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Counselling Needs of Adolescents in Orphanages in Kebbi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study looked at the counselling needs of adolescent in orphanages. Descriptive survey method was used in this study. The target population of this study comprised of all adolescents in the orphanages in Kebbi State. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the three main orphanage homes in Kebbi State. The researcher also used Proportional sampling technique was used in selecting respondents from the three main orphanage homes in Kebbi State. Four hundred adolescent's orphans were purposively selected for this study. Data gathered were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Result of this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescent orphans in orphanages based on gender, age, class level and religion. It was therefore recommended that the government should encourage caregivers to employ the services of professional counsellors in orphanage homes.

Keywords: Counselling, Orphans, Orphanages and Adolescents.

Introduction

The adolescent stage is a period of transition of from childhood to adulthood. Adegoke (2003) explained that this period is avital turning period in life trajectory of adolescents and this is filled with various challenges. The transition failure at this stage could actually destroy the adolescent's life goal. When there is no parental support at this point, adolescents resort to peers for emotional and psychological comfort which could be very dangerous.

Orphans who are adolescents and live in the orphanage goes through this period without adequate psychological support. Odeku (2008) revealed that emotional and psychological challenges are common problems among adolescents in the orphanages. An orphan is a child whose parents are dead and as well being abandoned. This is

because most of these children do not know their biological parents. Some of these abounded children were picked on the street while most of the newborn babies were enclosed in a nylon bag and dumped near a garbage heap. The numbers of orphans are multiplying on a daily basis due to various reasons (Wordnet, 2007).

United Children Fund (2002) discovered that 12 million children had become orphans as a result of HIV/AIDS pandemic and that 14 million children worldwide have lost their parents due to different types of sicknesses. World Orphans (2012) confirmed that there are about 153 million children who are orphaned worldwide. Adesina (2004) reported that the constant ethnic clashes and problems of daily attack of insurgents have resulted in death of many parents thereby leaving their children as orphans. As such, there are lots of orphans in the Northern part of Nigeria due to repeated crisis experienced in these areas (Nigeria Orphans and Vulnerable Children National Plan of Action, 2011). Many of these children are roaming around the streets as beggars. Aljazeera News (2015) noted that the activities of Boko Haram insurgents in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria has significantly increased the number of orphans in the orphanage homes.

Orphanage homes are residential places that house and take care of children that are without parents. However, there are some children in the orphanage home who were abandoned by their biological parents due to one reason or the other. Omolehin (2007) stated that the orphanage home started during the missionaries' era and they were established to carter for children who have been abandoned, abused or neglected. In Nigeria, there are different types of public and private orphanage homes. The public types are owned by the government while the private ones are sponsor by individuals or organizations.

Ayeni (2016) found that many of the adolescents in the orphanage homes have a lot of psychological problems while some are threaten and marginalized. Some of them live in abject poverty and depend only on what is provided by the orphanage home. A

great number of these children are not educated while some lack good health care. Lack of these basic survival necessities can lead to emotional breakdown. Children in the orphanage homes are often stigmatize. Afework (2013) noted that people do not actually like to associate with orphans especially those in the orphanage homes. The society often tries to avoid them and treats them as segregated member of the society (Atamatsiko, 2012). Furthermore, Ayeni (2016) affirmed that prejudice, discounting, discrimination and high level of marginalization directed at orphans, often lead to symptoms inferiority complex. This may consequently result into negative self-identity and low self-esteem. Doniger (2002) stated that children are often depressed as a result of parent's death. Orphans have problems of anger, inhibited anxiety and fear of the future. The death of parents often leads to trauma. These traumatic situations can lead to serious long term negative consequences like cognitive breakdown, emotional instability, depression, re-experiencing of trauma at the mental and Physical level (Bolu-Steve, 2013). Amole (2015) explained that the counselling needs of adolescents orphans are actually much. Counselling need of orphans deals with areas where adolescents in orphanages actually need the intervention of professional counsellors.

Counselling is a professional assistance rendered by the counsellor in order to assist clients who have challenges. Makinde (1983) defined counselling as an enlightenment process where the counsellor facilitates growth, development and positive change through self-understanding. Counsellors are professionally equipped in handling psychological and educational challenges. One of their duties is to provide relevant information that will help their client. The counsellors also help to link with organizations that could provide assistance towards the education of these children.

Adolescents needs to be counselled and exposed to life skills surviving strategies like assertive training and decision making skills. These skills are effective in assisting orphans who finds it difficult to ask for their right and refuse what they do not want (Asonibare, 2016). Swaranand Shikha, (2013) affirmed that the mental health status of orphans demands attention because they severely experience undesirable negative

emotions, behavioural problems, and higher levels of psychological difficulties due to reasons of being cared for by someone who is not their biological parent. This shows that they need to be counselled on how to handle behavioural challenges.

The adolescents can open up to the counsellor in areas where they need help. Emotional breakdown which are common problems among adolescents in the orphanages can only be handled by counsellors. Counselling is based on the assumption that every individual in most society is having, has had and will have a problem that one cannot cope with and therefore needs the intervention of a counsellor (Makinde, 1983). Oladele (2000) noted that counselling process can help students with problems of depression, anxiety, stress and those with borderline personality. The counsellor can also train workers in the orphanage homes with some basic counselling skills that could be of help to the adolescents. Adeoye (2016) stated reasons why care givers need basic counselling skills. The researcher believes that knowledge of psychological approaches skills would help the care givers in dealing with the counselling needs of orphans. Amole (2015) revealed that orphans in the orphanage homes also need career counselling but many of these institution do not perceive the need to employ professional counsellors, instead they make use of care givers who are untrained as counsellors.

Statement of Problem.

Adolescents in the orphanage homes are confronted with lots of problems. These children are most helpless because they do not have the emotional and physical strength to handle the psychological trauma associated with parental loss. Ben, Catherine, Shelagh and Kathlee (2006) explained that mental health problems are common problems among adolescents. Studies abound on the negative effects orphanage care has on orphan's emotional, social, and cognitive development. Some researchers believe that orphanage care is unsatisfactory option and many experts are advocating for alternative forms of care. (Provence & Lipton, 1962; Spitz, 1965).

Omolehi (2007) explained that many adolescents in the orphanage homes have resulted into prostitution and child labor as a means of survival. It was also revealed that educational regression is a common problem among the orphans. Most of these children who are adolescents are still in primary schools (Omolehi, 2007)`. Many of these children are going through this transition period with stress. Most orphanage homes are yet to understand the need for the services of professional counsellor despite the counselling needs of the adolescents in the orphanage homes.

A careful analysis of literature showed that the number of orphans has continued to increase in Nigeria and Africa at large. Amole (2015) worked on career knowledge and motivation for occupation among orphans in orphanage homes in Kebbi State. Atmatsiko (2012) carried a research on orphan needs while, Afework (2013) worked on comparative study of psychological well-being between orphan and non-orphan Children in Addis Ababa. To the best knowledge of the researcher, none of these studies specifically focused on counselling needs of adolescents' orphans in Kebbi State, hence the need for the study

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of study is to investigate the counselling needs of orphans in Kebbi State. The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the counselling needs of adolescents in orphanage homes in Kebbi State
2. To identify the influence of variables like gender, age, class level and religion on the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated for the purpose of this study.

1. What are the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State?

2. Is there any statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State on the basis of gender?

3. Is there any statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State on the basis of age?

4. Is there any statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State on the basis of class level?

5. Is there any statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State on the basis of religion?

Research Hypotheses

Based on the above listed research questions, the following hypothesis were formulated.

1. There is no statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State on the basis of gender

2. There is no statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State on the basis of age

3. There is no statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State on the basis of class level

4. There is no statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of adolescents in the orphanage homes in Kebbi State on the basis of religion

Method

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey method, in which the researcher generally tries to gather information from a representation group and based on such information inferences were drawn about the behaviours of the population (Hassan, 2003).

The target population for this study consisted of all adolescents in the orphanage homes. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the three main orphanage homes in

Kebbi State. The researcher also used proportional sampling technique in selecting respondents from the three main orphanage homes in Kebbi State (160 respondents in Birnin Kebbi orphanage home, 140 from Zuru while 100 fromYelwa-Yauri).Thus, four hundred adolescent's orphans were purposively selected for this study.

The instrument used for this study was tagged Counselling Needs of Adolescent Orphans (CNAOO). This instrument had two sections. Section A dealt with the demographic data of the respondents, while section B contained twenty items on the counselling needs of orphans. Respondents were asked to indicate their choice answer by ticking any of the options on Four Point Likert –Type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SA). The instrument contained twenty items. The highest possible score is 80 (4x20), while the lowest possible score is 20 (20x1). Therefore, the range is 60 (80-20). The mid-point of range is 30 (60/2) the cut- off point is therefore 80-30 (I,e maximum score minus the mid-point of the range) or 20 +30 (i.e maximum scores plus range) in which either case is 50

To ascertain the validity of the instrument of this study, the drafted copies of the questionnaire were given to experts in the related fields. These experts affirmed that the instrument covered the intended purpose and was therefore valid for use.
 The reliability of this instrument was ascertained using test re-test method within an interval of four weeks. The instrument was administered on twenty respondents. The two scores were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula and a reliability index of 0.74 was obtained, hence the instrument was statically adjudged to be reliable. The data obtain was analysed using frequency counts, simple percentages and mean ranking of mean values. The t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed to test the research null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results

This section presents the results of data obtained from the respondents in frequency counts and percentages.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

	Frequency	Percentage%
Gender		
Male	192	48
Female	208	52
Total	**400**	**100**
Age		
13-16years	147	36.8
17-20years	164	41
21years and above	89	22.2
Total	**400**	**100**
Class		
Primary	147	36.75
J.S.S	74	18.5
S.S.S	105	26.25
Higher Institution	74	18.5
Total	**400**	**100**
Religion		
Christianity	355	88.75
Islam	45	11.25
African traditional religion	-	-
Total	**400**	**100**

Table 1 indicates that 400 respondents participated in the study out of which 192 (48%) were males, while 208 (52%) of the respondents were females. It also indicates that 147 (36.8%) of the respondents were below 16 years, 164 (41%) were between the

ages of 17 – 20 years, while 89 (22.2%) of the respondents were 21 years and above. 147 (36.75%) of the respondents were in the primary class, 74 (18.5%) were in the J.S.S. class, 105 (26.25%) were in the S.S.S class, while 74 (18.5%) of the respondents were in higher institution. However, 355 (88.75%) of the respondents are Christians, 45 (11.25%) of the respondents were Muslims, while none of the respondents were worshippers of the African Traditional Religion.

Table 2: **Mean and Rank Order on the Counselling Needs of Orphans Living in Orphanages**

Item No.	As an adolescent in orphanage home i need to be counselled on how to:	Mean	Rank
1	be hopeful in spite of my situation	3.48	1st
2	build a bright future	3.44	2nd
10	get regular food supply	3.29	3rd
9	improve on my social interactions	3.18	4th
6	talk to people about my problems	2.99	5th
8	get in touch with my relatives	2.96	6th
17	overcome my educational concerns	2.92	7th
3	secure protective accommodation	2.86	8th
16	handle suicidal tendencies	2.85	9th
7	engage in productive economic activities	2.84	10th
14	get the woman/man to marry me	2.56	11th
19	forget the past	2.51	12th
18	relate with other orphans without being aggressive	2.45	13th
13	overcome the stigma of being raised in an orphanage	2.44	14th
15	deal with inferiority complex	2.22	15th
12	secure a job	2.19	16th
5	deal with loneliness	2.11	17th
4	make myself happy	2.08	18th
11	overcome anxiety	2.00	19th
20	deal with boredom	1.63	20th

Table 2 shows that Item 1, 2, and 10 ranked 1st , 2nd , and 3rd with mean scores of 3.48, 3.44 and 3.29 and they state that: *As an orphan I need to be counselled on how to: be*

hopeful in spite of my situation; build a bright future; and get regular food supply. While Item 4, 11, and 20 ranked 18th , 19th , and 20th with mean scores of 2.08, 2.00, and 1.63 and they state that: *As an orphan I need to be counselled on how to: make myself happy; overcome anxiety; and deal with boredom*. Since twelve out of the twenty items have mean scores that are above the mid-mean score of 2.50, then it can be said that the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages is high.

Hypotheses Testing

Four null hypotheses were generated and as well tested for this study. The hypotheses were tested using t-test, and ANOVA statistical methods at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One: *There is no statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages based on gender*

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value on the Counselling Needs of Orphans Lining in Orphanages Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Male	192	53.46	1.65			
				398	0.01	Rejected
Female	208	52.68	4.04			

*Significant, p<0.05

Table 3 shows a p-value of 0.01. The p-value is less than the alpha level of 0.05. The hypothesis is not accepted. Hence, there is a significant difference in the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages based on gender.

Hypothesis Two: *There is no statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages based on age*

Table 4: **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Counselling Needs of Orphans Lining in Orphanages Based on Age**

Age	df	SS	Mean Square	p-value	Decision
Between Groups	2	192.012	96.00		
Within Groups	397	3786.548	9.53	0.00*	Rejected
Total	399	3978.560			

*Significant, p<0.05

Table 4 shows the p-value of 0.00 at 0.05 alpha level. The p-value is less than the alpha value of 0.05. The hypothesis is not accepted. Hence, there is a significant difference in the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages based on age. In order to find out which of the age groups brought about the significant difference noted in the ANOVA on Table 4, a Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) table was drawn to indicate that on Table 5.

Table 5: **Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) on the Counselling Needs of Orphans Living in Orphanages Based on Age**

Duncan Groupings	N	Means	Group	Age
A	164	53.82	2	17 – 20 years
B	89	52.98	3	21 years and above
B	147	52.25	1	Below 16 years

Table 5 shows Group 3 (17 – 20 years) with a mean score of 53.82 differed significantly from Groups 3 (21 years and above) and 1 (Below 16 years) with mean

scores of 52.98 and 52.25respectively. All the groups differed from one another but the significant difference noted was as a result of the mean of Group 2 (17 – 20 years), hence the significant difference noted in the ANOVA on Table 4.

Hypothesis Three: *There is no statistically significant difference in the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages based on class*

Table 6: **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Counselling Needs of Orphans Living in Orphanages Based on Class**

Class	df	SS	Mean Square	p-value	Decision
Between Groups	3	209.632	69.87		
Within Groups	396	3768.928	9.51	0.00*	Rejected
Total	399	3978.560			

*Significant, p<0.05

Table 6 shows the p-value of 0.00 at 0.05 alpha level. The p-value is less than the alpha value of 0.05. The hypothesis is not accepted. In order to find out which of the class groups brought about the significant difference noted in the ANOVA on Table 6, a Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) table was drawn to indicate that on Table 7.

Table 7: **Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) on the Counselling Needs of Orphans Living in Orphanages Based on Class**

Duncan Groupings	N	Means	Group	Class
A	74	54.21	2	J.S.S.
A	105	53.42	3	S.S.S
B	74	52.98	4	Higher Institution
C	147	52.25	1	Primary

Table 7 shows the Duncan Multiple Range Test indicating the significant difference noted in the ANOVA Table 6. Group 2 (J.S.S) and 3 (S.S.S) with mean scores of 54.21 and 53.42 differed significantly from Groups 4 (Higher Institution) and 1 (Primary with mean scores of 52.98 and 52.25 respectively. All the groups differed from one another but the significant difference noted was a result of the mean scores of Group 2 (J.S.S) and 3 (S.S.S), hence the significant difference noted in the ANOVA on Table 6.

Hypothesis Four: *There is no significant difference in the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages based on religion*

Table 8:   **Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value on the Counselling Needs of Orphans Living in Orphanages Based on Religion**

Religion	N	Mean	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Christianity	355	52.85	3.13	398	0.00*	Rejected
Islam	45	54.66	2.89			

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 8 shows a p-value of 0.48. The p-value is less than the alpha level of 0.05. The hypothesis is not accepted. Hence, there is a statistical significant difference in the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages based on religion.

Discussion

Most of the respondents believe that they need counsel on how to be hopeful in spite of their challenges. According to Bolu-steve (2013) there is a close psychological and biological attachment between parents and their children as such; the death of parents could be life's most challenging experience that could lead to emotional torment and fear of the future. Weidner (2013) also noted that orphans often develop anxiety

about what the future holds and such thought may result in to other mental health issues.

Both male and female orphans agreed that there are differences in the counselling needs of orphans in Kebbi State.Aluede, Oyaziwo, Imhonde, Henry, Eguavoen, Agatha (2006) revealed that there is always gender differences in the counselling needs of students. They revealed that male and female students visit the counsellor for different reasons. The differences in their perception may be as a result of the fact that there has been a lot of sudden displacement as a result of the activates of the insurgent in the Northern part of Nigeria for some considerable number of years, this constant occurrence can influence their opinion. Kebbi State is located in the Northern part of Nigeria, however, Stover, Bollinger and Walkerz (2012) noted that many children are orphaned due to poverty while the fortunate ones may live in care centers or orphanages and in terms of tragedies orphans may live in tents. This may account for the differences in their counselling needs.

The counselling needs of the respondents were different based on age and class level. This is at variance with the study of Oniye, Yahaya and Oniyangi (2009) who found that orphans who were teenagers of different age group have similar counselling needs. In respect of their class level, Shearer (2006) stated that students need a clear understanding of themselves, their aptitudes, abilities and interest as they move from one class level to another, hence, their counselling needs may differ. .Amatsiko (2012) explained that orphans like other children need to be given equal right. One of such rights is equal access to basic education. In doing this, they need counselling in the different areas of their academic pursuit, as they move from one class to the other

The respondent's religious affiliation notwithstanding, it is clear that orphans are exposed to various negative experiences like torture, child abuse, lack of basic necessities and maternal deprivation and this calls for the intervention of a counsellor (Odeku, 2008). Barry and Wolf (1992) defined counselling as a psychological process of helping an individual to achieve self-direction, self-understanding and mental balance necessary to make the maximum adjustment to life. The different negative attitudes

developed by these children can be positively rechanneled through counselling and religious injunctions. This study corroborates the findings of Ayeni (2016) who affirmed that the counselling needs of orphans are different. Counselling is based on the postulation that sometimes people have challenges that they cannot resolve by themselves and therefore needs the intervention of a counsellor (Makinde, 1983).

Conclusion, counselling implication and Recommendations

The results show that there was no significant difference in the counselling needs of orphans living in orphanages based on gender, age, class level and religion. From this study, it is understood that orphans need counselling in different areas of life. Studies revealed that orphans suffer higher level of psychological problems than their non-orphaned peers (Afework, 2013). As such, counsellors should make themselves available and be ready to tech life surviving skills that will help orphans in orphanages to handle life issues.

It was therefore recommended that the government should encourage care givers to employ the services of professional counsellors in orphanage homes. Where this is not possible, partnership with NGOs will be an available alternative. A visit to orphanage home should be included in the practicum exercises and student personnel work courses for counsellor who are under training. This will give opportunity to the upcoming counsellors to acquire hand–on experienced as far as the challenges of orphans are concerned in the orphanage homes.

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