**Parental Involvement and Its Impact on Effective School Counselling Services in Senior Secondary Schools in Mubi-North Local Government Area, Adamawa State**

**ABSTRACT**

*This study examined Parental Involvement and Its Impact on Effective School Counselling Services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North Local Government Area, Adamawa State. A descriptive survey research design was employed to investigate the extent of parental involvement, its influence on the effectiveness of counselling services, and barriers to participation. The study population comprised all SS2 students and their parents in public senior secondary schools. Using purposive sampling, 200 respondents were selected from four public schools. Data were collected through a researcher-developed instrument titled Parental Involvement and School Counselling Services Questionnaire (PISCSQ), which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.87 using the Cronbach Alpha method. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to answer research questions, while ANOVA tested the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The results showed a low level of parental involvement in school counselling activities, with most parents not participating in meetings, planning, or support. While school counselling services were perceived as moderately effective, parental indifference was identified as a hindrance to their full impact. Major barriers to involvement included lack of time, limited awareness, and cultural beliefs, while language was not seen as a major issue. The study concludes that enhancing parental participation through awareness campaigns, flexible scheduling, and culturally sensitive approaches could improve collaboration and boost the effectiveness of school counselling services in the area.*

***Key Words: Parental Involvement, Parental Impact, Effective Schooling, Counselling Services, Senior Secondary Schools****.*

**Introduction**

Parental involvement has long been recognized as a foundational element in the educational success of students. Across cultures, extensive research confirms that when parents actively engage in their children's schooling through communication, monitoring, participation in school activities, or support at home students benefit academically, socially, and emotionally (Epstein, 2011). Effective school counselling services depend heavily on such involvement, as counsellors require collaboration with families to tailor support services that address students’ holistic needs (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). In Nigeria, the formal integration of guidance and counselling services into secondary school education has been supported by policies and curriculum frameworks. The National Policy on Education (2014) explicitly advocates for counselling services in schools. However, challenges such as inadequate resources, limited counsellor-student ratios, and societal attitudes toward counselling remain pressing. Within this context, parental engagement becomes a critical success factor for implementing effective school counselling interventions (Odeyemi, 2024).

In senior secondary schools, students face complex developmental challenges, including peer pressure, career confusion, academic anxiety, and behavioral issues. These require coordinated efforts between school counsellors and parents for effective resolution (Okolie & Nweze, 2014). Without parental support, even the most well-designed counselling strategies risk being misaligned with the student’s home environment, which may reinforce the very issues being addressed.

Studies in various Nigerian states have shown that parental attitudes toward school counselling often range from indifference to outright skepticism. In a recent study in Rivers State, Kennedy and Chukwu (2024) observed that while most parents acknowledged the importance of academics, fewer considered counselling as essential, often perceiving it as remedial or disciplinary rather than developmental. This misconception limits the scope and impact of counselling services. Where parents are actively engaged attending counselling conferences, responding to referrals, or collaborating with counsellors students report greater satisfaction and positive behavior changes (Owodunni, 2022). In Lagos State, for example, Edem, Omori, and Phoebe (2022) found a strong correlation between parental volunteering in school events and higher effectiveness ratings of school counselling programs. Such engagement promotes mutual trust and a shared understanding of student needs between counsellors and families.

Furthermore, cultural beliefs and socioeconomic barriers influence parental involvement. In many Nigerian communities, mental health and emotional support are still shrouded in stigma, making parents hesitant to engage with school counsellors (Sanusi & Owoyale-Abdulganiy, 2024). Financial instability, long working hours, or illiteracy may further limit parents’ ability to attend school functions or engage in structured support roles (Lasode & Adeyanju, 2017). Importantly, the communication style between schools and parents often determines the degree of involvement. Schools that proactively reach out to parents—through phone calls, local language newsletters, or home visits—tend to build stronger parent-counsellor partnerships (Suleiman, Hanafi, & Kamil, 2021). In contrast, schools that wait for parental initiative may see low participation levels, particularly in rural or underserved areas.

Gender roles also shape the pattern of parental involvement. In a study conducted in Calabar South, Nigeria, female parents were significantly more likely than male parents to engage with school counsellors, reflecting broader social norms about caregiving responsibilities (Edem et al., 2022). This skew often creates a communication imbalance and may limit the full picture of student experiences, especially when paternal involvement is crucial. Lastly, recent post-COVID research reveals that digital platforms have both challenged and enhanced parental participation. While some urban parents now attend virtual counselling sessions or receive WhatsApp updates, others in remote areas are further alienated due to poor connectivity and digital illiteracy (Owodunni, 2022). Thus, the digital divide exacerbates existing inequalities in access to counselling services and parental support. The literature overwhelmingly supports that sustained parental involvement enhances the reach, relevance, and impact of school counselling services. However, the Nigerian educational context presents unique cultural, infrastructural, and attitudinal challenges that require targeted interventions to maximize parental collaboration (Adeyemo, 2005; Emeka, Oyeyemi, & Nkemdilim, 2025).

**Statement of the Problem**

School counselling services plays an important role in supporting the academic, emotional, and social development of students, particularly at the senior secondary level. However, the effectiveness of these services often depends on meaningful collaboration between schools and parents. In many Nigerian contexts, including Mubi-North Local Government Area of Adamawa State, parental involvement in educational and counselling activities remains sporadic, limited, or entirely absent. Despite growing recognition of the value of home-school partnerships, evidence suggests that parents are either unaware of their role in supporting school counselling services or face significant barriers that hinder their participation, such as cultural beliefs, time constraints, or low educational background.

This lack of involvement can weaken the ability of school counsellors to address students’ needs holistically, thereby reducing the overall impact of counselling programs. It also creates a disconnect between students’ home and school environments, limiting the continuity of support necessary for student success. Furthermore, while the literature affirms that parental engagement enhances the effectiveness of counselling interventions, there is limited empirical data specific to Mubi-North that explores the extent of parental involvement, its impact on counselling outcomes, or the barriers impeding active participation. Given these concerns, the central problem of this study is the inadequate understanding of how parental involvement (or the lack thereof) affects the effectiveness of school counselling services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North. Addressing this gap is essential for developing strategies to strengthen parent-school collaboration and enhance the delivery of counselling services in the region.

**Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. examine the extent of parental involvement in school counselling activities in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North.
2. assess the influence of parental involvement on the effectiveness of school counselling services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North.
3. identify the barriers that hinder parental participation in school counselling services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions were to guide the study:

1. What is the extent of parental involvement in school counselling activities in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North?
2. How does parental involvement influence the effectiveness of school counselling services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North?
3. What are the major barriers that hinder parental participation in school counselling services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North?

**Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**H₀₁**: There is no significant difference in the extent of parental involvement in school counselling services in Mubi-North Local Government Area.

**H₀₂**: There is no significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of school counselling services based on levels of parental involvement in senior secondary schools in Mubi- North Local Government Area.

**H₀₃**: There is no significant difference in the barriers to parental involvement in school counselling services based on parents’ educational background in Mubi-North Local Government Area.

**Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is appropriate for gathering data from a sample population in order to describe trends, attitudes, and opinions regarding parental involvement and its impact on effective school counselling services. The population for the study comprised all SS2 students and their parents in public senior secondary schools within Mubi-North Local Government Area, Adamawa State. From this population, a total of 200 respondents 100 SS2 students and 100 parents were selected using a purposive sampling technique. Four public senior secondary schools were chosen based on accessibility and the availability of counselling services. One research instrument titled “Parental Involvement and School Counselling Services Questionnaire” (PISCSQ) was developed by the researcher and used for data collection. The instrument was designed to assess the extent of parental involvement, its perceived influence on counselling effectiveness, and the barriers to participation. The internal consistency reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach Alpha method, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.87, indicating a high level of reliability. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

**Results**

**Research Question 1:** *What is the extent of parental involvement in school counselling activities in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North?*

**Table 1: Extent of Parental Involvement in School Counselling Activities.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Item** | **Mean** | **SD** | **Remarks** |
| 1 | Parents frequently attend school-organized counselling meetings and events. | 2.12 | 0.678 | Rejected |
| 2 | Parents actively collaborate with school counsellors regarding their child’s academic and emotional needs. | 2.21 | 0.533 | Rejected |
| 3 | Most parents show interest in the school’s counselling programs. | 2.34 | 0.714 | Rejected |
| 4 | Parents are involved in planning or supporting counselling-related activities in the school. | 2.29 | 0.605 | Rejected |
| 5 | There is generally low parental participation in school counselling activities. | 3.41 | 0.497 | Accepted |
|  | Grand Mean | 2.47 |  | Rejected |

Decision Rule: ≥ 2.50 (Accept) or < less than 2.50 (Reject).

The data presented in Table 1 show a generally low level of parental involvement in school counselling activities among senior secondary schools in Mubi-North. Four of the five items measured attendance at counselling meetings, collaboration with counsellors, interest in counselling programs, and involvement in planning activities were all rejected based on mean scores below the 2.50 threshold. The only accepted item stated that there is generally low parental participation, confirming the widespread perception of limited engagement. The grand mean of 2.47 reinforces this conclusion, indicating that parental involvement in school counselling services is inadequate and sporadic.

**Research Question 2:** *How does parental involvement influence the effectiveness of school counselling services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North?*

**Table 2: Influence of Parental Involvement on Effectiveness of Counselling Services**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Item** | **Mean** | | **SD** | **Remarks** |
| 1 | Parental involvement has improved students' willingness to attend counselling sessions. | 2.41 | | 0.728 | Rejected |
| 2 | Active parent participation enhances the effectiveness of school counselling services. | 2.37 | | 0.602 | Rejected |
| 3 | The support from parents makes it easier for school counsellors to address students' personal and academic issues. | 2.22 | | 0.571 | Rejected |
| 4 | Parental indifference hinders the impact of school counselling programs. | 3.11 | | 0.482 | Accepted |
| 5 | Counselling services remain effective regardless of whether parents are involved. | 2.64 | | 0.499 | Accepted |
|  | **Grand mean** |  | **2.55** |  | **Accepted** |

Decision Rule: ≥ 2.50 (Accept) or < less than 2.50 (Reject).

Table 2 evaluates the influence of parental involvement on the effectiveness of school counselling services. The findings show that although three items such as improved student attendance, enhanced effectiveness, and counsellor support were rejected due to low mean scores, two critical items were accepted. These include the negative impact of parental indifference and the belief that counselling can still be effective without parental involvement. The grand mean of 2.55 suggests a modest but significant influence of parental involvement on counselling effectiveness, pointing to the importance of parental support while also acknowledging that counsellors may adapt in its absence.

**Research Question 3:** *What are the major barriers that hinder parental participation in school counselling services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North?*

**Table 3: Barriers to Parental Participation in School Counselling Services**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Item** | **Mean** | **SD** | **Remarks** |
| 1 | Lack of time prevents parents from participating in counselling-related activities. | 3.01 | 0.653 | Accepted |
| 2 | Many parents do not see the value of school counselling programs. | 2.78 | 0.727 | Accepted |
| 3 | Cultural beliefs discourage parents from engaging with school counsellors. | 2.54 | 0.601 | Accepted |
| 4 | Parents lack awareness about the availability and purpose of school counselling services. | 2.66 | 0.515 | Accepted |
| 5 | Language and communication barriers limit parents’ involvement in counselling programs. | 2.47 | 0.690 | Rejected |
|  | Grand mean | 2.69 |  | Accepted |

Decision Rule: ≥ 2.50 (Accept) or < less than 2.50 (Reject).

The results in Table 3 highlight several barriers that hinder parental participation in school counselling activities. Four out of five items lack of time, perceived lack of value, cultural beliefs, and limited awareness were accepted, indicating that these are common obstacles faced by parents in Mubi-North. Only language and communication barriers were rejected, suggesting they are less significant in this context. The grand mean of 2.69 confirms that barriers to parental involvement are prevalent, with time constraints and socio-cultural factors emerging as the most critical challenges impeding effective collaboration between schools and parents.

**H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the extent of parental involvement in school counselling services in Mubi-North Local Government Area.

**Table 4: Extent of parental involvement in school counselling services**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source of Variation | SS | df | MS | F-value | Sig. (p-value) |
| Between Groups | 18.42 | 2 | 9.21 | 3.67 | 0.027 |
| Within Groups | 491.58 | 197 | 2.49 |  |  |
| Total | 510.00 | 199 |  |  |  |

P < 0.05 (Significant).

The p-value (0.027) is less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant difference in the extent of parental involvement across groups. This result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, suggesting that parental involvement varies significantly among different school or community contexts. It implies that local factors within Mubi-North may influence how parents engage in school counselling services.

**H₀₂:** There is no significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of school counselling services based on levels of parental involvement in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North.

**Table 5: significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of school counselling services based on levels of parental involvement in senior secondary schools**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source of Variation | SS | df | MS | F-value | Sig. (p-value) |
| Between Groups | 22.35 | 2 | 11.18 | 4.73 | 0.010 |
| Within Groups | 465.40 | 197 | 2.36 |  |  |
| **Total** | **487.75** | 199 |  |  |  |

P < 0.05 (Significant).

With a p-value of 0.010, the analysis reveals a significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of counselling services based on parental involvement. This leads to the rejection of the second null hypothesis, confirming that involvement levels impact how effective school counselling is perceived. The result reinforces that greater parental participation can enhance the efficacy of counselling efforts in schools.

**H₀₃:** There is no significant difference in the barriers to parental involvement in school counselling services based on parents’ educational background in Mubi-North Local Government Area.

**Table 6: Significant difference in the barriers to parental involvement in school counselling services based on parents’ educational background.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source of Variation | SS | df | MS | F-value | Sig. (p-value) |
| Between Groups | 27.84 | 3 | 9.28 | 5.22 | 0.002 |
| Within Groups | 348.96 | 196 | 1.78 |  |  |
| **Total** | **376.80** | 199 |  |  |  |

P < 0.05 (Significant).

The p-value of 0.002 shows a significant difference in perceived barriers based on parents’ educational background. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that educational attainment influences how parents perceive obstacles to participation. Parents with different education levels likely face or interpret barriers to involvement in distinct ways.

**Discussion**

The findings from Table 1 indicate a generally low level of parental involvement in school counselling activities among senior secondary schools in Mubi-North. Specifically, parents rarely attended counselling meetings, collaborated with school counsellors, showed interest in counselling programs, or participated in planning or supporting such activities. This is evidenced by mean scores below the acceptance threshold on these items, while the statement reflecting low parental participation received strong agreement, highlighting a widespread recognition of inadequate involvement. These results align with the study by Anho, (2018), which reported that parental engagement in Nigerian secondary schools remains limited due to competing responsibilities and lack of awareness about counselling services.

Table 2 explores the influence of parental involvement on the effectiveness of school counselling services. The data suggest that parental participation does not strongly enhance students' willingness to attend counselling sessions or improve service delivery, as indicated by mean scores below the acceptance criterion. However, parental indifference was acknowledged as a significant hindrance to counselling impact, and there was some consensus that counselling services can maintain a degree of effectiveness even without active parental involvement. This nuanced perspective resonates with findings by Ngwakwe, (2016), who observed that while parental engagement positively affects counselling outcomes, counsellors often adapt their strategies to work around limited parental support in Nigerian schools.

Table 3 identifies several barriers limiting parental participation in school counselling activities. The most significant obstacles include lack of time, low appreciation for the value of counselling programs, cultural beliefs discouraging engagement, and insufficient awareness of available services. In contrast, language and communication barriers were not perceived as major impediments. This pattern suggests that practical constraints and socio-cultural factors play a more critical role in parental disengagement than linguistic challenges. Similar conclusions were drawn by Kimathi, (2017), who emphasized that socio-cultural perceptions and informational gaps are primary factors undermining effective home-school collaboration in Nigerian educational contexts.

Taken together, the findings underscore a low level of parental involvement in school counselling activities in Mubi-North, shaped by intersecting barriers such as time limitations, cultural attitudes, and poor awareness. Although school counselling services continue to operate, their full potential remains underutilized due to insufficient parental engagement. This scenario is consistent with the observations of Edward and Yahaya (2017), who argued that enhancing parental involvement through targeted awareness campaigns, flexible scheduling, and culturally sensitive outreach could strengthen collaboration between parents and schools, thereby improving counselling effectiveness.

The analysis demonstrates a statistically significant difference in the extent of parental involvement in school counselling services within Mubi-North (p = 0.027), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This outcome indicates that parental involvement is not uniform but varies across different demographic or contextual groups in the area. Such variation may stem from factors like socio-economic disparities, differing levels of school-community collaboration, or variations in parental availability. This observation is corroborated by findings from Aremu and Sokan (2019), who noted that both socio-economic and cultural backgrounds significantly shape parental engagement in Nigerian schools. In a similar vein, Olatoye and Agbatogun (2009) highlighted that institutional differences and community support mechanisms contribute to the uneven distribution of parental involvement, even within the same locality.

The findings from Table 5 (p = 0.010) reveal a significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of school counselling services based on the degree of parental involvement, resulting in the rejection of the second null hypothesis. This suggests that increased parental engagement is associated with enhanced perceptions and potentially greater effectiveness of counselling services. The implication is that parental participation not only supports but also strengthens the outcomes of school counselling interventions. This is consistent with the work of Ige (2014), who found that active parental collaboration with schools leads to improved student engagement and better counselling outcomes. Likewise, Oduolowu and Olowe (2011) reported that schools with robust parental involvement frameworks experienced more successful counselling program implementation compared to those with limited parental participation.

Table 6 indicates a significant difference in perceived barriers to parental involvement depending on parents’ educational background (p = 0.002), which warrants rejection of the third null hypothesis. This result suggests that parents’ educational attainment influences their perception and ability to overcome challenges related to participating in school counselling activities. Parents with higher education levels may be more aware of the benefits of counselling and better equipped to address logistical or informational barriers than those with lower educational backgrounds. This is in line with the research by Ekanem and Ekanem (2012), who found that parental education positively correlates with awareness and engagement in school-related programs. Similarly, Yusuf and Alabi (2013) observed that limited literacy among parents was a significant factor in reduced involvement in school support services.

**Conclusion**

The study investigated parental involvement and its impact on effective school counselling services in senior secondary schools in Mubi-North Local Government Area, Adamawa State. Findings revealed that parental involvement in school counselling activities is generally low, with minimal participation in meetings, collaboration with counsellors, and planning of support services. Despite this limited engagement, the effectiveness of counselling services was found to be moderately sustained, although significantly constrained by parental indifference. Major barriers such as lack of time, cultural beliefs, and low awareness were identified, and the study also established that parents’ educational background significantly influenced both their level of involvement and perception of these barriers. These outcomes suggest that while school counsellors continue to support students, the absence of robust parental collaboration limits the reach and impact of counselling services. Enhancing parental participation is essential for optimizing student outcomes and ensuring the holistic success of counselling interventions.

**Recommendations**

1. Educational authorities and school administrators should organize regular sensitization programs to raise parental awareness about the importance and benefits of participating in school counselling activities.
2. Schools should implement flexible meeting schedules and communication channels (e.g., SMS, WhatsApp groups) that accommodate parents’ time constraints and foster continuous engagement with school counsellors.
3. School counsellors should adopt counselling strategies that are culturally sensitive and inclusive, addressing local beliefs and values that may discourage parental involvement, while also educating parents on the evolving role of counselling in education.

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