

# Motivational Approaches for School Counselors for High Performance among Tertiary Institutions in Kano State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

*This study adopts the survey design to investigate the motivational approaches for high performances among tertiary institutions in Kano State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided this study. The population for the study comprises all the school counselors in the study area. However, six tertiary institutions in Kano State were selected for the study. Mean and t-test statistics was used to analyze the data. The findings of the study reveal among others that motivational strategies that could move counselors towards high productivity were all accepted by the respondents. These and many others include encouraging participatory management, providing financial assistance to the counselors when the need arises, getting into various counselors websites that offer reliable and useful counselors and lecturing tips and resources, providing incentives to the counselors. Hence, counselors should be given the opportunity of exposure to new knowledge, techniques and skills, thus making them more effective on their professions. Just and equitable reward system should be developed to motivate the counselors to meet their hopes and aspirations that is commensurate and self actualization were made.*

**Keywords:** *Motivational approaches, Counselors, Performances and Tertiary Institutions*

## INTRODUCTION

Counseling is an interaction process, which facilitates meaningful understanding of self and environment and results in the establishment and the clarification of goals and values for the future behaviour (Yusuf, 2001). Counseling is a social learning, a mutual interaction involving persons. The recipient of counseling services is generally called a client or counselee (Anagbogu, 2005) the mutual interaction is between two people- the counselors and counselee when the later discusses his/her problems with the former (Anagbogu, 2005). The professional counselor stimulates his clients to discover their potential weaknesses, so that clients can make effective decisions regarding how to cope with their environment. Counseling is a way of facilitating man's quest for identity, self understanding and the expression of his aspirations (Anagbogu, 2005). A counselor as perceived by these presenters is any person trained in the field of counseling to at least a master degree level. Counseling, according to Kolo (1997), has been defined in various ways. Common among the definitions is that it is a special helping relationship. He explains that the special nature of the relationship between the counselor and the client is growing producing in the client.

Citing Gesinder (1991), Kolo (1997) further observes that counseling goes far beyond advice-giving as it involves more than solution to immediate problem. He went on to unveil counseling as an in-depth interaction between two or more individuals with the aim of helping the clients to better understand himself/herself/themselves in relation to present and further problems. He emphasizes that the relationship between the counselor and the client is so tightly knitted that it often results in to positive change of behaviour on the part of the client. Yusuf (2001) explains that the main purpose of counseling is to help the individuals or group to explore and to understand their attitudes, vales, interests and abilities so as to become more self directing and self propelling. More so, the sole objective of counseling is to assist individuals making choices which will lead to lives which are individually satisfying and socially effective. Thus, counseling as a tool can be effectively used in bringing about attitudinal or behavioural change among individuals.

Highlighting the role of school counselors, Ipaye (1986) notes in-service programme, orientation, record keeping, management, and placement among others. He opines that teachers should be involved in setting guidance programmes and that through in-services programmes; they are made to know their expectation. Also Omeje (2005) notes that counselor role in continuous assessment is getting teachers to acquire skills in test construction. Counselors in Nigeria are professionals whose services are largely associated with school settings. The services of counselors however are needed and could be provided for people in various formal and non-formal settings. Denga (1986) enlightens that counseling services are required not only in the school. They are needed in non school settings such as hospitals, prisons, remand homes, rehabilitation centres, churches, industries, families and much more.

A cursory look at the Nigerian society today reveals a plethora of problems that require the services of the counselor. These include unemployment illiteracy, the rush to make money. Stress and hypertension, increasing rate of family disharmony and divorce; ethnic and religious intolerance, drug addiction and peddling, juvenile delinquency; the poor state of the economy that has led to retrenchment of workers, hunger and diseases among the majority of the citizenry. As could be observed, Dileep (2009) lists emotional, behavioural, organizational, personal and environmental problems that are to be handled by the counselor in medical settings. On areas covered by counseling in medical setting, Oliagba (2000) indicates that it includes giving information, decision-making, helping the patient clarify his own problem or even facilitating the development of his own solutions. Egbule (2009) identifies problem associated with service counseling in schools to include:

- i Fear of uncertainty
- ii Poor feasibility and sustainability study
- iii Attempting too much at a given time
- iv Lack of initiative on the part of the trained counselor
- v Low awareness of the relevance of guidance and counseling in the society
- vi Limitation and delimitation of counselors training programme to the school setting
- vii Non availability of essential counseling materials required for establishing a functional counseling centre

- viii Lack of initial capital for effective take off of the centre
- ix Deficiency in the counselors training in the areas of managerial and administrative skills for effective private centre operation and organization
- x Lack of enthusiasm and zeal to forge ahead despite all odds by the professional counselors (Tracy, 2003).

Furthermore, Egbule (2009) and Tracy (2003) identify the prospects for enhancing counselor performances in Nigeria schools to include:-

- a Individual and group counseling mode, consultation and therapeutic procedures
- b Organizing paid conferences, seminars, workshops, symposia and public lectures
- c Training programmes for various persons
- d Employers and employees consultancy
- e Organizing of orientation programme for new employees in different establishments, agencies or institutions
- f Provision of recreational services
- g Research consultancy services
- h Educational consultancy
- i Business and management consultancy
- j Proposal writing preparation
- k Functioning as a resource person to various organization and schools
- l Liaising between various persons, organizations and communities as well as government agencies in time of crisis
- m Conflicts resolutions
- n Cyber café and Internet services
- o Library services and information dissemination (Egbule, 2005).

There is, however, a wide spread perception of a problem associated with school counselors particularly at tertiary institutions. Problems of various kinds have been identified as impediments to effective teaching and learning of educational psychology in tertiary institutions. Eze and Ngwoke (2004); Eke, (1992) and Anagbogu (2005) identify the characteristics of a counselor to include acceptance, understanding, empathy, communication ability, sensitivity, genuineness, intelligence, confidentiality and good listening skills. Consequently motivational strategies should be found towards increasing high performance of school counselors. Motivation has been viewed by Ngwoke (2010) as the desire, need and interest that can arouse one towards achieving an objective. It is a drawing factor that can cause somebody to act positively or negatively towards a situation.

Productivity means getting more out of less as a way of optimizing resources to the benefit of the organization and society. Motivation is the set of processes that moves a person towards a goal (Maslow, 1956). Since motivation influences productivity, to understand what motivates counselors to really peak performance. It is not an easy task to increase educational psychologists' motivation because the counselors respond in different ways to their teaching profession and to institutional practices. Generally, people work to satisfy certain needs and the assumption is that if these needs are satisfied, the employee would be motivated to contribute to organizational performance. The complexity of

motivation is simply demonstrated by the fact that people respond in different ways to the same motivation scheme. Some may be motivated by financial reward, some by job security, some by challenging jobs and some by a combination of a number of these factors. It was against this background that the study sought to investigate the motivational approaches towards enhancing higher performance of schools counselors in tertiary institutions in Kano State, Nigeria. A comprehensive null Hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. Thus, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the motivational strategies to be adopted by the counselors towards higher performance among tertiary institutions in Kano State.

## METHOD

This study is a survey. It was carried out in five Tertiary Institutions in Kano State: Bayaro University, Kano; Northwest University, Kano; University of Science and Technology, Wudil; Federal College of Education, Kano and Saadatu Rimi College of Education, Kano. The population of the study comprises all the school counsellors in tertiary institutions in Kano State. Ninety two participants were randomly selected from the population. The sample is based on the number of school counselors in both state and federal institutions in the state. The study made use of all the school counselors in the selected tertiary institutions. The instrument for data collection was self designed questionnaire made up of two sections.

Section A contains information on strategies for motivating counselors for higher performance. The respondents were requested to indicate the degree of desirability or undesirability using SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree) and SD (Strongly Disagree) respectively. A draft copy of the questionnaire was given to three experts in educational psychology, guidance and counseling of not less than a senior lecturer status to ascertain the suitability or construct validity of the items. The questionnaire items were modified by integrating their objective suggestions. The instrument therefore was deemed fit for the study. A trial testing was carried out on the instrument. The questionnaire was administered to 20 teachers in secondary school sections in Kano Local Government Area outside the area of the study. Data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha and a coefficient of interval consistence of 0.72 and 0.89 was established. The data collected for this study was analyzed using mean and t-test statistics to answer the research questions and hypothesis posed. To determine, the acceptance level of any items, a mean rating of 2.50 and above indicated acceptance/desirable while a mean rating below 2.5 indicated rejection/undesirable.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that 10 items have their mean score ranging from 2.55 to 3.80. This signified that the mean scores were above the cut-off point of 2.50, indicating that the respondents agreed with the 10 items as strategies that could motivate counselors with respect to gender towards high performance. The data on table 2 show that the male counselor has a mean score of 3.60 while the female counselor was 3.69. The null hypothesis is accepted since the t-cal. is 0, which is below the t-critical of 1.96. The findings revealed on table 1

indicate 10 motivational strategies that could move counselors towards high performances. These include encouraging participatory management. Providing financial assistance to the counselors when the need arises, getting into various counselors websites that offer reliable and useful counselors and lecturing tips and resources, providing incentives to the counselors, using different teaching strategies for effective teaching and learning, provision of opportunities for personal fulfillment, subscribing to counselors newsletters, magazines and journals; participation in counselors; providing the lectures with innovative lecturing resources. This finding is in line with the findings of Umaru (2013), Ngwoke (2010) and Maslow (1954) respectively.

Furthermore, this finding is in agreement with the motivation theories presented by Maslows (1954) in his five hierarchies of needs which are psychological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and self actualization needs. Generally, people work to satisfy these needs and the assumption is that if these needs are satisfied, employees would be motivated to contribute to organizational performance (Egbule, 2005 and 2009). The result of the study shared that counselors could be motivated by these strategies since educational objectives and programme cannot be realized without highly motivated, dedicated and conscientious school counselors. In addition, the following can serve as good measures for motivation.

- i. Giving incentives/rewards and praises to the counselors to boost their productivity in teaching, learning and research
- ii. Providing of innovative teaching resources to the school counselors such as internet, e-learning facilities and improved text books. And
- iii. Offering opportunities for counselors to participate in workshops and retraining programmes and provision of scholarship for further studies.

**Table 1: Mean Responses of Counselors showing Strategies that could motives them toward High Performances**

S/No Items	Mean Male	Mean Female
1 Encouraging participatory management as much as possible by encouraging the school counselors to come up with ideas and suggestions on ways for achieving high performance	3.60	3.70
2 Providing financial assistance to the school counselors when the need arises	3.60	3.70
3 Getting into various educational psychology websites that offer reliable and useful educational psychology book, lecturing tips and resources	3.50	3.60
4 Subscribing to counselors newsletters, magazine and journals	3.70	3.73
5 Participation in counselors associations	3.50	3.60
6 Giving praises and other means of warm appreciation to the counselors	3.80	3.80
7 Provision of capacity building to the counselors such as training workshops and conferences	3.80	3.80
8 Provision of research grant and scholarships to counselors	3.50	3.70
9 Provision of computers, internet access and E-Learning to facilities counselors and students	3.70	3.70
10 As criteria for admission into guidance and counseling course: student must have credit pass at WAEC/NECO in English Language and credit at NCE in Education	3.60	3.60
Total Mean	36.40	36.90
Ground Mean	3.64	3.69

**Source:** Survey, 2013

**Table 2:** T-test statistical analysis of significant difference between the Mean ratings of counselors on the motivational approaches toward achieving higher performance by gender

Counselors	(X)	SD	N	Df	t-test	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	3.60	0.28	50					
Female	3.69	0.31	42	90	0.	1.96	0.05	Accepted

(P<0.05)

Source: Survey, 2013

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Counselors, in whatever setting exist to assist individuals in coping with varieties of personal, social, emotional and psychological problems for healthy personal development. Needless to mention that problems are part of the existential nature of human kind, nevertheless, in the case of Nigerians, problems had assumed an alarming state (Yusuf, 1995). Based on the above fact, it is concluded that counseling is so much about problem solving. Thus counselors, by virtue of their professional knowledge and skills acquired through training are at an advantage in assisting people in whatever setting to solve their problems. In fact, no meaningful progress can be made in the educational system without good and dedicated counselors (NPE, 2008). It is therefore recommended that:

- i. Counselor should be given the opportunity of exposure to new knowledge, techniques and skills that can make them more effective on their professions.
- ii. Just and equitable reward system should be developed to motivate counselors to meet their hopes and aspirations of self actualization of their full potential.
- iii. An award should be instituted for the best human resource manager in counselors in tertiary institutions.
- iv. There should be adequate monitoring of teaching learning and research activities of school counselors in tertiary institutions.

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