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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# THE EFFECT OF STUDY HABITS COUNSELLING ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF PROBATED STUDENTS OF ENUGU STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION TECHNICAL ENUGU, ENUGU STATE. NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

The study was to x-ray the effect of study habits counseling on academic achievement among probating, National certificate of education (NCE) two students of the College of Education technical Enugu. The study comprises 300 probating students and 255 were randomly selected and even number technique were used in the group process. The study had two objectives to determine the effect of study habit counselling towards improving academic performance of probating NCE students of college of education. To find out if gender is a factor to poor academic performance. Two hypotheses were generated and test using student-test and chi-square. There is no significant relationship between study habit and academic performance of probating students. There is no significant difference in student's performance as a result of gender. The result from the analysis of the data revealed that there is no significant relationship between students study habit and their academic performance. It also revealed that gender significantly affect academic performance. Suggestion and conclusions were also drawn from the study among which is that counsellors should encourage the repeats to try hard instead of ridiculing them.

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### INTRODUCTION

Throughout our lives, we encounter many challenges, conflicts in relationships, life transitions, emotional crises, educational and carrier decisions, physical illness and disability and many other events that may be difficult to handle. Sometimes the challenges are exciting, sometimes they are frightening. And sometimes we can benefit from help and support as we strive to master them. A professional counsellor of life. Working with a diverse range of techniques and skill, professional counsellors work with people to help them maximize their potentials make positive change in their lives and achieve their goals.

In their work with clients, professional counsellors help identify goals and develop solutions to problems that cause emotional turmoil, teach and enhance communication skills, strengthen self esteem and promote positive, successful behaviours. Counselling service can play a critical role in maximizing a student's educational success and getting the most out of their medical education by: Helping students to prevent and eliminate barriers to learning, helping to equip students with the personal and social skills they need to lead healthy, balanced, successful lives, resolving emotional and personal issues that interfere with academic success.

### *Improving Mental And Emotional Well-Being*

From childhood through late adulthood, there are times when one may need help addressing problems and issues that cause us emotional distress or make us feel overwhelmed. Counselling services offers the caring, expert assistance one needs during these difficult times. Professional counsellors offer help in addressing issues such as:

- Anxiety, depression, and other mental and emotional problems and disorders.
- Substance abuse and other addictions.
- Family and relationship issues.
- Sexual abuse and domestic violence.
- Eating disorders.
- Social and emotional difficulties related to disability and illness.
- The death of a loved one.
- Adapting to life transitions.
- Techniques used in counseling
- Information and education about how we make emotional decisions.
- Coping methods for dealing with difficult times.
- Communication skills.
- Integrating physical, emotional and spiritual practices.

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- Releasing old trauma that affect our life.

The counselling component aims to promote transferrable skills that equip graduates for diverse occupations, it is particularly suitable for those wishing to pursue careers in health care, personnel work, social work, teaching and any of the public services, the educational component is designed to provide students with an understanding of how young children learn and how schools provide the support to develop pupils' learning, students wishing to pursue careers in counselling, social work or education will benefit from the modules of the both these related areas. The national policy in education make the national certificate in education (NCE) the minimum requirement for persons who aspire to become teachers. This has led many states to phase out post primary teachers' training colleges, popularly known as TTC.

Atadogea (2003) observed that "Lack of a sound scientific background among other factors have been given as a major reasons for poor performance". However he did not disclose these other reasons as such this study equally tend to recall such other problems that Atadogea (2003) did not enumerate. These graduates from the post primary institution (secondary Grammar, Technical and vocation) gain admission to NCE in the various colleges of education. It is assumed that these candidates may likely change their style of study habit while others may not be able to do so.

To this regard they would be experiencing difficulties in their method of study and hence perform poorly in their examinations. In this study the followings are used interchangeably good study habits, study skills counseling and study habits counseling. Study habits are the attitudes, behaviour and styles the learners adopt in the process of learning. Hassan (2013) quoted confuses saying 'learning without thought is a labour lost'.

To this he regard recommended that students good study habit must include forming questions on every topic and answering those questions. In addition review of past question papers by a student is of largest importance. Hassan (2013) observed that the activity a learner must take to have good study includes: (1) regular class attendance (2) good note taking (3) good study place (4) concentration (5) developing good memory and (6) spaced revised.

In addition Carew and Tukur (2004) and Fajonyomi (2012) observed that study skills counselling involves providing systematic coordinated instructions and teaching how to get greater access to learning materials and developing better study skills. Implication is that students become more confident and develop better self image and less anxious about examination without tears. The assumption is that changes in the way a person thinks, feel and acts about his/her situation can be effective if such changes are made in the path he/she behaves and perform. Similarly, Fajonyomi (2012) in a study on anxiety and academic performance observed that study kills or good study habits are effective in improving academic performance in anxiety ridden students.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to:

- Determine the effect of study habits counseling towards improving academic performance of probating students (year 2) of college of education technical enugu.
- Find out the effect of gender to academic performance.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated for the study.

1. Does poor study habit encourage poor academic performance?
2. Does gender militate against student's performance?

### **Hypothesis**

The following hypotheses were tested

- There is no significant relationship between study habit counselling and academic performance of probating students.
- There is no significant difference in probating student's academic performance as a result of gender.

### **Method of data collection**

The population of the study comprised of 255 NCE two probating students (males and females) consisting of arts and science courses. Twenty-four (24) probating students. NCE two students were selected. The sample was obtained through the process of simple random selection (odd and even numbers techniques) those who picked even numbers were selected.

### **Instrumentation for data collection**

#### ***Two instruments were designed and used in the study***

1. There was the unstructured interview used in the eight weeks therapy sessions with aim of finding out others causes of poor academic performance. The unstructured interview format consists of fifteen (15) to ten (10) minutes talk by each of the students on the possible causes of his poor performance on both first and second semester exams. The enumerated factors were listed and tallied and most frequently appeared among the students is taken as one of the causes of poor academic performance. The reliability of the format was based on test retest reliability coefficient and was found to be 0.77.
2. Study habit counselling. The format was based on what constituted a good study habit based on researches conducted by researchers. Using test retest techniques, the reliability coefficient was found to be 0.78.

### **Validation of the Instruments**

The content validity of the instrument was carried out by experts from faculty of education Enugu state university of

science and technology who ascertained the validity of the instrument.

**Procedures for Administration**

Students were placed in psychotherapeutic session of eight weeks with three hours of contact per week.

Monday 5:30pm, Wednesday 5:30pm-6:30pm and Fridays 2:30pm. The students through group processes were lectured on good study habits, assignment writing, use of library, arts of constructing questions on their topics of study methods of writing examination, techniques of selecting and answering examination questions, developing personal study time table and strictly adhering to it, review of past question papers on all course and the last but not the least the therapeutic sessions was rounded up with a student’s seminar with main theme on a good academic environment for counselling which brought together experts from three tertiary institution in the state to talk on more causes of poor academic performance by students and offered useful suggestions to the students.

**Table 1** students with one problem or another

No of NCE 2003/2004 session	Results pending	No of students on probating	No of students withdrawn	Total no of students with problems	Percentage %	ratio
832	74	255	93	400	45	2:1

Table one above shows that out of Eight Hundred and Thirty-two (832) students that were admitted into NCE one in 2013/2014 academic years, seventy six (76) students had their result pending (at the time of study), Two hundred and Fifty-five (255) were advised to withdraw in their own interest. The grand total of students were four hundred (400) which is exactly half of the students admitted and ratio of 2:1. By implication any two NCE students you see, one has problem which are rallied towards poor academic performance

**RESULTS**

The result of the study is analyzed as follows based on the hypothesis formulated for the study.

- Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between study habit counselling and academic performance of study. T-test was used in the analysis.

**Table 2** student counselling and probating student’s academic performance.

Calculated t-test value	Critical/table value at a 0.05
T= 0.3377	1.796

Table 2 above shows that the table value of t-test = 1.796 at 0.05 level of significant is greater than that calculated of value of 0.3377.

**Table 3** Differences in students’ performance due to gender, chi-square was used to analyzed the score of the examination of probating students on gender basis. The result is in table 3 below.

Calculated value	Critical/table value
20.31	19.675

Since the obtained t value is less than the critical table values it therefore means that there is no significant relationship

between study habits counselling and the academic performance of probating students. That is to say that the null hypothesis is hereby accepted.

Table 3 above shows that the calculated chi-square value of 20.31 is greater than the critical/table value of 19.675 therefore since the obtained value of 20.31 is greater than the critical table value of 19.675 we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is significant difference in probating students performance due to gender.

**DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

From the results which were shown in table 2 it was visible that there is no significance relationship between students study habits counseling and academic performance. That is to say that the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. This is due to some intervening variables, which study habit counseling alone could not control. Such possible reasons include examination phobia, lecturer phobia ill-health, socio-personal reasons like disappoints by a significant other.

Sudden death of a loved one, and tragedies. (Ikwanme,2014) . Thus study confirm the study carried out in Ghana by Ikwanme 2014 who observed that with psychological assistance these psychologically dislocated persons could still perform wonders. The researcher also adduced possible reason for poor performance on lack of class attendance questions drawn from topic not covered and son.

However studies that were conducted that combined study habits counseling with anxiety reduction techniques using rational emotive therapy proved rewarding (Fajonyomi 2012, and Carew 2004)

The second hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between the probating students academic performance due to gender the analysis by chi-square reveals that there is a significant difference in students performance due to gender. The study collaborate some studies carried by Hassan (1013) who found that “both boys and girls attitude towards science varies particularly in mathematics”. In addition they observed that the ups and downs in students’s attitude towards mathematics were related to the quality of the curriculum, the teacher and the perceived career benefits. Why the result was like this, was because of the use of Arts and science students. Since research shows that attitudes of students towards science varies due to gender which can affect ones performance. Another possible reason was over reaction of some female students who were forced to take science subject in the school. A student may apply for Biology interscience due to some reasons like manpower demand, the students could be given physics, Maths or Physics, Chemistry which she/he has not contemplated to read even though she/he might get excellent in all the science subject at O level. In addition this study confirm also the study carried by Adadoga (2003) who revealed that females subjects have significantly higher

achievement than males and that both male and female differ significantly in their recall cognitive preference. Conversely the study with regards to Arts subjects did not tally with other studies. For instance Bergin (2009) in which sex difference did not influence the subjects performance in different tasks assigned to them Akaele (2010) had stressed the importance of participant's motivation recognition of the need for counseling and willingness to participate in the process of counseling as very basic to the success of counseling encounter.

Furthermore why this study is inconsistent with other studies might be due to the level of the students. O'level students were used by the researcher who were not condemned academically where as in this study A 'level student were used were condemned already academically and might have made up their mind to withdraw had it been they were not selected into the study. In addition the following factors are observed to influence probating students academic poor performance. These include: late admission, bad/poor study habit, examination phobia lecture phobia, socio-personal problems, ill-health before or enduring exams and tragedies affecting a student directly or indirectly.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study shows that gender does significantly affect the probating students performance and study habit counselling alone has no significant relationship with probating student's academic performance. Consequently certain intervening variables came in to play. This certainly affects the outcome of the study. Such variables include late admission, exam phobia, lecturer phobia, tragedies, and background of the students and among others. Furthermore the study shows that these students are not hopeless and helpless. They did not fail because they are unintelligent, but because they are in a system that has no positive due regard on them. The study also found out that the method of computing the probating students (G.P.A is not in their advantage in other words it is too harsh on them). In this respect the attention of the NCE is hereby called to handle the issue to the benefit of the students. It was suggested among other things that counselors main pre-occupation is to restore the equilibrium that lies out base which resulted to the examination failure, in other words restore the confidence of the psychologically dislocated stents, boosting their morale by a combination and multiplicity of counseling approaches. Encouraging them that they can still make it in spite of all odds if they try and if they want.

## **Recommendations**

The college of education and other tertiary institutions authorities in the state (both local Government, state and Federal should occasionally extend the time of examination of NCE one, part one of OND and prelim students depending upon the tertiary institution. This will give enough time to the students' to settle down so that the late admission candidates would not be disadvantaged. From legal point of view, the principle of natural justice is adhered to if enough time is given to them to catch with the rest of the students. Equity is also on the side of that these students if they can challenge the school

authorities on the bases of fair hearing. Any challenge by a student in a court of component jurisdiction can forced the school authorities to extend or shift the examination date. The laws are for men and not men for laws, therefore the law should be made flexible enough to incorporate such lapses. If such extension of examination date is done in other tertiary institutions, why not CET Enugu the same. At this juncture counsellors in the institutions should wake-up to face the current challenges. Any decision that the school authorities takes which put the students to disadvantage should be brought to the knowledge of the school authorities with its implications. School authorities should endeavor to liaise with the counselors particularly on examination time or period as regards to when to start and stop.

Ikwanme (2014) observed that with a little guidance and counseling, students who do not make it in exams can also do wonders, hence, the popular adage the down fall of a man/woman is not the end of his/her life. Counselors here on dealing with such broken spirits or psychological dislocated students should use modeling. Biograph/autograph of imminent personalities who made it at last like the British church hill. Wole Soyinka (prof) and Gani (SAN).

Show them empathy, a little push can help them climb the uphill rock. Researches show that some fail for reasons beyond their control, like, sickness, tragedies in the family before or during the exams. Low self esteem, tendency to experience amnesia, while entering examination hall, in short experiencing exam phobia. Counselors at this juncture are advised to use a multiplicity of approaches. Rational emotive therapy with study habits counseling or systematic desensitization process with study habit counseling in order to erode the client's test anxiety or exam, phobia. Research shows that some students fail in one or few courses while passing in others. While some suffer because all the questions in the exams were from either sections not taught at all or were taught in their absence or ones they had not fully prepared for. Failure, therefore could not be attributed only to inattention or lack of intelligence.

Counsellors should forbid these attitude of contempt and ridicule towards failed students. Parents, significant others and counselors should show appreciation for their strong points and identify their weaker area, then initiate corrective practices such as improvement of handwriting, study habits, controlling of exam phobia as these would boost their morale. In addition counselors, parents and significant others should encourage such students to join vocational schools and national directorate of employment (NDE) programs to learn trade so as to enable them discover their talents.

The Government of Enugu state in conjunction with the federal Government should team up to handle the situation by establishing technical/vocational courses that do not require any formal minimum qualification but only interest and talents, towards any vocational or technical course.

The Government of Enugu state jointly or separately with the Federal Government revive the programme of operation feed the nation (OFN) of 1976 which saw students of Higher

institutions in primary, post primary institutions teaching while others assigned to farms, under ministry of agriculture ministries and roads side mechanics. This will bring back the slogan of the Boys scout "No job is dirty". This will enable others to discover and rediscover their talents and inculcate the spirit of handwork among our youths. It should be noted that most of us enjoin OFN of 1976 and benefited a lot from it. Looking at the mode of teaching/instructions, the National open university of Nigeria seems to have better learning perspective for such students. Therefore counselors should endeavour to encourage such students to get enrolled in the Open University system. As life is full of struggle and as long as we live the struggle continuous. Forward ever backwards never.

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