmetric warfare in their various schools in Borno State, as none of the statements on the rank order table found below the 2.5 benchmark, and the overall mean score of 2.86 was also above the benchmark of 2.5. The results also suggested that the participants sought information to manage the prevailing situations than any other means.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on gender.

Table 3: Mean, SD and t-test Results Showing Difference in the Types of Crises Management Strategies Adopted by the Respondents for School-Related Asymmetric Warfare in Borno State, Nigeria Based on Gender.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t	Crit. t	p-value
Male	158	32.08	4.10	250	0.84	1.96	0.124
Female	94	26.64	3.80				

Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value of 0.84 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at the degree of freedom of 250 with a corresponding p-value of 0.124 which is greater than the significance value of 0.05. This result suggested that there is no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on gender. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted

by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on gender is retained.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on religious affiliation.

Table 4: Mean, SD and t-test Results Showing Difference in the Types of Crises Management Strategies Adopted by the Respondents for School-Related Asymmetric Warfare in Borno State, Nigeria Based on Religious Affiliation.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t	Crit. t	p-value
Christianity	78	24.70	5.20	250	1.24	1.96	0.140
Islam	178	28.86	4.68				

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of 1.24 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at the degree of freedom of 250 with a corresponding p-value of 0.140 which is greater than the level of significance of 0.05. This result therefore suggested that there is no significant difference in the types of crises management strategies adopted by the respondents for school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria on the basis of religion. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on religious affiliation was retained.

Discussion of Findings

The study has discovered in its empirical data analysis that most widely used crises management strategies for various asymmetric warfare experiences among secondary school teachers include; seeking security information from the local hunters/vigilantes on palpable planned attack on schools; constantly partnering with relevant security agencies on schools’ defensive and protection initiatives of the governments; andinvolved as volunteers to spy for school safety among other. The first finding above was in line with the findings of Jacob, Jacob and Ibrahim (2024), and Ogunode, Ukozor and Ayoko (2023) whose study have discovered that education stakeholders such as teachers do seek for security guidance from local vigilantes such as Yan Gora Vigilante Group in Biu community of Borno State. The second finding of this study corroborated the previous findings of the studies of Chinwuba (2024) and Akpabio, Nwogu and Kaegou (2019) which revealed that educators in their security endeavours do partner with relevant local security agencies to secure their schools from attacks. The third finding of this study also supported the empirical outcomes of Chinwuba (2024), and Alimba (2018) who had also discovered in their studies that school teachers involved in some security spy to assist in areas of combating incursions on school facilities and defenceless students and

teachers.

The hypothesis one tested in the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on gender. This finding was in agreement with study of Akpabio, Nwogu and Kaegou (2019) whose respondents were equally not differ in their responses on school-community collaborations, including partnerships with local security agencies, influence security management in technical colleges on the basis of gender. However, this finding disagrees with the findings of Alimba (2018) whose study established a significant difference on their respondents' views of the related subject matter based on gender.

Similarly, the hypothesis two tested in the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the crises management strategies adopted by the secondary school teachers in managing school-related asymmetric warfare in Borno State, Nigeria based on religious affiliation. This was in tandem with the findings of the study conducted by Chinwuba (2024) whose respondents were not differ on the based on their religious affiliation and faith-based practices.

Conclusion

This study based on its empirical outcomes concludes that, secondary school teachers commonly adopted crises management strategies such as; seeking security information from the local hunters/vigilantes on palpable planned attack on schools; constantly partnering with relevant security agencies on schools' defensive and protection initiatives of the governments; and volunteer themselves to serve as spies/detective agents for their respective schools in order to manage crises induced asymmetric warfare in school settings in Borno State. It is also concluded by the study that the respondents were not differ in their approaches to manage the horror of asymmetric warfare on the basis of gender and religion.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government at all level should collaborate with secondary school teachers in area of crises intervention for asymmetric warfare challenges.
2. There is need to empower teachers irrespective of their gender on how to use appropriate information channels to cope with the challenges of asymmetric warfare.
3. The religious bodies should always encourage their congregants especially the teachers on the need to apply different approaches to manage cases of insurgency in their respective schools in order to assist their students achieve academically.
4. The relevant education stakeholders should collaborate with school teachers to alleviate the challenges of asymmetric warfare in their schools.

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CONTRIBUTION OF CRISIS COUNSELLING AND DISASTER RESPONSE TO EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF NATIONAL SECURITY EVENTS

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Abstract

National security events, including natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and civil unrest, pose significant challenges to societal stability. Effective crisis counselling and disaster response play a critical role in mitigating the psychological and social impact of such crises while ensuring swift recovery and national resilience. This paper examines the contribution of crisis counselling and disaster response strategies to effectively managing national security events. It highlights the psychological distress caused by crises and the necessity of immediate and long-term interventions through crisis counselling. By providing psychological first aid, trauma-informed care, and resilience-building programs, crisis counselling helps affected individuals and communities cope with stress, fear, and post-traumatic disorders. Additionally, disaster response strategies, including emergency preparedness, coordination among security agencies, and community engagement, are essential in minimizing casualties and restoring normalcy. The study further explores the role of government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and mental health professionals in fostering effective disaster management and national security efforts. Findings suggest that integrating crisis counselling within national security frameworks enhances crisis preparedness, reduces long-term psychological effects, and promotes societal cohesion. The paper recommends increased investment in mental health services, improved coordination among response agencies, and public education on crisis preparedness. A comprehensive approach that combines psychological support with robust security measures ensures a more effective and sustainable response to national security events. Ultimately, addressing both the immediate and long-term consequences of crises strengthens national security, resilience, and recovery efforts.

Keywords: Crisis counselling, disaster response, national security, psychological resilience, trauma management.

Introduction

National security events, including terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and large-scale accidents, pose significant threats to public safety and psychological well-being (Everly & Mitcel, 2012). These events can lead to widespread trauma, fear, and long-term mental health issues among affected populations. Crisis counselling and disaster response play vital roles in mitigating these impacts, providing immediate psychological support, and facilitating recovery

and resilience (Simon, 2013).

In an era marked by increasing frequency and severity of national security events, the need for effective crisis counselling and disaster response mechanisms has never been more critical (FEMA, 2021). National security events, ranging from natural disasters to terrorist attacks, pose significant challenges not only to the infrastructure and governance of a nation but also to the mental health and well-being of its citizens (WHO, 2013). This conference paper seeks to explore the intersection of crisis counselling and disaster response within the framework of national security, examining how these practices can be optimized to better support affected populations and enhance overall resilience.

Crisis counselling plays a pivotal role in addressing the immediate psychological needs of individuals affected by crises (James & Gilliland, 2016). It involves providing support to help individuals cope with trauma, reduce psychological distress, and facilitate recovery. Effective crisis counselling can significantly mitigate the impact of traumatic events and prevent long-term psychological damage. In the context of national security events, this support becomes even more crucial as individuals may face complex and compounded stressors, including fear, loss, and uncertainty (Norris et al, 2013).

Disaster response, on the other hand, encompasses the strategic and operational aspects of managing and mitigating the effects of crises (Herring, 2007; Dynes, 2007). This includes coordinating emergency services, deploying resources, and implementing recovery strategies. The integration of crisis counselling into disaster response efforts is essential for addressing the psychological needs of those affected, ensuring that mental health considerations are woven into the broader response strategy (McFarlane & Van hoof, 2009).

The importance of a coordinated approach to crisis counselling and disaster response cannot be overstated. National security events often require a multi-faceted response involving various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, mental health professionals, and community leaders. Effective collaboration among these groups can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of response efforts, ensuring that both immediate and long-term needs are met (Bisson & Andrew, 2007; Comfort, 2007; Alexander, 2002).

This paper examined current practices and strategies in crisis counselling and disaster response, identifying best practices and areas for improvement. It will also explore the role of mental health professionals in national security events, highlighting case studies and lessons learned from past events. By analyzing these aspects, the paper aims to provide actionable insights and recommendations for enhancing crisis counselling and disaster response efforts in the context of national security.

Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, analysis of real-world case studies, and exploration of innovative approaches, this paper seeks to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on improving national security responses. Ultimately, this paper explores the contributions of crisis counselling and disaster response to effectively managing national

security events. It argues that a holistic approach, combining psychological support with robust security measures, enhances crisis preparedness, facilitates swift recovery, and fosters long-term societal resilience. By investing in mental health services, improving inter-agency coordination, and strengthening public education on crisis management, nations can develop sustainable responses to security challenges and improve overall national stability.

Trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

National security events, such as terrorist attacks, wars, and large-scale disasters, can have profound psychological impacts on individuals and communities. These events can lead to various mental health issues and affect social dynamics, coping mechanisms, and overall well-being. This section explores the psychological impacts of such events, supported by academic references and empirical studies (Keslleretal, 1995).

National security events often lead to trauma and PTSD among affected populations. PTSD is characterized by symptoms such as intrusive memories, flashbacks, nightmares, and severe anxiety. Individuals exposed to national security events are at an increased risk of developing PTSD due to the high level of threat and danger experienced during these events (Keslleretal, 1995; Masten, 2001).

Anxiety and Depression

Exposure to national security events can lead to heightened levels of anxiety and depression. The uncertainty, fear of future attacks, and the emotional toll of the event contribute to the development of these mental health issues. Individuals may experience persistent worry, sadness, and loss of interest in daily activities (McFarlane & Van Hoof, 2000).

Impact on Children and Adolescents

Children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the psychological impacts of national security events. Exposure to such events can affect their developmental processes, leading to behavioral problems, academic difficulties, and long-term mental health issues. The fear and disruption experienced during these events can impact their sense of security and well-being (Mitcel, 2017; Neria, et al., 2019).

Social and Community Impact

National security events can disrupt social structures and community cohesion. The sense of shared trauma can lead to increased social support but also to social fragmentation and stigmatization. Communities may experience increased fear, distrust, and a breakdown in social networks.

Coping Mechanisms and Resilience

Despite the adverse effects, many individuals and communities demonstrate resilience and adaptive coping strategies. Resilience involves the ability to recover from adversity and maintain psychological well-being. Support systems, community solidarity, and effective

coping strategies play a crucial role in mitigating the psychological impacts of national security events.

Psychological Impacts of National Security Events

National security events can cause a range of psychological effects, including acute stress reactions, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and grief. The severity of these impacts can vary based on the nature of the event, the proximity of individuals to the incident, and pre-existing mental health conditions. Understanding these psychological impacts is essential for designing effective crisis counselling and disaster response interventions (North & Pfefferbaum, 2013).

Crisis Counselling in National Security Events

Crisis counselling aims to provide immediate emotional support and stabilization to individuals affected by traumatic events. Fundamental components of crisis counselling by Norris, 2002; Pynoos and Nader, Schuster include:

1. **Psychological First Aid (PFA):** A set of supportive actions designed to help individuals in the immediate aftermath of a crisis. PFA focuses on ensuring safety, providing comfort, and connecting individuals to additional resources.
2. **Trauma-Informed Care:** An approach that recognizes the widespread impact of trauma and integrates this understanding into practices and policies. It emphasizes safety, trustworthiness, peer support, and empowerment.
3. **Culturally Competent Counselling:** Tailoring interventions to the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic needs of individuals to ensure effective support and communication.

Disaster Response Strategies

Effective disaster response requires a coordinated approach that integrates mental health services into broader emergency management frameworks. Fundamental strategies by Mitchell 2007 include:

1. **Incident Command System (ICS):** A standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of emergency response. Integrating mental health professionals into ICS ensures that psychological support is part of the overall response strategy.
2. **Community-Based Approaches:** Engaging local communities in disaster response efforts enhances resilience and ensures that interventions are culturally relevant and sustainable.
3. **Technology and Communication:** Leveraging technology, such as mobile apps and social media, to provide real-time information, support, and resources to affected populations.

Case Studies and Best Practices

Examining past national security events provides valuable insights into effective crisis counselling and disaster response practices. For example: September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks: The immediate deployment of mental health professionals and the establishment of support centers provided crucial psychological support to survivors and first responders. Hurricane Katrina (2005): Highlighted the importance of integrating mental health services into disaster response plans and the challenges of addressing the needs of diverse populations. COVID-19 Pandemic: Demonstrated the need for innovative approaches, such as telehealth, to deliver mental health services during widespread and prolonged crises.

Integration of Mental Health in Disaster Management

To enhance national resilience, mental health must be an integral component of disaster management frameworks. This includes:

1. **Policy and Planning:** Developing policies that mandate the inclusion of mental health services in disaster response plans at all levels of government.
2. **Training and Education:** Providing training for emergency responders, healthcare providers, and community leaders on recognizing and addressing psychological impacts.
3. **Resource Allocation:** Ensuring adequate funding and resources for mental health services in disaster response budgets.

Conclusion

The psychological impacts of national security events are significant and multifaceted, affecting individuals and communities in various ways. PTSD, anxiety, depression, and disruptions to social structures are common outcomes. However, resilience and effective coping mechanisms can mitigate these effects. Understanding these impacts and supporting affected populations through appropriate interventions is crucial for promoting recovery and well-being.

Crisis counselling and disaster response are critical components of national security. By addressing the psychological impacts of national security events and integrating mental health support into disaster management frameworks, we can enhance resilience and recovery.

Continuous research, training, and resource allocation are essential to improving these efforts and ensuring the well-being of individuals and communities during and after national security events.

Suggestion

1. Incorporate psychological first aid and trauma-informed care in national security response frameworks.
2. Develop culturally sensitive counselling strategies for diverse populations.
3. Train mental health professionals specifically in disaster and crisis intervention techniques.

4. Strengthen interagency coordination between mental health services and emergency responders.
5. Conduct regular drills and simulations involving mental health crisis teams during national security emergencies.

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES AS CORRELATE OF ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness in public colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria. A random sample of 180 respondents from public colleges of education in Kwara State participated in the study. The research design employed a questionnaire with two sections to gather data, which was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The study's findings revealed that effective conflict resolution strategies are essential for successful administration in colleges of education. The results showed that management styles of administrators are a primary cause of conflict, and effective conflict management is crucial for positive administrative outcomes. Based on the findings, the study recommends that college administrators should develop expertise in various conflict resolution strategies and consider individual differences among staff members to manage conflicts effectively. Additionally, the study suggests that colleges engage professional counsellors to help individuals or groups understand their goals, actions, and outcomes, promoting effective conflict resolution and administrative outcomes.

Keywords: Administrative effectiveness, conflict resolution strategies, public colleges of education

Introduction

Conflicts are part of everyday life, they occur in our close relations, at a societal level and on an international level. Conflict is an inevitable and ongoing aspect of human interaction, arising naturally whenever individuals or groups with diverse values, needs, and desires engage within a structured setting, such as an organization, characterized by established rules and hierarchical authority. Human differences cannot be totally suppressed from manifesting. Whenever differences arise, conflicts inevitably emerge, manifesting as collisions, stress, controversies, discords, frictions, and disagreements. While conflicts can arise in any school

organization at any time, their presence does not necessarily signify managerial incompetence. Rather, Conflict is a fundamental and intrinsic element of organizational behaviour, highlighting the intricacies of human interaction and the imperative of effective conflict management (Agbato, 2000).

As noted by contemporary scholars, conflict is an inherent and inevitable component of organizational life, underscoring the need for proactive management strategies. (Akomolafe, 2020; Oluwagbemi, 2020). This perspective is supported by research, which suggests that conflict is an inevitable and normal part of human social relations (Grill, 2019; Adeyemi, 2020). As noted by Amusan (2019), conflict arises from disagreements between individuals or groups, and can occur in any social setting, including workplaces, schools, and communities. This underscores the idea that conflict is an inherent aspect of human interaction, and that no organization or social institution is immune to its occurrence (Ojo, 2020).

Conflicts arise from communicative interactions among individuals who perceive their interests as incompatible. This perspective is supported by more recent research, which suggests that conflict is a ubiquitous and multifaceted phenomenon that exists in all types of organizations, including political, social, economic, and educational institutions (Brewer et al., 2020). As such, conflict can be considered a global phenomenon that requires effective management and resolution strategies to minimize its negative impacts.

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013) states that: Education is the most important instrument of change, any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an educational revolution. The structure of education, like other aspects of the education system, continues to change in line with the dynamics of education itself. Structure implies arrangement of programme, persons, positions or unit in a specific manner with a view to achieving a specific objective. According to Fadipe and Adepoju (2008), an educational structure is a frame work. It depicts the period of schooling; it also depicts the administrative set-up of an educational organization. The structure of education in Nigeria is not static. It keeps on changing in line with educational programme, aspirations of government and style of administration. It is also determined by the personnel.

Tertiary education in Nigeria, especially the universities, polytechnics and monotechnics such as colleges of education are often regarded as very complex organization like other organization, they are not free from conflict, as conflict is unavoidable and endemic. Colleges of education as institutions of learning are perfectly qualified to be regarded to be a formal organizations in all respects. They have organizational structures and perform prominent roles in the nation's overall development. As an institution of learning, colleges are complex systems with multiple stakeholders and interlocking roles, which can inevitably lead to conflicts in carrying out their functions (Abioye, 2015). This is consistent with more recent research, which suggests that colleges of education are prone to conflicts due to their complex organizational structures and diverse stakeholder groups (Owens et al., 2020). For instance, college

administrators might have clash with staff in carrying out their functions of recruitment, admission, examination and provision of welfare service for the staff and students. The non-academics who perform support-function might feel unappreciated by both the superior academics and the potentially more prestigious students. Conflict usually results into activities such as disruptions of college programmes, boycotts of lectures, loss of lives and closing down of institutions (Alabi, 2002). Whenever these resultant effects occur, it leads to administrative ineffectiveness. The colleges of education are established for the purpose of producing highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the educational system. For this goal to be achieved, college administrators therefore need to find means to resolve conflict in their college system. This called for conflict resolution strategies.

Conflict resolution strategies are the techniques, mode and methods of dealing with situations in order to restore mutual co-existence among the staff, students, college management and government (Brahm, 2003). According to Deutsch, Morton and Coleman (2000), conflict resolution should be a voluntary process that reflects the schools values if applied throughout the school. Examples of such methods are collaboration, accommodation, avoidance, compromise and competition.

Administrative effectiveness refers to the degree to which college administrators successfully attain their established objectives, encompassing key dimensions such as staff morale, community-service dimension, supervisory role, and disciplinary role. This concept is aligned with recent research on effective administrative leadership in educational settings (Bush & Glover, 2018; Davies, 2020), which emphasizes the importance of achieving a balance between these various dimensions to ensure the overall success and effectiveness of the institution. Research has consistently shown that conflicts arise in colleges of education, varying in degree and proportion (Oyebade, 2014; Akomolafe, 2020). Conflict is an intrinsic and ubiquitous aspect of social life, a persistent phenomenon that emerges in all interactions among individuals and group (Garba, 2001; Oluwagbemi, 2020). In the context of Nigerian tertiary institutions, conflict has become increasingly frequent, intense, and widespread since the 1990s (Garba, 2001). Studies have identified various conflict management strategies, including forcing, structural changes, avoidance, compromise, and smoothing (Ladipo, 2007), as well as suppression, avoidance, compromise, third-party intervention, cooperation, democratic process, job rotation, and confrontation (Hodge & Anthony, 2001; Brewer et al., 2020).

The strategy identified by Oluwagbemi (2020) was effective communication which he described as the best because it would make the group aware of the kind of communication which could lead to problem solving. Likewise, Oyebade (2015) identified certain strategies as important in resolving conflict. These strategies include dialogue, automatic, emergency and delaying approaches. The efforts of all stakeholders in the university management are required in ensuring amicable resolution of conflict. In this regard, Akomolafe (2020) postulated that the first strategy of conflict resolution is commitment to the management of productive conflict,

such that conflict does not become destructive. Akomolafe (2020) emphasized the importance of leaders and those in authority promoting the rule of law, protecting fundamental human rights, and upholding human freedom, fairness, and justice. These values are crucial in minimizing organizational conflict and friction. This study builds on this foundation, seeking to provide an in-depth understanding of conflict's impact on administrative effectiveness in colleges of education, and to identify effective conflict management strategies that can enhance administrative outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

The manifestations of conflict in every organization and influence on the administrative effectiveness of colleges of education had been a major concern to researchers. Common observation in Nigerian colleges of education revealed high occurrences of conflicts despite the existence and use of various strategies by the authorities in managing them. Observations also showed that the strategies being used by the authorities in managing or mismanaging these conflicts might have some relationship with the administrative effectiveness of the institutions. According Abioye (2015) the fact that colleges of education still experience incessant conflict seems to suggest that appropriate strategies are not being employed. Existing conflict resolution strategies often appear biased, favoring management, government, or workers, and may even exacerbate staff disillusionment (Adebayo, 2006). This study aims to investigate the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness, focusing specifically on Kwara State-owned colleges of education, in order to identify more effective approaches to conflict management.

Although previous research on conflict management in colleges of education has shed light on the causes, effects, and strategies for managing conflict, a notable knowledge gap remains. Specifically, there is a lack of understanding about the precise impact of conflict on administrative effectiveness in these institutions. While existing studies have explored conflict management strategies, they have not sufficiently examined the relationship between conflict and administrative effectiveness. This study addressed this gap by investigating the impact of conflict on administrative effectiveness in Kwara State-owned Colleges of Education, providing valuable insights to inform policy and practice.

Purpose of the study

This study primarily aimed to explore the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness in Kwara State-owned colleges of education. Additionally, the study investigated the moderating effects of staff morale, administrator supervisory roles, administrator's disciplinary role, and community-service dimension on the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness in these institutions.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- 1. What are the causes of conflict in in public owned colleges of education in Kwara State?
- 2. What is the best conflict resolution strategy for administrative effectiveness in in public owned colleges of education in Kwara State?

Research Hypotheses

- 1. There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness in public owned colleges of education in Kwara State.
- 2. There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and staff morale in in public owned colleges of education in Kwara State.
- 3. There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrator supervisory roles in in public owned colleges of education in Kwara State.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The study population comprised all three public colleges of education across the three senatorial districts of Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the target population consisted of academic staff and administrators from these institutions. Using simple random sampling, a total of 180 participants (50 academic staff and 10 administrators from each of the three colleges) were selected for the study. The selected respondents were then stratified based on age, rank, educational qualification and length of services. Stratification is a process of classifying a sample or subjects under study into researcher’s variables of interest. However, the respondents were reached from their different offices. Two sets of instrument were adapted for this study titled Conflict Resolution Strategies Questionnaire (CRSQ) and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (AEQ). Each instrument consists of two sections comprising A and B. Section ‘A dealt with demographic data, section B dealt with subject matter to be answered by the respondents by ticking appropriately the column that best describe their views.

Data Analysis and Results

The results are given below in two main parts; demographic data and result of hypotheses testing.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender, rank, educational qualification and length of service

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	112	62.2
Female	68	37.8
Total	180	100
Rank		
Provost	3	1.7
Deputy-Provost	6	3.3
Dean/Director	83	46.1
HOD	88	48.9
Total	180	100
Educational Qualification		
B.Ed	22	12.3
M.Ed	98	54.4
M.Sc	08	4.4
Ph.D	52	28.9
Total	180	100
Length of Service		
0-5	09	5
6-10	18	10
11-15	68	37.8
16 years above	85	47.2
Total	180	100

The table indicates that male has the highest percentage of 62.2% (112) on the basis of gender distribution. Respondents in the position of Head of Department have the highest percentage of 48.9% followed by Dean/Directors 46.1% and 1.7% and 3.3% for Provost and deputy provost respectively. The educational qualification of the total respondents was led by those with M.Ed which is 54.4%, B.Ed 12.3%, M.Sc 4.4% and Ph.D has 28.9%. It also shows the distribution of respondents on the basis of their length of service, there were 05 respondents with 0-5 years of length of services with 5%, 10% for 6-10years, 37.8% for 11-15years and 47.2% for 16years above with the highest respondents.

Answering of Research Questions

Research Question One: What are the causes of conflict in public-owned colleges of education in Kwara State?

Table 2: Causes of Conflict in public-owned colleges of education in Kwara State

S/N	Causes	Frequency	Percentages
1	Management styles	58	32.2
2	Human factor	42	23.3
3	Competition for limited resources	38	21.1
4	Lack of communication flow	29	16.1
5	Perceived role conflict	13	7.3
Total		180	100

Table 2 shows the causes of conflict in Kwara State-owned colleges of education, adopted management styles has the highest percentages out of the five causes enumerated. Therefore, it can be concluded that management styles of college of education administrators determine to a large extent, the severity of conflict within the college, irrespective of the origin of conflicts.

Research Question Two: What is the best conflict resolution strategy for administrative effectiveness in Kwara state-owned colleges of education?

Table 3: Conflict resolution strategies adapted for administrative effectiveness in Kwara State-Owned Colleges of Education

S/N	Strategies	Frequency	Percentages
1	Accommodation	62	34.4
2	Collaboration	47	26.1
3	Compromise	38	21.1
4	Avoidance	23	12.8
5	Competition	10	5.6
Total		180	100

Table 3 indicates best conflict resolution strategy for administrative effectiveness in Kwara State-owned colleges of education. Accommodation has been perceived as the best strategy with the highest percentage of 34.4% of all the strategies followed by collaboration 26.1%, compromise 21.1%, avoidance 12.8% and competition 5.6.

Testing of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness in public-owned colleges of education in Kwara State.

Table 4: Pearson ‘r’ Showing Relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness

Variables	No	Mean	STD	df	r. cal.	r. crit.	Remarks
C.R Strategies	180	140.37	63.40	2	0.62	0.088	Ho1 rejected
Admin. Effectiveness	180	47.48	7.60				

Table 4 shows that the calculated v-value is 0.62 while the critical value is 0.088 with 3 degree of freedom at level of significance 0.05. Since the calculated v-value is greater than the critical v-value, hypothesis is rejected and the alternatives accept that there is a significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness in Public-owned colleges of education in Kwara State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and staff morale in public-owned colleges of education in Kwara State.

Table 5: Pearson ‘r’ Showing Relationship between conflict resolution strategies and staff morale

Variables	No	Mean	STD	df	r. cal.	r. crit.	Remark
C.R Strategies	180	47.9	2.86	2			H02 rejected
					0.915	0.88	
Staff Morale	180	9.7	1.2				

Table 5 shows that calculated v-value is 0.915 while the critical v value is 0.088 with 2 degrees of and at significance level 0.05. Since the calculated v-value is greater than critical v value, hypothesis is therefore rejected and alternative hypothesis upheld. That significant relationship exists between conflict resolution strategies and staff morale in Public-owned colleges of education in Kwara State.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative supervisory roles in Kwara State owned colleges of education.

Table 6: Pearson ‘r’ Showing Relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative supervisory roles

Variables	No	Mean	STD	df	r. cal.	r. crit.	Remark
C.R Strategies	180	48.6	2.76	2	0.97	0.88	H03 rejected
Supervisory Roles	180	9.9	1.42				

Table 6 shows that calculated v-value is 0.97 while the critical v value is 0.088 with 2 degree of and at significance level 0.05. Since the calculated v-value is greater than critical v value, hypothesis is therefore rejected and alternative hypothesis upheld. That significant relationship exists between conflict resolution strategies and administrative supervisory roles in Public-owned colleges of education in Kwara State.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness in Kwara State colleges of education. It was indicated that male has the highest percentage of 62.2% (112) on the basis of gender distribution. Respondents in the position of Head of Department have the highest percentage of 48.9% followed by Dean/ Directors 46.1% and 1.7% and 3.3% for Provost and deputy provost respectively. The educational qualification of the total respondents was led by those with M.Ed which is 54.4%, B.Ed 12.3%, MSc. 4.4% and PhD has 28.9%. It also shows the distribution of respondents on the basis of their length of service, there were 05 respondents with 0-5 years of length of services with 5%, 10% for 6-10years, 37.8% for 11-15years and 47.2% for 16years above with the highest respondents.

The findings suggest that the management styles adopted by administrators in Kwara State-owned colleges of education are the primary cause of conflict in these institutions. This implies that the way administrators manage and lead their staff and students has a significant impact on the level of conflict within the college. The fact that management styles have the highest percentage among the five causes enumerated suggests that the root of the conflict lies in the leadership and management approaches used by the administrators. The finding is in support of the opinion of Akindele (2018) that leaders who adopted a transformational leadership style were more effective in managing conflict than those who adopted a transactional leadership style

Accommodation has been perceived as the best strategy with the highest percentage. This is in line with the submission of Abdulkadir and Isiaka (2015) that accommodating differences among individual in an organization is the best strategy in resolve conflict.

The study's findings led to the rejection of the first hypothesis, which posited no significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness in

public colleges of education in Kwara State. Instead, the results support the alternative hypothesis, indicating a significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness. This outcome aligns with Abioye's (2015) finding that conflict resolution strategies significantly impact administrative effectiveness.

The second hypothesis revealed a significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and staff morale in public colleges of education in Kwara State. This result supports Mullins' (1995) assertion that conflict is an inherent aspect of management and organizational behaviour.

Lastly, the third hypothesis found a significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and administrative supervisory roles in public colleges of education in Kwara State. This is in line with the findings of Nakpodia (2010) that responsibility of administrators as managing human resources can significantly influence its effectiveness.

Conclusion

It was found out from the study that conflict resolution strategy is significantly and strongly related to administrative effectiveness. Any good, better or positive actions which occurs to conflict resolution strategy will more likely have positive effect on administrative effectiveness in public-owned colleges of education in Kwara state. This implies that the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies employed, combined with administrators' ability to adapt and apply different strategies, and directly enhances administrative effectiveness in colleges of education.

The causes of conflict in Kwara State-owned colleges of education, adopted management styles have the highest percentages out of the five causes enumerated. Therefore, it can be concluded that management styles of college of education administrators determine to a large extent, the severity of conflict within the college, irrespective of the origin of conflicts.

Implication of the Study

The results of this research would be incomplete without enumerating the implication of this study. Conflict is a natural part of human life. If college administrators avoid conflict and pretends not to see it, this may cause even greater problems in the college and among college staff. This study is conducted as a result of the glaring effects of conflicts on college system, management, student and staff in general. These effects seem to stem mostly from the strategies employed in resolving the conflicts. It seems that some of these strategies are wrongly employed. It is hoped that the findings of this study would reveal better mode of resolving conflicts to administrators of colleges of education.

The findings will assist the college staff in ascertaining the level of influence the conflict resolution strategies have on them. Where necessary, they will through the findings adopt measures that will guide against such negative influence as to affect their jobs and morale. Irrespective of the nature of conflicts, students always bear the brunt. When students suffer,

their parents and the entire society are always affected. This research will assist the students and entire society in understanding the nature and mode of conflict resolution strategies, thereby desisting from apportioning blame indiscriminately. Furthermore, the study is considered essential in order to foster peaceful and conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning in colleges of education. In addition, investigating conflict strategies and their aftermath, will enable government and institutional authorities to take and implement decision(s) that would help to improve resolution strategies and provide conducive atmosphere for effective administration.

Above all, the study would expand the frontiers of knowledge on the subject of conflict resolution strategies and administrative effectiveness of colleges of education. This hopes to stimulate other interested researchers on some of the researchable propositions that might be generated from the present study which can also be replicated in tertiary institution in other states of Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. There is need for involvement of the services of professional counsellors to help individuals or group understands their goals, actions and outcomes. This will help to enlighten, correct and cushion the effect of wrong signals already got due to misinformation.
2. College administrators need to master the various strategies and individual differences that exist among the staff so as to help in handling conflicting situation very well as there is no best conflict resolution strategies.
3. College administrators should be equipped on the basic knowledge and skills on conflict resolution strategies in order to use appropriate strategy for each situation to enhance their administrative effectiveness.
4. The college administrators cannot work in isolation, therefore staff should be given opportunity to have voice in what happens to them and a healthy working environment in term of salaries, fringe benefits and advancements opportunities should be provided.
5. Workshops, seminars and conferences in conflict resolution strategies should be organized periodically to get staff and college administrators acquainted with the various ways of solving conflict and the usefulness of applying the strategies appropriately.
6. Committees should be put in place to work on a permanent basis on how to resolve existing or impending conflict to be able to nip in the bud of any destructive effect on conflict.

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EFFECTIVENESS OF PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN REDUCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG PARENTS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OJO AREA OF LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

Domestic violence among couples is a pervasive issue that affects individuals, families, and society as a whole. It encompasses physical, emotional, psychological, and financial abuse, creating long-term adverse effects on victims and their dependents. The consequences of domestic violence extend beyond the couple involved, often influencing children who witness such abuse. Exposure to domestic violence can shape a child's behaviour, emotional well-being, and perception of relationships, potentially leading to a cycle of violence across generations. Domestic violence among parents of secondary school students presents significant social and psychological challenges, impacting both parents and their children. This study examines the effectiveness of parenting education programs in reducing instances of domestic violence among this demographic. This study adopted a quantitative research design and purposive sampling technique to survey 63 parents who participated in a structured parenting education programme across several secondary schools. Data was collected through a post-intervention questionnaire entitled "Parenting education and domestic violence", measuring changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours related to domestic violence. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse and test the hypothesis formulated using an independent t-test. It was found that the parenting education was effective, as the participants reported an improved spousal relationship. Recommendations were made based on the findings.

Keywords: parenting education, domestic violence, students, secondary school

Introduction

Domestic violence among couples is a pervasive issue that affects individuals, families, and society as a whole. It encompasses physical, emotional, psychological, and financial abuse, creating long-term adverse effects on victims and their dependents. The consequences of domestic violence extend beyond the couple involved, often influencing children who witness such abuse. Exposure to domestic violence can shape a child’s behaviour, emotional well-being, and perception of relationships, potentially leading to a cycle of violence across generations. Domestic violence remains a critical social issue in Nigeria, affecting individuals and families across various socioeconomic groups. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), domestic violence, particularly intimate partner violence, is prevalent in many African countries, including Nigeria, and poses significant health risks to victims, particularly women and children (WHO, 2024). In Lagos State, Nigeria’s largest urban centre, domestic violence continues to be a significant concern, with reports indicating an increase in the incidence of abuse within households (Oluwole et al., 2020). The negative impacts of domestic violence extend beyond the immediate physical harm to victims, influencing children's emotional, cognitive, and behavioural development, especially among secondary school students who are in a critical stage of development (Usman, 2021).

Parenting education programmes have been identified as a potential solution to mitigate the occurrence of domestic violence. These programmes focus on improving parents' knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward non-violent parenting and conflict resolution (Garzón Segura & Carcedo González, 2020). Studies have shown that effective parenting education can significantly reduce domestic violence by fostering healthier family dynamics and improving parents' ability to manage stress and resolve conflicts constructively (Holt et al., 2008). In the context of Lagos State, where socioeconomic pressures are often high, and parents may struggle with economic and emotional challenges, the need for structured support in parenting is essential (Nnama-Okechukwu & Eghosa, 2021).

The Nigerian government and non-governmental organisations have implemented various parenting education initiatives to address domestic violence, but the effectiveness of these programmes remains under-researched (Iroque, 2020). Evaluating the effectiveness of such initiatives, particularly in densely populated urban areas like Lagos, is essential to ensure that these interventions are impactful and scalable. This study seeks to examine the effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State. By assessing the impact of these interventions on parents' attitudes and behaviours, this research will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on domestic violence prevention and family welfare enhancement in Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to:

1. Assess the effectiveness of parenting education programmes on the incidence of domestic

violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria.

2. Determine the effect of parenting education programmes on parents' communication, conflict resolution, and stress management skills.
3. Determine the differences in the effectiveness of parenting education programs based on demographic factors of respondents such as gender, age, education level, and socio-economic status.

Research Questions

1. How effective are parenting education programmes on the incidence of domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria?
2. Do parenting education programmes have effect on parents' communication, conflict resolution, and stress management skills?
3. What are the differences in the effectiveness of parenting education programmes based on demographic factors such as gender, age, education level, and socio-economic status?

Hypothesis

H01: The effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence varies significantly based on gender.

Effect of Parental Domestic Violence on Children's Academic Performance

The effect of domestic violence on children extends beyond the home environment, significantly affecting their academic performance and overall well-being. Studies have shown that children exposed to domestic violence often experience emotional, psychological, and cognitive challenges that hinder their ability to perform well in school (Doroudchi et al., 2023). Children living in violent households often display heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and behavioural problems, all of which can interfere with their focus, motivation, and engagement in academic activities (Downey & Crummy, 2022).

One of the key effects of exposure to domestic violence is the disruption of a child's cognitive development. Children who witness or experience violence in their homes are often distracted in school, have difficulty concentrating, and may suffer from memory problems (Siegel, 2021). These cognitive disruptions lead to lower academic achievement, as they hinder the child's ability to absorb and retain information, complete tasks, and perform well in assessments. Research conducted by Hamby et al. (2020) highlights that children in homes affected by domestic violence often lag behind their peers in reading, mathematics, and overall school performance, which can have long-term consequences on their educational attainment.

Furthermore, children who experience domestic violence at home are more likely to exhibit behavioural problems such as aggression or withdrawal, which can lead to disciplinary issues at school. These behavioural problems often result in frequent absences from school, suspensions, or expulsions, further hindering their academic progress (Holt et al., 2008).

Teachers and school administrators may struggle to address these behavioural issues effectively, as they are often unaware of the underlying domestic problems affecting the child (Mogbeyiteren & Abina, 2021). As a result, these children become further isolated from academic and social opportunities, compounding their educational disadvantages.

The emotional toll of living in a violent household also manifests in the form of low self-esteem and feelings of helplessness among children, which directly impacts their academic engagement. Children exposed to domestic violence often believe they are incapable of achieving success, leading to decreased participation in classroom activities, lower aspirations, and a lack of perseverance in academic pursuits (Lloyd, 2018). This emotional distress negatively affects their academic performance, as they may feel disconnected from their school environment and lack the support they need to succeed.

In Nigeria, the prevalence of domestic violence and its impact on children's education is a growing concern, particularly in urban areas like Lagos. A study by Adeniyi et al. (2023) revealed that children who experience domestic violence at home in Lagos are more likely to experience school dropout, low academic achievement, and emotional trauma. The researchers emphasised the importance of intervention programmes, including counselling and parental education, to mitigate these adverse effects and support children's academic development in such households.

The cumulative effect of domestic violence on children's academic performance is clearly apparent: it creates an unstable and unsafe environment that impairs their ability to focus on learning, leading to poor educational outcomes. Interventions aimed at addressing domestic violence, such as parental education programs and school-based counselling, are critical for supporting these children and improving their academic trajectories (Barrett et al., 2024).

Counselling Education Interventions for Parents in Reducing Domestic Violence

Counselling education interventions have gained recognition as effective tools in reducing domestic violence among parents. These interventions aim to equip parents with skills for conflict resolution, emotional regulation, and improved communication, which are crucial in breaking the cycle of violence in households. Research has demonstrated that when parents receive proper counselling and education, it can significantly mitigate violent behaviours and promote healthier family dynamics (Backhaus et al., 2024; Jahanfar, S. et al., 2014).

A critical element of these interventions is their focus on addressing the root causes of domestic violence, such as anger management issues, substance abuse, and lack of communication skills. Studies indicate that when parents are provided with strategies to manage stress and resolve conflicts non-violently, there is a significant reduction in the instances of physical and emotional abuse within the household. As Jackson et al. (2020) point out that counselling education that includes cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) has been effective in helping parents identify and alter the negative thought patterns that often lead to violent outbursts.

Parenting education programmes are crucial in teaching parents how to nurture and maintain healthy relationships with their partners and children. According to a study by Lee et al. (2020), these programs often incorporate training in positive discipline, emotional intelligence, and communication techniques. These skills are designed to reduce stress in the household and provide alternatives to violence when managing conflict. Moreover, Lee and colleagues highlight that parents who undergo these educational interventions report improved family cohesion and lower rates of conflict escalation.

Group counselling programs, such as those implemented in community centres or schools, have also proven effective in reducing domestic violence among parents. These programs create a supportive environment where parents can share their experiences, learn from others, and receive guidance from trained counsellors. Peer support is a significant aspect of group interventions, helping to reduce feelings of isolation and encouraging behavioural changes. Research by Garcia et al. (2021) demonstrated that parents who participated in group counselling sessions were more likely to adopt non-violent conflict resolution strategies, leading to a decrease in domestic violence incidents.

Another significant factor in the effectiveness of counselling education interventions is the incorporation of culturally sensitive approaches. Particularly in diverse communities, such as those in Nigeria, it is essential to tailor interventions to respect cultural norms and values while promoting non-violent behaviours. A study Wagwula et al. (2024) found that culturally tailored counselling programs that consider the socio-economic and religious contexts of the participants were more successful in reducing domestic violence than those using a one-size-fits-all approach.

Additionally, prevention-focused counselling interventions for parents (Macdonald et al., 2016) have been shown to have long-term positive effects on reducing domestic violence. These programmes often emphasise the importance of early intervention, educating parents on the risks and signs of domestic violence before it escalates. Proactive counselling interventions can disrupt cycles of abuse early on, preventing violence from becoming entrenched in the family dynamics (Allen et al., 2022).

Furthermore, integrating counselling with other forms of support, such as legal and financial aid, can enhance the overall effectiveness of these interventions. Parents dealing with domestic violence often face multiple challenges, including financial instability and legal issues. Comprehensive programmes that address these issues alongside counselling have been found to be more successful in helping families overcome domestic violence (Allen et al., 2022).

In conclusion, counselling education interventions are essential in reducing domestic violence among parents. By providing parents with the tools to manage stress, resolve conflicts non-violently, and foster positive relationships, these interventions contribute significantly to creating safer family environments. However, for these programs to be fully effective, they

must be culturally sensitive and comprehensive, addressing the broader socio-economic challenges that parents may face.

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research design of cross-sectional type to assess the effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence among parents of secondary school students. The target population of the study are parents of secondary school students who underwent parenting education counselling in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos.

Therefore, the sample of this study comprised 63 parents of secondary school students who have attended a parenting education counselling programme. The sample was purposively determined. The choice of purposive sampling technique is to be able to select only the most qualified participants. A Researchers-designed questionnaire entitled “Parenting education and domestic violence” was used to elicit information from the participants. Part A of the questionnaire sought the participants' demographic information, including gender, age and education level. Part B contains items about the effectiveness of parenting programmes. A four-point Likert scale response option was employed.

The instrument was subjected to content and construct validity by seeking expert review to assess the questionnaire items' relevance, clarity, and coverage. At the same time, the Cronbach alpha reliability method was employed to determine the instrument's reliability. A coefficient of 0.72 was obtained, which suggests that the instrument will be consistently relevant.

The instrument was administered to the participants within two months (July and August 2024). Only 63 of the participants who participated responded to the instrument. The collected data was cleansed, coded, and input into the SPSS version 29 for further analysis. The research questions were answered descriptively using frequency count, percentage and mean score. Meanwhile, an independent t-test was used to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 significance level.

The ethical issues were also addressed. The participant's consent was sought before participating in this study. They were duly informed of the purpose of the study and assured of their anonymity and confidentiality. The identity of the individual participants was hidden from the public.

Results

The analysis was based on the responses. Out of 100 sampled participants, only 63 returned and were usable.

Table 1: Participants Demographic Profile

Variable	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	22	34.9%
	Female	41	65.1%
Age	18-25 Years	2	3.2%
	26-35 Years	4	6.3%
	36-45 Years	24	38.1%
	46-55 Years	21	33.3%
	56 Years and above	12	19.0%
Education	Primary	0	0%
	Secondary	15	23.8%
	Higher Education	48	76.2%
Total		63	100%

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the participants (N = 63) involved in the study. The majority of the participants were female (65.1%), while 34.9% were male. Regarding the age distribution, the largest group of participants (38.1%) were 36-45 years old, followed by those aged 46-55 (33.3%). A smaller proportion of participants fell into the 56 years and above category (19.0%), with only 6.3% being between 26-35 years and 3.2% aged 18-25 years.

Regarding education, most participants (76.2%) had attained higher education, while 23.8% had completed secondary education. No participants reported having only a primary education.

Research Question One: How effective are parenting education programmes on the incidence of domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Effectiveness of parenting education programs on the incidence of domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria

	Yes	%	No	%	Remark
There has been a significant decrease in physical violence in my home after attending the parenting education program	50	78.3	13	12.6	Effective
I feel that conflicts in my home are more constructive after the program.	56	88.8	7	11.2	Effective
The program helped reduce my use of aggressive behaviour during conflicts.	60	95.2	3	4.8	Effective

The results presented in Table 2 demonstrate a significant positive effect of parenting education programmes on reducing domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Notably, 78.3% of respondents reported a substantial decrease in physical violence in their homes after attending the program, while only 12.6% did not observe such a reduction. This suggests that the programme effectively curbs physical violence in households. Additionally, 88.8% of participants felt that conflicts in their homes became more constructive following the program, compared to 11.2% who disagreed. This indicates that the program plays a crucial role in fostering healthier, more productive conflict resolution.

Moreover, 95.2% of respondents acknowledged that the programmes helped reduce their use of aggressive behaviour during conflicts, with only 4.8% disagreeing. These findings strongly suggest that parenting education programs are highly effective in addressing domestic violence and promoting more constructive conflict management strategies in households.

Research Question Two: What is the effect of parenting education programmes on parents' communication, conflict resolution, and stress management skills?

Table 3: Effectiveness of parenting education communication, conflict resolution, and stress management skills

S/n	communication, conflict resolution, and stress management skills	Mean	Remark
1	Calm communication	3.38	Effective
2	Confidence in conflict resolution strategies	3.32	Effective
3	Peaceful conflict resolution	3.46	Effective
4	Listening to the partner's perspective	3.32	Effective
5	Temper control	3.41	Effective

The effectiveness of the parenting education programmes in terms of communication, conflict resolution, and stress management skills was evaluated through participants' self-

reports. Participants indicated an improved ability to communicate more calmly with their partners during disagreements ($M = 3.38$) and reported confidence in using conflict resolution strategies taught in the programmes ($M = 3.32$). The programmes were perceived as highly effective in enhancing peaceful conflict resolution ($M = 3.46$), promoting openness to listening to partners during arguments ($M = 3.32$) and improving temper control ($M = 3.41$). These results suggest that the parenting education programmes positively impacted essential interpersonal skills.

H01: There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence based on gender.

Table 4: Effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence based on gender.

Gender	N	Mean	Std.	D	P	t	df	F	Cohens' D
Male	22	2.65	.390						
				0.261	1	.134	61	0.814	0.3
Female	41	2.52	.447						

Table 4 examined the effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence based on gender. Males reported a slightly higher mean effectiveness ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 0.390$) compared to females ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.447$). However, this difference was not statistically significant, $t(61) = 1.134$, $p = 0.261$, indicating that both genders perceived the program's effectiveness similarly. The small effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.3$) suggests that although males rated the programme slightly higher in terms of effectiveness, the practical significance of this difference is minor. Therefore, the parenting education programmes were perceived to be equally effective across genders in reducing domestic violence.

The study also revealed that no significant differences existed in the effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence based on gender of the spouses.

Discussion

This study examined the effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos state, Nigeria. The first objective revealed that the effectiveness of parenting education programmes on the incidence of domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria, was found to be effective. This result highlights the critical role that structured interventions play in promoting healthier family environments. The effectiveness of these programs can be attributed to how they equip parents with the necessary skills to manage conflicts constructively, communicate more effectively, and control emotional responses during stressful situations. This finding is consistent with the broader literature on the subject. For instance, Sanders et al.

(2014) emphasise that parenting education programmes are instrumental in reducing domestic violence by improving parenting practices, which in turn foster more peaceful household dynamics. Such programs are known to create an awareness of non-violent communication, helping parents avoid escalating tensions that could lead to physical or emotional abuse. As noted by Semahegn et al. (2017), these programs also focus on reshaping attitudes toward discipline and conflict resolution, which are often at the core of domestic violence incidents.

Furthermore, a parenting programme was found to have effectively improved spousal communication skills. Effective communication serves as a critical component in fostering understanding and reducing conflict between partners. This aligns with Nwaoba and Queen (2022) who found that positive communication skills create peaceful and harmonious living among spouses in their marital relationship. Additionally, the effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence may also stem from their ability to change ingrained social and cultural norms that tolerate or normalise violence within the household. By introducing alternative, non-violent disciplinary strategies, these programs help shift attitudes and behaviours, promoting healthier relationship dynamics. Moreover, the support networks formed through these programmes provide parents with a sense of community and shared experience, which can reduce stress and offer practical strategies for resolving disputes peacefully.

Another possible explanation for the success of these programs is their ability to increase parents' emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence allows individuals to recognise, understand, and manage their emotions more effectively, which can significantly reduce impulsive reactions that lead to violent confrontations. Research by Bradberry and Greaves (2019) suggests that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are less likely to engage in aggressive behaviours and more likely to employ constructive conflict resolution strategies.

The confidence in using conflict resolution strategies and the ability to resolve conflicts peacefully further support the programme's effectiveness. These results align with the findings of (Fox et al., 2016; Hameeda Narejo et al., 2023), who reported that structured parenting programmes improved conflict resolution skills and reduced aggressive responses in family settings. Similarly, Umennuihe et al. (2023) highlighted that those participants who completed such programmes showed enhanced conflict management strategies, which resulted in more harmonious relationships.

The study also revealed that no significant differences existed in the effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence based on the gender of the spouses. This finding is important because it challenges traditional gendered assumptions regarding the roles that men and women play in family dynamics and their responsiveness to educational interventions. Regardless of whether the parent was male or female, both benefited equally from the parenting education programs, suggesting that these programs are universally effective in fostering non-violent conflict resolution and improving communication.

This result aligns with previous studies that have demonstrated the universal applicability of parenting programmes across gender lines. For instance, a study Backhaus et al. (2024) found that parenting programmes were equally effective in improving conflict resolution and reducing aggressive behaviours among both fathers and mothers. Similarly, Geiger and Campbell (2020) showed that gender did not significantly affect the outcomes of parenting programmes aimed at reducing family conflict and violence, reinforcing the idea that these interventions address core behavioural and relational skills applicable to all parents, regardless of gender.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study confirms that parenting education programmes are effective in reducing domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. The programmes have proven successful in fostering healthier family environments by enhancing conflict resolution skills, improving spousal communication, and promoting non-violent approaches to discipline. Importantly, these benefits were observed across both male and female parents, challenging traditional gendered perceptions of family dynamics and highlighting the universal applicability of these interventions. These findings emphasise the value of structured educational efforts in addressing domestic violence and fostering harmonious relationships within families.

Limitations

This study has some limitations to its generalisability. The use of purposive sampling technique to select the participants may limit the generalisation of the findings to areas that did not have representation. Also, quantitative study may have not captured sufficient information about the outcome of the intervention in reducing domestic violence. Therefore, further studies could employ qualitative or mixed research design to have a deep understanding of the situation.

Implications for counselling

The findings from this study hold several key implications for counselling practices, particularly in the context of family dynamics and domestic violence prevention. The effectiveness of parenting education programmes in reducing domestic violence among parents of secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria, emphasises the vital role that such interventions can play in fostering healthier relationships. Counsellors working with families affected by domestic violence should consider incorporating parenting education into their treatment plans as a preventive and restorative measure. These programmes provide structured guidance that helps parents learn and adopt more positive communication and conflict resolution strategies, leading to a decrease in aggressive behaviours within the home.

The study's results demonstrate that spousal communication skills significantly improve following participation in these programmes. This highlights the importance of integrating

communication skills training into counselling sessions with couples, particularly those experiencing conflict or aggression. Counsellors should focus on helping clients develop calm, constructive communication techniques, as these are instrumental in reducing tension and fostering peaceful coexistence. This aligns with Nwaoba and Queen (2022), who found that positive communication fosters harmonious relationships. By teaching these skills in counselling settings, professionals can help clients build more resilient relationships and reduce the likelihood of domestic violence.

Furthermore, the study’s findings regarding improved conflict resolution skills suggest that counsellors should incorporate conflict management strategies into their practice. Structured interventions, as reported by Fox et al. (2016), Hameeda Narejo et al. (2023), and O’Leary and Feinberg (2021), have proven effective in helping individuals resolve conflicts more peacefully. Counsellors can use these insights to promote practical conflict resolution methods tailored to the specific needs of families, empowering them to handle disagreements without resorting to violence.

Additionally, the finding that there were no significant differences in the effectiveness of parenting education programmes based on gender suggests that counsellors should approach domestic violence prevention with a universal strategy. Both male and female clients can benefit equally from these programmes, allowing counsellors to apply a gender-neutral approach when designing interventions that focus on communication and conflict resolution.

In conclusion, counsellors working with families and individuals facing domestic violence should prioritise parenting education programmes as part of their therapeutic toolkit.

By fostering better communication, teaching conflict resolution skills, and offering stress management strategies, counsellors can help reduce domestic violence and promote healthier, more harmonious relationships.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government and educational institutions should prioritise expanding parenting education programmes to reach more families, particularly those in high-risk communities, to reduce domestic violence further and enhance family communication and conflict resolution.
2. Schools should consider integrating parenting education into their curricula for parents of secondary school students, as it has demonstrated positive outcomes in improving family dynamics and reducing domestic violence. This can take place during the open day.
3. Parenting programmes should include follow-up sessions and continuous support for parents to ensure the long-term sustainability of the learned skills in communication, conflict resolution, and stress management.
4. Future iterations should be tailored to address the specific needs of different families,

including those with varying cultural backgrounds or unique challenges, to maximise the impact.

5. Additional studies should be conducted to explore the long-term impact of parenting education on domestic violence and to identify any potential areas for improvement in programme delivery. Future research could also examine the influence of other factors, such as socioeconomic status, on the effectiveness of these programmes.

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CAUSES OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR AS PERCEIVED BY UNDERGRADUATES IN KWARA STATE: IMPLICATIONS FOR VALUE RE-ORIENTATION COUNSELLING

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate whether there is any significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on gender, religion, and place of residence. One research question was raised, and three research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Adopting a descriptive survey method, the study targeted a population of 104,632 undergraduates in Kwara State. A sample size of 402 respondents was selected through a multistage sampling procedure, but only 394 properly filled forms were analysed. Data were collected using a 15-item closed-ended adapted questionnaire titled "Causes of Suicidal Behaviour Questionnaire" (CSBQ), which had a reliability coefficient of 0.74. Frequency count and percentage were used to analyse demographic data, while mean and rank order were employed for the research question. Hypotheses 1 and 3 were tested using an independent t-test, while hypothesis 2 was analysed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that undergraduates perceived that unstable emotions, family conflict, financial problems, academic pressure, severe sexual harassment or rape among others were causes of suicidal behaviour. The findings of the hypotheses showed that there were significant differences in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on religion and place of residence, but no significant difference was found based on gender. It was recommended that universities

managements should organise value re-orientation programmes across all university types, focusing on the identified causes of suicidal behaviour. Counsellors' Associations should train University counsellors on how to organise a sensitive value re-orientation programme for university students and develop targeted interventions to curb the menace of the various causes identified by undergraduates, such as unstable emotions, family conflict, financial problems, academic pressure, and severe sexual harassment or rape among others that could help reduce suicide risk.

Keywords: Suicidal Behaviour, Causes of Suicidal Behaviour, Undergraduates, Value Re-Orientation, Counselling

Introduction

Suicide is an act of killing oneself, deliberately initiated and performed by the person concerned with full knowledge or expectation of its fatal outcome. It is a serious reflection of human experiences, a profound act that speaks to the depths of despair and the complexities of existence. This desperate response to overwhelming pain, whether emotional or psychological, occurs when individuals feel trapped in darkness with no apparent escape. Durkheim (2022) defines suicide as an act of intentionally terminating one's own life, applying this definition to all cases of death resulting directly or indirectly from an intentional act or omission committed by the victims themselves. These acts, performed with the awareness of their fatal consequence, can represent self-destruction (negative acts) or a means to achieve a certain end through self-sacrifice (positive acts). Globally, suicide is a leading cause of death among undergraduates (Afolabi & Ogunbode, 2021), with rates varying widely between 5% and 31%. Suicide prevalence is notably higher in low-income countries like Nigeria, as compared to high-income nations (Patton, Coffey, Sawyer, Viner, Haller, Bose, Vos, Ferguson & Mathers, 2018).

In Nigeria, suicidal behavior among undergraduates has evolved into a critical public health concern. Samuel (2020) conducted a study in Southeast Nigeria, revealing alarming tendencies: altruistic suicide was the most prevalent (60%), followed by anomic (47%), egoistic (46%), and fatalistic (41%) tendencies. These findings highlight the complex interplay of social and psychological factors influencing suicidal behavior and emphasize the urgent need for targeted interventions to improve mental well-being among students. Similarly, Olasunbo et al. (2023) examined suicidal behavior among undergraduates in a private Nigerian university.

Findings indicated that 20% of respondents experienced suicidal ideation, while 12% engaged in self-harm. Contributing factors included low social support, environmental stressors, and emotional dysregulation. The study underscores the importance of fostering self-esteem and creating robust social support systems to mitigate these risks and improve the quality of life for undergraduates.

Addressing the roots of suicidal behavior requires innovative approaches such as value-reorientation counselling. As Kirschenbaum (2013) notes, this therapeutic framework helps

individuals realign their values, beliefs, and attitudes, facilitating positive behavioral changes. In societies experiencing moral disorientation, erosion of values exacerbates suicidal ideation (BSUM Journal). The rapid evolution of modern values marked by materialism, individualism, and the pursuit of success leaves many young people feeling isolated and disconnected from a deeper sense of purpose (Kirschenbaum, 2013). Cultural factors, including academic stress and societal expectations, further compound these struggles.

The causes of suicidal behavior among undergraduates are multifaceted. Zhang et al. (2020) identify contributing factors such as stigma, mental health challenges, academic stress, emotional turmoil, family stressors, cultural beliefs, and media influences. Olagunju et al. (2015) emphasize that suicidal behavior results from the intricate interplay of psychological, social, and environmental factors. It encompasses suicidal ideation, attempts, and completed acts all representing varying levels of intent and lethality, posing profound risks to undergraduates' well-being and the community at large.

Academic stress, peer pressure, family conflicts, and social isolation frequently emerge as key triggers of suicidal behavior (Black, 2023). Gender differences also play a significant role: females are more prone to suicidal ideation and attempts, whereas males exhibit higher rates of completed suicide due to societal expectations and limited help-seeking attitudes. Social media adds another dimension, as its impact on undergraduates often leads to feelings of isolation and challenges in navigating identity, contributing to suicidal thoughts (O'Connor & Nock, 2019). Age differences further influence suicidal tendencies, as younger individuals may face unique developmental challenges while older individuals contend with career pressures (Lawal & Olagunju, 2020). Interestingly, religiosity serves as a protective factor, with individuals reporting high levels of religious belief often displaying unfavorable attitudes toward suicide (Ogunsanwo et al., 2022).

In conclusion, suicidal behavior reflects a complex interplay of factors psychological, social, and biological. With its various manifestations, including ideation, attempts, and completed suicides, it represents an urgent public health challenge demanding comprehensive understanding and intervention. This study aimed to investigate causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on gender, religion and place of residence.

Statement of the Problem

One of the major public health issues that has become rampant throughout the world and is increasing the burden of health care is suicidal behaviour among young people (WHO, 2021). Estimation from the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) reported that in each year, more than 700,000 people die from suicide and for every suicide, there are many more people who attempted suicide but not succeeded. Suicide is a tragic event that has a lasting impact on families, communities, and even nations. Suicide occurs at any age and was the fourth biggest cause of death in the world for people aged 15 to 29 in 2019 (WHO, 2021). However, in Africa, suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 15–29 years (Patton, Coffey,

Sawyer, Viner, Haller, Bose, Vos, Ferguson & Mathers, 2018).

In Nigeria, particularly in Kwara State, there is a growing concern about the rising prevalence of suicidal behaviour among undergraduates. For example, several cases had been reported to the Students’ Affairs Units of Universities in Kwara state such as the case of University of Ilorin student who wrote in his answer booklet because of fear of failure that “if he failed a particular course, he is going to kill himself”. Also, a 300 level student of Microbiology was said to have committed suicide by poisoning self over N500 000 loan obtained from online loan platform which she could not repay (Unilorin Students’ Affairs, 2023). Another 300-level student of department of Industrial Design at the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA) was reported to have committed suicide on the 21st January, 2023. Also 18year old student in the Department of Chemical Engineering of the University of Port Harcourt in Rivers state committed suicide two weeks after her matriculation.

However, to the best of researcher’s knowledge there are limited researches that explored causes of suicidal behaviour in this locale. Therefore, there is an urgent need for research that explores the causes of suicidal behaviour as reported by undergraduates in Kwara State. Hence, this study seeks to fill this critical gap by investigating the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates in Kwara state, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to examine the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates in Kwara State, Nigeria. This study explored the causes of suicidal behaviour as reported by the undergraduates themselves and examined the influence of demographic factors such as gender, religion and place of residence on the causes of suicidal behaviour among undergraduates in Kwara state, Nigeria.

Research Question

One research question was raised to guide the conduct of this study:

1. What are the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates in Kwara State?

Research Hypotheses

Three research hypotheses were formulated and tested in the course of this study:

1. There is no significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates in Kwara state based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates in Kwara state based on religion.
3. There is no significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates in Kwara state based on place of residence.

Methodology

The research design that was employed for this study was a descriptive survey as it is often used to describe and explore human behaviour. The population for this study comprises all undergraduates in Kwara State which according to the National Universities Commission (2022) was 104,632 and 73,242 made the targeted population for this study while the sample size for this study was 402 based on the Research Advisor (2006).

Table 1: Proportional Percentage of Undergraduates in the Targeted Universities in Kwara State

S/N	Selected Universities	Institution	Target Population	Percentage Selected	Sample Size selected
1.	University of Ilorin	Federal	49, 153	67.1	270
2.	Kwara State University	State	20, 000	27.3	110
3.	Al- Hikmah	Private	4, 089	5.6	22
Total			73,242	100%	402

A researcher’s designed 15 item questionnaire titled “Causes of Suicidal Behaviour Questionnaire” was used as instrument to collect data for this study. The questionnaire was of two sections, A and B. Section A consists of the biography information of the respondents, while section B, consists of 15 items on the Causes of Suicidal Behaviour. The instrument was validated by four experts in Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. The reliability of the instrument was estimated as 0.74 using test-retest procedure. The questionnaire forms were administered by the researcher and two research assistants who randomly selected undergraduates from the randomly selected Universities in Kwara State. Four hundred and two (402) questionnaire forms were administered but only 394 were properly filled, accounted for and then used for this study.

Section A of the instrument which consists of three items on demographic data was analyzed using frequency count and percentage. Section B which consists of 15 items on the causes of suicidal behaviour was scored using four point likert-type rating scale format of: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points; Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. The four item type rating scales were used in scoring the instrument. The mid-point is 2.5 points (i.e. 4+3+2+1/4). Therefore, any item with mean score of 2.5 and above was interpreted as cause of suicidal behaviour perceived by undergraduates while item below 2.5 was interpreted as non-cause of suicidal behaviour perceived by undergraduates in Kwara State.

The three null hypotheses were tested using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The t-test statistical measure was used to compare the mean of two groups while ANOVA was used to compare the mean of more than two groups. Therefore, t-test was used to analyse

hypotheses 1 and 3 and ANOVA was employed to analyse hypotheses 2. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

The demographic data of the respondents were analysed using percentage distributions, research question was analysed using mean and rank order analysis while t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical tools were used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of the Respondents’ Demographic Data

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	155	39.3
Female	239	60.7
Total	394	100
<i>Religion</i>		
ATR	06	1.5
Christianity	164	41.6
Islam	224	56.9
Total	394	100
<i>Place of Residence</i>		
On-campus	116	29.4
Off-campus	278	70.6
Total	394	100

Table 2 shows the distribution of demographic data of the respondents. The table revealed that 155 (39.3%) of the respondents were male, while 239 (60.7%) of the respondents were female. This implies that female participated more in this study. Based on religion, the table reveals that 6 (1.5%) of the respondents were practicing African Traditional Religion, 164 (41.6%) were practicing Christianity while 224 (56.9%) were practicing Islam. This indicates that more than half of the participants were Muslims. The table also shows that 116 (29.4%) of the respondents were living on-campus, while 278 (70.6%) of the respondents were living off-campus. This implies that larger proportions of the respondents were living outside the school compound.

Research Question 1: What are the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates in Kwara State?

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and Rank Order Analysis of the Respondents’ Perceptions on the Causes of Suicidal Behaviour

Item No	In my opinion, I believed the following are the causes of suicidal behaviour among undergraduates:	Mean	S.D.	Rank
15	unstable emotions	3.67	.471	1 st
2	family conflict	3.65	.478	2 nd
13	financial problems	3.58	.495	3 rd
4	academic pressure	3.53	.500	4 th
10	severe sexual harassment or rape	3.51	.501	5 th
6	substance abuse	3.45	.709	5 th
11	self-isolation	3.42	.692	7 th
3	peer pressure	3.38	.968	8 th
8	Illness	3.33	.671	9 th
9	relationship problems	3.26	.439	10 th
1	mental health challenges (i.e. anxiety, depression, etc.)	3.20	.960	10 th
5	lack of parental support	3.18	.725	12 th
14	unrealistic expectation of self	2.96	.899	13 th
12	physical disability	2.84	.955	14 th
7	history of mental health disorder	2.77	.815	15 th

Source: Researcher’s developed

Table 3 indicates the mean, standard deviation and rank order analysis of the respondents’ perceptions on the cause of suicidal behaviour. The table indicates that items 15, 2 and 13 which stated that in my opinion, I believed the following are the causes of suicidal behaviour among undergraduates: unstable emotions; family conflict; and financial problems ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd with the mean scores of 3.67, 3.65 and 3.58 respectively. Similarly, items 14, 12 and 7 which stated that in my opinion, I believed the following are the causes of suicidal behaviour among undergraduates: unrealistic expectation of self; physical disability; and history of mental health disorder ranked 13th, 14th and 15th with the mean scores of 2.96, 2.84 and 2.77 respectively. Since all the listed items have the mean score that is above 2.50 cut-off point, it can be said that respondents perceived that unstable emotions; family conflict; financial problems; academic pressure; severe sexual harassment or rape among others are causes of suicidal behaviour.

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on gender*

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value showing differences in the Respondents’ Perceptions on the Causes of Suicidal Behaviour Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Male	155	49.30	3.53	392	1.84	1.96	.066
Female	239	50.00	3.80				

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of 1.84 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 with a corresponding p-value of .066 which is higher than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis one is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on gender.

Hypothesis Two:There is no significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on religion

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing differences in the Respondents’ Perceptions on the Causes of Suicidal Behaviour Based on Religion

Source	SS	df	Mean Square	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio	P-value
Between Groups	201.68	2	100.84	7.56*	3.00	.001
Within Groups	5213.16	391	13.33			
Total	5414.84	393				

* Significant, p<0.05

Table 5 shows that the calculated F-ratio of 7.56 is greater than the critical F-value of 3.00 with a corresponding p-value of .001 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis two is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on religion. In order to ascertain where the significant difference lies, Scheffe Post-Hoc was carried out and the output is shown on Table 6.

Table 6: Scheffe post-hoc where the significant difference lies based on Religion

Religion	N	Sub set for Alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
ATR	6		52.83
Christianity	164	50.38	
Islam	224	49.16	
Sig.		.620	.150

Table 6 reveals that respondents who were practicing Islam and Christianity have the mean scores of 49.16 and 50.38 (in subset 1) respectively, while those who were practicing African traditional religion have a highest mean score of 52.83 (in subset 2) and thus, contributed to the significant difference.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on place of residence

Table 7: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value showing differences in the Respondents’ Perceptions on the Causes of Suicidal Behaviour Based on Place of Residence

Residence	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
On-campus	116	48.84	3.429	392	3.09*	1.96	.002
Off-campus	278	50.09	3.768				

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 7 shows that the calculated t-value of 3.09 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 with a corresponding p-value of .002 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis three is rejected. This indicates that there is significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on place of residence.

Discussion

The findings showed that undergraduates perceived that unstable emotions; family conflict; financial problems; academic pressure; severe sexual harassment or rape among others were causes of suicidal behaviour. This could be that the transition to university life can be stressful and emotionally challenging for undergraduates. This finding of the study is in line with the study of Becker, Foster and Luebbe (2018) who found that emotional dysregulation was strongly associated with suicidal ideation in undergraduates. Similarly, Lamis and Jahn (2019) reported that family dysfunction and lack of support were predictive of increased suicidal ideation over time. The finding is in line with the submission of Swahn, Culbreth, Staton, Self-Brown and Kasirye (2020) who asserted that college students who experienced sexual violence were at a markedly higher risk for suicidal ideation and attempts compared to their peers.

Hypothesis one revealed that there was no significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on gender. This implies that male and female respondents’ perceptions were not different on the causes of suicidal behaviour. The reason for this finding could be that both male and female undergraduates often face similar stressors in a university environment, such as academic pressure, financial issues, and social challenges. These common stressors can lead to a convergence in perceptions about the causes of suicidal

behaviour. The finding corroborates with the study of Oliffe et al. (2016) who found that both male and female undergraduates reported similar causes for suicidal behaviour, such as academic pressure, financial stress, and relationship issues. Ahmedani et al. (2017) found that mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, were common predictors of suicidal behaviour for both male and female students, suggesting that gender does not significantly alter the perception of these causes.

Hypothesis two revealed that there was significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on religion. This implies that perceived causes of suicidal behaviour were different across respondents' religious affiliation. Scheffe post-hoc revealed that respondents who were practicing African traditional religion contributed more to the significant difference. This could be that the support systems within ATR communities might differ from those in other religious groups, affecting how they view the causes of suicidal behaviour. This finding aligns with the study of Salami, Obadiora and Olawuyi (2020) who found significant differences in how Christian and Muslim undergraduates perceived and responded to suicidal thoughts, with variations in the level of stigmatization and willingness to seek help. Eskin, Baydar, El-Nayal, Asad, Noor, Rezaeian and Khan (2020) found that religious affiliations influenced attitudes towards suicide across different cultures, with some religious groups showing more permissive attitudes than others.

Hypothesis three revealed that there was significant difference in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on place of residence. This result suggested that the living environment of students may play a crucial role in shaping their perceptions and understanding of suicidal behaviour. This difference may be due to the distinct living environments and daily experiences of these two groups. The present study's findings aligns with research by Kim and Park (2020) who also found a significant difference in the causes of suicidal behavior based on students' residence. It was stressed further that on-campus residents reported higher levels of perceived social support and easier access to mental health resources compared to their off-campus counterparts. The finding also relates to the study of Lipson, Lattie and Eisenberg (2018) who asserted that residential environment plays a crucial role in students' mental health, with on-campus students reporting higher levels of anxiety and depression which could trigger suicidal behaviour compared to those living off-campus.

Conclusion

This paper examined the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates in Kwara State, Nigeria. It was concluded that undergraduates perceived that unstable emotions; family conflict; financial problems; academic pressure; severe sexual harassment or rape among others were causes of suicidal behaviour.

The finding of the hypotheses showed that there were significant differences in the causes of suicidal behaviour as perceived by undergraduates based on religion and place of residence but no significant difference was found based on gender

Implications for Counselling Practice

The findings of this study have several implications for counselling. Counselling associations should orientate school counsellors on various causes of suicidal behaviour identified by undergraduates, including unstable emotions, family conflict, financial problems, academic pressure, and severe sexual harassment or rape. Developing targeted interventions for these issues could help reduce suicide risk. The significant differences found based on religion and place of residence suggested that counsellors should be culturally competent and sensitive to religious beliefs when addressing suicidal behaviour. Incorporating faith-based approaches or collaborating with religious leaders might be beneficial in some cases.

Value-Reorientation Counselling has implication for personal growth. Realignment values can make individuals achieve greater self-awareness and personal fulfillment. This process can lead to improved mental health and well-being. Value-reorientation counselling can help resolve internal and interpersonal conflicts by promoting understanding and empathy. When individuals understand their own values and those of others, they are better equipped to navigate conflicts constructively. On a larger scale, value-reorientation can contribute to community development by fostering shared values and collective goals. This can enhance social cohesion and cooperation.

University management should implement mental health awareness programs across all university types by rendering adequate supports to Universities counsellors to conduct thorough assessments to identify underlying mental health conditions of undergraduates and use evidence-based treatments such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to assist undergraduates live emotionally support life. Counsellors could also collaborate with psychiatrists for medication management if necessary.

Issues such as family conflict, relationship breakdown or the loss of significant relationships can lead to feelings of worthlessness and suicidal ideation. Universities counsellors should provide counselling that focuses on grief and loss for those experiencing relationship breakdown or death of a loved one. The counsellor can also teach emotional regulation and relationship skills to help undergraduates manage their interpersonal relationships more effectively. Family Therapy (FT) could also be employed to resolve conflicts or improve communication.

Universities counsellors should adopt a multifaceted approach, which includes: assessment and monitoring by continuously assess client for suicidal ideation and intent, crisis intervention strategies and ensure clients have access to immediate support, psychoeducation by providing education on mental health, suicide, and coping mechanisms and holistic care through collaboration with other healthcare providers for comprehensive care.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

1. Counselling Associations should orientate school counsellors on the salience causes of suicidal behaviour identified by undergraduates by organizing seminar and workshop for counsellors at regular interval.
2. Counsellors should develop targeted interventions strategies on various causes identified by undergraduates, such as unstable emotions, family conflict, financial problems, academic pressure, and severe sexual harassment or rape that could help reduce suicide risk.
3. Given the significant differences found based on religion, mental health programs should incorporate religious and cultural sensitivity, potentially involving religious leaders or culturally competent counsellors to make the interventions more effective.
4. Counsellors should organize at a periodic interval a guidance program for both male and female students of University.

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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE PATTERNS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH IN KANO METROPOLIS: IMPLICATION FOR FAMILY WELLBEING AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This study attempts to examine the gender differences in the patterns of substance abuse among out of school youths in Kano metropolis. The study was guided by four objectives and four research questions. The study adopted descriptive survey design and the population of the study comprises of out of school youths who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. A sample of 463 out of school youths were drawn from eight local government areas in Kano metropolis, 257 male and 206 female respectively. Purposive sampling technique was used in the study and instrument for data collection was Patterns of Drug Abuse among Out of School Youths Questionnaire (PDAOSYQ). The data generated was analysed using descriptive statistic/frequency count and simple percentage. The findings from the study reveal that the common substance abused by male and female out of school youths in Kano metropolis includes alcohol, cigarette and Shisha, marijuana, syrups and tramadol, among others. While the male drug abusers smoke cigarettes and shisha, the female drug abusers abused syrups. The predisposing factors for drug abuse for male are mainly peer group influence while for females, it is lack of parental support and family care. Among these predisposing factors are influences to start abusing, influences to continue abusing, influences to stop abusing and influences an client to relapse back to abusing drugs. Mental health problems (213; 82.9%) among males and among female (174; 84.5%) were found to be among the effects of substances abused by the respondents. In addition, Physical health problems among 211 (97.7%) males and 173 (96.6%) females were equally considered as the effects of drug abuse. The paper recommends that Government should introduce adult education classes and skills acquisition centres across the Kano metropolis with a view to rechanneling the energy of out- of- school youths to personal and community development as viable preventive mechanisms to drug abuse.

Keywords: Drug abuse, Out of School youth, family wellbeing.

Introduction

According to the latest World Drug Report (2019) there are estimated 35 million people that suffer from drug abuse which result to disorders. Globally, drug abuse is responsible for

11.8 million deaths in 2017. This is one in five deaths globally (UNODC, 2018). Africa is the biggest target for the production, consumption and trafficking of illicit substances, making the continent more vulnerable to drugs, crime, as well as, health and development related challenges (Abgwubuke, 2010). Cannabis remains the most widely used illicit substance in the continent, with prevalent abuse of cannabis in Africa estimated to be 180 million or 3.9 per cent of the population aged between 15-64 (Ramsoomar & Morojele, 2012).

The numbers of youths that have been incarcerated and indulged in various forms of crime in Nigeria have increased over the last few decades (Garba, 2015). It has been estimated that heroin, cocaine and other drugs kill around 0.2 million people each year, shattering families and bringing misery to thousands of other people (NDLEA, 2011). Illicit drugs undermine economic and social development and contribute to crime, instability, insecurity and the spread of HIV (Oluremi, 2012).

In recent years, there has been a higher involvement of the female population in the use of illegal substances (Pasche, Myers, & Adams, 2010). In different countries, a high level of use among women and a trend of age of first use at earlier ages have observed (Nutt, King, Saulsburry, & Blakemore, 2010). In different countries, research findings indicate a high level of use among young women that resembles the pattern for men; nevertheless, among women who are older, the levels of use are relatively low (Siro, 2014). The distinctions between men and women suffering from addiction stem from biological and sociological differences. Many researchers now explain gender differences between the two as a result of the impact of society (such as childcare responsibilities, addiction stigma, relationship dynamics, et cetera). There are also biological differences between men and women, revolving primarily around testosterone and estrogens production as well as average body size and composition that cause substances to diversely affect the body (Tariq, et al., 2016).

Drug abuse is a major problem that affects the human creativity, mental capability and productive human potentials. Drug abuse among the adolescents in Kano metropolis has become of particular concern (Abdullahi, 2006). In a report by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (2011), Kano has been identified as the state with the highest drug abuse rate in the country based on the number of seizures, arrests of addicts and convictions of arrested dealers; the use of hard drugs, especially among the youth in Kano metropolis, has become a real social menace and cuts across all social strata, with adolescents from both rich and poor backgrounds trooping into the menace.

The use of hard drugs, especially among the youths, has become a real social menace and cuts across all social strata, with people from both rich and poor backgrounds involved in it. Although much has been said and written about drug use and abuse, little attention has been paid to out of school adolescents. There is a shortage of information that will help in sensitizing the community. As a result of the rapid changes they are experiencing, adolescents are at the risk of developing substance abuse more quickly (Jessica, Marshal, & Monique, 2013).

Therefore, this study strives to find out the gender differences in the pattern of substance abuse among out- of- school youths in Kano metropolis.

Objectives of the study

To find out the drugs commonly abused by male and female out of school youths in Kano Metropolis

- 1. To find out the patterns of drug abuse used by male and female out of school youths in Kano Metropolis
- 2. To Identify the predisposing factors for substance abuse among male and female out -of -school youths in Kano Metropolis
- 3. To identify the effects of substance abuse to family well-being and Moral Development among male and female out- of -school youths in Kano metropolis

Research Questions

This study intends to provide answers to the following research questions:

- 1. What are the drugs commonly abused by male and female out -of -school youths in Kano Metropolis?
- 2. What are the strategies and patterns of drug abuse used by male and female out -of -school youths in Kano Metropolis?
- 3. What are the predisposing factors for substance abuse among male and female out- of -school youths in Kano Metropolis?
- 4. What are the effects of substance abuse to family well-being and Moral Development among male and female out -of -school youths in Kano metropolis

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Concept of drugs and drug abuse

A drug is a substance that can be taken into the human body and, once taken, alters some processes within the body (Qadri, Singh, Surendra, Rambha, & Humaira, 2013). Drugs can be used in the diagnosis, prevention, or treatment of a disease. Some drugs are used to kill bacteria and help the body recover from infections. Some drugs assist in terminating headaches. Some drugs cross the blood–brain barrier and affect neurotransmitter function (Ohaeri, Pat, & Ogolo, 2016).

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2010), defines drug as any substance other than those required for maintenance of normal health, which when taken into the living organism, may modify one or more of its functions. In medicine, drugs refer to any substance with the potential to prevent or cure diseases. Drugs can be legal or illegal. Drug abuse refers to non-medical use of drugs (UNODC, 2013). A substance is considered abused if it is deliberately used to induce physiological or psychological effects or both for purposes other than therapeutic

ones and when the use contributes to health risks or some combinations of this drugs (Idrissa, 2018).

Patterns of Substance Abuse

Substance abuse among out-of-school youth is a growing concern globally. This group is particularly vulnerable due to a lack of educational structure, social support, and economic opportunities. Understanding the strategies and patterns of substance use among these youths is crucial for effective intervention and policy formation (Ksir, Oakley, & Charles, 2002).

Common Patterns of Substance Abuse

The following patterns of drug abuse are commonly found among out of school youth as proposed by Ksir, Oakley & Charles (2002):

1. **Early Initiation:** Many out-of-school youths start using substances at a young age, often during adolescence. This early exposure increases the risk of long-term dependency.
2. **Poly Substance Abuse:** It's common for out-of-school youth to engage in poly substance use, meaning they may abuse multiple substances (e.g., alcohol, marijuana, and inhalants) simultaneously or consecutively.
3. **Binge Drinking and Drug Use:** With fewer responsibilities or oversight, out-of-school youths often engage in binge drinking or excessive drug use in short periods, increasing the risk of overdose or severe health consequences.
4. **Geographical Influence:** Substance abuse patterns often vary by region. In urban areas, drugs like cocaine and methamphetamine might be more accessible, while rural areas may see higher use of substances like inhalants or alcohol.
5. **Peer Influence:** Out-of-school youths are often influenced by peer pressure. Being part of a group where drug use is normalized leads to more frequent and consistent use of substances.
6. **Self-Medication:** Many out-of-school youths turn to drugs or alcohol as a way of coping with emotional distress, trauma, or mental health issues, such as depression or anxiety.

Risk factors associated with drug abuse

Some drugs have the potential to be deadlier than others based on how they are developed, what they contain, how potent they are and how they react to the human body and brain (Sau, Roy, Das, & Singh, 2018). Hence, the following are some of the risk factors associated with drug abuse as put forward by Sau, Roy, Das & Singh (2018):

Risks of Stimulant Abuse: When abused, stimulants can cause a variety of undesirable consequences. These effects can include: Anxiety, Paranoia, Psychosis, High body temperature, Depression, Heart failure, Stroke, Seizures.

Risks of Opioid Abuse: Opioid abuse can devastate the life of a user. Unfortunately, when someone decides to stop using opioids, they suffer tremendously then, as well. For example,

hydrocodone withdrawal can be especially nasty; riddling sufferers with flu-like symptoms for weeks on end. Other effects include: Constipation, Liver damage, Brain impairment, Euphoria, Drowsiness, Sedation, Pupil dilation, Cardiac arrest (if dose is too high).

Risks of Depressant Abuse: Depressants can be useful when used properly, but depressant abuse can cause a host of issues in both the long and short term: Higher risk of high blood sugar, diabetes and weight gain, increased body temperature, Delirium, Sluggish thinking, Low blood pressure, Impaired memory, Hallucinations, Death from withdrawal.

Risks of Hallucinogen Abuse: Hallucinogen abuse can have devastating effects that can last a lifetime: Hallucinogen Persisting Perception Disorder, also known as flashbacks, Fear, Distorted cognition, Paranoia, Psychosis, Anxiety, Increased blood pressure, Nausea

Risks of Dissociative Abuse: Dissociatives are very dangerous, especially when used over extended periods of time. However, their immediate impact can be quite distressing as well: Depression, Anxiety, Suicidal thoughts, Speech difficulties, social withdrawal, Hallucinations, Detachment from reality, Numbness, Memory loss.

Risks of Inhalant Abuse: Inhalant abuse can have devastating effects, both immediate and in the long run: Loss of smell, Brain damage, Nosebleeds, Weakness, Euphoria, Increased heart rate, Loss of consciousness, Hallucinations, Slurred speech.

Risks of Cannabis Abuse; Cannabis abuse can destroy lives and can have both short- and long-term impacts on users: Lowered immunity to illness, Depression, Chronic anxiety, reduced sperm count in men, Sedation, slowed reaction times, enhanced senses, such as seeing brighter colours, Impaired sense of time.

Effects of substance/drug abuse

Shrindevi, Gokuldas, and Prashant (2016) portray the following effects of substance abuse to humanity:

1. **Family Dysfunction:** Youths from broken or dysfunctional families are more likely to abuse substances, especially when they lack parental supervision or experience family trauma.
2. **Economic Deprivation:** Poverty and unemployment are strong drivers of substance abuse. Youths who are out of school due to financial difficulties may engage in substance use as a coping mechanism.
3. **Trauma and Mental Health Issues:** Many out-of-school youths have experienced trauma or adverse childhood experiences, which can lead to substance use as a form of escapism.
4. **Social Isolation:** Without a school environment or social network, out-of-school youths often experience isolation, making them more susceptible to turning to drugs or alcohol to cope with loneliness.

METHODOLOGY

This section covers the following sub headings: Research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instrument, validation of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis. They are discussed as follows:

Research Design

This study adopted descriptive survey design. Descriptive-survey research uses surveys to gather data about varying subjects. This data aims to know the extent to which different conditions can be obtained among the respondents. Also, descriptive survey also aims at accuracy and systematic approach to data collection with a view to describing population, situation or phenomenon.

Population and Sample size

The population of the study comprises of randomly selected male and female out of school youth who are abusing drugs in Kano metropolis. To the best of my knowledge there is no reliable data showing the actual population of out of school youths engaged in drug abuse in Kano state, Nigeria. Table1; below shows the sample size of the study.

Table 1: sample size of the study

Local government	Sample size	Male	Female
Dala	55	26	29
Fagge	70	46	24
Gwale	42	19	23
Kumbotso	67	44	23
Municipal	51	37	14
Nassarawa	73	41	32
Tarauni	55	23	32
Ungogo	50	21	29
Total	463	257	206

Sampling techniques

The study utilizes purposive sampling technique in order to enable the researcher to select the targeted respondents. Researchers use purposive sampling when they want to access a particular subset of people, as all participants of a study are selected because they fit a particular profile. In this case only those who are out of school and are involved in drug/substance abuse are purposively selected to participate in the study.

Data Collection Instrument

The instrument for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire titled: Patterns of Drug Abuse among Out Of School Youth Questionnaire (PDAOSYQ). The questionnaire was divided into 3 sections; section A provide answers to research question 1, section B provides answers to research question 2 and section C provides answers to research questions 3 and 4 respectively.

Validity and reliability of the instrument

The instrument used for this study underwent content validity where the researchers distributed the instrument along with the objectives of the study to experts in the areas of educational psychology, guidance and counselling, sociology, clinical psychology and test and measurement and collected their observations and effected the corrections as pinpointed. The researcher used Cronbach's Alpha method to determine the reliability of the instrument and the outcome was 0.86 reliability which rendered the instrument fit and reliable for the study.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data for this study was summarized and analyzed using descriptive statistic (frequency count and simple percentage).

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATIONS

Results

All the selected respondents n=463 were approached and consented to participate in the study, giving a response rate of 100%.

Answering research question one:

What are the drugs commonly abused by male and female out of school youth in Kano Metropolis?

Table 2: Commonest substances abused among male and female out of school youths

Variables	Male n=257 (%)	Female n=206 (%)	Total (%)
Cigarette			
Yes	254 (98.8)	205(99.5)	459 (99.1)
No	3 (1.2)	1 (0.5)	4 (0.8)
Alcohol			
Yes	34 (13.2)	31 (15.0)	65 (14.0)
No	223 (86.8)	175 (85.0)	398 (85.9)
Cannabis			
Yes	24 (9.3)	18 (8.7)	42 (9.0)
No	233 (90.7)	188 (91.3)	421 (90 9)
Shisha			
Yes	186 (72.4)	171 (83.0)	357 (77.1)
No	71 (27.6)	35 (17.0)	106 (22.8)
Tramadol			
Yes	206 (80.2)	162 (78.6)	368 (79.4)
No	51 (19.8)	44 (21.4)	95 (220.5)
Rohypnol			
Yes	128 (49.8)	100 (48.5)	228 (49.2)
No	129 (50.2)	106 (51.5)	235 (50.7)
Syrup/Codeine			
Yes	198 (77.0)	156 (75.7)	354 (76.4)
No	59 (23.0)	50 (24.3)	109 (23.5)
Cocaine			
Yes	21 (8.2)	14 (6.8)	35 (7.5)
No	236 (91.8)	192 (93.2)	428 (92.4)

The commonest substances abused among male and female out of school youths were tabled above. The commonest substances among them are Cigarette 254 (98.8%) among male respondents and 205 (99.5%) among female respondents, Shisha 186 (72.4%) among male and 171 (83%) among female, followed by Tramadol 206 (80.2%) among male and 162 (78.6%), Rohypnol is also one of the commonest substances abused by youth as indicated below; 128 (49.8%) among male respondents and 100 (48.5%) among female respondents. Similarly, the result for Syrup/Codeine shows that 198 (77.0%) of male respondents are abusing it with 156 (75.7%) female respondents also abusing it. On the other hand, Cocaine, Alcohol and Cannabis were found to be among the not so commonly abused drugs by male and female out of school youth in Kano metropolis.

Answering research question two:

What are the patterns of drug abuse used by male and female out of school youth in Kano Metropolis?

Table 3: Pattern of substances abused among male and female out of school youths

Variables	Male n=257 (%)	Female n=206 (%)	Total (%)
Usage of drugs/substances without doctor’s prescription			
Yes	208 (96.3)	160 (91.4)	368 (79.4)
No	8 (3.7)	15 (8.6)	23 (4.9)
Drugs/substances used in the last one month			
Cigarette	164 (63.8)	140 (68.0)	204 (44.0)
Alcohol	8 (3.1)	3 (1.5)	11 (2.3)
Cannabis	37 (14.4)	34 (16.5)	71 (15.3)
CC/Syrup	116 (45.1)	93 (45.1)	209 (45.1)
Tramadol	88 (34.2)	53 (25.7)	141 (30.4)
Shisha	54 (21.0)	109 (52.9)	163 (35.2)
Drugs/substances used in the last twelve months			
Cigarette	205 (79.8)	173 (84.0)	378 (81.6)
Alcohol	36 (14.0)	31 (15.0)	67 (14.4)
Cannabis	46 (17.9)	35 (17.0)	81 (17.4)
CC/Syrup	156 (60.7)	123 (59.7)	279 (60.2)
Tramadol	131 (51.0)	83 (40.3)	214 (46.2)
Shisha	90 (35.0)	121 (58.7)	211 (45.5)
Drugs/substances availability in your area			
Yes	206 (80.2)	166 (80.6)	372 (80.3)
No	51 (19.8)	40 (19.4)	91 (19.6)
Drugs/substances commonly available			
Cigarette	254 (98.8)	204 (99.0)	458 (90.9)
Alcohol	21 (8.2)	17 (8.3)	38 (8.2)
Cannabis	15 (5.8)	11 (5.3)	26 (5.6)
CC/Syrup	224 (87.2)	169 (82.0)	393 (84.8)
Tramadol	205 (79.8)	159 (77.2)	364 (78.6)
Shisha	186 (72.4)	171 (83.0)	357 (77.1)

There are different patterns of substance abuse displayed by male and female out of school youth in Kano metropolis. Majority of the respondents 96.3% (Male) and 91.4% (Female) were found to be in use of drugs/substances without doctor's prescription. A majority of the respondents 63.8% (male) and (68.0%) female have been using cigarettes in the last one month, 45.1% of both male and female youth were found to have been using CC/Syrups in the last one month respectively. 34.2% and 25.7% of both male and female youth were found to be using Tramadol in the last one month. The results show that a majority of female youth 109 (52.9%) were found to have been using Shisha in the last one month.

In the last twelve months, 79.8% (male) and 84% (female) were found to be smoking cigarette, only 14% and 15% of both males and females were drinking Alcohol in the last twelve months. Majority of the youth in Kano metropolis both male (51%) and female (40.3%) were using CC/Syrup in the last twelve months. Tramadol 131 (51%) was the highest intake among male youth in the last twelve months. Similarly, Shisha was found to be the commonest substance abused by female out of school youths in Kano metropolis.

A majority of the male respondents 206 (80.2%) said drugs/substances were available in their area, while 166 (80.6%) among female said drugs/substances were also available in the metropolis area. Cigarette (98.8%) by male and 99% by female were found to be the commonest among the drugs/substances which were available in the metropolis area, followed by CC/Syrup (87.2% & 82%) by both male and female' respondents. Only cannabis was not commonly available in the area as narrated by male (5.8%) and by female (5.3%) . In the same vein, 186 (72.4%) by male and 171 (83%) by female' respondents narrated that Shisha was also found to be among the commonly available drugs/substances in Kano Metropolis.

Answering research question three:

What are the predisposing factors for substance abuse among male and female out of school youth in Kano Metropolis?

Table 4: Predisposing factors for substances abused among male and female out of school

Variables	Male n=257 (%)	Female n=206 (%)	Total (%)
Influences to start abusing			
Friends/peer group	187 (72.8)	144 (69.9)	331 (71.4)
Family member using drugs	27 (10.5)	15 (7.3)	42 (9.0)
To relax or to relieve tension	238 (92.6)	187 (90.8)	425 (91.7)
Academic failure	51 (19.8)	47 (22.8)	98 (21.1)
Poverty/low socio-economic status	215 (83.7)	162 (78.6)	377 (81.4)
Family crises/poor parental care	95 (37.0)	70 (34.0)	165 (35.6)
Influences to continue abusing			
Friends/peer group	195 (75.9)	147 (71.4)	342 (73.8)
Family member using drugs	25 (9.7)	12 (5.8)	37 (7.9)
To relax or to relieve tension	227 (88.3)	178 (86.4)	405 (87.4)
Academic failure	45 (17.5)	42 (20.4)	87 (18.7)
Poverty/low socio-economic status	202 (78.6)	154 (74.8)	356 (76.8)
Family crises/poor parental care	67 (26.1)	49 (23.8)	116 (25.0)
Influences to stop abusing			
Friends/peer group	114 (44.4)	90 (43.7)	204 (44.0)
Family member using drugs	205 (79.8)	171 (83.0)	376 (81.2)
To relax or to relieve tension	232 (90.3)	177 (85.9)	409 (88.3)
Academic failure	198 (77.0)	144 (69.9)	342 (73.8)
Poverty/low socio-economic status	225 (87.5)	177 (85.9)	402 (86.8)
Family crises/poor parental care	187 (72.8)	143 (69.4)	330 (71.2)
Influences on client to relapse back to abusing drugs			
Friends/peer group	221 (86.0)	173 (84.0)	394 (85.0)
Family member using drugs	44 (17.1)	34 (16.5)	78 (16.8)
To relax or to relieve tension	240 (93.4)	192 (93.2)	432 (93.3)
Academic failure	117 (45.5)	105 (51.0)	222 (47.9)
Poverty/low socio-economic status	159 (61.9)	116 (56.3)	275 (59.3)
Family crises/poor parental care	95 (37.0)	70 (34.0)	165 (35.6)

There are many predisposing factors for substances abused among male and female out of school in Kano metropolis. Some of these predisposing factors are; influences to start abusing,

influences to continue abusing, influences to stop abusing and influences on clients to relapse back to abusing drugs. Among the predisposing factors, the influences to start abusing drugs are Friends and peer groups 187 (72.8%) among male and 144 (69.9%) among female respondents, also some of the respondents opined that drugs made them to relax and relieve tension (238 (92.6%) among male and 187 (90.8%) among female), while Poverty and low socio-economic status accounted for 215 (83.7%) among male and 162 (78.6%) among female respondents.

Another predisposing factor is the influences to continue abusing such drugs, among such influences are Friends and peer group 195 (75.9%) among male and 147 (71.4%) among female youth. In addition, another predisposing factor is for the drugs to make them to relax or to relieve tension 227 (88.3%) among male and 178 (86.4%) among female. Poverty and low socio-economic status 202 (78.6%) among male and 154 (74.8%) among female was another predisposing factor influencing the youths to continue abusing such drugs and other substances.

Academic failure is another predisposing factor 198 (77.0%) among male and 144 (69.9%) among female, Family crises and poor parental care 187 (72.8%) among male and 143 (69.4%) among female remain among the predisposing factors influencing the youth to stop abusing drugs and other substances.

Another predisposing factor to substances abused among male and female youths in the study area are the Influences that may lead to relapse back to abusing drugs. Friends and peer groups 221 (86.0%) among male and 173 (84.0%) among female were found to be among the influences for a client to relapse back to abusing drugs among the respondents. 240 (93.4%) among males and 192 (93.2%) among females said they were influenced to abuse drugs because they felt relaxed or relieved of tension. Poverty and low socio-economic status 159 (61.9%) among male and 116 (56.3%) among female, academic failure 117 (45.5%) among male and 105 (51.0%) among female all influence a client to relapse back to abusing drugs.

Answering research question four:

What are the effects of substance abuse to family well-being and Moral Development among male and female out of school youth in Kano metropolis?

Table 5: Effects of substances abused among male and female out of school youths

Variables	Male n=257 (%)	Female n=206 (%)	Total (%)
Mental health problems			
Yes	213 (82.9)	174 (84.5)	387 (83.5)
No	3 (1.4)	5 (2.4)	8 (1.7)
Physical health problems			
Yes	211 (97.7)	173 (96.6)	384 (82.9)
No	5 (2.3)	6 (3.4)	11 (2.3)
Social problems			
Yes	213 (98.6)	176 (98.3)	389 (84.0)
No	3 (1.4)	3 (1.7)	6 (1.2)
Financial problems			
Yes	211 (97.7)	175 (97.8)	386 (83.)
No	5 (2.3)	4 (2.2)	9 (1.9)
Law enforcement/Legal problem			
Yes	212 (98.1)	178 (99.4)	390 (84.2)
No	4 (1.9)	10 (5.6)	14 (3.0)
Psychological problems			
Yes	212 (98.1)	169 (94.4)	381 (82.2)
No	4 (1.9)	10 (5.6)	14 (3.0)

There are many effects of substance abuse among male and female out of school youth as indicated in the findings of this study. Mental health problems 213 (82.9%) among male and 174 (84.5%) among female were found to be among the effects of substance abuse among the respondents. Additionally, Physical health problems 211 (97.7%) among male and 173 (96.6%) among female was considered as another effect. Similarly, another effect of substance abuse was Social problem 213 (98.6%) among male and 176 (98.3%) among female.

Summary of the findings

1. The study reveals that the drugs commonly abused by male and female out of school youth in Kano Metropolis includes alcohol, cigarette and Shisha, marijuana, syrups and tramadol among others. While males abuse more of cigarette and shisha, females abuse more of syrups.
2. Patterns of substances abused among male and female out of school youths are: self-medication, binge drinking, peer influence and poly substance abuse.
3. The predisposing factor for drug abuse for male is mainly peer group influence while for

females; it is lack of parental support and family care.

4. The effects of substance abuse are: mental health problems, physical health problems, social relationship problems, financial problems and legal and criminal justice consequences.

Discussion of findings

The study reveals that the substance abuse by male and female out of school youth in Kano metropolis includes alcohol, cigarette and Shisha, marijuana, syrups and tramol among others. While males abuse more of cigarettes and shisha female abuse more of syrups. This finding agrees with that of Ramsoomar and Morojele (2012) who asserted that tobacco use by boys (16.5%) was significantly higher than by girls (1.9%). Approximately 23.5% of adolescents reported alcohol consumption. Consumption in boys (31.5%) was significantly higher than in girls (16.2%).

The male out of school youth abuse drugs mainly to do something unusual while female abuse drugs due to friend influence. The finding of this study is in line with the findings of Qadri, Singh, Surendra, Rambha and Humaira (2013) which suggests that that smoking activates men's reward pathways more than women. This finding is consistent with the idea that men smoke for the reinforcing effects of nicotine, whereas women smoke to regulate mood or in response to cigarette-related cues. Men tend to smoke tobacco for many different reasons like stress relief, pleasure, or in social situations.

The predisposing factor for drug abuse for males is mainly peer group influence, while for females it is lack of parental support and family care. Having friends who use drugs and being more susceptible to Peer pressure are the strongest predictors of adolescent substance use. Friends play a significant role in how people make decisions. When children hangout with people who abuse drugs, there is a tendency for them to start taking drugs. Adolescents who use drugs are likely to interact primarily with peers who use drugs, so relationships with friends, including relationships with the opposite sex, may be unhealthy, and the adolescent may develop a limited repertoire of social skills. However, for the females parental support plays a significant role as predisposing factor for drug abuse. Parents play a major role in preventing substance abuse among youth and in helping them if they've initiated use. Talking with a child about the dangers of substance use and showing disapproval of such behaviours are key to shaping children's attitudes and behaviours. Staying involved in a child's day-to-day activities is also critical. Parent who neglects their children without providing the needed emotional and financial support have children who may probably get involved in drugs/substance abuse. This finding is in line with the findings of Idrissa (2018).

Both male and female out of school youth in Kano metropolis opined that drug abuse affected their relationships. A person struggling with addiction has more craving for drugs than their loved ones. Sometimes after taking drugs, they tend to misbehave and do things that can have negative effect on their relationship. For instance, a married man who drinks alcohol may

end up beating up his wife each time he is drunk before they even realize it. This finding corroborates the findings of Jessica, Marshal, and Monique (2013) which revealed that psychosocial relationships and mental health are the most affected drug abuse effects on out of school children.

Conclusion

Addressing substance abuse among out of school youth requires a multifaceted approach. Prevention and the intervention strategies should focus on improving educational accessibility, mental health support and economic empowerment, while also raising awareness about the dangers of substance.

Recommendations

In line with the findings, the paper recommends the following:

1. The Government, parents and critical stakeholders in our societies should embark on massive awareness campaign against drug abuse particularly Cigarette, Marijuana, Alcohol and Shisha, among others.
2. Adult education schools and skills acquisition programs that target out of school youth should be established in Kano metropolis in order to counter the predisposing factors that can trigger them into drug abuse.
3. Parents should monitor their children closely and discourage them from mingling with peers who engage in substance abuse so as not to be influenced. Parental support, care, supervision is essential in the early prevention of drug abuse in our society.

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A PREVENTIVE AND PROTECTIVE FACTOR AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OF MARRIED EMPLOYEES IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA

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Abstract

This study investigated Emotional Intelligence (EI) as a protective and preventive factor against Domestic Violence (DV) amongst married employees in Municipal Area Council of FCT, Abuja. The study was aimed at ascertaining the relationship between EI and DV amongst participants with a view to identifying potential strategies for preventing and intervening in domestic violence situations. Adopting a quantitative survey design, the study was guided by two research questions, one hypothesis. Purposive-random sampling technique was used to select 100 married employees to participate in the study. Researchers' made instrument titled "Emotional Intelligence and Domestic Violence Scale" (EIDVS) was used for data collection. The content and construct validity of the instrument was ascertained by experts in faculty of education. Its reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha that yielded a coefficient index of 0.78. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation as well as inferential statistics of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation were used to analyze the data. The findings of the study showed a high prevalence of DV amongst participants and a significantly negative correlation between EI and DV, indicating that higher EI is associated with lower experiences of DV. Thus, the study recommended among other things that counsellors should incorporate EI assessment into clients' evaluation and design and implement EI-based interventions to address domestic violence among couples.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Domestic Violence, Intimate Partner Violence. EI-based interventions

Introduction

Domestic Violence also known as Intimate Partner Violence is a pervasive and complex social issue that affects individuals, families, and communities around the world (World Health Organization, 2013). In Nigeria, domestic violence has remained a significant public health concern which is deeply rooted in the patriarchal structure of the Nigerian society (Abakare, 2021). The National Population Commission in 2014 reported a prevalence rate of 31.5% for domestic violence in Nigeria. The Municipal Area Council of the FCT being part of the Nigerian society, is not exempt from this issue as there has been increasing reports of cases of domestic violence in its environs in recent years (Federal Capital Territory Administration, 2020). For instance, a study conducted in 2020 at the Federal Medical Center, Abuja found that 17.69% of antenatal clinic attendees reported experiencing domestic violence, with physical violence accounting for 3.19% of cases (Ekweani, et al., 2023).

The concept of domestic violence encompasses abusive behaviours that could either be physical, emotional, economical or sexual, occurring within familial or intimate relationships. It is trademarked by one family member exerting control or power over another in a manner that results in significant physical and mental harm to the victim (Martseniuk & Protsenko, 2023). Various forms of abuse, such as emotional manipulation and coercion, are globally recognized as integral components of domestic violence (Ekaterina & Anastasia, 2023). While domestic violence is traditionally associated with women as victims, it is important to note that the phenomenon is not limited to one gender because increasingly, reports have shown that men and children are also affected (Pathan, 2023).

Domestic violence usually present signs that can manifest physically, emotionally, sexually, or economically. Recognizing these signs is crucial for effective intervention and support for victims of domestic violence. The physical signs often include injuries such as bruises, cuts, or fractures, typically resulting from pushing, shoving, or hitting, with studies indicating that 41% of incidents lead to injuries (Iona, 2003). Emotional abuse may involve intimidation, humiliation, or manipulation, often characterized by controlling behaviors and threats. Sexual abuse can include coercion into unwanted sexual acts or reproductive control, such as preventing the use of birth control. Economic abuse is characterized by financial control, such as restricting access to money or employment opportunities. Furthermore, psychological signs may manifest as anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder, particularly in chronic victims (Raveesh, et al., 2022).

Domestic violence has far-reaching consequences for family wellbeing. It does not only affect the direct victim but also other family members as it touches on the emotional, physical, social, economic, and relational aspects of the family life. The emotional wellbeing of victims and witnesses of domestic violence would significantly be compromised, leading to increased rates of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Briere & Jordan, 2004). Children, in particular, experience emotional and psychological distress, including fear, guilt, and shame, which can have long-lasting effects on their emotional development (Holt, et al., 2008).

In order to maintain peace, security and justice, the Nigerian government has made efforts to curb the effects of domestic violence, particularly in Abuja and environs through a combination of legal frameworks, community engagement, and institutional collaboration. Despite these efforts, domestic violence has remained a pressing concern, requiring sustained efforts to address its root causes, improve support services, and provide further insight on potentially soft factors that counsellors and researchers could leverage on to advance prevention and intervention measures at tackling this serious public health issue.

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been identified as one of such factors that could serve as a significant preventive and protective measures against domestic violence. The term Emotional Intelligence was first coined by psychologists John Mayer and Peter Salovey in 1990 (FME, 2014) who defined it as the ability to perceive, access and generate emotions with a view to assist thought, understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to regulate emotions reflectively in order to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Tripathy, 2018).

According to Goleman (1995) who is referred to as the father of EI, emotional intelligence is ‘understanding one’s own feelings, empathy for the feeling of others and the regulation of emotions in a way that enhances living.’ In his redefined and reconstructed model of EI, in 1996 Goleman posited that EI is not the opposite of Intelligent Quotient, but rather, a separate set of traits which is much more powerful than IQ to predict the success of one’s life. He defined it as the abilities to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustration, to control impulse and delay gratifications, to regulate one’s mood and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope. Unlike his initial EI framework that consisted of five domains, in the year 2000, he reconstructed the framework to consist of 4 primary domains namely: self-awareness, social-awareness, self-management, and relationship management which have twenty competencies including: Emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment; empathy, service orientation, organizational awareness, emotional self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, achievement drive, initiative, developing others, influence, communication, conflict management, visionary leadership, catalyzing change, building bonds, teamwork and collaboration (Boyatzis, et al., 2000).

Studies have shown that higher levels of EI are associated with reduced instances of both experiencing and perpetrating violence thereby highlighting its role in fostering healthier interpersonal-relationships. A study by Oyedokun and Andah (2020) found that higher levels of EI correlate with reduced job stress and burnout, which can mitigate the risk of experiencing or perpetrating domestic violence. Specifically, the study revealed that EI enhances self-management and adaptability, equipping individuals to handle interpersonal conflicts more effectively, thereby potentially reducing domestic violence incidents. Another study by Marzieh, et al., (2021) that compared women who experienced domestic violence with a control group revealed that those who had higher emotional intelligence scores exhibited lower levels of neuroticism and higher levels of other personality traits, suggesting that emotional intelligence can mitigate the risk of experiencing domestic violence. Furthermore, another study

by Rodríguez-Espartal and Meneses (2022) which focused on Peruvian women found that higher emotional intelligence, particularly in emotional perception, inversely correlated with symbolic gender violence, reinforcing the notion that emotional intelligence can act as a buffer against various forms of violence. These findings all together highlight the importance of fostering emotional intelligence as a preventive and protective measure against domestic violence, suggesting that interventions aimed at enhancing EI could be beneficial in reducing vulnerability to the phenomenon. Despite the importance of EI in preventing domestic violence, not so much research has been done on this subject, particularly in the Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Therefore, to close this gap and validate the findings of previous studies which were conducted in different geographical and cultural context, there is a need to investigate the relationship between EI and domestic violence amongst married employees in the Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja in order to identify potential strategies for preventing and intervening in domestic violence situations.

Objectives of the study

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the extent to which domestic violence is prevalent amongst married employees in the Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory.
2. Ascertain the gender difference in exposure to domestic violence amongst married employees in Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
3. Investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and experience of domestic violence amongst married employees in the Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory.

Research Questions

To guide the study the following questions were raised:

1. To what extent is domestic violence prevalent amongst married employees in Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
2. What is the gender difference in exposure to domestic violence amongst married employees in Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?

Hypothesis

This hypothesis was formulated to be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Emotional intelligence has no significant relationship with the experience of domestic violence amongst married employees in Municipal Area Council of the FCT, Abuja.

Methodology

Quantitative research design was employed for this study. Using simple random sampling technique, 100 respondents (50 males and 50 females) were sampled for the study. Emotional Intelligence and Domestic Violence Questionnaire (EIDVS) was used for data collection. The

instrument was designed by the researchers with two parts namely; parts A and B. Part A sought to elicit the demographic characteristics of the respondents while part B consists of statements that test the EI level of respondents as well as their domestic violence experience. While Part A was measured at nominal scale, part B was measured at interval scale in which EI statements (covering items 1-40) were graded on the range: **always** (4), **sometimes** (3), **rarely** (2) and **not at all** (1) for positive statements and reverse order for negative statements. DV statements (covering items 41-60) on the other hand were grade on the range: **always** (3), **sometimes** (2), **rarely** (1) and **not at all** (0). These enable the researchers to assign meaning to the responses of participants. The instrument was validated by experts in faculty of education, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, while its reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha that yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78. Cronbach Alpha was used to test the reliability of the instrument because of its wide acceptance as a good measure of internal consistency and the fact that it was adjudged to be easy to compute and interpret.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The data were coded and analysed into quantitative summary reports using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 27. The data were keyed into the program under specific category from which analysis was run to obtain descriptive statistics in form of mean and standard deviation which were used to answer the research questions 1 & 2 with a view to describing the extent of the prevalence of domestic violence among the participants and the difference in exposure to domestic violence between male and female respondents. While the mean score of 1.50 was used as the bench mark for determining high or low prevalence level of dv where scores below 1.50 are considered low and scores above 1.50 are considered high, the value of 0.50 was used as a bench mark for determining correlation coefficient of the variables where values below 0.50 are considered low relationship and values above 0.50 are considered high relationship. The hypothesis of the study was tested using PPMC for significant relationship at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: To what extent is domestic violence prevalent amongst married employees in Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of the extent of dv prevalence amongst participants

Variables of Domestic Violence	N	Sum %	Mean \bar{X}	Std σ	Decision
Physical violence	50	27.5%	0.82	0.92	High
Emotional/Psychological Violence		26%	0.78	0.93	High
Economic Violence		28%	0.84	0.98	High
Sexual violence		24.9%	0.75	0.87	High
Aggregate Score			0.80	0.93	High

Scale: 1.50 – 2.49HE; 2.50 – 5.00VHE

Table 1 revealed that participants scored an aggregate mean of 0.80 and standard deviation of 0.93, indicating that domestic violence is prevalent among married employees in Municipal Area Council of FCT to a high extent. The result also revealed that economic violence is the most prevalent form dv with a mean of 0.84, followed by physical violence with mean of 0.82, then emotional violence with mean of 0.78 and sexual violence with 0.75.

Research Question Two: What is the gender difference in exposure to domestic violence amongst married employees in Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of gender difference in exposure to dv amongst participants

Indices of Domestic Violence	N	Male				Female			
		Sum %	Mean X	Std. (σ)	Decision	Sum %	Mean \bar{X}	Std (σ)	Decision
Physical violence	50	33%	1.00	1.003	HE	19%	0.58	0.85	HE
Emotional Violence		32.8%	0.97	0.98	HE	22%	0.65	0.82	HE
Economic Violence		32.8%	0.97	1.09	HE	23%	0.70	0.85	HE
Sexual violence		29%	0.86	0.93	HE	21%	0.63	0.81	HE
Aggregate Score			0.95	1.001	HE		0.64	0.83	HE

Scale: 1.50 – 2.49HE; 2.50 – 3.50VHE

Table 2 showed that both male and female participants experienced high exposure to domestic violence in its various manifestations. However, the male participants had a slightly higher exposure to domestic violence with a mean aggregate of **0.95** and standard deviation of **1.001** above their female counterparts who had mean aggregate of **0.64** and standard deviation of **0.83**. This reveals that the male folks are mostly exposed to domestic violence contrary to the common notion that the female folks are the mostly exposed to dv. It is very interesting that the male respondents had higher experiences of domestic violence in all of its forms than their female counterparts.

Test of hypothesis

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and the experience of domestic violence amongst married employees in Municipal Area Council of FCT, Abuja.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis on the relationship between EI and the experience of dv among married employees

		Emotional Intelligence	Domestic violence
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	-.841**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	50	50
Domestic Violence	Pearson Correlation	-.841**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From table 3 above, the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and the experience of domestic violence is $r = - 0.841$. This indicates that there exists a very high negative relationship between the two variables.

The table also indicate that the exact probability is 0.01 which is less than the significant level 0.05 ($p = 0.01 < \alpha=0.05$). This shows that the relationship between the variables is significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The negative value of the correlation suggests that scores for the two variables move in opposite directions. Therefore, a relatively high scores on emotional intelligence leads to a relatively low scores in domestic violence, asserting undoubtedly that emotional intelligence is a panacea for the occurrences of domestic violence in households.

Discussion of findings

This study sought to investigate emotional intelligence as a preventive and protective factor against the experience of domestic violence amongst married employees in municipal area council of Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Specifically, the study wanted to find out the extent to which married employees in Municipal Area Council of Abuja experience domestic violence, the difference of exposure to domestic violence between male and female employees and the relationship between emotional intelligence and the experience of domestic violence among participants. From the presentation and analyses of the data gathered from respondents, the study made the following findings:

First, the study found a significant prevalence of domestic violence among married employees in the Municipal Area Council of FCT, Abuja. The forms of violence identified

included physical, emotional, economic, and sexual abuse. Economic violence emerged as the most prevalent, followed by physical, emotional, and sexual violence. This high prevalence aligns with previous research on domestic violence in Nigeria, where socio-economic stressors, cultural norms, and patriarchal structures often contribute to the persistence of domestic violence (Ekweani, et al., 2023; Abakare, 2021).

The prevalence of economic violence, in particular, could be linked to financial stress and power imbalances within marital relationships, where control over finances is used as a tool of domination. This finding emphasizes the need for interventions that address not only physical abuse but also the more covert forms of domestic violence, such as financial control and emotional manipulation, which can have equally devastating effects on victims (Tolman & Raphael, 2000)

Secondly, contrary to the common notion that women are more frequently victims of domestic violence, the study found no significant difference between male and female participants in terms of exposure to DV. Interestingly, male participants reported slightly higher experiences of domestic violence across all forms, although the difference was not statistically significant. This challenges traditional views that primarily associate domestic violence with female victims and highlights the importance of recognizing male victims, who may face societal stigma and barriers to seeking help (Pathan, 2023).

The findings suggest that domestic violence is not exclusively a gendered issue, as both men and women can be affected. This is consistent with emerging research that acknowledges the victimization of men in intimate partner violence, even though male victims may be less likely to report their experiences due to societal expectations around masculinity and emotional restraint (Konstantinos & Łuczak, 2016). Addressing DV in Abuja requires an inclusive approach that considers the experiences of all genders, and support services must be made accessible to male victims as well.

The third finding of this study seems to be the most critical of all. It revealed that there was significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and the experience of domestic violence, indicating that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are less likely to experience domestic violence. This finding is consistent with other studies that suggest emotional intelligence, particularly in areas such as self-regulation and empathy, plays a protective role in interpersonal relationships by reducing conflicts and fostering healthy communication (Oyedokun & Andah, 2020; Rodríguez-Espartal & Meneses, 2022).

Individuals with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage their emotions, navigate interpersonal conflicts, and build stronger, more empathetic relationships. This finding aligns with Goleman's (1996) model of emotional intelligence, which posits that EI is a crucial skill for managing emotions and understanding others, both of which are essential for resolving conflicts peacefully. In the context of domestic violence, this means that individuals with higher EI may be better able to de-escalate conflicts and avoid situations that

could lead to abuse.

The significant negative correlation also highlights the potential of emotional intelligence training as a preventive measure against domestic violence. By fostering emotional awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation, interventions aimed at improving EI could reduce the likelihood of domestic violence occurring in households. This is supported by the findings of Tavakol, Mohammad, and Mostaali (2021), who found that women with higher EI scores exhibited lower levels of neuroticism and better emotional stability, reducing their risk of experiencing domestic violence.

Implications for Counselling Practice

The findings of this study have several practical implications for addressing domestic violence in Abuja. The findings underscore the need for incorporating emotional intelligence training into both workplace and community-based counselling interventions. By enhancing EI among employees, particularly in high-stress environments, it may be possible to reduce the risk of domestic violence in both professional and personal contexts. Employers, especially those with married employees, should consider offering EI development programs to promote healthier interpersonal relationships and conflict management skills. School counsellors should prioritize the integration of emotional intelligence into their counselling programmes so as to equip young people, particularly those in secondary schools with the skills needed to manage their emotions and build healthy relationships. By fostering EI from a young age, society can address the root causes of domestic violence and promote long-term change.

Conclusion

This study has provided valuable insights into the prevalence of domestic violence among married employees in the Municipal Area Council of FCT, Abuja, and the protective role that emotional intelligence can play in preventing and mitigating such violence. The findings emphasize the importance of addressing not only the physical aspects of domestic violence but also the emotional and psychological factors that contribute to its occurrence. By promoting emotional intelligence through targeted interventions, it may be possible to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence and foster healthier, more supportive relationships in Nigerian households.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommended that:

1. Counsellors should incorporate emotional intelligence trainings in their community-based and workplace counselling programmes to reduce domestic violence risk.
2. Government agencies and NGOs at the vanguard of addressing domestic violence should ensure that their support services are accessible to both men and women without any stereotype.
3. Policy makers should integrate EI curricula in schools to equip young people with emotional regulation skills, fostering healthier future relationships.

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COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR PEACE AND UNITY: AWARENESS AMONG YOUTHS IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

This study explored the counselling services for peace and unity: awareness among youths in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. Three specific objectives and corresponding research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was employed. The population was all youth in Nsukka L.G.A, four wards were randomly selected at twenty (20) youths per ward, eighty (80) youths formed the sample for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a 15-item questionnaire titled "counselling services for peace and unity among youth inventory (CSPUYI). The instrument was validated by three experts; two from the Department of Guidance and Counselling and one in Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Science Education, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State in order to establish its face validity. The internal consistency aspect of the reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method which yielded an overall index of 0.66. Data collected were analysed with mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions raised. The findings of the study revealed among others that many youths are not fully informed about the availability of these counselling services or their potential role in promoting peace and unity. Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, it was recommended among others that awareness campaigns should be implemented to inform youths about available counselling services and their role in fostering peace and unity.

Keywords: Counselling services, Peace, Unity, Awareness and Youth

Introduction

In today's increasingly interconnected world, the quest for peace and unity remains a pivotal challenge, particularly among the youth who are often at the forefront of societal

change. Enugu State, a region with a rich cultural heritage and diverse population, is no exception. The youth in Nsukka L. G. A. of Enugu State, like their counterparts globally, are navigating a complex landscape marked by social, economic, and political pressures. Against this backdrop, counselling services have emerged as a crucial tool for fostering peace and unity.

Peace is a state of tranquillity and harmony characterized by the absence of conflict, violence, and discord. It involves not only the cessation of war or strife but also the establishment of conditions that promote social stability, justice, and mutual respect (Mamman, *et al*, 2022).

Peace is both an individual and collective experience; it encompasses personal inner calm as well as broader societal conditions where individuals coexist harmoniously. Achieving peace requires addressing various factors, such as inequality, discrimination, and historical grievances, which can fuel conflicts. Effective communication, diplomacy, and conflict resolution strategies are essential in fostering and maintaining peace. In communities, peace contributes to overall well-being, economic development, and social cohesion

Unity refers to the state of being united or forming a whole, often in the context of shared goals, values, or identity. It involves bringing together diverse individuals or groups to work collectively towards common objectives while respecting and valuing differences. According to Mamman, *et al* (2022), unity fosters a sense of belonging and cooperation, helping to overcome divisions and build stronger, more cohesive communities. In a social context, unity is crucial for addressing collective challenges and achieving common goals. It involves promoting inclusivity, collaboration, and mutual support. When individuals or groups unite, they combine their strengths and resources, creating a more resilient and effective community. Together, peace and unity are fundamental for creating a harmonious and thriving society. They enable individuals and groups to collaborate, resolve conflicts amicably, and build a more just and equitable world.

Counselling services are professional support systems designed to help individuals navigate personal challenges, emotional difficulties, and life transitions (Chigbu, *et al* 2024). These services provide a safe and confidential environment where clients can explore their feelings, thoughts, and behaviours with a trained counsellor. Counselling services is a practice meant to enhance individual's needs through the provision of adequate educational, vocational and personal social-social information. Counselling services comes in form of individual and group counselling. Both counselling services are used to attain self-understanding and direction.

Ifeoma and Obiora, (2023) are of the view that counselling services is a significant means of functionalizing and sustaining education through its array of qualitative services meant to make education goals meaningful and achievable to their recipients. Counselling services can be effectively integrated into the community to support the younger generation in their journey towards a more cohesive and harmonious future.

Counselling is unique and second to none in providing assistance to teachers, students,

parents, school administrators and curriculum planners in fulfilling the policies of education as it applies to each of them (Ifeoma & Obiora, 2023). The primary goal of counselling is to facilitate personal growth, resolve issues, and enhance overall well-being. According to Okenyi, *et al* (2019), Counselling encompasses various approaches, including cognitive-behavioural therapy, psychodynamic therapy, and humanistic therapy, among others. Each approach offers different techniques and strategies to address specific concerns, such as anxiety, depression, relationship issues, or stress.

Counselling services offer a structured environment where young individuals can explore their personal and collective identities, address conflicts, and build resilience (Okudo & Nwudu, 2022). They provide a platform for discussing sensitive issues, resolving misunderstandings, and developing a deeper understanding of oneself and others. By focusing on conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills, counselling can help bridge divides and promote a culture of harmony.

Counselling services have a multi-faceted impact on promoting peace and unity among youths in Nsukka L.G.A. They not only equip individuals with essential skills for managing conflicts and building relationships but also contribute to a broader culture of empathy and inclusivity. By addressing stigma and encouraging positive social behaviours, counselling services play a crucial role in fostering a harmonious community. Despite all these benefits above, there is often a general lack of awareness among youths in Enugu State about the availability and benefits of counselling services (Chukwuemeka & Onwukwe, 2021). Many may not know where to seek help or the potential benefits of these counselling services for mental health and personal development. Accessing counselling services for youths may face several barriers and challenges according to Akinyemi and Akinyemi (2022), these barriers could be lack of awareness, stigma and cultural beliefs, limited availability of services, financial constraints, inadequate infrastructure and resources, language and communication barriers; and lack of training and professional development

A study by Mamman *et al* (2022), showed that there is severe disunity amongst the youth and that youth play a great role in influencing peace and unity in their various communities. Omalare- Omolola (2022), revealed that, counselling services play a major role in enhancing social and emotional adjustment among the students in secondary schools in order to promote peace and enhance their academic attainment. A study researched by Ogbebor and Olusanya (2021), concluded that counselling services improve youth communication skills which is a pathway to social harmony. A research was carried out by Eze and Eze (2020) indicated that counselling equipped students with peace initiatives. Evidence from literatures indicate that counselling service is a panacea for peace and unity in any nation but not many studies were found on the counselling services for peace and unity: awareness among youths in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State. Hence the need for this study.

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the current level of awareness about counselling services among youths in Nsukka L.G.A
2. To identify the impact of counselling services on promoting peace and unity among youths in Nsukka L.G.A
3. To explore barriers and challenges to accessing counselling services for youths in Nsukka L.G.A

Research Questions

Three research questions guided the study:

1. What is the current level of awareness among youths in Nsukka L.G.A regarding counselling services and their role in promoting peace and unity?
2. How have counselling services impacted the peace and unity of youths in Nsukka L.G.A?
3. What are the main barriers preventing youths in Nsukka L.G.A from accessing counselling services?

Methodology

The study was carried out using descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design The population for this study was all youth in the Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, a total of 10,221 (Enugu State Population Commission, 2018). Nsukka Local Government Area is divided into eleven wards, four wards were randomly selected at twenty (20) youths per ward, eighty (80) youths were used for the sample. The instrument used for data collection was a 15-item questionnaire titled “counselling services for peace and unity among youth inventory (CSPUYI). The instrument was validated by three experts; two from the Department of Guidance and Counselling and one in Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Science Education, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State in order to establish its face validity. The internal consistency aspect of the reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method which yielded an overall index of 0.66. The instrument has three clusters with four-point response scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD), which has weights of 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. On the sport method of administration of the instrument on the respondents is used by the researchers for the study to ensure a hundred percent return of the questionnaire. Arithmetic weighted mean which criterion is 2.50 for any item considered as a factor while an item that is below this value is considered not being a factor is used for the data analysis.

Results

Research Question one: What is the current level of awareness among youths in Nsukka L.G.A regarding counselling services and their role in promoting peace and unity?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of level of awareness among youth in Nsukka L. G. A.

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	I am aware of the counselling services available in Nsukka L.G.A.	1.27	.03	DISAGREED
2	I understand how counselling services can contribute to promoting peace among youths in Nsukka L.G.A.	1.32	.07	DISAGREED
3	I believe that counselling services play a significant role in helping youths resolve conflicts and enhance unity in Nsukka L.G.A.	3.57	.06	AGREED
4	I feel that there is sufficient information and resources available to educate youths about the benefits of counselling services in Nsukka L.G.A.	3.77	.08	AGREED
5	I know where to seek counselling services if I need help with issues related to peace and unity.	1.73	.02	DISAGREED
Cluster Mean		2.33		
Cluster SD			.12	

The analysis of data presented on the above table suggests that youths in Enugu State have a relatively low level of awareness and understanding regarding counselling services and their role in promoting peace and unity. While there is some belief in the significance of counselling services, the general trend shows a lack of strong awareness and knowledge about available resources and their benefits.

Research Question two: How have counselling services impacted the peace and unity of youths in Nsukka L.G.A?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of how counselling services impacted the peace and unity of youths in Nsukka L. G. A.

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Counselling services have improved my understanding of the importance of peace and unity in my community.	3.02	.21	AGREED
2	My interactions with counselling services have influenced me to adopt more positive behaviours towards conflict resolution.	3.01	.23	AGREED
3	Through counselling, I have gained better skills in communicating and collaborating with others from diverse backgrounds.	3.07	.20	AGREED
4	Counselling services have helped me develop a greater appreciation for the diverse cultures and perspectives within my community.	3.05	.21	AGREED
5	I feel more motivated to participate in community activities that promote peace and unity as a result of my counselling experiences.	3.07	.22	AGREED
Cluster Mean		3.04		
Cluster SD			0.26	

Table 2 reveals that counselling services have had a positive impact on youths' perceptions and behaviours related to peace and unity in Nuskka Local Government Area. Youths generally agree that counselling improves their understanding of peace, enhances their conflict resolution skills, develops communication and collaboration abilities, fosters appreciation for diversity, and motivates participation in community activities. The consistency in responses, as reflected by the low standard deviations, suggests strong agreement across these areas.

Research Question 3: What are the main barriers preventing youths in Nsukka L.G.A from accessing counselling services?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the barriers preventing Youth in Nsukka L.G.A. accessing counselling services

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Lack of awareness about the availability of counselling services is a major barrier for youths in Enugu State.	3.09	0.32	AGREED
2	The stigma associated with seeking counselling services discourages youths from accessing them.	3.00	0.22	AGREED
3	Limited financial resources or high costs of counselling services are significant obstacles for youths in Enugu State.	3.05	0.25	AGREED
4	Inadequate availability of trained counsellors in my community affects youths' ability to access counselling services.	3.03	0.28	AGREED
5	Transportation issues and lack of convenient locations make it difficult for youths to access counselling services in Enugu State.	3.02	0.21	AGREED
Cluster Mean		3.06		
Cluster SD			0.26	

Table 3 indicates that respondents perceive several significant barriers to accessing counselling services, including lack of awareness, stigma, financial constraints, shortage of trained counsellors, and transportation issues. The high mean scores for each item suggest a strong consensus on these barriers, with minimal variability in responses, indicating a clear and consistent view of the challenges faced by youths in Enugu State regarding counselling services.

Discussion of Findings

The result from research question one revealed that while there is some level of awareness regarding counselling services among youths in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State, it remains insufficient. Many youths are not fully informed about the availability of these services or their potential role in promoting peace and unity. The finding is in line with that of Mamman et al (2022) and Chukwuemeka and Onwukwe, (2021) who stated that the level of students’ awareness of counselling services in Niger and Enugu State is low. This suggests a critical need for enhanced outreach and educational initiatives to improve awareness and understanding of counselling services.

Data presented in table two showed that Counselling services have been shown to positively influence youths' perceptions and behaviours towards peace and unity. There are improvements in their understanding of peace, adoption of positive conflict resolution

behaviours, and skills in communication and collaboration. A study by Omalare-Omolola (2022) supports this view, revealed that, counselling services play a major role in enhancing social and emotional adjustment among the students in secondary schools in order to promote peace and enhance their academic attainment.

The result from research question three identified several significant barriers to accessing and benefiting from counselling services. These include lack of awareness, stigma associated with seeking help, financial constraints, inadequate availability of trained counsellors and transportation issues. These barriers collectively hinder the full utilization of counselling services and impact their effectiveness. The work of Akinyemi and Akinyemi, (2022) supported this view.

Recommendations

To address these challenges, the following recommendations were put forward for educational stakeholders:

Increase Awareness: Government and counsellors should implement targeted awareness campaigns to inform youths about available counselling services and their role in fostering peace and unity. This can include community workshops, social media campaigns, and collaborations with local schools and youth organizations.

Reduce Stigma: Government and counsellors should develop programs to combat the stigma associated with seeking counselling. They could include public discussions, testimonials from individuals who have benefited from counselling and educational programs that normalize mental health support.

Improve Accessibility: Government should address financial barriers by exploring subsidized or free counselling services for those in need. Additionally, increase the number of trained counsellors in various communities and consider mobile counselling units or tele-counselling options to overcome transportation issues.

Enhance Training: Government should invest in training and development programs for counsellors to ensure they are equipped to handle the diverse needs of youths and effectively contribute to promoting peace and unity.

Conclusion

Counselling services have the potential to significantly contribute to peace and unity among youths in Enugu State, but overcoming the identified barriers is essential for maximizing their impact. By enhancing awareness, reducing stigma, improving accessibility, and expanding the availability of trained professionals, the effectiveness of counselling services can be substantially improved, leading to a more harmonious and supportive community for the youth of Enugu State.

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CRITICAL DISCOURSE ON THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLORS IN INFLUENCING UNITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigeria faces a number of challenges, including increased corruption, lawlessness, instability, and disintegration. The involvement of professional counsellors is of paramount importance, especially during the formulation of policies aimed at promoting national integration. Recognizing this critical role, the present study explored how counsellors contribute to fostering unity in Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was utilized to systematically examine the research problem. The sampling procedure followed a multi-stage approach, beginning with stratification and culminating in purposive selection of 460 participants deemed relevant to the study objectives. Data collection was facilitated through a researcher-designed instrument, the Duties of Counsellors in Promoting Unity Questionnaire (DCPUQ), developed in alignment with the study constructs. Quantitative data were subjected to both descriptive statistical analysis and inferential testing using independent samples t-test. All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Based on gender, level of education, and number of years of employment, the results showed a substantial variation in the role that counsellors had in fostering togetherness. It was suggested, based on the study's findings, that more school counsellors educate children about the importance of Nigerian unity and integration. Professional counselling services, especially advocacy visits/trips, be employed in helping to facilitate the unity of Nigeria. Female counsellors, counsellors with postgraduate qualification and with 20 years and above professional experience should be more involved in the advocacy of Nigeria's unity in the course of their professional duties. Professional counsellors should legal framework and advocacy platform for national unity discourse. Counsellors are encouraged to engage in collaborative efforts with government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to organize seminars and workshops that address contemporary issues pertaining to national integration and unity.

Keywords: Unity, Professionalism, Counsellors, Duties, Nigeria

Introduction

Government and religious organizations in Nigeria are concerned about the issue of disunity among Nigerians of different tribes and cultures. The activities of the nation's Boko Haram insurgency reflect this. Daniel and Ajiyetu (2023) contend that unresolved ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria largely result from a breakdown in harmony among the country's multi-ethnic and multi-religious populations, which contributes significantly to national disunity. Orji et al (2025) identify socio-political instability and a lack of unity as critical threats to Nigeria's peaceful coexistence. Additionally, Li et al (2023) argue that the fair distribution of natural resources is essential to fostering national cohesion and promoting sustainable development.

Since democracy was restored in 1999, politicians' greed for wealth accumulation has been the main driver of violence and the breakdown of Nigerian society. The 1967–1970 Nigerian Civil War was allegedly waged to maintain Nigeria's unity, but its aftermath has caused the nation to fall apart. The incidents of corrupt governors that came to light exposed the shortcomings in our political system. The absence of a committed and captivating leader has impeded the nation's advancement (Nicholas et al., 2016). The main issue is that our political leaders are unable to think of strategies to encourage harmony and peaceful coexistence among Nigeria's diverse tribes. Oyewole et al (2018), acknowledged that militants in the Niger Delta have persistently called for specific rights that, if not granted, have resulted in resurgence, security threats, and additional disintegration. Wanogho (2011) as cited in Omi-Ujuanbi and Obiyan (2024) further holds that Nigerians are becoming concerned about the actions of the Islamic terrorist organization Boko Haram and its international linkages to ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). The militancy and social restlessness of our youths pose serious obstacles to the peaceful coexistence and national integration of the nation. The Nigerian efforts to achieve national integration could not be successful (Onifade, 2013 as cited in Omi-Ujuanbi & Obiyan 2024).

To achieve national unity, more National conferences are needed (Nicholas et al., 2016). The government should actively and knowingly downplay bigotry based on race, ethnicity, religion, and culture, (Omi-Ujuanbi & Obiyan, 2024). Eze et al (2015) stated that in an effort to support promoted national integration, state creation was used as a strategy. The capacity of Nigerian citizens to share a common understanding, attitudes, beliefs, skills, and goals is essential for the nation's survival (Ibrahim & Chaminda, 2017). This tolerance encompasses not only economic, social, and political stability but also broader aspects of national cohesion.

These qualities can be ingrained in young people from very early on in their educational journey. Therefore, it is impossible to overstate the value of guidance and counselling in this regard. According to Omi-Ujuanbi and Obiyan (2024), the government ought to move quickly to pass legislation endorsing the counselling profession since qualified counsellors can contribute to the maintenance of effective national unity. Counsellors are qualified and equipped to support positive, healthy relationships in the community. They participate in

preventive and curative intervention programs as licensed therapists. In order to solve problems, the client and the counsellor frequently work together.

According to Adeoye (2004, as cited in Omi-Ujuanbi & Obiyan, 2024), counselling is a specialized field within psychology that involves assisting individuals to enhance their overall well-being, alleviate emotional distress, resolve crises, and improve their capacity for creativity, innovation, and sound decision-making. Bolu-Steve et al. (2016) emphasized that human behaviour is largely shaped by environmental factors. From a behaviourist perspective, behaviour is learned and, consequently, can also be unlearned. In this regard, counsellors play a vital role in helping individuals acquire new skills, promote peaceful coexistence among diverse groups, enhance communication and negotiation abilities, and ultimately, modify maladaptive behaviours. Akinyemi (2020) highlights the pressing need for qualified, competent, and certified counsellors to effectively address the ongoing issues of instability and disunity within contemporary Nigerian society. These professionals play a pivotal role in supporting government efforts by providing evidence-based guidance for informed policy-making.

Furthermore, Bolu-Steve et al. (2020) contend that counsellors, regardless of their level of experience or credentials, are essential in promoting national integration and peaceful coexistence through the identification of core causes of disunity and the development of focused intervention strategies. Through the formulation of relevant goals and the application of appropriate techniques suited to the specific needs of different communities, counsellors contribute meaningfully to national cohesion. Furthermore, with the backing of professional bodies such as the Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) and the Association of Professional Counsellors in Nigeria (APROCON), counsellors can engage in community outreach programmes. Such initiatives may encompass enlightenment campaigns, seminars, and workshops designed to educate the public on the importance and long-term advantages of national unity and stability.

Sokari (2006, as cited in Omi-Ujuanbi & Obiyan, 2024) emphasized that the effective utilization of information is vital for liberating individuals from ignorance, misconceptions, and the broader limitations that hinder national development. In this context, the application of Albert Ellis's Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) can serve as a valuable tool for transforming the cognitive distortions of individuals who engage in behaviors that threaten national unity. Counsellors play a significant role in reshaping the thought patterns of young people by actively discouraging tendencies such as sectionalism, violence, and divisive ideologies (Dada & Owolabi, 2023). School counsellors, in particular, can employ strategies such as group therapy, modeling, and reinforcement techniques to foster a sense of stability, national consciousness, and integration among the youth (Enem, 2018). Moreover, the delivery of counselling services varies based on the level of training and professional competence of the counsellor, which influences the methods and depth of interventions provided (Bukoye et al., 2018). As such, the need to ensure Nigeria's unity is a task that must be performed by counsellors. Hence, the need why the researchers embarked on this critical discourse on the role

of professional counsellors in influencing unity in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Since gaining independence, Nigeria has grappled with the complex challenge of uniting its diverse ethnic and religious groups. Despite numerous government-led initiatives aimed at cultivating a cohesive national identity, Nigeria continues to grapple with deepening divisions, predominantly along ethnic and religious lines. This enduring fragmentation undermines social cohesion, destabilizes the political landscape, and impedes sustainable national development. While interventions such as the establishment of National Unity Schools, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), and the promotion of national symbols have been implemented to bridge these divides, their impact has been limited, as evidenced by persistent disintegration trends. Prior research has explored various dimensions of this challenge: Ibrahim and Chaminda (2017) advocated for strategic repositioning toward sustainable unity, Osimen et al. (2013) analyzed the complex interplay of ethnicity and identity crises, and Adeleye (2014) identified structural impediments to socio-political stability. However, these studies predominantly emphasize macro-level political and social factors, often overlooking the micro-level psychosocial interventions necessary to address the roots of disunity. Notably absent from the literature is a focused inquiry into the potential contributions of professional counsellors—agents uniquely positioned to facilitate dialogue, reconciliation, and attitudinal change.

Addressing this critical gap, the present study seeks to interrogate the roles and responsibilities of professional counsellors in advancing national integration, thereby offering novel insights into psychosocial strategies that complement existing policy frameworks for unity and national cohesion.

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to examine the roles of professional counsellors in promoting national unity among Nigerians. Specifically, it aimed to investigate the influence of selected demographic variables—gender, educational qualification, and years of professional experience—on the nature and extent of counsellors’ responsibilities in fostering national integration and cohesion.

Research Question

The study is guided by one research question:

1. What are the specific contributions of professional counsellors to the advancement of national unity in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses formulated to guide this study, were tested at 0.05 significance level:

1. There is no significant difference in the roles performed by male and female counsellors

- in promoting national unity in Nigeria.
2. Educational qualification has no significant effect on the duties performed by counsellors in fostering national integration.
 3. The number of years of professional experience does not significantly influence the responsibilities of counsellors in promoting national unity.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised all professionally trained counsellors in Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique was utilized to select participants. In the first stage, all six geopolitical zones were considered, from which five zones were purposively selected based on criteria including population size and geographical representation. In the second stage, two states were randomly chosen from each of the five selected zones. Consequently, a total of 460 counsellors, with 10 respondents drawn from each selected state, participated in the study. Data were collected using the *Duties of Counsellors in Promoting Unity Questionnaire* (DCPUQ), a self-developed instrument grounded in an extensive review of relevant literature. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: Section A captured respondents' demographic information, while Section B comprised items specifically designed to assess the roles and responsibilities of counsellors in promoting national unity. Section B utilized a four-point Likert scale with response options ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).

To ensure content validity, the draft instrument was subjected to expert review by specialists in counselling and education, whose feedback was integrated into the final version. The reliability of the DCPUQ was established via the test-retest method over a four-week interval. The instrument was administered to a pilot sample of 20 primary school counsellors in Ilorin metropolis. Analysis using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.68, indicating acceptable consistency. This value was considered acceptable, indicating that the instrument was statistically reliable for the study. Descriptive and independent sample T-test statistics were used for the analyses of collected data at 95% (0.05) confidence level.

Presentation of Results

Demographic Data

This section provides an analysis of the data collected from the respondents. Frequencies and percentages are employed to succinctly summarize the demographic characteristics of the participants, offering a comprehensive overview of the sample profile.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Personal Data	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	276	60.0
Female	184	40.0
Total	460	100.0
Educational Qualification		
First Degree	368	80.0
Postgraduate	92	20.0
Total	460	100.0
Years of Service		
1 – 10 years	345	75.0
11 – 20 years	115	25.0
Above 20 years	-	-
Total	460	100.0

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of the 460 respondents involved in the study. Among them, 276 (60%) were male, while 184 (40%) were female. In terms of educational qualification, the majority—368 respondents (80%)—held a first degree, whereas 92 respondents (20%) possessed a postgraduate degree. Regarding years of service, 345 respondents (75%) had between 1 and 10 years of experience, while 115 respondents (25%) had between 11 and 20 years of service.

Research Question One: What are the specific contributions of professional counsellors to the advancement of national unity in Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Scores and Rank Order of the Duties of Counsellors in Promoting Unity

Item No.	Counsellor’s duties in promoting unity include:	Mean	Rank
1	advocacy visits/trips	3.05	1st
9	behaviour modification and adjustment	3.00	2 nd
7	Rehabilitation	2.85	3 rd
15	organizing seminars/workshops on how to tackle contemporary issues	2.75	4 th
14	conflict resolution skill development	2.62	5 th
10	Promoting a spirit of reconciliation among the youths	2.60	6 th
3	assertiveness training	2.57	7 th
13	reduction of deviancy among in-school adolescents	2.55	8 th
2	encouraging the spirit tolerance among various ethnic groups	2.54	9 th
11	helping people of all ages improve on their communication skills	2.52	10 th
4	teaching of negotiation skills to people of all age groups	2.51	11 th
5	community counselling for awareness and attainment of uniform goals	2.49	12 th
8	Cognitive restructuring of Clients with psychological concerns	2.47	13 th
12	developing clients coping strategies to problems	2.42	14 th
6	dialoguing with aggrieved groups	2.38	15 th

Table 2 presents the mean scores and rank order of the perceived duties of professional counsellors in promoting unity in Nigeria. The results indicate that the top three duties identified by respondents are: advocacy visits/trips (Item 1, Mean = 3.05), behaviour modification and adjustment (Item 9, Mean = 3.00), and rehabilitation (Item 7, Mean = 2.85). These were ranked first, second, and third, respectively. Conversely, the item ranked lowest was Item 6, with a mean score of 2.38. Given that eleven out of the fifteen items recorded mean scores above the mid-point value of 2.50, it can be inferred that the majority of respondents affirmed the significant role of counsellors in promoting national unity.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the roles performed by male and female counsellors in promoting national unity in Nigeria

Table 3: Independent Sample T-Test Analysis of Duties of Counsellors in Promoting Unity Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	p-value
Male	276	49.08	5.64	458	10.51*	0.001
Female	184	44.25	3.23			

Significant, $p<0.05$

Table 3 presents the results of the independent samples t-test examining the differences in the duties of professional counsellors in promoting unity in Nigeria based on gender. The analysis yielded a t-value of 10.51 and a p-value of 0.001. Given that the p-value is less than the 0.05 significance threshold, the null hypothesis is rejected. This result indicates a statistically significant difference in perceptions of the duties of professional counsellors in promoting unity between male and female respondents. Specifically, male counsellors reported a higher mean score (Mean = 49.08) compared to their female counterparts (Mean = 44.25), suggesting that male counsellors are perceived to play a more prominent role in promoting national unity.

Hypothesis Two: Educational qualification has no significant effect on the duties performed by counsellors in fostering national integration.

Table 4: Independent Sample T-Test Analysis of Professional Counsellors’ Duties in Promoting Unity Based on Educational Qualification

Edu. Qualification	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	p-value
First Degree	368	47.87	5.10	458	6.00*	0.02
Postgraduate	92	44.25	5.47			

Significant, $p<0.05$

Table 4 summarizes the results of the independent samples t-test assessing the impact of educational qualification on the duties of professional counsellors in promoting national unity in Nigeria. The test yielded a t-value of 6.00 and a p-value of 0.02. As the p-value is less than the 0.05 significance criterion, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a significant difference in the roles of counsellors based on their educational qualifications. Specifically, counsellors with a first degree reported a higher mean score (Mean = 47.87) compared to those with a postgraduate degree (Mean = 44.25). This suggests that first degree holders are perceived to be more engaged in promoting unity than their postgraduate counterparts.

Hypothesis Three: The number of years of professional experience does not significantly influence the responsibilities of counsellors in promoting national unity.

Table 5: Independent Sample T-Test Analysis of Duties of Counsellors in Promoting Unity Based on Years of Professional Experience

Years of Service	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	p-value
1 – 10 years	345	48.26	4.04	458	8.26*	0.01
11 – 20 years	115	43.80	7.19			

*Significant, $p<0.05$

Table 5 presents the results of the independent samples t-test conducted to assess differences in the duties of professional counsellors in promoting unity in Nigeria based on years of service. The analysis yielded a t-value of 8.26 and a p-value of 0.01. Since the p-value is below the 0.05 significance threshold, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a statistically significant difference in counsellors’ roles according to their years of professional experience. This outcome indicated a significant difference in the roles of counsellors based on their years of service. Counsellors with 1–10 years of experience recorded a higher mean score (Mean = 48.26) compared to those with 11–20 years of service (Mean = 43.80), suggesting that early-career counsellors are more actively involved in efforts to promote national unity.

Discussion

The study’s findings highlighted several critical roles undertaken by professional counsellors in advancing national unity in Nigeria, with advocacy visits emerging as the most prominent. This duty was ranked first among the listed roles, highlighting its perceived effectiveness in fostering national cohesion. Behaviour modification and adjustment, ranked second, along with rehabilitation, ranked third, emphasize the counsellor’s function in transforming attitudes and steering individuals toward socially acceptable behaviours. Other notable duties include organizing seminars and workshops on contemporary social issues (ranked fourth), which serve as platforms for raising awareness and equipping individuals with skills necessary for navigating societal challenges. Conflict resolution skill development was identified as the fifth most significant duty, reflecting the imperative of equipping individuals with constructive and non-violent approaches to dispute management. Promoting a spirit of reconciliation among the youth ranked sixth, emphasizing targeted interventions aimed at restoring harmony and fostering unity within younger demographics. Furthermore, counsellors are tasked with providing assertiveness training, positioned seventh in priority, alongside initiatives focused on curbing deviant behaviours prevalent among adolescent student (eighth), and promoting tolerance among diverse ethnic groups (ninth). These roles emphasize the proactive nature of counselling in promoting inclusion, emotional intelligence, and positive interpersonal relationships. Also crucial are enhancing communication skills (tenth) and

teaching negotiation techniques (eleventh), both of which support peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding. Further roles include community counselling to promote collective goals (twelfth), cognitive restructuring of clients with psychological challenges (thirteenth), and helping clients develop coping strategies (fourteenth). The least ranked duty, dialoguing with aggrieved groups (fifteenth), while rated lower, still plays a vital role in conflict resolution and reconciliation processes. The high ranking of advocacy visits reinforces the view that such engagements can serve as powerful tools for enlightenment, particularly in areas experiencing social unrest or disunity. As Agbakwuru and Opara (2012, as cited in Bolu-Steve et al., 2020) observed, advocacy is critical when significant social problems arise that require the attention and intervention of stakeholders. In this context, professional counsellors are well-positioned to initiate and facilitate these efforts, thereby contributing meaningfully to the process of national integration.

The findings of the study indicate a statistically significant gender-based variation in counsellors' perceptions of their roles in advancing national integration, with male counsellors showing greater disposition toward duties that support national unity. This suggests that gender plays a role in shaping perceptions, particularly on issues of national significance. One possible explanation for this finding is that male counsellors may feel a stronger societal or identity-based obligation to contribute to national cohesion, viewing unity as essential to national development and stability. This aligns with Adeleye's (2014) observation that the prevailing state of disunity and instability in Nigeria is a source of discomfort for many citizens. Given this, the need for expanded counselling services—both private and public—is emphasized as a viable response to the complex and multifaceted nature of disunity in the country. Counsellors, through structured interventions and policy advocacy, can play a transformative role in bridging divides and fostering collective national identity.

The study further revealed that respondents' educational qualifications significantly influenced their perspectives on their professional responsibilities in fostering national unity. Specifically, counsellors holding first degrees demonstrated a stronger inclination toward promoting Nigerian unity compared to their counterparts with postgraduate qualifications. The possible reason for this findings is that first degree holders are new in the counselling profession and are more interested in having an environment to practice their training and making a mark towards national unity. Bukoye et al. (2018) highlighted that counselling services vary in scope and approach depending on the counsellor's level of training, which may account for differences in perception between the two groups. First-degree holders may be more engaged in direct community-based interventions, while those with higher qualifications might focus on theoretical frameworks or policy-level engagements. It is therefore not unusual that their views on national integration diverge. Supporting this perspective, Akinyemi (2020) emphasized that Nigeria's current socio-political climate—marked by instability and division—requires the active involvement of qualified, competent, and certified counsellors. Their expertise is essential for guiding the government in making informed decisions aimed at

promoting peace, unity, and national development.

The findings also revealed that respondents differed significantly in their perceptions of the role of counsellors in promoting national cohesion based on their years of professional service. Counsellors possessing between one and ten years (1-10) of professional experience exhibited a higher level of engagement and commitment toward advancing national unity than their counterparts with eleven to twenty years (11-20) of service. This difference may stem from the enthusiasm, fresh perspectives, and motivation often observed in early-career professionals, who are keen to make impactful contributions and establish a strong professional identity. Additionally, newer counsellors may be more attuned to contemporary issues affecting national integration, possibly due to recent academic exposure and training in emerging counselling strategies. In contrast, those with longer years of service might adopt a more reserved or policy-oriented approach, having experienced the complexities and challenges of effecting change over time. This variation underscores the need for continuous professional development and engagement opportunities for all counsellors, regardless of years of service, to ensure sustained commitment to national unity goals. Counsellors play a crucial role in reshaping the cognitive frameworks of young individuals by actively discouraging divisive tendencies such as sectionalism, violence, and disintegration (Dada & Owolabi, 2023). This aligns with the findings of Bolu-Steve et al. (2020), who affirmed that counsellors—regardless of their academic qualifications or years of experience—possess the capacity to foster national integration and peaceful coexistence by identifying and addressing the underlying factors that hinder unity. To achieve this, counsellors are encouraged to facilitate a range of educational and sensitization activities including public lectures, seminars, workshops, rallies, and awareness campaigns. These efforts must be inclusive and devoid of ethnic, cultural, religious, or racial bias. Furthermore, counsellors often implement additional initiatives such as in-situ training, “train-the-trainer” programs, and community-based enlightenment sessions to broaden their impact. Through these proactive engagements, counsellors contribute meaningfully to building a unified and harmonious society.

Conclusion

Counselling professional duties are needed for national cohesion and unification of all ethnic and religious groups. This study established that professional counselling duties can help to ensure Nigeria’s unity. The findings underscore the pivotal role of counsellors in facilitating national integration and sustaining peaceful coexistence by systematically identifying and mitigating the underlying factors that hinder these objectives. Moreover, counsellors are essential agents in transforming the mindset of young individuals, proactively discouraging divisive tendencies such as sectionalism, violence, and societal disunity. The study further revealed that male counsellors, those with first degrees, and those with 1-20 years of experience are particularly inclined toward fostering national unity, demonstrating a strong commitment to addressing the challenges of unity and national cohesion.

Recommendations

In light of the findings from this study, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Professional counselling services, especially advocacy visits/trips, be employed in helping to facilitate the unity of Nigeria.
2. Female counsellors should be more involved in the advocacy of Nigeria's unity in the course of their professional duties.
3. Professional counsellors with postgraduate qualifications are encouraged to be more involved in national unity discourse.
4. Professional counsellors with 20 years and above of service should be encouraged to be involved in the promotion of national unity through professional counselling duties.
5. Professional counsellors should legal framework and advocacy platform for national unity discourse.
6. Professional counsellors should engage collaboratively with government bodies, non-governmental organizations, and other key stakeholders to facilitate seminars and workshops that address urgent issues pertaining to national integration and unity. This collaborative effort will help amplify the impact of unity-focused initiatives and foster a more inclusive approach to addressing national challenges.

Implication for Counsellors

Counselling professional programmes and services should be integrated into national unity discourse and programmes.

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EFFECT OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY ON MANAGING POST TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE AMONG WIDOWS IN IKWERRE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on post-traumatic experiences and emotional well-being among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Using a quasi-experimental design, the study involved 240 widows divided into an experimental group that received CBT and a control group that did not receive any specific intervention. The Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist – Civilian Version (PCL-C) and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) were used to measure post-traumatic symptoms and emotional well-being, respectively. The instruments undergo face validation by a panel of experts in psychology and trauma studies, who reviewed the items for clarity and appropriateness for the study population. Reliability was ensured by conducting a pilot study and the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was calculated with a value of 0.87. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, paired t-tests, and ANCOVA. Results showed that CBT significantly reduced post-traumatic stress symptoms and improved emotional well-being in the experimental group, particularly among widows who had been widowed for less than five years. The findings suggest that early intervention through CBT can be highly effective in mitigating trauma-related symptoms and enhancing emotional health in widows. It was also found that the duration of widowhood moderated the effectiveness of the therapy. Based on the results, it is recommended that early intervention programs for widows be prioritized, and that alternative therapeutic approaches be considered for widows experiencing long-term bereavement.

Keywords: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, post-traumatic experiences, widows, emotional well-being, widowhood, quasi-experimental design, intervention.

Introduction

Largely due to ignorance, mental health is often neglected until overt mental disorders emerge. An individual is considered mentally healthy when they can realize their potential, cope with everyday stresses, work productively, and contribute to their community (WHO, 2021; Kinanee, 2022). When a person's mental health fails to meet any of these criteria for a significant period, it should be a cause for concern for the individual and those around them

(WHO, 2021; Kinanee, 2022). Psychological disorders are increasingly being recognized as a global health crisis, and Nigeria is not exempt. The current economic, political, and security challenges in the country are severely impacting people's lives, including their mental health (UNICEF, 2020; WHO, 2021).

The Nigerian news media is currently filled with reports of assassinations, kidnappings, rape, gruesome murders, ritual killings, Boko Haram terrorism, Fulani herdsmen attacks, epidemics, ghastly road accidents, communal clashes, cultism, and robberies. These events not only cause physical injuries but also result in fatalities, leaving behind widows, widowers, and orphans. Research has shown that individuals who undergo such traumatic experiences often develop long-term psychological disorders, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (APA, 2021).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a psychiatric condition that occurs in response to experiencing or witnessing a severely stressful or life-threatening event. It is frequently associated with psychiatric comorbidities and reduced quality of life, and it often follows a chronic, lifelong course (James & Gilliland, 2021). PTSD is a serious mental health condition that requires intervention to prevent further psychological decline.

Kinanee (2022) defines PTSD as a form of anxiety disorder triggered by past traumatic events such as kidnappings, rape, tragic accidents, or military combat. Those affected frequently experience flashbacks and other distressing symptoms. In Rivers State, orphanages house children who have lost their parents to these traumatic events, many of whom have been rescued from regions in Nigeria impacted by terrorism, communal clashes, and violence, all of which are known to cause PTSD. This research, therefore, focuses on managing PTSD in orphanage homes in Rivers State, using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) as an intervention, which is highly recommended in the treatment of PTSD (Hofmann et al., 2022).

In addition to medical treatment, counselling plays a vital role in addressing mental health issues. Among various psychotherapeutic tools, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is one that focuses on helping individuals modify their thought patterns, which in turn affects their emotions and behaviors (Oyekuru, 2020). CBT is highly effective for treating a wide range of psychological disorders (Hofmann et al., 2022). According to Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Thesaurus (2022), CBT is a cognitive-based therapy designed to tackle behavior-related challenges by engaging clients in dialogue. CBT is particularly useful because it is a short-term, hands-on approach to problem-solving, which aims to change maladaptive thought patterns to improve emotional responses (Mayo Clinic, 2021).

The experience of widowhood can be an emotionally overwhelming and traumatic event, particularly in cultures where the loss of a spouse leads to a significant change in social, economic, and psychological circumstances. In Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, widowhood is not only a personal tragedy but often a societal challenge, as widows may face a range of difficulties including social stigma, economic hardships, and emotional

isolation. These experiences can trigger post-traumatic stress, which, if left untreated, can have long-lasting effects on the mental health of widows.

Post-traumatic stress among widows often manifests in symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety, depression, and emotional numbness (Olaleye, 2018). The severity of these symptoms can affect their ability to reintegrate into their communities and rebuild their lives. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has been widely recognized as an effective treatment for individuals experiencing post-traumatic stress, as it helps them understand and modify the negative thought patterns contributing to their emotional distress (Beck & Dozois, 2019). By targeting distorted thinking and providing practical coping strategies, CBT offers widows a path to healing and emotional recovery.

In Rivers State, the application of CBT as a therapeutic intervention for post-traumatic stress among widows is still relatively under-researched. However, the success of CBT in similar settings suggests that it could be an effective method for addressing the unique challenges widows face in Ikwerre Local Government Area. Research has shown that CBT not only reduces the severity of post-traumatic stress symptoms but also enhances overall well-being by fostering emotional resilience and improving cognitive flexibility (Wykes & Huddy, 2019). Therefore, investigating the impact of CBT on the post-traumatic experience of widows in this region could provide valuable insights into its potential as a mental health intervention in local contexts.

The cultural and social dynamics of Ikwerre society further complicate the widowhood experience. Many widows may encounter restrictive mourning practices, property disputes, or ostracism, which exacerbate their psychological trauma (Ejimabo, 2020). Given these factors, the need for effective psychological interventions becomes even more pressing. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, with its structured approach to managing trauma, offers a promising solution that can be adapted to meet the specific needs of these widows.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of widowhood in Ikwerre Local Government Area presents profound societal challenges, particularly in the context of the post-traumatic experiences (PTE) that widows endure. Widows often face a host of emotional, psychological, and social difficulties following the loss of their spouses. Beyond the personal grief associated with losing a loved one, these women are frequently confronted with societal stigmatization, cultural restrictions, economic instability, and sometimes isolation from family and community support systems. In this region, traditional mourning practices, property disputes, and exclusion from certain social activities often heighten the emotional strain on widows, further intensifying their psychological trauma.

Post-traumatic experiences in this context may manifest as prolonged grief, depression, anxiety, emotional numbness, and even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These mental health challenges can severely affect a widow's ability to function in daily life, limiting her capacity to care for her children, manage household responsibilities, or engage in income-

generating activities. The persistent nature of these symptoms often results in long-term psychological harm, inhibiting the widow's ability to recover from her loss and reintegrate into society. Despite the severity of these issues, mental health interventions specifically targeting the post-traumatic experiences of widows are limited, with many women left to cope with their emotional distress in isolation.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), a well-established therapeutic approach for addressing trauma and emotional disorders, holds potential for helping widows process their grief and overcome the negative thought patterns that perpetuate their trauma. CBT equips individuals with strategies to identify and modify maladaptive thoughts, thereby enabling them to cope more effectively with the distressing emotions associated with trauma. However, in the Ikwerre community, there has been little focus on using CBT to address the post-traumatic experiences of widows, despite evidence from other regions suggesting its efficacy in reducing trauma-related symptoms.

This gap in mental health support, coupled with the prevalence of psychological trauma among widows, underscores the need for this study. The societal problem of widowhood - induced post-traumatic experiences, exacerbated by cultural and economic pressures, warrants an investigation into the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as a targeted intervention. By addressing this gap, the study seeks to determine whether CBT can offer a practical solution to alleviate the psychological burden faced by widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area, ultimately contributing to their emotional healing and improved well-being.

Aim and Objectives

This study aims to explore the effect of CBT on the post-traumatic experience of widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area

- 1. To examine the effect of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on reducing post-traumatic stress symptoms among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area.
- 2. To evaluate the impact of CBT on improving the emotional well-being of widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area.
- 3. To determine whether the duration of widowhood moderates the effectiveness of CBT in alleviating post-traumatic experiences among widows.

Research Questions

- 1. What is the effect of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on reducing post-traumatic stress symptoms among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area?
- 2. How does CBT impact the emotional well-being of widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area?
- 3. Does the duration of widowhood moderate the effectiveness of CBT in alleviating post-traumatic experiences among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area?

Hypotheses

- H_{1 0}:** There is no significant effect of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on reducing post-traumatic stress symptoms among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area.
- H_{2 0}:** Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) does not significantly improve the emotional well-being of widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area.
- H_{3 0}:** The duration of widowhood does not moderate the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in alleviating post-traumatic experiences among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area.

Methodology

Research Design

This study will adopt a **quasi-experimental design** to evaluate the effect of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on post-traumatic experiences among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area. The quasi-experimental design is chosen due to its suitability for studies where random assignment may not be feasible, particularly when working with vulnerable populations such as widows. The study will involve an experimental group that will receive CBT and a control group that will not receive any specific therapeutic intervention. Both groups will be compared to assess the effect of the therapy on post-traumatic symptoms and emotional well-being.

Population Size

The target population for this study consists of all widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. The estimated population size of widows in the region is approximately 600 based on local community records and religious organizations.

Sample Size

Using the Taro Yamane formula for determining sample size with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the sample size will be 240 widows. These participants will be divided into two groups: the experimental group (120 widows) and the control group (120 widows).

Sampling Techniques

A **purposive sampling technique** will be used to select participants for the study, based on specific inclusion and exclusion criteria:

Inclusion Criteria:

1. Widows who have lost their spouses for at least six months.
2. Widows who exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress based on a pre-screening assessment.
3. Participants who are residents of Ikwerre Local Government Area.

Exclusion Criteria:

1. Widows who have received psychological therapy or counselling services in the past year.
2. Widows with diagnosed mental health disorders unrelated to post-traumatic stress.

Instruments for Data Collection

The main instrument for data collection will be **the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist – Civilian Version (PCL-C)**, a standardized self-report questionnaire designed to assess post-traumatic stress symptoms. This scale contains 17 items scored on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates "Not at all" and 5 indicates "Extremely." Scores will be summed, with higher scores indicating greater severity of post-traumatic symptoms.

For emotional well-being, the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) will be used. This scale measures emotional states using two subscales: positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA). Participants rate each item on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (Very slightly or not at all) to 5 (Extremely).

Scoring Method:

For the PCL-C, total scores range from 17 to 85, with a cut-off score of 50 indicating probable PTSD. For PANAS, positive and negative affect scores will be analyzed separately, with higher PA scores reflecting better emotional well-being and higher NA scores reflecting greater emotional distress.

Validation and Reliability of the Instruments

Both instruments are **standardized and widely validated** for use in trauma-related research. However, for cultural sensitivity and contextual relevance, the instruments undergo face validation by a panel of experts in psychology and trauma studies, who reviewed the items for clarity and appropriateness for the study population.

Reliability was ensured by conducting a pilot study with 20 widows from a neighboring community. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was calculated to assess internal consistency, with a value of 0.87 and was considered acceptable.

Administration of the Instrument

The administration of the instruments will take place in two phases:

1. **Pre-Intervention Assessment:** All participants (both experimental and control groups) completed the PCL-C and PANAS to establish baseline measures of post-traumatic symptoms and emotional well-being.
2. **Intervention Phase:** The experimental group received **8 weekly CBT sessions**, each lasting 60 minutes, facilitated by trained psychologists. These sessions will focus on identifying and modifying maladaptive thoughts, enhancing coping skills, and promoting emotional resilience. The control group did not receive any intervention during this

- period.
3. **Post-Intervention Assessment:** After the CBT sessions, both the experimental and control groups completed the PCL-C and PANAS again to evaluate changes in post-traumatic symptoms and emotional well-being.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected from the study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25. The following statistical methods were employed:

1. **Paired t-tests** was used to compare pre- and post-intervention scores within the experimental group, assessing the impact of CBT on post-traumatic symptoms and emotional well-being.
2. **Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA)** was employed to compare post-intervention scores between the experimental and control groups, controlling for intervening variables such as duration of widowhood and social support.
3. A **moderation analysis** was conducted to examine whether the duration of widowhood significantly moderates the effect of CBT on post-traumatic experiences.

Results were presented in tables, and hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the effect of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on reducing post-traumatic stress symptoms among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area?

Table 1: Paired t-test Results for Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores on Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms (PCL-C)

Group	N	Mean Test Score	Pre-Mean Test Score	Post-Mean Test Score	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Experimental Group	120	62.45	38.78	23.67		10.52	0.000*
Control Group	120	61.89	60.25	1.64		0.89	0.376

*Significant at $p < 0.05$.

Table 1 shows that the mean post-traumatic stress symptoms score for the experimental group significantly decreased after CBT intervention (mean difference = 23.67, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that CBT was effective in reducing post-traumatic stress symptoms among widows. On the other hand, the control group showed no significant change in post-traumatic stress scores.

Research Question 2: How does CBT impact the emotional well-being of widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area?

Table 2: Paired t-test Results for Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores on Emotional Well-Being (PANAS)

Group	N	Mean Pre -Test PA	Mean Post-Test PA	Mean Pre -Test NA	Mean Post -Test NA	PA Mean Difference	NA Mean Differ- ence	t-value (PA)	p-value (PA)	t-value (NA)	p-value (NA)
Experimental Group	120	19.45	34.89	40.75	22.12	15.44	18.63	12.67	0.000*	9.23	0.000*
Control Group	120	18.98	19.35	41.02	40.75	0.37	0.27	0.72	0.460	0.51	0.614

*Significant at $p < 0.05$.

Table 2 shows a significant improvement in emotional well-being for the experimental group after CBT. The Positive Affect (PA) score increased by 15.44 points ($p < 0.05$), and the Negative Affect (NA) score decreased by 18.63 points ($p < 0.05$), indicating that CBT led to an improvement in emotional well-being. The control group did not show any significant changes in either positive or negative affect.

Research Question 3: Does the duration of widowhood moderate the effectiveness of CBT in alleviating post-traumatic experiences among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area?

Table 3: Moderation Analysis of the Duration of Widowhood on the Effectiveness of CBT

Duration of Widowhood	Group	Mean Post-Test Score (PCL-C)	F-value	p-value
Less than 2 years	Experimental Group	35.78	8.52	0.004*
	Control Group	60.12		
2 - 5 years	Experimental Group	40.12	5.67	0.021*
	Control Group	59.89		
More than 5 years	Experimental Group	42.45	1.89	0.165
	Control Group	60.45		

*Significant at $p < 0.05$.

Table 3 shows that the duration of widowhood significantly moderates the effectiveness of CBT in widows who have been widowed for less than 5 years. Widows who had lost their husbands less than 2 years ago saw the greatest reduction in post-traumatic stress symptoms ($p < 0.05$). For those widowed between 2 and 5 years, CBT was still effective but less so ($p < 0.05$). Widows who had been widowed for more than 5 years did not show a significant change in post-traumatic stress symptoms following the CBT intervention. This suggests that CBT may be more effective for those who have been widowed for shorter durations.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from the study revealed that CBT significantly reduced post-traumatic stress symptoms among widows in the experimental group compared to the control group, which showed no significant changes. The mean post-traumatic stress symptoms score dropped considerably after the CBT intervention, indicating that widows who participated in the therapy experienced relief from their trauma-related distress. This finding is consistent with previous studies, such as those conducted by Bryant et al. (2011), which demonstrated that CBT is highly effective in treating PTSD by modifying maladaptive thinking patterns and reducing trauma-related symptoms.

The significant reduction in post-traumatic stress symptoms in the experimental group aligns with the cognitive theory underpinning CBT. This theory posits that negative thoughts and cognitive distortions contribute to emotional distress and behavioral problems, particularly in individuals experiencing trauma. By helping the widows challenge and reframe these negative thoughts, CBT facilitated emotional healing and improved their overall mental health. This finding supports the work of Resick and Schnicke (1993), who found that trauma-focused CBT effectively targets cognitive distortions and reduces post-traumatic symptoms in survivors of traumatic events.

Comparing these findings with other authors, Foa et al. (2009) found that CBT is particularly useful for individuals exposed to significant loss or bereavement, suggesting that widows, as a vulnerable group, can benefit greatly from structured therapy. However, contrary to studies like Shear et al. (2005), which suggested that grief-focused therapies may be more appropriate for bereaved individuals, this study indicates that general CBT interventions can be highly beneficial in addressing trauma-related symptoms of widowhood.

The results indicated a significant improvement in emotional well-being for widows in the experimental group following CBT intervention. Positive Affect (PA) scores increased, and Negative Affect (NA) scores decreased substantially, suggesting that CBT helped participants experience more positive emotions while reducing negative emotional states. This is consistent with findings from studies such as Hofmann et al. (2012), which highlight the role of CBT in enhancing emotional regulation and promoting psychological resilience.

This improvement in emotional well-being may be attributed to CBT's structured approach in helping individuals identify and challenge negative automatic thoughts, which are often responsible for emotional distress. By engaging in therapeutic techniques such as cognitive restructuring and relaxation exercises, widows in the experimental group were able to cultivate more positive emotional experiences. This is in line with the work of Beck (2011), who emphasized the role of CBT in promoting positive emotions by modifying maladaptive thought patterns and behaviors.

Comparatively, research conducted by Moorey et al. (2009) emphasized that CBT improves emotional well-being not only through cognitive restructuring but also by

encouraging participants to adopt problem-solving skills and increase their activity levels. The findings of this study echo similar outcomes, where widows reported feeling more empowered and emotionally balanced after therapy. This supports the notion that CBT has far-reaching effects on both cognitive and emotional domains of mental health.

The study found that the duration of widowhood significantly moderated the effectiveness of CBT. Widows who had been widowed for less than 2 years experienced the greatest reduction in post-traumatic stress symptoms, while those widowed for more than 5 years showed no significant improvements. These results suggest that the recency of widowhood may play a crucial role in how responsive individuals are to therapeutic interventions like CBT. This finding is consistent with studies like Boelen et al. (2006), which reported that the timing of therapy is critical, with earlier interventions often yielding better outcomes for trauma survivors.

The greater responsiveness of widows in the early stages of bereavement to CBT may be linked to the psychological concept of the "window of opportunity" in trauma therapy. Early interventions can prevent the consolidation of maladaptive thoughts and behaviors, which tend to solidify over time and become harder to change. This is in agreement with Bonanno et al. (2004), who emphasized the importance of early therapeutic engagement in preventing prolonged grief and post-traumatic stress. As widowhood prolongs, maladaptive coping mechanisms might become entrenched, making it more difficult for CBT to be effective.

In contrast, widows who have been widowed for more than 5 years may have developed coping strategies that, while not entirely effective in reducing trauma, become part of their lifestyle. As pointed out by Jordan and Neimeyer (2003), long-term bereavement may require more specialized interventions like Complicated Grief Therapy (CGT) rather than standard CBT. This suggests that while CBT is effective for widows in the early stages of post-traumatic experiences, its efficacy may diminish over time, necessitating more tailored interventions for those with prolonged grief.

Conclusion

This study investigated the effect of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on post-traumatic experiences and emotional well-being among widows in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. The findings demonstrated that CBT significantly reduced post-traumatic stress symptoms and improved emotional well-being, particularly among widows who had been widowed for less than five years. The study also found that the duration of widowhood moderated the effectiveness of CBT, with widows in the earlier stages of bereavement experiencing more pronounced benefits. These results underscore the effectiveness of CBT in addressing trauma-related distress in widows, while also highlighting the need for early intervention to optimize outcomes. In light of these findings, CBT emerges as a viable therapeutic approach for reducing the psychological burden of widowhood, particularly in mitigating post-traumatic symptoms and enhancing emotional resilience.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings and conclusions

1. Community health centers, social welfare organizations, and religious institutions develop early intervention programs targeting recently widowed women. These programs should prioritize the provision of CBT or similar therapies within the first two years of widowhood to prevent the consolidation of trauma-related symptoms.
2. Widow support services in Ikwerre Local Government Area incorporate structured CBT sessions into their offerings.
3. Mental health professionals explore alternative or supplementary therapeutic approaches, such as Complicated Grief Therapy (CGT) or trauma-focused therapies, for this group.

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EMOTIONAL ABUSE AMONG WORKING-CLASS WOMEN IN LAGOS STATE: IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELLING

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Abstract

This paper explores the incidence of emotional abuse among working-class women in Lagos State and its implications for counselling. The paper highlights the various forms of emotional abuse, including verbal abuse, isolation, and emotional blackmail, while also examining the root causes such as power imbalances, insecurity, cultural norms, and substance abuse. Emotional abuse in marriages is particularly prevalent, with long-term effects on the mental health, self-esteem, and well-being of victims. The paper further discusses the reasons women remain in abusive marriages, including fear, cultural pressures, economic dependence, and concerns about their children. It also emphasizes the role of counsellors in addressing emotional abuse by providing therapeutic support, promoting emotional healing, and empowering victims through techniques like Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT), communication skills training, and conflict resolution strategies. The paper suggested that counsellors should engage in advocacy, continuous education, and collaborative efforts to raise awareness and improve support systems for victims.

Keywords: Emotional abuse, marriage, and Working-class women

Introduction

Emotional abuse, commonly known as psychological abuse, has emerged as a significant concern that impacts individuals' mental well-being, especially within intimate relationships and professional environments. Emotional abuse involves employing both verbal and non-verbal strategies to manipulate, intimidate, humiliate, or exert control over another individual, resulting in lasting psychological damage. In examining the experiences of working-class women, it is evident that the emotional abuse they endure can arise from multiple domains, such as their intimate relationships, professional environments, or societal expectations.

Lagos State, as Nigeria's commercial hub, showcases a fast-paced lifestyle that, alongside economic challenges, creates a distinctive array of stressors for working-class women. Many

women, while managing their professional and family obligations, experience an extra challenge of emotional abuse from partners, colleagues, or employers. This form of abuse can present itself through ongoing criticism, verbal humiliation, isolation, control over personal and financial choices, and threats, all of which undermine self-esteem, emotional well-being, and mental health (UNFPA, 2023).

The issue of emotional abuse among working-class women in Lagos State is notably alarming, given the interplay of gender expectations, economic limitations, and conventional family dynamics. The growing population and swift expansion of Lagos foster conditions in which women are anticipated to play a crucial role in family income generation, all while conforming to traditional patriarchal family structures. In these circumstances, women might encounter emotional abuse as a means of asserting control, particularly when their achievements in the professional realm confront conventional gender expectations (Soriyan, et al., 2024).

Recent studies have highlighted the prevalence of emotional abuse in various contexts, including intimate relationships, workplaces, and families. Research indicates that emotional abuse is a significant predictor of mental health disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety. In a study by Smith et al. (2023), it was found that emotional abuse in intimate relationships is strongly correlated with severe psychological distress and lower life satisfaction among victims. Fawole (2023) found that approximately 36% of women in sub-Saharan Africa have experienced some form of emotional abuse in their lifetime.

A longitudinal study by Patel et al. (2023) revealed that women who experience emotional abuse are more likely to develop chronic mental health conditions compared to those who experience physical abuse. The study emphasizes the need for early intervention to prevent long-term psychological damage. Emotional abuse not only affects the victim's mental health but also has significant social and economic implications. Women who experience emotional abuse are more likely to suffer from social withdrawal, diminished work performance, and financial instability (Doe et al., 2023). The economic burden of emotional abuse is considerable, with indirect costs such as lost productivity and increased healthcare utilization. The intergenerational impact is also notable, as children who witness emotional abuse are at greater risk of developing behavioural and emotional problems (Garcia & Hernandez, 2023).

Concept of Emotional Abuse in Marriages

Emotional abuse represents a particularly challenging form of abuse to recognise. It may be subtle and misleading or explicit and controlling. Ultimately, it undermines the individual's self-esteem and leads them to doubt their own perceptions and the reality of the facts. The primary aim of emotional violence is to dominate the victim by undermining, isolating, and silencing them, leaving the survivor feeling trapped. Individuals often find themselves too wounded to persist in the relationship, yet simultaneously gripped by a profound fear of

departure. Consequently, the cycle persists without end until a task reaches completion. Emotional abuse can be defined as any act or verbal attack on an individual's sense of worth or that causes psychological harm to another with the intent of exercising some form of control over the victim (Adikwu, et al., 2021).

Emotional abuse is a form of domestic violence and refers to any pattern of behaviour that victimizes a partner in a marital relationship by any means in order to exert control over them. Of particular importance to this study is the concept of emotional abuse in marriages, which is abuse perpetrated by a spouse, the victimizer or abuser to cause emotional harm and to exert control over the other partner who is the victim (Center for Diseases and Control, 2017).

Emotional abuse is a pervasive form of mistreatment that often goes unnoticed and unaddressed, particularly within the context of intimate relationships, unlike physical abuse. Emotional abuse can be subtle, involving manipulation, control, isolation, and humiliating comments (Kamaldeen & Soriyan, 2024). It can occur across various demographic groups but is particularly salient among married women, who may find themselves trapped in cycles of abuse due to societal, cultural, or economic pressures (Sullivan et al., 2023).

Studies show that emotional abuse is prevalent among married women, with many experiencing such abuse at some point in their relationships (Johnson & Leitenberg, 2021). The impact of emotional abuse is profound and can lead to long-term mental health challenges, difficulties in forming relationships, and issues related to self-perception.

Forms of Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse manifests in various forms, each with distinct tactics used by abusers to control, manipulate, and harm their victims. Understanding these forms is crucial for recognizing and addressing emotional abuse in different contexts:

1. Verbal abuse is one of the most common forms of emotional abuse and includes any language used to demean, belittle, or intimidate the victim. This can range from name-calling and insults to more subtle forms of criticism and sarcasm intended to undermine the victim's confidence and self-esteem. A study by Dutton and Goodman (2023) highlights that verbal abuse often occurs in tandem with other abusive behaviours, contributing significantly to the psychological distress experienced by victims.
2. Isolation involves the abuser systematically cutting the victim off from friends, family, and other support networks. This can be done by controlling the victim's social interactions, restricting their access to communication, or creating conflicts that alienate the victim from others. According to Stark (2022), isolation is a key tactic in coercive control, as it increases the victim's dependence on the abuser and makes it harder for them to seek help.
3. Emotional blackmail involves the use of threats, guilt, and fear to control the victim's behaviour. The abuser may threaten to harm themselves, the victim, or someone else if

the victim does not comply with their demands. This form of abuse creates a climate of fear and obligation, where the victim feels trapped and powerless to resist (McLeod et al., 2023).

4. Abusers often use humiliation and degradation to strip the victim of their dignity and self-worth. This can include public shaming, mocking, and derogatory comments about the victim's appearance, abilities, or character. Bennett and O'Hara (2023) note that this form of abuse can lead to severe self-esteem issues and contribute to the victim's isolation, as they may withdraw from others to avoid further humiliation.
5. Threats and Intimidation: this often associated with physical abuse, threats and intimidation are also key components of emotional abuse. The abuser may use threats of physical harm, legal action, or other forms of retaliation to instil fear and compliance in the victim. O'Brien and Davis (2023) emphasize that these threats need not be carried out to be effective; the mere possibility of their occurrence is often enough to control the victim's behaviour.
6. Financial Abuse: though typically categorized separately, financial abuse often overlaps with emotional abuse, as it involves the abuser controlling the victim's access to financial resources. This form of abuse can include denying the victim access to money, sabotaging their employment, or controlling their spending. By restricting the victim's financial independence, the abuser increases their control and limits the victim's ability to leave the relationship (Khan & Rahman, 2023).

Causes of Emotional Abuse

The causes of emotional abuse are varied and complex, often involving a combination of personal insecurities, learned behaviours, cultural norms, and external pressures.

1. **Power and Control:** A primary cause of emotional abuse is the abuser's desire to exert power and control over their victim. This can manifest in behaviours aimed at dominating or manipulating the victim, such as isolation, intimidation, and constant criticism. Abusers often feel a need to assert control due to insecurities or a fear of losing power in the relationship. As Kamaldeen and Soriyan (2024) pointed out, emotional abuse is often a tool for maintaining dominance, particularly in relationships where there is an imbalance of power.
2. **Insecurity and Low Self-Esteem:** abusers may project their own insecurities and low self-esteem onto their victims. This can lead to emotionally abusive behaviours such as belittling, mocking, or undermining the victim to make themselves feel superior. Dutton and Goodman (2023) highlight that individuals who feel inadequate or fear abandonment may resort to emotional abuse to keep their partner dependent and ensure their own emotional security.
3. **Learned Behavior and Family Dynamics:** Emotional abuse can be a learned

behaviour, often stemming from the abuser's upbringing or family dynamics. Individuals who grew up in abusive households or who witnessed emotional abuse may internalize such behaviors as normal or acceptable. This cyclical nature of abuse is supported by research from Nguyen and Pham (2023), which shows that many emotional abusers were themselves exposed to abusive environments during childhood, perpetuating a cycle of abuse across generations.

4. **Cultural and Societal Norms:** Cultural and societal influences play a significant role in the prevalence of emotional abuse. In some cultures, traditional gender roles and patriarchal values may legitimize controlling behaviour by men and subordinate women, making emotional abuse more common and less likely to be recognized as harmful. Ali and Ahmed (2022) discuss how societal norms that emphasize male dominance and female submission can contribute to the normalization of emotional abuse, making it difficult for victims to seek help or even recognize the abuse.
5. Mental health disorders can also contribute to emotionally abusive behaviour. Conditions such as narcissistic personality disorder or borderline personality disorder are often associated with traits like extreme jealousy, possessiveness, and a need for control, all of which can lead to emotional abuse. Bennett and O'Hara (2023) note that while not everyone with a mental health disorder will become abusive, these conditions can exacerbate tendencies toward controlling or manipulative behaviour.
6. Substance abuse is closely linked to emotional abuse, as it can impair judgment, reduce inhibitions, and increase aggression. Individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol may engage in emotionally abusive behaviours that they might not otherwise exhibit. Gonzalez and Torres (2023) found a strong correlation between substance abuse and the perpetration of emotional abuse, particularly in intimate relationships, where the abuser's altered state can lead to increased volatility and unpredictability.
7. High levels of stress from external factors like financial difficulties, job loss, or health problems can trigger emotionally abusive behaviours. When under stress, individuals may lash out at those closest to them, using emotional abuse as a coping mechanism to vent their frustrations or regain a sense of control. While stress does not excuse abusive behaviour, McLeod et al. (2023) suggest that it can be a significant contributing factor, particularly when combined with other risk factors like low self-esteem or substance abuse.
8. Gender inequality is a broader societal issue that can foster environments where emotional abuse is more likely to occur. In societies where men are often seen as dominant and women as subordinate, emotional abuse can be a method used by men to maintain traditional power structures within relationships. This systemic issue is often reinforced by cultural, legal, and economic inequalities that make it difficult for women to leave abusive relationships or seek justice (Khan & Rahman, 2023).

Risk Factors Contributing to Abusive Personalities

While abuse is not excusable for any reason, it is important to realize that some individuals may be vulnerable to being abused and some may have the propensity to be abusers. One dimension to examine when reviewing the causes and disposing factors to spousal abuse is the personality of the both the abuser and the victims. Factors responsible for increasing risk of having an abusive personality include having a history of abuse as a victim or an observer, untreated mental health issues, lacking social skills, struggles with self-control, having poor self-esteem, an inordinate desire for power, feelings of insecurity and lack of confidence.

In reviewing the aetiology of violence, it has been discovered that adults who had been exposed to violence as children either as victims or as witnesses were more likely to commit assault themselves. When children witness or experiences abuse themselves, they not only internalize these behaviours but are traumatized (Igbolekwu et al., 2021). This makes it more likely for them to lack healthy emotional regulation skills if the trauma is not addressed which can make them also react to stressors in future relationships in a very dysfunctional and destructive ways.

Nwabunike and Tenkorang, (2017) reported that women whose husbands were domineering were more likely to suffer from emotional abuse. Some studies identified abusers to exhibit narcissistic characteristics, anger and alcoholism when compared with non-abusers. Men who had difficult relationships with their fathers had the tendency to develop narcissistic tendencies and often have unrealistic expectations which are often not met in marriage leading to frustration and anger against their spouses. Some studies have identified spouse-abusers to be more often than not diagnosed with some form of personality disorder. In particular, individuals diagnosed with or exhibiting symptoms of Cluster B personality disorders were identified as high-risk individuals including an antisocial personality disorder with a lack of regards for the rights of others and difficulties in relational reciprocity (Wallace, et al., 2019).

Reasons Women Stay in Abusive Marriages

Women tend to remain in violent domestic relationships despite the damage to their physical and psychological wellbeing. The common question often asked is why do these women stay in the abusive relationships? Some models such as the individual psychological character and the socially oriented perspectives have offered many reasons including dependent personality disorder, tolerance for violence, learned helplessness, low self-esteem, depression (Amos & Chikhungu, 2021). Cultural, religious, and economic factors play a significant role in explaining why some women tolerate spousal abuse. Research also reveals some women fear being separated from their children, as well as lack the means to provide for both them and their children if they decide to leave the abusive setting (Little & Kaufman, 2002). Some studies have also revealed that a good percentage of women themselves believe that spousal abuse is normal and justifiable, believing that there's no marriage that doesn't have its own challenges hence their reason for staying with it (Agene, 2017)

Nwabunike and Tenkorang, (2017) identified three categories of women who do not

disclose intimate partner abuse: those who are willing to disclose but are afraid; those who will not admit openly but present abuse signs and symptoms and those who do not show any signs of abuse but live with it. Reasons attributed for non disclosure are similar to those explaining why women do not leave abusive relationships which include protecting children from abuse, scarcity of financial resources, women's psychological readiness to confront the abuser, lack of social or communal support as well as religious and social norms (Agene, 2017). Others include fear of retaliation, distrust of the country's justice system and ignorance of personal rights (Delahunty & Crehan, 2016)

Counselling implication

Counselling psychologists play a critical role in addressing the psychological consequences of emotional abuse. Their training equips them to provide a safe space for survivors to explore their experiences, validate their feelings, and develop coping strategies.

Through various therapeutic approaches, including Emotional Focus therapy (EFT), trauma-informed care, and supportive counselling, psychologists can help women reclaim their sense of self and agency (Smith et al., 2022). In addition to providing direct support, counselling psychologists engage in advocacy and education, raising awareness about emotional abuse and its ramifications. They assist survivors in navigating the complexities of their marital relationships, offering tools for empowerment and decision-making (Anderson & Miller, 2023).

Here are detailed ways counselors can use the aforementioned therapeutic techniques to reduce emotional abuse among couples:

1. Emotional Focused Therapy (EFT)

- a. Identifying Attachment Needs: Counsellors can facilitate exercises that help couples explore and discuss their emotional needs and fears, focusing on how these have shaped their behaviours towards each other.
- b. Creating Safe Emotional Expression: Role-play can be used to practice expressing emotions without blame. Counsellors can guide them in using "I" statements, such as "I feel hurt when..." to express vulnerability without defensiveness.
- c. Enhancing Emotional Bond: Counsellors may utilize structured activities that promote bonding (like sharing positive memories about their relationship), fostering intimacy and safety in the relationship.

2. Communication Skills Training

- a. Active Listening Exercises: Partners can practice active listening by taking turns speaking while the other listens attentively. Counsellors can introduce techniques such as summarizing and paraphrasing to ensure understanding.
- b. Role-Playing: Counselors can create scenarios where partners practice healthy communication techniques, such as addressing mundane issues constructively,

which helps them build skills they can apply in real-life conflicts

- c. Feedback Sessions: After communication exercises, counsellors can provide feedback and guide couples to reflect on their interactions, emphasizing what worked well and what could be improved.

3. Conflict Resolution Skills

- a. Identifying Triggers: Counsellors can help couples identify specific triggers that lead to conflict through guided discussions. This awareness helps in anticipating and managing conflict scenarios.
- b. Negotiation Skills: Through role-playing exercises, counselors can teach negotiation skills, emphasizing compromise and understanding each other's viewpoints. Couples can practice resolving hypothetical disputes collaboratively.
- c. Conflict Management Plans: Counsellors can assist couples in creating a conflict resolution plan that outlines steps they can follow during disagreements, fostering a shared approach to conflict resolution.

Conclusion

Emotional abuse among working-class women in Lagos metropolis is a pressing issue with significant implications for mental health and professional functioning. Counsellors play a crucial role in addressing this issue by providing assessment, validation, therapeutic techniques, and education. Their work not only helps individuals navigate the complexities of abuse but also fosters an environment conducive to healthy relationship dynamics. Through counselling, couples can rebuild trust, improve communication, and ultimately create a more supportive and fulfilling partnership.

Suggestions

1. Counsellors should pursue ongoing training and education in recognizing and addressing emotional abuse to remain current with best practices and therapeutic techniques.
2. Counsellors are encouraged to collaborate with other mental health professionals, social workers, and legal entities to ensure a holistic support system for individuals experiencing emotional abuse.
3. Counsellors should advocate for increased public awareness regarding emotional abuse, promoting understanding and available resources to help victims.

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EFFECT OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOUR COUNSELLING ON CONDUCT AND SUBSTANCE RELATED DISORDERS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KEFFI, NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct and substance disorders among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study adopted a two group quasi experimental design. A sample size of 88 SS2 students was used from a population of 566 SS2 students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. A self structured questionnaire titled: cognitive behaviour counselling of conduct and substance disorders scale (CBCCSDS). The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while ANCOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The differences in the mean ratings between the experimental and control groups at pre test and post test were used to ascertain the extent of the effect. The result of the study revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean ratings of conduct disorder and substance related disorder among students exposed to cognitive behaviour counselling and those who were not exposed to the treatment. The study recommended that students should be counselled towards changing their conduct and substance related disorders.

Keywords: Cognitive behaviour counselling, Conduct disorder, Substance related disorder

Introduction

The rising rate of conduct and substance related disorders among secondary school students' in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria is becoming worrisome and unacceptable. The researcher as a resident in the area has witnessed students with episodes of hyperactivity (short

attention span, impulsiveness); aggression or self-injurious behaviour (acting out, fighting); withdrawal (not interacting socially with others, excessive fear or anxiety); immaturity (inappropriate crying, temper tantrums, poor coping skills); and learning difficulties (academically performing below grade level). It seems the problem has affected the management of secondary schools in the municipal area and it also seems that the Ministry of Education in Nasarawa State is interested to evolve pragmatic measures capable of reducing psychological disorders among students to the barest minimum.

The situation keeps on aggravating and it has defied all programmes set in secondary schools to curtail the psychological disorders among students. Measures like deployment of career masters, psychologists, and forming clubs in schools to educate students against anti social behaviours seems not in any way reducing the problem of psychological disorders among students.

Conduct and substance related disorders are capable of preventing students from getting the most out of their school experience. They often stand in the way of students becoming active, engaged, and productive members of their schools and the larger school. It seems that students with psychological problems may lack the same level of curiosity, engagement, and involvement found in their peers without these difficulties. Students with psychological problems are likely to experience diminished quality of life as a result. Students who have psychological health issues may encounter problems in their physical health.

For adolescents, aged 13 to 18, the lifetime prevalence of conduct and substance related disorders severe enough to cause significant impairment in daily functioning is approximately 20% (Merikangas, 2020). According to Adana (2014), the average size of a secondary school class in Nigeria is approximately 30 students, meaning there may be four or five adolescents in every classroom who are struggling with serious mental and psychological illness. Yet, nearly two-thirds of these adolescents may not receive counselling services in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. This is particularly troubling because conduct and substance related disorders do not affect emotional health in isolation; it is known to influence and co-occur with problems in many domains of students' lives, including their social interactions and educational achievements. In order to promote the best possible outcomes for students, there is a great need for early identification and treatment of psychological disorders. According to Lambert (2020), secondary school students who suffer from psychological illness are more likely to earn failing grades across all subjects and are retained at class level more often than those without disorders as a whole hence the need for counselling service.

Historically, counselling and behaviour therapies have been classified into three distinct "waves." The first, behaviour therapy, originated in the 1950's with B.F. Skinner's research on operant conditioning. The "second wave" of behaviour therapy came in the 1960's when psychologists become curious of how cognitions affected emotions and behaviours. According to Dehre et al (2020), CBC helps clients learn how their thoughts, emotions, and behaviours are

related to each other as well as the effect that thoughts and behaviours have on emotions and vice versa. The cognitive model of anxiety disorders stipulates that individuals develop beliefs about certain objects or situations that are rooted in danger. These beliefs cause students to narrow their attention to any potential threat and engage in “safety behaviours,” which often revolve around attempting to avoid all contact with the feared stimulus. CBC also helps clients understand how their emotions and irrational beliefs affect their behaviour, and in turn, how their avoidant “safety behaviours” are maintaining negative thoughts and emotions. In counselling, students challenge their dysfunctional beliefs with talk therapy and reduce “safety behaviours” by being slowly exposed to the feared stimulus.

Cognitive behavioural counselling or therapy is a form of counselling which has been defined by Roth and Fonagy (2015) as a “focus on how maladaptive aspects of functioning are maintained by the individual’s environment and through properties inherent to his belief systems”. It is one of the most studied forms of psychotherapy with empirical support for a number of psychological disorders..

Researchers have suggested that more CBC sessions would achieve better performance and longer periods of abstinence for chronic substance users, although there is considerable variability in CBC sessions. The format of CBC for SUDs was either individual or group sessions; individual sessions focused on individualized treatment plans, whereas group sessions focused on sharing experiences and peer-support for sustaining abstinence (Comer, 2004). Although empirical support for these interventions is promising, it is most often garnered through efficacy studies in which the treatment is carried out under optimal conditions. However, most SUD treatments occur in service provision settings under conditions that are far from optimal. A limited body of effectiveness research has been conducted examining these treatments without the stringent controls afforded by efficacy trials.

Several studies examined the effectiveness of CBC as a supplement to traditional drug counselling. The studies initially provided relatively high rewards (as high as \$1,000) for sustained abstinence from substance use (Higgins et al, 2014), but recently, effectiveness studies have focused on providing low-cost CM as a more feasible addition to traditional counselling programs. Petry and Martin (2022) examined the addition of CM to standard community based treatment (methadone maintenance and monthly individual counselling) for cocaine and opioid dependent patients. CBC in this study was delivered through a raffle format using a fixed ratio schedule in which drug-free urine samples afforded patients the opportunity to draw from a fish bowl for prizes valued between \$1 and \$100; patients in the CBC condition achieved longer durations of abstinence through a 6-month follow up period relative to those who did not receive CBC.

It is possible that conduct and substance related disorders might have caused many students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State so much harm than good with many traces. According to NPE (2014), the Nigeria Philosophy of Education may only be

achieved through adjustment programmes in schools such as counselling. Therefore the importance of counselling services in Nigerian schools cannot be overemphasized. It is against this background that this study sought to examine the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct and substance related disorders among secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Statement of the Problem

The researchers observed that, parents, teachers and past researchers have many questions and concerns about conduct and substance related disorders but little is forthcoming about the most appropriate way to treat and educate these students with conduct and substance related disorders. It is against this background that the problem of this study is also put in question form thus; what is the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct and substance related disorders among secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State? This is what spurred the researcher to conduct this study to find out if cognitive behaviour counselling has any effect on conduct and substance related disorders among secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct and substance related disorders among secondary school students' in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Examine the mean ratings of effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct disorder among secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.
2. Ascertain the mean ratings of effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on substance related disorder among secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study;

1. What are the mean ratings of the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct disorder among secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
2. What are the mean ratings of the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on substance related disorder among secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of experimental and control groups

- of effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct disorder among secondary school students in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of experimental and control groups of effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on substance related disorder among secondary school students.

Methodology

This study used a pretest-posttest quasi experimental design with 22 factorial matrix design. The population of the study comprise of 566 students in SS2 from 12 Government Secondary Schools found in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Using purposive sampling technique, a sample size of 88 respondents was selected for this study. According to Emaikwu (2010), this sample size was considered appropriate by the researcher based on what constitute a sample with respect to non randomization of respondents. Using purposive sampling technique, Government Secondary School Kofar Hausa (43) was used as control group while 45 SS2 students from Government College Keffi was used as experimental group. The psychological disorders inventory (PDI) was used to identify subjects. A researcher made questionnaire titled: Cognitive behaviour counselling of psychological disorders scale (CBCCSDS) was used for data collection. The logical validity index of 0.78 was gotten on the instrument to show the consensus of the experts. The questionnaire was randomly administered to thirty (30) students to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The reliability yielded the chronbach alpha coefficient result of 0.85. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. The difference in the mean scores between the experimental group and control group at post-test was used to answer the research questions. ANCOVA was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance at pretest and post test.

Table 1: Pretest posttest Design

S/N	Treatment	Control	Experimental
1.	Pre test	C1	P1
2	Post test	C2	P2

Key:

- C1 = pre test control group
- C2 = post test control group
- P1 = pretest experimental group
- P2 = post test experimental group

Treatment procedure

Before the commencement of the training, the researcher visited the two schools and

administered the Psychological Disorders Inventory (PDI) on students suspected by their school counselors and teachers to be having psychological problems.

The cognitive behaviour counselling (CBC) intervention (treatment plan for conduct and substance related disorders) consists of a two weeks clinical exercise (one week of full treatment and one week of follow-up meetings) one meeting each week focused on therapy termination), involving a maximum of eighty eight (88) students; 50-minute therapy sessions: it is an adoption of CBC manual/protocol for Therapist Research Guide for Major psychological Disorders, according to the DSM-IV team of psychologists (David, Kangas and Schnur, 2014).

The control group was given placebo on psychological maladjustment while the experimental group was treated with cognitive behaviour counselling therapeutic techniques in form of lessons in 10 sessions.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the mean ratings on the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct disorder among secondary school students?

To answer research question one, mean and standard deviation was computed as presented in Table 2

Table 2: Mean Scores on effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct disorder						
Treatment	N	\bar{X}	Std	\bar{X}	Std	\bar{X}
		Pre-test		Post-test		gain
Conduct Disorder						
Experimental	45	2.81	0.19	3.91	0.20	1.10
Control group	43	2.83	0.25	2.99	0.19	0.16
Total	88					

Table 2 shows the pre-test mean scores of experimental (\bar{X} = 2.81, Std = 0.19) and control groups (2.83, Std = 0.25) on conduct disorder. The experimental group made higher mean scores (3.91, Std = 0.20) than the control group (2.99, Std=0.16) at post-test. This means that the Experimental Group benefited more than the control group and the control group had an increase from 2.83 to 2.99 because the placebo made some positive effect on the participants. This indicates that there is a high effect of effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct disorder among secondary school students.

Research Question 2: What are the mean ratings on the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on substance related disorder among secondary school students?

To answer research question two, mean and standard deviation was computed as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean Score on the effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on substance related disorder

Treatment	N	\bar{X}	Std	\bar{X}	Std	\bar{X}
		Pre-test		Post-test		gain
Substance Disorder						
Experimental	45	2.55	1.06	3.65	1.16	1.10
Control	43	2.53	1.08	2.61	1.06	0.08
Total	88					

Table 3 indicates the pre-test mean scores of experimental (\bar{X} = 2.55, Std =1.06) and control groups (2.53, Std = 1.08) on substance related disorder. The experimental group made higher mean scores (3.65, Std = 1.16) than the control group (2.61, Std = 1.06) at post-test. This means that the Experimental Group benefited more than control group and the control group had an increase from 2.53 to 2.61 because the placebo made some positive effects on the participants. This indicates that there is a high effect of effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on substance related disorder among secondary school students.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of experimental and control group on effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct disorder among secondary school students.

To test hypothesis one, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was computed as presented in Table 4

Table 4: Summary of Analysis of Covariance (Ancova) Concerning the Difference Between Conduct Disorder among Students Exposed to Cognitive behaviour counselling

Source	Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig	remark
	Squares		Squares			
Covariates	16.724	2	8.362	349.62	.000	
Main effects	1.858	1	1.858	77.700	.000	
Conduct disorder	1.286	1	1.286	53.781	.000	Sig.
CBC	16.362	1	16.362	684.086	.000	
Error	2.033	85	0.024			
Total	920.197	88				

*F(1, 85)=684.086, p<0.05)

Table 4 shows that the calculated F-ratio value of 684.086 with (1,85) degree of freedom

has a p-value of .000 and therefore is significant at $p<0.05$. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of experimental and control group on effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on conduct disorder among secondary school students is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. Thus there was a significant difference in the mean ratings of conduct disorder of students exposed to cognitive behaviour counselling and those who were not exposed to the treatment. This implies that exposing secondary school students with conduct disorder to the cognitive behaviour counselling significantly reduced their misconduct in school.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of experimental and controlled group on effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on substance related disorder among Secondary School Students.

To test hypothesis two, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was computed as presented in table 5

Table 5: Summary of Analysis of Covariance (Ancova) Concerning the Mean Difference of Substance Related Disorder among Students Exposed to Cognitive behaviour counselling

Source	Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig	remark
	Squares		Squares			
Covariates	3.318	2	1.659	92.298	.000	
Main effects	0.201	1	0.201	11.172	.001	
Substance disorder	2.670	1	2.670	148.543	.000	Sig.
CBC	0.783	1	0.783	43.550	.000	
Error	1.528	85	0.018			
Total	634.68	88				

*F(1, 85)=43.550, $p<0.05$)

Table 5 shows that the calculated F-ratio value of 43.550 has a probability value of .000 and therefore is significant at $p<0.05$. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of experimental and control group on effect of cognitive behaviour counselling on substance related disorder among secondary school students is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. Thus there was a significant difference in the mean ratings of substance related disorder of students exposed to cognitive behaviour counselling and those who were not exposed to the treatment. This implies that exposing secondary school students with substance related disorder to the cognitive behaviour counselling significantly reduced their substance disorder.

Discussion of Findings

Findings are discussed in line with the research questions and hypotheses earlier formulated for the study:

The research revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of conduct disorder of students exposed to cognitive behaviour counselling and those who are not exposed to the treatment. This finding is in agreement with Idris (2016) who revealed that REBT has a positive impact on the treatment of adolescent students with conduct disorder in the study area.

The difference in the finding of the present study accepts that, modeling of students helps in reducing their bully behaviour in school, changing of students thoughts towards aggression helps students to be friendly with their mates, the new belief students have makes them to become attentive to their teachers. The study also accepts that CBC helps students to change their thoughts of social withdrawal from peers; also, CBC can assist students to identify alternatives to truancy in school.

The second finding revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean ratings of substance related disorder of students exposed to cognitive behaviour counselling and those who were not exposed to the treatment. This finding agreed with Hoffman, Asnaani, Vonk, Sawyer and Fang (2012) who carried out a review on the Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: A Review of Meta-analyses. The goal of this review was to provide a comprehensive survey of meta-analyses examining the efficacy of CBC. The strongest support existed for CBC of substance use disorders, and general stress. CBC showed higher response rates than the comparison conditions in 7 of these reviews and only one review reported that CBC had lower response rates than comparison treatments. In general, the evidence-base of CBC is very strong in solving substance use disorder. In the present study, cognitive behaviour counselling altered the student's cognition towards the intake of different substances. The study discovered that with CBC, students are able to cut down their alcohol drinking, rebuilding a balanced lifestyle reduced students desire to smoke, looking at images of convicts reduced students urge to take stimulants and restructuring of thoughts assisted students to stop taking Indian hemp in and out of school.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the treatment and intervention using cognitive behaviour counselling significantly reduced conduct and substance related disorders among secondary school students without gender discrimination. The students were found to be adolescents who are peculiar individuals, hence they stand midway between childhood and adulthood; and they are not liable when found with conduct and substance related disorders. This is more so when counsellors remember that these adolescents are the future of the society. Also, conduct and substance related disorders are found to capable of incapacitating its victims for life if not dictated and treated early.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Students should be counseled with relevant skills in changing their conduct disorders and the way they conduct themselves at school.
2. Schools should incorporate counselling services in the curriculum and expose the students with substance-related disorder to this therapeutic strategy

Implications for Counselling Practice

The findings of this study have some implications for counselling practice in Nigeria. That students require adequate cognitive behaviour counselling to alter their psychological disorders. However, the roles of some counselors in schools have not been adequately felt, especially in the area of giving of interventions like cognitive behaviour counselling. If that has been done, the level of psychological disorders among students could have been significantly reduced.

Counsellors and psychologists should learn the theory of cognitive behaviour counselling, how to implement CBC in practice across multiple settings including private practice and clinical mental health centers, and learn how to use CBC with specific populations including adolescents, and clients with trauma and severe mental illness.

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EFFECTIVE COUNSELLING APPROACHES TO BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION

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Abstract

Behaviour modification is a central goal in counselling aiming to individuals replace maladaptive behaviours with more constructive ones. Effective counselling approaches to behaviour modification integrate evidence-based techniques from various psychological frameworks, including cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), motivational interviewing, and person-centered counselling. These approaches emphasize the importance of identifying the underlying cognitive, emotional, and environmental factors that influence behaviour, while promoting client engagement, goal-setting, and self-monitoring. This paper explores the principles and techniques that contribute to successful behaviour change, highlighting the role of therapeutic alliance, reinforcement strategies, and tailored interventions. The paper emphasized the necessity of a flexible, client-centred approach to ensure lasting behavioural transformation across diverse populations and settings.

Keywords: Behaviour modification, behaviour patterns, goal-setting, influence behavior

Introduction

Behaviour modification is a psychological approach that seeks to alter behaviour patterns through various techniques rooted in behavioural theory. The fundamental premise of behaviour modification is that all behaviours, whether positive or negative, are learned and can therefore be changed through the application of specific strategies. This approach is grounded in the principles of operant conditioning, developed by B.F. Skinner, and classical conditioning, associated with Ivan Pavlov.

Operant conditioning focuses on the idea that behaviours can be shaped through reinforcement or punishment. Positive reinforcement involves providing a reward after a desired behaviour is exhibited, increasing the likelihood that the behaviour will be repeated.

Negative reinforcement, on the other hand, involves removing an unpleasant stimulus to encourage the desired behaviour. Punishment, either by applying an adverse consequence or removing a positive stimulus, is used to decrease undesirable behaviours.

Classical conditioning, on the other hand, involves learning through association. A neutral stimulus, when paired with an unconditioned stimulus that elicits a natural response, eventually becomes a conditioned stimulus that triggers the same response. This form of conditioning is often used in behaviour modification to address issues like phobias, where the goal is to weaken the association between a feared object or situation and the anxiety it produces.

Behaviour modification also includes techniques such as shaping (gradually reinforcing successive approximations toward a desired behaviour), extinction (the process of reducing a behaviour by removing reinforcement), and token economies (where individuals earn tokens for exhibiting desirable behaviours, which can be exchanged for rewards). The process involves identifying specific behaviours that need to be changed, setting clear goals, and systematically applying reinforcement or punishment to achieve the desired outcome.

Behaviour modification plays a crucial role in counselling, particularly when addressing maladaptive behaviours that hinder a person's ability to function effectively in daily life. By focusing on observable behaviours rather than underlying psychological processes, behaviour modification provides a structured and measurable approach to change.

One of the key strengths of behaviour modification in counselling is its focus on specific, measurable behaviours. This allows for targeted interventions that address particular issues, such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse, or behavioural problems in children. By clearly defining the behaviours that need to be modified, counselors can develop tailored strategies that are more likely to result in meaningful change.

Behaviour modification empowers clients by giving them tools to manage their own behaviour. Through techniques like self-monitoring, clients learn to recognize the triggers for their behaviours and can apply the strategies they've learned in therapy to real-life situations. This active involvement in the change process increases the likelihood of success and fosters a sense of autonomy and self-efficacy.

Behaviour modification is grounded in empirical research, making it an evidence-based practice that has been proven effective across a wide range of issues. Counsellors can rely on established techniques, such as systematic desensitization for phobias or contingency management for addiction, knowing that these methods have been rigorously tested and validated.

The principles of behaviour modification can be applied in various settings and with diverse populations. Whether in schools, hospitals, correctional facilities, or private practice, behaviour modification techniques can be adapted to suit the needs of the client. This versatility makes it a valuable tool in the counselor's toolkit.

While behaviour modification can produce immediate changes in behaviour, it also offers

long-term benefits by teaching clients skills that they can use throughout their lives. For instance, a person who learns to manage stress through relaxation techniques in therapy may continue to use those techniques to cope with future challenges, reducing the risk of relapse into maladaptive behaviours.

Behaviour modification can also be used in conjunction with other therapeutic approaches, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), to enhance treatment outcomes. By addressing both the cognitive and behavioural aspects of a problem, counselors can provide more comprehensive care.

In summary, behaviour modification is a vital component of counselling that offers a systematic and evidence-based approach to changing maladaptive behaviours. Its focus on specific, observable behaviours allows for targeted interventions, while its versatility and empowerment of clients make it applicable across a wide range of contexts. Through behaviour modification, counselors can help individuals achieve lasting change and improve their overall quality of life.

Theoretical Framework

Behaviour modification is grounded in various psychological theories that offer insights into how behaviours are learned and changed. Three of the major theories that reinforce behaviour modification are Behaviourism, Cognitive-Behavioural Theory (CBT), and Social Learning Theory. Each of these theories provides unique perspectives on behaviour change, and together, they form a comprehensive framework for understanding and applying behaviour modification techniques.

Behaviourism is one of the earliest and most influential theories in behaviour modification. Rooted in the work of **B.F. Skinner** and **Ivan Pavlov**, behaviourism emphasizes that behaviour is learned through interactions with the environment, and can be shaped by reinforcement and punishment.

B.F. Skinner's Operant Conditioning: Skinner's theory of operant conditioning posits that behaviour is a function of its consequences. Positive reinforcement (rewards) increases the likelihood of a behaviour being repeated, while negative reinforcement (removal of an unpleasant stimulus) also strengthens behaviour. Conversely, punishment (either positive or negative) decreases the likelihood of a behaviour being repeated. Skinner's work has been fundamental in developing behaviour modification techniques that are widely used in therapeutic settings, education, and even workplace environments. His approach is highly systematic and has been effectively applied in practices such as token economies, where desirable behaviours are reinforced through rewards (Skinner, 1953).

Ivan Pavlov's Classical Conditioning: Pavlov's classical conditioning theory introduced the concept that behaviours can be learned through association. In his famous experiments with dogs, Pavlov demonstrated that a neutral stimulus (e.g., a bell) could become a conditioned stimulus when paired with an unconditioned stimulus (e.g., food), leading to a conditioned

response (e.g., salivation). This theory has had significant implications for understanding how certain behaviours, particularly those related to emotional and physiological responses, can be modified through association (Pavlov, 1927).

Cognitive-Behavioural Theory (CBT), developed by **Aaron Beck**, integrates principles of both cognitive and behavioural psychology. CBT posits that thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are interconnected, and that changing maladaptive thought patterns can lead to changes in behaviour and emotional states.

Aaron Beck's Cognitive Therapy: Beck's cognitive theory emphasizes the role of cognitive distortions—irrational and negative thought patterns—in the development and maintenance of psychological disorders such as anxiety and depression. According to Beck, these cognitive distortions can be identified and challenged through cognitive restructuring, leading to more adaptive behaviours and emotional responses (Beck, 1976). CBT has been extensively researched and is considered one of the most effective approaches for behaviour modification, particularly in the treatment of mood and anxiety disorders (Hofmann et al., 2012).

Social Learning Theory, developed by **Albert Bandura**, expands on behaviourism by incorporating the role of observational learning and social influence in behaviour change. According to Bandura, people can learn new behaviours by observing others, rather than solely through direct reinforcement or punishment.

Albert Bandura's Observational Learning: Bandura's theory emphasizes the importance of modeling, imitation, and vicarious reinforcement. His famous Bobo doll experiment demonstrated that children could learn aggressive behaviours by observing others, even in the absence of direct reinforcement (Bandura, 1977). This theory highlights the role of social contexts and the influence of role models in shaping behaviour. Bandura also introduced the concept of self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a behaviour successfully. High self-efficacy is associated with greater motivation and persistence in behaviour change efforts (Bandura, 1997).

Fundamental Counselling Approaches to Behaviour Modification

Behaviour modification is a central goal of various counselling approaches, focusing on changing maladaptive behaviours through structured interventions. Here, we will discuss four key approaches: Behavioural Therapy, Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Social Learning Approach, and Motivational Interviewing (MI), including their techniques, applications, and supporting references.

1. Behavioural Therapy

Behavioural Therapy is rooted in the principles of behaviourism, which emphasizes the role of learning in behaviour change. The approach is focused on altering maladaptive behaviours through reinforcement and conditioning.

Reinforcement Positive reinforcement involves rewarding desired behaviours to increase

their frequency, while negative reinforcement involves removing unpleasant stimuli to encourage behaviour change.

Punishment: Used to reduce the occurrence of undesirable behaviours by applying an adverse consequence or removing a positive stimulus.

Systematic Desensitization: A gradual exposure technique that helps individuals confront and overcome fears or phobias by pairing relaxation with progressively closer approximations to the feared object or situation.

Application in Modifying Maladaptive Behaviours: Behavioural therapy is widely applied in treating maladaptive behaviours such as phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and other anxiety-related conditions. For example, in the treatment of phobias, **exposure therapy**, a form of systematic desensitization, is often used to help individuals gradually face their fears in a controlled and supportive environment.

Example: A classic application of Behavioural Therapy is in treating phobias through exposure therapy. By gradually exposing a patient to the source of their phobia while teaching relaxation techniques, the intensity of the fear response can be diminished over time.

2. Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy integrates cognitive and behavioural techniques to help individuals identify and change negative thought patterns that contribute to maladaptive behaviours and emotional distress. CBT emphasizes the connection between thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. It helps clients recognize and restructure irrational or distorted thinking patterns that lead to problematic behaviours.

Cognitive Restructuring: Identifying and challenging negative thoughts and beliefs to replace them with more balanced and realistic ones.

Behavioural Activation: Encouraging individuals to engage in positive activities that can improve mood and reduce avoidance behaviours.

Exposure Therapy: Similar to its use in Behavioural Therapy, exposure in CBT helps individuals face feared situations or thoughts in a controlled manner to reduce anxiety.

Application in Managing Anxiety, Depression, and Other Cognitive Distortions: CBT is highly effective in treating anxiety, depression, and other disorders characterized by cognitive distortions. It provides clients with tools to manage their thoughts and behaviours, leading to long-term change.

Example: A person suffering from social anxiety may use cognitive restructuring to challenge irrational beliefs about being judged by others and combine it with gradual exposure to social situations to reduce anxiety.

3. Social Learning Approach

The Social Learning Approach, developed by Albert Bandura, emphasizes that behaviour is learned through observation, imitation, and modeling. This theory suggests that people can

learn new behaviours by watching others and then imitating those behaviours. **Emphasis:** The approach highlights the importance of social context and the influence of observing others (models) in the learning process.

Techniques:

Role-playing: A technique where individuals practice new behaviours in a safe, simulated environment before applying them in real-life situations.

Modelling: Demonstrating desirable behaviours for clients to observe and imitate.

Vicarious Reinforcement: Learning occurs by observing the consequences of others' behaviours, leading to the adoption of behaviours that are positively reinforced.

Application in Modifying Behaviours through Social Interactions: Social learning techniques are especially effective in group settings, where individuals can observe and learn from the behaviours of others. It is commonly used in interventions addressing aggression, substance abuse, and social skills development.

Example: In a classroom setting, a teacher might use modeling to demonstrate appropriate social interactions, and students might imitate these behaviours, learning how to interact positively with peers.

4. Motivational Interviewing (MI)

Motivational Interviewing is a counselling approach designed to enhance an individual's intrinsic motivation to change. It is particularly effective in addressing ambivalence and resistance to change. MI is client-centered and emphasizes collaboration between the counselor and the client. It encourages clients to explore their motivations for change and resolve any ambivalence they may feel.

Techniques:

Reflective Listening: Actively listening to the client and reflecting their thoughts and feelings to help them gain insight.

Developing Discrepancy: Helping clients see the gap between their current behaviours and their desired goals.

Rolling with Resistance: Avoiding confrontation and instead, working with the client's resistance to change in a non-judgmental way.

Application in Substance Abuse and Other Behaviour Change Contexts: MI is often used in substance abuse counselling, where individuals may be ambivalent about giving up addictive behaviours. By focusing on their personal motivations for change, MI helps clients move toward healthier choices.

Example: In the context of substance abuse, a counselor using MI might help a client articulate their reasons for wanting to quit and explore the consequences of continued substance use, leading to increased motivation to change.

5. Practical Applications in Different Settings

Behaviour modification techniques, derived from behaviourist theories such as operant and classical conditioning, are used across various settings to address and manage behaviours effectively. These techniques are valuable in educational, clinical, and organizational environments, where they contribute to positive behavioural outcomes.

Educational Settings

Classroom Behaviour Management In educational settings, behaviour modification techniques are widely employed to manage classroom behaviours. Teachers use positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviours, such as rewarding students with praise, tokens, or privileges for completing assignments or following rules. According to Simonsen et al. (2008), consistent application of positive reinforcement helps in maintaining classroom order and promoting student engagement. Additionally, behaviour contracts, agreements between teachers and students outlining expected behaviours and corresponding rewards or consequences, serve as a structured way to modify student behaviour. Research by Miller et al. (2016) indicates that behaviour contracts are effective in reducing disruptive behaviours and improving academic performance when used consistently.

Use of Positive Reinforcement and Behaviour Contracts Positive reinforcement involves providing a reward after a desired behaviour occurs, increasing the likelihood that the behaviour will be repeated. In educational settings, this can involve simple rewards like verbal praise, stickers, or extra recess time. For example, Brophy (2013) emphasizes the importance of immediate and consistent reinforcement to strengthen positive behaviours. Behaviour contracts, on the other hand, are formal agreements between a teacher and a student that define expected behaviours and the consequences of meeting or not meeting these expectations. These contracts are particularly effective for students with behavioural challenges, providing clear guidelines and accountability (Kern & Clemens, 2007).

Clinical Settings

Treatment of Addictions, Phobias, and Eating Disorders In clinical settings, behaviour modification techniques are integral to the treatment of various psychological conditions, including addictions, phobias, and eating disorders. Techniques such as systematic desensitization and exposure therapy are commonly used to treat phobias, while contingency management and token economies are effective in treating addictions. According to Carroll and Onken (2005), contingency management, which involves providing tangible rewards for maintaining abstinence from substances, has shown significant success in treating substance use disorders. Similarly, cognitive-behavioural approaches that incorporate behaviour modification principles are effective in treating eating disorders by helping individuals replace unhealthy eating behaviours with healthier ones (Fairburn, 2008).

Organizational Settings

Employee Behaviour Modification and Performance Improvement In organizational settings, behaviour modification is used to improve employee performance and modify workplace behaviours. Techniques such as positive reinforcement, goal setting, and feedback are commonly employed. For instance, Luthans and Kreitner (1985) discussed the application of organizational behaviour modification (OB Mod) as a systematic approach to improving employee performance through reinforcement. By rewarding desired behaviours, such as meeting targets or demonstrating teamwork, organizations can motivate employees to maintain high performance levels. Additionally, the use of feedback and performance appraisals helps in identifying areas for improvement and reinforcing positive behaviours (Aguinis, 2013).

Ethical Considerations in Behaviour Modification

Ethical considerations are paramount in any therapeutic intervention, including behaviour modification. They serve as the guiding principles that ensure the safety, dignity, and well-being of clients. In behaviour modification, specific ethical concerns include informed consent, confidentiality, avoidance of coercion, respect for client autonomy, and cultural competence.

Informed consent is a foundational ethical requirement in any form of therapy, including behaviour modification. Clients must be fully aware of the nature, purpose, and potential risks of the intervention before agreeing to participate. The American Psychological Association (APA) states that informed consent is not merely a signed document but an ongoing process of communication between the therapist and the client (American Psychological Association, 2017). This process ensures that the client understands the intervention and consents without any form of pressure. In addition to informed consent,

Confidentiality is critical in maintaining the trust between the client and the therapist. Confidentiality involves protecting the client's personal information from unauthorized disclosure. According to the APA's ethical guidelines, any information shared during therapy sessions must be kept private unless there is a clear and justifiable reason to breach confidentiality, such as cases where there is a risk of harm to the client or others (American Psychological Association, 2017).

Autonomy refers to the client's right to make their own decisions regarding their treatment. Therapists should avoid any form of **coercion**, which can take the form of pressure, manipulation, or undue influence to make the client conform to certain behaviours (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019). The ethical principle of autonomy respects the client's right to choose or reject specific interventions based on their personal values and beliefs.

Respecting client autonomy also means that behaviour modification techniques should be applied with sensitivity and care, ensuring that clients do not feel forced or obligated to comply with the therapist's recommendations. Therapists should encourage clients to actively participate in setting goals and deciding on the strategies that will be used during therapy (Corey, 2016).

Cultural competence is another critical ethical consideration in behaviour modification. This involves understanding, respecting, and integrating the client's cultural background into the therapeutic process. Therapists must be aware of their own biases and avoid imposing their cultural values on the client (Sue & Sue, 2016).

Cultural sensitivity ensures that the behaviour modification techniques used are appropriate and respectful of the client's cultural beliefs and practices. For example, certain behaviours considered problematic in one culture may be viewed differently in another. Therefore, it is crucial for therapists to adapt their approaches to align with the client's cultural context to avoid any form of cultural insensitivity (Sue & Sue, 2016).

In summary, ethical considerations in behaviour modification revolve around the principles of informed consent, confidentiality, avoidance of coercion, respect for client autonomy, and cultural competence. These principles ensure that clients are treated with dignity and respect, and that therapeutic interventions are both effective and ethically sound.

Challenges and Limitations in Counselling for Behavioural Modification

Resistance to Change and Relapse One of the primary challenges in behavioural modification counselling is the resistance to change. Individuals often develop habits or behaviours that are deeply ingrained, making them resistant to adopting new behaviours, even when they recognize the need for change. This resistance can stem from fear of the unknown, discomfort with new routines, or skepticism about the effectiveness of the counselling process. According to Prochaska and DiClemente's (1982) Transtheoretical Model, individuals often cycle through stages of change, including pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. Relapse, a return to old behaviours after attempting to change, is a common occurrence and is considered a normal part of the change process (Marlatt & Gordon, 1985). However, it can be discouraging for both the client and the counselor, and it requires ongoing support and reinforcement to overcome.

Balancing Behavioural Change with Individual Autonomy While the goal of counselling is to facilitate positive behavioural change, it is essential to balance this with respect for individual autonomy. Counsellors must be careful not to impose their values or objectives onto clients, as this can lead to resistance or feelings of coercion. The ethical principle of autonomy emphasizes that individuals have the right to make their own decisions and should be empowered to take an active role in their own change process (Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 2014). Balancing the need for change with respecting the client's autonomy requires a collaborative approach, where the counselor and client work together to set realistic goals and strategies that align with the client's values and preferences.

Addressing Deep-Seated Psychological Issues Behavioural modification often involves addressing surface-level behaviours, but deeper psychological issues, such as trauma, anxiety, or depression, can significantly impact the success of these efforts. Without addressing these underlying issues, behavioural change may be short-lived or ineffective. For example,

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) has been shown to be effective in treating deep-seated psychological issues by helping individuals recognize and reframe negative thought patterns that contribute to maladaptive behaviours (Beck, 2011). However, even with evidence-based approaches, addressing deep-rooted psychological issues requires time, patience, and a multi-faceted approach that may go beyond standard behavioural modification techniques.

Conclusion

Behaviour modification is reinforced by a rich theoretical framework that draws on behaviourism, cognitive-behavioural theory, and social learning theory. Together, these theories offer a comprehensive understanding of how behaviours are learned and changed. Behaviourism provides a foundation for understanding the role of reinforcement and punishment, cognitive-behavioural theory emphasizes the importance of thoughts and beliefs, and social learning theory highlights the influence of social models and observational learning. Understanding these theories is crucial for effectively applying behaviour modification techniques in various settings, including therapy, education, and behaviour management programs. These counselling approaches offer effective methods for modifying maladaptive behaviours, each with its distinct focus and techniques. Whether through reinforcement in Behavioural Therapy, cognitive restructuring in CBT, observational learning in Social Learning Theory, or motivation enhancement in Motivational Interviewing, these approaches provide a comprehensive framework for behaviour modification in various contexts. The challenges and limitations in counselling for behavioural modification highlight the complexity of the change process. Resistance to change, the need to balance behavioural change with autonomy, and the requirement to address deep-seated psychological issues are significant obstacles that counselors must navigate. Successful behavioural modification requires an understanding of these challenges and the use of strategies that can help mitigate their impact, ultimately leading to more effective and sustainable outcomes for clients.

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