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NYANSAPO – "Wisdom Knot"

Symbol of wisdom, ingenuity, intelligence and patience

Assessing the Counselling needs of Undergraduate Students on Multiple-Site Sandwich Programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast

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Abstract

The study assessed the counselling needs of students on sandwich programmes of the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast. Two research questions and four hypotheses were answered and tested respectively. A descriptive study in which 207 respondents were selected from four sandwich centres of the Institute of Education, using various sampling techniques and procedures. The Counselling Needs Inventory designed by the investigators were used to collect data. The predominant counselling need of the students was "I need help on how to get along with extrovert spouse", whilst a majority of them preferred to talk to a counsellor. Statistically significant differences were found to exist between counselling needs by gender, and age with regards to their psychological needs. No statistically significant differences were found among the ages of the respondents and counselling needs such as Financial needs, Marital needs and Educational needs, and among marital status and number of years taught by the respondents and their counselling needs. It was therefore concluded that sandwich students of the Institute of Education, University of Cape have counselling needs. Among recommendations were that authorities/agencies should ensure that professional counselling services are rendered by universities that run programmes in the non-conventional mode. Implications of the study for counselling included the fact that professional counsellors should be attached to multiple sites of sandwich programmes. Again, students on sandwich programmes should be offered similar counselling services as those in the conventional mode.

Key words: Sandwich students, counselling needs, financial needs, educational needs, psychological needs, marital needs.

Introduction

Guidance and counselling as a movement was started in America at the beginning of 20th Century as a reaction to change process in an industrialized society (Oyieyo, 2012). Guidance and counselling programme is one of the most important components of the school curricular activities (Ndung'u, 2008). The wide range of behavioural problems in schools has amplified its vitality. Counselling is a process of helping individuals or group of people to gain self-understanding in order to be themselves (Oyieyo, 2012). Burks and Steffler (1979) see counselling as a professional relationship between a trained counsellor and a client. Olayinka (1972) defined it to be a process whereby a person is helped in a face-to-face relationship while Makinde (1983) explained counselling as an enlightened process whereby people help others by encouraging their growth. Counselling is the skilled and principled use of relationship to facilitate self-knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth and the optimal development of personal resources (The British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy, 2013). Counselling is a process aimed at assisting clients understand and clarify personal views of their living, and to learn to attain their goals through the provision of meaningful data, and making informed choices to resolve problems that are emotional, vocational and educational.

A need is any lack or deficit of something within an individual, either acquired or physiological, whose fulfilment would tend to promote the welfare of the individual. (Biswas & Aggarwal, 1971). Counselling needs are needs of a student that are required to resolve his/her problems which he/she confronts in day to day life situations and also to enrich his personal development.

DuCharme-Hansen and Dupin-Bryant (2005) opined that the main purpose of student needs assessment is to give the instructor the tools and information necessary to make solid decisions about how to best facilitate the educational experience from start to finish. Anderson (2004) suggests that “developing quality education systems requires that educators have a deep understanding of how individuals and groups of students learn” (p. 239).

The Cambridge Dictionary (2016) defines sandwich programme as a college course consisting of periods of study with periods of work between them so that students get practical experience. Sandwich candidates are majorly primary and secondary school teachers who prefer to use their holidays for further studies. Imakpokpomwan and Adeyemi (2016) posited that sandwich programmes were part-time teacher education programmes often designed for upgrading the qualification of teachers and other education workers. The programmes operate during the school holiday periods.

The relevance of the sandwich programmes in teaching is manifested in the high manpower production, especially teachers. Enrolment in the sandwich programmes is investment since it raises teachers' productive and earning capacities. Sandwich students invest time, money and energy so that at the end they could be better and current teachers. They could also earn better income and possibly improve their social and economic rating in the society. On the macro level, the society benefits by having more intelligent with productive teachers.

The introduction of the sandwich programme by the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, was in line with the mission of University of Cape Coast which was constantly seeking alternative ways to respond to changing needs to make university education accessible to a large number of qualified students who cannot be admitted into the conventional systems due to lack of space at UCC or the demands of their jobs.

The programme is run during vacation and is intended to eliminate the perception about teacher absenteeism which had been erroneously linked with teachers enrolling on programmes of study while schools are in session. Another reason for the introduction of the programme in July 2011 was to give an opportunity to teachers outside Cape Coast and its environs, who due to distance, could not enroll in the evening classes, to acquire a degree. Early Childhood education was added to the programme in 2013 to provide an opportunity for those who hold diplomas in early childhood from colleges of education to upgrade themselves. The programme, which was initially held at five centres, had now been extended to 10 centers across the country and constantly monitored by Faculty members from the university as well as officials from the National Council of Tertiary Education (NCTE) and the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service.

Durosaro (1998) did a comparative study of the internal rate of returns to the full time and the sandwich programmes in Nigerian universities. He found higher rate of return to the sandwich than the full-time programmes. He suggested that ‘there is need to encourage states to aid teachers to take advantages of the sandwich programmes in universities around them’. Apart from gaining new skills, degree qualifications boost their potentials to be promoted up the organizational hierarchy. According to Adesoye and Amusa (2011), the information needs of the respondents are diverse, it varies from information on their course of study, and career development, to information on current affairs and politics. Dada, Agbana and Adetayo (2010) studied the counselling needs of sandwich students of University of Ado-Ekiti, College of Education, Oro campus, Kwara State, Nigeria. The major findings showed that the most pressing need of the respondents was “transportation” while the least need was “personal”. They found, no significant differences in respondents’ counselling needs based on religion and marital status while significant differences were noted based on gender, age and year of study. They recommended that professional counsellors should intensify efforts in organizing intensive counselling programmes which will meet the counselling needs of the sandwich students and that government at all levels should take urgent steps in finding lasting solutions to the psychological, social and academic problems of sandwich students. *Results of a study by Mabizela (2014) showed that*

first year students need counselling on adaptation to studying at an Open Distance Learning (ODL) institution, knowing career opportunities, improving study skills, preparing for examinations, identifying further study opportunities, compiling career portfolios, preparing for job interviews, and dealing with exam failure. Counselling needs which are considered less important to students were issues relating to accepting others and dealing with peer pressure (p.).

Counselling services are provided to mainstream students of the University of Cape Coast. The Institute of Education sandwich programme is run by the same university. However, students in this bracket are not offered counselling services.

Of late there has been a growing concern on the quality of students turned out by some universities through their non-traditional

approaches such as sandwich programmes and distance learning. Could it be that the non-traditional students do not get the same kind of services available to the mainstream students? The study therefore sought to assess the counselling needs of undergraduate students on multiple-site sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast

Objectives of the study

The study was conducted in order to

1. Ascertain the prevalent counselling needs of undergraduate students on sandwich programme of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast.
2. Examine the extent to which undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, prefer to talk to a counselor when faced with problems.
3. Explore the effects of demographic variables (gender, age, marital status, and number of years taught) on undergraduate students on sandwich programme of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast.

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions;

1. What are the prevalent counselling needs of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast?
2. What is the extent to which undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, prefer to talk to a counsellor when faced with problems?

Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following hypotheses:

1. There is statistically significant difference between the counselling needs of male and female undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast.
2. There is statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of

- Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast in terms of ages.
3. There is statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast in terms of their marital status.
 4. There is statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of undergraduate students on the sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast in terms of years taught.

Methodology

The descriptive research design was employed in this mainly because it was to ascertain the current counselling needs of undergraduate sandwich students of the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast.

Population

The population for the study was 2,340 comprising all students in the B.Ed. (Basic education) and B. Ed. (Early Childhood Education) in the eight study centres (Outreach Section, Institute of Education, UCC, 2016/2017). These study centres are located in eight Colleges of Education across the country.

Sample and Sampling Procedures

Sampling is the act, process or technique of selecting a suitable smaller size of a population or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Two hundred and seven (207) respondents were selected from four sandwich study centres of the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast as sample for the study. The lottery method was used to select four study centres out of seven (because Holy Child College of Education; the eighth study centre was used for the internal consistency of the instrument). Quota sampling was used to select initial samples from these centres, whilst the stratified sampling technique was used to group the initial samples into programme and gender. The final respondents for each group were randomly selected using a table of random numbers.

Materials

Data were collected using a Counselling Needs Inventory consisting of 31 items constructed by the investigators. There were five questions on the demographic characteristics of the respondents and 26 items covering four areas (financial, educational, psychological and marital) of counselling needs of the respondents. The questionnaire was a Likert-type scale for rating the 26 items.

Content validity and internal consistency were established for the instrument. The content validity was established by given the instrument to some colleagues to go through while 20 sandwich students at the Holy Child College of Education were purposively sampled to answered the instrument. This was done to establish the internal consistency of the instrument. After consent had been sought from the respondents, they were given copies of the questionnaires to be completed after which they were collected by researchers on the same day.

Results and Discussions

This section presents the results of the analyses of the research questions and hypotheses raised, for the study and situate them to trends in available literature.

Analyses of Research Questions

1. What are the prevalent counselling needs of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast?

This question sought to determine the prevalent counselling needs of the undergraduate students on sandwich programmes. The results are present in a ranking order in Table 1.

Table 1: Prevalent Counselling Needs of the Undergraduate Students on Sandwich Programmes

SNItems	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1 I need help on how to use my money judiciously.	207	3.8068	.39579	6 th
2 I need assistance on how to cultivate the habit of savings.	207	1.1256	.93667	26 th
3 I need help on how to broaden my income base.	207	3.7903	1.07482	11 th
4 I need help to enable me invest my money	207	3.9034	.94527	2 nd
5 I need help to learn about the available investment opportunities	207	3.6039	.79902	23 rd

6	I need help on how to critically analyse issues before contracting loans.	207	3.7874	.93125	12 th
7	I need help on how to identify symptoms of stress.	207	3.7295	.85574	16 th
8	I need help on how to improve my physical well-being.	207	3.7488	.87283	15 th
9	I need help on how to improve my psychological well-being.	207	3.8744	.87226	4 th
10	I need help on how to improve my emotional well-being.	207	3.7729	1.56467	13 th
11	I need help on how do away with some negative attitudes that add to my stress at workplace.	207	3.6961	.80830	18 th
12	I need help on how to manage job related stress.	207	3.8019	.82697	7 th
13	I need help to be well informed about causes of workplace stress.	207	3.8261	.90773	5 th
14	I need help on how to express affection to my spouse.	207	3.8889	.78346	3 rd
15	I need help on how get along with extrovert spouse.	207	3.9469	.83728	1 st
16	I need help on how to achieve effective communication in my marriage.	207	2.0000	1.03342	25 th
17	I need help on how to make my spouse a companion.	207	2.1353	1.00052	24 th
18	I need help on how to encourage honesty in my marriage.	207	3.7150	.91954	17 th
19	I need help to know when to further my education.	207	3.7923	.95039	10 th
20	I need help to enable me choose educational programme.	207	3.7971	.93860	9 th
21	I need help to know the various job opportunities available for every programme of study.	207	3.7585	.83003	14 th
22	I need help to know the requirement when applying for a particular academic programme.	207	3.8011	.88059	8 th
23	I need help in getting information about the right institution to choose for further studies.	207	3.6667	.80049	20 th
24	I need help to enable me have full concentration when studying.	207	3.6860	.77142	19 th
25	I need help to enable me know much about study leave issues.	207	3.6087	.72843	22 nd
26	I need help in getting information on available scholarships in connection with my programme.	207	3.6329	.85359	21 st

The finding of the study revealed that the most predominant counselling need of the respondents “I need help on how to get along

with extrovert spouse” (M = 3.9469, SD = .83728). This was followed by “I need help to enable me invest my money” (M = 3.39034, SD = .94527).

Dealing with an extrovert spouse is considered as a psychological issue while seeking help on how to invest is also a financial issue. Hence the finding of this study is consistent with Appiah (2014) who found that the predominant counselling need of students in the Atebubu District was psychological. He indicated that even though finances was also a major concern for 69% of the respondents, that also culminated into a psychological effect thereby making psychological need the most dominant.

2. What is the extent to which undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, prefer to talk to a counsellor when faced with problems?

Research question 2 sought to determine who students preferred to talk in times they faced problems. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents’ Preferred Confidant in times of Problems

Confidant	Frequency	Percent
Form Tutor	21	10.1
Any Tutor	16	7.7
Counsellor	146	70.5
Centre Coordinator	24	11.7
Total	207	100.0

It was revealed from the results in Table 2 that majority 146 (70.5%) of the respondents preferred to talk to a counsellor than other helpers around. This finding is consistent with the finding of Brempong (2014) who found among students that about 84% out 127 respondents indicated they preferred to discuss their issues with professional counsellors than their friends.

Counsellors are considered to play major roles in the growth of a people. They assist and guide individuals to understand themselves and their situations. In the case of sandwich students, they are saddled with courses to be taken within a relatively short space of time. As teaching and learning draw from their wellbeing so are other pressing issues such as how to finance their education, marital and relationship issues among others. Most of these students may have been exposed to

the importance of counsellors and counselling in their colleges of education (Ampofo-Agyare, 2013). It is therefore not surprising that about 71% indicated that they preferred to talk to a counsellor when they faced challenges.

Analyses of Research Hypotheses

1. There is statistically significant difference between the counselling needs of male and female undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast.

Hypothesis One was to find if there is a statistically significant difference in counselling needs of the students in the study on basis of gender. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of t-test distribution of the Difference in Counselling Needs of Sandwich Students in terms of Gender

Gender	N	X	SD	df	t-value	P
Male	86	2.8274	.35034	205	3.193*	.015
Female	121	3.1464	.30221			

*Significant, $p < .05$

Hypothesis 1 was tested at statistical significance level of 0.05 and the results showed that at $df = 205$, $p = 0.015$ which is less than 0.05. This implies there is statistically significant difference between the counselling needs of male and female undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast. Therefore, we fail to reject Hypothesis One; $t(205df) = 3.193$, $p < 0.05$.

2. There is statistically significant difference among the ages of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast with respect to their counselling needs.

Hypothesis Two was to find if a statistically significant difference in counselling needs of the students concerning their ages. Table 4 presents the results.

Table 4: ANOVA Distribution of Age Difference and Counselling Needs of Undergraduate Students on Sandwich Programmes

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ALL Mean	Between Groups	.894	4	.223	.936	.444
	Within Groups	48.216	202	.239		
	Total	49.110	206			

A One – Way Analysis of Variance was conducted to determine the differences in counselling needs of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast with respect to their age. No statistically significant difference was found among the ages of the respondents and counselling needs at the significant level $\alpha = .05$. We therefore reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is, no statistically significant difference in the counselling needs undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast with respect to their ages ($\alpha = .05$).

The study is consistent with the findings of Randolph (2015) who found no difference in counselling of civil servants in Malaysia with respect to their ages. He espoused that the work demands are no different in terms of ages but with ranks. In schools the curriculum is not structured differently for different ages within the same level or class. This notwithstanding, people of different ages have different preferences and approach to issues. Though students may be at the same level in education, especially at the tertiary level, while a group is thinking of how to choose spouses, others may be thinking of how to approach their retirements.

3. There is statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast in terms of their marital status.

Hypothesis Three was tested to determine whether a statistically significant difference in counselling needs of the students concerning their marital status. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: ANOVA Distribution of Difference in Counselling Needs and Marital Status

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ALL Mean	Between Groups	.178	2	.089	.371	.691
	Within Groups	48.933	204	.240		
	Total	49.111	206			

A One – Way Analysis of Variance was conducted to determine the differences in counselling needs of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes with respect to their marital status. There was a no statistically significant difference at $\alpha = .05$ among the marital status of the respondents and their counselling needs. We therefore reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is no statistically significant difference among the marital status of undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast in terms of their counselling needs ($\alpha = .05$).

The finding of the study is at variance with the finding Mbali (2014) who found among students of University of Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa that differences existed between married and unmarried students with respect to their counselling needs. Mbali (2014), explained that married students had more counselling needs than those unmarried, and that the married group of students had better ways of handling their counselling needs than unmarried students.

Most of the students on this programme are married, since, the mode is different from the conventional type of university education so students could afford being spouses and students concurrently.

4. There is statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of undergraduate students on the sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast in terms of years taught.

Hypothesis Four sought to determine whether a statistically significant difference in counselling needs of the students in terms of years taught. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: ANOVA Analysis Distribution of Difference in Counselling Needs and Duration of Teaching

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ALL Mean	Between Groups	1.524	4	.381	1.618	.171
	Within Groups	47.586	202	.236		
	Total	49.110	206			

The One – Way Analysis of Variance distribution presented in Table 7 indicated no statistically significant difference among the number of years taught by the respondents and their counselling needs ($\alpha = .05$). The hypothesis is rejected, and it can therefore be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference in undergraduate students on sandwich programmes of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast with respect to their counselling needs in terms of the number of years taught ($p > .05$).

It is believed that years of work equip individuals with experience and that issues that bother them with time may reduce in effect. It was therefore expected that the counselling needs of workers such as the sandwich students should be at variance in terms of those who have worked for relatively shorter period of time and those who have worked for a relatively longer period of time. This was not the case of the finding of the current study.

Conclusion

It was therefore concluded that sandwich students of the Institute of Education of the University of Cape have counselling needs, with Psychological needs being the most prevalent.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are considered relevant to the study:

1. Authorities/Agencies (such as Ministry of Education and National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE)) should ensure that professional counselling services are rendered by universities that run academic programmes in the non-conventional mode.
2. Clear lines should be drawn between faculty members (teaching staff of the sandwich programmes) who offer academic counselling and services offered by professional counsellors.
3. Counselling should be made easily accessible to all students on sandwich programme of the Institute of Education, especially to assist students to satisfy their psychological needs.

Counselling Implications

The findings of this study have the following implications for counselling:

1. Professional counsellors should be attached to multiple sites of sandwich programmes.
2. Student on sandwich programmes should be offered similar counselling services as enjoyed by their counterparts on mainstream programmes.
3. Counsellors should employ effective counselling techniques in order to ensure that the counselling needs of students are addressed to a greater extent.
4. Course Tutors of Institute of Education's sandwich programmes should be taught to be more receptive and understand the value of enhancing teacher-student relationship. This can be achieved through training and use of counselling skills such as attending, listening, reframing and challenging.

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