

Contextual and Situational Factors Determining Perceived Counselling Effectiveness of Professional Counselling Psychologists

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ABSTRAK

Layanan bimbingan dan konseling yang efektif sangat erat kaitannya dengan perkembangan sosio-ekonomi Nigeria sebagai sebuah bangsa. Banyak yang perlu dilakukan untuk mencapai Layanan Bimbingan dan Konseling yang efektif dalam sistem sekolah Nigeria. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor kontekstual dan situasional (usia, jenis kelamin, pengalaman mengajar dan pengalaman konseling) yang menentukan efektivitas konseling yang dirasakan oleh psikolog konseling profesional terpilih di Negara Bagian Kwara. Metode Penelitian korelasional diadopsi untuk penelitian ini. 120 psikolog konseling profesional yang dipilih secara acak menjadi peserta penelitian ini. Instrumen penelitian yang digunakan adalah Skala Faktor Penentu Efektivitas Konseling Persepsi (PCEDFS) dengan menggunakan empat format Likert yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Data yang dihasilkan dikenai Korelasi Pearson Product Moment dan Analisis Regresi Berganda. Temuannya menunjukkan adanya hubungan yang signifikan antara masing-masing variabel independen dan variabel dependen; variabel independen memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan secara bersama-sama terhadap prediksi variabel dependen dan seluruh variabel independen secara relatif memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap prediksi variabel dependen. Temuan-temuan tersebut dibahas dan rekomendasi-rekomendasi yang diperlukan disoroti. Implikasi dari temuan ini terhadap pengembangan kejuruan dan kewirausahaan juga dijelaskan.

ABSTRACT

Effective guidance and counselling service is germane to the much-anticipated socio-economic development of Nigeria as a nation. Much is needed to be done to achieve effective Guidance and Counselling Services in the Nigerian school system. This study aims to analyze contextual and situational factors (age, gender, teaching experience and counselling experience) determining the perceived counselling effectiveness of selected professional counselling psychologists in Kwara State. The correlational Research method was adopted for this study. 120 randomly selected professional counselling psychologists were the participants of this study. The instrument of the study was the Perceived Counselling Effectiveness Determining Factor Scale (PCEDFS) using four Likert formats was used for this study. The generated data were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. The findings showed a significant relationship between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable; independent variables made a significant joint contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable and all the independent variables relatively made a significant contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. The findings were discussed and necessary recommendations were highlighted. The implications of the findings for vocational and entrepreneurial development were explained.

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a course to believe that professional counsellors' prior teaching and counselling experience influences the effectiveness of SCS. This position accentuates the strong connection between school counselling and education. Proponents of prior teaching experience argue that experience is necessary for effective school counsellors to fully understand the school system and the environment in

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which they work (Kok, 2013; Mayor & Yu, 2012). They further purport that teachers may not fully accept school counsellors if they have not "walked the walk" and "talked the talk". One contention is that counsellors without classroom teaching experience may not be as effective or comfortable in conducting classroom guidance. In contrast, opponents contend that the prior teaching prerequisite may deter otherwise highly qualified candidates from entering the field (Mayor & Yu, 2012; Oderinde & Muraina, 2014). This argument, coupled with research that identified professionals with classroom teaching experience as having less favourable interviewing skills, adds to the overall discussion of whether or not prior classroom teaching experience is a necessity for being an effective school counsellor.

Correspondingly, researchers have indicated constituents within schools also have differing views about the necessity of prior teaching experience. Previous study noted that principals and other school administrators saw no significant difference in the effectiveness of school counsellors with and without teaching experience (Tang, 2019). In contrast, teachers seem to believe that school counsellors with previous classroom teaching experience are most effective (Gagnon et al., 2022). School counsellor educators are also divided on the issue. When surveyed, 75% of those interviewed believed prior teaching experience to be unnecessary, and deficits could be remedied through school counsellor training programs. The remaining 25% viewed prior teaching experience as vital to successful school counselling (Gibson & Cartwright, 2014; Kourkoutasa & Giovazolias, 2015). One school postulates school counsellors are the first educators who provide limited mental health practices. The other school has adopted CACREP's emphasis that school counsellors are primarily mental health professionals with specific training designed to work within a school setting. Previous study found that both schools are passionate about their viewpoints and often inflexible in their philosophy regarding school counsellors (Beames et al., 2022).

The importance of Guidance and Counselling Services (CGS) in Nigerian secondary schools cannot be over-emphasised. Guidance and Counselling Services are indispensable to achieving the aims and objectives of Education in Nigeria. It has been posited that effective discharge of GCS in Nigerian school systems can facilitate the upbringing of well-adjusted students who are more likely to create a positive and conducive environment for teaching and learning (Oluremi, 2014; Usman, 2016). Other study observed Guidance as a systematic process of helping an individual through education and interpretative procedures to gain a better understanding of his/her characteristics and potentialities and relate himself/herself more satisfactorily to social requirements and opportunities (Sinha & Satpathy, 2013).

Counselling could be explained as the interaction between professionally trained individuals and maladjusted persons in which the former assists the latter in understanding himself and his world (Kusmanto et al., 2014; Purwanti et al., 2022; Rahim & Hulukati, 2021). Counselling is also perceived as a person-to-person or person-to-person interaction between a professionally trained individual (counselling psychologist) and a person(s) experiencing maladaptive behaviour where the former assists the latter in getting solutions to their maladaptive experiences (Kourkoutasa & Giovazolias, 2015; Nissen-lie et al., 2013). In this era of student extremism, activism and cultism in our schools and campuses, there is increasing pressure on school counsellors to justify their relevance by designing appropriate and proven programmes to meet the challenges posed by these negative tendencies. Violent and revolutionary student behaviour gives birth to social problems that culminate in rape, murder, extortion, destruction of property, insecurity and general breakdown of law and order. There is an argument that counselling when properly adapted has the potential capacity to mediate students' excesses seen largely as a manifestation of a lack of self-awareness, confused identity and personality maladjustment (Agi, 2014; Harris et al., 2019).

The unfolding scenario in the Nigerian political system demands effective implementation of guidance and counselling services especially in the school system. These scenarios include but are not limited to unstable homes, poor academic performance, drug abuse, high-risk sexual exploitation, cultism and kidnapping. The latest concern to the government and stakeholders of education is the scenario where some graduates of primary school and secondary school are unable to pass common entrance examinations into secondary and tertiary levels. Also, some graduates of tertiary institutions no longer fit into the labour market. As laudable as the GCS is at all school levels in Nigeria, it has been observed that the service has not been effectively implemented in many schools in the country (Mustikawanto et al., 2019; Perdana & Kartidjo, 2022). Whereas, the school counsellor is supposed to facilitate the optimum development of students, remedy faulty development and prevent shortcomings (Friend et al., 2010; Susilowati & Suyatno, 2021), the recurrence and prevalence of the above-mentioned social and economic imbroglis is a pointer to the ineffectiveness of GCS.

This presupposes that research light should continually be beamed on means of ensuring effective SCS, particularly in secondary schools. One way of doing this is by empirically establishing the

determinants of effective SCS. This study intended to analyze the demographic determinants of perceived counselling effectiveness among selected professional counsellors in the Ilorin Metropolis.

2. METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive research design of correlational type. This design was adopted in the study because there was no intention of manipulating any variable (Lambert & Lambert, 2012; Seixas et al., 2018). The participants were observed directly in their natural setting. Several data including perceived counselling effectiveness, professional training, teaching experience, and counselling experience are to be collected from professional counsellors in Kwara State. A purposive sampling technique was used in the study. The professional counsellors within the Ilorin metropolis who are able and willing to volunteer information were considered participants of the study. The participants consisted of 100 purposively selected professional counsellors in Kwara State. They were made up of 68 male and 42 female counsellors in the state. The ages of the respondents range between 28 and 52 years with the mean age and standard deviation of ages respectively as 34.62 years and 13.37.

The instrument of the study was the Perceived Counselling Effectiveness Determining Factor Scale (PCEDFS) was used for this study. The instrument was self-constructed. The instrument was constructed using four Likert formats with response options ranging from very much like me, like me, not like me and not at all like me. The instrument contains 25 items and the minimum and maximum obtainable scores are respectively 25 and 100. The instrument was validated by giving the first draft of the instrument to three experts in the area of testing and assessment to check for face and content validity. The observation of each of the experts was used to bring about the final draft of the scale. Thirty copies of the final draft were administered to the professional counselling psychologist in Oyo State. Split-half method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. 0.83 was obtained as the Cronbach alpha of the reliability test.

The procedure for data collection involved the investigator requesting the willingness of the professional counsellors to participate in the study in one of the meetings of Kwara State Casson and the professionals responded overwhelmingly by agreeing to participate in the study. They were given copies of the questionnaire and were asked to submit it in subsequent meetings. One hundred and thirteen copies of the questionnaire were given out and 100 of the returned were found useful for the analysis. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis were the statistical procedures used to analyse the generated data. P.P.M.C. was used to determine the relationship between each of the independent variables (age, educational qualification, length of teaching services and length of counselling services) and the perceived counselling effectiveness of the professional counsellors in Kwara State. Multiple Regression analysis was used to determine the joint and relative contribution of the independent variables to the prediction of the dependent variable.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

In order to find out the relationships between each of the situational factors and the perceived counselling efficacy of professional counselling psychologists in Kwara State is show in Table 1.

Table 1. The Relationships Between Situational Factors

Variable	No	Mean	St. Dev	Df	r. Calc	Sig.	P
Edu Quality	120	4.53	0.5				
PCE	120	68.27	9.49	118	0.4	0.00	**
Age	120	42.25	8.36				
PCE	120	54.27	9.49	118	0.32	0.02	**
TE	120	2.95	0.21				
PCE	120	15.98	6.31	118	0.35	0.00	**
CE	120	42.25	5.36				
PCE	120	98.27	9.49	118	0.47	0.00	**

** (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

Table 1 shows the results obtained from testing hypothesis one. From the table, it is shown that r. calculated ranged from 0.32 to 0.47, the degree of freedom is 118 and Significance ranges from 0.00 to 0.02. From the results, it is shown that gender, age, teaching experience and counselling experience have a significant relationship with the perceived counselling efficacy of the participants.

To find significant joint contribution of the situational factors to the prediction of the perceived counselling effectiveness of professional counselling psychologists in Kwara State is use multiple regression is show in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. Multiple Regression Test

Model	Sum of square	Df	ANOVA		
			Mean square	F.Calculated	Sig.
Regression	5597.95	4	1399.48		
Residual	15185.95	115	132.05	10.6	0.00
Total	20783.89	119			

** (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

[Table 2](#) shows the results obtained from testing hypothesis two. From the table, it is shown that R-value = 0.62, $R^2 = 0.37$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.35$ and Standard Error of Estimate = 8.22. This shows that the situational factors contributed 35% to the variance in the perceived counselling effectiveness of professional counselling psychologists in Kwara State. The ANOVA table shows that F. calculated = 10.6 and this is found to be significant at 0.05 critical region. This implies that the situational factors made a significant joint contribution to the prediction of counselling effectiveness of professional counselling psychologists in Kwara State. The significant relative contributions of the situational factors to the prediction of the perceived counselling efficacy of professional counsellors in Kwara State is show in [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Relative Contribution of the Situational Factors

Model	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized coefficient	t.value	Sig.
Constant	147.74	11.01		13.42	0.00
Edu Quality	5.51	1.15	0.21	2.15	0.04
Age	3.39	1.01	0.22	2.17	0.03
Teaching Exp	0.79	0.29	0.31	2.75	0.00
Counselling Exp	8.02	2.96	0.42	3.27	0.00

[Table 3](#) shows that unstandardized B ranged from 147.74 to 0.79, Std. Error ranged from 11.01 to 0.29, Standardized Beta values ranged from 0.21 to 0.42 and t.values ranged from 13.42 to 2.15. It is shown from the table that Counselling experience has the highest relative contribution to the prediction of Perceived counselling effectiveness of the participants ($\beta = 0.42$). This is followed by Teaching experience ($\beta = 0.31$), Age ($\beta = 0.22$) and educational qualification ($\beta = 0.21$).

Discussion

Significant relationships were found between each of the situational factors and perceived counselling effectiveness. This means that the higher the qualification of a counselling psychologist, the better his perceived counselling effectiveness. The same is the case with age, teaching experience and counselling experience. People doing a particular thing over some time, stand to do it better. This also goes with the saying that the older the wine, the better the taste. Ageing comes with experience in the profession. Some students are comfortable with young counsellors while others will want to seek help from relatively older counsellors ([Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2014](#); [Supriyanto et al., 2020](#)). Previous study investigated the factors that influence the delivery of effective guidance and counselling services in all the 45 public secondary schools in the Laikipia District as perceived by school principals and teacher counsellors ([Bobga, 2016](#)). Two questionnaires, one for principals and another for teacher counsellors provided data which was analysed using descriptive statistics and t-tests. The findings showed that there is no significant difference in the perception of the effect of training, experience, workload, age and gender of the teacher-counsellors and students' attitudes on the delivery of guidance and counselling between the principals and teacher counsellors. Educational qualification is another important variable of this study. In Nigeria that most secondary schools do not have qualified Counsellors. Other study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between the qualification of guidance and counselling personnel and the quality of guidance services rendered to secondary school students ([Eliamani et al., 2014](#)).

Schools with qualified guidance and counselling personnel benefited more from the varieties of guidance services rendered by these personnel. The study concluded that counsellors must have a fairly high level of psychological sophistication in their professional education to meet the different expectations

of their students. Previous studies revealed that training, lack of time for counselling, facilities (e.g. a private room, reading and counselling materials) and teaching workload were some of the factors hindering effective counselling in secondary schools as perceived by school counsellors (Kolog et al., 2015; Omeje et al., 2016). Another study on 420 secondary school students in Benin City (Nigeria) found that insufficient counsellors; inadequate availability of counselling facilities; and the qualification of guidance and counselling personnel have an impact on the quality of guidance and counselling services (Omeje et al., 2016). It is posited that the quality of counselling services rendered depends a great deal on the training of the counsellors (Beames et al., 2022; Ogbodoadoga, 2022; Sa'idu & Abdu, 2019).

The situational factors jointly and significantly contributed to the prediction of the perceived counselling effectiveness of professional counselling psychologists. When the situational factors are combined, their contribution to the prediction of the perceived counselling effectiveness of the counselling psychologists in Kwara State is significant. This implies that the situational factors contributed 35% to the variance in the perceived counselling effectiveness of the participants. This joint contribution is found to be significant at 0.05 critical region. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are offered; Professional counselling psychologists should be given an enhanced capacity to deliver their services and should not be unduly bothered by responsibilities which are professionally not theirs. Professional counselling psychologists should be more motivated to effectively discharge their responsibilities and the co-workers in the school system should support the school counsellors in a way to be effective in carrying out counselling responsibilities. The principals who are the chief executives in secondary schools should work cooperatively with the school counsellors to make the attainment of counselling aims and objectives, a reality.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that situational factors had joint and relative contributions to the prediction of the perceived counselling effectiveness of the counselling psychologists in Kwara State. It was also observed that the situational factors contributed significantly to the prediction of the perceived counselling effectiveness of the participants. Equally, it was observed that counselling experience has the greatest relative contribution to the prediction of perceived counselling effectiveness. This is followed by teaching experience, age and educational qualification.

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