

Effect of Group Counselling on Attitude of Senior Secondary School Students' Towards Schooling in Federal Government College Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

Amos AUDU*

Department of Education, P M B 1069 Maiduguri, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, NIGERIA

Domiya G. ALI Ph.D

Department of Education, P M B 1069 Maiduguri, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, NIGERIA

Hamsatu J. PUR

Department of Education, P M B 1069 Maiduguri, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, NIGERIA

Abstract

The study investigated the effect of group counselling on attitude of senior secondary school students' towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. Two objectives were stated and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance. Experimental design was used for the study. The target population for the study comprised all the 356 (SS1) students in Federal Government College, Maiduguri. However, 30 students were drawn through random sampling technique as sample for the study. Three stages were used in collecting the data: pre-treatment, treatment and post-treatment phases. Students Attitudes Towards Schooling Scale (SATSS) developed by the researchers was used for data collection. Pilot study was conducted to determine the reliability of the instrument. The data collected was tested using a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient and reliability coefficient of .76 was obtained which showed that the instrument was reliable for the purpose of this study. t-test of independent samples was used to test hypotheses one and two. The results were considered at $P < .05$ level. The findings of the study showed that group counselling had significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students' towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri. It was further found that gender has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students' towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that group counselling promoted favourable attitude of students towards schooling. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that Guidance and Counselling Unit of the Federal Government College Maiduguri should re-orient the students through information service on the benefits of positive attitude towards schooling.

Keywords: effect, group counselling and attitude towards schooling

Introduction

Education is regarded as a strong pillar upon which every nation's economy depends on as well as a source of empowering the youths morally and intellectually. Secondary education is an instrument for national development. It also fosters the worth and development of the individual's and society at large. The Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) in her broad goals of secondary education enshrined in the National Policy on Education (NPE) stated that secondary education was designed to prepare an individual for useful living within the society and for higher education. Precisely, secondary education shall raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others and respect dignity of labour, unfortunately it is increasingly common to find in secondary schools nowadays unmotivated students who experience repeated academic failure, having negative attitude towards schooling which in many cases leads to dropping out of school.

The construct attitude towards school was first defined by Lewy (1986) as being the subjects' behaviours, their feelings expression regarding affection and judgments, favourable or unfavourable for the school and school experiences. The affective characteristics of it may be an important explanatory element of quality education and investment of individual actors in different dimensions that make up the school. The phrase 'attitude towards schooling' pertains to feelings about school activities in general and the value attached to schooling (Morrell & Lederman, 1998). Students' attitude towards schooling represents students positive or negative feelings associated with school. A child's attitude is often a more accurate predictor of his or her success in school. However, the key to changing the negative attitudes of students is to understand them first, get to know the reasons behind their attitudes and try to help them, although, this may require time, observation, infinite patience and counselling. What is required from counsellors, teachers, psychologists and school principals are new ways to combat these phenomena and increase students' interest in school and in addition improve their academic performance, until the students develop positive attitude towards schooling.

Akey (2006) asserted that students attitude towards schooling were deeply influenced by their cultural background, the kind and quality of family relationships, family and peers support and previous school performance. However, students' positive attitudes and behaviours play an important role in their academic success. The students' negative attitude towards schooling accompanied by discouraging performance of the students at the senior secondary school level have become a cause of great concern particularly to counsellors, educationists, school administrators, parents, government and even the nonprofessionals. School is an avenue where students should attain growth and development, thus, schooling can be described as the acquisition of curricular and co-curricular educational skills within the school system. Marijobanks (1992) reported that students attitude towards school demonstrated moderate statistically significant association with academic achievement.

Abdullahi, Atsua, Amuda, and Ago (2013) determined the effect of group study habit counselling on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Maiduguri Metropolis. The researchers adopted a quasi-experimental research design and used simple random sampling technique to select the sample of the study. The sampled students were grouped into two control and experimental groups. The experimental group was exposed to study habits counselling session while the control group was exposed to placebo. "Students Results Proforma" was designed and used for data collection on students' academic performance. The findings of the study revealed that study habit counselling techniques has a significant effect on academic performance of the students and that study habit counselling techniques do not significantly vary with gender. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that school counsellors should expose students to effective group study habit counselling techniques in their first year of study at school to improve their academic performance.

Mburza & Hanafi (2012) determined the effect of group counselling on the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Three objectives were stated and three null hypotheses were tested. The researchers adopted quasi-experimental design for the study. The population comprised 139 adult male parents from the four nomadic clans in the study area. Twelve male parents (sampled) were randomly selected from each of the four nomadic clans totaling 48 nomadic male parents. The researchers adapted Parents Attitude Towards Girl-Child Education Scale (PATGCES) developed by Dakasku (1998) for the study. Three (3) stages were used in collecting the data: pre-treatment, treatment and post treatment phases. The data collected were analyzed at $P < 0.05$ level using t-test of independent samples and one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings of the study showed that group counselling had a significant effect on changing the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State, Nigeria. It was further found out that the age of nomadic male Fulani parents and their clan differences had no significant effect on their attitude towards girl-child education.

Newton and Mwisukha (2009) determined relationship between students' attitude towards school, selected peer group activities and academic achievement of secondary school students in Nairobi, Kenya. Two of the objectives of the study were to examine relationship between students' attitudes towards school and their academic achievement and students' gender difference in relation to their attitudes towards school. The findings of the study revealed that there was positive significant relationship between students' attitudes towards school and their academic achievement. Furthermore, the findings of the study also showed that gender has no significant effect on the secondary school students' attitude towards schools in Nairobi, Kenya. This indicates that students favourable attitude towards schooling is the step for academic success and vice versa.

Igwe (2013) determined effect of individual and group counselling on secondary school students' truant behaviour in Abia State, Nigeria, and found that there was significant effect of group counselling on students truant behaviour in Abia State. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that there was a strong connection between negative attitudes towards schooling and students truancy in secondary schools. Akey (2006) believed gender has significant effects on students' attitude towards schooling in general. However, students' attitude towards school appear to be shaped by many factors such as; gender, teachers, learning environments, self-concepts, peers and parental influence. Makinde (1983) viewed counselling as an enlightened process whereby people help others by encouraging their growth. Counselling is generally used to help individuals to deal with variety of problem situations which includes negative attitude towards schooling, during counselling process it is expected that the counsellor should establish a warm, supportive, therapeutic relationship with the client using a variety of skills. Based on the strength of this relationship, the counsellor helps the client or clients explore problem areas, set goals and assists the client or clients to work through problems in order to establish a more meaningful and productive life style.

Furthermore, counselling is a process designed to help clients understand and clarify personal views of their life space and to learn to reach their self-determined goals through meaningful, well-informed choices and a resolution of problems of an emotional or interpersonal nature. Group counselling typically has the effect of enabling clients to deal with problematic dilemmas which impede their happiness and success in life and in their educational careers (Corey & Corey, 1992). Baker and Gerler (2001) reported that students who participated in a

group counselling programme had significantly less inappropriate behaviours and more positive attitude towards school than those students who did not participate in the group counselling.

Statement of the Problem

There has been an outcry against the poor performance of students in the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) in Nigeria. Students who achieved academically in secondary schools were usually interested in schooling (Glick, 1970 & Weiner, 1992). The researchers during three (3) months of counselling practicum in Federal Government College Maiduguri assessed the attitude of senior secondary school students' towards schooling and found that significant number of the students had negative attitude towards schooling. Moreover, secondary school students are expected to obtain certain amount of knowledge, skills and maintain a positive attitude towards schooling.

However, previous studies have shown that students positive attitude towards schooling positively correlate with their academic performance. Therefore, it is always in the interest of teachers and counsellors to assess the attitude of students towards schooling. Negative attitude of students towards schooling is of great concern to educators, counsellors and this trend if not checked may render purpose of secondary school education fruitless. It is against this background that the researchers investigated the effect of group counselling on attitude of senior secondary school students' towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to determine:

1. effect of group counselling on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri.
2. gender difference in the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance in the study:

Ho₁: group counselling has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri.

Ho₂: gender difference has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri.

Methodology

The design for the study was experimental design adopted to investigate the effect of group counselling on the attitude of senior secondary school students' towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. The target population for the study comprised all the senior secondary school students in their first year (SS1) in Federal Government College, Maiduguri, which was 356 students'. However, 30 students were selected from the population through random sampling technique as the sample for the study. The sample for the study comprised of 17 boys and 13 girls. Fifteen (15) students were assigned to experimental group and the other 15 students to control group through randomization using odd and even numbers. This population was chosen because it was observed by the researchers during counselling practicum, that negative attitude towards schooling were mostly exhibited by (SS1) students.

Students Attitude Towards Schooling Scale (SATSS) developed by the researchers was used for data collection. The SATSS consisted of two sections; Section A of the SATSS had items on demographic information of the students. The Section B also had 40 items in the form of statements to which the students were required to respond on a 5-Likert-type scale, response mode of Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Undecided (3), Agree (4) and Strongly agree (5) were used. The respondents were required to indicate their attitude towards schooling via the items. The instrument was validated by experts from Evaluation and Measurement unit in the Department of Education, University of Maiduguri. Pilot study was conducted to determine the reliability of the SATSS using Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient, reliability coefficient of .76 was obtained at $p < .05$, this showed that the instrument was reliable for the purpose of this study. The t-test of independent samples was used to test hypotheses one and two. The results were considered at $P < .05$ level.

Results

Ho₁: group counselling has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri.

Table 1: t-test of Independent Samples of Effect of Group Counselling on Attitude of Students towards Schooling in Federal Government College Maiduguri, Nigeria

	N	Mean	SD	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	t-Value	P-Value	Remarks
Post-Test Exp.	15	161.73	17.17	28	.001	9.73	.05	S
Post-Test Cont.	15	86.53	24.50					

Key: S = Significant

Table 1 indicates that the Sig. (2-tailed) value is .001 is less than .05, this implies that group counselling has significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri, Therefore, hypothesis which states that group counselling has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri was rejected.

Ho₂: gender difference has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

Table 2: t-test of Independent Samples of Difference in the Attitude of Student towards Schooling by Gender in Federal Government College Maiduguri, Nigeria

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	t-Value	P-Value	Remarks
Male	17	93.82	18.58	28	.132	1.57	.05	NS
Female	13	79.69	28.07					

Key: NS = Not Significant

Table 2 indicates that the Sig. (2-tailed) value is .132 which is greater than .05, this implies that gender difference has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri. Therefore, the second hypothesis which states that gender difference has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri was accepted.

Discussion

The findings of this study with respect to the first hypothesis which states that group counselling has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri; revealed that group counselling has significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri. The finding of the study agrees with the finding of Baker & Gerler (2001), Mburza & Hanafi (2012), Abdullahi, Atsua, Amuda & Ago (2013) and Igwe (2013) who reported that group counselling has a significant effect on attitude. The finding of this study suggests that group counselling have played significant role on the attitude of secondary school students towards schooling, therefore, effective group counselling is important to the secondary school students and is one of the crucial elements in improving student achievement.

The findings of the study with respect to the second hypothesis which states that gender difference has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri. This shows that gender difference has no significant effect on the attitude of senior secondary school students towards schooling in Federal Government College, Maiduguri. The findings of this study seemed to be consistent with that of Akey (2006) and Newton and Mwisukha (2009) who reported that gender had no significant effect on the attitude of secondary school students' schooling.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that group counselling promotes favourable attitude of students towards schooling in Federal Government College Maiduguri. Group counselling provided by school counsellors' significantly decreases participants' aggressive and hostile behaviours in addition to helping in changing the students negative attitude towards schooling. It was also concluded that gender was not a determinant factor when it comes to students' attitude towards schooling, other factors like biogenic and socio-cultural were concluded to be responsible.

Recommendations

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

1. Guidance and Counselling Unit of the Federal Government College Maiduguri should re-orient the students through information service on benefits of positive attitude towards schooling.
2. Since group counselling was effective positively in improving the attitude of students towards schooling in Federal Government College Maiduguri, therefore, group counselling is recommended for both boys

and girls with negative attitude towards schooling.

References

- Abdullahi, U., Atsua, T. G., Amuda, B. G. & Ago, H. A. (2013). Study habit counselling and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Maiduguri, Nigeria. *Journal of Research in National Development*, 11(2), 36-42.
- Akey, T. M. (2006). *School context, student attitudes and behavior, and academic achievement: An exploratory analysis*. New York: MDRC. Retrieved December 23rd, 2015, from <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/419/full.pdf>.
- Baker, S. B and Gerler, E. R. (2001). *Counseling in schools*. In D.C. Locke, J.E. Myers, and E.L. Herr (Eds.), *The Handbook of Counseling*, Thousand Oaks, C A: Sage Publications.
- Corey, M. S. and Corey, G. (1992). *Groups: Process and practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (2013). *National Policy on Education* (6th ed.). Lagos: Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) Press.
- Igwe, E. U. (2013). Effects of individual and group counselling on secondary school students' truant behaviour in Abia State. *An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, 7(2), 277-293.
- Lewy, A. (1986). *School Attitudes: General*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Linnehan, F. (2001). Examining racial and family educational background differences in high school student beliefs and attitudes toward academic performance. *Social Psychology of Education*, 5, 31–48.
- Makinde, O. (1983). *Fundamental of Guidance and Counselling*. London: Macmillan.
- Mburza, A. and Hanafi, U. M. (2012). Effect of group counselling on the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State, Nigeria. *Academic Research International*, 2(2), 441-447.
- Newton, M. A. and Mwisukha, A. (2009). Relationship between peer attitudes towards school, selected peer group activities and academic achievement of secondary school students in Nairobi, Kenya. *Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 4(1), 99-104.