

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MANAGEMENT AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN A UNIVERSITY SETTING, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This Study adopted descriptive survey research design, and the population covered all the 12,900 undergraduate students of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, Nigeria. The research sample comprised 370 participants, randomly selected from all the five faculties, based on Research Advisors guideline, out of which 247 (67%) were males and 123 (33%) were females. The data was collected with a 50-item instrument called Counselling Services Evaluation Questionnaire (CSEQ). The instrument was developed by the researcher, and validated by experts in Counselling and Tests and Measurement units of the University, and was reported to have a test retest reliability of .867. The hypotheses were tested with t-test and ANOVA. The findings that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their approach to counselling services, but there is significant difference among students in various levels of study and across various faculties, in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina. Accordingly it was recommended among others that the new students, particularly the female should be sensitized and mobilized to be patronising the Counselling centre for the benefit of all the stakeholders.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, Management, Counselling implications

Introduction

Gender-based violence (GBV), according to Meghan (2021), includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse, threats, coercion, and economic or educational deprivation, whether occurring in public or private life. Gender-based violence (GBV) is violence that is directed at an individual based on his or her biological sex or gender identity. Gender based violence is a common social problem in Nigeria especially in the Northern part of Nigeria. Utulu and Utulu (2005) as cited in Nuhu (2022) reflects that, although some federal legislations are in favour of women's rights, the trend rather goes towards a strengthening traditional values, less favourable to Nigeria's 60 million women. There has also been an increase in the cases of domestic violence, forced early marriage and rape, since kidnapping, cattle rustling and boko haram insurgency became a recurrent feature in Nigeria. Despite being so prevalent, gender-based violence is largely under-reported because of stigma and lack of access to resources and support systems (Nuhu, 2022).

GBV can impact anyone regardless of their geographical location, socio-economic background, race, religion, sexuality, or gender identity. While women and girls are the most at risk and the most affected

by gender-based violence, boys, men, and sexual and gender minorities also experience gender-based violence (Angya, 2005). GBV can manifest in many different forms. Adolescents who had experienced GBV are likely to exhibit such violence during their adulthood. However, early intervention by way of providing Counselling services, especially in tertiary institutions like university setting, is one of the most effective forms of prevention. Meghan (2021) further observes that, increasing awareness and changing behaviour, (as part of counselling strategies) intervention will help to reduce the gender inequality that exists at all levels of society in Nigeria. GBV is a human right concerns as individuals who experiences it may suffer different human rights violations which, has serious short- and long-term consequences on women's physical, sexual and reproductive and mental health as well as on their personal and social well-being. The health consequences also of violence against women include injuries, untimed/unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, pelvic pain, urinary tract infections, fistula, genital injuries, pregnancy complications and chronic conditions. Mental health impacts for survivors of gender-based violence include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, substance misuse, self-harm and suicidal behaviour, and sleep disturbances (Angya, 2005).

A panacea to GBV counselling services, the role of human resource management, which is the strategic and coherent approach to effective and efficient management of people in a company or organization, such that they help their business gain a competitive advantage is key. Also related and as a panacea to GBV is guidance and counselling which Denga (2019) defined as a cluster of formalized services aimed at helping an individual or group of individuals to understand themselves including their potentials. These programmes are specialized and organized activities rendered to students for the dissemination of meaningful and factual information in the area of educational, vocational/career and personal-social needs that assist them to make correct choices.

Generally speaking there is a consensus in literature, which viewed Counselling as consisting of several processes/procedures used in assisting individuals in solving problems which arise in various aspects of his/her life, or in assisting him/her to maximise his overall personal development, so that they could be more effective, satisfied and more useful to the society in which he lives (Akinade, 2012; Arijesuyo, 2012). In line with Denga (2019) outlined some of these programmes as orientation, career day/week, excursion, information service, seminar, as well as, workshops for parents, staff and students. Among the listed programmes, Agbajor (2017) opined that counselling emerged as a major service in guidance programme which brings the counsellor and the client into intimate relationship, with a view to establishing confidentiality that facilitates clients to assess self and available potentials gemmates towards appreciative decision making.

One of the major objectives of good counselling services in a university setting, according to National Universities Commission (NUC, 2013), is to, amongst others, help the undergraduates acquire essential skills so as to effectively manage human problems often manifested as disorder, crimes, delinquency, educational deficiencies, cognitive deficits developmental issues, academic under achievement and various forms of maladaptive behavioural problems. Victims of Gender-based Violence are also stabilized through the provision of counselling services. The need for guidance and counselling programme was stressed in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014). Similarly, the National Policy on Counselling (FME, 2018) further stressed the relevance of a functional guidance and counselling service in any setting.

Moreover, in a university setting, guidance and counselling services promote academic and personal-social progress of students. Several studies carried out indicated that it is good for the students, because many undergraduates face anxieties and stresses and to be able to handle these kinds of problems they need guidance and counselling services. Thus, the provision of the services in a university setting would foster or bring about well guided and properly counselled undergraduates and graduates who would be good ambassadors/alumni of their Universities.

It is against this backdrop, that the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in 2013, reported in Nuhu (2015) that Nigeria has the worst global education indicators. The report further revealed that Nigeria has the highest population of out-of-school children (10.5 million) as at 2012. It added that there has been a high gender inequality and prevalence, which was very pronounced. The report opined that Nigeria might not be able to achieve the goals of Education for All (EFA) barely three years to the global deadline of 2015 as at the time of releasing the report in 2012. In Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, Nigeria, Counselling services commenced as far back as in 2014. Available record shows that in 2014, Guidance and Counselling Unit was set up and placed under the office of the Dean of Students' Affairs Division. The following schedules of duties were outlined:

- i. Advising the management on policies, regulations and matters affecting students.
- ii. Assisting students in need of academic, social and emotional guidance counselling.
- iii. Working directly with teachers (Staff) and other specialists/professionals to achieve effective services, amongst others.

It is not an overstatement to assert the fact that the educational system in Nigeria is bedevilled with a number of problems which students in institutions of higher learning are not an exception. The neglect of orientation programme, field trips/excursion, individual and group counselling among others, often results to maladaptive behaviours such as cultism, kidnapping, delinquency, among students (Anugwom,2009). The increase in the mode and nature of the problems are alarming and may not be unconnected with the developmental stage/processes of the adolescents. The situation has become of great concern to government, parents, and stakeholders and significant others within the educational system. The undergraduates of tertiary institutions are not well fixed into the labour market for lack of required skills which leads to unemployment and underemployment.

As expected there are many problems prevalent among undergraduate students and it is in view of the enormity of these under reported problems that, the researchers evaluate the gender based violence happening among students who volunteer to disclose their concerns during counselling sessions.

Objectives of the study

The following were the objectives of the study:

1. To investigate if there is any significant difference between male and female students in their perception of Gender- Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina.
2. To examine if there is any significant difference among students in various levels of study in their perception of Gender- Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina.
3. To examine if there is any significant difference among students in various faculties in their perception of Gender- Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina.

Hypotheses

Based on the above research objectives, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested:

Ho1: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception of Gender-Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Ho2: There is no significant difference among students in various levels of study in their perception of Gender- Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Ho3: There is no significant difference among students in various faculties in their perception of Gender- Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. This is a kind of design which describes situations as they are, without making predictions and without establishing cause-effect relationship. This design was chosen because the study observed and recorded information carefully as they are without answering questions about how, when, and why and there was no intention of establishing cause-effect relationship.

The population of the study comprises all undergraduate students of Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina state, Nigeria. As at 2018/2019 academic session, Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina has a total number of five faculties, 25 departments, and a total number of 12,900 undergraduate students. These students were distributed into various departments and across various levels of study, and they comprise both males and females.

The required sample size for the study is 370 students as shown in Table 1; the sample size was based on Research Advisors (2006) guideline. In selecting the required sample, simple random sampling technique was used, where 247 male students representing 67% and 123 female students representing 33% made the sample for the study. The participants were chosen from all levels and faculties purposely.

Table 1: Samples of the study

Faculty	Total Population	Sample		Total Sample
		Male	Female	
Education	4017	74	41	115
Humanities	1372	28	11	39
Law	278	26	22	48
Natural and Applied Sciences	4883	77	24	101
Social and Management Sciences	2350	42	25	67
Total	12,900	247	123	370

The data was collected with an instrument called Counselling Services Evaluation Questionnaire (CSEQ). The instrument was developed by the researcher, and has five subsections. Altogether, the instrument has 50 items (10 items in each subsection). It was validated by experts in Guidance and Counselling and Tests and Measurement units of the Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina. The instrument was pilot tested with 20 students from School of Basic and Remedial Studies of the

university and was reported to have a test retest reliability of .867. This figure, according to Dan’inna (2018), indicated that the instrument was reliable for the study.

In testing the stated hypotheses, the researchers employed the use of inferential statistics. In particular, independent samples t-test and analysis of variance were used. All the hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance. All the analyses were carried out with the help of SPSS v.23.0 and the summary of the results were as presented in different tables.

Presentation of Results

Ho1: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the prevalence of Gender-Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

To test this hypothesis, the researchers used independent samples t-test statistic, and the summary of result is as presented in table 2.

Table 2: Differences between male and female students in their perception regarding Gender-Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	P-value
Males	115.0161	18.09533	- .988	.324
Females	117.0738	20.24771		

Table 2 indicated that the calculated t-value for the differences between male and female students in their perception regarding Gender- Based Violence and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina was $t = .988$, $df = 368$, and $p = .324$. Since the p-value is greater than alpha (.05), the null hypothesis is retained. So, the researchers concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding management of Gender Based Violence and effectiveness of counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Ho2: There is no significant difference among students in various levels of study in their perception of management of Gender –Based Violence and effectiveness of counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

To test this hypothesis, the researchers used one-way analysis of variance statistic, and the result summary is as presented in table 3.

Table 3: Differences among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Sig.
Between Groups	19592.790	4	4898.197	16.072	.000
Within Groups	111237.700	365	304.761		
Total	130830.489	369			

From Table 3, the differences among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina was $F = 16.072$, and $P = .000$. Since the p-value (.000) is less than the alpha value

(.05), the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was adopted. So, the researchers concluded that there is significant difference among students in various levels of study in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Ho3: There is no significant difference among students in various faculties in their perception of management Gender- Based Violence and effectiveness of counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

To test this hypothesis, the researcher used one-way analysis of variance statistic, and the result summary is as presented in table 4.

Table 4: Differences among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	6172.451	1543.113	4.518	.001
Within Groups	124658.038	341.529		
Total	130830.489			

From Table 4, the differences among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina was $F = 4.518$, and $P = .001$. Since the p-value (.001) is less than the alpha value (.05), the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was adopted. So, the researchers concluded that there is a significant difference among students in various faculties in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings from this study revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness of counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina. On the other hand, the findings indicated that there is significant difference among students in various levels of study and across various faculties, in their perception regarding the management and effectiveness of counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Looking at these findings, it can be implied that both male and female undergraduates of the university are aware of the counselling services being rendered by the counselling unit of the university. These are in line with the assertion of Agbajor (2017) who maintained that evaluation is one of the services that determines the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services, which serves as a means of examining what and how students think, feel and react about the counselling services through the use of valid and reliable techniques. Moreover, Denga (2019) explained that guidance and counselling programme was perceived by majority of students as effective in improving competencies in academic performance as well as careers of students.

Looking at these findings, one realises that the counselling centre in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, Nigeria, is really doing a great job in imparting the required knowledge and awareness the students needed. This is owing to the fact that both male and female students, across all levels of study, and across all faculties demonstrate a very good level of awareness about the activities of the centre, they are also aware about the facilities available at the centre, the challenges facing the counselling service delivery at the centre, as well as the measures being taken to improve the services at the centre. This is in line with the recommendations of Akinade (2012) and also in line with the definition of guidance and counselling services and Gender-based violence offered by Denga (2019).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that students' perception regarding the management and effectiveness of counselling services being rendered by the guidance and counselling unit of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina was effective. The findings indicated that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina and this has far reaching implications on gender-based violence which are largely under reported. Similarly, the findings also indicated that there is significant difference among students in various levels of study and across various faculties, in their perception regarding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina.

Recommendations

Based on this study, the researchers recommend that;

1. The new students particularly the female ones should be sensitized, mobilized and encouraged to be patronising the Counselling centre, and be getting the derivable benefit in terms of acquiring information regarding their academic, personal-social and other co-curricular activities. This will benefit them throughout their stay in the university and also in career choice, and will lead them to make appropriate decisions during their stay in the university and beyond. Specifically for female students, they should be visiting the centre for persona-social issues, gender-based violence and for marriage counselling. This will enable them to live a successful matrimonial life when they are married.
2. Similar researches should be conducted in other tertiary institutions in the state, so as to evaluate the effectiveness or otherwise of the activities of their respective guidance and counselling centres. This will provide rightful information to the management of these institutions, and would lead them to taking right decisions as to what to do to improve the guidance and counselling service delivery for the betterment of the students, staff, and the general public.

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