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**EFFECTIVE COUNSELING CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND NATIONAL POLICY ON
 EDUCATION CASE STUDY OF BORNO STATE: NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The study examined the effective application of counselling curriculum and national policy on education in Borno State public secondary schools. The method of data used was repository that refers to collection of data stored in a centralised location. The schools have a combined total of 91 across 27 government area of the state. The data was analysed using simple percentage and count statistics. The study found that while some public secondary schools in metropolitan have successfully implemented counselling curricula, certain urban schools have disproportionately placed specialized staff members, while para counsellors train by the SUBEB were engage to meet up to the standards The state's public secondary schools are home to 88,621 pupils, although about 5 local government do not operate Moreover, research highlighted that there is a severe need for counselling equipment as well as better interpersonal contact skills to stimulate the realisation of counselling curriculum aims. In order to support the proper implementation of the secondary school counselling curriculum throughout the state, counselling implications were suggested.

Keywords: Effective Counselling, Curriculum Implementation, and National Policy

Introduction

The curriculum is made up of instructional techniques and learning experiences that the school has developed to help the student achieve specific goals (Denga, 2006: 145). Stated differently, it encompasses all meaningful endeavours aimed at the holistic growth of the student physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, and other. Naturally, the focus of these activities needs to be on the child in order to produce the intended outcomes. A child's development in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains is a prerequisite for receiving a quality education. Therefore, the counsellors are concerned with curriculum that will lead to the person's overall growth in order to improve the quality of education. Rather than seeing counselling as an afterthought or something to be tolerated, counselling curriculum takes a whole and comprehensive approach, integrating the counselling program into the educational process for all students. A number of guiding concepts that must be used to counselling enable our comprehension of the curriculum.

The Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) lists the following as guiding principles for

counselling: All students have access to counselling services; 2. In our schools, the provision of counselling services can be organized and scheduled as a curriculum; 3. Counselling sessions in our classrooms can be flexible and sequential; 4. Counselling ought to be viewed as an integrated component of the entire learning process; 5. Counsellors in our schools should offer specialized counselling services and interventions; 6. Counselling should be focused on assisting students in learning more effectively and efficiently; and 7. All staff members should be involved in counselling (CASSON Curriculum for schools in Nigeria, pp. 4-5). The curriculum for counselling encompasses the competencies that students normally build around three domains of development: academic/learning, career/vocation, and personal/social. This is a valuable component of the educational journey that aligns with Nigeria's five primary national goals as stated in the National Policy on Education, which are to build: Among other things, the educational philosophy of Nigeria holds that education is a tool for the advancement of the country. To this purpose, education encompasses the creation of

ideas, their integration for the advancement of the nation, and the integration of individuals and ideas. The following values must therefore be instilled in students at all educational levels: (a). respect for each person's worth and dignity; (b). belief in man's capacity for reason; (c). moral and spiritual values in interpersonal and human relations; (d). shared responsibility for the common good of society; (e). respect for the dignity of labor; (f). and the advancement of every child's physical, mental, and overall health (National Policy on Education (NPE) 2004 p. 7, NPE 1998 p. 1-3). In line with our overarching national goals, secondary education's main goals are to get students ready for both higher education and meaningful living in society. To be more precise, the secondary school education is supposed to Offer more primary school students the chance to receive an education of greater equality, regardless of their gender or their social, religious, or ethnic background.

Broaden its curriculum to accommodate students' varying talents, opportunities, and roles that become available to them after completing their secondary education; Equip students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology; Develop and Project Nigerian culture, art and language as well as the world's cultural Heritage; Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the ideas and feelings of others, respect the dignity of work and enjoy those principles outlined under our broad national arms and live as decent citizens; Foster Nigerian unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity; and Inspire its students with a desire for achievement and self-improvement both school and in later life (NPE, 2004,

These realistic national goals, along with the country's education policy, secondary school general goals and objectives, and the counselling curriculum, are intended to be implemented concurrently in all of Nigeria's secondary schools. But the real question is: How successful has the counselling curriculum been implemented in the public secondary schools in Borno State? Does the program have enough specialized staff to carry it out? How adequate are the students brought up in terms of interpersonal relationship s from kills? Are there adequate counselling equipment? The following inquiries served as the basis for the study: (a). Is there a significant difference between the use of specialized counselling staff and the successful

implementation of counselling curriculum? (b). Is there a significant difference between the use of counselling equipment and the successful implementation of counselling curriculum? (c). Is there a significant difference in the interpersonal relationship skills of boys and girls?

Importance of Counselling in Education According to WHO (2008), It is a collective agreement globally that counselling plays a very important role in education and some consider it as one pillars of educational system, especially in supporting students' academic prowess ringing from preparation of entry qualification to graduation point. Personal concern of a student's are considered as concern of a counsellor to provide the necessary assistance for the students to achieved goals that set to achieved. The social aspect of a student is also a concern of the counsellor Oliver, (2024). Counsellors are responsible to teache the students to exhibit a healthy socialization among peer group so as to create emotional development in portraying acceptable behaviours in the society. Effective counselling is no doubt fosters not only positive learning environment but creates a sustainable and positive educational atmosphere as well counselling promoting student success and well-being. Galbally, and Christodoulidi (2024).

Academic Benefits There are about 4 elements this study considered to be academic benefits under the importance of counselling in education, they are as follows:

1. Students improvement of academic Performance. according to Abubakar, et al (2024), an appropriate and effective counselling helps students set an achievable goals can even design a gun chart to achieved in line with the time and where to accomplish the stated goals. In dealing with how student achieve a set of goals is very imperative to prioritize every tasks ahead of time. Being a committed student should remember to develop study skills, Rufai, & Eyiemi, (2024).

2. According to Nhleko, et al (2024), every student should be enticed to visit counsellor or counselling centre for enhancement of motivation, counsellors possesses the ability, responsibility, and professionalism to cater for student's motivation. Counsellor upholds the confidentiality and personal

details of the students and also trained to motivate students to reach their full potentials, Khotimah, (2023).

3. Another factor that basically counsellors are responsible but is silent is better attendance of academic activities among the students, and considering all facets of educational task. Followed retention, student retention are mostly provided by counsellors through effective counselling so as to addresses both attendance and retention issues Nhleko, et al (2024).

4. Counsellors are persuaded to obtain training and retraining periodically so as to provide well informed career choices for their clients, pursuant to student's background. Counsellors are accountable in guiding students towards their career exploration and lifelong planning Abubakar, et al (2024). Personal and Social Benefits, These involves emotional Support by the counsellors the provision of a safe location or space for students to share their views and concerns.

Yusuf and Ibrahim, (2024), assert that students at all level of study must exhibit self-awareness so as to build consciousness through and Self-Esteem is developed. Saidu, et al 2023, maintained that Counselling is believed to be promoting self-understanding and confidence. Building positive relationship among or within students are often considered as part of counsellor's culpability, fostering positive relationships between students is an element of teaching decency and morality, as well parents too have huge role to play Adaka,et al. (2024).

According Abdullahi, and Bukar, (2025). Conflict resolution in a counselling context helps in resolving conflicts and disputes not only amongst students but applies to entity of community, hence, is worth of possessing the skills and ability. Empathy and Compassion are part of human feeling embedded with sense of positive thinking which are to be instilled by a counsellors showing through empathetic practice with a self-emotional imagination which can build a very strong social skills, Arman, (2023). Anger management is considered to be a behavioural exhibition of an individual to do away with unwanted attitudes and portray in healthy manner, and most often can be resolved through certain therapies, counselling addresses anger and aggression issues in several professional means Omumu., (2024). One behavioural tendency that needs to be carted away in our school

system is bullying among students. Bullying prevention should be forestalled at all levels of schools. Counsellors should strategically curtail bullying and promote anti-bullying strategies.

Moraca, and Vivian (2024). Muirhead,et al (2025), contained that diversity and Inclusion is a dealings that has to do with valuing and accepting individuals from different demographic background and accorded with inclusiveness at all levels of curriculum development. Hence, Counselling fosters respect and understanding. Curriculum developers are responsible for composing and implant mental health awareness into Nigerian school curriculum as well counsellors often educate students on benefits and prospect of mental health. Jude, et al. (2025). Importance of stress management should be inclusive in developing school curriculum, it provides wellbeing of a student both physically and mentally in stabilising a psychological status. Concluded that counseling services provides stress-reduction techniques to all level of students.

Okonkwo and Olannye,(2025). Hyseni et al. (2023), supported that there are some phenomenon that needs to be holistically addressed while at the point of developing curriculum such as anxiety and depression. Particularly examination anxiety and other forms of depression, curriculum developers should consider print out and other mediating effects on how to manage examination anxiety and depression. Counsellor's support and offer guidance resources to overcome these devastating situations. Counsellors and curriculum developers collaborate to bring trauma and Crisis Intervention while counsellors provide critical incident response

Chenube, (2024). Consideration of Special Needs Support is a crucial and has an imperative role to play, mostly considered as Inclusive education and counsellors facilitate inclusive learning environments. Roberts, (2023). On the understanding of Raji,et al. (2022), disability support counsellors are train to assist students with disabilities and insist on their inclusiveness. In Nigeria, the national policy on education recognizes gifted and talented students. There is a serious expectation to develop the uniqueness and capabilities of students. The policy emphasizes the importance of identifying gifted and talented children in schools and providing them with appropriate educational opportunities to enhance their skills and

talents. While on the other hand Counsellors are responsible to identify and nurture exceptional abilities among all categories of students.

Owolabi, et al. (2024). Members of the community and School administrators are duty bound to form a common platform for the benefits and Improvement of School climate. While counselling fosters positive school culture for students to exhibit their innate potentialities, Hedayati and Li, (2016). According to Akande, (2024), Parental engagement in the Counselling context is to persuade students' parents to be involved in school and community related activities as well as to facilitate parent-teacher-student communication. Moreover, community resources are potentially a vital means in which both human and natural resource are benefited by all members of the communities through which counsellors connect students with external services, Sheyapo, (2024).

Lawal, and Oluwatoyin, (2011), insist on policy development, on counsellors inform education policy. Counsellors should imbibe effective counselling strategies to meet up with the professional global standards, there are several techniques of counselling but not limited to Individual and Group Counselling, Hanafi. (2025). Classroom guidance is considered as method in which skills and knowledge were been instilled to students in the aspects of social development, social and emotional growth. Dwiyono, and Elias, (2025). Peer Mediation is a sort of conflict or disagreement between two or more students, while a train students help another students in resolving their agreement the counsellors come in where necessary. Parent-Teacher Conferences is a collection of teachers and parents to deliberate on issues related to student and their teacher, this type of Collaborative Problem-Solving plays a very significant portion in school setting, (Nelson, 2013). Benefits for educators' teacher support counsellors assist teachers with classroom management, professional development counsellors provide training on counselling techniques. Classroom Resources Counsellors offer educational materials.

Borno State Educational Challenges

The difficulties and obstacles faced by the education system in Borno State, Some of these challenges may include where identified as sectorial conflict and Insecurity which significantly affected stability peaceful coexistence, particularly due to the Boko

Haram insurgency. Which has led to the obliteration of schools, imposing internally displaces of families, and both students and teachers lack safety. Many people experienced displacement both internally and externally. Several other families have been displaced from their homes due to conflict, leading to disruptions in children's education camps often lack proper schooling facilities. As a result of the conflict bulk of school infrastructure suffers, inadequate, classrooms, and materials, limiting access to quality education. Many schools were destroyed or damaged. Access to Education: Geographic and socio-economic factors can limit access to schools, especially in rural areas. Some children may not be able to attend school at all due to distance or costs. Quality of Education: Even when schools are available, there may be challenges related to the quality of education, including a lack of trained teachers, insufficient learning materials, and overcrowded classrooms. Health Issues problems, including malnutrition and diseases, also affects students ability to perform well in school. Similarly, these challenges can hinder the educational attainment of students in Borno State, affecting their future opportunities and the broader development of the region.

Inadequate Counselling Curriculum Implementation in Nigeria

Inadequate counselling curriculum implementation in Nigeria, that is due to a various reasons or elements that contribute to the insufficient or ineffective application of counselling programs in educational institutions across Nigeria. Some of the factors that may be involved are: Lack of periodic training for counsellors and those who did not receive adequate training, limits their ability to ineffectively deliver the curriculum. Resource Constraints, Schools may lack the necessary resources, such as funds, materials, or facilities, to implement a comprehensive counselling curriculum. Limited Awareness: There may be a lack of awareness among school administrators, teachers, and parents about the importance of counselling services, leading to insufficient support. Inadequate Policies: Policies governing counseling services in schools may be weak or poorly enforced, leading to inconsistent implementation. Cultural Barriers are some the bottleneck in making prominent developments in counselling process as well as cultural attitudes toward

mental health and counselling may hinder students from seeking help or fully benefiting from counselling services. Overcrowded Curriculum: The existing academic curriculum may be too heavy, leaving little time for counselling programs to be properly delivered. Staff shortages and lack of qualified counselling staff can lead to insufficient support for students in need. These factors collectively contribute to the challenges faced in effectively implementing counselling curricula in Nigerian educational settings. Addressing these issues is crucial for improving the overall effectiveness of counselling services.

Problem Statement

There are numerous challenges in implementing counselling curriculum in educational institutions. It's imperative in promoting students' emotional well-being, and academic success. It concerns with personal development of students. Some of the challenges posed by security instability and other socio economic conflict exacerbated the need for a structured counselling program. However, National Policy on Education support the incorporation of counselling services at all categories of schools systems, there are significant gaps in execution of implementation across the schools. There are several issues affecting the effective implementation of the counselling curriculum in Borno State: they are as follows:

Shortage of Trained, professional and qualified counsellors. This gap impedes the provision of adequate support for students. Inadequate Infrastructural facilities hinders many schools in Borno State lack of necessary facilities and resources to facilitate counselling programs effectively, such as dedicated counselling rooms and materials. However, a clear metrics and evaluation frameworks to assess the effectiveness of counselling programs when they are implemented, making it difficult to determine their impact on student well-being and academic performance.

Effective Counselling Curriculum Implementation and National Policy on Education

Counselling curriculum is a structured educational program designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary for effective counselling practice. This might include, communication skills, psychological theories, ethical practices, and

techniques for helping individuals cope with various issues, as well as importance of effective implementing of counselling curriculum accordingly thus, a crucial for ensuring that the future counselling profession and the practicing counsellors are to be well-prepared for the job. Effective implementation is constitutes of Planning and Developing a specific, focus, and clearly outlying of the curriculum zeal to be achieved through the content drafted, and be precise on the methodologies. Similarly, teacher training and periodic retraining is very essential that's to ensure that counsellors, teachers, and educational facilitators are well knowledgeable, skilful and professionally oriented in counselling practices. Another aspects of concern is the availability counselling resources providing necessary resources such as print materials (textbooks), office tools and materials, as well as access to counselling laboratories or practice facilities. A promising assessment method is paramount Setting up a credible means for evaluating students' understanding perceptions and preparedness in counselling practices.

Key Strategic Avenues for Implementation:

Students should involve in active learning, so also students of secondary school categories should be engaging through role-playing, simulations, and case studies for proper understanding of what they learned. The implementation body should consider an integration of existing Programs this will give proper aligning of the counselling curriculum with other subjects taught within secondary school system so as to create a comprehensive educational experience. A regular and or periodic continuous evaluation of assessment of the curriculum effectiveness is very vital, and making necessary adjustments time after time based on feedback from students and departments.

Nigeria National Policy on Education (NPC)

NPC Is the agency responsible for coordinating implementing educational policies, The NPE in Nigeria was established to provide a framework for educational planning and development. Has the mandate and aims to ensure that education is accessible for all Nigerian children, equitable for all classes of children, and to uphold high quality education. Similarly, counselling services are one pillars of education in schools and are a vital component of this policy. The role of counselling in education is believed to be very essential. According

to the National Policy, counselling services are not only vital but considered as part of the educational process. NPE has the mandate and enshrine on its policy that supporting student development in the aspects of their educational career to navigate academic prowess successfully so as to overcome their personal and social challenges are paramount. The system also provides avenues for enhancing educational outcomes. Providing a substantive guidance which can leads to improved learning experiences and performance. Another important aspect is create and promote mental health services in addressing issues related to mental well-being among the students as well as emotional stability within the school environment.

Policy Implementation Strategies:

Institutional framework is a vital component in a school system, whereas establishing school counselling units in various educational institutions is important so as to

provide dedicated services. Meanwhile, counsellor's professional development should take into cognisance training and retraining for counsellors attending professional conferences and teachers to ensure they are well equipped in attending workshops and other teacher developmental concerns to support students effectively. Monitoring and evaluation plays a crucial part in continuous assessment of counselling programs, this will ensure the needs of students are met accordingly and comply with national standards.

Methodology

This study used repository method of data collection. The total schools involved were 91 public secondary schools across 27 local government with 88,621 enrolments, the schools run both JSS and SS and all the schools enrollee are mix in gender. The female outnumbered the male student that was due to the initial enrolments.

Table 1: shows local government number of schools, counsellors and percentage

	Local Government Area	No. schools	No. Counsellors	Percentage
1	Abadam		Nil	Nil
2	Askira	10	4 Para counsellor	0.4%
3	Bama	4	2 Para counsellor	0.08%
4	Bayo	2	1 Para counsellor	0.02%
5	Biu	8	4 Para counsellor	0.32%
6	Chibok	2	1 Para counsellor	0.02%
7	Damboa	3	1 Para counsellor	0.03%
8	Dikwa	1	1 Para counsellor	0.01%
9	Gubio	1	1 Para counsellor	0.01%
10	Guzamala	-----	Nil	Nil
11	Gwaza	4	1 Para counsellor	0.04%
12	Hawul	5	1 Para counsellor	0.2%
13	Jere	6	6 Para counsellor	0.36%
14	Kaga	2	1 Para counsellor	0.02%
15	Kalabalge	-----	Nil	Nil
16	Konduga	6	6 Para counsellor	0.36%
17	Kukawa	-----	Nil	Nil
18	Kwaya	4	4 Para counsellor	0.16%
19	Mafa	1	1 Para counsellor	0.01%
20	Magumeri	1	1 Para counsellor	0.01%
21	Marte	-----	Nil	Nil
22	Metropolis	22	22 Para counsellor	4.84%
23	Mobar	1	1 Para counsellor	0.01%
24	Monguno	2	2 Para counsellor	0.04%
25	Ngala	1	1 Para counsellor	0.01%
26	Nganzai	1	1 Para counsellor	0.01%
27	Shani	4	4 Para counsellor	0.16%
	Total	91		

The table 1 above shows the 27 local governments, while 5 local governments were not operational as at the time this data was collected. However, the school counsellors were train by the Borno State Universal

Basic Education (SUBEB) as Para counsellors. The highest number para counsellors indicated were 22 with 4.84% least with para counsellor 0.01%

Conclusion and Recommendation

Counselling is essential in education, promoting academic success, personal growth, and social-emotional well-being. Effective counselling strategies support students, educators, and parents, fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment. Combining effective counselling curriculum implementation with the objectives of Nigeria's National Policy on Education can significantly enhance the educational experience of students. Encouraging a supportive and well-structured counselling service is

vital for helping students thrive and ensuring the overall success of the educational system in Nigeria. An gross shortage of counsellors was shown in the result, however, the serving and existing are para counsellors train by SUBEB to achieved the stated goals met up to the national standards. This study hereby recommends that there is the need to employ more counsellors and placed them on training, as well as provision of all basic tools and structures for the counsellors to operate effectively.

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