



EFFECT OF PERSONAL SOCIAL COUNSELLING ON EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT OF STUDENTS FROM DIVORCED PARENT IN BENUE STATE

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ABSTRACT :

The study investigated the effect of Persona- Social Counselling on emotional adjustment of Secondary School Students from divorced parents in Benue State. The Non-randomized Control Group, Pretest post-test quasi-experimental research design was used for the study. The study was guided by six research purposes, questions and null hypotheses. The population of the study was 75,969 Secondary School Students in Benue state. A sample size of 32 respondents was taken from 2 secondary schools using the purposive sampling technique. The instrument used was a self-developed instrument titled Emotional Adjustment Questionnaire (EAQ). This was validated by three experts, two from Guidance and Counselling and one from Mathematics and Science Education, Benue State University. The reliability test carried out yielded a reliability coefficient of .87 using Cronbach Alpha. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions and the ANCOVA statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that: Persona-Social Counselling had positive significant effect on Depression, Anxiety, and Truancy among students of divorced parents in Benue State. It was concluded that Persona-Social Counselling had significant effect on students' emotional adjustment and thus reduced depression, anxiety, and truant behaviour of students from divorced parents. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that: Counsellors should render Persona-Social Counselling intervention to counsel Secondary School Students from divorced parents to avoid depression, and also, improve their academic performance and the overall emotional adjustment.

Key words: Emotional adjustment, Students from divorced parents, Depression, Anxiety, Truancy.

INTRODUCTION :

One of the problems confronting the contemporary society is the issue of emotional adjustment, which plays a crucial role in the mental health and general well-being of individuals. Recently, there has been an observable trend in the behaviour of secondary schools' students that seemed awkward, taking into cognisance their seating position in the class, their unwillingness to answer questions in the class, their interaction with other students and their peers, as well as their behaviours. Others seem to show little or no interest in the activities carried out by their peers. Teenagers commonly play with their peers but some find it difficult to associate freely, a typical example could be playing football both in school and on the street, jumping around the school. The researcher observed that some particular groups of students are seen walking around the school campus alone, even when their peers want to associate with them, one can sense a spirit of avoidance. Other typical behaviours that seem to be associated with these students also include excessive crying, constant resting of their heads on the bench in the class, feeling insecure, seeking attention, among others.

Emotional adjustment, according to Agustus and Sumathi (2015), is the maintenance of emotional equilibrium in the face of internal and external stressors, which is facilitated by cognitive processes of acceptance and adaptation. Emotional adjustment is a key component in every child's development, it is essential for the personal well-being of all humans. Every individual is considered well-adjusted if he is able to demonstrate positive social skills, normal psychological functioning, and is able to adaptively meet the demands of his immediate environment. Adjustment is a process that helps a person to lead a happy and contented life while maintaining a balance between his needs and his capacity to fulfil them. Lack of adjustment might impinge students' lives emotionally and academically as well.

It has been observed that students of secondary school age exhibit some behavioural difficulties, which before now were not commonly noticeable among students. A critical thought into what must have caused this behaviour among secondary school students resulting into emotional outburst, episodes of crying and panic attack experiences making it a challenge regulating their emotions and causing instability in their emotion causing an increase in the number of students across the world exhibiting unacceptable behaviours, as observed by the researcher, could be as a result of the

economic challenges, insecurity, genetic, upbringing, peer influence, lack of basic needs of life, social, biological, economic, psychological problem or life experiences because they miss a particular parent or both as a result of death, separation or parental divorce.

This observation agrees with Augustus and Sumathi (2015) view that, Teenage years is a critical time of social, psychological and biological development between childhood and young adulthood with changes in hormones, physical appearance, peer groups and all the environmental transition which is characterised with mood swings which is a natural part of this process, it is important to be aware of the deeper issues faced by these young adults which might pose as a challenge they might be struggling with emotionally.

According to Mulikat and Odediran (2019) students who experience the divorce of their parents have higher rates of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and emotional distress. Some of these conditions, for some individuals, require assistance to help them realise their capabilities and potentials. Counselling comes in to assist such individuals adjust emotionally, failure to adjust can lead to mental health issues.

Parental divorce is the legal termination of a marriage between parents, resulting in a separation of the parents and potentially affecting their children's wellbeing. Globally, it has been observed that the number of secondary school students from divorced homes have been on a steady increase over the years, these learners suffer vast challenges that affect their emotional, social and academic life. In the African context, Chauke and Obadira (2019) observed that students of divorced parents in South Africa, often undergo series of challenges of adjustment as they navigate the changes brought about by their parents' divorce which cause a disruption in their daily routine, manifesting itself in form of truancy, bullying, feeling of anger, sadness, self-esteem and inability to regulate their emotions effectively. In Ethiopia, it was noted that adolescent who experience the divorce of their parents have higher rates of depressed mood, low self-esteem and emotional distress. (Huit, 2011 in Mulikat and Odediran 2019). According to Nyaegah, (2011) these students are confronted with problems ranging from withdrawal, unhappiness, anxiety, anger, and hyperactivity.

As noted by Chauke and Obadire (2019), students from divorced parents experience behavioural problems such as lack of confidence to participate in class, due to low self-esteem and depression that might be taking place within such students' lives as a result of parental divorce. Globally, there has been an alarming increase in divorce rate, unarguably, divorce rates official statistics according to National Centre for Health Statistics (2018) suggests that the divorce rate in the United States remained unchanged at 2.3% in 2022, this had over time been observed to be one thousand per married women doubled between 1963 and 1974 from 9.6% to 19.3%, in Africa, Muranga had a total of 6,456 divorcees as per the Kenya Population.

Divorce often creates emotional turmoil for the entire family, most especially, the child whose situation, in most cases, is quite scary, confusing and frustrating, and has been among the most visible features of the recent decades of family change. Divorce is common and it is witnessed on a daily basis in our environment, churches, and the community at large. Hundreds of divorce cases are reported on a daily basis and it is a commonly discussed topic even among children. Divorce brings about stress, tension, lack of motivation and frustration, which manifest negatively on a child's academic achievement. According to Fraser (2013) achievement and behaviour of children living with a divorced parent is below that of children living with the two parents. He observed that children who live with a parent especially a divorced one, usually feel unsecured, always seeking attention and anxious that his or her education may be seriously hindered or disrupted through these feelings and might affect the child's total behaviour. Helping students overcome these challenges can be achieved through persona-social counselling intervention.

Persona-social counselling according to Winkel and Hastuti (2004), is counselling services provided to assist students in dealing with the state of their own mind and to overcome many struggles in their own mind. It is an assistance in organizing oneself in various fields of life and human relationships with others in a variety of environments (social interaction). From the opinions of persona- social counselling above, it is understood that persona-social counselling service programme help students develop awareness and acceptance of self and others, to help improve personal competence in survival and be responsible for their decisions, and to develop and maintain a good relationship with others. Persona-social counselling plays a vital role in reducing the emotional challenges faced by students from divorced parents. In relation to this study, the researchers looked at some emotional adjustment variables that are characteristics of children from divorced parents, such as depression, anxiety, and truancy and the effect of persona-social counselling in curbing these emotional challenges among secondary school students.

Depression refers to a mood disorder that varies from normal transient low mood in daily life to clinical syndrome with severe and significant duration with associated signs and symptoms marked differently from normalcy (APA, 2013). Depression is used to describe range of experiences from a slightly noticeable and temporary mood decrease, as well as a mild tiredness and simple sadness, to the most profound state of apathy and severe symptoms of anhedonia, depressed mood, as well as a set of correlated affective, cognitive, and somatic symptoms. It is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how one feels, the way one thinks and how one acts (The American Psychiatry Association, 2024). According to World Health Organisation (2017), depression is the fourth leading disease, and is projected to be the leading cause of the global burden of disease by the year 2030 (World Health Organization, 2019). It further stated that children cannot achieve their full potential if they are affected by emotional or mental disturbances such as divorce that hinder their success. Parental divorce is significantly related to depression among family members, especially students from such a divorced family background. Shugaba and Ahmad (2022) who found that explored personal-social guidance and counselling as an effective tool for managing and reducing depression among school students in Nigeria found that persona-social counselling as a tool significantly reduced depression among students. Ijeoma (2020) attested that depression had a significant effect on student academic performance irrespective of their gender, leading to a low performance which was accustomed to the students living under depressed conditions. Depressive tendency can actually lead to depression, if there is no intervention, which in severe cases can cause death. It is strongly believed that giving timely intervention such as persona-social counselling to students having depressive symptoms could help adjust their thinking patterns which could be fuelling the depressive tendency, and be better equipped to pursue their academic programmes, fit into the social life of the school, and solve life problems without undue stress.

Anxiety is an intense feeling of uneasiness, worry and fear. According to the American Psychological Association (APA 2019) anxiety is typically characterised by tension, anxious thoughts and physical changes. Anxiety is not the same as fear but are often interchangeably used. Anxiety is considered a future oriented, long-acting response broadly focused on a diffuse threat, whereas fear is an appropriate, present oriented and short-lived response to a clearly identifiable and specific threat or danger. Everyone experiences anxiety which involves a perception of danger, thoughts about harm, and a process of physiological alarm and activation. The accompanying behaviours display an emergency effort toward "fight or flight." The situation of threat may be mild, or catastrophic. In each case, the experience of threat or danger is individualized and unique for each person at a given

moment. The situation may look entirely safe and secure to others. For the anxious individual, however, each sensory modality goes “on alert” and focuses on the signs of possible harm. Fear and anxiety are universal human experiences that come and go in the course of life. Otakpo, Wike and John-Nelson. (2021) who investigated the effect of group counselling in reducing anxiety in students, revealed that group counselling had significant effect in reducing anxiety because it gave students opportunity to solve their problems. Kennedy (2018) also noted that persona-social counselling model, had effect on the anxiety level of college students. Parental divorce brings about anxiety in students and since anxiety as a negative emotion and has grave consequences on students’ academic performance and wellbeing in general, it is pertinent for persona-social counselling intervention to be carried out among secondary school Students to help them become aware of themselves and the way they react to behavioural influences of their environment, and to establish some personal meaning to their behaviour and development, which will, in turn, enhance effectiveness.

Truancy according to Sa’ad, Sabo and Dahuwa (2015) is defined as absent from school for no legislative reason. Absence which is unacceptable by teachers and local education authorities but recognised and practiced by such pupils who are persistently truant. It therefore, includes intentionally absenting of oneself without permission. A child who engages in truancy is called a truant. Educational Services and Attendance and Truancy (ESAT, 2016) defined a truant as a child who is absent without valid cause from school. These valid causes could be illness, observation of religious holiday, death in the family among others. Truancy can be seen as any intentional, unauthorized absence from compulsory schooling. The term typically describes absences caused by students by their own free will and usually does not refer to legitimate excuse or absence such as those related to medical conditions. According to Brenda (2014), truancy may also refer to students who attend school, but do not go to classes. Parental divorce can significantly impact on children school attendance, often leading to increase in truancy, making it difficult for them to concentrate in school. This emotional turmoil caused by divorce can reduce a child’s interest in school and academic success, leading to increased absenteeism. Anyamene, and Anyikwa (2020) in a study on individualized counselling technique, noted that counselling had significant effects on truants and consequently reduced truancy, indicating that the individualized counselling technique, led to significant effect on the remediation of truancy among students.

It will be of paramount importance to assist a child to revert from truant behaviour through counselling intervention. Persona-social counselling proffers a lasting solution to this serious educational problem for students to attain full utilization of their potentials and opportunities. Based on the forgone premise the present study is set out to investigate the effect of persona-social counselling on emotional adjustment of students from divorced parents in Benue State Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In the course of interacting with students in the environment, churches and schools visited by the researcher, the researcher was keen to know why some students behave the way they do. The researcher had cause to interact with students from divorced homes who suffer some emotional and behavioural problems ranging from depression, anxiety, low self -esteem, lack of motivation, self-withdrawal, and truancy as against students from homes that are intact. This might be traceable, to a large extent, to the observed increase in parental divorce in Benue State. Benue State between 2018 and 2024 recorded over 1,900 cases of parental divorce (Benue State Ministry of justice, 2024). The researcher was convinced that the overall prevalence of parental divorce in Benue state pose a great threat to the emotional adjustment of secondary school students within the State.

Emotional adjustment among secondary school students seems to be a phenomenon that is attracting global attention. Students from parental divorce background seem to experience more emotional stress than their counterparts from intact homes. As such, Adedayo (2019) opined that a good family structure inhabited by loving parents and characterized by cordial parent-child’s relationships, warmth, good communication, affection and problem solving generally appeared to have some resistance to children maladjustment. Parental divorce seems to contribute to an increase in emotional turmoil for the entire family, but for children the situation can be quite scary confusing and frustrating, (Morin, 2021). Students, often struggle to understand why they must go between two homes. They may worry that if their parents can stop loving one another that someday, their parents may stop loving them. Some may worry that the divorce is their fault, maybe because they misbehaved or they may assume to have done something wrong.

Students from divorced families may experience more externalizing problems, such as conduct disorders, delinquency, and impulsive behaviour than children from two-parent families. In addition to increased behavioural problems, children may also experience more conflict with peers after a divorce. There is a global awareness of the Importance of the home environment on student’s emotional state and adjustment. The environment in which a child comes from can greatly tell on his or her performance in school. Teachers commonly describe students from divorced parents to be more hostile, aggressive, anxious, fearful, hyperactive and distractive than students from intact families. Alemu (2013) stated that children from divorced parents are faced with numerous personal, social, and emotional needs and problems which if unattended to could led to a host of patterns of undesired behaviour. Hence, the need for counselling. Counselling is essential because as relational beings, students of divorced parents experience a range of emotions and have an innate desire to avoid suffering and live an abundant live which the main aim of counselling is to help improve the quality of life and wellness of an individual by exploring moods and behaviours and providing fresh perspectives and understanding of emotions. The researchers had cause to interact with students from parental divorced homes from different schools in Benue State who exhibit emotional problems such that might degenerate into depression and anxiety. It is against this backdrop that the study is aimed at examining the effect of personal social counselling on eliminating some emotional problems students from parental divorced homes in Benue State might have.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate the effect of Persona- Social counselling treatment model on emotional adjustment of students from divorced parents in Benue State. The Specific objectives are:

1. Ascertain the effect of Persona- Social Counselling on Depression of the experimental and control groups.
2. Determine the effect of Persona-Social Counselling on Anxiety of the experimental and control groups.
3. Determine the effect of persona- Social Counselling on Truancy among the experimental and control group.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study;

1. What is the mean difference between experimental and control groups on post-test measures of depression?
2. Will there be a mean difference between experimental and control groups on post-test measures of anxiety?
3. What is the mean difference between experimental and control groups on post-test measures on truancy?

Research Hypotheses

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

1. There is no significant mean difference between experimental and control groups on post-test measures of depression.
2. There is no significant mean difference between experimental and control groups on post-test measures of anxiety.
3. There is no significant mean difference between experimental and control groups on post-test measures of truancy.

METHODOLOGY

The quasi- experimental design was adopted for the study. The study area was Benue State and the population of the study consisted of 197,014 Secondary School students in Benue State. The sample size was 32 students determined using purposive sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was the researcher's structured questionnaire, titled "Personal social Counselling and Emotional Adjustment Questionnaire (PSCEAQ). The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts, two from Guidance and Counselling in the Department of Educational Foundations and one from Mathematics and Science Education all from Benue State University, Makurdi.. To ensure internal consistency of the items of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was trial tested on a smaller sample and a reliability of 0.881 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha. Instrument which take the form of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) were scored thus; SA = 4, A = 3, D = 2 and SD = 1 and the benchmark for decision making was calculated thus; $\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.50$ Thus, any item with a Mean value of 2.50 and above was considered agreed while those below 2.50 were considered disagreed" Research questions were answered using descriptive statistics measures of Mean and Standard Deviation, the inferential statistic of ANCOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance, basing decision on P-values for significant consideration.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section hinges on data presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings. The presentation follows the order of the research questions answered and hypothesis tested.

Research Question one:

What is the mean difference in depression of students from divorced homes exposed to personal social counselling and those that are not?

Table 1: The Difference in the Mean Score of Students on Depression from Divorced Parents Exposed to Persona- Social Counselling and those that are not

Items cluster	Groups	N	Type of test	Mean	Std dev.	Mean diff
Depression	Experimental	16	Pre-test	3.29	1.00	.85
			Post-test	2.44	1.02	
	Control	16	Pre-test	2.40	0.88	.06
			Post-test	2.34	1.02	
Post-test scores difference				.1		

The result from the finding showed mean rating score of 3.29 (pre-test) and 2.44 (post-test) with corresponding standard deviations of 1.00 and 1.02 respectively for the students under the experimental category. The table also revealed a mean rating score of 2.40 (pre-test) and 2.34 (post-test) with corresponding standard deviations of .88 and 1.02 respectively for the students under the control group. The table, as shown above, indicates that there exists a difference in the mean rating of responses of students in the experimental and control groups at post-test stage. As seen in the table, experimental group mean reduced by .85 while controlled group mean reduced by .06. This means that persona-social counselling had effect on depression among students from divorced parents in Benue State.

Research question two:

What is the mean difference in anxiety of students from divorced homes exposed to personal social counselling and those that are not?

To answer this research question, responses of students in both the control and experimental group under anxiety were collected. Each item was recorded with 4 points for SA, 3 points for A, 2 points for DA and 1 point SDA. The result of the analysis for this research question is tabulated as shown in table 1 below:

Table 2: The Difference in the Mean Score of Students on Anxiety from Divorced Parents Exposed to Persona-Social Counselling and those that are not

Item cluster	Groups	N	Type of test	Mean	Std dev.	Mean diff
Anxiety	Experimental	16	Pre-test	4.00	1.02	1.97
			Post-test	2.04	1.10	
	Control	16	Pre-test	2.31	1.01	.03
			Post-test	2.34	1.02	
Post-test scores difference				1.70		

The findings showed a mean rating score of 4.00 and 2.04 for the pre-test and post-test scores with corresponding standard deviations of 1.02 and 1.10 respectively for the students under the experimental category. The table also revealed a mean rating score of 2.31 and 2.34 for the pre-test and post-test scores with corresponding standard deviations of 1.01 and 1.02 respectively for the students under the control group. The result as seen above indicates a difference of 1.70 in the post test scores of the experimental and control groups. This means that Persona-Social Counselling had effect on anxiety among students from divorced parents in Benue State.

Research question three:

What is the mean difference in truancy among the experimental and control groups?

To answer this research question, responses of students in the control and experimental group under truancy were collected. The items were recorded with 4 points for SA, 3 points for A, 2 points for DA and 1 point SDA. The result of the analysis for this research question is tabulated as shown in table 3 below:

Table 3: The Difference in the Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Students on Truancy from Divorced Parents Exposed to Persona-Social Counselling and those that are not

Item cluster	Groups	N	Type of test	Mean	Std dev.	Mean diff
Truancy	Experimental	16	Pre-test	3.88	.84	2.00
			Post-test	1.88	.74	
	Control	16	Pre-test	2.30	1.11	.27
			Post-test	2.03	1.07	

Table 6 show a mean rating score of 3.88 and 1.88 for the pre-test and post-test scores with corresponding standard deviations of .84 and .74 respectively for the students under the experimental group. It also shows a mean rating score of 2.30 and 2.03 for the pre-test and post-test scores with corresponding standard deviations of 1.11 and 1.07 respectively for the students under the control group. This means that Persona-Social Counselling had effect on Truancy among students from divorced parents in Benue State.

4.2.0 Hypothesis one

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of experimental and control groups on depression in students of divorced parents in Benue State.

Table 4: ANCOVA for Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups on Depression in Students of Divorced Parents in Benue State.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	35880.82 ^a	2	17940.41	997.60	.000
Intercept	2743.20	1	2743.20	152.54	.000
Pretest	28309.51	1	28309.51	1574.19	.000
Groups	3754.83	1	3754.83	208.79	.000
Error	3560.74	29	17.98		
Total	441979.00	32			
Corrected Total	39441.56	32			

a. R Squared = .910 (Adjusted R Squared = .909) p<.05

The data presented in Table 4 shows a result of significance $F(1,95) = 208.79, P=.000$. Since .000 is less than Alpha at .05, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is a significant difference in the mean rating scores of experimental and control groups on depression in students of divorced parents in Benue State. In other words, persona- social counselling has significant effect on depression among students from divorced parents in Benue State Nigeria.

4.2.2 Hypothesis two

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental and control groups on anxiety on students of divorced parents in Benue State.

Table 5: ANCOVA for the Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups on Anxiety on Students of Divorced Parents in Benue State.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	13.95 ^a	2	6.98	.78	.001
Intercept	282.59	1	282.59	31.38	.000
Pre-test	.78	1	.78	.09	.001
Groups	13.94	1	13.94	108.55	.000
Error	855.61	29	9.01		
Total	10137.00	32			
Corrected Total	869.56	32			

a. R Squared = .016 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005) $p < .05$

The data presented in Table 5 show $F(1,95) = 108.55$, $P = .000$. Since .000 is less than Alpha at .05, the test statistics is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. It therefore follows that Persona-Social counselling has significant effect on anxiety of students from divorced parents in Benue State.

4.2.6 Hypothesis three

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of experimental and control groups on truancy in students of divorced parents in Benue State.

Table 6: ANCOVA for the Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups on Truancy in Students of Divorced Parents in Benue State.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	36780.82 ^a	2	15640.41	907.60	.000
Intercept	2743.20	1	2433.20	122.54	.000
Pretest	28309.51	1	20309.51	104.19	.000
Groups	3754.83	1	3754.83	128.09	.000
Error	3560.74	29	17.98		
Total	441979.00	32			
Corrected Total	39441.56	32			

a. R Squared = .910 (Adjusted R Squared = .909) $p < .05$

The data presented in Table 6 shows, a result of significance $F(1,95) = 128.09$, $P = .000$. Since .000 is less than Alpha at .05, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, Persona-Social Counselling has significant effect on truancy of students from divorced parents in Benue State.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings of the study the following discussions were made:

Hypothesis one revealed that Persona-social counselling has significant effect on depression of students from divorced parents in Benue State. This finding agrees with that of Shugaba and Ahmad (2022) who revealed that personal-social guidance and counselling tool significantly reduced depression among secondary school students in their study area. This could be that the usage of personal social counselling reduces negative thoughts in secondary school students in Benue State. It also, agrees with that of Ijeoma (2020) who investigated the Influence of Depression on Academic performance among secondary school students in Enugu state and concluded that there exists a significant relationship between depression and academic performance among secondary school students irrespective of gender in Enugu state with a low performance accustomed to the student living under depressed condition. Persona-Social Counselling has significant effect on the emotional support of students from divorced parents, because it provided a safe space for such students to express their feelings, which helped in easing the burden that contributed to their depressive feelings. Through counselling, students learnt from each other ways to handle depressive symptoms, which before the session was difficult for them to share their thoughts and feelings. Persona-Social Counselling also, helped the students to identify and challenge their negative thoughts, which contributed greatly to depression, as negative thoughts were replaced with more positive ones through the restructuring of thoughts. These students developed healthier perspectives of themselves which helped in reducing depression. Through Persona-Social Counselling these students gained a deeper understanding of their thoughts, behaviours and triggers of depression, thus self-awareness led to a more informed choice and sense of control over

their lives. Thus, it could be said that Persona-Social Counselling had significant effect on depression among students from divorced parents in Benue State.

Findings from hypothesis two revealed that, Persona-Social Counselling has significant effect on anxiety of students from divorced parents in Benue State. This finding is in line with that of Otakpo, Wike, and John (2021) who revealed that group counselling was significant in reducing test anxiety and gives students opportunity to solve their problems more conveniently. It also agrees with Kennedy (2018) who established Effects of Counselling on emotional state of Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. It revealed that Persona-Social counselling had significant effect on anxiety, amongst other variables of the study. This finding is significant because, Persona-Social Counselling offers immediate and long-term benefits in reducing anxiety among students from divorced parents. This helps the students to identify and also challenge irrational thoughts that significantly contributed to anxiety. These students, through counselling, were taught effective coping mechanism such as mindfulness, stress management which was geared towards helping them manage their level of anxiety effectively, living their daily lives without been anxious and afraid of the unknown. Through this, they were able to identify what triggered anxiety in their lives, understanding the underlying causes of anxiety, they learnt how to regulate their emotions. Cognitive behavioural therapy was a fundamental tool for modifying negative thoughts. It can therefore be said from the finding that there is a high reduction of anxiety in secondary school students in Benue, when exposed to personal-social counselling.

The third hypothesis revealed that, Persona-Social Counselling has significant effect on truancy of students from divorced parents in Benue State. This result agrees with that of Anyamene, and Anyikwa (2020) who showed that individual counselling techniques had significant effects on truants and consequently reduced truancy. The truants in the experimental group acquired more effective regular school behaviour. The findings show that the individualized counselling technique, led to significant effect on the remediation of truancy among students. Counselling provides a safe space for students from divorced parents to express their feelings about their parents' divorce. In that counselling includes academic support, helping students of divorce parents manage their school work better. When students feel capable academically, they are less likely to skip school. The counsellor work with students on specific behavioural interventions to address underlying issues related to truancy, such as time management, conflict resolution and stress management. Persona-Social Counselling also helps mitigate the negative effect of parental divorce including truancy. The positive result obtained by students stand to buttress the efficacy of Persona-Social Counselling in modifying truant behaviour. These benefits may have helped the students to understand the futility and danger associated with truancy. Thus, it can be said from the finding that Persona- Social counselling effectively reduces truant behaviours.

Conclusion :

Based on the findings from the study, the researcher concluded that, there is a positive effect of personal social counselling treatment model on emotional adjustment of secondary school students from divorced parents in Benue State. The effect was that when the personal social counselling therapy was applied on students from divorced parent, they tend to exhibit positive emotional adjustment.

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