

**INFLUENCE OF COUNSELLING SERVICES ON THE ADJUSTMENT AND
ADAPTATION OF FIRST YEAR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE FACULTY
OF EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
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EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION AND COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY, FACULTY OF
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CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that they research work was carried out by Atinuke Faith OLUMORIN with Matriculation Number: EDU2203345 in the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University Of Benin, Benin City in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Award of Bachelor of Science Degree (B.Sc. Ed) in Guidance and Counselling

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DEDICATION

This work is wholeheartedly dedicated to Almighty God, whose grace, love, wisdom, and guidance have sustained me throughout the course of this study.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the Influence of Counselling Services on the Adjustment and Adaptation of First Year Undergraduate Students in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin. Four research questions were raised one was hypothesized.

The study employed survey research design. The population of the Study consists of first year undergraduate in faculty of education university of Benin. The sample was drawn using purposive sampling selection in order to select students from different faculties in the university of Benin. 10 students each, from in the Department in the Faculty of Education were used making a total of 150 were used for the research. There were 3 sections in the questionnaire, Section A contained the respondents demography and bio-data, Section B gathered data on respondents prior counselling experience, Section C the effects of counselling on first year students adjustment and adaptation. The instrument was validated by my project supervisor and two other lecturers in the Department Of Educational evaluation and counselling psychology.

The findings of this study revealed that first year undergraduate students in the university in the university of Benin have a positive attitude toward counselling, and that counselling is highly effective for first year undergraduate students in the university adjustment and adaptation in the university of Benin.

The study recommended that counselling should be enhanced, there should be diverse counselling programmes, there should be a gender-neutral approach, there should be room for student feedback in the university of Benin.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of The Study

The transition from secondary school to university can be challenging for first-year undergraduate students. For many, it marks the first time they are living away from home, the first time they are responsible for managing their own schedules, and the first time they are exposed to the demands of higher education. These new experiences can lead to feelings of anxiety, stress, and uncertainty as they adjust to their new environment. High school students who have graduated and become first-year students will go through a transition period where new students must adjust to the academic demands of college, develop study habits, and adjust learning strategies in a new learning environment. In their statement, [mentioned that adaptation in campus life is significant as an experience and reflection to become a successful member of society because when students adapt well on campus, they have fulfilled their duties and responsibilities.

More specifically, student academic adjustment in University as an individual's ability to manage social, psychological, and scientific challenges when experiencing the transition to college life adaptation refers to the interaction of students with their environment, including student achievement and personal growth. Academic adjustment is crucial when students face campus life changes, demands, or conflicts This is because students' academic adaptation is complex, not only limited to adaptation in lectures, but also social, personal, emotional, and

adaptation to institutions; especially in the transition to college, students often question their relationships, life goals, and self-esteem.

Students' adjustment to the university environment is critical in predicting outcomes and essential for future achievements. A necessary period in the adjustment process is seen from the first six weeks of the initial semester. During this period, students will encounter various new situations, such as the lecture system, learning methods different from high school, more difficult lecture materials, friends from different regions, and a new living environment. The university education system can be confusing for new students, and this confusion becomes even more significant when students come from different languages and diverse cultural backgrounds.

In lectures, students are required to understand and master lecture material, be able to think critically, and analyze through assignments, practicums, exams, presentations, and so on. Revealed several problems that are often faced by new students, namely difficulties in understanding the material, nervousness during presentations, and inability to perform optimally [Researched first-year students at Al-Azhar University Indonesia and found that 44,7% of students still have difficulty adapting to the environment and demands of higher education [

The same thing was stated by in their research, stating that around one in three new students reported experiencing mental health problems in their first year, both related to internal and external problems. Furthermore, the study also revealed students with external problems, namely low academic achievement. The same thing was also revealed by that the complex demands of

higher education put students at high risk of experiencing emotional problems, difficulty building social relationships, low academic achievement, loss of motivation, and failure to complete their studies.

The environmental changes that new students in college must face will shape their perceptions, especially regarding their ability to overcome various obstacles and challenges in their university life Nugraheni. Students' inability to adjust can hinder the learning process and completion of studies. Students who fail to adjust risk experiencing academic stress This happens because students are less able to adapt to the academic demands and education system in higher education, causing many students to feel depressed. In addition, the desire not to continue or resign from the recovery is one of the effects of students' inability to adjust. This could be related to the academic environment or social environment.

Based on the description above, it is known that adjustment is an essential factor for students facing the college transition period. Studies on adjustment have also been carried out before. However, considering the impact that significantly affects student life, especially in terms of academics, it is necessary to conduct a theoretical study of the factors that influence and the measurements used to determine the academic adjustment of first-year students.

As with many universities and higher educational institutions, the existence of first-year student adjustment problems at the University of Benin (UNIBEN) is a common and well-recognized phenomenon. The transition from high school or other educational backgrounds to a university environment can be a significant life change for many students, and it often comes with various

challenges and adjustment issues. Some common adjustment problems experienced by first-year students at University of Benin, Benin city may include academic challenges, cultural and environmental differences, navigating campus resources, balancing extra co-rricular activities amongst many others.

The University of Benin, is a renowned institution of higher learning located in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. Established in 1970, University of Benin, Benin city has a rich history of contributing to the advancement of education and knowledge in Nigeria. The university was one of the first-generation federal universities created by the Nigerian government to address the increasing demand for higher education in the country.

University of Benin, Benin city was founded with a vision to foster academic excellence, promote research and innovation, and produce well-rounded graduates who would contribute significantly to the nation's development. The university's establishment marked a milestone in Nigeria's education sector, providing opportunities for thousands of young Nigerians to pursue tertiary education.

In its early years, University of Benin, Benin city began with a modest number of faculties and academic programs. However, the university quickly expanded, adding new faculties and courses to cater to a diverse range of academic interests and career aspirations. As the demand for quality education grew, University of Benin, emerged as a leading institution in Nigeria, attracting students from various parts of the country and beyond.

Over the years, University of Benin, has achieved numerous milestones and received recognition for its contributions to education, research, and community development. The university has

produced notable alumni who have excelled in various fields, including academia, politics, business, and the arts.

Recognizing the importance of providing holistic support to students, University of Benin, Benin city has continuously invested in various support services and programs. These initiatives are designed to enhance students' overall academic experience, personal development, and well-being.

Given the university's commitment to student support and development, it becomes essential to explore the effects of counselling on the adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students at University of Benin, This study aims to understand the role of counseling in helping students navigate the challenges of transitioning into university life, fostering successful adaptation, and promoting overall well-being.

First year undergraduate student often face various challenges as they adjust to the new academic environment in the university. These challenges can be academic, social, or personal and may lead to poor adaptation and adjustment which can negatively impact their academic performance and overall well-being (Wikipedia, 2023).

Counselling has been identified as an effective tool for addressing these challenges and helping undergraduate students adjust to the university life ,counselling can have appositve effects on the adjustment and adaptation of first year undergraduate students in the university. This is because Counselling can provide students with support and coping strategies for managing stress and anxiety related to academic performance and life transitions. It can also help students

develop a better understanding of their values, interests, and goals, which can lead to increased motivation and engagement in their studies (Wikipedia, 2023).

Additionally, counselling can help students build social skills, establish healthy relationships with peers and faculty, and enhance their self-esteem and confidence. By addressing these issues early on, counselling can set students up for success in their academic and personal lives.

The University of Benin, is a highly competitive institution, and the adjustment process for freshmen students can be particularly challenging. The pressure to succeed academically, establish social networks, and maintain a healthy lifestyle can cause stress and anxiety, which can negatively affect the students' overall well-being and academic performance. Counselling services have been identified as a useful resource to help students cope with these challenges and improve their adjustment and adaptation.

Studies have shown that counselling services can improve students' mental and emotional wellbeing, enhance their academic performance, and facilitate their social integration into university life (Wang, 2010; Pieterse et al., 2016). However, accessing counselling services can be challenging for some students due to factors such as stigma, lack of awareness, and limited availability (Chung and Bemak, 2016; Reinke and Eddy, 2019). As a result, research focusing on the relationship between counselling services and the adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students is essential in informing the development and improvement of counselling services in universities.

Statement of the Problem

Attending university is supposed to be a very appealing experience that could give satisfaction to students. Unfortunately, not all students make the transition from secondary schools to university smoothly. A study conducted by Tinto (2010) showed that 40% of all students in America who started out in a four year college failed to earn a degree, and nearly 57% of all dropouts left before the start of their second year.

In Nigeria, there is lack of statistics on students drop out rate. However, this does not preclude the existence of similar situation. Adegroye, Ayodele and Babatunde 2019 description of the social life in the university such as violence, cultism, decline in ethical and moral values questions the student's ability to adjust. Moreover, the change from teaching to lecturing and the self regulatory form of learning in the university setting may be an added factor to these students inability to adjust academically.

The adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students to university life can have a significant impact on their academic and personal success. Without adequate support, many students can become overwhelmed, leading to poor academic performance, a decline in mental health, and even drop out from their studies. While counselling services have been shown to provide essential support to students, there is limited research on the effect of counselling on the adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students in the University of Benin. Consequently, this study aims to assess the effectiveness of counseling services on the adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students in the University of Benin.

Academic advising help students to pursue educational goals and reduce maladjustment found among students (Holcomb –Macoy & Hayes cited in Nwokolo, Anyamene, Oraegbunam, Anyachebelu, Okoye & Obineli (2010). “Academic advising is the only structured activity in campus in which all students have the opportunity for on – going, one –to – interaction with a concerned representative of the institution It’s goal is for education and development of students (Creamer, 2000).Academic advising that focused on development of the student adopts a systemic process based on a close student- adviser relationship intended to aid students in achieving educational, career.

Research Questions

To guide the study, the following research questions were raised:

1. What is the influence of guidance and counselling services on first year undergraduates’ adjustment and adaptation in University of Benin?
2. What is the perception of the influence of guidance and counselling services on the academic performance undergraduates in University of Benin?
3. What is the influence of guidance and counselling services on the psychological wellbeing of first years undergraduates in University of Benin ?
4. What aspect of the guidance and counselling services was found most helpful among first years undergraduates in University of Benin ?

Research Hypothesis

H₀ There is no significant relationship between male and female students' of the influence of guidance and counselling services on adjustment and adaptation among first years undergraduates in University of Benin

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate influence of Counselling services on the Adjustment and Adaptation of First-Year Undergraduate Students in UNIBEN". Specifically to

- i. examine the relationship between counselling and the adjustment of first-year undergraduate students in the University of Benin the faculty of Educator..
- ii. determine how counselling the adaptation of first-year undergraduate students university life in the University of Benin.
- iii. effectively determine the level to which counselling is helpful for first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin the faculty of Educator..
- iv. determine the prevalence and nature of adjustment and adaptation problems among first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin
- v. identify the factors that may influence the effectiveness of counselling interventions in enhancing the adjustment and adaptation of first year students
- vi. evaluate the perceptions of first year undergraduate students towards counselling services and their impact on their adjustment and adaptation
- vii. provide recommendations for improving counselling for first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin.

Significance of the Study

he study will be of immense benefit to the counselling services on the adaptation and adjustment of first year undergraduate students in the University is significant to the University of Benin as well as her first year undergraduate students.

Also, the transition from secondary school to university can be challenging for many students, and counselling can provide a supportive environment to help student navigate this transition successfully.

Furthermore, the adjustment and adaptation of students in their first year can have a significant impact on their academic performance and overall well-being.

In addition , the study can provide insights into the effectiveness of counselling programs in improving the adaptation and adjustment of first year undergraduate students.

The findings of this study will have significant implications for the UNIBEN administration, counselling services, and first-year undergraduate students. The study will provide insights into the factors that contribute to students' adjustment and adaptation and the effectiveness of counselling services in promoting their well-being. The results will inform the development of strategies and interventions to enhance students' adjustment and adaptation to university life. Additionally, the study will contribute to the existing literature on counselling and student adjustment, providing a basis for future research in this area.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses on examining the influence of counselling services on the adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin. It investigates how counselling contributes to students' academic, social, emotional, and personal adjustment as they transition into university life. . It examines how academic, personal-social, and career counselling services help students cope with academic demands, social relationships, and emotional challenges during their first year in the university.

The study is limited by factors such as time constraints, the willingness and honesty of respondents in providing accurate information, and the possibility of incomplete responses to the questionnaire. These factors may slightly affect the generalization of the results to other contexts beyond the Faculty of Education.

Definition of Terms

- Adjustment:** The process of adapting to a new environment or new situation.
- Undergraduate;** A university student who has not yet taken a first degree.
- Adaptation:** The ability to adjust or modify one's behaviour, attitudes, or beliefs to fit new circumstances.
- Counselling:** A process of providing guidance, support, and advice to individuals to help them solve problems, make decisions, and cope with challenges.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, related literature pertaining to the influence of services on the adjustment and adaptation of first year undergraduate students in the faculty of education university of Benin are discussed under the following subheadings:

- Theoretical Framework of the Study
- Concept of Undergraduate Students Adjustment and Adaptation
- The Importance of First -Year Student Adjustment and Adaptation
- Concept of classroom adjustment and Adaptation
- The Role of Counselling in Student Adjustment and Adaptation
- Counselling Approaches and Interventions
- Withdrawal and Classroom Adjustment
- Barriers to Counselling Services for First year University Students
- Summary of Reviewed Literature

Theoretical Framework of the study

Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory (1968) University-age students (18–24) are in the stage of Identity and emphasizes the influence of various environmental systems on an individual's development. It's multiple levels of influence, including microsystems (individual interactions), mesosystems (interaction between different microsystems), exosystems (external

environments indirectly influencing individuals), and macrosystems (sociocultural contexts). In this framework, counselling interventions can be seen as a support system that operates within these ecological levels to facilitate adjustment and adaptation. This theory holds that we encounter different environments throughout our lifespan that may influence our behavior in varying degrees. It highlights the dynamic interactions between individuals and their surroundings, recognizing that development and behavior are shaped by these complex relationships. In the context of counseling, this theory helps therapists consider the broader context in which a client lives and the impact of different systems on their well-being and issues. Therapists using this perspective may explore factors such as family dynamics, social support networks, cultural influences, and community resources to gain a comprehensive understanding of the client's challenges and strengths. By taking into account these various ecological levels, counselors can provide more holistic and effective interventions that address the client's needs within their broader context. In the context of counseling, ecological systems theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the individual within their broader environment. Therapists who incorporate this theory into their practice consider not only the client's individual experiences and characteristics, but also the various systems they are a part of, such as family, school, community, and culture. By examining how these systems interact and influence the client's life, counselors can gain insights into the sources of challenges or distress.

This approach encourages a more holistic and contextual understanding of the client's issues, and it allows therapists to address problems by considering both internal and external factors. Ecological systems theory in counselling also underscores the importance of

collaboration and involving various stakeholders in the therapeutic process. It encourages therapists to work with families, schools, and other relevant systems to create a supportive and effective intervention that takes into account the broader context of the client's life. Overall, ecological systems theory enriches counseling practice by emphasizing the interconnectedness of individuals and their environments, and by promoting a more inclusive and systemic approach to addressing psychological and emotional well-being. Ecological systems theory is highly relevant when considering students' adjustment to new environments such as schools. This theory helps educators and counselors understand the multiple layers of influence that impact students' ability to adapt and thrive in their educational settings.

Microsystem

This level includes immediate influences on students, such as their families, peers, and teachers. Understanding how these relationships contribute to or hinder their adjustment is crucial. For instance, positive family support can enhance a student's confidence and resilience.

Mesosystem

This level involves interactions between different microsystems. For students, this might mean how their family dynamics interact with school expectations or how peer relationships at school influence their behavior at home.

Exosystem

This level includes external environments that indirectly affect students, like community resources and social services. For example, access to extracurricular activities or community programs can greatly impact a student's sense of belonging and engagement in their new environment.

Macrosystem:

This level encompasses cultural and societal norms that shape students' experiences. It's important to consider how cultural expectations and educational policies may either support or hinder students' adjustment.

Chronosystem

This dimension emphasizes the impact of time on a student's adjustment. Transitions, such as moving to a new school or grade level, can disrupt or enhance their adaptation process.

By taking into account all these levels of influence, educators and counselors can better identify potential stressors, supports, and resources that affect students' adjustment. This approach allows for a more holistic and personalized approach to helping students navigate and succeed in their educational environments. Applying ecological systems theory to students' adjustment, educators and counselors can recognize the interconnected factors influencing a student's experience. By understanding and addressing issues at multiple levels, they can develop more comprehensive

strategies to support students during times of transition, helping them navigate new educational environments successfully.

The Importance of First Year Student Adjustment and Adaptation

University students are constantly exposed to psychosocial stressors throughout their academic careers, with a personal square exhibiting more emotional and intellectual sternness than previous educational levels. Students go through a lot of stress and hardships at this point, leading to various physical, social, and emotional issues (Saleem and Mahmood, 2017). The majority of first-year students have reported that moving to campus is the most difficult adjustment period of their lives (Aderi et al., 2017). According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual Fifth Edition Text Revision (DSM-V-TR) diagnostic criteria, adjustment disorders are characterized by a maladaptive emotional response to identifiable stressful events, such as the loss of a job, divorce, or failure in school (American Psychiatric Association, 2016). It is one of the few diagnostic entities in which an external stressful event is linked to the development of symptoms. For university students, the adjustment problem could be a multifaceted one, which may be classified into four different elements; academic adjustment (dealing with various educational demands of the university), social adjustment (interacting and forming relationships with peers and staff, and being involved in social activities on campus), personal-emotional adjustment (sense of psychological and physiological wellbeing, feeling of calm and stability of the students), and institutional attachment (feelings about the institution and satisfaction with attending a particular University(Barker and siryk 2018).Attending university is supposed to be

a very challenging experience which could change life-course for students, providing real satisfaction. Adjustment is a psychological concept that refers to the behavior that permits people to meet the demands of the environment , university is a new environment that triggers different reactions among first year students (Wikipedia 2023). Thus, life at university for the first year can be exciting and challenging , On the other hand, the student has to reconstruct his or her personal relations in a new environment and this often causes mental and physical distress .The university terrain is drastically different from that of the secondary school in which the students had been attending their education before they joined the campus. Students get anxious as they adjust to academic, social, personal and lifestyle challenges that the university presents. It is not surprising that today, it is widely recognized that high school graduation is not sufficient to prepare students for academic and social independence at university, This is a cause of concern as adjustment to the university environment is regarded as an important factor in predicting university outcomes and the students' academic performance in their campus life

Attending college or university is considered to be a very exciting experience that could give satisfaction to students. However, there are many students who are unable to complete their studies due to adjustment difficulties students' encounter during their freshman campus life. A study conducted by Tinto (1987) showed that 40% of all students in America who started out in a four year college failed to earn a degree; and nearly 57% of all dropouts left before the start of their second year. Another study conducted by Kidwell (2005) Understanding the college first-year experience. *The Clearing House*, 78(6), 253-255. on the persistence to graduate amongst 944 undergraduate students in a Canadian university reported that within six years, 57.9% of the

students had graduated, 9% remained enrolled, and 33.1% were neither enrolled nor graduated. Research conducted by Kidwell (2005) showed that this failure was caused by adjustment difficulties. According to Smith and Renk (2017), the combination of many stressors of university life, such as planning for the future, struggling with exams and assignments, coping with demands and challenging professors, deciding on a major, and transitioning into financial and emotional independence, can be an overwhelming experience for many students. Hence, almost all new students go through an adjustment phase upon entry to a university with each student varied in his or her own pace of development (Blimling and Miltenberger, 2017).

Past researches also showed that adjustment difficulties are found to be the most common problems among first year students who are going through an active adjustment phase in universities. Many previous studies for example: (Aldwin & Revenson 2011) indicated four aspects of adjustment to college. These are; academic adjustment (dealing with various educational demands of the college), social adjustment (interacting and forming relationships with peers and staff), personal-emotional adjustment (sense of psychological and physiological well being, feeling of calm and stable) and institutional attachment (feeling about the institution and satisfaction with the institution). All these aspects require changes in roles, relationships, academic and social demands. According to Yusuf Ethiopian university and college level students also pass through same difficulties and challenges during their freshman university life. Yusuf asserts that students continuing higher education experience with different kinds of challenges while economic, psychosocial, educational, and health are among the dominant concerns. Specially, newly enrolled students suffer from either multiple or at least one form of the

commonly reported problems more frequently than seniors. Furthermore, students may experience additional problems due to cultural differences and language barriers, in multicultural campus society like wolaita Sodo University. In general, research findings in the area of student adjustment process and difficulties indicated that if students are unable to adapt to the challenges they could face in university, there is greater chance to refrain from their studies. And the result would be more deplorable. Concerning with different challenges that students are supposed to adjust to, it would be desirable to assess the students' alternative coping strategies. Help seeking, a form of coping strategy that relies on other people, is defined as communicating with other people to obtain help in terms of understanding, advice, information, treatment, and general support in response to a problem or distressing experiences (Letseka 2018).

In conclusion, the adjustment and adaptation of first-year students are crucial for their academic, social, and emotional well-being. Institutions should prioritize providing adequate support and resources to help students navigate this transitional phase successfully, as it lays the groundwork for their future academic and personal achievements.

First-year student adjustment and adaptation are crucial for academic success and overall well-being. Here's a breakdown of the importance and factors influencing this adjustment: Academic success Adjustment influences students' academic performance and persistence in higher education. Mental health Poor adjustment can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression, while good adjustment promotes mental well-being. Dropout rates Students who struggle to adjust are more likely to drop out, with high dropout rates observed in the first year of university.

Concept of classroom adjustment and Adaptation

Classroom adjustment is an essential area of study within educational psychology, reflecting how well students adapt to the social, emotional, and academic demands of the classroom environment. It encompasses a range of behaviors and attitudes that facilitate a child's ability to navigate their educational setting effectively. Classroom adjustment can be broadly defined as the process by which students develop the skills and competencies necessary for successful participation in school activities. According to Pianta et al. (2019), classroom adjustment involves both the ability to engage in learning tasks and to establish positive relationships with peers and teachers.

Miller et al. (2020) describe classroom adjustment as the degree to which students can integrate into their educational environment, which includes adapting to classroom rules, forming relationships with peers, and engaging with teachers. This definition underscores the importance of both behavioral and social dimensions in evaluating how well students adjust to their educational contexts. Johnson et al. (2022) propose a more nuanced view, arguing that classroom adjustment should also encompass students' emotional well-being and overall engagement in the learning process. They emphasize that a child's emotional state significantly influences their ability to participate effectively in classroom activities. Smith and Brown (2021) further elaborate on the concept by highlighting the interaction of various factors that contribute to classroom adjustment. They categorize these factors into intrinsic elements, such as motivation and self-regulation, and extrinsic elements, such as parental involvement and school

resources. Their research indicates that both sets of factors interact dynamically to shape a student's adjustment to the classroom environment.

Factors Influencing Classroom Adjustment and Adaptions

Numerous factors contribute to classroom adjustment, which can be categorized into individual, familial, school-related, and socioeconomic factors.

Individual Factors: Individual characteristics play a crucial role in how preschoolers adjust to classroom settings. Cognitive abilities, personality traits, and motivation are significant contributors. Research conducted by Duncan et al. (2018) shows that preschoolers with higher levels of self-efficacy—belief in their capabilities—tend to adjust better in classroom environments. They are more likely to engage in tasks, seek help when needed, and persist in the face of challenges. Additionally, personality traits such as resilience and adaptability have been linked to improved classroom adjustment (Roberts et al., 2021). Children who exhibit these traits often demonstrate a greater capacity to cope with the demands of the classroom, enhancing their overall learning experience.

Familial Factors: The family environment significantly influences a child's ability to adjust in school. Parental involvement is a critical determinant of classroom adjustment. Fan and Chen (2019) conducted a meta-analysis revealing a strong positive correlation between parental engagement in a child's education and their adjustment to the classroom. Their findings suggest that children whose parents actively participate in their education—whether through homework assistance, attendance at school events, or open communication with teachers—tend to exhibit

better behavioral and academic adjustment in school settings. This involvement provides a supportive foundation that helps children navigate the challenges of the classroom.

School-Related Factors: The school environment, including teacher effectiveness, school resources, and peer relationships, plays a critical role in classroom adjustment. According to Hattie (2020), factors such as teacher-student relationships and the overall school climate significantly impact how children adjust to their educational settings. Schools that foster supportive environments, characterized by caring and responsive teachers, create optimal conditions for student adjustment. Additionally, positive peer relationships can enhance children's social skills and emotional well-being, further facilitating classroom adjustment. Research highlights that children who feel connected to their peers and teachers are more likely to engage in classroom activities and demonstrate positive behaviors.

Socioeconomic Factors: Socioeconomic status (SES) is a well-documented factor influencing classroom adjustment. Research consistently shows that students from higher SES backgrounds tend to adjust better academically and socially due to access to resources, educational opportunities, and supportive environments (Duncan and Murnane, 2021). Children from lower SES backgrounds may face additional challenges, such as limited access to educational materials and extracurricular activities, which can hinder their adjustment. Recent studies, such as those by Gonzalez et al. (2022), emphasize the disparities in educational outcomes based on socioeconomic status, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to support disadvantaged students in improving their classroom adjustment.

The Role of Emotional and Social Skills

Emotional and social skills are crucial components of classroom adjustment. Emotional regulation—the ability to manage one’s emotions effectively—plays a vital role in how preschoolers navigate their educational environments. According to Denham et al. (2012), children who exhibit strong emotional regulation skills tend to experience fewer behavioral problems and demonstrate better adjustment to classroom settings. These skills allow children to cope with frustration, engage positively with peers, and respond appropriately to teacher instructions. Social skills, including communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution, are equally important. Children who possess strong social skills are more likely to form positive relationships with their peers and teachers, facilitating smoother interactions in the classroom. Research by Bierman et al. (2017) indicates that preschoolers with well-developed social skills are better equipped to engage in collaborative activities, seek help when needed, and contribute positively to the classroom community. This engagement not only enhances their own adjustment but also positively influences the classroom environment as a whole.

Behavioral problems in preschoolers are a significant area of study within developmental psychology and early childhood education, reflecting how children navigate social interactions and emotional challenges in educational settings. These problems can manifest through various behaviors that disrupt learning and socialization, impacting a child's ability to thrive in both academic and social environments. Behavioral problems can be broadly defined as patterns of behavior that deviate from age-appropriate norms, leading to difficulties in relationships with peers and authority figures. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2023), these issues may include symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), oppositional

defiant disorder (ODD), and various anxiety-related behaviors. This definition emphasizes that behavioral issues encompass a range of challenges that can hinder a child's development and educational experience.

Miller et al. (2021) describe behavioral problems as observable patterns of behavior that disrupt classroom learning and social interactions. This definition underscores the importance of understanding specific behaviors, such as aggression, defiance, and impulsivity, that can adversely affect a child's educational outcomes. Johnson et al. (2022) propose a more comprehensive perspective, suggesting that behavioral problems should also consider the emotional well-being of preschoolers and their overall engagement in learning activities. They argue that the emotional state of a child significantly influences their behavior and interactions in the classroom. Smith and Brown (2021) further elaborate on this concept by highlighting the interplay of various factors that contribute to behavioral problems, categorizing them into intrinsic elements, such as temperament and self-regulation, and extrinsic elements, such as family dynamics and school environments. Their research indicates that both sets of factors interact dynamically to shape a child's behavioral outcomes.

Numerous factors contribute to behavioral problems in preschoolers, which can be categorized into individual, familial, social, and environmental influences.

Individual Factors: Individual characteristics play a crucial role in how preschoolers display behavioral issues. Cognitive abilities, temperament, and emotional regulation are significant contributors. Research conducted by Duncan et al. (2018) shows that preschoolers with higher levels of self-efficacy—belief in their capabilities—tend to exhibit fewer behavioral

problems. Additionally, temperament traits such as difficulty adapting to changes can lead to increased behavioral challenges, as children may struggle to cope with new situations (Rothbart & Bates, 2016). Furthermore, emotional regulation, or the ability to manage one's emotions effectively, is essential for preschoolers. According to Denham et al. (2022), children who develop strong emotional regulation skills are less likely to exhibit aggressive or defiant behaviors.

Familial Factors: The family environment significantly influences a child's behavioral development. Parenting styles, family stress, and parental involvement are critical determinants of behavioral outcomes. Fan and Chen (2019) conducted a meta-analysis revealing a strong positive correlation between authoritative parenting—characterized by warmth and structure—and positive behavioral outcomes in children. Their findings suggest that children whose parents engage actively in their upbringing tend to exhibit fewer behavioral problems. Conversely, high levels of family stress, such as financial difficulties or parental conflict, can exacerbate behavioral issues. Research indicates that children from families experiencing significant stress are more likely to display aggression and defiance (McLoyd, 2018).

Social Factors: The social environment, including peer relationships and interactions with teachers, plays a crucial role in behavioral development. Negative peer interactions, such as bullying or social exclusion, can lead to increased behavioral problems. According to Parker and Asher (2017), preschoolers who struggle to form positive relationships with peers may respond with aggression or withdrawal. Additionally, the quality of teacher-student interactions

significantly influences behavior. Pianta et al. (2019) highlight that supportive teacher relationships can mitigate behavioral problems, while negative interactions can exacerbate them.

Environmental Factors: The broader environmental context, including educational settings and community resources, also impacts behavioral outcomes. A structured, supportive preschool environment can foster positive behaviors and emotional well-being. Hattie (2020) emphasizes that schools with effective behavioral management strategies create conditions conducive to positive behavioral development. Moreover, access to resources and community support can help mitigate behavioral challenges. Children from low-resource backgrounds may face additional barriers, leading to increased behavioral problems due to limited access to educational opportunities and supportive environments (Duncan & Murnane, 2021).

Aggressive behavior in preschoolers is a common concern within the field of early childhood education, as it significantly impacts classroom dynamics and individual learning experiences. The way children adjust to classroom environments is influenced by a variety of behavioral issues, and aggressive behaviors, in particular, can disrupt the smooth functioning of a classroom, hindering both the aggressor and their peers. The consequences of aggression in preschoolers, both in terms of social and academic development, have drawn considerable attention from researchers in developmental psychology and educational psychology. Aggression, typically characterized by hostile or disruptive behaviors, such as hitting, shouting, or physical confrontation, can complicate social interactions and undermine the child's ability to adjust to classroom expectations.

The American Psychiatric Association (2023) defines aggressive behavior as actions that are forceful, hostile, or disruptive, often involving both physical and verbal elements. In preschool settings, aggression can arise from a variety of triggers, including frustration, poor emotional regulation, or the desire for control over situations. According to Barkley (2024), aggressive behaviors are often linked to broader issues such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and poor self-regulation. The inability to control impulses and emotions can manifest as aggression in preschoolers, making classroom adjustment difficult. Research by Denham et al. (2022) suggests that children who struggle with emotional regulation are more prone to aggressive outbursts, which can negatively affect their relationships with peers and teachers, as well as their ability to engage in learning activities.

Aggression is often considered a behavioral problem that undermines socialization and classroom adaptation. Preschoolers exhibiting aggressive behavior tend to have difficulty with peer relationships, as their actions can provoke fear or avoidance among other children. This difficulty in forming positive peer relationships is crucial, as peer interactions are fundamental to a child's social development during early childhood. Thompson et al. (2021) found that aggressive children often face social exclusion or bullying, exacerbating their behavioral problems and hindering their social adjustment. These children may struggle to engage in group activities, leading to isolation and a lack of participation in educational tasks. Such disengagement can contribute to long-term academic challenges, as classroom adjustment is closely linked to both academic success and emotional well-being.

The relationship between aggressive behavior and classroom adjustment has been explored by several scholars. According to Smith and Brown (2021), preschoolers exhibiting aggression not only face social difficulties but also encounter academic challenges. The inability to interact appropriately with peers or teachers can result in disruptions during instructional time, making it harder for the aggressive child to focus on learning. Additionally, the classroom environment may become less conducive to learning due to the negative impact that aggressive behaviors have on overall classroom dynamics. Teachers may find it difficult to provide equal attention to all students when aggressive behavior requires more intervention and redirection. Research by Pianta et al. (2019) supports this, indicating that children who demonstrate aggression are less likely to be engaged in classroom activities and often perform poorly academically.

Another critical factor influencing classroom adjustment is the role of teacher-student interactions. Pianta et al. (2019) emphasize that positive teacher-child relationships can mitigate the effects of aggressive behavior. When teachers respond to aggression with patience and consistent behavioral management strategies, it can help the child learn appropriate ways to express emotions and resolve conflicts. Conversely, teachers who fail to address aggression appropriately may contribute to the child's sense of frustration and emotional instability, further impairing their ability to adjust to the classroom environment.

Furthermore, environmental factors such as classroom structure and teacher practices play a significant role in how children with aggressive behaviors adjust. Hattie (2020) points out that classrooms that offer clear routines, consistent expectations, and emotional support

contribute to better behavioral regulation. For preschoolers, a structured environment can help reduce impulsivity and aggression by providing a sense of security and predictability. Schools that implement behavior management strategies such as positive reinforcement, clear rules, and conflict-resolution training are more likely to help aggressive children develop the skills necessary for positive classroom adjustment (Blaair & Razza, 2019). In contrast, poorly managed classrooms where aggression is unchecked can lead to a more hostile and disruptive environment, which further hinders the development of social and academic skills.

One of the most significant impacts of aggression on preschoolers' classroom adjustment is the long-term effect it can have on social-emotional learning. Children who struggle with aggression may develop poor coping mechanisms and find it difficult to manage frustration or disappointment, essential skills for socialization and academic success (Denham et al., 2022). Early intervention is essential to help these children learn self-regulation and adaptive behaviors. Studies suggest that when preschoolers with aggressive tendencies are given proper emotional support and behavior management, their classroom adjustment improves over time (Thompson et al., 2021).

Akinola et al. (2020) conducted an empirical study examining the relationship between aggression and classroom adjustment among Nigerian adolescents. The study aimed to understand how aggressive behavior influences students' ability to adapt to the classroom environment, both academically and socially. The research was conducted in Lagos, Nigeria, where 300 secondary school students were selected using random sampling. The students were assessed using the Aggression Scale (AS) to measure the intensity of aggressive behaviors and

the Classroom Adjustment Inventory (CAI) to evaluate their adaptation to the school environment. The findings revealed a significant negative correlation between aggression and classroom adjustment. Students who exhibited higher levels of aggression had lower levels of academic performance and struggled with social integration. The study highlighted that aggressive students often faced conflicts with peers and teachers, which further disrupted their learning environment. Additionally, such students were less likely to participate in classroom activities and more likely to exhibit disruptive behaviors. The researchers concluded that aggressive behavior, if not properly managed, could lead to poor classroom adjustment, affecting both academic and social outcomes for students. They recommended the implementation of behavior modification programs in Nigerian schools to help aggressive students adjust better to the classroom setting. Additionally, they suggested that teachers be trained in conflict resolution and classroom management techniques to reduce the frequency of aggressive incidents. They also emphasized the importance of school counselors in identifying early signs of aggression and providing necessary interventions. The study's implications suggest that addressing aggression early can foster a more conducive learning environment and improve both academic and social experiences for students.

Farrington and Welsh (2017) conducted a longitudinal study on the link between aggressive behavior and classroom dynamics in early childhood education. This research, conducted in the UK, involved observing preschool children aged 4 to 6 years in their natural educational settings for a year. Teachers assessed levels of aggression, categorized as physical, verbal, and relational, and measured classroom adjustment by observing social interactions and

academic engagement. The results demonstrated that aggressive children were more likely to face challenges in adapting to classroom routines, developing positive peer relationships, and adhering to school rules. Aggression was linked to decreased classroom participation and more frequent disruptions, which not only affected the aggressive child but also the overall classroom dynamics. The study recommended early interventions for aggressive children, including behavior management programs and increased teacher training in handling disruptive behaviors. Teachers were encouraged to work with parents to create a consistent approach to managing aggression, and the study emphasized the need for social-emotional learning (SEL) programs in preschools.

Karaca and İkiz (2014) examined preschool teachers' perceptions of aggressive behavior and its impact on classroom adjustment in Istanbul, Turkey. The study involved 30 preschool teachers who were interviewed about their experiences with aggressive children and the strategies they employed to manage such behaviors. The findings highlighted that teachers saw aggression as one of the main challenges in maintaining a positive classroom environment. Physical aggression, in particular, was reported to significantly disrupt classroom activities, lead to peer rejection, and reduce academic engagement. Teachers noted that children who displayed aggression often lacked the social skills needed to interact positively with peers and struggled to conform to classroom norms. However, teachers who received training on managing aggressive behaviors reported better classroom management and improvements in the children's adjustment. The study recommended that preschools implement behavior modification programs and that teachers receive ongoing professional development in classroom management techniques. The

importance of family involvement was also highlighted as crucial in addressing aggressive behavior effectively.

Monks, et al, (2022) conducted a study in Spain to explore the relationship between aggressive behavior and peer relationships in preschoolers. The study involved a mixed-methods approach, combining observational data from 150 preschoolers aged 4 to 6 years old with teacher assessments of classroom adjustment. The preschoolers were observed over a three-month period in their classrooms, and teachers completed reports on the children's peer relationships and social behaviors. The results indicated that aggressive preschoolers experienced more difficulty in forming positive relationships with their peers and were more likely to be socially isolated. Aggression, especially physical aggression, led to a higher incidence of peer conflicts and a lack of participation in group activities. The study found that aggressive behaviors had a direct impact on classroom adjustment, as children struggled to comply with classroom rules and participate in academic tasks. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended the implementation of early interventions, including social skills training and conflict resolution programs, to help children with aggressive tendencies better adjust to the classroom environment. Teachers were also advised to create classroom settings that encouraged positive peer interactions and to foster a supportive atmosphere that could reduce aggressive behaviors.

Empirical Evidence:

Classroom adjustment refers to the process by which students modify their behavior, emotions, and interactions to fit into the school environment effectively. It is closely related to social, emotional, and academic adjustment, and is essential for student success. Researchers have emphasized that students' ability to adjust in classrooms influences their learning outcomes, peer relationships, and overall well-being. Ansari and Khan (2019) found that students who exhibited high levels of classroom adjustment showed better academic performance and lower levels of disruptive behavior. Abdullahi & Bello (2020) highlighted that classroom adjustment is influenced by factors such as teacher-student interaction, peer support, and classroom climate. Mwamwenda (2018) reported that students struggling with adjustment often show signs of anxiety, reduced participation, and lower motivation, which can negatively affect their academic achievement.

The Role of Counselling in Student Adjustment and Adaptation

Counselling plays a crucial role in facilitating student adjustment and adaptation to the college environment. It provides valuable support, guidance, and resources that can significantly enhance a student's ability to navigate the challenges and transitions they face during their first year. The first year of university life is most of the time perceived as overwhelming and stressful time in four aspects of students adjustments in university life such as for social, academic, institutional attachment and personal-emotional adjustment. At this time, first-year students experience a lot of social difficulties (e. g. moving away from their primary support systems- parents) and intellectual challenges (e.g., more demanding course work or heavy work load).

(Wikipedia 2023) In addition, to the above mentioned factors freshman life can be filled with emotional stressors such as loneliness, home sickness, grief, confusion and uncertainty all related to break from their primary attachment figures-parents and or other loved ones .The role of counselling services in the school system cannot be overemphasized. counselling services have always played a leading role in terms of student adjustment and adaptation. For this reason, counselling services are sine qua non to child's development. According to Eyo, Joshua, and Esuong (2016), counselling is one of the educational services that promotes the effectiveness of the educational system for goals attainment and guiding learners through the learning process. This is in line with the goals of educational services as contained in the National Policy on Education (2014) which include facilitate the implementation of the educational policy; the attainment of policy goals and the promotion of effectiveness of educational system; and make learning experiences more meaningful for children. Auni, Songok, Odiambo and Lyanda (2018), highlighted that Counselling is encompassed by activities of relevant services and also processes of helping persons within and outside the school, to achieve their full potentialities in their emotional, moral, social, academic and vocational developments. First year undergraduate students are confronted with problems ranging from withdrawal, unhappiness, annoyance, anger, anxiety, and hyperactivity (Nyaegah, 2011). Eyo et al., (2010), adds that students who are at the adolescent stage suffer more stress than any other group. This is because of the physiological and psychological changes they undergo. They latter include questioning of family values, of self-concept, personality development, and emotional experiences.

Physiological changes include development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics, endocrine change, and alterations in physical appearances (Akinade, 2012). Nyaegah (2011) opined that adolescents in school also experience social changes, because they are so dependent upon their relationship with others. All the variations can generate high levels of stress because the adolescents are adapting to the new changes. Due to this social emotional challenges that majority of students have been experiencing in schools, governments across the world saw the need for introduction of counseling services in University. The need for counseling services in all universities cannot be overstated due to increasing complexities of modern life that have placed heavy demands and responsibilities on university students. These students are faced with numerous personal, academic, social and emotional needs and problems, which, if unattended to, could lead to host patterns of undesirable behaviours (Alemu, 2019). counselling programmes have therefore been introduced to assist students to overcome and adjust to a host of emotional challenges they experience at home and at school. Virtually, all countries have established channels to intensify and improve guidance and counseling services in their respective learning institutions in an attempt to address tenets of students' behaviours. The history of guidance and counseling around the world varies greatly based on how different countries and local communities have chosen to provide personal, academic and emotional adjustment among the first year undergraduate students (Alemu, 2013). Eyo et al (2021) hold the view that emotions are central to all aspects of life, including intellectual performance, social behaviour and physical health. Akinade (2018) has observed that emotional adjustment among adolescents is the most

profound and important experience that culminates to the change of behaviour. The role of counselling in student adjustment and adaptation include;

Academic Counselling

: Academic counselling plays a vital role in helping first-year students navigate the academic demands of university life. Academic counsellors can provide guidance on course selection, time management, study skills, and academic goal setting. Studies have demonstrated that academic counselling interventions positively influence students' academic performance and increase their confidence in managing their coursework. Academic counselling is one of the critical components of a strategy to address this complex problem. It is commonly cited in American literature as an important function that supports student persistence. Recently academic counselling has been showing up more prominently in student's success literature, such as in the book *Increasing Persistence* (Habley et al., 2012) and in the Center for Community College Student Engagement's recent national research report on high impact practices for student success, *A Matter of Degrees* (2014). The most recent example is a book called, *Rethinking College Student Retention* (Braxton et al., 2014), which found empirical evidence to support a theory of student success on commuter campuses. Braxton et al. also found that academic counselling is one of the most important interventions for commuter students.

At its most basic level, academic counselling is “a decision-making process during which students realize their maximum educational potential through communication and information exchanges with an advisor” (Grites, 2019). This definition, which emphasizes the

reciprocal process of communication between a student and an advisor, was also the definition that Braxton et al., (2014) cited in their recent work. The current applicability of Grites's definition demonstrates the stability of the concept academic advising, even as different theories and approaches have been introduced in the literature. Another practical definition is that of Kuhn (2008), which is similar but provides greater insight into explaining the various roles of advisors. Kuhn refers to academic advising as "situations in which an institutional representative gives insight or direction to a college student about an academic, social, or personal matter. The nature of this direction might be to inform, suggest, counsel, discipline, coach, mentor, or even teach" . The inclusion of "academic, social or personal matters" into the definition demonstrates that academic advisors do not just address academic issues; rather, advisors are available to address a comprehensive range of issues with students. This respects core tenants of the plethora of theories explaining student development in post-secondary education, which emphasize support of the whole person (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). Furthermore, the reference to "inform, suggest, counsel, discipline, coach, mentor, or even teach" represents the wide scope of approaches advisors may use with students. This breadth of understanding how advisors advise is equally important in the understanding of the scope of practice for academic advisors. Scholars have debated a number of fundamental questions about academic advising in recent years, largely related to the questions: is academic advising a field of inquiry or a profession? Creamer (2000) argued that there were no theories of advising. In a response to this statement, Hagen and Jordan (2008) concede that there is no single unified theory of advising, but that a unified theory is non-existent in other professions too. They argue that multiple

theories can exist and should exist at the same time within a profession. Lowenstein (2005, 2011, 2014) has contributed the most to these debates, including his proposed Integrative Theory of Advising, which holds that advising is “fundamentally a learning activity in which students intentionally and reflectively integrate their academic learning into an education that is a coherent whole” (Lowenstein, 2014, para. 1). As the editors of the NACADA Journal, Kuhn and Padak (2018) address the question about academic advising as a discipline.

They concluded that “based on published discipline-oriented research findings in adjudicated journals and acceptance as a degree granting area... academic advising must establish more credentials before it can be considered an academic discipline. A year later, and after a comprehensive analysis of scholarly activity related to academic advising, Habley (2009) made a similar conclusion. Kuhn (2008) concludes that “the future history of academic advising will lie in its ability to create and use theory, apply findings in practice, and assess effectiveness through research. There is still very much a need for a widely accepted and empirically tested theory of advising to legitimize it, and Lowenstein’s (2014) proposed theory may serve to be the catalyst for new scholarly work to rise to this challenge.

Social Support and Peer Counseling

Peer counselling is popularly being accepted as an important contributor of behaviour change among learners in learning institutions. It utilizes role- playing and modelling to change behaviour. Peer counselling owes its beginnings to the paraprofessional movement of the 2015s. During the last fifteen years, there has been a growing acceptance of peer counselling,

particularly on university campuses. The students in order to help, advice, and counsel other students, must develop and use active listening and problem-solving skills together with knowledge about growth and development. The peer counsellor assists other students by clarifying thoughts and feelings, exploring options, or providing needed information (Bururia, Marangu, & Nyaga, 2017).

In Universities, peer counselling takes the form of coaching, peer education, modelling, mentoring, and behaviour modification. It typically involves the use of members of the same age group to affect change among other members of the same group. Peer counselling addresses change both at the personal and social levels. It attempts to modify a person's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behaviour, group norms and stimulating collective action that leads to changes in programmes and policies. Peer counsellors are exposed to communication, listening, assertiveness and basic counselling skills. Peer counsellors are therefore understand the importance of a positive self-concept, team building and conflict resolution skills as well as ethical expectations in counselling. Peer counsellors' training includes referral issues such as how, when and where to refer challenging cases, thus enabling

Social support is crucial for first-year students to establish a sense of belonging and connection within the university community. Peer counseling programs, where experienced students mentor and support incoming freshmen, have been shown to enhance social integration and reduce feelings of isolation. These programs create a supportive network that fosters positive social interactions and enhances the overall university experience. Social support and peer

counseling can indeed serve as effective tools for facilitating the adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students. Here's how they can be beneficial:

Emotional Support: Peer counselors can offer a safe space for new students to express their feelings, concerns, and anxieties about the transition to university life. Having someone who understands and empathizes with their experiences can help reduce stress and promote emotional well-being.

Information and Guidance: Peer counselors can provide practical advice on navigating campus resources, academic expectations, and various aspects of university life. This guidance can empower students to make informed decisions and feel more confident in their new environment.

Building Relationships: Connecting with peer counselors and fellow students can help first-years establish meaningful relationships, fostering a sense of belonging and community on campus.

Normalization of Challenges: Peer counselors sharing their own stories of adjustment and overcoming challenges can help normalize the ups and downs of transitioning to university, making first-years feel less alone in their experiences.

Skill Development: Peer counselors can offer workshops and sessions focused on study skills, time management, stress reduction, and other valuable skills that aid in successful adaptation to academic life.

Cultural and Diversity Support: Peer counselors from diverse backgrounds can provide insights and guidance on cultural adjustment and inclusion, helping international or minority students feel more comfortable and understood.

Reducing Loneliness: The presence of a peer support network can combat feelings of isolation and loneliness that some first-year students may experience.

Positive Role Modeling: Observing successful upper-year students who have effectively adjusted and thrived in the university environment can inspire first-years and give them hope for their own journey.

Confidentiality and Trust: peer counselors often provide a confidential space for students to share their concerns, ensuring that their privacy is respected. Smooth Transition: Peer counseling and social support can contribute to a smoother and more positive transition, ultimately enhancing academic performance and overall well-being.

To maximize the benefits of social support and peer counseling, universities can establish structured programs, training for peer counselors, regular workshops, and events that encourage interaction among first-year students. This holistic approach can significantly contribute to their successful adjustment and adaptation to university life.

Personal Counseling

Personal counselling has been viewed as an integral part of the professional development of psychotherapists virtually since the advent of psychoanalysis (Freud, 1912, 1937). Personal

Counselling is generally understood to serve two main purposes: to enhance their professional development and relational capacities, and to increase the personal development, capacities, and well-being of the therapist. For instance, personal therapy may enable increased self-awareness through greater understanding of and reflection upon the self, and this can lead to increased empathy, warmth and relational skills, awareness of transference and countertransference processes, defense mechanisms such as projection and identification, and decrease the likelihood of burnout or unethical behavior (Norcross, 2019; Risq & Target, 2018; 2019; Wiseman & Shefler, 2020). Others have argued that personal counselling increases counsellors' effectiveness and personal well-being through six mechanisms related to professional development (Grimmer & Tribe, 2019; Macran & Shapiro, 2018), as follows: (a) increasing sensitivity to one's clients' needs and enhancing the development of empathy; (b) allowing observation, learning, and mastery of therapeutic skills; (c) reducing therapists' stress, emotional burden, and eventually "burn-out"; (d) increasing therapists' understanding of their own problems, conflicts, and values; (e) increasing conviction in the efficacy of therapy; (f) and serving as a profound socialization experience fostering a rite of passage into the role of a psychotherapist. First-year students may encounter personal challenges such as homesickness, anxiety, and stress during the adjustment period. Personal counseling provides a safe space for students to discuss their emotional concerns and develop coping strategies. Studies indicate that personal counseling interventions improve students' emotional well-being and resilience, leading to better adaptation to university life.

Anxiety is a common emotional disorder in children and adolescents that can significantly impact their ability to adjust to classroom environments. Defined as a feeling of fear or apprehension, anxiety can manifest as generalized anxiety, social anxiety, or specific phobias, all of which can hinder a student's academic performance and overall classroom adjustment (National Institute of Mental Health, 2021). Research has established a robust link between anxiety and various aspects of classroom adjustment, including academic performance, social interactions, and behavioral responses.

Children suffering from anxiety often experience difficulties concentrating, which can adversely affect their academic performance. The relationship between anxiety and academic achievement has been extensively documented. For instance, a study by Hembree (2018) concluded that students with high levels of test anxiety tend to perform poorly on examinations. This observation is echoed by Putwain (2018), who found that anxiety can negatively influence students' motivation to engage in academic tasks, thereby hindering their learning and adjustment to the classroom environment.

Social anxiety, in particular, is a critical factor influencing classroom adjustment. Children with social anxiety may fear negative evaluation by peers and teachers, leading them to avoid social interactions and participation in group activities (Ginsburg et al., 2021). As Schlenker and Leary (2022) point out, negative self-perception can exacerbate feelings of isolation in anxious students, making it difficult for them to form effective peer relationships, which are essential for social adjustment. Lack of positive relationships can contribute to lower self-esteem and further withdrawal from classroom activities (Ladd, 2020).

Anxiety not only affects academic performance and social interactions but also influences behavioral responses in the classroom. Students with anxiety may display avoidance behaviors, such as refusing to participate in discussions or activities (Eisenberg et al., 2017). These withdrawal behaviors can lead to misinterpretation by teachers and peers, potentially reinforcing a cycle of anxiety and exclusion. According to a study by Wood et al. (2023), anxious children are more likely to exhibit externalizing behaviors, such as tantrums and disruptions, as a way of coping with their insecurities, thus further impacting classroom dynamics and their adjustment.

Fortunately, research also highlights effective interventions to support anxious children in classroom settings. Creating a supportive and understanding classroom environment is essential for fostering better adjustment. Teachers can significantly mitigate the effects of anxiety by implementing strategies such as structured routines, positive reinforcement, and social skills training. A study by Kearney and Albano (2024) emphasizes that therapeutic interventions, including cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), have shown promise in reducing anxiety symptoms, thus improving children's engagement and performance in school.

Furthermore, collaboration between educators and mental health professionals can optimize the support system for anxious students. Integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) programs into the curriculum can help students develop coping strategies, resilience, and emotional regulation skills (Durlak et al., 2021). Research by Zins et al. (2024) demonstrates that SEL programs can lead to improvements in both social behavior and academic performance, further indicating the importance of addressing anxiety in educational settings

Pallini et al. (2024) investigated the impact of anxiety on classroom adjustment, specifically focusing on how anxiety influences both academic performance and social behavior. Although the study was conducted in Italy, it provides valuable insights for Nigerian schools as it explores the universal challenges faced by anxious students in school settings. The researchers involved 150 primary school students, assessing their anxiety levels using the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory and measuring classroom adjustment through teacher and peer evaluations. The results showed that anxiety negatively affected classroom adjustment. Anxious students were more likely to withdraw from social interactions, avoid classroom activities, and perform poorly on academic tasks. The study revealed that anxiety often led to heightened self-doubt and avoidance behaviors, which in turn worsened students' academic and social outcomes. The researchers identified that teacher support and peer relationships played a crucial role in helping anxious children adjust to school life. The study suggested that interventions focusing on reducing anxiety, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness practices, could improve classroom adjustment for anxious students. It also emphasized the importance of creating an emotionally supportive classroom environment where students feel safe to express their feelings without fear of judgment. They recommended that schools globally, including Nigerian schools, implement programs that promote emotional well-being and provide counseling services for students dealing with anxiety. Teachers should be trained to identify signs of anxiety and to offer reassurance and guidance to anxious students.

Adebayo et al. (2020) conducted a study investigating the relationship between test anxiety, academic performance, and classroom adjustment among secondary school students in

Lagos State, Nigeria. The research used a survey design to gather data from 300 participants randomly selected from public and private secondary schools. The researchers utilized the Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI) to measure levels of anxiety and a Classroom Adjustment Scale (CAS) to evaluate students' ability to interact effectively within the classroom environment. Data analysis, performed using ANOVA, revealed a strong correlation between elevated test anxiety and diminished classroom engagement. High-anxiety students often avoided participating in class discussions and displayed behavioral issues such as restlessness and withdrawal. The study highlighted that student with lower levels of anxiety performed better academically, interacted more effectively with peers, and exhibited a higher degree of classroom adjustment. Gender analysis revealed that female students reported slightly higher anxiety levels than their male counterparts, but the difference in classroom adjustment was not statistically significant. The authors recommended incorporating anxiety-management techniques into teaching methods and curriculum design. For example, mindfulness exercises and relaxation techniques could be introduced during school hours to help students cope with test-related stress. Additionally, they advocated for teacher training programs aimed at identifying anxiety symptoms early and providing appropriate support to affected students. This study underscores the need for holistic interventions to address anxiety and improve classroom dynamics.

Udoh and Ekong (2022) explored how family-related factors influence emotional adjustment and classroom behavior among secondary school students in Calabar, Cross River State. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combined quantitative surveys and qualitative focus group discussions involving 250 students from public and private schools. The Emotional

Adjustment Scale (EAS) was employed to measure variables such as anxiety levels, peer interaction, and teacher-student relationships. The results showed that students from stable family backgrounds—characterized by supportive parenting styles—exhibited better emotional adjustment and lower anxiety levels. These students were more likely to participate in classroom activities and develop positive relationships with peers and teachers. Conversely, students from unstable family environments, such as those experiencing frequent conflict or parental neglect, displayed heightened anxiety and struggled with social integration within the classroom. The study also examined the impact of socioeconomic status, noting that students from lower-income families faced additional stressors, including a lack of educational resources and support, which exacerbated anxiety levels. Udoh and Ekong proposed interventions such as school-based counseling programs that account for family dynamics and socioeconomic challenges. They also emphasized the importance of parent-teacher collaboration in fostering emotionally supportive environments for students.

Ojo and Adewale (2021) focused on anxiety related to academic research among education undergraduates in Abuja, Nigeria, and its implications for classroom adjustment. The study surveyed 200 students from three universities, using the Research Anxiety Scale (RAS) to assess the impact of anxiety on academic engagement and performance in classroom settings. The findings indicated that research anxiety significantly disrupted classroom engagement. Many students reported feeling overwhelmed by research-related tasks, leading to avoidance behaviors such as skipping lectures or failing to participate in group discussions. The study also revealed a lack of research support resources, including mentoring and workshops, which contributed to

elevated anxiety levels. Female students were found to experience slightly higher anxiety than male students, a trend attributed to societal expectations and perceived academic pressure. The authors proposed practical solutions, including the establishment of research support centers within universities to provide mentoring and resources. They also recommended integrating research skills training into the undergraduate curriculum to build students' confidence and reduce anxiety. The study underscores the need for universities to address research anxiety as part of broader efforts to enhance classroom engagement and academic success.

Ahmed and Ibrahim (2023) investigated the role of school environments in shaping the emotional and social adjustment of students in Kano, Nigeria. This descriptive survey involved 280 secondary school students from 10 schools. Data collection relied on the School Environment Adjustment Inventory (SEAI), which measured factors such as teacher-student relationships, peer interactions, and school infrastructure quality. The results showed that students in supportive school environments—characterized by strong teacher-student bonds, inclusive policies, and adequate facilities—exhibited lower levels of anxiety and better classroom adjustment. In contrast, students in schools with poorly maintained facilities and authoritarian teaching styles reported higher anxiety levels and struggled with classroom participation. Peer support emerged as a critical factor, with students who had positive peer relationships displaying better emotional adjustment. The study concluded that creating mental health-friendly school environments could significantly improve classroom dynamics and reduce anxiety. Ahmed and Ibrahim recommended policy reforms aimed at training teachers to adopt

inclusive and empathetic approaches while improving school infrastructure to foster a conducive learning atmosphere

Empirical Review

Improved Academic Performance Studies have shown that students who receive counseling tend to perform better academically, with improved grades and increased motivation. Enhanced Social Adjustment Counseling helps students develop better social skills, leading to stronger peer relationships and improved social integration. Better Emotional Well-being Counseling supports students in managing stress, anxiety, and other emotional challenges, promoting overall well-being. Counseling Strategies for Student Adjustment Cognitive Restructuring Helps students reframe negative thoughts and behaviors. Behavioral Counseling Focuses on developing positive behaviors and coping skills. Reality Counseling Supports students in taking responsibility for their actions and decisions. Peer Counseling Utilizes trained peers to provide support and guidance ³

Counseling Approaches and Interventions

Counseling approaches are therapeutic frameworks that help mental health professionals provide effective support to individuals (Wikipedia 2023). Each approach has its own techniques and principles for addressing various emotional and psychological challenges.

Helping first-year undergraduate students adjust to college life requires a supportive and tailored approach. Here are some counseling approaches that can be effective:

1. Orientation Workshops: Conduct workshops or group sessions before the start of the semester to provide information about campus resources, academic expectations, and strategies for successful adaptation.
2. Person-Centered Counseling: Create a safe and empathetic space for students to express their feelings, fears, and concerns about the transition. Offer active listening and support to help them explore their experiences.
3. Psych education: Provide information about common challenges faced by first-year students, such as homesickness, time management, and academic stress. Teach coping strategies and skills to navigate these challenges.
4. Cognitive-Behavioral Techniques: Help students identify and challenge negative thought patterns related to their adjustment. Teach them techniques to reframe their perceptions and manage stress.
5. Goal Setting: Collaborate with students to set realistic academic and personal goals, helping them stay focused and motivated throughout the year.
6. Social Skills Training: Offer guidance on building social connections and relationships, including effective communication, making friends, and joining clubs or groups.
7. Time Management Strategies: Teach time management techniques to balance academic responsibilities, social activities, and personal time effectively.

8. Stress Management Techniques: Introduce relaxation techniques, mindfulness, and stress-reduction exercises to help students manage the pressures of university life.
9. Peer Support Groups :Facilitate support groups where first-year students can share their experiences, offer advice, and build a sense of community with their peers.
10. Exposure to Campus Resources: Familiarize students with available support services, such as academic advising, counseling centers, health services, and career counseling.
11. Group counselling: Group counseling sessions offer a supportive and collaborative environment where students can share their experiences and learn from one another. Research has shown that group counseling interventions enhance social skills, reduce feelings of isolation, and promote a sense of community among first-year students.
12. Online Counseling : With advancements in technology, online counseling platforms have become more prevalent in universities. Online counseling provides convenience and accessibility, allowing students to seek support from the comfort of their own spaces. Several studies have highlighted the effectiveness of online counseling in reaching a broader student population and addressing mental health concerns.
13. Self-Care Promotion: Emphasize the importance of self-care practices, including exercise, healthy eating, and sufficient sleep, in maintaining physical and emotional well-being.
14. Culturally Sensitive Counseling: UNIBEN's diverse student population requires counseling interventions that are culturally sensitive and inclusive. Culturally competent

counseling approaches acknowledge and address the unique needs of students from different cultural backgrounds, enhancing the effectiveness of counseling services.

15. **Feedback and Reflection:** Encourage students to reflect on their experiences periodically, discussing challenges and successes, and adjusting their strategies as needed.
16. **Referral:** If students are struggling with more severe emotional or mental health issues, provide referrals to specialized mental health professionals.

Tailoring counseling approaches to individual students' needs and cultural backgrounds is essential for effective support during their adjustment to college life. Regular follow-up sessions and a holistic approach that addresses both academic and emotional aspects can contribute to a successful transition. It is essential for counselors to be flexible and adaptable in their approach to best serve their clients' needs.

Empirical Review

Counseling approaches and interventions are crucial in supporting students' academic, social, and emotional development. Here's a review of effective counseling approaches and interventions:

Effective Counseling Approaches

- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)** Helps students identify and change negative thought patterns and behaviors.
- Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)** Emphasizes identifying and building on students' strengths to achieve goals.
- Person-Centered Therapy** Focuses on creating a supportive and non-judgmental environment to promote self-exploration and growth.
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT):** Teaches students skills to manage

emotions, tolerate distress, and improve relationships. Individual Counseling One-on-one counseling sessions tailored to students' specific needs. Group Counseling Small group sessions focusing on specific topics, such as stress management or social skills Crisis Intervention Immediate support and guidance for students experiencing a crisis or emergency. Psych educational Workshops Educational workshops on topics such as study skills, time management, and stress reduction.

Withdrawal and Classroom Adjustment

Withdrawal behavior in children, often characterized by social isolation, disengagement, and avoidance of interaction, has critical implications for classroom adjustment. This behavior can stem from various factors, including anxiety, low self-esteem, and negative peer experiences. Understanding the nuances of withdrawal can illuminate how it affects a child's ability to thrive in an educational setting.

Research indicates that withdrawal behaviors are commonly observed in children who struggle to adjust to the demands of the classroom. According to Rubin et al. (2016), withdrawal is not merely a passive behavior but an active strategy that children may adopt in response to social and academic challenges. Children who withdraw often experience difficulty in forming peer relationships, which can lead to feelings of loneliness and further withdrawal—a concept known as the "vicious cycle" of withdrawal (Gazelle, 2006). This cycle can significantly hinder their ability to participate in classroom activities, adversely affecting their academic and social development.

Engagement in classroom activities is essential for effective learning, and withdrawal can impede a child's academic performance. Research by Lee and Odom (2016) demonstrates that withdrawn children tend to have lower academic achievement, as they often miss out on valuable interactions that enhance learning. Participating in discussions and group work facilitates not only the acquisition of knowledge but also the development of critical social skills, such as cooperation and communication. When children withdraw from these opportunities, they deprive themselves of essential learning experiences and peer modeling.

Social relationships play a pivotal role in classroom adjustment. Students who are withdrawn may be at risk for exclusion and victimization, which can exacerbate their social difficulties. According to a study by Boivin et al. (2015), socially withdrawn children tend to be more susceptible to bullying, leading to further withdrawal and emotional distress. This not only reinforces their isolation but can also lead to broader behavioral issues, such as depression and anxiety (Hymel et al., 2015). Consequently, the social dynamics in the classroom can impact the extent of withdrawal, influencing how well a child adjusts to the classroom environment.

Importantly, the role of teachers and the classroom environment in addressing withdrawal behaviors cannot be overstated. Research by Hughes et al. (2015) suggests that supportive teacher-student relationships can significantly mitigate the adverse effects of withdrawal. When teachers create an inclusive environment that encourages participation and values individual contributions, withdrawn children may feel more comfortable engaging with their peers. Positive reinforcement strategies and structured opportunities for social interaction can help provide the support needed for these students to gradually overcome their withdrawal tendencies.

Furthermore, interventions targeting social skills development can effectively enhance classroom adjustment for withdrawn children. The implementation of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs has gained support in educational settings as a method to foster better interpersonal skills and emotional regulation (Durlak et al., 2021). SEL programs equip children with tools to navigate social situations, build relationships, and enhance their overall adjustment to the classroom environment.

Nwokolo and Okoro (2022) examined the effects of social withdrawal on classroom adjustment among secondary school students in Nigeria. This study involved 250 students from five Nigerian secondary schools and focused on the correlation between withdrawal behaviors and both academic and social adjustment. The researchers used the Social Withdrawal Scale to measure the extent of withdrawal and the Classroom Adjustment Inventory to assess academic and social adaptation. The study found that students who exhibited social withdrawal behaviors had lower levels of classroom participation and academic engagement. These students tended to avoid interactions with peers and were less likely to seek help from teachers, which resulted in poor academic performance. Additionally, social withdrawal contributed to feelings of loneliness and exclusion, further exacerbating the challenges faced by these students in adapting to the school environment. The researchers concluded that social withdrawal had a detrimental effect on both academic performance and social relationships. They recommended that schools develop programs to help withdrawn students engage with their peers and teachers. Such programs could include group activities, social skills training, and peer mentoring. The study also highlighted the importance of school counselors in identifying and providing support for socially withdrawn

students. They explored how peer relationships mediate the effect of withdrawal behaviors on classroom adjustment in secondary schools in Enugu, Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers surveyed 300 students and conducted focus group discussions with teachers and students. The Classroom Peer Interaction Scale (CPIS) was used to measure peer relationships, while withdrawal behaviors were assessed using the Social Adjustment Scale. Results indicated that students with positive peer relationships were less likely to exhibit withdrawal behaviors, even when experiencing academic stress or personal challenges. Conversely, students with poor peer support displayed higher rates of classroom withdrawal and struggled to form meaningful connections with teachers and classmates. Teachers emphasized the role of group activities in reducing withdrawal behaviors, noting that collaborative tasks helped students feel included and valued. The study concluded that fostering strong peer networks within schools could significantly mitigate withdrawal behaviors and improve classroom adjustment. Recommendations included introducing peer mentoring programs and encouraging cooperative learning strategies.

Adeyemo and Salami (2020) investigated how withdrawal behaviors influence academic and social adjustment among secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study utilized a descriptive survey design and sampled 250 students across public and private schools. Data was collected using the Student Behavior and Adjustment Inventory (SBAI), which assessed dimensions of withdrawal, such as avoidance of peer interaction and reluctance to participate in class. The study found that withdrawal behaviors were significantly correlated with poor academic performance and social isolation. Students exhibiting withdrawal tendencies often

avoided group work, showed reluctance to ask questions in class, and disengaged from classroom activities. Teachers reported challenges in engaging withdrawn students, noting that these behaviors hindered classroom cohesion. Gender differences were also observed, with female students showing slightly higher rates of withdrawal than male students. The authors recommended implementing peer-support programs and teacher-led initiatives to create an inclusive environment. They suggested that teachers receive training in identifying withdrawal behaviors early and using interventions such as group assignments and participation incentives to reduce social isolation.

Okeke and Umeh (2022) examined the impact of emotional withdrawal on classroom participation and academic performance among students in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study employed a longitudinal design, tracking 200 students over two academic terms. Emotional withdrawal was measured using the Emotional Adjustment and Participation Scale (EAPS), while classroom engagement was assessed through teacher observations and participation records. The findings revealed that emotionally withdrawn students participated less in classroom discussions and showed lower engagement in learning activities. These students often avoided eye contact, gave minimal responses during teacher-student interactions, and displayed reluctance to join extracurricular activities. Over time, emotional withdrawal was linked to declining academic performance and increased absenteeism. The authors suggested implementing school-based counseling services to address the underlying causes of emotional withdrawal, such as family issues or trauma. They also recommended that schools develop training programs for teachers to recognize and support emotionally withdrawn students.

Yusuf and Ibrahim (2023) explored how teacher support influences the adjustment of withdrawn students in classroom settings in Kano State, Nigeria. The study used a correlational design and involved 220 students from six secondary schools. The Teacher Support and Student Adjustment Inventory (TSSAI) was used to measure the perceived level of teacher support and its effect on classroom adjustment. The results showed that students who perceived high levels of teacher support were less likely to exhibit withdrawal behaviors and adjusted better to classroom demands. Specific teacher behaviors, such as providing positive feedback, showing empathy, and encouraging participation, were identified as critical factors in reducing withdrawal tendencies. The study emphasized that teacher-student relationships play a vital role in promoting classroom engagement for withdrawn students. Recommendations included incorporating emotional intelligence training into teacher development programs and implementing mentorship schemes to foster stronger teacher-student bonds.

Empirical Evidence:

Withdrawal in the classroom refers to the behavior where students disengage physically, emotionally, or socially from classroom activities. This can manifest as avoiding participation, minimal interaction with peers or teachers, and reduced attention during lessons. Withdrawal can be voluntary (shyness, introversion) or involuntary (due to stress, anxiety, or learning difficulties). Wentzel (2010) found that socially withdrawn students often have difficulties forming peer relationships, which negatively affects their classroom engagement and academic performance. Rubin, Bukowski & Parker (2006) highlighted that withdrawal behaviors are linked to lower motivation and participation, leading to poor academic adjustment. Akpan &

Uche (2018) observed that students who withdraw from classroom activities experience higher levels of stress and reduced academic achievement, emphasizing the importance of intervention.

Barriers to Counselling Services for First year University Students

The issues and challenges facing counsellors are not peculiar to Nigerian alone, but it is at global level. In most countries in the world today counselling has moved from the confinement of the school to industries, remand homes and other settings due to unemployment distress and economic problems (David, 2019). The growth of guidance and counselling in most countries like Ethiopia, South Africa, Ja pan, China and Nigeria is rather very slow due to insufficient counsellors (Heart, 2018) Watanable and Herr (2019), Daniel (2019), Udom (2019) and Joseph (2019 in their researches discovered that, professional counsellors are faced with serious challenges like lack of acceptance, lack of instruments for psychological tests for appraisal and placement purposes, lack of vocational information, economic, cultural and language barriers.

A second barrier to seeking counseling help is the sense that the counselor is a virtual stranger with whom they do not feel comfortable sharing problems (Fox & Butler, 2019). Another barrier identified in the literature is the stigma frequently associated with talking to a counselor (Chandra & Minkovitz, 2006; Fox & Butler, 2007; Gulliver et al., 2010). Chandra and Minkovitz (2006) found that 59% of eighth graders were too embarrassed to see a counselor because of what other students might say if they found out. Similarly, Fox and Butler (2018)

identified that fear of being seen by other students entering the counselor's office is a barrier. Stigma may serve as a barrier for many university students, but even those who do not appear to stigmatize help from counselors may still avoid seeking professional help. Focus group research with students in the US found that even if these students find value in counseling and would not judge peers who were in counseling, they would resist seeking professional counseling help for themselves (Del Mauro & Williams, 2020), a finding more pronounced for boys (Raviv et al., 2019). Undergraduate students tend to overestimate their ability to manage emotional problems, presuming they are better able to handle their own problems than may actually be the case (Raviv et al., 2009).

Another critical barrier that interferes with students' willingness to seek help from professional counselors is a lack of trust in the counselor. Multiple studies have found that startlingly high percentages of adolescents do not trust counselors and do not believe counselors will keep their conversations confidential (Chan & Quinn, 2019; Chandra & Minkovitz, 2018; Del Mauro & Williams, 2013; Fox & Butler, 2007; Timlin-Scalera et al., 2017). A final barrier that may impact these students' desire to seek help from counselors is a fear of being judged; some studies indicate that students may resist seeking counseling help because they are worried what the counselor will think about them and their problems (Del Mauro & Williams, 2013; Yap, Reavley, & Jorm, 2018).

Olayinka and Olanrewaju (2019) conducted a study examining how sex differences in behavioral problems impact school adjustment among adolescents in Lagos, Nigeria. The study

involved 400 adolescents from four secondary schools and used a combination of behavioral assessment tools, including teacher ratings and self-reports from students. The study revealed that male adolescents exhibited higher rates of aggression, hyperactivity, and conduct problems compared to their female counterparts. These behaviors were linked to poor classroom performance, frequent disciplinary issues, and difficulty forming positive relationships with peers. Boys with behavioral problems often faced academic challenges due to their disruptive behaviors, which affected their classroom participation and focus. Female adolescents, while less likely to display overt behavioral problems, often faced internalizing issues such as anxiety and depressive symptoms. These issues led to emotional withdrawal, which impacted their social interactions and academic engagement. Although they did not exhibit disruptive behaviors, their academic adjustment was compromised by their emotional struggles. The authors recommended that interventions should be designed to address the distinct behavioral and emotional needs of each gender. For boys, programs focused on anger management and improving impulse control were suggested, while girls would benefit from counseling and stress management programs to help them cope with anxiety and depression.

Eze and Chukwudi (2018) investigated how behavioral problems impact classroom adjustment among Nigerian primary school children, focusing on gender differences. The study involved 350 primary school children from five schools in southeastern Nigeria. Behavioral problems were assessed through teacher reports, and academic performance was measured using school records. The study found that boys were more likely to exhibit aggressive behaviors, such as fighting and defiance, which led to poor classroom behavior and academic struggles. These

externalizing behaviors were associated with difficulty focusing in class and forming positive relationships with teachers and peers. Boys also received more disciplinary actions due to their disruptive behavior. In contrast, girls in the study showed higher levels of internalizing behaviors, such as anxiety and depression. These behaviors affected their ability to participate in class activities and caused withdrawal from peer interactions. While girls did not exhibit disruptive behaviors, their academic performance was affected by emotional distress, which led to lower academic achievement. The authors concluded that gender-sensitive approaches should be implemented in schools to address the different behavioral challenges faced by boys and girls. They recommended that schools provide boys with programs to manage aggression and promote positive behavior, while girls would benefit from counseling services to address emotional and social challenges.

Teachers' perceptions of gender and behavior play a significant role in how behavioral problems are addressed in the classroom. Research suggests that teachers may have different expectations and responses based on a student's sex. Boys with behavioral problems are often viewed as more disruptive than girls exhibiting similar behaviors (Wang et al., 2018). This bias can lead to increased disciplinary measures for boys while girls may receive more support but not necessarily the attention they need for their internal struggles. A study by Lee and Smith (2016) highlights that teachers' differential treatment based on gender often influences students' self-efficacy and classroom participation, affecting their overall adjustment. To foster better classroom adjustment, it is essential for educators to adopt an equitable approach that considers the unique needs of both male and female students. Implementing interventions tailored to

specific behavioral problems can help. For example, social-emotional learning programs can assist in teaching skills such as emotional regulation and conflict resolution, benefiting all students, particularly those exhibiting behavioral issues (CASEL, 2015).

Akinyemi et al. (2021) conducted a mixed-method study to explore how gender influences classroom adjustment among Nigerian secondary school students, with a focus on behavioral problems. The research was conducted in Lagos State, Nigeria, involving 500 students from 5 different schools. The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods, including structured questionnaires and interviews with teachers and students. The study found that male students exhibited more externalizing behaviors, such as aggression and impulsivity, compared to female students. These behaviors were linked to poor academic performance, reduced classroom participation, and strained relationships with peers and teachers. In contrast, female students were more prone to internalizing behaviors, including anxiety and withdrawal. These internalizing behaviors impacted their classroom adjustment, as they often led to a lack of engagement and difficulties in peer relationships. The study revealed that male students struggled more with emotional regulation, which contributed to their behavioral issues in the classroom. For instance, aggressive behaviors were more prevalent among boys, resulting in frequent disciplinary actions and academic struggles. On the other hand, female students exhibited greater emotional withdrawal and social anxiety, which hindered their ability to interact effectively with peers and teachers. They also highlighted the importance of gender-sensitive interventions in addressing these behavioral problems. They suggested that school systems should implement gender-tailored strategies to support both boys and girls. For boys, anger management programs

and conflict resolution training were recommended, while for girls, interventions should focus on building self-esteem and social skills to address anxiety and withdrawal tendencies. The findings of this study emphasize the need for schools to understand and address the distinct behavioral challenges faced by male and female students. Akinyemi et al. concluded that improving classroom adjustment requires an awareness of the gender-specific behavioral patterns and providing targeted interventions to promote emotional well-being and academic success for both genders.

Okeke and Adeyemo (2020) examined the role of gender in behavioral problems and their impact on academic adjustment among secondary school students in Ibadan, Nigeria. Using a survey design, the researchers collected data from 300 students across three secondary schools. They administered behavioral assessments to identify issues such as aggression, attention problems, and anxiety, which were analyzed alongside the students' academic performance and classroom behavior. The results showed a significant gender difference in behavioral problems. Male students were more likely to exhibit externalizing behaviors, such as aggression and hyperactivity, which disrupted their classroom engagement and interactions with teachers and peers. These behaviors were often linked to lower academic performance, as boys tended to struggle with staying focused and following classroom rules. In contrast, female students were more likely to experience internalizing problems such as anxiety and depression, which affected their ability to concentrate and engage in classroom activities. While these students were generally quieter and less disruptive, their lack of participation and academic underachievement were attributed to their emotional struggles. The study concluded that gender-specific approaches

are essential in addressing behavioral issues in the classroom. The researchers recommended that boys receive support for managing aggression and impulsivity, while girls should be provided with resources to cope with anxiety and depression. Both groups would benefit from programs that promote emotional regulation and resilience, fostering better classroom adjustment.

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This study examined the effects of counselling services on the on the adjustment and adaptation of first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin. University students are constantly exposed to psychosocial stressors throughout their academic careers, with a personal square exhibiting more emotional and intellectual sternness than previous educational levels.

Students go through a lot of stress and hardships at this point, leading to various physical, social, and emotional issues (Saleem and Mahmood, 2017). The majority of first-year students have reported that moving to campus is the most difficult adjustment period of their lives (Aderi et al., 2017). According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual Fifth Edition Text Revision (DSM-V-TR) diagnostic criteria, adjustment disorders are characterized by a maladaptive emotional response to identifiable stressful events, such as the loss of a job, divorce, or failure in school

1. Personal Barriers These are obstacles that originate from the student themselves: Stigma and Shame: Many students fear being judged for seeking help, seeing counseling as a sign of weakness. Lack of Awareness: First-year students may not know counseling services exist or what they offer. Low Self-Efficacy: Some students may feel they can handle problems alone or doubt counseling will help. Cultural/Religious Beliefs: Cultural norms may discourage discussing personal or mental health issues with strangers.

2. Institutional Barriers These relate to the university environment and policies: Limited Access: Counseling centers may have insufficient staff or limited office hours, leading to long waiting times. Cost: Even if services are available, there may be indirect costs (transport, materials, or fees for private counseling). Lack of Promotion: Universities may not effectively inform students about services or events related to mental health. Inflexible Scheduling: Counseling sessions may clash with academic timetables, discouraging attendance.

3. Social and Peer-Related Barriers Interactions with others can influence willingness to seek help: Peer Influence: Negative opinions or teasing from peers can discourage students from seeking counseling. Fear of Breaching Confidentiality: Students may worry that personal

information will not remain private. Limited Peer Support Networks: First-year students may be isolated, making them less likely to learn about or be encouraged to access services.

4. Psychological/Emotional Barriers These stem from the student's mental state: Anxiety or Depression: Symptoms can make initiating help-seeking difficult. Fear of Change: Counseling may require confronting uncomfortable feelings or making life adjustments, which can be intimidating. Previous Negative Experiences: Past unsatisfactory interactions with counselors may discourage students from returning.

5. Structural/Environmental Barriers These involve broader logistical or environmental factors: Physical Location: Counseling offices may be hard to reach or in areas that feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Overcrowding: High student-to-counselor ratios reduce the quality of service and discourage utilization. Technology Barriers: Lack of online counseling options or poor digital infrastructure can limit access.

First-year students often face a combination of personal, institutional, social, and psychological barriers that reduce the likelihood of using counseling services. Awareness campaigns, flexible scheduling, peer education, and destigmatization efforts are key strategies to overcome these barriers.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

This review of literature started by looking at the importance of first-year student adjustment and adaptation. subsequently, the role of counselling in student adjustment and

adaptation was reviewed. Moving on the counselling approaches and intervention and also the barriers to counselling services were also discussed. Having established the background, this review of literature in an attempt to lend credence to this study, investigates the importance of first-year student adjustment and adaptation to the University system. The barriers of counselling services ended this research.) In addition, to the above mentioned factors freshman life can be filled with emotional stressors such as loneliness, home sickness, grief, confusion and uncertainty all related to break from their primary attachment figures-parents and or other loved ones .The role of counselling services in the school system cannot be overemphasized. counselling services have always played a leading role in terms of student adjustment and adaptation. For this reason, counselling services are sine qua non to child's development. According to Eyo, Joshua, and Esuong (2016), counselling is one of the educational services that promotes the effectiveness of the educationa`l system for goals attainment and guiding learners through the learning process. This is in line with the goals of educational services as contained in the National Policy on Education (2004) which are to facilitate the implementation of the educational policy; the attainment of policy goals and the promotion of effectiveness of educational system; and make learning experiences more meaningful for children. Auni, Songok, Odiambo and Lyanda (2018), highlighted that Counselling is encompassed by activities of relevant services and also processes of helping persons within and outside the school, to achieve their full potentialities in their emotional, moral, social, academic and vocational developments

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology and procedures adopted in this study will be presented under the following subheadings:

- Design of the study
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Design of the Study

This study adopts the descriptive survey research design. This method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. This type of research design is also useful when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, and habits. The objectivity and the ability to gather information from a large group of people makes it suitable for this study.

Population of the Study

The study population will comprise all first-year undergraduate students (both male and female) in the Faculty of Education at the University of Benin, Benin City. A total of 1,442 undergraduates, spread across 15 course areas within the Faculty, will form the population of the study. The table below provides a breakdown.

Department	Male	Female	Total
Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology	35	103	138
Educational Management	79	149	228
Adult and non formal Education	53	89	142
Educational Foundation	87	251	344
Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology	163	144	307
Department of Vocational and Technical Education	113	250	330
Human kinetics sports science	23	57	80
Health and Environmental Education	60	144	203

Source University of Benin, Student Affairs, (2020/2021 – 2023/2024 Academic Sessions)

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study consisted of 150 first-year undergraduate students from the Faculty of Education at the University of Benin. These students represented a variety of course areas within the Faculty, and each had previously undergone counseling. To select the departments from

which the students would be sampled, simple random sampling was used. This method was employed to ensure that each student in the population had an equal chance of being selected, and that no student's chance of being chosen was influenced by the selection of other students. As part of the sampling process, four departments were randomly chosen. These departments together constituted 50% of the total departments within the Faculty of Education. After the departments were selected, all students within these four departments were included in the study, meaning intact groups were used rather than individual students being randomly selected. This approach helped to ensure that the sample was representative of students from different areas of study within the Faculty, while also reducing any bias related to individual selection.

Sampled Distribution of First-Year Undergraduate Students Faculty of Education, University of Benin (2020/2021 – 2023/2024 Academic Sessions)

EDUCATION	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology	163	181	127	173	125	145	96	119
Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology	53	105	43	113	29	70	23	50
Educational Management	77	149	51	134	91	149	62	76
Human kinetics sports science	23	57	27	51	19	68	20	23
Sub total	498	974	351	876	375	792	306	580

Research Instrument

The questionnaire as an instrument was used in gathering information in a descriptive survey was employed in this study. This instrument allows the researcher to gather objective data from large number of respondents. The questionnaire was divided into three (3) sections. The first section gathers information about the respondents demographic information (age, gender, faculty, course of study etc) while the others section was patterned after Likert's scale gathered data on the students prior counselling experience at the university, and third section the effects of counselling on first-year student adjustment and adaptation.

. Validity of the Instrument

To establish the validity of the instrument was subjected to expert review by the research supervisor and two other experts. Department Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology (EECP)/This evaluation is intended to ascertain the appropriateness, clarity, and comprehensibility of the questionnaires items in relation to the respondents cognitive levels, as well as to ensure comprehensive alignment with the objectives of the study. Revisions and recommendations provided by the evaluators was duly incorporated to enhance the instrument's content validity and thereby ensure the reliability and rigor of the research outcomes

Reliability of the Instrument

The dependability of the instrument was established by administering them to twenty (20) 100L students in the Faculty of Vocational Technical Education who not part of the sampled population. There responses were subjected to crombach Alpha method of reliability, and the reliability coefficient value of 0.88 was obtained. This is an inculcation that he instrument was reliable.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the instrument to the respondents, and the completed instruments were retrieved immediately after they were filled out.

Method of Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Research Questions 1 to 4 (RQ1-4) were answered using means and standard deviations ($\bar{x} \pm SD$). Hypothesis One was tested using a one-sample t-test

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter, data collected is analyzed and presented in tabular form and discussed, the analysis and discussion is presented in the order of the research questions in chapter one.

Presentation of Result

The results and \ interpretation of the research questions is first presented before that of the hypothesis.

Research Questions: 1

What is the students' influence of guidance and counselling services on first year undergraduates' adjustment and adaptation in University of Benin?

Table 1: Descriptive in Mean and Standard Deviation of Students' Perception of the Effect of the Guidance and Counselling Services on Adjustment and Adaptation

Variable	N	Calculated Mean	Std.Dev	Theoretical Mean value	Remarks
Effect of GCS	150	39.22	4.31	32.50	Positive

Table 1 showed the descriptive data with respect to the students' perception of the Influence t of the guidance and counselling services (GCS) on first year undergraduates' adjustment and adaptation. From the table, the mean score of students' perception mean score is 39.22 ± 4.31

Standard Deviation. When the obtained mean is compared with the theoretical mean value, the mean score is greater, therefore the students have a positive perception of the effect of the guidance and counselling services (GCS) on first year undergraduates' adjustment and adaptation.

Research Questions: 2

What is the perception of the influence of guidance and counselling services on the academic performance undergraduates in University of Benin?

Table 2: Description of students' perception of the effect of the guidance and counselling services on academic performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	cumulative %
Strongly Agree	46	30.7	30.7
Agree	98	65.3	96.0
Disagree	04	02.7	98.7
Strongly Disagree	02	01.3	100.0
Total	150	100	

Table 2 contains the descriptive of students' responses to their perception of the effect of the guidance and counselling services on academic performance. From the table 46 (30.7%) of the total respondents said strongly agreed, 98(65.3%) of the total respondents said agreed, 04 (02.7%) of the total respondents disagreed while 02 (01.3%) of the total respondents said strongly disagreed. From this analysis the majority (96%) of the undergraduates are of the view that the guidance and counselling services have effect on their academic performance.

Research Questions: 3

What is the influence of guidance and counselling services on the psychological wellbeing of first years undergraduates in University of Benin ?

Table 3: Description of students' perception of the effect of the guidance and counselling services on their psychological wellbeing

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	cumulative %
Strongly Agree	23	15.3	15.3
Agree	127	84.7	100.0
Disagree	--	--	
Strongly Disagree	--	--	
Total	150	100	

Table 3 contains the descriptive of students' responses to their perception of the Influence t of the guidance and counselling services on their psychological wellbeing. From the table 23 (15.3%) of the total respondents said strongly agreed, 127(84.7%) of the total respondents said agreed. However none among them disagreed or strongly disagreed. From this analysis the all (100%) of the undergraduates are of the view that the guidance and counselling services have effect on their psychological wellbeing.

What aspect of the guidance and counselling services was found most helpful among first years undergraduates in University of Benin ?

Table 4: Description of students’ perception of the effect of the guidance and counselling services on their psychological wellbeing

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Academic Counselling	21	14.0
Personal Social Counselling	56	37.3
Time Management	29	19.3
One-on-One Counselling	25	16.7
Stress Management	02	01.3
Social Skill Training	04	02.7
Orientation Exercise	13	08.7
Total	150	100

Table 4 contains the descriptive of students’ responses to aspect of the guidance and counselling services they found most helpful. From the table 21 (14%) “Academic Counselling”, 56(37.3%) “Personal Social Counselling” while 29(19.3%) said “Time Management”. Also 25 (16.7%) “One-on-One Counselling”, 02(01.3%) “Stress Management” 04 (02.7%) said “Social Skill Training” while 13 (08.7%) said it was the Orientation Exercise. From these analyses the majority of them affirmed that the personal social counselling was the most helpful while stress management came last.

Hypothesis Testing

There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female students of the effect of the guidance and counselling services on adjustment and adaptation

Table 5: Independent Sample t-test of Difference in attitude towards marriage for male and female students in the department of Curriculum in Instructional Technology

Sex	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-value	p-value (Sig. 2-tailed)
Male	83	38.73	2.01	148	1.542	.125
Female	67	39.82	6.01			

$\alpha = .05,$ $p > .05$ Not Significant

Table 5 shows difference in the perception of male and female students of the effect of the guidance and counselling services on adjustment and adaptation. From the table, the number of Male N = 83 while Female N = 67. Their Mean values are 38.73 and 39.82 while standard deviations are 2.01 and 6.01 respectively. The t-value of 1.542 is not significant, because, the *p-value* (.125) is greater than *alpha level*. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that both the male and female students have same perception on the effect of the guidance and counselling services on adjustment and adaptation.

Discussion of Findings

The findings for research question one shows that a lot of first year student participated in the counselling programme, as 100% of the population have participated in the counselling programme. Table 1 explains the data with respect to the perception of the effect of that guidance and counselling services (GCS) has on first year undergraduates' adjustment and adaptation. When the obtained mean is compared with the theoretical mean value, the mean score is greater, therefore the students have a positive perception of the effect of the guidance and counselling services on first year undergraduate's adjustment and adaptation. This corroborates the research of Eyo, Joshua, and Esuong (2010) that recognizes that student have a positive perception of the effects of counselling services. University students are constantly exposed to psychosocial stressors throughout their academic careers, with a personal square exhibiting more emotional and intellectual sternness than previous educational levels. Students go through a lot of stress and hardships at this point, leading to various physical, social, and emotional issues (Saleem and Mahmood, 2017). The majority of first-year students have reported that moving to campus is the most difficult adjustment period of their lives (Aderi et al., 2017). According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual Fifth Edition Text Revision (DSM-V-TR) diagnostic criteria, adjustment disorders are characterized by a maladaptive emotional response to identifiable stressful events, such as the loss of a job, divorce, or failure in school (American Psychiatric Association, 2016). It is one of the few diagnostic entities in which an external stressful event is linked to the development of symptoms

The findings for research question two shows that the Table 2 gives a description on how student's perceive the effect of the guidance and counselling services on academic performance. From this analysis the majority (96%) of the undergraduates are of the view that the guidance and counselling services have effect on their academic performance. This is in line with the research by Alemu (2013) which recognizes that counselling has an effect on the academic performance of students.. Past researches also showed that adjustment difficulties are found to be the most common problems among first year students who are going through an active adjustment phase in universities . Many previous studies for example: (Aldwin & Revenson 2011) indicated four aspects of adjustment to college. These are; academic adjustment (dealing with various educational demands of the college), social adjustment (interacting and forming relationships with peers and staff), personal-emotional adjustment (sense of psychological and physiological well being, feeling of calm and stable) and institutional attachment (feeling about the institution and satisfaction with the institution). All these aspects require changes in roles, relationships, academic and social demans . According to Yusuf Ethiopian university and college level students also pass through same difficulties and challenges during their freshman university life. Yusuf asserts that students continuing higher education experience with different kinds of challenges while economic, psychosocial, educational, and health are among the dominant concerns. Specially, newly enrolled students suffer from either multiple or at least one form of the commonly reported problems more frequently than seniors. Furthermore, students may experience additional problems due to cultural differences and language barriers, in multicultural campus society like wolaita Sodo University. In general, research findings in the area of student

adjustment process and difficulties indicated that if students are unable to adapt to the challenges they could face in university, there is greater chance to refrain from their studies. And the result would be more deplorable. Concerning with different challenges that students are supposed to adjust to, it would be desirable to assess the students' alternative coping strategies. Help seeking, a form of coping strategy that relies on other people, is defined as communicating with other people to obtain help in terms of understanding, advice, information, treatment, and general support in response to a problem or distressing experiences (Letseka 2018).

The findings for research question three shows that the Table 3 explains how student perceive counselling as a tool for promoting psychological well-being. From this analysis the all (100%) of the undergraduates are of the view that the guidance and counselling services have effect on their psychological wellbeing. This matches with the research by Aldwin & Revenson (2011) which emphasized on counselling as a tool for promoting psychological well-being.

Table 4 explains the students' responses to aspect of the guidance and counselling services they found most helpful. From these analyses the majority of them affirmed that the personal social counselling(19.3%) was the most helpful while stress management(02.7%) came last. This is in line with the research by Freud (1912, 1937) which establishes that personal-social counselling is the most helpful for student's adjustment and adaptation.

Table 5 explains difference in the perception of male and female students of the e Influence of the guidance and counselling services on adjustment and adaptation. The t-value of 1.542 is not significant, because, the p-value (240) is greater than alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that both the male and female students have same perception on the effect of the guidance and counselling services on adjustment and adaptation.

In summary, the in-depth discussion of the findings sheds more light on the effects of counselling on the adjustment and adaptation of first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin. Each finding resonated with contemporary research, contributing to a proper understanding of counselling multifaceted influence. The high student participation rate, the influence counselling has on their academic performances, psychological well-being, and all the roles it plays in student's adjustment and adaptation. As student transition from secondary school to the University, counselling is Important for an effective adjustment and adaptation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, this work will be summarized, conclusions will be reached and recommendations will be made.

Summary

This study investigated the Influence of counselling on the adjustment and adaptation of first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin, 4 research questions were asked, the study used a survey research, and data collected was analyzed and presented in tabular form.

The Findings of this work reveal the following,

- i. Students have a positive perception of the effects of counselling services on first year undergraduate student's adjustment and adaptation.
- ii. Counselling is effective in influencing academic performance of first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin.
- iii. Counselling also influences the psychological well-being of first year undergraduate student's in the university of Benin.
- iv. First year undergraduate students in the university of Benin find personal-social counselling most helpful amongst the counselling services rendered.

- v. Overall counselling is seen to be highly effective in the adjustment and adaptation of first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has shed light on the significant role that counselling plays in the adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students at the University of Benin. The findings presented in this research have provided valuable insights into the impact of counseling on various aspects of students' lives, including academic performance, social and emotional well-being, and overall adjustment to the university environment. First and foremost, the data clearly indicate that the majority of students perceive counseling services as beneficial. They believe that counseling positively affects their academic performance, with a substantial number acknowledging its influence on their psychological well-being. This underscores the importance of counseling as a support mechanism in helping students navigate the challenges of their first year at university. Furthermore, the analysis of students' preferences for specific counseling services revealed that personal social counseling was identified as the most helpful aspect. This insight can inform the university's counseling service providers in tailoring their offerings to better address the unique needs of first-year students, particularly in the realm of personal and social development.

Importantly, the study's findings also indicate that there is no significant difference in the perception of the effects of counseling between male and female students. This suggests that counseling services are equally effective and well-received by students of both genders. Overall,

the results of this research underscore the importance of providing effective and well-rounded counseling services for first-year undergraduate students. Such services contribute not only to their academic success but also to their overall well-being and successful adaptation to university life. As the University of Benin continues to enhance its support systems for incoming students, this study serves as a valuable resource for optimizing counseling services and ensuring that every first-year student has the opportunity to thrive academically and personally

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made by the researcher;

1. Counselling services should be enhanced: The University of Benin should consider further enhancing its counseling services, both in terms of availability and accessibility. This may involve increasing the number of counselors, extending counseling hours, or providing online counseling options to accommodate a wider range of students' schedules and preferences.
2. There should be diverse counselling programmes :Recognizing that students have varying preferences for counseling types, it is advisable to diversify counseling programs. Offering a mix of academic counseling, personal social counseling, time management workshops, and stress management sessions can cater to the diverse needs of first-year students.

3. Student should have regular feedback: Implement a systematic feedback mechanism for students to express their opinions and suggestions regarding counseling services. Periodic surveys or focus group discussions can provide valuable insights into their evolving needs and preferences.
4. Ensure an appropriate counselor-student ratio to maintain the quality of counseling. Overloaded counselors may not be able to provide adequate support, so consider hiring additional counselors if necessary.
5. There should be a Gender-Neutral Approach: Given that there was no significant difference in perceptions between male and female students, maintain a gender-neutral approach in delivering counseling services and avoid gender biases in service provision.
6. Encourage collaboration between counseling services and academic departments to ensure a holistic approach to students' development. Academic advisors and counselors can work together to address academic challenges effectively.

These recommendations aim to further enhance the effectiveness of counseling services at the University of Benin and ensure that they continue to support the successful adjustment and adaptation of first-year undergraduate students. Regular assessment and adaptability are key to meeting the evolving needs of students in their academic and personal journeys.

Suggestions for Further Studies

For the fact that no research work is totally all inclusive, the following are recommended for further studies;

1. The role of parental involvement and support in student's adjustment and adaptation.
2. The influence of cultural and contextual factors in the effectiveness of counselling services.
3. Effectiveness of online counselling in supporting the adjustment and adaptation of first year undergraduate students.

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION AND COUNSELLING
PSYCHOLOGY**

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

Dear Respondents,

The researcher is a student of the above-named department, faculty and university. This questionnaire is designed to investigate the influence of counselling on the adjustment and adaptation of first year undergraduate students in the university of Benin. You are requested to complete the questionnaire as sincerely and objectively possible. Your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

OLUMORIN ATINUKE FAITH

Researcher

SECTION A: Demographic Information

INSTRUCTION: Please tick { } the answer that best describes your response

a Age: 15 Years -20 Years () 21 Years -25 Years ()

b Sex: (1) Male [] (2) Female []

Items

1-5 for RQ1

6-12 for RQ2

13-21 for RQ3RQ4 = Collect first (EECP) students first semester aggraded scorn

RQ1**SECTION B: Adjustment And Adaptation**

Kindly pick the option that best describe your experience.

1. What is the students' perception of the influence of the guidance and counselling services on first year undergraduates' adjustment and adaptation?
 - a) Far
 - b) Poor
2. What is the students' perception of the influence of the guidance and counselling services on academic performance?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
3. What is the students' perception of the influence of the guidance and counselling services on psychological wellbeing?
 - a) Very positive
 - b) Positive
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Negative
 - e) Very negative

RQ1 Section C: First year undergraduates

What aspect of guidance and counselling services did found most helpful?

Academic counselling

6	Personal-social counselling	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7	Time management strategies							
8	One-on-one counseling							
9	Psychoeducation							

10	Stress management techniques							
11	Social skills training							
12	Orientation exercise							

SECTION C: influence counselling on the adjustment and adaptation

Please tick { } the answer that best describes your response.

KEY: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
13	Receiving counselling is important for first year undergraduate students.				
14	The counselling program influenced my psychological well-being.				
15	The counselling program helped me address all the problems I faced as a first year student.				
16.	The counselling program helped improved my time-management skill as a first year student.				
17.	The counselling program was easily accessible to me as a first year student.				
18.	The Counselling program improved my level of adaptaton as a first year student to the university environment.				
19	The counseling program was tailored to suit my needs and cultural				

	background.				
20	The counselling program has helped in influencing my decision making process.				
21.	Technological innovation like online counselling was utilised during the counselling program paternally helpful to first years students				

Reliability

RELIABILITY

/VARIABLES=A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 A6 A7 A8 A9 A10 A11 A12 A13 A14 A15 A16 A17 A18 A19 A20

/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL

/MODEL=ALPHA.

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	20	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	20	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.887	20

FREQUENCIES

Statistics					
		AGE	SEX	RELIGIO N	FAC
N	Valid	150	150	150	150
	Missing	0	0	0	0

Frequency Table

AGE					
		Frequen cy	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15.0 0	8	5.3	5.3	5.3
	16.0 0	33	22.0	22.0	27.3
	17.0 0	24	16.0	16.0	43.3
	18.0 0	36	24.0	24.0	67.3
	19.0 0	9	6.0	6.0	73.3
	20.0 0	17	11.3	11.3	84.7
	21.0 0	14	9.3	9.3	94.0
	22.0 0	8	5.3	5.3	99.3
	28.0 0	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

SEX					
		Frequenc y	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	83	55.3	55.3	55.3

FEMA LE	67	44.7	44.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

RELIGION					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	CHRISTIANITY	108	72.0	72.0	72.0
	ISLAM	40	26.7	26.7	98.7
	TRADITIONAL	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=B1 B2 B3 B4
/ORDER=ANALYSIS.

Frequency

Statistics					
		B1	B2	B3	B4
N	Valid	150	150	150	150
	Missing	0	0	0	0

Frequency Table

B1					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	150	100.0	100.0	100.0

B2					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	150	100.0	100.0	100.0

B3					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

	VERY POSITIVE	39	26.0	26.0	26.0
Valid	POSITIVE	105	70.0	70.0	96.0
	NEUTRAL	6	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

4					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	ACADEMIC COUNSELLING	21	14.0	14.0	14.0
	PERSONAL SOCIAL COUNSELLING	56	37.3	37.3	51.3
	TIME MGT	29	19.3	19.3	70.7
Valid	ONE-ON-ONE COUNSELLING	25	16.7	16.7	87.3
	STRESS MGT	2	1.3	1.3	88.7
	SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING	4	2.7	2.7	91.3
	ORIENTATION EXERCISE	13	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=EFFECT

DESCRIPTIVES

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
EFFECT	150	34.00	70.00	5883.00	39.2200	4.30837
Valid N (listwise)	150					

C2				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A	127	84.7	84.7	84.7
Valid SA	23	15.3	15.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

C5				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
SD	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
D	4	2.7	2.7	4.0
Valid A	98	65.3	65.3	69.3
SA	46	30.7	30.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

T-TEST GROUPS=SEX(1 2)
 /MISSING=ANALYSIS
 /VARIABLES=EFFECT
 /CRITERIA=CI(.95).

T-Test

Group Statistics					
	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
EFFE CT	MALE	83	38.7349	2.01267	.22092
	FEMAL E	67	39.8209	6.01746	.73515

Independent Samples Test	
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances
	t-test for Equality of Means

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
EFF EC T	6.640	.011	-	148	.125	-	.70434	-	.30591
			1.54 2			1.0859 6		2.4778 2	
			-	77.9 47	.161	-	.76763	-	.44229
			1.41 5			1.0859 6		2.6142 0	