

## **EXAMINATION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING STRATEGIES AS TOOLS FOR ENHANCING NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS**

**Chinyere, C. NGWAKWE** *PhD.*

*School of Education,  
Federal College of Education (Technical), Gombe.  
Phone no. 08030994606  
E-mail: chinyerenwosu57@gmail.com*

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### **Abstract**

*This paper looked at how Nigerian tertiary institutions use guidance and counselling to achieve national security. The principles of guidance and counselling, national security, education, and ways that guidance and counselling can employ to promote peace and harmony in tertiary institutions were all explored. The discussion of this paper demonstrated that sufficient orientation, motivation, and counselling services will aid in the establishment of peace among the country's students. Conclusions and recommendations were given, including that orientation services are crucial and should be required of all new intakes before the start of school in any tertiary institution in Nigeria. Hostels, classrooms, instructional materials, libraries, laboratories, and qualified guidance counsellors and professors should all be included in the government's requirements for higher institutions. Counselling as a means of resolving disciplinary issues and disagreements among tertiary students, as well as providing motivational services, is a more widely accepted campus environment.*

**Keywords:** Guidance, Counselling, Education, National Security, Counselling services, security education.

### **Introduction**

In the middle of the 1950s, guidance and counselling started to become a recognizable part of Nigeria's educational system. Guidance and counselling was established as a discipline in Nigerian institutions as a result of events that occurred in the United States of America. This discipline's history is rooted in these events. In Nigeria, school guidance and counselling have existed for as long as formal education. This suggests that traditional counselling methods are employed throughout Africa, and Nigeria specifically, to help problematic youths avoid crises and reposition themselves for meaningful functioning in society.

Since the beginning of time, the school has been used to guarantee that counselling programmes are effective and meet the needs of the people, since it is a reflection of society. During the colonial era, school curricula were enough to meet the demands and whims of the

colonial masters. Before organized or professional guidance services were introduced, Nigerians used what is now called "traditional guidance" to solve their problems.

Since humans are social beings, they require assistance and direction from others in one form or another. Children are guided for effective life by their parents, grandparents, teachers, and other seniors, as well as by their home, school, and society. The demand for professional guidance counsellors is more intense in today's society because of the proliferation of knowledge, industrialization, and changes in the socioeconomic structure. In order to properly implement guidance and counselling services in Nigeria, especially in the school system, it is necessary to take into account the recent complicated developments and educational trends in the workplace and society. Nigerian society is now dealing with a number of modern social issues. Among them are cultism, drug addiction, poverty, juvenile delinquency, examination malpractice, kidnapping, and films that glorify crime. High rates of reliance, poor per capita income, unintended pregnancies, general disorders, and moral decay are just a few of the issues that have been highlighted as having an impact on society (Ndifon & Akande, 2015).

Guidance and Counselling are essential components of the Nigerian educational system. Together with administration and instruction, it makes up the third force in education. Guidance programmes for secondary school students are made to address the academic, occupational, social, emotional, and physical challenges of adolescents, according to Eyo, Joshua, and Esuong (2010). This will improve students' academic achievement and supplement classroom instruction. Nigerian youth are growing up in a society that is becoming more complex and changing quickly. This is because of the world's industrial and technological advancements, which present difficulties in the areas of school, employment, and personal-social interactions. These problems cause children to feel anxious, afraid, and stressed about how they will handle and adapt to these difficult circumstances.

Young Nigerians must adapt to this web of change in many facets of their personal, social, and academic lives. Only a well-integrated guidance and counselling programme inside the educational system can address this demand. Regretfully, there isn't a well-organized and efficient system of student guidance and counselling in Nigerian public schools in general. Guidance and Counselling should not be seen as an afterthought, something that should be accepted and permitted at educational institutions. It is, in fact, the center of the learning process (Ihuoma & Lazarus, 2011; Ndifon & Akande, 2015). This study looked at the Examination of Guidance and Counselling Strategies as Tools for Enhancing National Security in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions.

### **Concepts of Guidance and Counselling**

The terms 'Guidance' and 'Counselling' have been loosely or interchangeably used. Counselling is one of the services that go under the umbrella word of guidance, which is more general than counselling. Various people have varied definitions and interpretations of guidance. "To guide" means "to point out," "to guide," and "to show the way." The word

guidance comes from the word guide, which always implies "to manage, to instruct, and to direct on a course." The phrase "guidance" is more inclusive. It is the help given to a person to manage the activities of their life. A more specialized function is counselling. It is given to a person who is having difficulties in their life by an expert. Guidance can be provided by many agencies and organizations like parents, teachers, family members, community or society as a whole. Counselling is provided by some expert in the field. Guidance is preventive while counselling is curative. "The former refers to helping students' whole-person development, while the latter is frequently targeted at helping students with problems" (Lai-Yeung, 2013). Egbochuku (2018) opined that Guidance would enable individuals to answer such questions as Who am I? What am I capable of doing? How can I fit into my society? How can I maximally use the opportunities within my environment to achieve my life goals?

Guidance and Counselling are crucial educational tools that help students shift their focus from the negative beliefs that their classmates have instilled in them to more rewarding and positive ones. Guidance, according to Nnadi, Uzokwe, Obi, and Chigbu (2021), is a comprehensive programme of several highly specialized activities carried out by specialists to assist an individual in making informed decisions. It may also be described as a procedure intended to help a person determine what they want to do and the best way to accomplish it in order to get a favourable outcome. Therefore, the role of the school counsellor is to help each child shape their destiny through counselling.

According to their training, counsellors are supposed to be friends with schoolchildren, listen to their grievances and shortcomings, and offer advice in an effort to shape them into the best person they can be for their future. According to Egbo (2013), "a child's full development can only occur in an environment conducive to teaching and learning." Given the foregoing, educational planners pay top priority to all educational services that can enhance instruction and learning in classrooms. Counselling services are essential for students' scholastic progress and future professional success, as the aforementioned unquestionable affirmation makes clear.

Conversely, counselling is the process of assisting individuals or groups of individuals in developing the self-awareness necessary to be authentic. A qualified counsellor's professional relationship with a client is reflected in counselling (Egbochuku, 2018; Alutu, 2006). While Agrawal (2006) described counselling as an enlightened process where people help others by promoting their growth, Durosaro and Adeoye (2010) defined it as a process where a person is supported in a face-to-face connection. The practice of counselling is intended to assist clients in understanding and elucidating their own perspectives on their living environment, as well as in learning how to achieve their own goals by making meaningful, informed decisions and resolving emotional or interpersonal issues. It believes that every human individual has the potential for self-growth, self-development and self-actualization.

### **The Concept of National Security**

It is impossible to describe national security without first understanding what security is.

Security is defined by Wikipedia as resilience or freedom from possible harm (or other unwelcome forced change) brought about by others. The website <https://en.m.wikipedia.org> According to Nmom (2013), security is the tranquil state of mind of a person, group, state, or country at a specific moment in time and location. He reasoned that a relative calm can ensure social cohesion and quality of life for the survival of the individual group or nation, even if there isn't any violence, physical assault, or disturbances.

From the two definitions given above, it is clear that security is viewed as a matter of safeguarding the populace as a whole and that both the people and the government share responsibility for it. As a result, the term "community policing" has become often used in Nigerian security discourse. Mezieobi (2012) claims that whenever the phrase "security" is used, it evokes concerns that mostly relate to one or a combination of the following:

- a. The defence and protection of national integrity or Nigeria's sovereignty, territorial and political jurisdictions from external and internal interferences or intervention;
- b. Personal safety of members of the political class who are in control of the helm of affairs of governance, in addition to safeguarding or protecting their office, hence the incredible allocation of funds for security services;
- c. The security agents or forces, civil defence corps protecting the lives and properties of the mass of the defenceless citizenry against the menace of the men of the underworld;
- d. Forestalling or deterring possible internal attacks or crises and subjugating insurgency;
- e. Keeping the security agents on active security alert and readiness at all points in time;
- f. Checkmating impending or actual internal threats to state or national security or anti-social behaviours by those who are deliberately undermining or sabotaging government efforts;
- g. Checkmating social problems such as the Boko-Haram saga and youth militancy, kidnapping/abduction that may pose threat to the state and national security and detract the political cadre in control of state affairs from active commitment to their functions; and;
- h. Making the environment free from insecurity to attract international investment. This is in line with Robert McNamara's earlier quoted assertion on the relationship between growth, national development and peace and security.

According to the definitions given above, security can be defined as the absence of risk, danger, or threat. It addresses the absence of fear and anxiety as well as the protection of a state or organization from criminal attacks and activities such as espionage, theft, and terrorism (Ogheneakoke, 2014). Therefore, a country's security interests encompass the protection of people and property, economic, physical, and mental health, as well as the ability to pursue goals without interference (Otoibhi, 2021).

According to Brown (2013), national security is the capacity to protect the country's

borders, its natural resources, institutions, and governance from external interference, its economic ties with the rest of the world on fair terms, and its physical integrity and territory.

Furthermore, national security is the state in which our most prized principles and ideals, our democratic way of life, our governmental structures, and our solidarity, welfare, and general well-being as a country and its citizens are consistently safeguarded and improved. It is the necessity of preserving the country's existence through the use of high-quality education, economic might, political and military might, diplomacy, and power projection. It can be described as the aggregation of the security interest of the individuals, political entities, human associations and ethnic groups which make up the nation (Osakwe, 2013). Succinctly put, national security is the security of a nation-state, including its citizens, economy, and institutions, which is regarded as a duty of government.

National security, therefore, refers to a policy enacted by governments to ensure the survival and safety of the nation-state, including but not limited to the exercise of diplomatic, economic and military power in both peace and war. In other words, it means freedom from foreign domination which is the sine-qua-non for the sustenance of the state through the instrumentality of economics, diplomacy, power projection and political power.

### **Education**

Any society's progress greatly depends on education. According to Freire (1970), education is actually a powerful tool for social change and should not be disregarded by any human community that aspires to progress in all aspects of life. To the extent that Nigeria's educational philosophy is founded on the following set of principles, the Nigerian government acknowledges the value of education for the country's overall development and "as an instrument for effecting national development":

- a. Education is an instrument for national development and social change
- b. Education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria
- c. Education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfillment and general development of the society.
- d. Education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, colour, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges: and
- e. Education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society (FGN, 2014).

In an effort to understand the term education, scholars have throughout time included the adjective "quality." They believed that education needed to be qualitative in order to meet its declared objectives. Therefore, according to Maduwesi (2022), in order for education to be considered high-quality, all levels and components of the educational system including but not limited to theoretical, practical, and vocational education must provide outcomes that would benefit the country greatly. It includes elements like clearly stated national objectives, a

carefully thought-out curriculum, assessment tools and processes, the ability to analyze data, the use of assessment findings, and the quality of students enrolled. To him, the challenge of quality education is the lack of good parenting and a belief among many of the youths and adults in our society that education and hard work to achieve it are not critical components in life.

UNICEF (2020), clarifying what quality education should be, emphasizes that this education type should incorporate:

- i. Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and who are supported in learning by their families and communities
- ii. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and that provide adequate resources and facilities
- iii. Content that is reflected in relevant material for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeric skills for life and knowledge of nutrition, HIV/AIDs prevention and peace.
- iv. Process through which trained teachers to use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities
- v. Outcome that encompasses knowledge, skills and attitudes, and is linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

Writing along these lines, UNESCO (2015), another UN agency, stated that high-quality education should support the goals of peace, citizenship, and security; foster the creative and emotional growth of students; and seek out and preserve local and global cultural values for future generations. The promotion and enhancement of basic education, the reorientation of current educational policies and programs at all levels to address national security and sustainable development, the development of public awareness, and the provision of training and retraining, which should involve higher education, are just a few of the major domains that quality education addresses, according to Omo-Ojuga (2017) and Ajegbesan (2010). These domains reflect a variety of goals and audiences.

Therefore, education must be wholistic, encompassing qualitative and quantitative processes which must include “relevant curriculum, availability of adequate human and non-human resources, assessment of educational programmes and processes through proper supervision and evaluation of educational outcomes to ensure quality assurance, control and nation security (Osakwe, 2013).

### **Guidance and counselling and national security**

Counselling and guidance are powerful components of societal security building. The security education that the guidance and counselling services serve to provide makes people confident and brave enough to follow the norms and regulations for peaceful living and harmony in society. Juvonen (2016) made the argument that guidance and counselling services

are essential to violence prevention initiatives by resolving disciplinary issues, mediating particular situations, and implementing suitable resolution techniques.

Similarly, guidance and counselling offer motivational services which enhance the environment with a maximum for the welfare and protection of people, fighting against vices, and engagements for quality learning in schools as well as providing tips for parental monitoring and supervision of their children. These services help to provide lasting peace and harmony among members of society. The orientation services are also a tool that keeps members of the society acquainted with to development, of independence, social networks, intellectual skills and moral habits that promote good values, norms, and moral reasoning which serve as ingredients for love, peace and national security.

### **Guidance and Counselling Strategies for Achieving School Security**

The security they say is everybody's business. It is the state by which life and property are protected from harm and destruction. It is the hallmark of good living. It could be seen as the source of peace of mind and peaceful co-existence between and among people. Security cannot be bought but can be cultivated to become part and parcel of the life pattern of an individual.

Security education from schools or security training centres can be available. Security education is taught in school just like every other subject of study. Educational International in Oguzie (2014) reported that peace consciousness makes it possible for people from all walks of life to be enlightened on issues that bring about peace. Enlightenment in the form of security teaching is a bold step in the right direction to bring about peaceful coexistence in the school and society at large. According to Oguzie (2014), a setting that has helped young people develop a sense of peace will be free of crimes like kidnapping, armed robbery, theft, corruption, drug trafficking, child abuse, discrimination, political irony, electoral malpractice, murder, terrorism, and religious rivalry. Students who receive security education will be better equipped to prevent issues and improve the safety of people and property. Students, the host community, professors, political issues, religious conflicts, and the condition of the school's infrastructure can all pose security risks. Hurley (2016: 1):

Students of all ages need a safe learning environment in order to concentrate on acquiring the skills necessary for a successful education and future. Every student is impacted in some manner when there is violence in the classroom. There are just more causes of school insecurity than one might think. At the very least, the school must try its hardest to prevent insecurity because it causes trauma and terrible consequences for both the people and the school. According to Hurley (2016), school safety is crucial in order to prevent assaults, bullying, victimization, theft, classroom disturbances, fights, robberies, the use of weapons, and violent and sexual crimes.

Uriah *et al.* (2015), have it that various forms of youth restiveness are economically, politically, or religiously motivated have existed for a long time. Security issues that can stem

from the students are cultism, prostitution, stealing, and examination malpractice, riot, bullying and fighting. These security issues are easily and widely witnessed in high institutions across the nation. Some of the problems that are found outside the school premises are religious fighting, political irony, land disputes between the school and community, and problems arising from choosing the Vice Chancellor, Provost, or Rectors of the host institution. Functional school facilities prompt students with the needed securities in school as key concepts. Ofom and Ajayi (2018) reported that humanitarian and social welfare, lack of good governance, corrupt practices of government officials, inadequate training programmes, unemployment, inadequate recreational facilities, lack of quality education, and so on, are the major causes of youth restiveness. More so, Sokari (2016) opined that information is necessary for people to be liberated from the shackles of ignorance, misconceptions, economic stagnation, social unrest, and political instability.

One area of study that helps clients understand their difficulties and find solutions to overcome them is guidance and counselling. Guidance and counselling programmes support students' personal/social, academic, and professional development, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (2011). According to Oguzie (2014), guidance and counselling cover both activities of pertinent services and procedures for assisting individuals both inside and outside of schools in realizing their full potential in terms of their academic, vocational, moral, social, and emotional development. The counsellor encourages the client, gives them direction, and gives them advice on how to quickly get out of any difficult position. Ogazie (2014) asserted that teaching the principles of peace through guidance and counselling would also build in the universal values and behaviour on which a culture of peace is predicated, including the development of non-violent conflict resolution skills and a commitment to working together to realize a shared and preferred future.

Orientation for new students is often encapsulated by a Freshmen's week which entailed the period of adjustments to the college environment as the time to reckon the academic year of university culture or any other tertiary level institution's preparation of various events that welcome new students. It is at this period in time that the school guidance/counsellors are supposed to make the students understand the need to run away from anything that will endanger their life and stay in the university. Feldman in Davis (2013) mentioned that colleges have strategic goals to increase students' enrolments but often fail to address the needs of students to be more persistent once they have enlisted and arrived on campus. The school environment where teaching and learning are going on is supposed to be appealing and intriguing for arduous academic work hence guaranteeing security in the school system.

### **Conclusion**

Given the significance of security for Nigeria's political stability, economic development, and interethnic harmony, guidance and counselling services should play a bigger role in the country as a whole. The main goal of security management guidance and counselling is to help

individuals and groups comprehend their surroundings and fulfill their responsibilities in order to promote peace, stability, and harmony in Nigeria. Effective management of the limited people and material resources, which frequently led to tension and conflict, is necessary to achieve peace and stability. The researcher came to the conclusion that effective orientation, motivation, and ongoing counselling regarding the risks of insecurity in Nigeria are effective tactics.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The school authorities should make orientation services important and compulsory for all new intakes before the start of school in any tertiary institution in Nigeria.
2. The government and National Universities Commission (NUC) should endeavour to make sure that the required basic learning facilities like hostels, classrooms, instructional materials, libraries, and laboratories are made available in schools within the school premises.
3. The guidance and counselling services should be provided for the students not only when they are likely to face school problems but should be done proactively for the students not to seek solutions from their peers. Different measures that support the counselling services can be infused into instructional programs such as detectors, security guards and imposition of rules and regulations for students for school safety.
4. Training the teachers to be effective teacher advisers and counsellors would be necessary inclusion in higher institutions with a guidance culture for improved counselling services.
5. The orientation program can be improved as part of higher institution's culture of excellence and be fully recognized as an important aspect of security in school.

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