**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

1. **An Overview of Student Counseling**

Student counseling help students to understand and clarify their views of their life-space, and to learn to reach their self-determined goals through meaningful, well-informed choices and through resolution or problems of an emotional or interpersonal nature. It helps all students in the areas of academic achievement; social/emotional development and career development, ensuring today's students become the productive, well-adjusted adults of tomorrow. According to (State of Connecticut State Board of Education, 2008) high-quality counseling services can have long-term effects on a student’s well-being and can prevent a student from turning to violence and drug or alcohol abuse. High-quality student counseling services can improve a student’s academic achievement. Studies on the effects of student counseling have shown positive effects on student’s grades, reducing classroom disruptions, and enhancing teacher/lecturers’ abilities to manage classroom behavior effectively. High-quality student counseling services also can help to address students’ mental health needs.

The British Association for Counseling and Psychotherapy (BACP) define student counseling as: ‘a professional activity delivered by qualified practitioners in schools’. Counselors offer troubled and/or distressed students an opportunity to talk about their difficulties, within a relationship of agreed confidentiality (Department for Education, 2016).

Student counseling is beneficial in a number of ways, for example it helps to:

1. Reduce the psychological distress that students may experience as a result of facing a range of life difficulties, such as being bullied or experiencing sadness.
2. Support students who are having difficulties within relationships, for example, with family or with friends.
3. Students who are having difficulty managing their emotions, such as anger.
   1. **History of Student Counseling in Nigeria**

The history of Student Counseling in Nigeria formally started as a result of efforts of a group of Catholic Reverend Sisters at the St. Theresa’s College, Oke-Ado, Ibadan which led to the institutionalization of guidance and counseling in Nigerian school system. The Catholic Reverend Sisters developed a career workshop for all the school’s graduating students during the 1959 academic session, especially in the area of subject selection and job search. A major outcome of the workshop was the distribution of the much needed career information that enabled 54 out of the 60 graduating students to gain full employment upon their graduation from university.

It can also be recalled that the workshop concerning guidance and counseling which was held at the comprehensive high school, Aiyetoro in 1963 where Mr. R.O. Rees delivered a paper titled “The role of the guidance counselor in a comprehensive high school“ was also an instrument to the emergence of guidance and counseling in Nigeria.

Another great instrument towards the emergence of guidance and counseling in Nigeria was the book written by Mr. C.I. Berepiki entitled, An approach to guidance in schools. This book inspired the Federal Government of Nigeria to develop a workshop on guidance and counseling in schools.

School counseling began in 1959 at St. Theresa’s College, Oke Ado in Ibadan by some Reverend Sisters, out of concern for the products of their school. These Reverend Sisters were aware of the importance of guidance and counseling services in creating job awareness to their out–going students. They invited some resource people to talk to their final year students on the type of career they may engage in as they enter into the world of works. A total of 54 out of the 60 students benefited from the resource personnel advice and were placed in various jobs. The innovation was highly welcomed by the society because in later years this group of people, though not trained counselors, organized career talks, seminars and workshops for the class five students. Afterwards, the vocational guidance services spread to other public secondary schools outsides Ibadan and across the entire Nigeria. Officials from the ministry of education became interested in these organized services that this group of career advisers were invited to provide career talks and workshop for teachers and career masters. Later, the career advisers became a national issue. As to make the Nigerian youth to meet up with the challenges of the global trend in technological advancement and by acquiring the relevant skills needed through the assistances from career counselors in school.

According to Egbochukwu, (2008) **as cited in** (Oye, Obi, Mohd & Bernicce, 2012) the aims of school guidance and counseling services, which are based on a developmental hierarchy, are to provide student, with opportunities to:

1. Develop knowledge and appreciation of themselves and others.
2. Develop relationship skills, ethical standards and a sense of responsibilities.
3. Acquire skills and attitude necessary to develop educational goals which are suited to their needs, interest and abilities.
4. Acquire information that would enable them to make decisions about life and career opportunities

To ensure that this discipline, counseling wears a national outlook, the National Policy on Education (2004) made it clear that counseling services should be rendered to students in schools (Oye, Obi, Mohd & Bernicce, 2012). The above-mentioned policy document noted that in view of the apparent ignorance of many young people about career prospects and in view of personality instability among school children, career officers and counselors will be appointed in post primary institutions (Oye, Obi, Mohd & Bernicce, 2012). The above citation gives an idea that all students in the school system should benefit from counseling services. The counseling services became widely recognized as an important aspect of educational services. It was to fulfill the Nigeria government policy and as a way of implementing the policy statement, professional counselors are posted to virtually all the post–primary schools in Nigeria. The policy provision has been encouraging but appears to run short of many processes as well as the problem of implementation. The guidance counselors are expected to render counseling services which according to Ifelunni, (1997) and Afia, (2005) **as cited in** (Oye, Obi, Mohd & Bernicce, 2012) include counseling, orientation, information appraisal, placement, referral, fellowship and evaluation. The services are not only to ensure quality in education, but also to help individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to identify opinions, explore alternatives and succeed in life. No doubt [6] noted that when counselors perform their expected duties in the school setting, then the students will be satisfied as their different academic, vocational, social and personal life aspirations are fulfilled.

It rarely exists at the elementary school level. Where there are federally funded secondary schools, there are some professionally trained school counselors. However, in many cases, there are only teachers who function as career masters/mistresses. School counselors often have teaching and other responsibilities that take time away from their school counseling tasks. The Counseling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) was formed in 1976 to promote the profession, but there is no code of ethics (Wikipedia, n.d). However, a certification/licensure board has been formed. Aluede, Adomeh, & Afen-Akpaida (2004) **as cited in** Wikipedia (n.d) discussed the overreliance on textbooks from the USA and the need for school counselors in Nigeria to take a whole-school approach and lessen the focus on individual approaches and honor the traditional African world view that values the family and community's roles in decision-making as paramount for effective decision-making in schools.

* 1. **Brief History of Benue State University**

Benue State University was established by the Benue State Government with the enactment of the Benue State University Edict No. 1 of 1991. The University took off in the 1992/93 academic year with four faculties, namely, Arts, Education, Science and Social Sciences. Two Faculties, Law and Management Sciences came on stream in the 1993/94 academic year. A post graduate school took off in the 1998/1999 academic year while the College of Health Sciences was established in the 2003/2004 academic session. The University took off Nineteen years ago during the tenure of Late Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu as Executive Governor of Benue State. Adasu, therefore became the first visitor of the University. (“Brief History - Benue State University”, n.d., para. 1)

The seventh and current visitor of the University, since May 2015, is Dr. Samuel Ortom, the current Executive Governor of Benue State. The University has also had four Chancellors so far; the Pioneer Chancellor was (Dr) T.Y. Danjuma (1994-2004) while the second was Prof. Jubril Aminu (2004 – 2009) the third was Alhaji (Dr.) Umaru Mutallab, *CON* (2010-2015). The incumbent Chancellor, HRH Justice (DR) Lawal Hassan Gummi (Rtd), *OFR*, Sarkin Mafara Gummi was installed in February, 2015. In the same vein, the University has had four Pro-Chancellors and Chairmen of Governing Council since inception, with Chief Edwin Ogbu of blessed memory as Pioneer Chairman of Council. His successors include, Prof Ochapa Onazi (1992 to 2005). Dr. Aako Ugbabe (2005 to 2008) and the incumbent, Prof. Ode Ojowu, (2008 to 2015).

The University has had four Vice-Chancellors from beginning to date with Prof Charles Gbilekaa Vajime as Pioneer Vice-Chancellor (1992 to 2000). Prof. David Ker (*OON*) became the second Vice-Chancellor from 3rd August, 2000 to 17th November, 2005 while the 3rd Vice-Chancellor, Prof Akase P. Sorkaa was appointed on 8th November, 2005. His tenure ended on 3rd November, 2010 after which Prof. Charity A. Angya took over on 4th November, 2010 as the fourth and first female Vice- Chancellor of the Institution. Her tenure however also ended on the 2nd of November, 2015 following which the current Vice Chancellor; Prof Moses Msugh Kembe took over on the 3rd of November, 2015 and still holds the position till date. (“Brief History - Benue State University”, n.d., para. 2-3)

* 1. **Student Counseling in Benue State University**

Student counseling in the University is done through the Counseling Unit of the Student Affairs Division. The university has a resident Counseling psychologist attached to the counseling unit which is directly under the Student Affairs Division for the purpose of counseling the different categories of persons who come to seek knowledge in different fields in the University and have problems which they need to solve.

The resident psychologist renders these counseling services to students in conjunction with other trained guidance counselors who are employed by the university for this purpose. The counseling unit occasionally organizes conferences and seminars aimed at encouraging students to contact the counselors whenever they have problems which they cannot resolve on their own. It is important to note here that despite the occasional conferences and seminars organized by the counseling unit, only few students go to the counseling unit for counseling because most students consider counseling as ‘waste of time’ and some are due to shyness.

* + 1. **Processes Involved in Student Counseling**

The counseling process is a planned, structured dialogue between a counselor and a client (Student). It is a cooperative process in which a trained professional helps a person called client to identify source of difficulties or concerns that he or she is experiencing. Together they develop ways to deal with and overcome these problems so that person has new skills and increased understanding of themselves and others.

Counseling comprises the following processes:

1. The Initial Phase,
2. The Working Phase,
3. The Termination Phase
4. The Follow-up Phase
   * 1. **The Initial Phase**

The initial phase is the same thing as preparatory or preparation stage. Essentially it involves all the activities during the first meeting between the Counselor and the client. This phase is important because it is at this stage that the client presents the problem, which necessitated the counseling encounter. An important factor or an essential ingredient in the stage is the readiness of the client to want to present his/her problem. Similarly, the nature of the problem and the client’s personality are important for the initial phase to take place. Sometimes in order to facilitate a quick takeoff in this phase, the Counselor may start by welcoming the client and introduce each other. He/she will then find out why the client is interested in seeing him/her.

The initial phase is strictly for familiarization, problem presentation and awareness of the existence of the problem by the counselor and the client. It is not the stage where problem is discussed or solved.

* + 1. **The Working Phase**

Immediately after the initial phase during which counseling relationship has been established with an understanding that a problem to be discussed is in existence, then follows the working phase. The working phase is the problem discussion stage. In this  
phase, the counselor assists the client to work through their feelings as they discuss their concern. Here, good techniques and professional skills must be used by the Counselor as the client works through his/her problem to enable them gain better insights into them.

In this phase, the client should be able to gain better insight into his problem, understand various and alternative course of actions to be taken and take positive actions to solve his problems. Both the client and the counselor may have an assignment to carryout in respect of the problem being discussed before the next phase. For example, the assignment may be to visit the parent, an industry, employment agency, an examination office or the teacher handling a particular subject that is constituting a problem for the client. Each person is however expected to give a feedback during the next session. The essence of the given assignments is to gather sufficient information or data that will enhance smooth transition into the next phase and ensure that a sound bases for the next stage is created.

* + 1. **The Termination Phase**

The termination stage marks the end of counseling process. This stage is necessitated:

1. When client’s problem have been successfully discussed and resolve;
2. When client has been referred to another professional counselor; and
3. Due to client’s lack of apparent problems.
   * 1. **Follow-Up Phase**

This is about the last stage in the Counseling process. The Counselor must have told the client during termination stage to keep in touch with him. Specifically, follow-up phase is a counseling activity in which the counselor finds out whether the acquired behavior by the client during the counseling session is maintained or not and whether the client has been able to solve his problem or not. As follow-up, the counselor can visit the client to have dialogue on how his new behavior has been maintained or has been helpful in his adjustment process. Peradventure there is no improvement observed in the client, reassessment of the problem can be done through exploration and new goals mapped out as they both go over through the counseling process all over again.