



<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17478244>

Influence of Guidance and Counselling on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Rivers State

Dr. (Mrs.) Patricia Ellah Okim Agbor¹, Vivien Voke Sota² & Margaret Ibhadie Aziegbé³

Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling
Faculty of Education, Rivers State University, Nkpolu Oroworokwu
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
Phone Number: 08033697766/08033167991 and 08033103280
Email: patricia.agbor@ust.edu.ng / vivien.sota...st.edu.ng/
megaziegbé@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of Guidance and Counselling on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Rivers State. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher developed three (3) specific objectives, three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. The research design used for the study was a descriptive research design. The population of the study was Seventeen Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Two (17,972) SS II students. There are 9,817 female and 8,155 male SS II students. The total sample size for this study was 400 SS II students. That is 220 female and 180 male SS II students. The researcher used simple random sampling technique. The instrument used for the data collection was self structured questionnaire titled: Influence of Guidance and Counseling on Academic Performance of Students Questionnaire. The data gathered were analyzed using mean score and standard deviation for the research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significant. Based on the analysis of the data, the findings of the study reveals that information services, referrals services and placement services have positive and significant influence on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that: government through the school management should implement all the services required for a guidance and counselling programme and government, through school management and counselor should always organize orientation programme for students to orient them on the needs of information services to students' career choice.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Influence, Referrals, information, guidance and counseling, services, students

INTRODUCTION

With the recent increased and complicated nature of things going on in our society, industrial and technological development, all going hand-in-hand, the succeeding generation will find it difficult to adjust themselves both to the society, work, family and schools. Failure in proper adjustment to all the aspect of these situations mentioned, could affect the education of young people and expose them to environmental as well as Personal problems in development. The need to address these challenges and to promote educational success and health life, therefore, call for exposure to Guidance and Counseling programs by individual/students. Bark (2013), states that Guidance and Counseling are the assistance made available by qualified and trained persons to an individual of any age to help him to manage his own life activities develop his own points of view, make his own decisions and carry his own burden. According to Herman (2015), Guidance and Counseling services are designed to help individuals with psychological problems to voluntarily change their behavior and to enable them make wise future decisions, clarify their ideas, perceptions, attitudes and goals. Also Anagbogu (2022), defined Guidance and Counseling as a

process of helping the individual towards overcoming obstacles to his/her personal growth which could be educational, social or personal, wherever it may be encountered.

The word process means that Guidance involves a series of actions or steps leading towards a goal. On the other hand, Mute and Ndambuki (2022), referred to 'Counseling' as a learning – oriented process which usually occurs in an interactive relationship with the aim of helping the client learn more about him/herself. Counseling is also defined according to Eze (2022), as an inter-personal relationship between a professionally trained individual (counsellor) and a troubled individual (counselee) whereby the former utilizes his professional skills to help the latter to be able to solve his educational, vocational, personal and social problems.

The role or functions of Guidance and Counseling have increase overtime in most secondary schools in Nigeria; its influence is mostly noticed in the Academic performance of secondary schools' students. Guidance and Counseling are two closely interrelated concepts and each determines the availability and efficiency of the other. According to Makinde (2014), 'Guidance' refers to a broad area of all educational activities and services aimed at assisting individual students to understand themselves and adjust to school life. The adoption of Guidance and Counseling services in most secondary schools in Nigeria was as a result of behavioral pattern of students in most schools (Gerardo, 2016). The schools environment, peer group and their relationship with teachers has a role to play in the Academic performance of students. Guidance and Counseling is therefore aimed at bringing about maximum development and self- realization of human potential for the benefit of the individual and the society. In a school, the programme assists students in harmonizing their abilities, interest and values and enables them to develop their full potential. It directs students on appropriate career and subject choices, selecting discipline, education, social and psychological problems and general adjustment to school life. Also Gibson, (2022), states that Guidance and Counseling services prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the result of their choices.

In a school, the programme assists students in harmonizing their abilities, interests and values and enables them to develop their full potential. It directs students on appropriate career and subject choices; solving discipline, education, social and psychological problems, and general adjustment to school life. In Nigeria, the need for Guidance and Counseling in survey was done on 20 school counselor's selected from different states of the federation and the main problems examined. It was noted that, there is guidelines for Guidance and Counseling programs, and also the Guidance counselors. The main goal is to help the counselee learn to deal more effectively with himself anytime he/she is in trouble and the reality of his environment so as to improve the academic performance. Allis, Kanue (2022), conducted a survey in Alexandria in Egypt on indiscipline among 2170 preparatory and secondary school students attending main-stream governmental schools. In this study indiscipline among school students and its predictors were investigated. Few indiscipline cases were related to family background where as the majority was related to the children themselves and according to the research it has a major effect on the Academic performance of these students. Schools are social organizations which have several objectives to achieve and role in Guidance of students in shaping their Academic Performance.

The provision of Guidance and Counseling should address the following three domains of learning, namely personal social, vocational career and educational Guidance and Counseling. Personal social Guidance and Counseling deals with self-identity, negative self-concept, social skills, and family relationship, conflict resolution, personal loss, anxiety, drug addiction and other psychological issues that disturb individual children and affect their studies. Vocational career Counseling includes information about course requirements, post-secondary or tertiary institutions, potential employers, job hunting, career path, planning which will help the students and the parents to consider their choice of the career. Okeke in Anene (2019), sees vocational Guidance as the process of helping a person match his personal attributes and his background with suitable jobs and

employment opportunities. Education Guidance and Counseling; Nwoye (2021), define Guidance as an educational programme of a school through which group of specialized services are provided in the school to enrich the educational experience of each student.

According to Ifelunni (2013), educational Guidance and Counseling is aimed at assisting both the students and their parents to develop educational plans that will help them plan their school work such as how to choose subject, study habit, learning strategies, educational opportunities beyond school, examination techniques, test taking skills, promoting and performance. The planning is such that they benefit from their present school work and be able to progress to the next level of schooling. Also educational Guidance and Counseling service helps the students to discover areas of weakness in their academic endeavor. The focus of Guidance of Guidance and Counseling in school is to address the needs and concerns of students or educational development. Graham-Miges (2014), reiterated that comprehensive school Guidance and Counseling services address the development need of students in secondary schools in the three domains of learning mentioned above. The most function of school Guidance and Counseling services is to discover the student's abilities, interests and needs, thereby helping them to make effective to their future plans. Thus, the primary mission of a school's Guidance and Counseling program is to provide a broad spectrum of personnel services to the students.

Denga (2021), referred to the services as 'cluster of formalized educational services designed by the school to assist students to achieve self- knowledge or self-understanding which is necessary for them to attain the fullest self – development and self-realization of their potentials;. These services include: student appraisal serve, information service, Counseling service, placement service, orientation service, referral service, follow-up and evaluation service, and research service. Appraisal service involves the use of tests and non-test instruments to collect, analyze and interpret data on students to understand themselves better. It also affords counselors and significant others, the opportunity of having insight into the strengths and weakness of students. Information service is tailored towards equipping students with the necessary information in the areas of educational, vocational and personal social. The information are very important because they assist students to make wise decision about life. Counseling service is a face to face interaction between the counselor and the students, through which students are assisted towards overcoming obstacles to their academic, vocational, personal social progress and other life needs. Placement service is concerned with assisting students to adjust to the next stage of development whether in school or on the job. Orientation service is designed to familiarize fresh students with their environment (Erford, 2014). It is a process of initiating an individual to a work or learning situation and of instructing him about rules, regulations and responsibilities, as an introduction to a new situation. Referral service affords the school counselor an opportunity to refer the cases which he cannot handle to specialists like clinical psychologist, medical practitioner, therapist, psychiatrics and others. Follow-up and evaluation service is designed to ascertain the extent to which the Guidance programmed previously carried out by the school is meeting the objectives for which it was established and also to monitor the program of students in their work places. Research service helps the school counselor to discover relevant information that can improve students learning and understanding. The service should be an on- going process which professional counselors should embrace and encourage. These services constitute the core of any Guidance programme and should be organized to facilitate the growth and development of all students from kindergarten through post high school experiences (Erford, 2013).

The most important outcome of a Guidance programme is desirable change in the behavior of students such as improved school attendance, better study habit, better academic Performance, fewer academic failures, lower drop –out rate, better educational planning and better family relationship. Secondly, effective Guidance and Counseling programmes balance corrective, preventive and developmental functions. Braddock (2015), states that the purpose of Guidance and

Counseling in school is also to improve academic Performance, foster positive study attitude, increase acquisition and application of conflict resolution skills and decrease school dropout. In addition, Rutondoki (2015), suggested that complete Guidance and Counseling should be continuous. Counseling should begin when the student enters school and should carry that student into adult life. The counselling should be preventive in the sense that counselee receive help in order to avoid certain problems. In working together with parents, school counselor can effectively achieve the goals of Counseling.

Concept of Guidance and Counselling

Literally, Guidance means to direct, to point out; to show the path. It is the assistance or help rendered by a more experienced person to a less experienced person to solve certain major problems of the individual (less experienced) i.e. educational, vocational, personal etc. Guidance is a concept as well as a process. As a concept Guidance is concerned with the optimal development of the individual. As a process Guidance helps the individual in self understanding (understanding one's strengths, limitations, and other resources) and in self-direction (ability to solve problems, make choices and decision on one's own). The terms Guidance and counseling have been loosely or interchangeably used. Guidance is a term which is broader than counselling and it includes counselling as one of its services. Butter makes a logical separation of the counselling process, adjustive and distributive phase. In the adjustive phase, the emphasis is on social, personal and emotional problems of the individual, in the distributive phase the focus is upon educational, vocational and occupational problems. It is the duty of a guidance counselor to help the students solve their educational, vocational and occupational problems as this will help them achieve greatly in their academics.

Role of Guidance and Counselling in Secondary Schools

The objective of Guidance and counseling programme is to bring about the maximum development and self-realization of human potential for the benefit of the individual and society. Makinde (2014), observes that the school counsellor is concerned with facilitating the optimum development of students. This is supported by Bennars (2014), and Mutie and Ndambuki (2012) who argue that the programme is supposed to develop the learner's intellectual abilities, develop a balanced personality and to have a complete person intellectually, spiritually, morally and socially. Guidance and counseling programme is therefore aimed at assisting students to harmonize their abilities, interests and values, thereby enabling them to develop their potential fully. Self-knowledge helps one to formulate life goals and plans which are realistic. In secondary schools, there is need for students to make proper subject and career choices after the four year course.

It is the role of Guidance and counseling programme to provide the students with the necessary information about the courses availability and the qualifications required for each course. Such information will assist students develop realistic self-concept according to their academic capabilities Borrow (2021). Most secondary school students are in the adolescent stage. According to Robert and Elizabeth (2015), during this time, adolescent experience alienation which is a syndrome comprising of distrust, anxiety, pessimism, egocentrism, meaninglessness, normlessness and powerlessness. They observe that Guidance and counselling is therefore needed during this adolescence stage to assist them understand their developmental stage and adjust to school life. Guidance and counseling programme also help students choose and pursue achievable careers. According to Borrow (2013) the world is highly complex and dynamic which makes career choice very difficult. He reckons that time change, people change, technology progresses and these challenges everyone to change to new ways of living and working. The students need Guidance and counseling programmes to inform them about various jobs and openings available, the qualification required plus the responsibilities involved and the nature of the work so that they can decide and have clear occupational goals. The programme also plays the role of intercepting and assisting disadvantaged students and also checks on school dropout.

Makinde (2014) observes that one of the roles for school counsellor is to help students who are experiencing difficulties. Students from disadvantaged families of the society have many problems and needs which, are to be dealt with in Guidance and counseling programme. Lindsay (2013) argues that such students may experience difficulty in adjustment with peers, teachers and the environment thus Guidance programme helps such students to adjust and utilize the Guidance facilities available fully. Majority of the disadvantaged students later acquire low qualifications for the world of work. This poor Performance may even marginalize them more if Guidance programme does not intervene; some may even drop out of school, thus the Guidance programme is well suited for assisting the students.

Performance is an attainment of a given standard in a particular field by an individual. It is an accomplishment of a task which is a source of joy to the individual as a measure of his/her efforts. Okoro (2012), defined Performance as the state or quality of excelling. Also Performance is the ability of an individual to accomplish his/her set goal. Performance in the school system involves the ability of students to realize their academic dreams in the school. Academic Performance is synonymous with accomplishment and has strong correlation with motivation. Ncharam (2015), sees academic Performance as the actualization of the educational standard and appropriate goal as the major objective functions of school in the society. In this study, academic Performance is the level of real/actual accomplishment or success/proficiency one has achieved in an academic area. Academic Performance of students has been of concern to students themselves, guardians, parents, communities and even wider society and this is the most important goals of the educational process. The failure or success of student's Performance depends on many factors such as self-understanding, self-realization of their potentials, study habits, relationship with peers, parents/teachers supports, parental background among others. A good supportive; well organized Guidance and Counseling programme cannot only motivate the child but also enhance his academic Performance and hence a successful transition to the next level of education and life. Guidance and Counseling, thus, promotes holistic development of every teacher to become a Guidance minded in the course of carrying out of his/her duties with the aim of making impacts in the lives of students. It is therefore, based on this that the researcher is motivated to find out the influence of Guidance and Counseling services on the academic Performance of secondary school students in Rivers East Local Government area of Rivers state.

It has also been noted that students face a number of problems during adolescence like drug addiction, peer pressure, premarital sex, depression, alcohol use and academic problems. Since secondary school students are in the adolescent stage, the need for effective Guidance and Counseling becomes compelling. Thus there is need to establish the Impact of services from schools counselors and students. In addition, the views of the school as a context where students experience a number of problems as well as the increased number of problems students face in modern society have prompted the researcher to investigate influence of Guidance and Counseling services on academic Performance of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Guidance and Counselling on Students Academic Performance

Guidance and counselling are two closely interrelated concepts, and each determines the availability and effectiveness of the other. According to Okita and Odihambo (2022), "guidance" refers to an abroad area of all educational activities and services aimed at assisting individual students to understand themselves and adjust to school life. Oye, Obi, Mohd and Bernice (2022) define "counselling" as an inter personal relationship in which one person attempts to help another person to understand and cope with problems emanating from education, vocation and family relationship. Guidance and counselling is therefore aimed at bringing about maximum development and self-realization of human potential for the benefit of the individual and the society. Oniye and Alawane (2018) opined that guidance and counselling programme assists the student in harmonizing their abilities, interest, values and enable them to develop their full potential. It direct student on appropriate career and subject choices; solving discipline, education, social and psychological

problems; and general adjustment to school life. Disksha and Kashyap (2016) guidance is interpreted as a specialized service to help the individual to solve certain major problems- personal, educational, and vocation. He further opined that guidance involves personal assistance which is given by an expert to an individual which is designed to assist the him or her to decide where he wants to go, what he wants to do and how best to accomplish his/her purpose.

Omoniye (2016) state that it is generally accepted that in Nigeria the organized and formal guidance and counselling service started in 1959 at St. Theresa's College, Oke-Ado Ibadan, by a group of dedicated religious reverend sisters who had the perception of the need for proper guidance in job selection for their secondary school leavers. They invited some twenty outsiders to advise them about placing sixty of their final year female students in appropriate careers. This is about eight decades after the birth of an established and functional guidance and counselling services in America. The advisers though were not vocational guidance specialists, they later formed the core of what later became the Nigerian career council.

The Federal Ministry of Education in its efforts to encourage guidance education established a guidance counselling unit in 1961 to be supervised by an education officer in the ministry. This was temporarily suspended in 1966 as a result of the civil war but re- visited inattheonsetofthe6-3-3-4system of education. By the end of the 70s, the government had already recognized the importance of guidance and counselling in the educational, economic and social life of the nation. In the 3rd national development plan (1975-1980) emphasis was geared towards achieving the manpower needs of the nation. The government then realized that for education to be complete, the beneficiary must have a good sense of fulfilment. This led to the inauguration of the Counselling Association of Nigeria in 1976 as an affiliation of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA). The Federal Government then inserted the need for guidance and counselling services and courses in our schools in its National Policy on Education by 1981. This then led the state governors to establish guidance and counselling units in their ministries of education, in addition to counselling units that are available in the universities.

Statement of the Problem

It is statutorily observed that the academic performance of secondary schools in Rivers State has been declining over time (Ministry of Education, Benue State Secretariat, Makurdi 2017). This has a negative reflection on the various programmes put in place to promote academic performance in the area by the education ministry of the State. The main concern of the study, therefore, was to investigate the role of guidance and counselling programme in improving the self-image of the students and facilitating better Performance in academic performance. Since all efforts of the ministry are being scrutinized. Little information was available on the extent to which the guidance and counseling programme has been used to assist in raising the academic performance of secondary school students. This study sought to provide some insights into these issues and examine influence of guidance and counselling on academic performance of senior secondary school students n Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the Influence of Guidance and Counselling on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students n Rivers State. Specifically, the study is to achieve the following objectives:

1. Examine the extent guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Identify the extent information services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

3. Determine the extent referrals services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The researcher developed the following research questions to guide the study:

- 1 To what extent does guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- 2 To what extent does information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- 3 To what extent does referrals service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The researcher formulated the following null hypotheses to guide the study:

- 1 There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- 2 There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- 3 There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent referrals services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

In carrying out this research, the researcher used descriptive survey design. The essence of this design is to elicit information from the respondents on the above topic. Descriptive survey is a research design or method which focuses on a representative sample derived from the entire population. This design was adopted because of its ability to ensure a representative outlook and provide a sample approach to the study of opinions, attitude and values of individuals. The population of this study comprised male and female students in all the public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State with a population size of Seventeen Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Two (17,972) SS II students. We have 9,817 female and 8,155 male SS II students. The total sample size for this study was 400 students. We have 220 female and 180 male SS II students. The researcher used simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling is the basic sampling technique where we select a group of subjects for study from a larger group or a population. In this case, each individual is chosen entirely by chance and each member of the population has an equal chance of being represented. The instrument that was used in this study is a self-structured questionnaire titled: "Influence of Guidance and Counseling on Academic Performance of Students Questionnaire (IGCAPSQ)". The instrument was validated using the research supervisor and 2 other external in the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling. The researcher made use of Cronbach Alpha method for the reliability of the instrument. The data gathered were analyzed using frequency table, mean and standard deviation for the researcher questions which the null hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: To what extent does guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation analysis on the extent guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Male Students = 180			Female Students = 220		
		Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1.	School counselors expose students to subjects Offered in the school	2.89	0.85	High Extent	2.95	0.86	High Extent
2.	School counselor assist students to develop their Personal study timetable	2.86	0.83	High Extent	2.86	0.84	High Extent
3.	School counselors assist students to relate the Subjects they offer to their career choice	2.78	0.83	High Extent	2.91	0.85	High Extent
4.	School counselors assists students to develop good study habit	2.83	0.84	High Extent	2.82	0.84	High Extent
5.	School Counselors help students to develop interest in being religious with doing their assignments, copying their notes, quizzes, tests and examinations	2.86	0.84	High Extent	2.86	0.84	High Extent
Grand Total		2.84	0.84		2.88	0.85	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The analysis in Table 1 above revealed that the respondents agreed on the view that school counselors expose students to subjects offered in the school. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted on the point that school counselor assist students to develop their personal study timetable. It was also observed in the analysis that the respondents accepted the fact that school counselors assist students to relate the subjects they offer to their career choice. The study still showed that the respondents agreed on the view that school counselors assists students to develop good study habit. The analysis also revealed that the respondents agreed on the view that School Counselors help students to develop interest in being religious with doing their assignments, copying their notes, quizzes, tests and examinations.

Research Question 2: To what extent does information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation analysis on the extent information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

S / N o	Questionnaire Items	Male Students = 180			Female Students = 220		
		Mea n $\bar{x}$	SD	Rema rks	Mea n $\bar{x}$	SD	Remark s
6.	Information service helps many students to develop a realistic goals about their choice of career in life.	2.83	0.84	High Extent	2.91	0.85	High Extent

7.	Information service helps students to know the requirements about the subjects combination in their area of career choice.	2.72	0.82	High Extent	2.86	0.84	High Extent
8.	Information service helps students to gain knowledge that could help them do well in school subjects related to their chosen career.	2.75	0.83	High Extent	2.93	0.85	High Extent
9.	With adequate information, most students can better progress in their educational career	2.69	0.82	High Extent	2.95	0.86	High Extent
10.	Information service in the school can help students to make adjustment in their choice of career for better	2.67	0.82	High Extent	2.87	0.85	High Extent
Grand Total		2.73	0.83		2.90	0.85	

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The analysis in Table 3 above showed that the respondents accepted the point that information service helps many students to develop realistic goals about their choice of career in life. The study still revealed that the respondents agreed that information service helps students to know the requirements about the subjects combination in their area of career choice. It was also observed from the analysis that the respondents accepted the point that information service helps students to gain knowledge that could help them do well in school subjects related to their chosen career. The analysis still indicated that the respondents agreed on the view that with adequate information, most students can better progress in their educational career. The study also showed that the respondents accepted the fact that Information service in the school can help students to make adjustment in their choice of career for better.

Research Question 3: To what extent does referrals service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation analysis on the extent referrals service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Male Students = 180			Female Students = 220		
		Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
11.	School counsellor accompanies students on excursions and other places of interest	2.86	0.84	High Extent	2.91	0.85	High Extent
12.	School counsellor keeps any personal information he gets about the students and other clients (secret).	2.83	0.84	High Extent	2.95	0.86	High Extent
13.	Counsellors help students to solve problems related to their studies	2.97	0.86	High Extent	2.98	0.86	High Extent
14.	Resource persons are always invited by our counselor	2.94	0.86	High Extent	2.99	0.86	High Extent
15.	Counsellor helps the students to read and understand their books	2.92	0.85	High Extent	3.00	0.87	High Extent
Grand Total		2.90	0.85		2.97	0.86	

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The data analysis in Table 3 above indicated that the respondents accepted the point that school counsellor accompanies students on excursions and other places of interest. The analysis also showed that the respondents agreed on the view that school counsellor keeps any personal information he gets about the students and other clients (secret). It was still noticed in the study that the respondents agreed on the fact that counsellors help students to solve problems related to their studies. The analysis also revealed that the respondents accepted the view that Resource persons are always invited by our counselor. The study indicated that the respondents agreed on the fact that counsellor helps the students to read and understand their books.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Status	N	Mean $\bar{X}$	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male Students	180	2.84	0.84	398	1.29	1.96	Accepted
Female Students	220	2.88	0.85				

The analysis on Table 4 revealed that the z-cal of 1.29 is less than the z-crit of 1.96. Therefore, the calculated z-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is smaller than the given critical value of z-ratio. So, the hypothesis 1 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Status	N	Mean $\bar{X}$	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male Students	180	2.90	0.85	398	1.24	1.96	Accepted
Female Students	220	2.94	0.86				

Female Students	220	2.97	0.86
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The analysis on Table 5 indicated that the z-cal of 1.24 is less than the z-crit of 1.96. Therefore, the calculated z-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is less than the given critical value of z-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 2 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent referrals services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent referrals services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Status	N	Mean $\bar{X}$	SD	df.	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male Students	180	2.73	0.83	398	1.39	1.96	Accepted
Female Students	220	2.90	0.85				

The analysis on Table 6 showed that the z-cal of 1.39 is less than the z-crit of 1.96. Therefore, the calculated z-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is less than the given critical value of z-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 3 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent referrals services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in research question one: To what extent does guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings revealed that guidance and counseling services has positive influence on the academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The corresponding hypothesis 1 was accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent guidance and counseling services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding is in collaboration with Empey (2012), who observed that school counselors expose students to subjects offered in the school. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted on the point that school counselor assist students to develop their personal study timetable. It was also observed in the analysis that the respondents accepted the fact that school counselors assist students to relate the subjects they offer to their career choice. The study still showed that the respondents agreed on the view that school counselors assists students to develop good study habit. The analysis also revealed that the respondents agreed on the view that School Counselors help students to develop interest in being religious with doing their assignments, copying their notes, quizzes, tests and examinations.

The findings in Research Question Two: To what extent does information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State showed that information service has significant influence academic performance of students in public senior

secondary schools in Rivers State. The corresponding hypothesis 2 was accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent information service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings is in the same vein with Ndichu (2010), who noted that information service helps many students to develop realistic goals about their choice of career in life. The study still revealed that the respondents agreed that information service helps students to know the requirements about the subjects combination in their area of career choice. It was also observed from the analysis that the respondents accepted the point that information service helps students to gain knowledge that could help them do well in school subjects related to their chosen career. The analysis still indicated that the respondents agreed on the view that with adequate information, most students can better progress in their educational career. The study also showed that the respondents accepted the fact that Information service in the school can help students to make adjustment in their choice of career for better.

The findings in Research Questions Three: To what extent does referrals service influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State indicated that referrals service influence the academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. However, the corresponding hypothesis 2 was accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female students on the extent referrals services influence academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This study is in the same view with the Hwer (2015), who noted that school counsellor accompanies students on excursions and other places of interest. The analysis also showed that the respondents agreed on the view that school counsellor keeps any personal information he gets about the students and other clients (secret). It was still noticed in the study that the respondents agreed on the fact that counsellors help students to solve problems related to their studies. The analysis also revealed that the respondents accepted the view that resource persons are always invited by our counselor. The study indicated that the respondents agreed on the fact that counsellor helps the students to read and understand their books.

CONCLUSION

The influence of guidance and counseling services on students academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State cannot be over emphasized. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that information services, referrals services and placement services have positive and significant influence on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. There is significant influence of guidance and counselling service on academic Performance of students, not minding the non-challantness of the students and there is a strong relationship between guidance and counselling, and students' academic Performance and that there are other factors than guidance and counselling that affect students' academic Performance. The study also deduced that guidance and counselling have positive approaches toward solving disciplinary problems among pupils at various schools. Guidance is a process of helping an individual understand himself/herself and the world. The basic services of guidance in school settings: Appraisal Service or Individual Analysis, Counselling Services, Information Service, Planning, Placement and follow-up, Orientation, Referral Service and Evaluation Service Counselling are process in which one person assists another person in a person to person or face to face encounter. The tree major counselling services that should be provided in the school settings are: Educational Counselling, Vocational Counselling and Personal-social Counselling.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to ensure that the study meet its objectives.

1. Government through the school management should implement all the services required for a guidance and counselling programme.
2. Government, through school management and counselor should always organize orientation programme for students to orient them on the needs of information services to students' career choice.
3. School management should organize seminar programme for the school staff and students on the importance of referrals services hence it influence students' career choice.

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