

# EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITH COUNSELLING SERVICES

By

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## **Abstract**

The study evaluated the performance of senior secondary three (SSIII) students' in their first term and Second Term Examinations as well as their WAEC Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations. The purpose was to find out whether or not students improve at every examination in schools with counsellors who provide academic counselling service to students. A total of 30 students were randomly selected through cluster random sampling technique. Students' scores and grades in the various examinations were collected from the school academic record for analysis. Percentage was used to analyze the performance of students. The result showed that students improved in every examination. It revealed the effect of academic counselling on students in schools with counsellors. Recommendations were made on regular evaluation and counselling in schools to improve the performance of students at every examination.

**Keywords:** Evaluation, Education, Academic performance, Counselling services.

## **Introduction**

Educational institutions in Nigeria need evaluation and counselling to guide students achieve excellent academic performance. Evaluation implies objective judgment about students' performance by identifying those who pass and fail in any examination. Counselling is then needed to guide the students particularly those who failed in school subjects. The counsellor as a professional can judge students' performances and provide counselling for excellent academic performance, it should be noted that as a result of students' poor performances in examination and lack of adequate knowledge of career prospects, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1981, 1998 & 2004) in its National Policy on Education recommended evaluation and counselling for schools. This requires that

senior secondary school students should be continuously assessed and decision made on their performances in the chosen subjects. The school counsellor counsels the students who have academic problems. When students are evaluated, the use of pass or fail may be used to describe their academic performances. The school counsellor is required to counsel those who failed in every examination and guide those who passed to improve or maintain their performance. Indeed, students who failed need academic counselling more either on individual or group basis. Evaluation is very important for educational decisions. It is a judgment or decision derived objectively from analyzed data (Osadebe, 2008). It is a derived statement of fact such as: pass, fail,

promoted, good, poor, satisfactory among others. It involves the use of qualitative and quantitative data. Evaluation is a human activity usually carried out to ascertain the worth, value or credibility of action, operation, or programme (Oluwatayo, 2004).

Studies of Gronlund (1985), Okpala, Onocha and Oyedeji (1993) showed that evaluation requires gathering of valid information on attainment of educational objectives, analyzing and using the information to aid judgment on effectiveness of an educational programme. Evaluation may focus on judgment on students' performance or the extent to which the objectives of educational programme are being achieved. It has been noted that evaluation of educational programmes is useful in guidance and counselling (Gronlund, 1985; Osadebe, 2008). There are four types of evaluation commonly used in schools. These include placement, formative, diagnostic and summative.

Similarly, there are different types of evaluation model. These include: goal-attainment model, judgmental model emphasizing intrinsic criteria, judgmental model emphasizing extrinsic criteria and decision facilitation model (Popham, 1975 Osadebe. 2005) The model suitable for this study is the (decision facilitation model. It allows counsellor to make judgment on students' performances.

Counselling requires evaluation to help students achieve excellent academic performance. Counselling is a service of guidance that every student needs. There

are so many definitions about counselling aimed at making it more understandable and meaningful. In one aspect of the definition, Okobiah and Okorodudu (2004, p. 30) defined counselling "as a process of aiding normal people to achieve higher level adjustment, skills which manifest themselves as increased maturity so as to be meaningfully integrated into the society and become, more responsible citizen". Counselling has also been defined as a relationship in which a trained counsellor helps an individual to understand and solve his or her problems (Oladele, 1987). In their own view, Shertzer and Stone (1974) pointed out that counselling denotes a wide range of procedures including encouragement, information giving and test interpretation. There are three main areas a counsellor can function to counsel students, as observed by Esere (2002). These include academic, vocational and personal-social. However, this study focuses on academic counselling. It helps the counsellor to monitor students' academic performance at regular intervals (Counselling Association of Nigeria, 2003).

Therefore, the study evaluated the performance of SS3 students after first term, second term and WAEC examinations. The study helped to find out how students performed after every examination in schools with guidance counsellors. The school counsellors are expected to provide academic counselling, which will help students to improve performance.

Hence, the following questions guided the study:

1. What was the performance of students in the first term examination?
2. What was the performance of students in the second term examination?
3. What was the performance of students in West African Examination Council (WAEC) senior secondary certificate examination?

### **Method**

A senior secondary school out of the three with counsellors in the area of study was randomly selected using the simple

random sampling of balloting. Using the cluster random sampling technique, all the 30 students in the school selected were used for the study. The researcher visited the sampled school where the students' scores from the academic records were obtained on the first term and second term examinations as well as WAEC senior secondary certificate examinations, 2017. Students' test scores in the school assessment records were obtained. The data obtained were analyzed with the use of percentage

### **Results**

The data collected were analyzed in line with the three research questions.

**Research Questions I:** What was the performance of students in the first term examination?

**Table 1: Percentage Analysis of SS3 students' performance on each subject in first Term Examination**

S/N	Subject	No pass	No Fail	% Pass	% Fail	Rank
1.	English Language	25	5	83	17	7
2.	Mathematics	23	7	77	23	9
3.	Biology	26	4	89	11	6
4.	Chemistry	24	6	80	20	8
5.	Physics	22	8	73	27	10
6.	Religious Studies	28	2	93	7	4
7.	Agricultural Science	28	2	93	7	4
8.	Economics	29	1	97	3	1
9.	Government	27	3	90	10	1
10.	Fine arts	29	1	97	3	1

Table I above reveals the percentage pass and fail of students in each subject. It was observed that at least a student failed each subject. The students who failed required

immediate counselling attention. The ranking shows that students performed best in Economics and Fine Art while the least performance was in Physics.

**Research Question 2:** What was the performance of students in the second term examination?

**Table 11: Percentage Analysis of SS3 students' performance on each subject in second term examination**

S/N	Subject	No pass	No Fail	% Pass	% Fail	Rank
1	English Language	28	2	93	7	7
2.	Mathematics	27	3	90	10	10
3.	Biology	30	0	100	0	1
4.	Chemistry	29	1	97	3	6
5.	Physics	28	2	93	7	7
6.	Religious Studies	30	0	100	0	1
7.	Agricultural Science	28	2	93	7	7
8.	Economics	30	0	100	0	1
9.	Government	30	0	1 00	0	1
10.	Fine Art	30	0	100	0	1

Table II showed more percentage passes than failure of students. There is an improvement when compared to the first

term result. It appears to be the effect of counseling. The students who failed still need counseling attention.

**Research Question 3:** What was the performance of students in the West African examination council?

**Table III: Performance of SS 3 students at senior secondary certificate examination.**

S/N	SUBJECT	PERFORMANCE									TOTAL
		A1	B2	B3	C4	C5	C6	D7	E8	F9	
1	English Language	-	-	1	2	10	17	-	-	-	30
2.	Mathematics	1	-	1	5	10	13	-	-	-	30
3.	Biology	-	-	3	10	7	10	-	-	-	30
4.	Chemistry	1	-	2	3	16	9	-	-	-	30
5.	Physics	1	-	2	5	14	8	-	-	-	30
6.	Religious Studies	-	-	23		12	10	3	-		-
7.	Agricultural Science	-	I	-	4	13	10	2	-	-	30
8.	Economics	2	-	3	5	2	19	-	-	-	30
9.	Government	1	-	-	6	10	13	-	-	-	30
10.	Fine Art	1	-	- 5	5	1 0	13	1	-	-	30
	Total	7	1	14	48	103	121	6	-	-	300
	Percentage	2.3	0.3	4.7	16	34.3	40.3	2	0	0	

From table III above A1 to E8 represent pass while F9 is fail, The table showed that no student failed any subject. All the students passed. It is an excellent performance for students and the school due to regular academic counselling.

### Discussion

The result showed that SSIII students improved at every examination in schools with regular evaluation and academic counselling. Gronlund (1985) has pointed out that evaluation is useful for guidance and counselling decisions. It helps to determine counselling objectives.

Evaluation is used as judgment to describe students who pass or fail (Osadebe, 2008).

The SSCE result of students is an improvement because academic counselling was provided to the students on regular basis. This is in line with the recommendation of Counselling Association of Nigeria (2003). Other factors that should be taken care of during counselling include study habit and personal reading timetable of students. This was remarked by Esere (2002) that academic counselling is concerned with effective study habit and achieving high grades. Counsellors are expected to provide individual and group counselling. These help to improve students' performances. This supported the observation of Idowu as cited in Esere (2002) that the use of group and individual counselling help to solve students educational problems. Moreover, the improved academic performance of students may have been influenced by the cooperative effort of the principal and staff with the counsellor. It has been pointed out that the success of any school guidance programme depends on the cooperation of head of schools, teachers, students and other personnel with the counsellor (Shertzer & Stone, 1976; Oladele, 1987).

### **Conclusion**

The performance of SSIII students in first term and second term examinations as well as West African Examination Council (WAEC) senior secondary certificate examination in school with guidance counsellors has been evaluated. It was observed that students improve in every examination. It appears to be the effect of

academic counselling on the students in the schools with counsellors. Therefore, it is necessary that continuous evaluation and academic counselling should be provided for the students.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made following the results of the study:

1. The performance of students in every examination should be evaluated.
2. Counsellors should regularly counsel students who fail any examination, and guide those who pass to maintain or improve their performances.
3. Educational guidance/careers day that 'will require teachers, resource persons and others to speak on the importance of the various school subjects and how to pass them in relation to their proposed careers should be organized for students.
4. Counsellors should work cooperatively with the head of school, teachers and other staff to achieve excellent academic performance for both students and the school.
5. There should be at least a counsellor in every school to help achieve excellent academic performance.
6. Students should be guided to prepare personal reading timetables to encourage good study habit needed to achieve excellent academic performance.

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