

Impact of Guidance and Counseling on Academic Performance

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in order to ascertain the impact of guidance and counselling on academic performance. The study area was the Dormaa Senior High School in the Dormaa Central Municipality of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. Pre-test and post-test control group design was applied for the study. An experimental design was used as the research frame for the study. 40 students were selected; 20 for experimental group and 20 for control group for the study. Two hypotheses were formulated to keep the study in focus.

Data from respondents were gathered by the use of interviews. The results of the findings revealed that there is no significant difference of pre-test scores of experimental and control group. However, significant difference was realized between post-test scores of experimental and control group with regards to academic performance.

It was recommended that full time counsellors be appointed in each school to address the existing and teething problems of students. It was again recommended that guidance programmes should be seriously included in the curriculum of our pre-tertiary institutions. .

Key Words: Guidance, Counselling, Counsellor and Treatment

Introduction

Guidance is often seen as a kind of direction or leadership offered an individual to assist him or her to makes decisions about his or her present and future life. Counseling on the other hand is seen as a psychological process of helping an individual to be equipped with self-understanding and skills of problem solving of everyday life in the society, home and school.

According to Okobiah and Okorodudu (2004) guidance is a programme of activities which has provided us with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in our present age of complex scientific and technological development. Essuman (2010) maintains that guidance and counselling should form an essential part of Ghana's educational system. Olayinka (2001) opines that obtaining good grades in examination to acquire certificates either for admission into higher institution or obtain good employment is the main goal of education to many people and not the acquisition of knowledge and skills through studying. Many students perform poorly because they lack the right attitude to study and do not have the right orientation from home and from the society (Essuman, 2007).

The attitudes of human beings play significant role in their behaviours. The study of human habits and attitudes is relevant and essential to counseling, as it can help in the understanding of the rationale for their behaviour and provides basis for prediction and assistance. Abiri (1996) argues that if the society is not to be plaque by a band/group of disgruntled, frustrated and unrealistic individuals, it is desirable that adequate guidance and counseling and career information be provided, to enable the school and society arrive at a realistic vocational choice for their children/wards with due realization of their potentialities.

Guidance and counselling is an integral part of modern academic programmes. Ghana, indeed has a long and documented history on guidance and counseling (Danquah, 1987). Stakeholders in education are faced with a myriad of problems albeit social, religious, financial or psychological. The worst victims have also been students and their educators. Whereas guidance and counselling is seen to be an effective management tool for peoples' problems whether this has been transcended to the field of academics and specifically academic performance is still seeking solutions. According to a report by the West African Examination Council in 2013 revealed that more 0.73% of candidates who sat for the West African Secondary School Certificate Examination in Ghana failed in all subjects. Again, just a year after, 3.07% failed in all subjects. This shows in an increasing trend which is a source of worry.

The question one will ask is; what then is the impact of guidance and counselling on academic performance after the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service have made it a policy for all second cycle institutions to have guidance and counselling coordinators? To provide answers to questions such

as this propelled the researchers to investigate the “impact of guidance and counseling on academic performance”.

Population, Sample Design, Research Design and Instrument

Pretest-posttest designs are the preferred method to compare participant groups and measure the degree of change occurring as a result of treatments or interventions. Therefore, to study the impact of guidance and counseling on academic performance of the students pre-test and post test control group design was applied. The target population for the study were Senior High school students both male and female studying in schools in Dormaa Municipality. The sample of the study was drawn from second year students. The researcher selected Dormaa Senior High School purposively. Borg and Gall (1983) as cited by Mehmood, Rashid and Azeem (2011) have suggested that in causal comparative and experimental research, it is desirable to have a minimum of 15 cases in each group to be compared. A group of 20 students are considered manageable for guidance services. Hence, research required 40 students, 20 for experimental group and 20 for control group. Again 10 each were selected for both males and females for the control groups. For experimental group, 20 total students (10 female and 10 male) were selected randomly by using simple random.

To get the drift of the impact of guidance and counseling on students’ academic performance in the subject of mathematics they were given a set of test comprising both objective and essay types based on the second year mathematics syllabus taught by the subject master. Two groups of pre-test and post test experimental design was applied for the study. There was treatment package made up of guidance together with both individual and group counselling for the experimental group.

Treatment schedule:

1. Guidance and counseling services were provided to the experimental group every other day for one session of 30 - 45 minutes.
2. Twenty sessions of individual and group guidance and counseling were conducted during the study comprising each session of 30 - 45 minutes.
3. Counseling sessions of 10-15 minutes for individual students were held to address students’ problems.

Treatment

There was a one month treatment process with twenty sessions and an average of thirty five minutes. This was done through a guidance programme, individual and group counselling for the experimental group.

Results and Discussions

According to Mehmood, Rashid and Azeem (2011) experiments that apply same kind of treatment can apply a test or measurement in two places: before the treatment, which is a *pre-test* and after the treatment, which is a *post-test*. Descriptive statistics, t-test of differences and Analysis of Variance (2-group) were used to ascertain the effect of change between the control and the treatment groups. This was made possible through the use of SPSS version 20.

H1: There is no significant difference of experimental and control group students’ achievements in pre-test

Table 1. Pre test score(total group)

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	Mean Difference	T-value	Sig
Experimental	20	19.23	12.24	38	3.82	.639	.581
Control	20	15.41	13.25				

The Null Hypothesis 1 was tested at statistical significance level of 0.05 and the results showed that at $df = 38$, $p = .581$ which is greater than 0.05. Therefore we fail to reject the Null Hypothesis 1. This implies there is no significant difference of pre-test scores of experimental and control group. The results, however, revealed a small mean of 3.82 meaning the two groups are statistically the same.

Okobia, and Okorodudu, (2004) on the concepts of guidance and counselling in Benin City in Nigeria revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between students who had undergone counselling treatment and those had not. They however added that eventhough there were no statistically significant differences, there existed some marginal difference in the mean scores of the two groups.

Nwachukwu, (2007) agrees to the findings of Okobia and Okorodudu. He also concluded that there was no significant difference between students who had had counselling and their counterparts who had not with regards to academic performance.

H2: There is no significant difference between the experimental and control group in their academic performance at the end of treatment.

Table 2. Post-test score(total group)

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	Mean Difference	T-value	Sig
Experimental	20	23.29	7.63	45	10.94	3.229	.021
Control	20	12.35	10.24				

The Null Hypothesis 2 was tested at statistical significance level of 0.05 and the results showed that at $df = 38$, $p = .021$ which is less than 0.05. Therefore we reject the Null Hypothesis 2. This implies there is significant difference of post-test scores of experimental and control group. However, the results showed a small mean of 3.82 meaning the two groups are statistically the same.

Eyo, Joshva, &Esuong (2010) joins compliments to the finding of the this study when they found thatthere is significant difference between post-test scores of experimental and control group with regards to academic performance. They made known in a study they carried on the attitude of secondary school students towards guidance and counseling services in Cross River State in Calabar.

Ladipo's 2000 study also agrees with the finding of the study. He found out that significant differences existed in the academic performance of students who had undergone counselling and those who had not undergone counselling.

Findings

The study revealed that guidance and counseling services have a positive effect on students' academic achievements. As well as the results of the study are concerned, it is concluded that

- 1 There is no significant difference of pre-test scores of experimental and control group.
- 2 There is significant difference of post-test scores of experimental and control group.

Conclusion

- 1 Guidance and counseling is necessary for all students especially at senior high school level.
- 2 Guidance and counseling improves the accomplishment of students.

Recommendations

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

1. Appointing full time counselors in each school will address the existing and teething problems of students.
2. Guidance programmes should be seriously embedded in the curriculum of our schools.
3. Regional or a nationwide study should be undertaken to give a much broader view of the subject under study.

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