QUALITY ASSURANCE REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVENESS OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated quality assurance required for effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Three research questions were answered while three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Multistage random sampling was used for selecting 178 guidance counsellors across 104 secondary schools in the two education zones (Aguata and Otuocha) used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured close-ended questionnaire titled: "Quality Assurance of Guidance and Counselling Services Questionnaire (QAGCSQ)". The instrument was validated by three experts while the reliability was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability method which yielded a coefficient of 0.792. Data for the study were collected with the help of six research assistants. One hundred and seventy eight (178) copies of the questionnaire were administered on the respondents out of which 162 copies were completely filled and retrieved, representing 91% rate of return. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions while t-test statistics was used for testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. From the data collected and analysed, the study identified 11 competencies related, 8 materials and facilities related and 9 funding related items for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Result on hypotheses tested showed no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female guidance counsellors on quality assurance required for effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings, the study among others recommended that there should be recruitment of qualified guidance counsellors for effective services to secondary school students in public schools in the state, and provision of relevant materials and facilities in schools to make the work of guidance counsellors more effective for quality assurance.

Keywords: Guidance and counseling, quality assurance, effectiveness, secondary schools.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a paramount sector in the growth and development of any nation. Olowoselu and Bello (2015) described education as the key that unlocks the development of personal and national potential and all other kinds of rights and powers in the world. In Nigeria, the education system is divided into Kindergarten, primary, secondary and tertiary education (UNESCO, 2011). Secondary school education comes after primary school before tertiary institution. Fabunmi (2005) defined secondary school education as the form of education, which children receive after primary education and before the tertiary level. Secondary education is education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage (Federal Government of

Nigeria, 2014). Secondary education in Nigeria started in the year 1859 when the CMS Grammar School Lagos was opened (Mbayuav, 2017). The objectives of secondary school education according to Federal Government of Nigeria (2014) are to (i) provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, (ii) offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles, (iii) provide trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades, (iv) develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage, (v) inspire students with a desire for self improvement and achievement of excellence, (vi) foster national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity, (vii) raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feeling of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good citizens; (viii) provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.

In his own view, Biswalo (1996) summarized the objectives of secondary school education into two which are: (i) to nurture students who have varying abilities, capacities, interest and unlimited potentials and (ii) to prepare those individual to become effective functioning members of their changing societies. The aforementioned objectives of secondary school education are so essential to the development of the nation and cannot be achieved without a functional guidance and counselling services in secondary schools.

Guidance and counselling according to Birichi and Rukunga (2009) is a practice that had been in existence for a long time and had been passed on from one generation to another. Ebizie, Enajedu and Egenti (2016) viewed guidance and counselling in schools as that area of the schools provision that is specifically directed towards helping pupils realize their full potential in preparing for adult and working life. In the opinion of Akinade (2012), guidance and counselling is a process of helping an individual become fully aware of his/her self and the ways in which he is responding to the influences of his/her environment. Salgong, Ngumi and Chege (2016) noted that guidance and counselling are essential elements in discipline management of people in all societies even the most primitive societies grew out of the necessity of guiding individual's behavior patterns in the interest of the group. Similarly, Ebizie, Enajedu and Egenti (2016) submitted that guidance and counselling services in school develop, assess and improve educational programmes; enhance teaching and improve the competence and confidence of the students. Ajowi and Simatwa (2010) shared that the main goal of guidance and counselling is to help students or clients understand themselves in order to deal with life experiences in a healthy manner, by being able to recognize the factors that cause problems and look for appropriate methods of resolving or avoiding the situations that may lead to unhealthy lifestyles.

It is worrisome to note that guidance and counselling status in enhancing students' discipline in Nigerian public secondary schools have struggled with the problem of lack of recognition over the years. While some school management made time available for counsellors to provide guidance and counselling services to their students, others felt it was a waste of precious time and resources. Others relegated it as an after-school activity. They see the education of the students as merely the provision of academic knowledge and skills in reading and writing rather than offering guidance and counselling services to the students. This is the current situation of guidance and counselling services in most Nigerian public secondary schools. Interactions of the researcher with some secondary school managements in Anambra State further confirmed the poor orientation of school management about the services of guidance counsellors in secondary schools. Hence, for objectives of secondary school education to be achieved on

sustainable basis, there is need for quality assurance in guidance and counselling of Nigerian secondary school education system.

Quality assurance is a global term used to incorporate the quality policy, quality management and quality control functions, which combine to assure the client that the product will be consistently manufactured to the required condition. Quality assurance is a way of measuring, improving, and maintaining the quality of any human activity that has a value (Obadara & Alaka, 2013). According to Ogunlana and Amusa (2008), quality assurance has to do with standard for the various processes and activities that lead to the production of a product and services. Arikewuyo (2004) asserted that quality assurance process involves setting up standards and ensuring that the standards established are kept and reviewed periodically. It entails procedure for assessing quality parameters, quality standards, regular quality assessment, periodic review of set standards and evaluation. Odukoya, Chinedu, George, Olowookere and Agbude (2015) gave a detailed account of quality assurance in academic system as multidimensional concept embracing functions and activities such as student admission, promotion and certification process, staff recruitment and promotion, curriculum development, teaching, learning, research, infrastructural development, equipments, community development and related issues. Quality assurance in Anambra State secondary school education system signifies the ability of the public secondary schools to meet the career and education needs of the students in relation to the quality of skills acquired for required outputs in future endeavours. This study therefore was carried out to determine quality assurance for effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria

Purpose of the Study

The broad objective of the study was to determine quality assurance for effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined:

  i.   Guidance counsellors' competencies for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.
  ii. Materials and facilities for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria
  iii. Funding for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Based on the above three specific purposes, the study answered the following three research questions:

  i.   What are the guidance counsellors' competencies required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?
  ii. What are the required materials and facilities for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?
  iii. What are the significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female guidance counsellors based on competencies required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female guidance counsellors on required materials and facilities for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

H0₃: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female guidance counsellors on the significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

METHOD

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Anambra State to investigate quality assurance for effectiveness of guidance and counselling services. The study specifically answered three research questions and tested three null hypotheses. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design according to Rouse (2019) is the collection of data attained by asking individuals questions either in person, on paper, by phone or online using questionnaire through primary research which is the gathering of first-hand data from its source. In the opinion of Tanny (2018), descriptive survey research design is a procedure in quantitative research in which investigators administer questionnaire to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of the population.

In this study, copies of structured questionnaire were administered to respondents for data collection for the study. Anambra State is divided into six education zones (Umezinwa and Ngozi, 2018). These include: Awka, Aguata, Nnewi, Otuocha, Ogidi and Onitsha education zones. The samples for the study were selected using multistage random sampling. Firstly, random sampling technique was used to select two education zones (Aguata and Otuocha) for the study. The second stage involved sampling of three Local Government Areas (LGAs) from each of the education zones making six Local Government Areas for the study. At the third stage, all public secondary schools in the six Local Government Areas were involved in the study. The fourth stage of the sampling involved selection of all the 178 guidance counsellors in the entire 104 secondary schools in the two zones as sample for the study.

The instrument for data collection for the study was a structured close-ended questionnaire titled: "Quality Assurance of Guidance and Counselling Services Questionnaire (QAGCSQ)". The questionnaire was divided into four sections (A to D). Section A was structured to obtain personal information of the respondents such as gender and name of schools. Sections B, C and D were structured to obtain data on research questions 1, 2 and 3 for the study. The response options for research questions 1, 2 and 3 were structured on a 4-point rating scale of: Highly Required (HR); Moderately Required (MR); Less Required (LR) and Not Required (NR) with corresponding values 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts which include two guidance counsellors from Delta State University, Abraka and one from Federal College of Education Technical Asaba, Delta State. For the purpose of ascertaining the reliability of the instrument, 15 copies of the validated instrument were trial-tested on 15 guidance counsellors in public secondary schools in Delta State. The data collected for the trial testing were analysed using Cronbach Alpha reliability method which yielded a coefficient of 0.792. This implied that the instrument is about 79% reliable for collecting data for the study.

The data for the study were collected with the help of six research assistants with each manning data collection in each of the six Local Government Areas used for the study. The researcher coordinated the data collection activities of the research assistants. One hundred and seventy eight (178) copies of the questionnaire were administered on the respondents out of which 162 copies were completely filled and retrieved, representing 91% rate of return. Data collected

were analysed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions while t-test statistics was used for testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In taking decision on the research questions, cut-off point of 2.50 was used on 4-point rating scale which was computed thus:

$$\frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} \quad = 2.50 \ (Cut-off \ point).$$

Based on the obtained cut-off point value, any item with mean value of 2.50 and above was interpreted as "Required" while items with mean values less than 2.50 were interpreted as "Not Required". On the null hypotheses tested, the hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted when the t-calculated (t-cal) value was less than the t-critical (t-tab) value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance while hypothesis of no significant difference was to be rejected when the t-calculated (t-cal) value was greater than the t-critical (t-tab) value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS
Research Question One
What are the guidance counsellors' competencies required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

The data for answering research question one are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Guidance Counsellors on Competencies required for Quality Assurance of Guidance and Counselling Services in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria (N= 162)

SN	Competency items required in guidance and counselling for quality assurance are:	$\overline{X}$	SD	Rmks
1	Recruitment of professionally competent guidance counsellors in secondary schools.	3.57	0.61	**Rqd**
2	Giving adequate orientation of newly recruited guidance counsellors for effective service and quality assurance.	3.62	0.54	**Rqd**
3	Subjecting guidance counsellors for constant in-service training for skill update in counselling service delivery to students.	3.64	0.52	**Rqd**
4	Capacity building of guidance counsellors in contemporary technologies in rendering quality counselling services to students.	3.56	0.59	**Rqd**
5	Recruitment of guidance counsellors who are computer literate for quality assurance in service delivery.	3.41	0.62	**Rqd**
6	Recruitment of guidance counsellors with good communication skills and competencies.	3.36	0.64	**Rqd**
7	Organizing conferences, workshop and seminars for guidance counsellors for improved skills and competencies in service delivery.	3.27	0.61	**Rqd**
8	Ensuring framework for acquisition of higher degrees by guidance counsellors.	3.59	0.56	**Rqd**
9	Recommending guidance counsellors for foreign studies for quality assurance in service delivery to students.	3.26	0.67	**Rqd**
10	Training guidance counsellors on good human relations for effective service delivery to secondary school students.	3.28	0.71	**Rqd**
11	Ability of the school guidance counsellors to improvise materials for quality assurance in guidance and counselling services	3.26	0.68	**Rqd**
	Pooled Mean	**3.44**	**0.61**	**Rqd**

Note: $\overline{X}$ = *Mean;* **SD** = *Standard Deviation;* **Rqd** = *Required;* **NR** = *Not Required.*
Source: Survey Data, 2019.

The result in Table 1 shows that the mean values of the 11 items were between the range of 3.26 and 3.64 which are all greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50. This indicates that the 11 identified items in the table are guidance counsellors' competencies required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The pooled mean for the cluster is 3.44 which further buttress that the identified items are required competency items for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services. The standard deviation values of the 11 items ranged from 0.52 to 0.71 which signifies that the responses of the respondents are close to one another and the mean.

Hypothesis One

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female guidance counsellors based on competencies required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.
        The data for testing hypothesis one are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: The t-test Statistics of Mean Ratings of Male and Female Guidance Counsellors on Competencies required for Quality Assurance of Guidance and Counselling Services in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Variables	N	$\overline{\text{X}}$	SD	DF	Std. Error	t-cal	t-tab	Level of sig.	Rmks
Male G/C	63	3.42	0.52						
Female G/C	99	3.46	0.49	160	0.033	0.41	1.96	0.05	NS

Note: NS = Not Significant at 0.05.

The result on hypothesis one in Table 2 presents the t-test statistics with t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.41 which is less than the t-critical (t-tab) value of 1.96 at 160 degree of freedom. This suggests that there is no significant ($p<0.05$) difference between the mean ratings of the responses of male and female guidance counsellors on competencies required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The null hypothesis (**H0₁**) of no significant ($p<0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents is therefore accepted for hypothesis one.

Research Question Two

What are the required materials and facilities for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?
The data for answering research question two are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Mean Ratings of Guidance Counsellors on required Materials and Facilities for Quality Assurance of Guidance and Counselling Services in Public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria (N= 162).

SN	Required materials and facilities for quality assurance of guidance and counselling are:	$\overline{X}$	SD	Rmks
1	Provision of updated ICT facilities for quality assurance in guidance and counselling.	3.67	0.50	**Rqd**
2	Improved internet connectivity to schools for quality assurance in guidance and counselling services.	3.29	0.78	**Rqd**
3	Provision of photocopying and other technology based services to users for quality assurance.	3.24	0.78	**Rqd**
4	Provision of vehicles in public secondary schools for service delivery of guidance counsellors.	2.39	0.98	**NR**
5	White boards and markers should be provided in guidance counsellors offices for quality assurance and service delivery.	3.51	0.63	**Rqd**
6	A well equipped library in schools with standard guidance counsellors textbooks and materials.	3.53	0.62	**Rqd**
7	Good and standard sporting field and equipment to stimulate students interest in other extra-curricula activities.	3.49	0.61	**Rqd**
8	Provision of well furnished staff and principals offices guarantee quality assurance of guidance and counselling services.	2.42	0.64	**NR**
9	There should be adequate provision of current guidance and counselling textbooks in schools for quality assurance.	3.63	0.55	**Rqd**
10	A conducive learning and classroom environment for guidance counsellors service delivery.	3.23	0.87	**Rqd**
	Pooled Mean	**3.24**	**0.58**	**Rqd**

*Note: $\overline{X}$ = Mean; **SD** = Standard Deviation; **Rqd** = Required; **NR** = Not Required.*
Source: Survey Data, 2019.

The result in Table 3 reveals that the mean values of 8 out of the 10 items in the table were between the range of 3.23 and 3.67 which are all greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50. This indicates that the 8 items are required materials and facilities items for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The mean values on items 4 and 8 are 2.39 and 2.42 respectively which are in each case less than the cut-off point value of 2.50 indicating that the two items are not required materials and facilities items for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools. The pooled mean for the cluster is 3.24 further supports that the identified items are required competency items for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services. The standard deviation values of the 10 items ranged from 0.50 to 0.98 which signifies that the responses of the respondents are close to one another and the mean.

Hypothesis Two

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female guidance counsellors on required materials and facilities for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.
The data for testing hypothesis two are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: The t-test Statistics of Mean Ratings of Male and Female Guidance Counsellors on required Materials and Facilities for Quality Assurance of Guidance and Counselling Services in Public Secondary Schools

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Std. Error	t-cal	t-tab	Level of sig.	Rmks
Male G / C	63	3.28	0.44						
Female G / C	99	3.19	0.60	160	0.021	0.83	1.96	0.05	**NS**

Note: NS = Not Significant at 0.05.

The result on hypothesis two in Table 4 presents the t-test statistics with t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.83 which is less than the t-critical (t-tab) value of 1.96 at 160 degree of freedom. This indicates that there is no significant ($p<0.05$) difference between the mean ratings of the responses of male and female guidance counsellors on required materials and facilities for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis (**H0₂**) of no significant ($p<0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents is accepted for hypothesis two.

Research Question Three
What are the significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?
The data for answering research question three are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Mean Ratings of Guidance Counsellors on the significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria   (N= 162).

SN	Significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services are:	$\overline{X}$	SD	Rmks
1	Adequately funding of guidance and counselling services for quality assurance.	3.59	0.55	**Rqd**
2	Alternative forces of fund for effective guidance and counselling services.	3.43	0.56	**Rqd**
3	Judicious spending of available funds and accountability for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services.	3.36	0.59	**Rqd**
4	Financial incentives for guidance and counselling services to motivate personnel for quality service.	3.45	0.59	**Rqd**
5	Provision of loan facilities to school guidance counsellors for effective service delivery in schools.	2.47	0.82	**NR**
6	Adequately funding of the development of guidance counsellors for quality assurance in service delivery in schools	3.35	0.63	**Rqd**
7	Timely release of fund for guidance and counselling library to be well stocked with current books and journals.	3.39	0.68	**Rqd**
8	Monthly imprest for effective running of activities in guidance and counselling services for assuring quality.	3.66	0.53	**Rqd**
9	Steady increase in staff salary for improved morale and quality service delivery.	3.64	0.55	**Rqd**
10	Intervention fund for upgrading technologies and replacement of obsolete technologies for quality assurance in guidance & counselling.	3.31	0.62	**Rqd**
	Pooled Mean	**3.37**	**0.61**	**Rqd**

*Note: X = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; **Rqd** = Required; **NR** = Not Required.*
Source: Survey Data, 2019.

The result in Table 5 shows that the mean values of 9 out of the 10 items in the table were between the range of 3.31 and 3.66 which are all greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50. This indicates that the 9 items are significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The mean value for item 5 was 2.47 which is less than the cut-off point value of 2.50 indicating that item 5 in the table is not required funding item for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools. The pooled mean for the cluster is 3.37 further supports that the identified funding items are required competency items for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services. The standard deviation values of the 10 items ranged from 0.53 to 0.82 which indicates that the responses of the respondents are close to one another and the mean.

Hypothesis Three

H0₃: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female guidance counsellors on the significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

The data for testing hypothesis three are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: The t-test Statistics of Mean Ratings of Male and Female Guidance Counsellors on the Significances of Funding required for Quality Assurance of Guidance and Counselling Services in Public Secondary Schools.

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Std. Error	t-cal	t-tab	Level of sig.	Rmks
Male G / C	63	3.38	0.52						
Female G / C	99	3.36	0.55	160	0.019	0.23	1.96	0.05	**NS**

Note: NS = Not Significant at 0.05.

The result on hypothesis three in Table 6 presents the t-test statistics with t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.23 which is less than the t-critical (t-tab) value of 1.96 at 160 degree of freedom. This indicates that there is no significant ($p<0.05$) difference between the mean ratings of the responses of male and female guidance counsellors on the significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Hence, the null hypothesis (**H0₃**) of no significant ($p<0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents is accepted for hypothesis three.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study identified guidance counsellors' competencies required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools as: recruitment of professionally competent guidance counsellors in secondary schools, adequate orientation of newly recruited guidance counsellors for effective service and quality assurance, constant in-service training for skill update in counselling service delivery to students, capacity building of guidance counsellors in contemporary technologies in rendering quality counselling services to students, ensuring framework for acquisition of higher degrees by guidance counsellors and recruitment of guidance counsellors with good communication skills and competencies among others. The findings of this study supported that of Obadara and Alaka (2013) that human capacities should be built in the area of quality assurance so as to ensuring quality in Nigerian

universities. Akinbobola and Ikitde (2008) on strategies for achieving quality assurance in Science Education in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria found out that quality teachers should be trained and employed in schools, quality supervision, there should be increased provision for instructional materials, facilities and equipment necessary for enhancing teaching and learning in schools.

This study on research question two identified the required materials and facilities for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools to include: updated ICT facilities for quality assurance in guidance and counselling, improved internet connectivity to schools for quality assurance in guidance and counselling services, photocopying and other technology based services to users for quality assurance, a well equipped library in schools with standard guidance counsellors textbooks and materials, good and standard, sporting field and equipment to stimulate students' interest in other extra-curricular activities and a conducive learning and classroom environment for guidance counsellors service delivery among others. The findings of this study agreed with the report of a study by UNESCO (2008) that teacher's quality, availability of instructional materials and the use of student-centred teaching methods will guarantee quality assurance in Nigerian educational system.

The significances of funding required for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools as found out in this study include: adequately funding of guidance and counselling services for quality assurance, alternative forces of fund for effective guidance and counselling services, judicious spending of available funds and accountability for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services, financial incentives for guidance and counselling services to motivate personnel for quality service, adequately funding of the development of guidance counsellors for quality assurance in service delivery in schools and timely release of fund for guidance and counselling library to be well stocked with current books and journals. The findings of this study agreed with the report of a study by UNESCO (2008) where it was also found that adequate funding of education facilitate capacity building in education system.

CONCLUSION

The weak guidance and counselling framework in Nigerian public secondary school level is worrisome. Hence, quality assurance in guidance and counselling services in secondary schools will help to ensure achievement of the stated objectives of secondary school education in the country. This study investigated quality assurance required for effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in public secondary schools using Anambra State as a case study. Data were collected from school guidance counsellors. From the data collected and analysed, the study identified 11 competencies related, 8 materials and facilities related and 9 funding related items for quality assurance of guidance and counselling services in public Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Results on hypotheses tested showed no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female guidance counsellors on quality assurance required for effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- There should be recruitment of qualified guidance counsellors for effective services to secondary school students in public schools in the state.
- It is also recommended that relevant materials and facilities should be provided in schools to make the work of guidance counsellors more effective for quality assurance.
- There should be constant in-service training of guidance counsellors in the schools on the application and usage of interactive and student-centred counselling methods.
- There should be adequate provision of school plants, facilities, well equipped libraries for guidance and counselling and conducive teaching and learning environment in schools for quality assurance.
- There should be adequate funding of guidance and counselling services to ensure standard is maintained for quality assurance in public secondary schools.

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