

# COUNSELING STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIOR RELATED PROBLEMS IN SCHOOLS

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## **Abstract**

*The proportion of students with behavior related problems is increasing rapidly. Perhaps due to the present socio-economic changes and globalization. Life is so complex and less understandable to most students leading to a real decline in moral values. The paper discussed the definitional issues of counseling and behavior related problems. It outlined the causes and classification of behavior related problems in schools. Counseling strategies for ameliorating behavior related problems in schools were provided. Conclusion and recommendations were offered.*

## **Introduction**

Counseling is a professional discipline that contains indispensable programs in our educational system. Gensinde (1991) defined counseling as an in-depth interaction between two or more individuals with the intention of assisting the client to understand himself in relation to his or her present and future problems. Thus, counseling involves individual and group interaction with the view of helping the individuals to be useful to himself and to others. Oyediran and Awoniyi (1992:85) opined that counseling involves the application of psychological principals, methods and procedures in order to facilitate effective functioning during the developmental process and the life-span of individuals. It is designed to help clients to acquire useful knowledge, improve strategies in coping with life demands and develop a variety of problem solving and decision making capacities. Infact, counseling profession assist individuals to understand themselves, their growth, development in relation to others.

Behavior is viewed as what one does, how he relates to others, what he accomplished, what he reports about his emotional experiences, how he approaches a learning task, how he performs in a competitive situation and how he uses convert cognitive behavior to influence other behaviors (garner, 1978). Chinnard (1974) explained problem behavior as those behaviors that distress from what the majority approves, or a variation of a normal behavior. Behavior related problem applies to any kind of behavior that creates difficulties such as interfering with the effective functioning of the pupils or the classroom. It may also be a behavior that reveals the presence of difficulties which indicate that the pupils or the group is not functioning effectively. However, this paper sees problem related behavior as any consistent discrepancy between

what is expected of a pupil in academic and social areas and what is done by him in these various areas.

### **Causes and Classification Behavior Related Problems In School**

There are several factors that lead to behavior related problems in schools. However, stress seems to be the main causal factor because many things come under it. Akinade (2007:23) defined stress as “any stimulus that either rise your excitement or anxiety beyond what you regard as above your usual or perusal capabilities”. Nevertheless, stresses are of different types, such as frustration, anxiety between behavior and its goal or any interference with or disruption of a going instruction.

Another stress that can cause behavior related problem is anxiety. A person who finds himself in a sense of dread, foreboding and apprehension.

Frustration can also be seen under four main headings, as follows:

1. **Aggression:** A person tries to attack physically or verbally, the person or object linked with the frustrating situation. The aggression may be turned in upon himself as an anxiety and guilt feelings, or directed towards a person or group distantly connected with the situation. The later is well recognized as projection.
2. **Psychomatic Disturbance:** Through developing some physical condition like asthma, diarrhea, or even enuresis, a person is able to withdraw from the persistently frustrating situation with rationalized excuse, that is without “loss of face”
3. **Withdrawal:** A person withdraws physically from the goal or else withdraws from the situation psychologically through fantasy.
4. **Regression:** A child reverts to a more infantile form of behavior. Thus he may lose motor or language skills that have been acquired or display tantrums (Lovell and Vernon, 1979). Shertzer and Stone (1980) classified primary school pupils behavior related problems as follows: -
  - a. Emotional problems, in form of anxiety, immaturity, impulsiveness, moodiness and withdrawal, they may be caused due to their early exposure to school life.
  - b. Poor and negative attitudes, frustration, lack of interest and low level of aspirations. The child here may try to be reserved and do not have the zeal to label himself with his co-students in the school.
  - c. Moral defects such as lying, stealing and underdeveloped values. Infact, he listed among others as bullying, truancy, showing off, masturbation or heterosexual activity, tatling (gossip), profamily and boisterousness.

### **Counseling Strategies for Students with Behavior Related Problems**

Tambawal (2012:9) posited that the “major aim of counseling is to change behavior and changing of behavior involves behavior modification techniques. He “also explained that behavior ranges from normal to abnormal, desirable to undesirable, adaptive

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maladaptive. He posited that behavior counseling is designed to decrease maladaptive behavior and eliminate inappropriate behavior, to establish adaptive behavior (in order) to get a new behavior to occur, and develop and maintain new behavior in order to develop behavior persistence. He reported Odoemelan and Ajoku (2010) and Robert (2007) who outlined the following as behavior modification techniques in changing undesirable, abnormal and unacceptable behaviors to desirable and normal behavior, acceptable in the society and by law.

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. Reinforcement           | b. Ear shorting               |
| c. Fading                  | d. Flooding                   |
| e. Extinction              | f. Systematic desensitization |
| g. Shaping/ modeling       |                               |
| h. Implosion               |                               |
| i. Bibliography            |                               |
| j. Bio feedback            |                               |
| k. Cognitive restructuring |                               |
| l. Self management         |                               |

Another practical strategies may include counseling experience, for example, his role is to identify each pupils needs and interest because counseling is basically concerned with helping the child as a learner. For instance, student with problem of anxiety, shyness, immorality and withdrawal. The counselor should bring them and advice them to mix freely with others and to feel just as the same. With regard to the grown up pupils like masturbation. Here, parents must be invited, the counselor's work include involving the class teacher and parents in solving the problem but he must keep the issues as in access (an indoor discussion). Try to identify the cause, then find a solution. Counselor should not forget to go closer to the client with so many pieces of advice all the time.

In secondary education, students tend to commit burglary, truancy, showoff, heterosexual affairs, riots, gossip, stealing, and youthful marriage. The counselor's role here is to find out each pupil needs and interest, communicate to teachers and parents, children to be made to accept themselves in relation to the needs of their society. The last category is the tertiary or university level whose behavior related problems include; juvenile delinquency leading to frustration, stealing, alcohol or drug abuse, sexual misbehavior or homosexuality, cultism, riot, school dropout and so on. The counselor should in terms of sex abuse, homosexuality and lesbianism explains religions, social and administrative implications of these offences. He should advice the parents, school administrators and others on how to handle the case as well as mount a public enlightenment with the view to minimizing the problems.

## **Conclusion**

Behavior related problems tend to occur due to lack of discipline either from the home or school. It is a general view that learning cannot take place without discipline. It is regrettable that, those professionals that help in proper maintenance of discipline

(counselors), are not recognized by government, parents as well as schools administrators in Nigeria. Thus, lack of proper utilization of counselors in schools contribute immensely in the increase of behavior related problems in our schools.

### Recommendations

1. There is need for guidance and counseling officers in our primaries, secondary schools, tertiary institutions and universities.
2. Government and other education stakeholders should help in the training and retraining of guidance and counseling officers.
3. Parents should play their roles in the upbringing of their children and should consult a counselor for any inappropriate behavior, they observe or notice with their children.

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