Enhancing Guidance Services in Secondary Schools in Anambra State through the use of Information Communication Technology

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Abstract

In our economy today, information and communication technology has become the choice of many individuals in information assessment and dissemination. Guidance services provided at any level is aimed at assisting a client discover their own hidden strengths and ultimately grow in independence and ability make decisions, choices or adjustments in future unaided, hence the relevance of guidance services cannot be side lined. However this study was surveyed enhancing guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra state through the use of information communication technology. Five research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of 243 guidance counsellors in government owned secondary schools in Anambra State. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. The reliability of the instrument was computed using Cronbach Alpha and yielded a co-efficient of 0.78. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Findings showed that guidance counsellors in secondary schools in Anambra state "Always" use callcenters/hotline and video conferencing to enhance guidance services and "Rarely" use computer graphics, instructional satellite, and web television to enhance guidance services. The researchers recommended among others that Guidance counsellors who are not digital native should be mobilized for workshops, conferences and training on the use of innovative ICT tools to enhance guidance service delivery in secondary schools in Anambra state.

Keywords: Enhance, Counsellors, Guidance Services, Information and Communication Technology.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

In the society today, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) marks a significant positive turn-around in electronics and evolution. The emergence of new tools to handle repetitive work, and also supply for acquisition of certain high level human skills is part of the everyday environment at work, home, in productive activities and at leisure. The use of ICT for numerous activities cannot be overridden in our domestic and professional lives. According to Oye, Obi, Mohd and Bernice (2012), ICT is a revolution that involves the use of computers, internet and other telecommunication tools in all aspects of human endeavour. Oye et al. (2012) also described ICT as the handling and processing of information (texts, images, instructions, and others.) for use, by means of electronic and communication devices such as computer, cameras, and telephones (GSM).

According to Wilson, Ayebi-Arthur, and Tenkorang (2011), Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) often spoken of in a particular context such as ICT in education, health care, sports, commerce and others provide opportunities for educational institutions and other organizations to harness and use technology to complement and support the teaching and learning processes (educational activities). Wilson et al. (2011) further posited that ICTs are useful in numerous instances as they facilitate the development of various aspects of the society such as knowledge management, acquisition of knowledge, business, communication, entertainment, commerce among others. This however has led to fundamental changes in the past decades in the way people think, teach, learn, and as well communicate.

Presently, the internet as an ICT tool has become the choice of many individuals in information assessment and dissemination. According to Anyamene, Nwokolo, and Anyachebelu (2012), this ICT tool (the internet) is a

global connection of different types of computer networks linked together. Anyamene et al. further stated that it is an electronic network that makes it possible for people to interact, access and exchange information. Information technology is all about the technologies that aid in the communication process of passing messages from the sender to the receiver and the internet enhances ICT.

According to Anyamene et al. (2012) technologies have advanced into the development of communication and multimedia equipment that are capable of accepting data, processing data into information and storing both data and information for future use and reference purposes. Okenwa further noted that computer based technologies commonly used includes: teleconferencing machine, computer, electronic books (e-books) computer graphics technology; instructional satellite, video conferencing and web television. From these definitions of ICT, ICT could therefore be described in a nut shell as processing and sharing of information using all kinds of electronic devices, an umbrella that includes all technologies for the manipulation and transfer of information.

The effective dissemination of educational programmes and activities has been faced with several challenges, and one of such educational programmes is the delivery of guidance services. According to Modo, Sanni,Uwah and Mogbo (2013) guidance counselling service is one of the educational services that promote the effectiveness of the educational system for goals attainment and guiding learners through the learning process. This is however in line with the goals of educational services as contained in the National Policy of Education (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2013) which are to facilitate the implementation of the educational policy; the attainment of policy goals and the promotion of effectiveness of educational system; and make learning experiences more meaningful for children. Oguzie (2014) stated that guidance and counselling is encompassed by activities of relevant services and also processes of helping persons within and outside the school, to achieve their full potential in their emotional, moral, social, academic and vocational developments. The role of guidance and counselling services provided in secondary school system cannot be overemphasized. Guidance services have always played a leading role in terms of child's development and improvement. For this reason, guidance services are sine qua non to a child's development.

Primarily, guidance services provided at any level is aimed at assisting the client student discover their own hidden strengths and ultimately grow in independence and ability to take his own decisions, make choices or adjustments in future unaided, the relevance of guidance services cannot be side lined. These services could vary from counselling services, individual inventory, routine interview, vocational guidance, and information services and others. According to Obineli and Okonkwo (2014), ICT can help widen access to guidance services in two important and related ways. Firstly, it encourages a different approach to service provision, where self-help takes precedence over direct delivery by professionals. And secondly, ICT brings information and guidance services to the client. Increasingly, computer terminals often linked to the internet are available in non-institutional site, meanwhile most guidance services have been built around one-to-one counselling interviews. The models used in such interviews have varied from diagnostic approaches in which the counsellor analyses the individual's attributes and makes appropriate recommendations, to person-centered approaches in which the counsellor helps clients to explore their perceptions of themselves and of the opportunities open to them, and to reach their own decisions.

In more recent years, there has been a move in many countries towards a more open professional model, in which the concept of the counsellor working with individual clients in a psychological vacuum is replaced or supplemented by a more diffused approach, utilizing a more varied range of interventions (for instance, curriculum programmes, group work, and use of ICT based resources), with greater emphasis on the individual as an active agent rather than a passive recipient within the guidance processes (Bucharest, 2012). However, to further buttress this, some guidance services have moved away from a service centered on long interviews to an open-access model, with information rooms containing ICT and other resources supported by brief informal interviews, and with long interviews being available as a residual resource to those who need them. Guidance services such as counselling services are rendered to see that students have someone (counsellors) to talk with as regards personal/ academic/ family and other problems and concerns. This service helps the students to develop their ability to explore the problem, consider possible solutions, make important decisions, and plan out a course of action. This service is conducted either individually or in group.

On the other hand, individual inventory as a guidance service involves a cumulative record keeping of each student, containing information continuously collected throughout their stay in school. Such information includes family background, psychological test results, counselling/interview records, personality profiles,

teacher feedback/anecdotal, and others. One particular technology that has opened up new opportunities for guidance service delivery is the call-center. Several states in Nigeria report that call-in services tend to be associated rather more with help-lines and hot-lines providing crisis support in relation to a range of problems such as domestic violence, child abuse, attempted suicides, rape, and substance abuse, they are nevertheless being used to a good effect in some guidance services rendered, with clients being able to telephone in queries (Obineli, 2008).

The application of the routine interview service is a process where the counsellor calls for each student periodically to find out how they are doing in school and whatever needs they have has been met. The routine interview serves to update the information in the individual inventory. Vocational guidance also known as career development is a life-long process in which counsellor offer to the students in-depth discussions regarding career choice specifically to students who find it difficult to decide. Vocational counselling basically involves exploring all options, enhancing self-awareness and guidance service in which the students are provided with updated information on educational, occupational, social and personal matters through seminar-workshops, symposia, newsletters, bulletin board announcements, etc. which will promote personal development.

Nevertheless, successful integration of ICTs in educational system especially in providing guidance services depends largely on the availability, competence and the attitude of counsellors towards the role of modern technologies available for use in secondary schools. Similarly, ample provision of guidance services rest on the shoulders of guidance counsellors (certified), who are expected to develop effective guidance and counselling programmes in schools that will assist in moulding well-grounded individuals. To achieve this, the programme should target all areas of guidance and counselling which according to Monicah (2016) include personal and social, vocational, health and educational guidance and counselling among others.

Similarly computer according to Bansal (n.d) has become a powerful tool for the rapid and economical production of pictures. Bansal further asserted that computer graphics remains one of the most exciting and rapidly growing fields. Generally, it is expected that graphical communication will often be more convenient when computers are utilized for this purpose. This is however true because one must represent objects in two-dimensional and three-dimensional spaces. Computer graphics has revolutionized almost every computer based activities in all spheres of life (guidance and counselling inclusive). Many people for different reasons use computer graphics to enhance their activities, computer graphics can be used to enhance guidance services to a great advantage, and will in turn take communication between counsellors and clients from face-to face interaction to an advanced level.

According to Meera, (2011) instructional satellite technologies have exhibited their capabilities for providing services related to education, Tele-medicine, Tele-education, healthcare besides information on planning and development. Generally, instructional satellites are a powerful medium in educating the masses. Therefore nations are making use of instructional satellites for broadcasting and through them for distance education programmes. It is in this context that the study assumes great significance with emphasis on enhancing guidance services in secondary schools. Instructional satellites could enhance the delivery of guidance services in an educational institution and also at home.

Video conferencing as an ICT tool is a way of co-working independently on physical distance with the use of audio-visual equipments. However, video conferencing tools are yet to achieve the standard of face-to-face communication in an overall effectiveness and subjective impression of the participants, more emphasis has to be placed on video conferencing as a tool for quality guidance service delivery. According to Driskel, Radtke, and Salas (2003), the aim of video conferencing is to create an environment using videos that could be at least comparable to those offered by classical face-to-face interactions, with these in place in secondary schools, guidance services could be enhanced.

Web televisions are platforms created to make videos which will assist students discover their innate potentials and in turn enhance guidance services. Web television is a platform which is still evolving. Web television is aimed specifically at amateur sites like YouTube which make it really easy for web videos to be created and uploaded. These videos are available on the website and can be clicked by anyone who wants to see them. This process is done with the help of a web cam (Steve, 2018).

The application of the routine interview service is a process where the counsellor calls for each student periodically to find out how they are doing in school and whatever needs they have has been met. Routine interview serves as a means to update information in the individual inventory. Vocational guidance also known as career development is a life-long process in which counsellors offer to the students in-depth discussions regarding career choice specifically to students who find it difficult to decide. Vocational counselling basically involves exploring all options, enhancing self-awareness and guidance service in which the students are provided with updated information on educational, occupational, social and personal matters through seminar-workshops, symposia, newsletters, bulletin board announcements, etc. which will promote personal development.

In the current dispensation, the rate student's at secondary school level access and use ICT is a strong indication that online multimedia information with personalized elements and links to reputable sources of information are all priorities for services (guidance services inclusive). According to Adebowale, Papoola, Obisakin, and Oyaziwo (2012), the current trend all over the world is the transformation from mechanical phase to digital phase, and the significant role of ICT in improving education enhances quick and quality services delivery including counselling. Presently, the performance of students in secondary education is deteriorating day-by-day. To this effect, the services of school counsellors in secondary education is important in guiding students in career building for optimum performance in their various endeavours such as; education, social activities, health, moral, personal and marital areas. Therefore it is worthy to note that guidance counselling as a profession should be explicitly inevitable in secondary education.

On the other hand, students experience immense socio-economic and psychological pressure in today's world, with the advent of information communication technology (ICT) which in a way makes or mare the learning processes. In the same vein, according to Wambu and Fisher (2015), changing societal and family values, traditions as well as disintegrated community, forms the bases for psychological and social issues affecting students in institutions of learning (secondary school inclusive). These societal trends presents the need and increasing demand for the services of professional counsellors to provide comprehensive guidance and counselling programmes in secondary schools to effectively address students' needs.

Furthermore, the introduction of ICT for use by counsellors for providing guidance services at secondary education level has become a big boost in enhancing guidance services. This provision of ICT facilities in resource centres presupposes that counsellors and students could use them to create awareness, adjust behaviours, and improve learning achievement. Similarly, Anyamene, Nwokolo and Anyachebelu (2010), supported that the array of information provided through counselling would help tremendously in the production of professionally competent graduates. The essence of incorporating guidance and counselling into the secondary school system was to eliminate overwhelming ignorance of many young people on their choices of career prospects and personality maladjustment among secondary school children (Oye, Obi, Mohd & Bernice, 2012). But this aim seems not to have been met. Based on these, this study seeks to enhance guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra State through the use of information communication technology.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine:

- 1. The use of call-centre services/hotlines by guidance counsellors to enhance routine interview in secondary schools in Anambra state.
- 2. The use of computer graphics technology by guidance counsellors to enhance counselling services in secondary schools in Anambra state.
- 3. The use of instructional satellite by guidance counsellors to enhance individual inventory in secondary schools in Anambra state.
- 4. The use of video conferencing by guidance counsellors to enhance vocational guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra state.
- 5. The use of web television by guidance counsellors to enhance information services in secondary schools in Anambra state.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

- 1. How often do guidance counsellors utilize call-centres/Hotlines to enhance routine interview in secondary schools in Anambra state?
- 2. How often do guidance counsellors utilize computer graphics technology to enhance counselling services in secondary schools in Anambra state?
- 3. How often do guidance counsellors utilize instructional satellite to enhance individual inventory in secondary schools in Anambra state?
- 4. How often do guidance counsellors utilize video conferencing to enhance vocational guidance in secondary schools in Anambra state?
- 5. How often do guidance counsellors utilize web television to enhance information services in secondary schools in Anambra state?

1.4 Method

The design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in Anambra State. The population for the study comprised 243 guidance counsellors in government owned secondary schools in Anambra State.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled "Use of Information Communication Technology by Counsellors to Enhance Guidance Services Questionnaire (UICTCEGSQ) and was validated by two experts. Items for the questionnaire were derived from literature and suggestions offered by the experts in Department of Guidance counselling and Department of Technology and Vocational Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. On the basis of these suggestions, twenty five items were generated for the questionnaire.

The instrument was structured on a Four (4) point Likert scale of Always (3.50-4.49), Sometimes (2.50-3.49), Rarely (1.50-2.49), Never (0.50-1.49). The reliability of the instrument was computed using Cronbach Alpha and yielded a co-efficient of 0.78, the instrument was therefore deemed reliable for the study.

In collecting data, the researchers adopted direct approach in administering the questionnaire to the respondents (guidance counsellors) present at CASSON (Anambra chapter) general meeting of 2018. Two hundred and three (203) CASSON members were present at the meeting and participated in the study.

Arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Particularly the standard deviation scores were used to determine how close or spread apart the respondents ratings are. Decisions were taken thus; items with mean scores of 2.50 and above were accepted signifying "Always" use of the ICT tool, while items with mean score of 2.49 and below was rejected signifying "Never".

1.5 Results

1.5.1 Research Question 1: How often do guidance counsellors utilize call-centres/Hotlines to enhance routine interview in secondary schools in Anambra state?

Table 1: Mean and Standard deviation on how often guidance counsellors use call-centers/hotlines to enhance routine interview (N=203).

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	use of call centers/hotlines for effective follow-up of clients	2.80	.83	Always
2.	use of call centers/hotlines to get clients consent before interview	2.43	.88	Rarely
3.	use of call centers/hotlines to organize safety plan before interview	2.64	.87	Always
4.	use of call centers/hotlines to track and evaluate key outcome in students learning	2.75	.82	Always
5.	use of call centers/hotlines to make students feel part of their learning	2.99	.80	Always
	Grand mean	2.72		Always

Data presented in Table 1 reveals that guidance counsellors rated the use of call centers/hotlines as Always used for items 1, 3, 4, and 5 with mean scores of 2.80, 2.43, 2.64, 2.75, and 2.99 respectively, however item 2 with a mean score of 2.43 indicated that call centers/hotlines was Rarely used. The grand mean of 2.72 shows that call centers/hotlines is Always used to enhance guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra state. The standard deviation scores showed that the respondents had similar view.

1.5.2 Research Question 2: How often do guidance counsellors utilize computer graphics technology to enhance counselling services in secondary schools in Anambra state?

Table 2: Mean and Standard deviation on how often guidance counsellors utilize computer graphics to enhance counselling services (N=203)

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
6.	use computer graphics to create a relax environment during counselling session		.83	Always
7.	use computer graphics to elaborate and give more explanations on issues on discussion	2.01	.87	Rarely
8.	use computer graphics to help clients openly express themselves in terms of their challenges	1.23	.86	Rarely
9.	use computer graphics to motivate and inspire clients to discover their inner potentials		.91	Rarely
10.	Use of computer graphics to help client students plan out the course of action use	2.11	.89	Rarely
	Grand mean	2.04		Rarely

Analysis on Table 2 shows the use of computer graphics for item 6 with mean score of 2.52, while it was rated as rarely used for items 7, 8, 9 and 10 with mean scores of 2.01, 1.23, 2.34 and 2.11 respectively. The grand mean 2.04 indicated that computer graphics is rarely used by Guidance Counsellor in enhancing guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra state. The standard deviation scores also indicated that the respondents had similar opinion.

1.5.3 Research Question 3: How often do guidance counsellors utilize instructional satellite to enhance individual inventory in secondary schools in Anambra state?

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
11.	use instructional satellites for easy storage of students client information	2.96	.92	Always
12.	use instructional satellites for easy retrieval of students' client information stored	2.96	1.00	Always
13.	use instructional satellites for easy re-assignment of clients for better service	1.90	.96	Rarely
14.	use instructional satellites to remove barrier that might set in whilst counselling	1.85	1.03	Rarely
15.	use instructional satellites to commend teachers and career masters and encourage them	2.02	.92	Rarely
	Grand mean	2.33		Rarely

Table 3: Mean and Standard deviation on how often guidance counsellors utilize instructional satellite to enhance individual inventory (N=203)

Data presented in Table 3 reveals that instructional satellite was rated as Always used for items 11 and 12 with mean scores of 2.96 and 2.96 respectively, while it was rated as Rarely used for items 13, 14 and 15 with means scores of 1.90, 1.85 and 2.02 respectively. Furthermore, the grand mean score of 2.33 shows that Guidance Counsellor Rarely use instructional satellites in delivering guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra state. The standard deviation scores indicated similar view in the respondents' opinion.

1.5.4: Research Question 4: How often do guidance counsellors utilize video conferencing to enhance vocational guidance in secondary schools in Anambra state?

Table 4: Mean and Standard deviation on how often guidance counsellors utilize video conferencing to enhance

vocational	guidance	(N=203)
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S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
16.	use of video conferencing to improve students anxiety towards decision making	2.48	.97	Rarely
17.	use of video conferencing to improve clarity and stability in their self Perception	2.64	.90	Always
18.	use of video conferencing to cut out negative expectations about their ability to make appropriate career choice	2.28	1.01	Rarely
19.	use of video conferencing to reduce difficulty in thinking clearly about themselves and their career choices	2.59	1.01	Always
20.	use of video conferencing to enlighten students view on the appropriate subjects for a particular	2.74	.90	Always
	Grand mean	2.54		Always

Data presented in Table 4 shows that video conferencing was rated as rarely used for items 16 and 18 with mean scores of 2.48 and 2.28, while it was rated as Always used for items 17, 19 and 20 with mean scores of 2.64, 2.59 and 2.74. Also the grand mean of 2.54 indicated that Guidance Counsellors always use video conferencing in enhancing guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra State.

1.5.5 Research Question 5: How often do guidance counsellors utilize web television to enhance information services in secondary schools in Anambra state?

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
21.	use web television to provide self assessment to client	1.96	.89	Rarely
22.	use web television for awareness raising exercise for clients	1.67	.90	Rarely
23.	use web television for psychometric test for clients	1.88	.94	Rarely
24.	use web television to facilitate retrieval of information about training and job opportunities relevant to the client	2.01	1.00	Rarely
25.	use web television to inform related training or distance learning materials for job seekers	2.11	.86	Always
	Grand mean	1.92		Rarely

Table 5: Mean and Standard deviation on how often guidance counsellors utilize web television to enhance information services (N=203)

Data presented in Table 5 shows that web television was rated as rarely used for all items 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25, with mean scores of 1.96, 1.67, 1.88, 2.01 and 2.11 respectively. However with a grand mean of 1.92 it indicated that Guidance counsellor "Rarely" use web television to enhance guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra State.

1.6 Discussion

The analysis on how often guidance counsellors utilize call-centres/Hotlines to enhance routine interview in secondary schools presented in Table 1 shows that this ICT tool was Always used to enhance guidance services this is in line with Obineli, (2008) who revealed that several states in Nigeria report that call-in services tend to be associated rather more with help-lines and hot-lines providing crisis support in relation to a range of problems such as domestic violence, child abuse, attempted suicides, rape, and substance abuse, they are nevertheless being used to a good effect in some guidance services rendered, with clients being able to telephone in queries. This result could be due to the reason that telephone and GSM is becoming a popular tool in every individual disposal.

The analysis on how often guidance counsellors utilize computer graphics to enhance counselling services in secondary schools presented in table 2 revealed that this ICT tool is rarely used to enhance guidance services. This disagrees with Bansal (n.d) who stated that computer has become a powerful tool for the rapid and economical production of pictures. Bansal further asserted that computer graphics remains one of the most exciting and rapidly growing fields. Generally, it is expected that graphical communication will often be more convenient when computers are utilized for this purpose. In this wise, computer graphics would have given the enhancement of guidance services a face lift. However the rarely use of computer graphics by guidance counsellors could be as a result of lack of awareness by the guidance counsellors.

The analysis on how often guidance counsellors utilize instructional satellite to enhance individual inventory in secondary schools presented in table 3 revealed that this ICT tool is rarely used to enhance guidance service. This finding disagree Meera, (2011) who stated that instructional satellite technologies have exhibited its capabilities for providing services related to education, Tele-medicine, Tele-education, healthcare besides information on planning and development. Generally, instructional satellites are a powerful medium in educating the masses. Nevertheless this could be as a result of neglect of this ICT tool by guidance counsellors in secondary schools.

The analysis on how often guidance counsellors utilize video conferencing to enhance vocational guidance in secondary schools presented in Table 4 revealed that this ICT tool is Always used to enhance guidance services. This study affirms with Driskel, Radtke, and Salas study in (2003) who stated that the aim of video conferencing is to create an environment using videos that could be at least comparable to those offered by classical face-to-face interactions, with these in place in secondary schools, guidance services could be enhanced.

The analysis on how often guidance counsellors utilize web television to enhance information services in secondary schools presented in Table 5 revealed that this ICT tool is rarely used to enhance guidance services. This finding disagrees with Steve (2018) who stated that web televisions are platforms created to make videos which will assist students discover their innate potentials and in turn enhance guidance services. However guidance services offered in secondary schools could have gained some level of enhancement if counsellors employ the use of web television as proven to be effective by Steve (2018). On the other hand, the result of it being rarely used to enhance guidance service could be as a result of improper awareness.

1.7 Conclusion

Conclusively, counseling is a form of education which the students receive from their counselors. In the new National Policy of Education (2013), (6-3-3-4) the demand for guidance and counseling is apparently made clear. There was agreement also, with a very negligible deviation that most secondary school time-table does not make provisions for guidance and counseling activities, hence the need to do so. The essence of incorporating guidance and counseling into the school system was to eliminate overwhelming ignorance of many young people on their choices of career prospects, attitude, and personality maladjustment among secondary school children. The integration of ICT tools such as call-centers/hotline, instructional satellite, and video conferencing for delivering guidance and counselling services can be seen as an alternative, a tool, and an agent of change. The incessant growth of internet and web television as means of information delivery implies that the potential of ICT as a means of change is greater now than ever before. The importance of guidance and counseling programmes offered in secondary schools, which include bringing to the students an increased understanding of the educational, social and vocational information needed to take future decisions in career and other areas of their endeavour. Presently, in our society there are forces responsible and influencing the gradual recognition of guidance to young people/students at various educational levels. Nevertheless, principals of secondary schools have negative impression that a school can function effectively and profitably without a guidance counselor. This paper focused on enhancing guidance services in secondary schools in Anambra State through the use of information communication technology.

Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions, this paper recommended that:

- 1. The state government through its ministry of education should provide ICT tools for use by guidance counsellors in secondary schools in Anambra state.
- 2. Guidance counsellors who are not digital natives should be mobilized for workshops, conferences and training on the use of innovative ICT tools to enhance guidance service delivery in secondary schools in Anambra state.
- 3. Secondary schools in Anambra state should have well equipped counselling clinics to enhance guidance service delivery.

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