

Influence Of Guidance Services on Students' Adjustment in Secondary Schools in Benue State

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Abstract- The study determined the influence of guidance services on students' adjustment to study in secondary schools in the Benue state. It was guided by three research questions with corresponding hypotheses. The study adopted a survey research design method. The study was carried out in Benue State. The population of the study is 9,236 SS II students. This comprises all the Senior Secondary II Students in Zone B of Benue State, Nigeria. The sample size for this study was 365 SS II students. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Counselling Services and Adjustment to Study Questionnaire" (CSASQ). Direct delivery and retrieval method was employed in the administration of the instrument with the aid of three research assistants. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of Means and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions while Chi-Square Goodness of Fit was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that educational, vocational and personal-social counselling services have significant positive influence on senior secondary school students' adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria. It was recommended that School administrators should ensure that qualified Counsellors are employed and supported to provide regular educational Counselling sessions that help students develop effective study habits, time management skills, and learning strategies.

I. INTRODUCTION

The transition through senior secondary school is a critical period in the life of students, as it presents various academic, personal, and social challenges that influence their overall development and future prospects. In the Nigerian context, particularly, students at this level face increasing pressures such as academic demands, career decision-making, peer influence, and psychosocial issues. These challenges, if not adequately addressed, could negatively affect students' ability to adjust to their studies and attain satisfactory academic performance. Counselling Services in schools have been widely recognized as

crucial interventions in supporting students to cope with these challenges.

The educational landscape in Nigeria has undergone profound transformations over the past few decades, with a growing recognition of the critical role that Counselling Services play in fostering students' academic success and personal growth (Adegoke & Aluede, 2022). At the secondary school level, particularly in the senior years, students encounter a wide range of challenges that can significantly influence their educational trajectories, career aspirations, and overall well-being. These challenges, if not adequately addressed, may hinder students' academic performance and limit their future opportunities. In Benue State, as in many other regions across Nigeria, the implementation of comprehensive and well-structured Counselling programs has become increasingly essential. Educators, school administrators, and policymakers are actively seeking ways to strengthen these Services to effectively respond to the diverse and evolving needs of students in an ever-changing educational environment (Egbo & Okeke, 2023).

Counselling Services represent a comprehensive, systematic, and professional support system designed to assist students in their educational, vocational, and personal-social development. According to Adegoke and Mohammed (2023), these Services encompass a range of structured interventions and activities aimed at helping students make informed decisions, develop necessary life skills, and overcome various challenges they encounter during their academic journey. Nwachukwu and Eze (2023) further elaborate that Guidance and Counselling Services in educational settings typically include educational Counselling (focusing on academic development and study skills), vocational Counselling (addressing career planning and occupational choices), and

personal-social Counselling (dealing with emotional, social, and psychological concerns). These Services are delivered by trained professionals who employ various techniques and strategies to facilitate student development, enhance academic performance, promote psychological well-being, and prepare students for future career opportunities (Okonkwo & Tersoo, 2022). The integrated nature of these Services provides a holistic approach to student development, addressing both immediate academic concerns and long-term life goals while fostering personal growth and adjustment in the educational environment.

The concept of Counselling in Nigerian secondary schools has undergone significant evolution, expanding beyond its initial emphasis on career Guidance to adopt a more comprehensive approach that addresses the educational, vocational, and personal-social aspects of student development (Nwachukwu & Igbineweka, 2021). Over the years, research has consistently highlighted the positive impact of well-structured Counselling programs in helping students navigate academic challenges, make informed career decisions, and cultivate essential life skills. Studies have shown that these programs play a crucial role in fostering students' ability to adapt to academic pressures while also supporting their emotional and social well-being. Recent findings by Okonkwo and Mohammed (2023) further reinforce this perspective, indicating that students who receive consistent Counselling support tend to perform better academically and exhibit improved social adjustment compared to their peers who lack access to such services.

The educational Counselling component, which aims at equipping students with effective study habits, time management skills, and learning strategies, has become increasingly essential in addressing the challenges of modern education. As academic demands continue to evolve, the need for structured support to help students manage their studies efficiently has grown significantly. Jimoh and Asaju (2023) emphasize that educational Counselling Services play a crucial role in guiding students through the complexities of academic life, particularly in an era where digital distractions, social influences, and psychological pressures can

negatively affect learning outcomes. The link between educational Counselling and academic adjustment has been extensively documented in research, with numerous studies highlighting its positive impact. Evidence suggests that students who receive structured educational Guidance demonstrate improved concentration, stronger organizational skills, and heightened academic self-efficacy, ultimately leading to better overall academic performance (Adeniran & Oyedeji, 2022).

Vocational Counselling Services have become increasingly important in recent years, as the Nigerian education system places greater emphasis on equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed for future careers and the workforce. With the growing complexity of career choices and the evolving job market, early career Guidance has emerged as a crucial support system for students. Research by Uzoma and Chibuike (2023) underscores the importance of providing students with timely vocational Counselling to help them make informed decisions about their academic pathways and long-term professional goals. In Benue State's Zone B, where economic opportunities and career options are diverse, the significance of vocational Counselling is even more pronounced. Through offering students personalized Guidance, vocational Counselling helps them align their academic pursuits with their career aspirations while also considering the practical demands of the job market (Akpan & Edet, 2022).

Personal-social Counselling Services focus on addressing the psychological and emotional aspects of student development, which are now widely recognized as critical factors influencing academic success. As students navigate various personal and social challenges, their ability to concentrate, engage in the classroom, and perform academically can be significantly affected. Research by Eze and Nnamdi (2023) highlights that students experiencing emotional distress or social difficulties often encounter setbacks in their academic performance and struggle with active classroom participation. The implementation of well-structured personal-social Counselling programs has proven to be highly beneficial, as these Services help students build self-esteem, develop healthier interpersonal relationships,

and enhance their overall emotional well-being. In turn, these positive psychological and social adjustments contribute to improved academic outcomes and a more supportive learning environment (Olayinka & Adebayo, 2022).

Student adjustment refers to the process through which learners adapt to the academic, social, and emotional demands of the school environment. It plays a pivotal role in shaping students' academic outcomes and overall well-being. In the context of senior secondary schools, especially in transitional phases, successful adjustment involves managing academic pressures, establishing positive peer relationships, and developing effective coping mechanisms (Omeje et al., 2018). When students experience difficulty adjusting, it can manifest as low academic achievement, school avoidance, or behavioral problems. Guidance and Counselling Services are critical in facilitating this adjustment by addressing students' educational, vocational, and personal-social challenges (Oye, Obi, Mohd, & Bernice, 2012). These Services provide structured support to help students understand themselves, make informed decisions, and adapt effectively to the demands of school life. In Nigerian secondary schools, especially in regions like Zone B of Benue State, where students often face socio-economic and psychological stressors, the availability and quality of Counselling Services can significantly impact their adjustment levels and academic success.

The integration of Counselling Services within Benue State's educational system has encountered several challenges, including limited resources, insufficiently trained counsellors, and inconsistent institutional support. Despite these obstacles, research by Ogbonna and Terwase (2023) indicates that schools that have effectively implemented comprehensive Counselling programs have seen significant improvements in student adjustment, academic performance, and overall well-being. The positive impact of these Services is especially evident in Zone B of Benue State, where a range of socio-economic factors shape students' educational experiences and influence their academic outcomes. By addressing these challenges and strengthening Counselling programs, schools can better support students in navigating both academic and personal challenges.

Statement of the Problem

The provision of Guidance and Counselling Services in secondary schools is designed to be a comprehensive support system that enhances students' educational experiences and outcomes. Ideally, these Services should facilitate students' adjustment to academic demands, career planning, and personal-social development through systematic interventions delivered by qualified counsellors. According to Adeniran and Oyedeji (2023), well-implemented Guidance and Counselling programs should lead to improved study habits, better career decision-making, enhanced interpersonal relationships, and ultimately higher academic performance among secondary school students.

However, observations in Zone B of Benue State indicate significant gaps in the implementation and effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling Services in senior secondary schools. Observations reveal inconsistencies in the delivery of educational, vocational, and personal-social Counselling services, with many schools lacking structured programs or qualified personnel. More so, it has been observed that even where these Services exist, there is limited understanding of their specific impacts on students' adjustment to study and academic performance.

These inadequacies in Guidance and Counselling Services have led to various challenges among senior secondary school students in Zone B, Benue State. Many students seem to struggle with poor study habits, inappropriate career choices, and personal-social issues that adversely affect their academic performance. The absence of effective Counselling interventions could result in increased academic difficulties, poor adjustment to school demands, and suboptimal educational outcomes among students. This study therefore sought to examine the perceived influence of Counselling services, specifically focusing on educational, vocational, and personal-social counselling, on students' adjustment to study in senior secondary schools in Zone B, Benue State.

Objective of the Study

The main aim of this study was to examine the perceived influence of Counselling Services on student's adjustment to study in senior secondary schools in Zone B Senatorial District of Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. determined the perceived influence of educational Counselling service on senior secondary school student's adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.
2. examined the perceived influence of vocational Counselling service on senior secondary school student's adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.
3. find out the perceived influence of personal-social Counselling service on senior secondary school student's adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the perceived influence of educational Counselling service on senior secondary school student's adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria?
2. What is the perceived influence of vocational Counselling service on senior secondary school student's adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria?
3. What is the perceived influence of personal-social Counselling service on senior secondary school student's adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Educational Counselling Service has no significant influence on senior secondary school students' adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.
2. Vocational Counselling Service has no significant influence on senior secondary school students' adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.
3. Personal social Counselling Service has no significant influence on senior secondary school students' adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design method. The study was carried out in Benue State. The population of the study is 9,236 SS II students. This comprises all the Senior Secondary II Students in Zone B of Benue State, Nigeria. The sample size for this study was 365 SS II students. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula for sample size calculation to ensure adequate representation from the total population of 9,236 SS II students in Zone B, Benue State. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Counselling Services and Adjustment to Study Questionnaire" (CSASQ). The development of this questionnaire was based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature. It was structured on a four (4) point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) and organized into six clusters, denoted as Clusters A, B, C. The instrument was scrutinized for face and content validity by three experts, two from the field of Guidance and Counselling and the third from Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach Alpha reliability method. The Cronbach Alpha method yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.77 which means that the instrument was reliable. Direct delivery and retrieval method was employed in the administration of the instrument with the aid of three research assistants. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of Means and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions while Chi-Square Goodness of Fit was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument was in the form of SA, A, D and SD and was scored as follows: SA = 4, A = 3, D = 2, SD = 1. The benchmark for decision was calculated thus: $\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.50$. Hence any Mean of 2.50 and above was considered 'agreed' while those below 2.50 were considered 'disagreed'. For the Chi-square test of hypotheses, the decision was based on P-values and Alpha values generated from the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). When $P < .05$, the null hypothesis was to be rejected and considered "Significant Influence" and when $P > .05$, the null hypothesis was not to be rejected and considered "No Significant Influence".

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents results of the data analysis and discussion of findings based on the results. The presentations and interpretations follow the sequence of the research questions and corresponding hypotheses tested.

Research Question 1: What is the Perceived Influence of Educational Counselling Service on Senior

Secondary School Student’s Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria?

To answer this research question, responses on the Perceived Influence of Educational Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Student’s Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State were collected, interpreted and analyzed as shown in Table 1

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of the Perceived Influence of Educational Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Student’s Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	St.D	Remark
1	Educational Counselling helps me to have positive attitude towards learning	365	2.96	.76	Agree
2	Educational Counselling helps me to set goals for learning	365	3.08	.71	Agree
3	With educational Counselling, I am able to manage time in school well	365	3.07	.68	Agree
4	With educational Counselling, I know the importance of the library how to use it.	365	2.96	.74	Agree
5	With educational Counselling, I am always on time for every class	365	2.73	.98	Agree
6	With educational Counselling, I am able to formulate my personal study time table	365	2.84	.95	Agree
7	Educational Counselling helps me to develop interest in school activities	365	2.95	.86	Agree
8	With educational Counselling, I am able to settle down and focus on learning	365	2.89	.74	Agree
9	Educational Counselling makes me to review my notes daily	365	2.99	.75	Agree
10	Educational Counselling helps me adjust to study in group with my mates	365	2.91	.77	Agree
11	Educational Counselling helps me adjust and manage my learning in school generally	365	2.88	.79	Agree
Cluster Mean			2.93	.79	Agree

The result presented in Table 1 shows that all the item statements received mean scores ranging from 2.73 to 3.08, which are above the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating that the respondents agreed with each statement. The highest mean score (3.08) was recorded for the item “Educational Counselling helps

me to set goals for learning,” suggesting that goal setting is a significant area influenced by educational counselling. The lowest mean (2.73) was for the item “With educational Counselling, I am always on time for every class,” though still within the "Agree" range, showing a slightly lower influence in this area.

The overall cluster mean of 2.93 and standard deviation of 0.79 suggest a generally positive influence of Educational Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Student's Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the Perceived Influence of Vocational Counselling Service on Senior

Secondary School Student's Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria?

To answer this research question, responses on the Perceived Influence of Vocational Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Student's Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria were collected, interpreted and analyzed as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of the Perceived Influence of Vocational Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Student's Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	St.D	Remark
12	Vocational Counselling helps me to know all the subjects I suppose to take.	365	3.04	.79	Agree
13	Vocational Counselling helps me understand my interest in career choice	365	2.92	.88	Agree
14	Vocational Counselling initiates me for career choice, so I study hard towards it	365	3.02	.82	Agree
15	With vocational Counselling, I know the class I belong.	365	2.77	.93	Agree
16	With vocational Counselling, I know the requirements necessary to further my education, so I study hard towards that	365	2.98	.86	Agree
17	Vocational Counselling helps me develop the spirit of motivation to work hard in class.	365	3.03	.88	Agree
18	Vocational Counselling helps me to plan on how to choose subjects best on my interest.	365	2.90	.90	Agree
19	With vocational Counselling, I understand my ability	365	2.89	.95	Agree
20	Vocational Counselling provides me with a broader view about the various world of work that helps me adjust to study hard.	365	2.84	.90	Agree
21	With vocational Counselling, I know the requirements necessary to further my education	365	2.99	.88	Agree
22	Vocational Counselling gives me confidence in choosing my career	365	2.90	.90	Agree
Cluster Mean			2.93	.88	Agree

The result in Table 2 reveals that all item statements on the influence of vocational Counselling Services

received mean scores ranging from 2.77 to 3.04, which are all above the benchmark mean of 2.50, indicating general agreement among the respondents. The highest mean score (3.04) was recorded for the item "Vocational Counselling helps me to know all

the subjects I suppose to take,” suggesting that vocational Counselling is particularly effective in guiding students on subject selection. The lowest mean score (2.77) was for the item “With vocational Counselling, I know the class I belong,” which, though lower, still indicates a positive influence. The overall cluster mean of 2.93 and standard deviation of 0.88 further confirm that vocational Counselling Services have a notable positive perceived influence on senior secondary school students’ adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

Research Question 3: What is the Perceived Influence of Personal-Social Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Student’s Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria?

To answer this research question, responses on the Perceived Influence of Personal-social Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Student’s Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria were collected, interpreted and analyzed as shown in Table 3

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of the Perceived Influence of Personal-social Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Student’s Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	St.D	Remark
23	Personal-social Counselling helps me have self-confidence to study.	365	2.92	.89	Agree
24	Personal-social Counselling helps me adjust to the school environment to study.	365	3.86	.88	Agree
25	It helps me to relate well with my class mates and friends in school	365	3.03	.84	Agree
26	With personal-social Counselling, I am able to manage academic pressure, that makes me focus on my study	365	2.96	.80	Agree
27	Personal-social Counselling helps me understand myself better and my role in the school as a student	365	2.88	.89	Agree
28	With personal-social Counselling, my self-esteem is high, and that makes me focus on my study	365	3.03	.88	Agree
29	Personal-social Counselling helps me feel good about my emotional well-being, and that enable me study well	365	2.85	.89	Agree
30	With personal-social Counselling am able to share my emotional challenges with friends and teachers.	365	2.91	.92	Agree
31	Personal- social Counselling helps me to accept myself the way I am in the school setting	365	2.90	.88	Agree
Cluster Mean			3.04	.87	Agree

The result in Table 3 shows that all item statements on the Influence of Personal-Social Counselling Services received mean scores between 2.85 and

3.86, all above the cut-off mean of 2.50, indicating that the respondents agreed with the positive influence of these services. The highest mean score (3.86) was recorded for the item “Personal-Social Counselling helps me adjust to the school

environment to study,” highlighting the strong role of personal-social Counselling in helping students feel comfortable and settled in their learning environment. The lowest mean (2.85) was for the item “Personal-social Counselling helps me feel good about my emotional well-being, and that enables me study well,” which still reflects a positive influence. The overall cluster mean of 3.04 and standard deviation of 0.87 suggest that personal-social Counselling

Services positively influence students' adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses of the study were tested using Chi-Square (χ^2) at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis one: Educational Counselling Service has no Significant Influence on Senior Secondary School Students' Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test of Significance of the Influence of Educational Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Students' Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria

Response Options	Observed N	Expected N	df	x^2_{cal}	Sig	α – level	Remark
SA	167	91.25					
A	103	91.25					
D	63	91.25					
SD	32	91.25					
Total	365		3	111.61	.000	.05	Significant

df = Degree of Freedom; x^2_{cal} = Chi-Square Calculated Value; Sig = P-Value, P<0.05

The result presented in Table 4 showed the χ^2 Chi-square calculated value of 111.61, with 3 as the degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance, the asymptotic significance value under Chi-Square test of goodness-of-fit analysis yielded a P-value of 0.00. Based on decision rule, it was stated that whenever the P-value is less than α -value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected whereas whenever the P-value would be greater than the α – value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Since P-value of 0.00 is

less than the α - value of 0.05, this indicates that the test statistic is significant and hence the null hypothesis rejected. This implies that, Educational Counselling Service has a significant positive influence on senior secondary school students' adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis two: Vocational Counselling Service has no Significant Influence on Senior Secondary School Students' Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria

Table 5: Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test of Significance of the Influence of Vocational Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Students' Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria

Response Options	Observed N	Expected N	df	x^2_{cal}	Sig	α – level	Remark
SA	171	91.25					
A	100	91.25					
D	63	91.25					
SD	31	91.25					
Total	365		3	119.04	.000	.05	Significant

df = Degree of Freedom; x^2_{cal} = Chi-Square Calculated Value; Sig = P-Value, P<0.05

The result presented in Table 5 showed the χ^2 Chi-square calculated value of 119.04, with 3 as the degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance, the asymptotic significance value under Chi-Square test of goodness- of -fit analysis yielded a P- value of 0.00. Based on decision rule, it was stated that whenever the P-value is less than α -value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected whereas whenever the P-value would be greater than the α – value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Since P-value of 0.00 is

less than the α - value of 0.05, this indicates that the test statistic is significant and hence the null hypothesis rejected. This implies that, Vocational Counselling Service has significant positive influence on senior secondary school students’ adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria

Hypothesis three: Personal-social Counselling Service has no Significant Influence on Senior Secondary School Students’ Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria

Table 6: Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test of Significance of the Influence of Personal-social Counselling Service on Senior Secondary School Students’ Adjustment to Study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria

Response Options	Observed N	Expected N	df	χ^2_{cal}	Sig	α – level	Remark
SA	170	91.25					
A	99	91.25					
D	67	91.25					
SD	29	91.25					
Total	365		3	117.53	.000	.05	Significant

df = Degree of Freedom; χ^2_{cal} = Chi-Square Calculated Value; Sig = P-Value, P<0.05

The result presented in Table 6 showed the χ^2 Chi-square calculated value of 117.53, with 3 as the degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance, the asymptotic significance value under Chi-Square test of goodness- of -fit analysis yielded a P- value of 0.00. Based on decision rule, it was stated that whenever the P-value is less than α -value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected whereas whenever the P-value would be greater than the α – value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Since P-value of 0.00 is less than the α - value of 0.05, this indicates that the test statistic is significant and hence the null hypothesis rejected. This implies that, Personal-social Counselling Service has significant positive influence on senior secondary school students’ adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first finding of the study revealed that educational Counselling Service has significant

positive influence on senior secondary school students’ adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State, Nigeria. The finding aligns with Adeniran, Oyedeji and Mohammed (2023) who found a significant relationship between educational Counselling Services and students' adjustment to study. This consistency across different geographical contexts—Lagos State and now Benue State—suggests that educational counselling's positive impact on student adjustment transcends regional boundaries within Nigeria. The effectiveness of educational Counselling in facilitating adjustment might be attributed to several factors: first, educational Counselling likely provides students with essential study skills, time management techniques, and academic decision-making frameworks that directly enhance their ability to navigate academic challenges; second, counsellors may offer personalized Counselling that addresses individual learning styles and academic strengths, thereby promoting better self-awareness and educational fit; third, educational Counselling might

reduce academic anxiety by equipping students with coping mechanisms for academic stress, thus fostering psychological readiness for study challenges. This finding has significant implications for educational policy and practice in Benue State and potentially nationwide, suggesting that investment in robust educational Counselling Services could serve as a strategic intervention to improve students' adjustment capabilities across varying socioeconomic backgrounds and educational contexts.

Furthermore, this finding resonates with Ondilna, Mokogi, Ombaba, and Osoro's (2013) study, which revealed that Counselling programs were perceived as effective in enhancing students' academic competencies in Benin, Edo State. The consistency across these studies in different Nigerian states underscores the cross-cultural reliability of educational Counselling as an adjustment intervention. While the present finding relates to Benue State specifically, the pattern emerging across multiple Nigerian studies suggests a universal principle operating regardless of ethnic or cultural variations. The mechanisms through which educational Counselling influences adjustment likely include the development of metacognitive awareness, whereby students gain insight into their own learning processes; the enhancement of academic self-efficacy through targeted feedback and encouragement; and the cultivation of positive attitudes toward academic challenges through reframing techniques commonly employed in counselling. The implications extend beyond individual student benefits to potential systemic improvements—schools with well-implemented educational Counselling programs may experience reduced dropout rates, decreased academic remediation needs, and improved overall school climate as students become better adjusted to the demands of academic life. From a developmental perspective, this finding suggests that educational Counselling provides critical support during the adolescent transition phase when students are forming academic identities and establishing patterns of engagement with educational institutions that may persist throughout their lives.

The second finding of the study revealed that vocational Counselling service has significant positive influence on senior secondary school

students' adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State. The finding converges with the empirical evidence presented by Uche, Okonkwo, and Tersoo (2023), who documented significant improvement in study adjustment among students receiving vocational Counselling in Rivers State. This consistency across different Nigerian states suggests a reliable pattern regarding the effectiveness of vocational Counselling for student adjustment. The positive influence of vocational Counselling on adjustment to study might be explained by several mechanisms: first, vocational Counselling likely creates meaningful connections between academic subjects and future career aspirations, thereby enhancing students' motivation to engage with their studies through perceiving immediate relevance; second, the process of exploring career options and understanding the educational prerequisites may clarify students' academic goals, providing direction and purpose to their study efforts; third, vocational Counselling typically includes assessment of aptitudes and interests, which may improve self-understanding and lead to more appropriate academic choices aligned with personal strengths. The implication of this finding is substantial for educational practice in Benue State, suggesting that vocational Counselling should not be narrowly conceptualized as merely preparing students for employment decisions, but rather recognized as a comprehensive intervention that fundamentally shapes how students' approach and engage with their current academic work.

Moreover, this finding aligns with Chireshe's (2006) assessment which found that vocational Counselling Services were beneficial in offering students requisite knowledge to enhance their learning in Nassarawa State, as well as with Wrenn's (2002) investigation that identified providing alternatives and understanding as key functions of Counselling services. The convergence of these findings across different time periods and geographical contexts strengthens the validity of the current study's results. The mechanisms through which vocational Counselling specifically influences adjustment to study likely include the development of future time perspective, where students can better tolerate current academic demands when connected to meaningful future outcomes; the enhancement of academic identity through alignment with prospective

professional identities; and the cultivation of practical goal-setting abilities that transfer from career planning to academic planning. In the context of Benue State's educational and economic landscape, this finding has particularly important implications—it suggests that well-implemented vocational Counselling could serve as a bridge between rural students' immediate academic context and their potential participation in broader economic opportunities, potentially addressing issues of educational relevance that might otherwise lead to disengagement. Schools implementing comprehensive vocational Counselling may see improvements not only in academic adjustment but potentially in attendance rates and completion rates as students develop clearer visions of how their education connects to future livelihoods.

The third finding of the study revealed that personal-social Counselling service has significant positive influence on senior secondary school students' adjustment to study in Zone B, Benue State. The finding is consistent with Ibrahim, Yakubu, and Ameh's (2023) research in Kaduna State, which demonstrated that personal-social Counselling significantly predicted student adjustment to study. This alignment between studies conducted in different Nigerian states reinforces the reliability of this relationship and suggests the transferability of personal-social counselling's benefits across diverse regional contexts. Several factors may explain personal-social counselling's positive influence on student adjustment: first, personal-social Counselling likely addresses non-academic barriers to learning such as emotional distress, social conflicts, and family issues that might otherwise impede academic engagement; second, through developing stronger interpersonal skills and emotional regulation capabilities, students may become better equipped to navigate the social dimensions of the learning environment, including relationships with teachers and peers; third, personal-social Counselling typically enhances self-awareness and self-acceptance, potentially leading to greater academic confidence and reduced anxiety around performance. The implications of this finding for educational practice in Benue State are significant, suggesting that holistic approaches to student development that address personal and social dimensions are not

merely supplementary but fundamental to creating conditions conducive to academic adjustment and subsequent success.

Furthermore, this finding resonates with Chireshe's (2011) study in Zimbabwean secondary schools, which found that both school counsellors and students believed Counselling Services resulted in personal-social benefits, and with Ondilna et al.'s (2013) research indicating that personal-social Counselling programs were effective in enhancing students' personal competencies. The consistency of results across national boundaries (Nigeria and Zimbabwe) underscores the cross-cultural importance of addressing students' personal-social development as a foundation for academic adjustment. The mechanisms through which personal-social Counselling specifically influences adjustment to study likely include the development of psychological resilience, enabling students to persevere through academic challenges; the enhancement of communication skills that facilitate help-seeking behaviors when academic difficulties arise; and the cultivation of a positive self-concept that supports academic risk-taking and engagement. In the context of secondary education in Benue State, with its unique socio-cultural dynamics and adolescent development challenges, this finding implies that schools should prioritize personal-social Counselling as an essential component of comprehensive Counselling programs rather than focusing exclusively on academic or career dimensions. Educational systems that integrate personal-social Counselling may see broader improvements in school climate, reduced behavioral problems, and enhanced student wellbeing, creating a more supportive environment that naturally facilitates better adjustment to academic demands.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that Counselling services specifically Educational, Vocational, and Personal-social Counselling play a significant and positive role in enhancing students' adjustment to study in Senior Secondary Schools in Zone B, Benue State. The results underscore the importance of providing structured and accessible Counselling Services within

schools as a means to support students' academic development and personal well-being. By addressing educational planning, career awareness, and personal-social challenges, Counselling Services contribute meaningfully to students' holistic development and school success.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made

1. School administrators should ensure that qualified Counsellors are employed and supported to provide regular educational Counselling sessions that help students develop effective study habits, time management skills, and learning strategies.
2. Schools should incorporate comprehensive career Counselling programs into their Counselling Services to help students align their academic efforts with their career interests, thereby enhancing motivation and study commitment.

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