

## **A Survey of the Availability of Counselling Services for the Social Adjustment Needs of Children with Hearing Impairment**

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**Abstract.** The paper took a look at the availability of counseling services for the social adjustment of needs of children with hearing impairment in Jos metropolis. Children with hearing impairment in two special schools in Jos metropolis comprised the population of the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses were posed to guide the study. A sample of 60 comprising teachers and children with hearing impairment was used for the study. A structured questionnaire developed by the researchers was used as instrument for data collection. The instrument held a content validity coefficient of 0.06 and a reliability index of r.07. Results showed that the schools had no professional counselors , and that counseling services though provided were skeletal and not appropriate to the children's social adjustment needs. It was concluded that the way and type of counseling services provided to children with hearing impairment is both inappropriate and inadequate. It was therefore recommended that government should make efforts to ameliorate the situation by ensuring that professional counselors are posted to special schools and are given an enabling environment to offer appropriate counseling services for the social adjustment of children with hearing impairment.

**Keywords:** Availability, counselling services, social adjustment and hearing impairment

### **1. Introduction**

Children with hearing impairment are those children whose hearing mechanism is damaged to an extent that they cannot hear speech or perceive sound through the ear alone. A common term that is used to describe them is deaf children. However, children with hearing impairment who can hear speech and perceive sound when it is presented loud enough with or without the use of amplification devices such as a hearing aid are referred to as hard of hearing . Children with hearing impairment are at a disadvantage in academic and social settings. This is because the inability to hear is often accompanied with the feeling of uncertainty. Fear and mistrust of others which makes it difficult for the child to interact freely with peers and other people in his environment. Social adjustment is the ability of a child to interact freely with people around him in whatever situation he finds himself. Successful social adjustment depends on how well the child with hearing impairment is availed the contingencies that serve as a mediation between the

child and his environment. counseling is one of such contingencies.

Counseling services is a necessary and important factor for the proper adjustment of children with hearing impairment. Counseling services for children with hearing impairment involves the conveyance of factual information about hearing impairment and appropriate rehabilitative measures, information counseling, and the discussion of the psychological, social and emotional impact of hearing loss. Hence Okeke (2003) asserted that the use of counseling services is desired to help students in their different problems, so that they grow up well-adjusted with children in the classroom and in the society at large.

Whether a child is born with a hearing impairment or loss in his hearing in later life, adjusting to life in a society dominated by hearing people requires careful consideration, planning, and guidance. Hence Nwokob and Anagbogu (2006) identified counseling services as a means by which children with hearing impairment could be helped to accept their condition, adjust to the condition, and identify positive areas of ability. This is because through counseling, the individual is reassured and motivated, emotional tensions are released and things clarified (Anagbogu,2004).

Counseling services is designed to serve as a reference point in the overall development of children with hearing impairment who are faced with numerous problems which may affect them in social adjustment and in academic performance (National Policy

on Education, 2004). For children with hearing impairment, counseling services serve as a helping relationship which Akande( 2005) observed, help the child to solve certain interpersonal, vocational, emotional, and educational decision making problems that also enables him to understand self and the society, and well furnished with the information needed for decision making in educational, vocational, and social matters.

### **1.1 What is Counseling?**

Counseling is described as the art of giving counsel. Advice. Consultation. Deliberations. Discussions. Exchange of ideas and the process of decision making. Many authors view counseling service as mere added process because according to them. Counseling is one service with guidance. However, Okeke (2003) defined counseling as the brain and the heart of guidance programme and remarked that counseling is guidance. The author also viewed counseling as helping a relationship involving the counselor and the client (who is the counselee) for whom the counselor uses his professional knowledge and skills to assist the client to attain proper development and maturity, improved functioning and ability to cope with life problems. Okeke also mentioned that counseling relationship is a situation in which the counselor attempt to help an individual to be better in relation to his present and future problems.

Akande (2005) noted that counseling children with hearing impairment is very important because counseling is a helping relationship in which

individuals learn to solve certain inter-personal, vocational, emotional, educational decision making problems and the individuals are helped for better understanding of self and society and they become well furnished with the information they need for decision making in their areas of educational, Vocational and personal social matters. Through counseling, individuals achieve adjustment and fulfillment in major decisions' of life.

There are two types of counseling in general namely: individual and group counseling. In individual counseling, the counselor attend to only one client while group counseling involves more than one client at the same time. However, it is very important to note that to promote socially well-adjusted and healthy minds, It is of paramount importance that counseling services should be provided for children with hearing impairment. Counseling services to children with hearing impairment should be sensitive to their unique needs.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Counseling is the service that school children need and which every school should have. Because children need someone they can trust and with whom they can confide their personal social problems. For children with hearing impairment who have to cope with the problem of living with a disability, the need for counseling services is even imperative. Children with hearing impairment find it difficult to relate freely and to express their fears and worries with other people including family members. The resultant effect is often poor social adjustment and poor academic performance.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The study had two objectives namely:

- To find out whether or not counseling services are available to children with hearing impairment in schools with children with hearing impairment in Jos.
- To find out the nature of counseling services provided to children with hearing impairment in Jos Metropolis.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Two research questions were posed to guide the study.

- To what extent are counseling services available to children with hearing impairment in schools with children with hearing impairment in Jos Metropolis?
- What is the nature of counseling services provided to children with hearing impairment in Jos Metropolis?

## **2. Methodology**

### **2,1 Population and sample**

The study adopted a survey research design. All teachers and students with hearing impairment in two special schools in Jos metropolis comprised the population of the study. The sample of the study was 60, comprising 30 teachers and 30 children with hearing impairment. In each of the two schools, two children were selected from primary 6 while 8 were selected from junior and senior secondary classes.

**2.2 Instrument**

A structural questionnaire was developed by the researchers and used for data collection. The questionnaire was subjected to expert judgment and held a content validity coefficient of 0.06. The pearson product moment correlation analysis was used to

determine reliability of the instrument which was r.07. The researchers visited each of the 3 schools on different days and administered the questionnaire which were also collected on the same day. The answered questionnaire were analyzed using simple percentages and tables of frequencies.

**3. Results**

**Research Question One:** To what extent are counseling services available in schools with children with hearing impairment in Jos metropolis?.

**Table 1: The nature of availability of counseling services in schools**

S/N	Questionnaire Item	Responses			
		yes	%	No	%
1	Do you have any idea of what counseling is?	40	66.66%	20	33.33%
2	Does your school offer counseling services to students?	50	83.33%	10	16.66%
3	Have you at one time or the other counseled in your school?	41	85%	39	65%
4	Is there a special room in your school where students go for counseling	2	3.33%	58	96.66%
5	Do your school have a counselors?	01	6.66%	59	98.3%
6	If you have ever been counseled in your school Who counseled you?				
	The school counselor				
	The principal	06	10.33%		
	My class teacher	17	28.3%		
	A teacher	13	21.16%		
	Religion teacher	04	66.66%		
		20	33.3%		
7	Where are students counseled in your school?				
	In the counsellor’s office				
	In principal’s office		6	10.33%	
	In the staff room		17	28.3%	
	During the morning assembly		07	1.16%	
			30	50%	

The table showed that 66.6% of the children said that they have an idea of what counseling is, but 33.3% said they have no idea on whether their school offer counseling services to students or not. 83.3% said their school offer counseling services, while 19.6% said their school do not offer counseling services. 65% of the children said they have never had a counseling session, 35% said they had counseling session. Also, 96.9% of the students said that there is no special room in their school where students are counseled, while 3.33% said their school has a special room for counseling.

On whether their school has a school counselor, 98.3% of the children said no to this question. However, 1.66% said their school has a counselor. Asked if they have ever been counseled in school and who counseled them. 33.3% said their religion teacher. 28.3% said the principal. 28.3% said their class teacher. 10.3% said the school counselor while 6.6% said they were counseled by another teacher in the school. Asked where students are counseled in their school 50% said they are counseled during the morning assembly. 28.3% said in the principals' office, while 1.16% said they are counseled in the staff room.

**Research Question Two:** What is the nature of counseling services provided to children with hearing impairment in metropolis Jos?

**Table 2: How counseling services are provided to children with hearing impairment**

S/N	Questionnaire Item	Responses			
		yes	%	No	%
1	Are children in your school provided counseling in different issues of life?	37	61.10%	23	38%
2	Are children in your school counseled individually?	33	55%	27	45%
3	In your school can a child go for counseling on his/ her Own?	15	25%	45	75%
4	Can you say that the type of counseling services provided to children in your school are appropriate?	18	30%	52	86.6%
5	In which issue of life are children in your school Counseled?	Response			
	Academic	6	10%		
	Social issues	10	16.6%		
	All issues of life	30	50%		
	Spiritual	04	23.3%		

The table showed that 61.10% of the respondents said that children in their school are counseled in all issues of life, while 38% said not in all issues of life. 55% of the respondents said that children in their school are counseled individually. However, 45% said they are not counseled individually. Also 75% of the respondents said that children in their school can not go for counseling on their own, where as 25% said yes they can go for counseling on their own.

On whether the counseling services provided in their school is appropriate, 30% of the respondents said that

counseling services provided in their school is appropriate, 86% however said it is not appropriate. Furthermore, 10% of the respondents said that the children are mostly counseled on academic issues; 16.6% said on social issues; 50% said children are counseled in all issues.

**4. Discussion**

The study revealed that although most children know who a counselor is schools with children with hearing impairment did not offer professional counseling services to the children. This is reinforced by the fact that 96.66% of the children said there is no special

room in their school where they go for counseling. Moreover, the schools lack professional counselors. The principals, class teachers and religion teachers did most of the counseling and the counseling were in places where there were no privacy. In fact data indicate that the children were counseled even in the staff room. This is not in line with those scholars like Ademokoya (1995) who advocate that students with hearing impairment need counseling to enable them adjust socially and to move academically.

The study also discovered that counseling services provided on different issue of life of children with hearing impairment in schools in Jos Metropolis. However, most of the counseling provided is grouped counseling. The study also discovered that the children cannot go for counseling on their own unless a teacher or the principal calls a student to counsel him. Also, most of the counseling offered to the students were on issues of life followed by spiritual matters. By implication it was only when a student has a problem known to the teacher or the principal that counseling will be given.

### **5. Summary of finding**

The study discovered that:

- There is no formal professional counseling services for children with hearing impairment in special schools in Jos Metropolis.
- The type of counseling services provided in the schools is not appropriate to the children

because children with hearing impairment need professional counseling for social adjustment which is key to the improving the academic performance.

- Children are counseled in unconventional manner and places which made it difficult for the children to express their personal feelings.

### **6. Conclusion**

On the basis of the findings of this study the researchers concluded that counseling services are offered only on skeletal level in schools with children with hearing impairment in Jos Metropolis. This does not augur well for the social adjustment that the children need to enable them develop their academic potentials. The lack of counseling services on a professional basis may explain why children with hearing impairment have problem with social adjustment and are also poor in most academic tasks.

### **7. Recommendations**

- Effort should be made by the government to ensure that all schools with children with hearing impairment offer professional counseling services to the children.
- As a starting point all schools with children with hearing impairment should employ trained counselors. The trained counselors will help organize counseling services in the schools.
- Schools should offer counseling services to their students in any

area which the student needs counseling.

- The practice of counseling students in the staff room should stop.

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