

# Need for Counselling at Primary School level

A Study of Pre-Schools in Educational District II of Lagos State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

*Childhood period represents one of the period of greatest crises in human existence. The children have extreme and prolonged conflicts, frustration, uncertainty, emotional problems and physiological/psychological needs which tend to lead to delinquency, emotional problems, social problems, unhappiness and the like. Hence, this study examined counselling needs of pre-primary school pupils in Education District II, Lagos state. The study employed survey method and Quasi experimental research method. The pupils were observed and rated by the researcher using checklist titled Observation Checklist for a Pre-school Child. Also questionnaire on Pre-Primary Pupils Need Inventory (PPPNI). Counselling needs were distributed to the teachers and the counsellors in the sampled schools. A total of 8 pre-primary schools were involved in the study. The research questions were analysed using frequency count and percentage while the hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical analysis. The findings from the study revealed that; (i) pre-primary school pupils have personal, emotional and academic needs which demands the attention of school counsellors and teachers (ii) there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of pre-basic pupils based on gender (iii) there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of children from religious homes and less religious homes and (iv) there is significant difference in the counselling needs of pupils from unsettled and settled homes. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that the school counsellor should endeavor to study each pupil carefully in order to determine his/her counselling needs and address it appropriately and the government should ensure that the pre-primary schools are equipped with qualified and adequate number of school counsellors.*

**Key words:** Need, Counselling, Primary School, Educational District II.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background to the Study**

It is very obvious that primary school education occupies a very strategic position in nation's education system because it is the base of all other educational programs. The experience of an individual at this stage has a lot to do with his or her other stages of education and most of his or her entire life experience. The Nigerian government has long realized the importance of this stage of education which has led to the introduction of many programs/policies such as Universal Primary Education (UPE), Education for All (EFA), the 2000 UNESCO education agenda for Nigeria, Universal Basic Education (UBE) etc as a result of which many primary and secondary schools were established with a large number of students' enrolment thus, creating equal opportunities for every child to enter school (NPE, 2004; UNESCO, 2002).

The period of primary school education is the period of rapid physical, social growth and development, when most of boys and girls have social/psychological problems which probably accounts for the large numbers of cases of emotional disturbances related problems, incidence of indiscipline behaviours, anti-social behaviours, deviance behaviours and mental illnesses among primary school pupils (Kendra 2010)

Childhood represents a period of one of the greatest crises in human existence. The children have extreme and prolonged conflicts, frustration, uncertainty, emotional problems and physiological/psychological needs which tend to lead to delinquency, emotional problems, social problems, unhappiness and like. These problems need to be removed and their needs must be satisfied in order to help them make a smooth transition to adult status, adjust well, set realistic goals as well as improve personal happiness. These cannot be achieved successfully without identifying their problems and needs by their teachers to assist them to realize their appropriate goals in life (Glendale, 2000; Isangedighi, 2007; Akanni, 2013)

An 'effective counselling programme has not been achieved or is still new in the primary school curriculum system in Lagos state. A modern problems and counselling needs survey is therefore of prime importance to the primary schools in Lagos state. Hence, the teachers, counsellors, school administrators, curriculum planners, School/child Psychologists, parents and many others need to

understand the individual pupil's problems, needs, likes, dislikes, emotional and psychological attitude etc. so that they can help him/her maintain his emotional balance at his/her early age, and in gearing his/her mind in the proper direction (Adamu, 2000).

Many educational researchers have expressed their views and concern for problems and needs assessment in our primary schools. The studies of Oladele (2000), Duntoye, Akande and Finer (2007) also stressed the importance of counsellors and teacher's assessment of pupils' problems and needs prior to undertaking a design as well as a delivery of effective counselling service programmes at primary school level. Along this line, Adomeh (2005) stressed that "these issues clearly underline the critical need for a systematic assessment of institutional and individual pupil's needs in order to plan appropriate and effective intervention.

A number of research works by Idowu (1986) & Kendra, (2010) have suggested that there is a need for further study on the area of problems and counselling needs of primary school pupils. The fact remains that little or no research study in this area has been carried out in Lagos state, especially among the primary school pupils in education district II in Lagos state, thus signal the need for one, hence the focus of this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Due to numerous social, psychological, academic and environmental problems which characterized the life of school children in Lagos state, as in the other states today, has become not only a major concern of those who govern but also a concern for all well-meaning citizens whether teachers, doctors, parents, counsellors, lawyers, economists, school psychologists, social workers, curriculum planners, scientists, school administrators or the ordinary common man on the street. These individuals have at one time or the other singly or collectively spoken out on the need to finding a lasting solution to the primary school pupils' problems.

The bulk of school children in Lagos belong to the families where 'surviving stress' has created a gap between children and parents' attention. Most children hardly open their eyes wide in the morning before they find themselves on their way to school. There is hardly little or no 'fellowship' between many children and their parents in the morning before departure from home and even after school most parents are not available to attend to their children needs. As such, many children are faced with stress, social, emotional, psychological conflicts. Adomeh, (2005) and Nyarko

(2010) stated that need assessments are conducted to establish programme goals based on the skills of the counsellor and the needs of the students, teachers and parents. The guidance and goals, its implementation strategies and evaluation schemes are only valid when needs assessment are first conducted (Adomeh, 2005).

Conflict and frustration inevitably occur when an individual strives to attain or rather seeks the satisfaction of his/her basic needs, but finds himself/herself blocked by problems in reaching them. Adegoke, 2003, 2012 and Kendra, 2010 opined that if needs assessment is first conducted it allows the programme developers, educational planners and school counsellors to understand the types of problems being experienced as well as the magnitude and pervasiveness of the problems within the target population. Although, there had been many works on adolescents and their needs among the senior secondary school students in Nigeria but little or no consideration is given to the pre-basic school pupils forgetting they also have needs and challenges(Ojo, 2005).Hence, this work is on preschool children needs assessment in Lagos state

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to identify problems and counselling needs among Senior Secondary School Students in education district 11 Lagos state.

In addition, the study sought to;

1. Investigate whether there is difference in the problems and counselling needs of pre- school pupils based on gender.
2. Investigate whether there is difference in the problems and counselling needs of pre-school pupils on religion.

### **Significance of the Study**

The involvement of pre- school pupils in a study of this nature is important because this stage of education being the foundation of education program for children deserved careful attention. The study could provide adequate preventive and curative measures in order to guide against both the negative effects as well the worsening of their problems and needs and it is hoped that the findings of this study will shed more light on the often ignored crucial areas of social, emotional, occupational career choice needs, psychological needs etc.

Idowu (2004) and Luneburg, (2010) opined that need assessment can help counsellors discover the order of frequency of problems among students in general, the specific pattern of problems; which problems can be handled by the school counselling programmes and which should be left to the outside agencies and specialists. It is in the same vein that Asikhia (2010) stated that asking students what their problems are is the first and most important step toward developing a comprehensive way to solution. Thus, this could guide the counsellor in setting priorities for planning the programme and services that are most needed by pre-basic pupils Asikhia, (2010).

### **Research Questions**

Since, the objective of this study is to identify the problems and counselling needs of pre- basic school pupils in education district II, Lagos state. Specifically, the study sets out to find answers to the following Research questions:

1. Would there be needs for pre- school pupils in education district II Lagos state?
2. Would there be counselling needs of pre-school pupils in education district II Lagos state based on gender?
3. Would there be difference in the needs of pre- school pupils in education district II Lagos state based on their religion

### **Hypotheses**

The following Hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no significant difference in the problems and counselling needs of pre- school pupils in education district II Lagos state based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the problems and counselling needs of pre- school pupils in education district II Lagos state based on religion.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study examined the problems and counselling needs of pre-school pupils in education district II Lagos state. The study covered all the education districts II, Lagos state. The population for this study was all pre- school pupil in Lagos state. The target population was all the pre- school pupils

in education district II, Lagos state. While the sampled for the study consisted of 24 pre-school teachers and counselors selected education district II, Lagos state.

A self designed questionnaire was used to collect the data for the study. Frequency counts, percentile and t-test were all used as statistic tools in this study.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The research was based on survey design with focus on problems and needs of pre- school pupils in Lagos state. Stangor, (2004) and Akanni, (2013) have both stressed that survey design is a useful scientific tool to employ when one is interested in the opinions and attitudes of pupil as well as the relationship of these attitudes to the respondents' overt behavior.

### **Sampling Procedure**

The population for the study comprise of all the pre-school teachers and pupils in Education District II, Lagos state. The participant for this research was drawn from Shomolu Local Government Area of Lagos state out of the 48 pre-basic schools in the local government area, 8 schools were randomly selected from the 8 zones in Shomolu LGEA. The pre-school teachers and counsellors from each school were purposely selected for the study making a total of 24 teachers and counsellors.

### **Instrumentation**

A check list on assessment of needs of pre -school pupils and a researcher designed questionnaire (Primary Pupils' Need Inventory) was used to obtained data required from participants for this study. The questionnaire was adequately structured to consist the list of general problems and needs that pupils in pre-basic schools usually have, it contains 30 items. These items are classified into 6 sections which are specified in the questionnaire. Apart from personal background information of the respondents, the questionnaire section has equal number of items. They include; Personal background information, educational needs, emotional needs, social related needs, moral needs and health related needs of pupils in pre-basic schools. Efforts were made by researcher to design the questionnaire as simply as possible to enable respondents to understand the content and

thereby supply objective and accurate information. Responses to the instruments were on four points Likert- type scale.

### **Validity and Reliability**

The instrument used was pilot tested using 20 participants selected from ten pre- primary schools in education district I Lagos state. The essence is to reveal and correct the areas of problems that could have constituted a stumbling block later if left unchecked. It is also important for the fact that researchers have to determine the effectiveness of his\her instrument which will in turn serve as a yard-stick for achieving the success or otherwise of the study and whether it is worth continuing or not. The analysis of the data collected from the pilot study was carried out and a Cronbach alpha value of 0.79 was obtained.

## **DATA ANALYSES AND RESULT**

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Section A (Demographic Distribution)**

**Research Question 1:** Would there be counselling needs for pre- school pupils in education district II Lagos state?

**Table 1.1: Result obtained from observation checklist on counselling for pre-school children**

**Keys:(1=lowest, 2=average, 3=highest)**

|   | <b>Check List Items for a Pre-school Child</b>       | <b>1</b>     | <b>2</b>     | <b>3</b>     |
|---|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|   | Early childhood education and counselling needs.     |              |              |              |
| 1 | Is the child restless and unsettled?                 | 14<br>17.5%  | 35<br>43.75% | 31<br>38.75% |
| 2 | Is the child able to participate in the class?       | 30<br>17.5%  | 29<br>36.25  | 21<br>26.25% |
| 3 | Is the child unhappy and timid?                      | 28<br>35%    | 42<br>52.5%  | 10<br>12.5%  |
| 4 | Is the child's appearance clean and neat?            | 32<br>40%    | 26<br>32.5%  | 22<br>27.5%  |
| 5 | Did the child eat his/her food on time?              | 24<br>30%    | 30<br>37.5%  | 26<br>32.5%  |
| 6 | Is the child stable or moves around during teaching? | 43<br>53.75% | 25<br>31.25% | 12<br>15%    |

Table 1.1 revealed that 38.75% and 43.75% of the observed children are highly and averagely restless and unsettled respectively. Only 17.5% of the children observed are well settled and calmed. Also, 17.5% and 36.25% of the children observed have low and average participation respectively in class room activities. In addition, 40% of the children observed untidy in appearance. 30% of the pupils did not eat their food while 37.5% eat but very little. On the other hand, only 15% of the pupils moves around during teaching. The observation from the check list shows that majority of the pupils needs attention of the counsellors in one area or the other. To further ascertain the counselling needs of pre-school pupils in the sampled school respondent opinions on the questionnaire on pre- school was used to collect data which is analyzed as follow:

**Table 1.2: Respondent opinion on counselling needs of Pre-Basic Pupils**

|    | <b>Academic needs</b>  | SA | A  | D | SD | SA+A | %     |
|----|--|----|----|---|----|------|-------|
| 1. | Some pupils are afraid to speak up in the class discussion   | 16 | 6  | 1 | 1  | 22   | 91.6% |
| 2. | Pupils worry too much about examination.                     | 9  | 10 | 3 | 1  | 19   | 79.2% |
| 3. | Some pupils cannot concentrate on his/her studies.           | 12 | 9  | 3 |    | 21   | 87.5% |
| 4. | Some pupils not really interested in study.                  | 11 | 6  | 5 | 2  | 17   | 70.8% |
| 5. | Some pupils always afraid to speak up in the class.          | 14 | 8  | 1 | 1  | 22   | 91.6% |
|    | <b>Personal Needs</b>  |    |    |   |    |      |       |
| 1. | Most pupils want to be free in the school always.            | 10 | 12 | 1 | 1  | 22   | 91.6% |
| 2. | Some pupils see teachers not friendly to them.               | 15 | 7  | 1 | 1  | 22   | 91.6% |
| 3. | Some pupils missing too many days of school.                 | 8  | 12 | 3 | 1  | 20   | 83.3% |
| 4. | Some pupils having so many friends.                          | 7  | 12 | 4 | 1  | 19   | 79.2% |
| 5. | Some pupils ashamed of the home they live or they come from. | 7  | 12 | 1 | 1  | 19   | 79.2% |
|    | <b>Emotional Needs</b>                                       |    |    |   |    |      |       |
| 1. | Many pupils are feeling of timidity and shyness              | 12 | 10 | 1 | 1  | 22   | 91.6% |
| 2. | Some pupils don't have self confident.                       | 13 | 7  | 1 | 1  | 20   | 83.3% |
| 3. | Some Unhappy too much of a time.                             | 7  | 13 | 1 | 1  | 20   | 83.3% |
| 4. | Some teachers do not understand pupil behavior               | 3  | 13 | 5 | 1  | 19   | 66.6% |
| 5. | Some pupils too easily discouraged.                          | 13 | 7  | 2 | 1  | 20   | 83.3% |

From table 1.2, it was revealed that 91.6% of the respondent agreed that Pupils worry too much about examination, 79.2% and 87.5% of the respondent agreed respectively that Some pupils

cannot concentrate on their studies and some are not really interested in their study. Also, 91.6% of the respondent indicated that some pupils are always afraid to speak up in the class. In addition, 91.6% , 83.3% 79.2% and 79.2% of the respondents respectively agreed that pupils have the following personal needs; want to be free in the school always ,missing too many days of school, having so many friends and feeling uncomfortable with the home they live or they come from. Moreover, 91.6%, 83.3% 83.3%, and 66.6% of the respondent agreed respectively that some pupils have the following emotional needs; feeling of timidity and shyness, not having self-confidence, unhappy too much of a time and been easily discouraged.

**Research Question 2:** Would there be counselling needs for pre-primary school pupils in education district II Lagos state based on gender?

**Table 1.3: The counselling needs of pre-primary school pupils in education district II Lagos state based on their religion.**

| <b>Pre –school child needs and gender</b>              | <b>SA</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>SA+A</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| 1. Female pupils have more counselling needs than male | 3         | 7        | 12       | 2         | 10          | 41.6%    |
| 2. Male pupils have more counselling needs than female | 6         | 3        | 7        | 6         | 9           | 37.5%    |
| 3. Female pupils are more shy and timid                | 7         | 5        | 8        | 4         | 12          | 50%      |
| 4. Male pupils are more delinquent than female         | 3         | 13       | 5        | 1         | 19          | 66.6%    |

Table 1.3 revealed that 41.6% of the respondent agreed that female pupil have more counselling needs than male while 37.5% agreed that male pupils have more counselling needs than the female. Also, 50% of the respondent agreed that female pupils are more shy and timid than male pupils on the other hands 66.6% agreed that male pupils are more delinquent than female. This implies that

both male and female have various counselling needs that which demand urgent attention of counsellors and teachers.

**Research Question 3:** Would there be difference in the counselling needs of pre- primary school pupils in education district II Lagos state based on their religion?

**Table 1.4: Counselling needs of pre- school pupils in Education District II Lagos state based on their religion**

| Pupils counselling needs and religion                    | SA | A | D | SD | SA+A | %     |
|--|----|---|---|----|------|-------|
| Parent religion affect pupils counselling needs          | 6  | 5 | 5 | 4  | 11   | 45.8% |
| Religion improve children moral                          | 8  | 9 | 3 | 4  | 17   | 70.8% |
| Children from religious homes are less delinquent        | 5  | 6 | 8 | 5  | 11   | 45.8% |
| Children from less religion homes are usually delinquent | 6  | 4 | 2 | 12 | 10   | 41.7% |

Table 1.4 revealed that less than half (45.8% ) of the respondent agreed that Parents religion affect pupils counselling needs, while70.8% of the respondents agree that religion teachings improve children moral. On the other hand, only 45.8% of the respondents agreed that children from religious homes are less delinquent. In the same vein, only 41.7% of the respondents agreed that children from less religion homes are usually delinquents. This implies that parents’ religion is not a determinant of children counselling need.

## Test of Hypotheses

### Hypothesis1

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the counselling needs of pre- basic pupils based on gender

**Table 1.5 : T-test analysis on counselling needs of pre–primary Pupils based on gender**

|                                    | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |    |                 |                 |        |        |
|------------------------------------|---|----|-----------------|-----------------|--------|--------|
|                                    | T   | Df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Lower  | Upper  |
|                                    |   |    |                 |                 |        |        |
| counselling needs of male pupils   | 18.217                                    | 47 | .000            | 2.54167         | 2.2610 | 2.8224 |
| counselling needs of female pupils | 16.333                                    | 47 | .000            | 2.47917         | 2.1738 | 2.7845 |

Table 1.5 shows the t-test analysis on counselling needs of pre –basic pupils based on gender. t-test values of 18.217 and 16.33 respectively was revealed for the counselling needs of male and female pupils at P=0.000 which is less than 0.005 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of pre-primary school pupils based on gender was not rejected, this implies that both male and female pupils have equivalent counselling needs. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of pre-primary school pupils based on gender.

## Hypothesis 2

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the counselling needs of children from religious homes and less religious homes

**Table 1.6: T- test analysis on counselling needs of children from religious homes and less religious homes**

|                                   | Test Value = 0 |    |                 |                |                 |   |        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---|--------|
|                                   | T-test         | Df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Std. Deviation | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |        |
|                                   |                |    |                 |                |                 | Lower                                     | Upper  |
| children from religious home      | 13.795         | 43 | .000            | 1.16933        | 2.43182         | 2.0763                                    | 2.7873 |
| children from less religious home | 13.444         | 43 | .000            | 1.13259        | 2.29545         | 1.9511                                    | 2.6398 |

Table 1.6 Showed, the standard deviation of the counselling needs of children from religious and less religious homes to be 1.16933 and 1.13259 respectively. Also T-test values of 13.795 and 13.444 was revealed for children from religious and less religious homes respectively. P=0.000, which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of children from religious and less religious homes was not rejected. This implies children from both religious and less religious homes have equivalent counselling needs. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of children from religious homes and less religious homes.

## Interpretation of Result

This study examined the counselling needs of pre-basic school pupils in Educational District II School, Lagos state. The finding shows that pre-primary schools pupils has academic, emotional and personal needs that requires counsellors' and teachers' attention. This finding is in line with that of Adegoke, 2004; Adeyemi, 2011; Ebebuwa, 2010 and Malumfashi 2004. Also the findings

of the study showed no significant difference between counselling needs of pre-primary schools pupils based on genders. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the counselling needs of pre-primary pupils based on gender was not rejected. This finding collaborate with that of Bukoye ( 2000) and Ebinuwa (2010)

Furthermore, the findings of the study revealed no significance difference between the counselling needs of pupils from religious and less religious homes. The T-test values of 13.795 and 13.444 was obtained and  $P=0.000$  which is less than 0.050 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of children from religious and less religious homes was not rejected. This finding is in line with that of Adeniyi (2016) .

### **Conclusion**

Available literature reviewed on this study have established that students from various background and educational level have differs counselling needs. The main objective of this study was to investigate the counselling needs of pre primary pupils in Educational District II Lagos state. The findings of the study gave an indication that these pupils or the pre-primary pupils have emotional, academic and personal needs which require attention of the counsellors and teachers. In addition, the study shows that there is no significant difference in the counselling needs of pre-primary school pupils based on gender. Both pupils from religious and less religious home have equivalent counselling needs according to the findings of the study.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings from this study. The following recommendations are considered relevant and inevitable.

1. The counsellor should endeavor to study each pupil carefully in order to determine his/her counselling needs and to address it appropriately
2. The government should ensure that the pre-primary pupils are equipped with qualified and adequate number of counselors.
3. Parents should train children in the way of the Lord

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