



Counselling Instructions to School Children for Overall Development and Growth

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INTRODUCTION

Guidance is a programme of service meant to enhance the ability of clients to cope with circumstances and be of need to themselves and the society. Guidance enables clients to make choices which are intended to bring self-direction and adjustment. It is designed to help clients adjust meaningfully to the environment, develop the ability to set realistic goals and improve on total educational programmes. The counsellor is a professional who through diagnosing, planning, predicting, interpreting and evaluating provides educational, personal, social and vocational assistance to the clients in such a way that it would reflect their interests, objectives, potentialities and needs for effective adjustment.

The elementary school level of education is the most important in all education levels. It is for this reason that it is labeled primary school. The primary school, is but part of the early education processes that prepares a child for the secondary school, among other numerous benefits. It is important to note here that both the primary school teachers and parents of the kids join hands to mould the mind of the child to a meaningful status. The primary school children are at the stage of formation of identity and self-concept. They are open to a myriad of options and that is why guidance and counselling services are supposed to be prevalent at this stage because it is better to train kids than to mend men. The Universal Basic Education in Nigeria in 1976 and the subsequent National Policy on Education are but strategies designed to sustain zeal for education, skill and development in Nigerian school children. They

are both fashioned out for functional, universal and qualitative education among Nigerian youths. This is why guidance and counselling services should be provided at the elementary school stage to nurture the development and growth of the school kids. To her, the counsellor has the skilled task to aid the personal growth and development of his clients. As a result, she classified the qualities of the professional counsellor to include being understanding, sympathetic, friendly, humorous having stability, patience, sincerity, tactfulness, tolerance, calmness, broadmindedness, kindness, pleasantries, intelligence, resourcefulness and cordiality in all characteristics. The counsellor must be able to predict and understand human behaviour. He must be able to understand realities of the time and be able to apply same in helping the clients and mankind.

The primary school kids encounter problems from sexual abuse, lateness to school, truancy, cheating at home and in schools, bullying, fighting, withdrawal problems, day dreaming, poor study habits, among others. If counseling is properly applied to stem these problems at the formative stages, the kids will experience less adjustment problems, even in subsequent stages of their lives. This explains the need for school guidance and counseling at the primary school level. As a result, all stake holders in education in Nigeria, should join handsto encourage and invest in crucial counseling programmes at the primary school level to avert maladjustment problems at the secondary and tertiary levels in later stages of life. This is the onus of this paper.

School guidance services are but job aspects where counsellors exhibit specialized dispensation of their jobs. Thus, information, orientation, counselling, appraisal, placements, referrals, evaluation, follow up and research are applied also at the primary school level to bring the best in the school kids. Unfortunately, focus and emphases are placed on the secondary and tertiary levels in schools guidance and counselling programmes, instead of the primary stage where the pupils are at the formative stages of their character.