

APPRAISING EQUITY INFUSION OF PSYCHO SOCIAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES (PSS)
INTO SCHOOL CURRICULUM IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study appraised equity infusion of psycho social support activities (pss) into school curriculum in Borno state, Nigeria. Schools in Borno state are target of Boko Haram, schools are burnt, closed down, and insecure for effective teaching and learning. Teachers and pupils are traumatized and school curriculum is for peaceful environment. The objectives of this study are to appraise the level of equity infusion of psychosocial support activities into school curriculum in Borno state and to determine gender difference in the infusion of PSS activities into the school curriculum in Borno state, Nigeria. Two research questions were answered and one null hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study was all the trained teachers in PSS activities in Borno state, Nigeria. The instrument for the study titled “Appraising Equity Infusion of Psycho Social Support Activities in School Curriculum Questionnaire” (AEIPSSASCQ) was used for data collection. The population for the study was all the 2959 primary school teachers that were trained in PSS infusion in Borno state. A random sample of 300 teachers male and female was selected. Data collected was analysed using rank order for research question one and simple percentage for research question two. While mean and standard deviation were used to test the hypothesis. The results showed that the level of PSS infusion into the school curriculum is average and above average in pupils’ participation in the PSS activities. It was concluded that level of equity infusion of PSS activities into the school curriculum is average and above average in pupils’ participation in the PSS activities.

Keywords: Appraising, Equity, Infusion, Psycho Social Support, School and Curriculum.

Introduction

Infusion is the process of seamlessly integrating pressing curriculum contents with psycho social support activities (PSS) in schools. Curriculum infusion of Psycho Social Support activities (PSS) issues in the education system of vulnerable region at this time necessitates an add-on to the teacher preparation. However, as you will see, in this study, the integrity of the curriculum is maintained, if not enhanced by integrating content that is of particular benefit to students whether they intend to do their educational development in normal or crisis area, mixed or single school settings to ensure equity. Such as subject taught, methods and school environments should be made secured and friendly for learners' disregards of gender to enhance equity.

“The term *psychosocial* underscores the close connection between psychological aspects of experience (e.g., our thoughts, emotions, and behaviour) and our wider social experience (e.g., our relationships, traditions and culture). Mental disorders, which often benefit from clinical treatment, tend to involve severe psychosocial difficulties in managing thoughts and feelings, maintaining relationships, and functioning in expected social roles. However, many psychosocial problems do not require clinical treatment but are rooted in stigmatisation, lost hope, chronic poverty, uprooting, inability to meet basic needs, and inability to fill normal social roles such as that of student/learner.”(UNICEF, 2015), Schools in Borno state were burnt down and teachers and pupils were traumatized as a result. The insurgency has among school children exhibited rapid heartbeat, feeling of dread, feeling of terror, feeling of panic and irrational fear of noise resulting to psycho social problems (Musa & Nwachukwu, 2014). The school children throughout the region were exposed to heavy frightening sounds of explosives and gun shots, fear of kidnap, attack, and abduction. A school can be described as either safe or unsafe, Barton

(2009) holds that a school is said to be safe if students do not encounter any negative circumstances at school, in school garden and the surrounding. Psychological well being is a general sense of emotional health as evidence by high self esteem and positive relationship among students and teachers (Baginsky, 2003). It has been observed that permanent damage has been done to the education system in such region with innocent students being mercilessly murdered and abducted on a regular basis (Shuaibu, 2013). For instance the abduction of 250 girls from a girls' school in Chibok, Borno state is typical example. Also Karbalai (2005) noted that experienced and professionally qualified teachers, especially women could be in short supply in insecure areas and this could result to lack of female teachers which could keep girls, especially older girls from the business of school. UNICEF (2006) was to build a world whereby every child grows up healthy and protected from any form of harm and have equal right to education and attend full potentials for societal and educational development. Also, UNESCO (2007) place more emphasis on renewing, intensified focus on equity education, encourage involvement of both male and female in any positive progress and development including education.

The threat of Boko Haram against security of schools and community consequently promised on the belief that infusing psycho social support activities into the curriculum and community development in basic education will be productive and necessary. To help the teachers and pupils in the affected schools return to normalcy after the liberation of their areas by the Nigerian Army, United Nation International Children Education Fund (UNICEF, 2012) in collaboration with State Primary Education Board (SUBEB) embarked on awareness campaign workshops in Psycho-Social Support activities to teachers. The PSS activities were meant to equip teachers with both methodology and skills that can be applied in certain subjects to bring

healing opportunities into the traumatic pupils. Teachers from the affected areas were trained by master teachers in batches with the aim of reaching out to all teachers. The PSS activities were developed for infusion into the curriculum for pupils to feel motivated, recognized, successful and stimulated. UNICEF (2015) Pointed that PSS activities are aimed to raise, build and develop pupils capacity for:- self awareness, identity, self respect, self esteem and owner peace, a sense of belonging with group and comforting communities, a sense of wonder, hope and future thing, a sense of inclusion, participation and cooperation, awareness of child protection and trust resilience and preparedness. Also Hobfoll, Watson, Bell, Bryant, Brymar and Fredman (2007) identified five empirically supported components in crisis management, which include promoting a sense of safety, calming, self esteem, community efficacy, connectedness and hope. The activities when infused must meet the development of a specific individual through curriculum and community development in the basic education.

The PSS activities by UNICEF (2012) are eight and they are: 1,“Willow in the wind, 2,Elephant game, 3. Colour talk, 4. Baboon game, 5. Bounce back, 6. Why writing my name matters, 7. Cooperative square and 8. Time chairs, “The objectives of the activities were to revive the pupils from the trauma of Boko Haram and be able to continue with education which is seen as an instrument of development of any community or society.

The aims of PSS activities are; A) to create a culture of empowerment and positive change in teaching and learning, B) to heal, recover and build resilience and trust throughout the school population during situations of high insecurity and C) to promote social cohesion and inclusion.

Also, PSS activities are developed, adapted and contextualized based on child friendly

approaches and are participatory and child centered. Through an energetic and dynamic participation, play, experimentation and socialization the objectives of PSS activities aim to raise, build and develop students' capacities for:

1. self-awareness, identity, self-respect, self-esteem and inner peace.
2. a sense of belonging within groups and comforting communities.
3. a sense of wonder, hope and futures thinking.
4. a sense of inclusion, participation and cooperation .
5. awareness of child protection.
6. trust, resilience and preparedness.

The content of each PSS activity were carefully selected to meet Basic Psychosocial Needs of Children: To feel loved , To feel listened to, To feel understood , To feel appreciated , To feel physically safe ,To feel emotionally safe ,To have a sense of self-worth ,To have a sense of meaning ,To have a sense of hope ,To trust and be trusted, To feel connected to a learning community , To have a sense of belonging to and being accepted by a group ,To feel competent, To feel some control over the environment, and To be able to exercise self-control for positive self development.

Statement of the Problem

In Borno state there are cases of kidnapping, killing of people, teachers, students'. Bombing of social centers, schools, market place and business centers by the Boko Haram terrorists. This threatens the security situation in the state. How many children will like to go to school and benefit in such environment and how many parents too would encourage their children or wards to go to school for educational development in such volatile environment?

What type of learning can actually take place for educational development and productivity? The teachers and students together with the general public are traumatized and the school curriculum is for normal and secured environment. The problem of this study is therefore to appraise equity infusion of Psycho Social Support activities into school curriculum in Borno state.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to appraise:

1. level of equity infusion of psychosocial support activities into school curriculum in Borno state
1. What are different types of PSS activities infused into core basic education subjects in Borno State?

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered:

1. What is the level of equity infusion of Psycho Social Support activities into school curriculum in Borno state?
2. What are different types of PSS activities infused into core basic education subjects in Borno State?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant gender difference in equity infusion of psychosocial support activities into school curriculum in Borno state.

Methodology

The study employed the use of descriptive survey design. The schools that were involved in the study are Universal Basic Education Primary Schools under the programme of European Community Organisation (ECO) and Safe Schools Initiative (SSI) of UNICEF in Borno state, Nigeria. The population for the study were all the 2959 primary school teachers that were trained in PSS infusion by SUBEB in Collaboration with UNICEF in Borno state. A random sample of 300 teachers male and female was selected. The instrument for the study is titled “Appraising Equity Infusion of Psycho Social Support Activities in School Curriculum Questionnaire” (AEIPSSASCQ) was used for data collection. The questionnaire had only three sections. Section A contained the respondents Bio data, Section B contained items on equity infusion of the eight PSS activities into primary education curriculum (subjects) and Section C five items information on equity gender infusion relevant for eliciting responses to the research questions. The item statements for the instrument were generated out of the researchers experience and those of their colleagues on what mostly constitute infusion of PSS activities into Curriculum of basic education in Primary schools. All items on section B and C were scored based on Likert type scale responses starting from Strongly Agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2 to Strong Disagree=1. This was validated by experts in Curriculum and, Guidance and Counselling in Yobe State University, Damaturu. The experts were asked to evaluate the equity infusion of PSS activities into school curriculum and relevance of the items to the research questions and their contributions added to the final production of the instrument. The reliability coefficient of .82 was obtained which shows that the items were reliable and measured the internal consistency of the instrument.

Results

1. What is the level of equity infusion of psychosocial support activities into school curriculum in Borno state?

Table 1: Level of PSS activities equity infusion into school curriculum in Borno state(N=300)

S/NO	ITEMS	STRONGLY AGREE (%)	AGREE (%)	DISAGREE (%)	STRONGLY DISAGREE(%)	TOTAL
1.	Infused PSS activities into my lesson plan	150(50)	132(44)	15(5)	3(1)	300(100)
2.	PSS activities are infused into lesson delivery	156(52)	135(45)	9(3)	0(0)	300(100)
3.	PSS activities are infused in subject I teach	135(45)	150(50)	15(5)	0(0)	300(100)
4.	Pupils enjoy PSS activities in my class	180(60)	120(40)	0(0)	0(0)	300(100)
5.	Pupils level of participation in PSS activities are Satisfactory	210(70)	90(30)	0(0)	0(0)	300(100)

Table 1 revealed that 50% of teachers ensure equity infused PSS activities into the emergency education curriculum, 52% of teachers infused PSS activities into the lesson delivery, 50% of teachers teach their subject with PSS activities. Also 60% of Pupils enjoyed PSS activities and 70% of the pupils showed satisfactory level of participation. The level of PSS infusion into the school curriculum is average and above average in pupils' participation in the PSS activities.

2. What are different types of PSS activities infused into the core basic education subjects in Borno State?

Table 2: Different types of PSS activities infused into core basic school subjects in Borno state

S/NO	PSS ACTIVITIES INFUSED INTO CURRICULUM	ENG%	MATH%	PHE%	SOS%	B.SCI%	C.EDU%
1.	Why writing your name matters	65	60	75	80	65	70
2.	Colour talk	60	65	70	75	70	57
3.	Willow in the wind	70	55	70	67	50	60
4.	Co operative square	60	85	60	75	80	75
5.	Balloon game	55	75	80	75	75	80
6.	Elephant game	60	70	85	60	70	75
7.	Time chair	65	75	75	70	75	80
8.	Bounce back	65	70	70	70	65	80

Table 2 showed different types of PSS activities infused into core basic school (subjects) curriculum SOS 80% infusion of Why writing your name matters, 75% Colour talk in SOS, 70% Willow in the wind into ENG and PHE, 85% Co operative square into MATH, 80% Balloon game into C EDU and PHE, 85% Elephant game into PHE, 80% Time chair and 80% Bounce back activities into C EDU basic education

H₀₁: There is no significant gender difference in equity infusion of psychosocial support activities into school curriculum in Borno state.

Table3: Teachers gender differences in equity infusion of PSS into the school curriculum

Gender	N	X	S ²	Df	t-cal.	t-crit.
Male	150	37.93	154.83	298	0.827	1.860
Female	150	36.40	72.32			

Table 3 revealed that the calculated t (0.827) is less than the critical t (1.860) for degree of freedom (df) = 298 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore retained and concluded that there is no significant gender difference in the mean score of the respondents according to gender on trained teachers' infusion of PSS activities into the school curriculum.

Discussion

In the study, two research questions were answered and one null hypothesis tested. The result from first research question which sought to find out the level of equity infusion of psychosocial support activities into school curriculum in Borno state. The findings revealed that 50% of teachers infused PSS activities into the Basic education curriculum, 52% of teachers infused PSS activities into the lesson delivery, 50% of teachers teach their subject infusing PSS activities, and also 60% of Pupils enjoyed PSS activities and 70% of the pupils showed satisfactory level of participation. The level of PSS infusion into the school curriculum is average and above average in pupils' participation in the PSS activities. This result corroborates the finding of Hobfoll, Watson, Bell, Bryant, Brymar and Fredman (2007) who identified five empirically supported components in crisis management, which include promoting a sense of safety, calming, self esteem, community efficacy, connectedness and hope. The activities when infused shall meet the development of a specific individual through curriculum and community development in the basic education.

The result of the second research question showed that different types of PSS activities equity infused into core basic school (subjects) curriculum with SOS 80% infusion of Why writing your name matters, 75% Colour talk in SOS, 70% infusion of Willow in the wind into ENG and PHE, 85% Co operative square infusion into MATH, 80% Balloon game infusion into C EDU and PHE, 85% Elephant game into PHE, 80% Time chair and 80% Bounce back activities into C EDU basic education. This consistent with UNESCO (2007) who place more emphasis on renewing, intensified focus on equity education, encourage involvement of both male and female in any positive progress and development including education.

The hypothesis tested revealed that no significant gender difference in equity infusion of psychosocial support activities into school curriculum in Borno state. Therefore the null hypothesis is retained. This is supported by UNESCO (2007) who emphasized more emphasis on renewing, intensified focus on equity education, encourage involvement of both male and female in any positive progress and development including education.

Conclusion

The study concluded that level of equity infusion of PSS activities into the school curriculum is average and above average in pupils' participation in the PSS activities and different types of PSS activities were infused into core basic school (subjects) curriculum. Also, there is no significant gender difference in equity infusion of psychosocial support activities into school curriculum in Borno state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers made the following recommendations:

1. There should be general infusion of PSS activities in all levels of education.
2. Infusion of PSS activities should be encourage and monitored all level of education.
3. Government should provide means of providing Knowledge to teachers on the infusion of PSS activities.

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