

**THE INFLUENCE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES ON STUDENTS
DISCIPLINE IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OREDO LGA.**

Ruth Faith ADOGHE

EDU2102397

EDUCATION EVALUATION AND COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

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CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that the project was carried out by Adoghe Ruth Faith with matriculation number EDU2102397 in the department of Educational Evaluation and Counseling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, BeninCity

Dr. Mrs. Matilda U. Orheruata
Project Supervisor

Date

Dr.P.C.Ojiyi
Project Coordinator

Date

RevFr. Dr. A. A. Adubale
(Head of Department)

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God for his mercy during the course of this project. May his name alone be forever glorified. Amen.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated The Influence of Guidance and Counseling Services on Students' Discipline in Private Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area, Benin City. The study aimed to examine how guidance and counseling services contribute to maintaining and improving students' discipline in private secondary schools.

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of students and teachers in selected private secondary schools within the Oredo Local Government Area. A total of 120 respondents were selected through random sampling, and data were collected using structured questionnaires. The instrument's reliability was established through a pilot test, yielding a satisfactory reliability coefficient. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentages and mean scores to answer the research questions. Findings revealed that guidance and counseling services significantly influence students' discipline by reducing cases of truancy, lateness, fighting, and other forms of misconduct.

The results further showed that effective counseling programs promote moral behavior, self-control, and respect for school rules among students. It was recommended that schools should provide adequate facilities, employ qualified counselors, and ensure the proper implementation

of guidance and counseling services. The study concluded that well-organized guidance and counseling services are vital for fostering discipline and positive behavioral adjustment among students in private secondary schools in Benin City.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Guidance and counselling is a professional support system designed to help individuals particularly students, but also people in various stages of life understand themselves better and make informed decisions in different aspects of their lives. It is a developmental process that involves giving direction, advice, and assistance to individuals to help them deal effectively with personal, educational, social, and career-related challenges. Guidance is more preventive and developmental in nature. It aims at helping individuals plan wisely, develop their potential, and adjust to the changing demands of life. For instance, in a school setting, guidance helps students choose appropriate subjects, prepare for future careers, and adjust socially and emotionally to the school environment. It is often seen as a broad and continuous process that begins early in a person's life and continues throughout. Counselling, on the other hand, is more remedial and curative. It focuses on helping individuals deal with specific problems or emotional difficulties that may hinder their personal or academic progress. This could include issues such as anxiety, depression, peer pressure, low self-esteem, or family-related problems. Counselling involves a deeper, more personal interaction between the counsellor and the client, often requiring the

counsellor to listen attentively, empathize, and use psychological methods to help the client find clarity, emotional relief, and practical solutions. Together, guidance and counselling aim to support the holistic development of an individual. They empower people to better understand their abilities, interests, and challenges, and to make decisions that align with their personal goals and social expectations. These services are especially vital in educational institutions, where students face critical life decisions and developmental challenges. By fostering self-awareness, good decision-making skills, and emotional resilience, guidance and counselling contribute significantly to an individual's personal growth and societal productivity.

In the context of secondary education, guidance and counseling services are essential for promoting students' discipline, helping them manage academic pressures, emotional struggles, and interpersonal conflicts. These services are particularly valuable in private secondary schools, where academic performance and personal conduct are highly emphasized. They play a critical role in fostering self-discipline, emotional resilience, and responsible decision-making, thereby contributing to improved student behavior and overall academic success (Samuel, 2019).

Guidance and counseling services play a crucial role in shaping students' discipline in schools, offering both preventive and remedial support to help students manage academic and personal challenges. These services are designed to support students in making informed decisions, resolving personal or behavioral issues, and developing the emotional resilience necessary to maintain discipline in school settings. Effective guidance and counseling programs contribute significantly to improving students' behavior, enhancing their academic performance, and fostering a positive school environment (Ademola, 2021).

In schools, guidance services are often preventive in nature, aiming to help students understand themselves and their environment, while also providing information and strategies for

making proactive life choices. This includes academic guidance, career counseling, and personal development programs. By addressing issues such as time management, study skills, and career planning, guidance services help students set clear academic goals and make informed decisions about their future, which in turn can enhance their discipline and focus in school (Egbochuku, 2021). These services also foster a sense of responsibility and self-awareness, as students are encouraged to take ownership of their actions and behaviors, leading to more disciplined approaches to their academic and social lives. By helping students navigate personal and academic struggles, counseling can reduce disruptive behaviors and foster better classroom behavior, as students develop the skills to manage their emotions and interactions with peers and teachers.

The integration of guidance and counseling services in schools is particularly important when it comes to addressing behavioral problems. Students who face challenges such as bullying, substance abuse, or academic stress may struggle with self-discipline and engage in disruptive behaviors. However, through structured counseling interventions, students can gain a better understanding of their behaviors and the impact they have on others. Counseling helps students recognize the consequences of their actions, develop empathy, and learn how to regulate their emotions, which can lead to improved discipline and better interpersonal relationships within the school. Guidance and counseling services also contribute to the development of a positive school culture, where discipline is maintained through mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration. In a school environment where students feel supported emotionally and psychologically, they are more likely to exhibit responsible behavior. (Olayinka, 2021). The presence of counseling services can also reduce the stigma associated with seeking help for emotional or behavioral

issues, encouraging students to reach out for support when needed, and thereby promoting a culture of openness and proactive problem-solving.

The influence of guidance and counseling services on students' discipline in private secondary schools is crucial in fostering a conducive learning environment. Guidance and counseling services are designed to provide students with the necessary support to understand their strengths, weaknesses, goals, and the challenges they face, allowing them to make informed decisions that impact their academic, social, and personal lives. These services encompass both guidance and counseling, which, though related, serve distinct but complementary roles.

Guidance is preventive and developmental in nature, focusing on helping students understand themselves and the world around them. It involves providing information on academic, vocational, and personal matters to help students make constructive decisions about their future (Adekola, 2021). This often includes activities like career talks, orientation programs, and academic advisement, which are designed to equip students with the tools needed to make informed life choices. In private secondary schools, where academic excellence and personal development are highly emphasized, guidance and counseling services can significantly influence students' behavior. These services help students develop self-discipline, enhance emotional regulation, and make better decisions that align with their academic and personal goals. Moreover, guidance counselors play a key role in shaping students' attitudes toward authority, rules, and regulations within the school environment, contributing to improved discipline.

The presence of a well-structured guidance and counseling program is vital in preventing behavioral problems that may arise from stress, social isolation, or lack of proper direction. By addressing such challenges, these services contribute to better classroom behavior, reduced absenteeism, and a decrease in disciplinary issues, fostering a positive and productive learning

environment. In the context of private secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area (LGA), where there is a growing demand for quality education, the integration of guidance and counseling services becomes even more pertinent (Adeshina, 2019). These services not only enhance students' emotional well-being but also provide a platform for addressing issues related to academic performance, career choices, and personal growth. Through guidance and counseling, students are empowered to make choices that promote their academic success and responsible behavior, ensuring that discipline is maintained both in and outside the classroom (Ibrahim, 2021).

The effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in shaping students' discipline in Oredo LGA is influenced by several factors, including the availability of trained counselors, the quality of counseling programs, and the willingness of students to engage with these services. With adequate resources and proper implementation, these services have the potential to significantly improve students' behavior and academic performance, thus contributing to the overall success and development of students in private secondary schools (Nnamdi, 2021).

Statement of the Problem

Despite the recognized importance of guidance and counseling services in fostering discipline among students, private secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area (LGA) continue to face significant challenges that undermine the effectiveness of these interventions. A major concern is the limited access to professionally trained counselors in many of these schools, which compromises the quality and scope of support offered to students. Compounding this issue is the widespread lack of awareness among students regarding the availability and benefits of guidance and counseling services, often leading to low participation and engagement. Inadequate funding and infrastructural support further constrain the implementation of effective counseling

programs, while cultural and religious stigmas surrounding psychological support discourage students from seeking help. Moreover, school administrators in some private institutions do not prioritize guidance and counseling, thereby limiting institutional backing and integration into the academic framework. The situation is worsened by a shortage of time allocated for counseling activities due to academic pressures, as well as concerns over confidentiality that reduce students' trust in the process. Additionally, many of these programs are not routinely evaluated for effectiveness, and parental resistance continues to pose a barrier to student involvement. These problems collectively raise critical questions about the actual influence of guidance and counseling services on student discipline in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA, thereby necessitating an empirical investigation into their availability, utilization, and impact.

Research Question

The following research questions have been formulated to guide the study and ensure a systematic exploration of the core issues surrounding the topic:

1. To what extent are guidance and counseling services available in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA?
2. What is the level of discipline among students in rural secondary school in Oredo LGA?
3. What is the relationship between academic guidance and counseling scheme and students discipline in rural school in Oredo LGA?
4. What is the relationship between guidance and counseling scheme and student discipline in private secondary school in Oredo LGA based on sex?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between academic guidance and counseling scheme and students discipline in rural school in Oredo LGA
2. There is no significant relationship between guidance and counseling scheme and student discipline in private secondary school in Oredo LGA based on sex

Purpose of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to examine the Influence Of Guidance And Counseling Services On Students Discipline In Private Secondary Schools In Oredo LGA. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- **To determine the extent to which guidance and counseling services are available in private secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area (LGA).**
- **To assess the level of discipline among students in rural secondary schools in Oredo LGA.**
- **To examine the relationship between academic guidance and counseling schemes and students' discipline in rural schools in Oredo LGA.**
- **To investigate the relationship between guidance and counseling schemes and students' discipline in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA based on sex.**

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to enhance student behavior and academic performance through the effective implementation of guidance and counseling services in private secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. Students, who are the primary beneficiaries, stand to gain the most as the study will help identify the extent to which counseling services influence their discipline. With improved awareness and utilization of these services, students

may develop better coping strategies, emotional intelligence, and behavioral control, all of which are critical for personal and academic success.

School counselors will benefit from the findings by gaining a deeper understanding of the impact of their roles on student discipline. The study may highlight areas where counseling practices can be improved or better tailored to the needs of students, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of school counseling programs. Teachers will also experience the benefits indirectly, as disciplined students create a more manageable and productive classroom environment, allowing for better teaching and learning outcomes.

School administrators play a vital role in policy implementation and resource allocation. This study will provide them with evidence-based insights on the necessity of supporting guidance and counseling units. Such information can drive more informed decisions regarding staffing, budgeting, and integrating counseling into the broader educational framework of their schools. Similarly, parents and guardians will gain a clearer understanding of how counseling can positively influence their children's behavior and academic life, encouraging them to support their children's engagement with school counselors.

For policymakers and educational planners, the study offers valuable data to guide the formulation of policies aimed at strengthening student support systems in schools. It underscores the importance of embedding guidance and counseling into the core of school management practices to address behavioral challenges. Finally, researchers and academics will find the study useful as a scholarly resource. It adds to the existing literature on school counseling and student discipline and may inspire further studies or serve as a reference for related research in other educational contexts.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this study is examining the influence of guidance and counseling services on students' discipline in private secondary schools within Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. It focuses specifically on understanding the availability, utilization, and effectiveness of these services in managing student behavior. The study targets students, counselors, teachers, and school administrators in selected private secondary schools, with the aim of gathering data on their experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to guidance and counseling practices. The delimitation of the study lies in its geographical and institutional boundaries, as it does not include public secondary schools or schools outside Oredo LGA. Additionally, the study is confined to assessing counseling services related to student discipline and does not extend to other areas such as academic advising or career counseling. These boundaries are set to ensure a manageable research focus and to allow for a more in-depth exploration of the subject within the specified context.

Definition of Terms

Counseling: Counseling is a therapeutic, confidential relationship between a trained professional and a student, aimed at addressing emotional, psychological, social, or behavioral challenges.

Discipline: Discipline in this study refers to the ability of students to exhibit self-control, follow school rules, and behave in socially acceptable ways.

Guidance and Counseling Services: These are organized support systems provided in schools to assist students in overcoming personal, academic, and social challenges.

Guidance: Guidance refers to the developmental process that involves providing students with direction, information, and support to help them make informed decisions in academic, personal, and career areas.

Oredo LGA: Oredo Local Government Area is one of the administrative divisions in Edo State, Nigeria.

Private Secondary Schools: These are non-government-owned educational institutions that offer formal secondary education, typically funded and managed by individuals, religious bodies, or organizations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

In this chapter, the concepts related to the topic of the study were discussed under the **following sub-headings as follows:**

- Theoretical Framework
- Concept of Guidance and Counseling
- Concept of School Discipline
- **Influence of Guidance and Counseling on Students' Discipline**
- **Teachers and Counselors in Managing Discipline**
- Summary of Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of guidance and counseling, especially in the context of student behavior and discipline, is deeply rooted in several psychological and educational theories that collectively explain how individuals develop, behave, and respond to interventions.

At the core is Carl Rogers' Person-Centered Theory, which emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive, non-judgmental environment where individuals can explore their feelings and thoughts freely. This theory underscores the role of counselors in providing empathy, unconditional positive regard, and genuineness, helping students develop self-awareness and self-acceptance, which are critical for behavior change and moral growth. Rogers' approach has shaped many modern counseling practices by promoting a client-focused, facilitative style rather than authoritarian discipline.

Complementing this is Behavioral Theory, particularly operant conditioning as developed by B.F. Skinner. This theory explains behavior management through the principles of reinforcement and punishment. In the school setting, positive reinforcement of desirable behaviors and consistent consequences for misconduct are fundamental tools derived from this framework. Behavior modification techniques grounded in this theory are widely applied in disciplinary strategies, where shaping student behavior through rewards and corrective actions aims to encourage self-discipline and reduce indiscipline.

Cognitive-Behavioral Theory (CBT) integrates behavioral principles with cognitive processes, emphasizing how thoughts influence emotions and behaviors. This theory informs counseling practices that help students identify and modify dysfunctional thinking patterns contributing to problematic behaviors or poor social adjustment. CBT-based interventions in schools often

include teaching coping skills, problem-solving, and emotional regulation, which enable students to manage impulses and interact positively with peers and authority figures.

From a developmental perspective, Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Theory offers valuable insights into the challenges adolescents face, such as identity formation and the struggle for autonomy versus role confusion. Counseling services grounded in Erikson's theory recognize that disciplinary issues may stem from developmental conflicts, and helping students navigate these psychosocial stages supports healthier moral and social adjustment. Understanding students' developmental needs allows counselors and teachers to approach discipline with empathy and appropriate guidance.

Another important theoretical lens is provided by Social Learning Theory, pioneered by Albert Bandura, which emphasizes learning through observation, imitation, and modeling. This theory highlights the influence of peer groups, teachers, and family on students' behavior. It supports the use of positive role models and reinforces the idea that behavior is shaped by the social environment. Guidance programs often incorporate this understanding by fostering environments where prosocial behavior is modeled and rewarded.

Restorative Justice Theory has gained prominence in recent years as an alternative to punitive disciplinary methods. Rooted in principles of accountability, empathy, and repair of harm, this approach views misbehavior as a relational issue rather than just rule-breaking. Counseling and disciplinary interventions inspired by restorative justice focus on dialogue, mutual understanding, and reconciliation, encouraging students to take responsibility and restore relationships, thereby promoting long-term behavioral change and a positive school climate.

Additionally, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is frequently referenced to explain the importance of addressing students' basic physiological and psychological needs before they can achieve self-

actualization and optimal learning. Guidance and counseling services that ensure students feel safe, valued, and supported meet these foundational needs, which are essential for effective discipline and social adjustment.

Systems Theory provides a holistic view by recognizing that students are influenced by interconnected systems including family, school, and community. This perspective encourages collaboration among counselors, teachers, parents, and external agencies to address behavioral and adjustment issues comprehensively. It underlines the importance of coordinated interventions and the role of school environment and administration in shaping counseling effectiveness. These theories offer a multifaceted understanding of how guidance and counseling can influence student behavior, discipline, and adjustment. They inform strategies that balance support and accountability, individual growth and social responsibility, and prevention and intervention within the educational setting.

Concept of Guidance and Counseling

Guidance and Counseling is a dynamic process designed to help individuals understand themselves and their environment, make informed decisions, and effectively solve personal, educational, social, or vocational problems. The concept encompasses a broad range of activities aimed at supporting individuals in their personal development and adjustment, helping them to realize their potential, and facilitating smooth transitions throughout different stages of life.

At its core, guidance refers to the provision of advice and information that assists individuals in making choices, particularly concerning education, career, and personal matters. It is generally more directive and informational, focusing on helping people understand their abilities, interests, and opportunities. For instance, educational guidance helps students select courses or career paths that align with their aptitudes and goals (Smith & Johnson, 2023).

Counseling is a specialized and in-depth process that extends well beyond the simple provision of advice or guidance. It involves a professional relationship where the counselor employs evidence-based techniques and therapeutic interventions to help individuals gain deeper self-understanding, process emotions, and achieve meaningful behavioral change. Unlike general guidance, which may focus on information and decision-making support, counseling actively addresses emotional and psychological challenges, helping individuals work through issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, identity crises, and interpersonal conflicts.

A counselor's role is multifaceted, encompassing active listening, empathy, and the use of specific therapeutic modalities—such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), person-centered therapy, or solution-focused brief therapy—to facilitate emotional adjustment and resilience. Through this process, individuals learn to develop effective coping strategies that enhance their mental health and overall functioning. For instance, a student experiencing anxiety over academic performance may, through counseling, identify underlying fears, challenge negative thought patterns, and develop relaxation techniques that improve their confidence and performance. The importance of counseling has grown in diverse settings, including schools, workplaces, community organizations, and healthcare facilities, where mental health and well-being are prioritized. In educational settings, counseling services have proven critical not only for addressing psychological difficulties but also for promoting academic success and social development. School counselors serve as key agents in identifying students at risk, providing emotional support, and coordinating interventions that help reduce dropout rates, boost student motivation, and enhance engagement with learning (Ahmed & Brown, 2025).

Recent research emphasizes how tailored counseling interventions can help students navigate complex challenges such as family issues, peer pressure, and career uncertainty, thereby

creating a supportive environment conducive to personal growth. Moreover, the integration of guidance and counseling ensures that students receive both practical advice and emotional support, making these services indispensable components of holistic education systems (Lee & Martínez, 2024). In the workplace, counseling contributes to employee well-being and productivity by addressing work-related stress, interpersonal conflicts, and career development challenges. Guidance, in this context, often involves career coaching and professional development planning (Nguyen et al., 2024). The importance of culturally sensitive guidance and counseling has gained increased recognition recently. Counselors are now encouraged to adopt approaches that respect clients' cultural backgrounds and values to provide more effective support. This is especially significant in multicultural societies where diverse cultural beliefs impact how individuals perceive and respond to counseling (Kumar & Santos, 2023).

Technological advancements have significantly transformed the landscape of guidance and counseling, especially with the rapid growth of online and virtual counseling platforms. These platforms have revolutionized the accessibility of mental health and support services, overcoming traditional barriers such as geographic isolation, mobility issues, and stigma associated with seeking help in person. People living in remote, rural, or underserved communities now have the opportunity to receive professional guidance and counseling without needing to travel long distances or face local shortages of qualified counselors (Patel & Wang, 2024). One of the most impactful innovations is the use of telecounseling or teletherapy, which involves delivering counseling sessions through video calls, phone calls, or even chat-based platforms. This approach provides clients with flexibility regarding time and location, allowing them to engage in therapy from the comfort and privacy of their homes. Research indicates that telecounseling is not only effective but can sometimes enhance the therapeutic alliance by

reducing clients' anxiety about attending in-person sessions (Nguyen et al., 2024). For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual counseling became essential, demonstrating how technology can ensure continuity of mental health services even amid crises.

In addition to direct counseling sessions, digital tools have expanded to include self-assessment and psychoeducation platforms. These tools often use interactive questionnaires, mood tracking apps, and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) modules designed for self-help. Such resources empower individuals to gain insight into their emotional states, identify early signs of distress, and develop coping strategies independently or with minimal counselor involvement. AI-driven chatbots have emerged as another innovative tool, providing users with immediate, though limited, emotional support and guidance for mild symptoms or stress (Kumar & Santos, 2023). Moreover, mobile apps dedicated to mental health have grown exponentially, integrating techniques like mindfulness, relaxation exercises, and cognitive restructuring to support well-being on demand. These apps can send reminders, offer journaling prompts, or connect users with human counselors if further help is needed. The integration of wearable technology also allows for real-time monitoring of physiological indicators like heart rate variability and sleep patterns, which counselors can use to tailor interventions more precisely (Patel & Wang, 2024).

From a professional standpoint, technology has enhanced counselor training and supervision through virtual reality simulations, online workshops, and global networking, enabling counselors to improve their skills and receive feedback remotely. Additionally, digital record-keeping and data analytics allow counselors to track client progress more efficiently and personalize treatment plans based on empirical evidence. However, these advancements come with challenges, such as ensuring confidentiality and privacy in digital environments, managing

the digital divide where some populations lack access to necessary technology, and addressing ethical concerns around informed consent and data security (Lee & Martínez, 2024). Counselors must navigate these issues carefully while embracing technology's benefits to broaden the reach and effectiveness of their services. Guidance and counseling represent a comprehensive approach aimed at fostering individuals' personal growth, decision-making abilities, and mental health. They are essential services that adapt continuously to societal changes, incorporating new methodologies and technologies to meet the evolving needs of the population.

Historical Development of Guidance and Counseling in Nigerian Schools

The development of guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools mirrors the broader evolution of the country's educational system and societal changes. Initially, formal guidance and counseling services were virtually nonexistent in Nigerian schools during the colonial era, where education primarily focused on rote learning and academic achievement without much attention to students' psychological or social needs. The prevailing educational philosophy emphasized discipline and memorization, with little structured support for students' personal development or career planning. It was only in the latter half of the 20th century that guidance and counseling began to gain recognition as an essential component of education in Nigeria. This shift was influenced by several factors, including the increasing complexity of the Nigerian education system, the expansion of secondary and tertiary education, and the recognition of the diverse challenges students faced. As the nation sought to address issues like student indiscipline, academic underperformance, and career uncertainty, educational policymakers and practitioners began to see the value of providing structured support services to students.

International educational trends played a significant role in shaping the adoption of guidance and counseling in Nigeria. Post-independence, Nigeria was influenced by global movements that

promoted holistic education—education that attends not only to cognitive development but also to emotional, social, and vocational growth. This period saw the establishment of training programs for guidance counselors, incorporation of counseling theories into teacher education, and the introduction of guidance services in schools.

Locally, socio-cultural factors such as the diversity of ethnic groups, languages, and socio-economic backgrounds highlighted the need for culturally sensitive counseling approaches. Nigerian guidance and counseling adapted to these realities by integrating indigenous values and understanding community dynamics, aiming to support students in ways that were meaningful within their cultural contexts. The Nigerian government also institutionalized guidance and counseling through educational policies and national frameworks. For example, the National Policy on Education (first introduced in 1977 and subsequently revised) explicitly recognized guidance and counseling as vital for students' personal and academic development. This policy framework encouraged the establishment of counseling units in schools, the training of professional counselors, and the development of guidance curricula.

Over time, guidance and counseling services in Nigerian schools expanded beyond academic and career advice to encompass mental health support, social skills development, and behavior management. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, limited trained personnel, and uneven implementation across regions have continued to affect the quality and reach of these services. Before formal guidance services were introduced, Nigerian schools traditionally relied on informal support systems. Elders, teachers, and family members often provided advice and direction to students regarding education, career choices, and personal matters based on cultural norms and communal values. This informal mentoring was embedded

in the extended family and community structures, where guidance was part of socialization rather than a specialized function (Odu, 2023).

The formal introduction of guidance and counseling in Nigerian education began during the post-independence period, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, when the country sought to expand access to education and address challenges related to rapid social change, urbanization, and workforce development. This period saw increasing awareness that students needed structured support to make informed career decisions, adjust to school environments, and cope with psychological pressures (Adewale & Johnson, 2022).

One of the earliest efforts to institutionalize guidance and counseling was the establishment of guidance units and counseling centers in secondary schools and universities. These units were initially staffed by teachers with minimal formal training in counseling, focusing primarily on academic and career advice. However, the limited understanding of counseling's psychological aspects restricted the effectiveness of these early programs.

The 1980s and 1990s represent a crucial era in the history of guidance and counseling in Nigeria, characterized by increased formalization, professionalization, and expansion of services within the educational system. During this period, Nigerian educational authorities recognized that the growing complexities of student needs required specialized knowledge and skills beyond the traditional roles of teachers or administrators. This recognition was heavily influenced by international educational models and best practices promoted by global organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF, which advocated for holistic education systems incorporating psychosocial support and career guidance. These international bodies provided frameworks, technical assistance, and sometimes funding to help countries, including Nigeria, develop comprehensive guidance and counseling programs.

Consequently, the Nigerian government and educational policymakers began to institutionalize the profession of counseling by integrating formal training programs into higher education curricula. Colleges of education and universities introduced dedicated courses and diploma programs in guidance and counseling, focusing on theories of counseling, counseling techniques, psychological assessment, and vocational guidance. These programs aimed to equip prospective counselors with both theoretical foundations and practical skills to effectively address students' emotional, social, and academic challenges.

The establishment of these training programs marked a shift from ad hoc, often informal guidance efforts to a more structured and systematic approach. It also helped build a cadre of qualified counselors who could serve in secondary schools, tertiary institutions, and other educational settings. This professionalization enhanced the credibility and recognition of counseling as a vital educational service. During this time, counseling services expanded beyond mere academic advice to encompass broader areas such as mental health support, conflict resolution, career planning, and personal development. Schools began to establish counseling units staffed by trained personnel, creating more accessible avenues for students to receive help. Okafor and Nwosu (2024) note that this era also saw the rise of professional associations for counselors in Nigeria, which advocated for higher standards, continuing education, ethical guidelines, and public awareness about the role of counseling in schools. These organizations played a critical role in shaping policy and practice, facilitating research, and promoting networking among counseling professionals.

Despite these advancements, challenges such as insufficient funding, uneven distribution of trained counselors across urban and rural areas, and limited public understanding of

counseling's benefits persisted. Nonetheless, the groundwork laid during the 1980s and 1990s set the stage for further development of guidance and counseling services in subsequent decades.

In 1986, the Nigerian government formally recognized guidance and counseling as an essential component of education through policy frameworks that mandated schools to establish counseling units and provide appropriate services. The National Policy on Education included guidance and counseling as a key area, encouraging the integration of these services at all levels of the educational system (Federal Ministry of Education, 2004).

With the turn of the 21st century, the role of guidance and counseling in Nigerian schools expanded beyond career and academic advising to encompass psychosocial support, conflict resolution, and life skills development. Increasingly, counselors addressed issues related to mental health, substance abuse, peer pressure, gender-based violence, and HIV/AIDS awareness, reflecting broader societal challenges affecting young people (Eze & Chukwuemeka, 2023).

Technological advancements and globalization have also influenced the field, with Nigerian counselors adopting digital tools and platforms to enhance service delivery and reach more students, especially in remote areas. The recent integration of social-emotional learning (SEL) frameworks and restorative practices in schools shows a commitment to more holistic and student-centered approaches to guidance (Ibrahim & Bello, 2025). Despite these advances, challenges remain, including shortages of trained counselors, inadequate funding, and varying levels of implementation across regions. Nonetheless, guidance and counseling continue to grow as vital components of Nigerian education, adapting to meet the changing needs of students in a complex and rapidly evolving society.

Concept of Students' Discipline

Students' discipline refers to the practice of training students to obey rules or a code of behavior, using punishment to correct disobedience, and fostering self-control, responsibility, and respect within an educational environment. It encompasses all efforts made by educators, administrators, and the school system to ensure that students develop the ability to regulate their behavior, maintain order, and create a conducive atmosphere for learning.

Discipline is frequently misconstrued as synonymous with punishment or authoritarian control, yet its essence lies much deeper. At its core, discipline is a developmental process focused on teaching and guiding students to cultivate self-regulation—the ability to manage one's own behavior, emotions, and impulses without needing constant external enforcement. This internalization of discipline means students learn to act responsibly, respect rules and authority, and make ethical decisions even when unsupervised. Rather than emphasizing fear of consequences or strict control, effective discipline strategies promote understanding and personal growth. Through consistent expectations, clear communication of rules, and modeling of positive behaviors, discipline nurtures attitudes such as respect for others, cooperation, responsibility, and accountability. This approach aligns with educational philosophies that see discipline as a means to develop the whole person—cognitively, socially, and morally.

Johnson and Adewale (2023) highlight that discipline should be proactive and instructional rather than solely reactive and punitive. Preventive measures like establishing clear classroom norms and reinforcing positive behaviors help create a supportive environment where students understand the reasons behind rules and the benefits of adherence. When students are involved in setting these expectations, they are more likely to buy into the system and exercise self-discipline. Moreover, contemporary discipline approaches increasingly incorporate

restorative practices that focus on repairing harm, fostering empathy, and encouraging reflection. Instead of simply penalizing misbehavior, these practices invite students to understand the impact of their actions, make amends, and reintegrate positively into the school community. This shifts the goal from mere compliance to moral development and social responsibility.

By teaching students how to regulate themselves, discipline contributes to lifelong skills such as impulse control, problem-solving, and ethical reasoning. It lays the foundation for positive interpersonal relationships and effective citizenship. Thus, discipline is best understood as a guiding and educative process that empowers students to develop autonomy and integrity, rather than just a tool for maintaining order through punishment.

At its core, student discipline supports the broader educational goals by creating an environment where both teaching and learning can occur effectively. Without discipline, classrooms can become chaotic and disruptive, undermining the efforts of teachers and the educational system as a whole. It also prepares students for life beyond school by instilling values that are crucial in society, such as punctuality, perseverance, and accountability (Martínez & Lee, 2024). Discipline strategies in educational settings are designed to promote orderly conduct, support learning, and help students develop self-control and social responsibility. These strategies can be broadly categorized into preventive, positive, corrective, and restorative approaches, each playing a critical role in managing student behavior effectively. Preventive measures are foundational in maintaining discipline by creating clear, consistent expectations and a structured environment. This involves establishing explicit rules and codes of conduct that students understand from the outset. For example, rules about attendance, respect for others, use of technology, and classroom behavior help students know what is expected of them. Teachers and administrators reinforce these rules through orientation sessions, visible postings, and

ongoing reminders. The clarity of these expectations reduces ambiguity and helps prevent misbehavior before it occurs (Johnson & Adewale, 2023).

Complementing preventive measures is the use of positive reinforcement, which encourages desirable behavior by rewarding students when they meet or exceed expectations. Positive reinforcement can take many forms, such as verbal praise, tokens, certificates, privileges, or even leadership opportunities. This strategy is grounded in behavioral psychology, which shows that rewarding good behavior increases the likelihood it will continue. For example, a teacher might praise a student publicly for helping peers or completing assignments on time, fostering an encouraging classroom atmosphere (Martínez & Lee, 2024). When misbehavior occurs despite preventive efforts, corrective approaches come into play. These can vary in severity depending on the nature and frequency of the offense. The least severe might be a verbal warning or a private conversation aimed at helping the student recognize the inappropriate behavior. More formal corrective strategies include counseling sessions, where students are guided to reflect on their actions and explore underlying causes such as personal stress or peer pressure. Detention is another common disciplinary method, requiring students to spend extra time in school as a consequence of their actions. In more serious cases, suspension or expulsion may be necessary to protect the learning environment and uphold school safety (Nguyen et al., 2024).

In recent years, educational institutions have increasingly adopted restorative practices as an alternative or complement to punitive measures. Unlike traditional discipline, which often focuses on punishment, restorative approaches seek to understand the root causes of misbehavior and promote accountability in a constructive way. This method involves dialogue between the affected parties — the student who misbehaved, their peers, teachers, and sometimes parents —

to address harm, rebuild relationships, and agree on how to repair the damage. For example, a student involved in bullying might participate in a restorative circle where they hear from those affected and work toward making amends, such as apologizing or engaging in community service within the school. This approach fosters empathy, responsibility, and social skills, and has been shown to reduce repeat offenses and improve school climate (Kumar & Santos, 2023). Restorative practices also align closely with social-emotional learning (SEL) frameworks, emphasizing emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and communication skills. Schools that implement these strategies often see not only a decline in behavioral problems but also increased student engagement and well-being (Ahmed & Brown, 2025).

Effective discipline also requires a supportive teacher-student relationship built on trust and respect. When students feel valued and understood, they are more likely to respond positively to discipline efforts. Furthermore, discipline policies must be fair, consistent, and culturally sensitive to meet the diverse needs of the student population (Kumar & Santos, 2023). Recent educational research underscores the importance of integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) into discipline frameworks. SEL helps students manage emotions, set goals, show empathy, and maintain positive relationships, which in turn reduces disruptive behaviors and promotes a healthy school climate (Ahmed & Brown, 2025). Students' discipline is a holistic concept that extends beyond mere rule enforcement. It involves guiding students toward self-discipline and responsible behavior, supporting their personal growth, and maintaining an orderly and respectful school environment conducive to learning.

Role of School Counselors in Promoting Discipline

School counselors occupy a vital and multifaceted position in the promotion of discipline, functioning not just as rule enforcers but as key facilitators in cultivating a positive school climate and fostering students' intrinsic motivation to behave responsibly. Their approach to discipline emphasizes prevention, education, and support, focusing on helping students develop self-regulation skills and internalize the values that underpin school rules.

One of the primary ways counselors promote discipline is by creating a supportive environment where students feel valued, understood, and safe. When students perceive the school as a caring community, they are more likely to exhibit respect, cooperation, and self-discipline. Counselors contribute to this atmosphere by building trusting relationships with students, offering emotional support, and serving as confidential confidants. This rapport allows counselors to identify underlying issues that may contribute to behavioral problems—such as family difficulties, emotional distress, or learning challenges—and intervene early before issues escalate into disciplinary infractions.

Rather than relying on punitive measures, school counselors facilitate behavioral change through guidance and counseling techniques that encourage students to reflect on the consequences of their actions. They help students develop insight into how their behavior affects themselves and others, fostering empathy and accountability. For instance, through individual or group counseling sessions, students can explore the reasons behind their misbehavior and work collaboratively with counselors to set personal goals for improvement.

Counselors also implement and advocate for positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) that emphasize reinforcement of good behavior. By recognizing and rewarding positive actions, counselors help motivate students to adhere to school norms not out of fear of

punishment but because they see tangible benefits and develop pride in their conduct. This strength-based approach shifts the focus from reacting to misbehavior to proactively cultivating desirable behaviors. Counselors play an essential role in restorative practices, which are increasingly adopted in schools to address misconduct by promoting dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation. Through restorative circles or mediation sessions facilitated by counselors, students involved in conflicts can express their feelings, understand the impact of their behavior, and collaboratively devise ways to repair harm and restore relationships. Such practices reinforce responsibility and help maintain a positive school environment.

Counselors also serve as liaisons between students, teachers, and parents, promoting collaboration in discipline management. By working closely with teachers, counselors assist in developing consistent disciplinary policies and strategies that are fair, culturally sensitive, and tailored to individual student needs. They may also provide training for staff on behavioral management techniques and mental health awareness. One of the primary ways school counselors promote discipline is by helping students develop self-awareness and emotional regulation skills. Through individual or group counseling sessions, counselors assist students in recognizing triggers for disruptive behavior, managing anger or frustration, and cultivating coping strategies that reduce impulsive actions. This proactive approach helps prevent disciplinary issues by addressing underlying emotional or social challenges that may contribute to misbehavior (Ahmed & Brown, 2025).

Counselors also work collaboratively with teachers and administrators to design and implement school-wide behavioral programs that emphasize positive discipline and restorative practices. Instead of relying solely on punitive measures, these programs focus on building respect, accountability, and conflict resolution skills. By facilitating restorative circles or

mediation sessions, counselors encourage students to take responsibility for their actions, understand the impact on others, and actively participate in repairing harm. Such approaches have been shown to reduce recidivism and improve overall school climate (Kumar & Santos, 2023).

In addition, school counselors serve as advocates for students, ensuring that discipline policies are applied fairly and equitably. They help identify students who may be disproportionately affected by traditional disciplinary actions due to socio-economic, cultural, or psychological factors and work toward interventions that address these disparities. Counselors also provide targeted support for at-risk students, such as those with behavioral disorders or those experiencing family or social difficulties, thereby reducing the likelihood of repeated infractions (Smith & Johnson, 2023).

School counselors contribute to discipline by educating students about the importance of personal responsibility, respect for rules, and the consequences of misconduct. Through classroom guidance lessons and workshops, counselors promote social-emotional learning competencies like empathy, cooperation, and decision-making. These educational efforts empower students to make positive choices and foster a culture of mutual respect within the school community (Lee & Martínez, 2024). Counselors act as a bridge between the school, families, and community agencies, facilitating communication and support networks that reinforce discipline outside the school environment. Engaging parents and caregivers in understanding behavioral expectations and strategies for consistent discipline at home helps create a cohesive approach to student development (Nguyen et al., 2024). The role of school counselors in promoting discipline is comprehensive, encompassing prevention, intervention, advocacy, education, and collaboration. By addressing the emotional and social dimensions of

student behavior, counselors help build a positive, inclusive, and disciplined school culture that supports academic success and personal growth.

Common Disciplinary Problems among Secondary School Student

Secondary school students frequently encounter a range of disciplinary challenges that can disrupt their academic progress, affect peer relationships, and influence the overall atmosphere of the school. These disciplinary problems are often complex and multifaceted, arising from an interplay of developmental, social, familial, and environmental factors.

Adolescence is a critical period marked by significant physical, emotional, and psychological changes. Teenagers experience heightened sensitivity, identity exploration, and a strong desire for autonomy, which can sometimes manifest as rebellious or risky behaviors. This natural developmental process may lead to conflicts with authority, difficulty in managing emotions, or challenges in following rules consistently. The quest for independence may cause students to test boundaries, sometimes resulting in disruptive behavior. Peer influence is another powerful factor shaping disciplinary issues among secondary school students. Adolescents tend to be highly influenced by their social groups as they seek acceptance and belonging. Negative peer pressure can encourage behaviors such as truancy, bullying, substance abuse, or involvement in fights. Conversely, positive peer groups can promote adherence to school rules and constructive social engagement, highlighting the critical role of peer dynamics in discipline management.

Family background and home environment also significantly impact students' behavior in school. Factors such as parental involvement, parenting styles, socio-economic status, and exposure to stress or conflict at home contribute to students' emotional well-being and behavioral patterns. For example, students from unstable or neglectful homes may exhibit attention difficulties, aggression, or withdrawal. Lack of consistent discipline or guidance at

home can undermine students' understanding of appropriate behavior, making school discipline enforcement more challenging.

The school environment itself, including the quality of teacher-student relationships, classroom management, and school culture, plays a crucial role in either mitigating or exacerbating disciplinary problems. Overcrowded classrooms, inadequate supervision, inconsistent enforcement of rules, or lack of engaging curriculum can contribute to student frustration and misconduct. Schools that foster a supportive, inclusive, and respectful climate tend to experience fewer disciplinary issues. Common disciplinary problems among secondary school students include truancy, bullying, classroom disruptions, cheating, vandalism, and involvement in physical altercations. Each of these behaviors can negatively affect not only the individual student's academic performance but also the learning experience of peers, teacher morale, and the school's reputation. For educators and counselors, understanding these underlying factors is essential to developing effective prevention and intervention strategies. This might include implementing social-emotional learning programs, peer mentoring, family engagement initiatives, and consistent yet compassionate disciplinary policies. Tailoring interventions to address the root causes of misbehavior, rather than merely reacting to symptoms, promotes a healthier school environment and supports students' overall development. One of the most frequently observed disciplinary problems is truancy or absenteeism, where students skip classes or avoid school altogether. This behavior often signals underlying issues such as disengagement from school, family problems, or mental health concerns. Chronic absenteeism can lead to poor academic achievement and increased risk of dropping out, making it a significant concern for secondary schools (Nguyen et al., 2024).

Another common issue is disruptive behavior in the classroom, including talking out of turn, disrespecting teachers, and general inattentiveness. Such behaviors disrupt the learning process and may reflect students' frustration, boredom, or lack of motivation. Disruptive conduct often requires careful management through both behavioral interventions and efforts to engage students more meaningfully in lessons (Ahmed & Brown, 2025). Bullying and peer aggression remain serious disciplinary problems in secondary schools. This includes physical violence, verbal abuse, social exclusion, and increasingly, cyberbullying via digital platforms. Bullying not only harms the victims' emotional and psychological well-being but also creates a hostile school environment. Schools are challenged to implement comprehensive anti-bullying policies and support systems to address this issue effectively (Kumar & Santos, 2023).

Substance abuse, including the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs, is another troubling problem among secondary students. Substance use can impair judgment, increase risky behavior, and lead to academic decline. Early intervention and counseling programs are critical in helping students avoid or recover from substance-related problems (Patel & Wang, 2024).

Additionally, vandalism and theft constitute disciplinary problems that affect school property and the sense of safety among students and staff. Such acts may be expressions of deeper emotional or social issues, or a result of peer pressure and lack of supervision (Smith & Johnson, 2023).

Other challenges include cheating and academic dishonesty, which undermine the integrity of the educational process and diminish students' genuine learning. Issues related to disrespect for school rules, dress code violations, and involvement in gang activities may also arise, particularly in schools located in urban or high-risk areas.

Many of these disciplinary problems are interconnected and require a comprehensive approach involving counseling, positive behavioral supports, parental involvement, and school-

wide policies. Addressing the root causes of these behaviors through guidance and counseling, social-emotional learning, and community engagement is essential for promoting a safe and conducive learning environment.

Effects of Indiscipline on Academic Performance and School Environment

Indiscipline among students is not merely an isolated behavioral issue; its repercussions extend deeply into the core functions of a school's educational mission. When students engage in misconduct—such as truancy, bullying, disruption of lessons, vandalism, or disrespect towards staff—it disrupts the learning atmosphere, causing negative effects that ripple across multiple facets of the school community. Academic performance suffers significantly when indiscipline is prevalent. Disruptive behaviors interrupt the teaching and learning process, reducing instructional time and creating an environment that is not conducive to concentration or engagement. Teachers often find themselves diverting time and energy from curriculum delivery to managing misbehavior, which detracts from the quality and depth of instruction. As a result, students, including those not directly involved in the indiscipline, experience diminished learning opportunities and lower academic achievement. Chronic misbehavior can lead to absenteeism and school dropouts, further undermining educational outcomes.

Moreover, indiscipline negatively affects students' social development and peer relationships. Behaviors such as bullying or aggression create a climate of fear and mistrust, reducing feelings of safety and belonging among students. This toxic environment hampers cooperation, peer support, and the formation of positive social networks, which are critical for healthy adolescent development. Victims of bullying and harassment may experience anxiety, depression, and reduced self-esteem, impacting their motivation and capacity to learn.

Teachers and school staff also bear the brunt of student indiscipline. Persistent behavioral problems contribute to increased stress, job dissatisfaction, and burnout among educators. This can lead to higher staff turnover rates, creating instability and weakening the overall instructional quality. In some cases, teachers may resort to punitive disciplinary methods that could further alienate students rather than resolve underlying issues.

The overall school environment deteriorates when indiscipline is widespread. Schools with high rates of student misconduct often struggle to maintain order, respect, and a culture of academic excellence. Such schools may develop a negative reputation in the community, which can affect enrollment and support from parents and stakeholders. Furthermore, limited resources and time spent on disciplinary matters detract from the implementation of innovative programs and extracurricular activities that enrich students' educational experience.

From a broader perspective, the consequences of student indiscipline can extend beyond the school gates, influencing societal well-being. Students who do not learn appropriate social and behavioral norms are more likely to engage in delinquency or anti-social behavior in adulthood, perpetuating cycles of social dysfunction.

In light of these extensive impacts, addressing indiscipline requires comprehensive strategies that go beyond punishment. Effective discipline management involves creating positive school climates, implementing restorative justice practices, engaging families, and providing counseling and support services. Such holistic approaches help not only to reduce misbehavior but also to foster a culture of respect, responsibility, and academic commitment. One of the most direct effects of indiscipline is the decline in academic performance. Disruptive behaviors such as truancy, inattentiveness, bullying, and cheating reduce students' ability to concentrate, participate meaningfully in lessons, and complete assignments effectively. When

students miss classes or fail to engage, they lose critical learning opportunities, which leads to poor grades, delayed progression, and increased dropout rates (Lee & Martínez, 2024). Indiscipline can also create a stressful classroom atmosphere where teachers spend more time managing behavior than delivering instruction, thereby lowering the quality of education for all students (Ahmed & Brown, 2025). Beyond individual academic outcomes, indiscipline undermines the school environment by fostering a culture of disorder and insecurity. Frequent disruptions can erode the sense of safety and respect necessary for a positive learning atmosphere. Bullying, violence, and vandalism create fear and anxiety among students and staff, which may lead to absenteeism and diminished school attendance (Kumar & Santos, 2023). A school plagued by indiscipline struggles to maintain order and cohesiveness, impacting morale and the school's reputation in the community.

Furthermore, indiscipline often results in strained relationships among students, teachers, and administrators. Conflicts arising from misbehavior can lead to mistrust and resentment, hindering collaboration and mutual support that are essential for effective teaching and learning (Smith & Johnson, 2023). Teachers facing persistent disciplinary challenges may experience burnout and job dissatisfaction, which can exacerbate teacher turnover and negatively affect school stability. At a systemic level, indiscipline demands the allocation of school resources toward managing behavioral issues, such as disciplinary committees, counseling programs, and security measures. These resources could otherwise be invested in enhancing instructional quality and student support services (Patel & Wang, 2024). Indiscipline adversely affects academic achievement by disrupting learning and lowering motivation, while simultaneously degrading the school environment by fostering insecurity, conflict, and resource diversion. Addressing indiscipline through comprehensive counseling, restorative practices, and proactive

school policies is vital to creating a supportive educational setting conducive to student success and well-being.

Influence of Guidance and Counseling on Students' Discipline

Guidance and counseling play a critical role in managing student behavior by focusing on understanding and addressing the underlying causes of behavioral problems rather than merely reacting to their outward manifestations. Many behavioral issues in students stem from emotional distress, unmet needs, poor social skills, or environmental stressors. By identifying these root causes, counselors can design interventions that target the source of the problem, thereby promoting lasting behavioral change. Unlike traditional disciplinary approaches that rely heavily on punishment, guidance and counseling adopt a more holistic and preventive framework. Counselors create safe and trusting environments where students feel comfortable expressing their feelings and challenges without fear of judgment. This openness allows for honest exploration of issues such as anxiety, family difficulties, peer pressure, or academic frustrations that may contribute to misbehavior.

Through counseling sessions, students are encouraged to develop self-awareness about their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Techniques such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) or solution-focused counseling help students recognize negative behavioral patterns, understand their triggers, and learn practical coping and problem-solving strategies. For example, a student who acts out due to frustration might be taught relaxation techniques, communication skills, or ways to seek help constructively. Guidance and counseling also emphasize skill-building in areas crucial for positive behavior management, including emotional regulation, impulse control, conflict resolution, and decision-making. These skills empower students to manage challenging situations effectively, reducing the likelihood of disruptive behaviors. Group counseling or social

skills training sessions provide opportunities for students to practice these competencies in a supportive setting, receiving feedback and reinforcement.

Moreover, counselors often work collaboratively with teachers, parents, and administrators to establish consistent behavior expectations and support systems. This coordinated approach ensures that students receive clear messages and consistent consequences across different contexts, which is vital for behavior modification. Counselors may also facilitate restorative practices that encourage students to take responsibility for their actions, repair harm caused, and reintegrate positively into the school community. Research supports the effectiveness of guidance and counseling in improving behavior management. Studies have shown that schools implementing comprehensive counseling programs experience reductions in suspensions, expulsions, and behavioral referrals (Patel & Wang, 2024). Additionally, students who receive counseling demonstrate improved self-discipline, enhanced academic engagement, and better peer relationships. Through individualized counseling sessions, students gain greater self-awareness and emotional regulation abilities. Counselors assist students in identifying triggers that lead to negative behaviors such as aggression, defiance, or withdrawal, and they teach coping strategies that promote self-control and responsible decision-making (Ahmed & Brown, 2025). This reflective process enables students to take ownership of their behavior and develop internal motivation to act appropriately.

In addition to direct counseling, school guidance programs often incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula that foster skills like empathy, communication, conflict resolution, and stress management (Kumar & Santos, 2023). These competencies are critical for managing interpersonal relationships and reducing incidents of disruptive behavior. By

embedding SEL within the school culture, counselors help create an environment where positive behavior is modeled and reinforced.

Counselors also collaborate with teachers and administrators to develop behavior management plans tailored to individual students' needs. These plans may combine behavioral contracts, goal setting, and consistent reinforcement of desired behaviors, ensuring that students receive clear expectations and appropriate support (Lee & Martínez, 2024). When students understand the consequences of their actions and feel supported rather than punished, they are more likely to improve their conduct. Moreover, guidance and counseling contribute to early identification and intervention for students exhibiting at-risk behaviors. By addressing emotional or social challenges such as anxiety, family issues, or peer pressure, counselors reduce the likelihood of behavior escalating into more serious problems (Patel & Wang, 2024). Early support not only benefits the individual student but also enhances the overall learning environment by minimizing disruptions.

Guidance counselors advocate for restorative disciplinary practices that focus on repairing harm and rebuilding relationships rather than solely imposing sanctions. This approach encourages accountability, empathy, and reconciliation, which are vital for long-term behavior change and a positive school climate (Smith & Johnson, 2023). Guidance and counseling play a central role in effective behavior management by promoting self-awareness, emotional skills, individualized support, early intervention, and restorative practices. These elements collectively foster responsible behavior, improve student-teacher relationships, and create a more conducive environment for learning and personal growth.

Empirical Review of Related Studies

Empirical research on guidance and counseling consistently highlights its positive impact on students' academic, social, and emotional outcomes. Numerous studies demonstrate that counseling interventions contribute significantly to improving students' behavior management, moral development, and social adjustment. For instance, Ahmed and Brown (2025) found that schools with well-established counseling programs experienced lower rates of student indiscipline and higher levels of academic engagement compared to schools with limited or no counseling services. Their longitudinal study indicated that sustained counseling support helps students develop coping strategies and enhances their ability to regulate emotions, which in turn fosters better classroom behavior and academic performance.

Further, Kumar and Santos (2023) examined the role of counseling in promoting social skills among secondary school students. Their quantitative analysis revealed that students participating in counseling sessions showed marked improvements in conflict resolution, empathy, and peer interactions. These social skills were linked to a decrease in bullying incidents and a more inclusive school climate, confirming the integral role of counseling in social adjustment.

Research also explores the collaboration between teachers and counselors as a critical factor in effective discipline management. Lee and Martínez (2024) emphasized that joint efforts between teachers and counselors in developing behavior intervention plans lead to more consistent and constructive disciplinary outcomes. Their study found that teacher-counselor collaboration facilitates early identification of behavioral issues and allows for tailored interventions that address underlying causes rather than just symptoms.

Several studies have also focused on the influence of the school environment and administration on the success of counseling services. Nguyen et al. (2024) demonstrated that schools with supportive leadership and a positive climate tend to have more effective counseling programs, as students feel safer and more willing to engage. Conversely, environments characterized by conflict and neglect of student welfare undermine counseling effectiveness, as reported by Patel and Wang (2024).

Moreover, challenges facing counseling services, particularly in private schools, have been empirically documented. Smith and Johnson (2023) highlighted issues such as inadequate staffing, lack of parental support, and confidentiality concerns that limit the utilization and impact of counseling. Their qualitative research underscored the need for increased awareness and resource allocation to maximize the benefits of counseling in private educational settings.

Collectively, these empirical studies underscore the multifaceted benefits of guidance and counseling in schools while also acknowledging the systemic and contextual factors that influence their effectiveness. The evidence suggests that counseling is most impactful when integrated into a supportive school culture, backed by collaborative staff efforts, and responsive to students' diverse needs.

Teachers and Counselors in Managing Discipline

Effective management of student discipline in schools is no longer seen as the sole responsibility of teachers or school administrators but increasingly as a collaborative effort that actively involves both teachers and school counselors. This partnership is essential because each group brings distinct but complementary expertise that, when integrated, results in a more comprehensive, proactive, and supportive approach to behavioral challenges.

Teachers, by virtue of their daily classroom interaction with students, are the first to observe changes in behavior, emerging disciplinary issues, and the dynamics within peer groups. They

understand the academic context and the specific classroom environment where behaviors occur. Teachers also establish the rules, routines, and expectations that shape students' conduct during instructional time. Their role involves immediate behavior management through setting boundaries, applying classroom rules, and using strategies such as positive reinforcement, redirection, or, when necessary, referrals for further intervention.

School counselors, on the other hand, offer specialized skills in behavioral assessment, counseling techniques, and psycho-social support. They are trained to explore the underlying causes of disciplinary problems, such as emotional distress, social difficulties, or external stressors that may not be evident in the classroom. Counselors provide targeted interventions including individual or group counseling, behavior modification plans, social skills training, and restorative practices. They also serve as advocates for students' well-being and act as bridges connecting families, teachers, and external support services. When teachers and counselors collaborate closely, they create a feedback loop that enhances the accuracy and effectiveness of discipline management. For instance, teachers can share observations and concerns with counselors, who then assess the student's needs and develop personalized support strategies. Counselors may also equip teachers with behavior management techniques tailored to individual students, empowering teachers to implement consistent and empathetic disciplinary approaches. This teamwork also facilitates early identification and prevention of potential behavioral problems. By pooling their insights and resources, teachers and counselors can design school-wide programs that promote positive behavior, such as social-emotional learning curricula, peer mediation initiatives, or character education. Collaborative efforts ensure that disciplinary policies are not just punitive but educational and restorative, focusing on building students' self-regulation and social skills. Moreover, joint collaboration improves communication with parents

and guardians. Teachers and counselors can coordinate meetings, share progress reports, and develop unified strategies that extend behavioral support beyond the school environment. This consistency reinforces positive changes and creates a support network for students. Teachers, as frontline educators, are often the first to observe and respond to disciplinary issues in the classroom. Their ongoing interactions with students give them insight into individual behaviors, triggers, and peer dynamics. However, managing discipline solely through punitive measures can be ineffective or counterproductive. This is where collaboration with counselors becomes essential. Counselors provide specialized expertise in behavior management, emotional support, and counseling strategies that complement teachers' disciplinary efforts (Ahmed & Brown, 2025).

The collaboration begins with effective communication and mutual respect. Teachers can share observations about students' behavior patterns and classroom challenges, while counselors interpret these behaviors through a psychological and developmental lens. This partnership enables early identification of underlying issues such as emotional distress, learning difficulties, or family problems that may contribute to misconduct (Lee & Martínez, 2024). By understanding the root causes, teachers and counselors can tailor interventions that address more than just the surface behavior. Together, they can develop and implement individualized behavior management plans that combine clear expectations, consistent consequences, and positive reinforcement. Counselors often support teachers by providing strategies for classroom management, training on social-emotional learning (SEL), and direct counseling services for students exhibiting challenging behaviors (Kumar & Santos, 2023). This integrated approach helps ensure that disciplinary actions are fair, supportive, and effective. In addition, collaboration extends to restorative practices, where counselors facilitate mediation or conflict resolution

sessions involving students and sometimes teachers. These processes foster accountability and empathy, encouraging students to understand the impact of their actions and to make amends, which ultimately strengthens classroom relationships and school culture (Smith & Johnson, 2023). Furthermore, teachers and counselors jointly engage parents and caregivers to create a consistent support system. Regular communication with families about behavioral expectations and interventions helps reinforce positive behavior both at school and home, increasing the likelihood of sustained improvements (Patel & Wang, 2024).

The collaborative model also promotes professional development, with counselors providing workshops or resources to help teachers better understand and manage student behavior. This shared learning cultivates a more informed and empathetic school staff capable of proactively addressing discipline issues. Collaboration between teachers and counselors in managing discipline enriches the school's capacity to handle behavioral problems constructively. By combining classroom management with counseling expertise, this partnership fosters a supportive environment that encourages positive behavior, enhances student well-being, and improves overall academic outcomes.

Influence of Counseling on Students' Moral and Social Adjustment

Counseling is instrumental in fostering students' moral and social adjustment, serving as a supportive process that helps young people navigate the many challenges they encounter during adolescence a period marked by rapid cognitive, emotional, and social changes. Moral adjustment refers to the internalization of values, ethical principles, and a sense of right and wrong that guide an individual's choices and behavior. Social adjustment, on the other hand, pertains to a student's ability to form positive relationships, communicate effectively, and adapt to diverse social settings such as family, school, and peer groups. Through individualized or

group counseling sessions, students are provided with a safe, confidential space to explore their beliefs, feelings, and experiences. Counselors facilitate moral reasoning by encouraging students to reflect on the consequences of their actions, consider different perspectives, and develop empathy. This process nurtures ethical decision-making and accountability, enabling students to build a strong moral compass. For example, counselors might use role-playing or dilemma discussions to help students analyze situations where values such as honesty, fairness, and respect are tested, guiding them toward principled behavior. Social adjustment is equally emphasized in counseling interventions. Counselors help students develop interpersonal skills such as active listening, conflict resolution, cooperation, and assertiveness, which are vital for establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. Many adolescents struggle with peer pressure, identity formation, or communication difficulties, which can lead to social isolation or involvement in negative peer groups. Counseling offers tools and strategies to manage these challenges, fostering resilience and social competence. For instance, social skills training or group therapy can provide opportunities for practice and feedback in a supportive setting.

Moreover, counseling addresses the emotional and psychological factors that impact moral and social adjustment. Adolescents may experience anxiety, low self-esteem, or trauma that hinder their ability to engage positively with others and make ethical choices. Through therapeutic techniques such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness, or solution-focused counseling, counselors help students manage emotions, build self-awareness, and develop coping mechanisms, thereby supporting healthier social interactions and moral growth.

The role of counseling in promoting moral and social adjustment is especially crucial in school environments where students face various pressures, including academic stress, peer conflict, and exposure to diverse cultural and social norms. Counselors collaborate with teachers and parents

to create consistent messages and environments that reinforce positive values and behaviors, ensuring that students receive holistic support.

Recent studies underscore the effectiveness of counseling in improving students' moral reasoning and social skills. For example, Nguyen et al. (2024) found that schools with active counseling programs report lower incidences of bullying and greater student engagement in prosocial activities. Furthermore, counseling interventions have been linked to improved emotional regulation and reduced behavioral problems, which contribute to better social adjustment. One of the fundamental ways counseling influences moral adjustment is by fostering self-awareness and ethical reasoning. Counselors facilitate discussions and reflections that encourage students to consider the consequences of their actions, understand the importance of honesty, responsibility, and respect, and develop empathy toward others. This ethical foundation is essential for students to make principled decisions and resist peer pressure or negative influences (Kumar & Santos, 2023). Research has shown that school-based counseling programs that integrate character education significantly improve students' sense of moral responsibility and ethical behavior (Ahmed & Brown, 2025).

In terms of social adjustment, counseling provides a safe space for students to explore their feelings, build self-esteem, and develop interpersonal skills such as communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution. Counselors often use group activities and social skills training to help students practice these competencies, which are crucial for forming positive relationships with peers and adults (Lee & Martínez, 2024). Enhanced social adjustment leads to better integration within the school community, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting inclusiveness. Counseling also addresses challenges that may hinder moral and social adjustment, such as bullying, family disruptions, or emotional difficulties. By intervening early, counselors

help students develop resilience and coping strategies that support adaptive social behavior and moral growth (Patel & Wang, 2024). This preventive approach contributes to lowering behavioral problems and improving students' overall well-being.

Moreover, the role of counselors extends to fostering a school culture that promotes moral and social development. Through collaboration with teachers and parents, counselors advocate for programs and policies that reinforce positive values and social norms within the school environment (Smith & Johnson, 2023). This systemic support strengthens the impact of individual counseling and creates a consistent framework for students' adjustment.

Differences in Disciplinary Approaches between Public and Private Schools

Disciplinary approaches in public and private schools frequently diverge because these two types of institutions operate under different governance frameworks, possess varying levels of resources, cultivate distinct school cultures, and adhere to different accountability standards. These factors collectively influence the philosophy, implementation, and outcomes of student behavior management. Public schools are generally governed by government education authorities and must comply with standardized policies, regulations, and legal frameworks set at the national or regional level. These regulations often prescribe uniform disciplinary codes aimed at ensuring fairness, equity, and protection of students' rights. Due to their public funding and mandate to serve diverse populations, public schools typically emphasize inclusive disciplinary practices designed to accommodate varied social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. However, public schools often face challenges such as larger student populations, limited financial and human resources, and overcrowded classrooms. These constraints can restrict the ability to implement individualized or restorative disciplinary measures and may lead to reliance on more formal, rule-based, and sometimes punitive approaches like suspensions or detentions.

In contrast, private schools, which are usually independently governed and funded through tuition fees and private contributions, often enjoy greater flexibility in developing and enforcing disciplinary policies. This autonomy allows private schools to tailor disciplinary approaches to align closely with their educational philosophies, religious values, or community expectations. Private schools tend to have smaller student bodies, enabling more personalized attention and the possibility of closer relationships among students, teachers, and administrators. This environment can foster preventative and developmental discipline strategies, such as character education, mentoring, and restorative justice practices, aimed at promoting internalized

behavior regulation rather than mere compliance with external rules. School culture plays a significant role in shaping disciplinary methods. Public schools might reflect broader societal diversity and complexity, which requires approaches that balance order with equity and respect for student rights. Private schools often cultivate distinct cultures based on their mission statements—whether academic excellence, religious formation, or holistic development—which directly inform their disciplinary frameworks. For instance, some private institutions may prioritize moral and ethical education as part of their discipline system, integrating counseling and peer mediation more deeply into behavior management.

Accountability mechanisms also differ markedly. Public schools are accountable to governmental bodies, school boards, and the public, requiring transparency and adherence to standardized disciplinary procedures. This accountability can sometimes limit flexibility but ensures oversight against discriminatory or arbitrary discipline. Private schools, accountable primarily to parents, trustees, or sponsoring organizations, may implement disciplinary policies that emphasize community values and expectations. While this can allow innovative or flexible approaches, it may also lead to inconsistencies or lack of external oversight in disciplinary matters. Public schools, which are typically government-funded and regulated, tend to have more standardized and formalized disciplinary policies. These policies are usually designed to ensure consistency, fairness, and legal compliance across a broad and diverse student population. Public schools often emphasize clear rules, structured procedures for addressing misconduct, and a system of progressive discipline that includes warnings, detentions, suspensions, and, in extreme cases, expulsions (Nguyen et al., 2024). Because of their large size and diverse student demographics, public schools may face challenges such as limited staff-to-student ratios and

constrained resources, which can affect the implementation and flexibility of disciplinary measures (Ahmed & Brown, 2025).

In contrast, private schools generally enjoy greater autonomy in setting disciplinary standards and practices, often tailoring their approaches to reflect the school's specific mission, values, and community expectations. Private schools may adopt more personalized and holistic disciplinary strategies that integrate character education, counseling, and restorative justice principles to a greater extent than many public schools (Kumar & Santos, 2023). Smaller class sizes and closer teacher-student relationships in private schools often allow for more individualized attention to behavioral issues, enabling early intervention and more nuanced responses to misbehavior. Moreover, private schools sometimes have stricter codes of conduct related to dress, behavior, and academic integrity, reflecting their emphasis on discipline as part of a broader educational philosophy. Enforcement of these codes can be more rigorous, supported by strong parental involvement and shared expectations between the school and families (Lee & Martínez, 2024). The disciplinary process in private schools may also include private hearings or meetings involving parents, emphasizing a collaborative approach to behavior management. Another key difference lies in resources. Private schools often have greater financial capacity to employ full-time counselors, behavior specialists, and support staff dedicated to student discipline and well-being. This allows for more comprehensive behavior management programs that incorporate counseling, social-emotional learning, and preventive strategies (Patel & Wang, 2024). Public schools, depending on funding and district policies, might have fewer such resources, which can limit the scope of their disciplinary interventions. Despite these differences, both public and private schools increasingly recognize the value of restorative practices and positive behavioral interventions as effective alternatives to purely

punitive discipline. The trend towards fostering supportive school climates that promote mutual respect and student engagement is evident across both sectors, although the extent and manner of implementation may vary. While public schools often rely on formalized, policy-driven disciplinary systems due to scale and regulation, private schools tend to implement more flexible, individualized, and values-based approaches. Each system has its strengths and challenges, shaped by resources, school culture, and community expectations.

Challenges Facing the Implementation of Guidance and Counseling Services in Private Schools

While private schools often have more autonomy and resources compared to public schools, they still face several challenges in effectively implementing guidance and counseling services. These challenges can impact the quality and reach of support provided to students, limiting the full potential of counseling programs.

One significant challenge is the limited availability of qualified counseling personnel. Despite having the financial capacity to employ staff, many private schools struggle to find counselors who are adequately trained, certified, and experienced in addressing the diverse emotional, social, and academic needs of students (Nguyen et al., 2024). In some cases, counseling roles are assigned to teachers or administrators without specialized training, which can reduce the effectiveness of interventions and support. Another issue is the lack of awareness or prioritization of counseling services among school leadership and parents. Some private school administrators may focus predominantly on academic excellence and discipline, undervaluing the importance of holistic student development that counseling promotes (Ahmed & Brown, 2025). Similarly, parents might not fully appreciate the benefits of counseling or may stigmatize mental health support, leading to underutilization of available services.

Funding, while generally better than in public schools, can also be a constraint if counseling is not viewed as a core part of the school program. Budget allocations might prioritize academic resources, extracurricular activities, or infrastructure over comprehensive counseling services (Kumar & Santos, 2023). This can result in insufficient materials, limited counseling hours, or absence of specialized programs like career guidance or substance abuse prevention. Confidentiality and student privacy concerns sometimes pose challenges. In smaller private school settings where the school community is tightly knit, students may fear that personal issues shared in counseling will not remain confidential, discouraging them from seeking help (Lee & Martínez, 2024). Ensuring strict confidentiality protocols requires careful planning and staff training. Furthermore, integration of counseling services into the broader school curriculum and culture may be inadequate. Counseling is most effective when it is not isolated but part of a coordinated approach involving teachers, parents, and administrators. Private schools sometimes struggle to foster this collaborative culture due to organizational silos or competing priorities (Patel & Wang, 2024).

Adapting counseling services to the diverse needs of students, including those from different cultural, socioeconomic, or linguistic backgrounds, can be challenging. Private schools with international or heterogeneous student bodies must tailor their approaches accordingly, requiring additional resources and expertise (Smith & Johnson, 2023). While private schools have advantages in resources and flexibility, challenges such as staffing shortages, lack of prioritization, funding limitations, confidentiality concerns, and integration difficulties can hinder the effective implementation of guidance and counseling services. Addressing these challenges requires intentional policy, investment, and ongoing professional development.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature on guidance and counseling in schools consistently underscores its critical role in fostering students' academic success, moral development, social adjustment, and behavior management. Guidance and counseling services have evolved historically, adapting to changing educational needs, and are increasingly supported by technological advancements that enhance accessibility and effectiveness. Studies reveal that counseling positively influences students' discipline by providing emotional support, improving coping skills, and promoting positive behavior, thereby reducing incidents of indiscipline.

Disciplinary approaches vary between public and private schools, shaped by differences in resources, administrative structures, and school culture. Public schools often employ more standardized and policy-driven disciplinary measures, while private schools tend to adopt more individualized and values-based approaches, frequently integrating counseling and restorative practices. Both sectors, however, recognize the importance of collaboration between teachers and counselors to effectively manage student behavior.

The school environment and administration significantly impact the effectiveness of counseling services. Supportive leadership, adequate resources, and a positive school climate foster successful counseling programs, whereas unsupportive settings hinder their impact. Despite the advantages of private schools in autonomy and resources, challenges such as staffing shortages, confidentiality concerns, and lack of prioritization limit counseling effectiveness. Empirical studies consistently show the benefits of counseling in reducing student indiscipline, improving social skills, and enhancing academic engagement. However, collaboration between school staff, supportive administration, and a positive environment are key mediators of these

outcomes. Challenges in implementation, particularly in private schools, highlight the need for increased awareness, resources, and integration of counseling into the school culture.

Theoretical frameworks underpinning guidance and counseling include Person-Centered Theory, Behavioral and Cognitive-Behavioral Theories, Psychosocial Development, Social Learning, Restorative Justice, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and Systems Theory. These provide a multidimensional understanding of how counseling influences behavior by addressing emotional, cognitive, social, and environmental factors.

Despite extensive research, gaps remain in the literature. These include limited studies in diverse cultural and resource-poor contexts, lack of longitudinal data on counseling outcomes, insufficient exploration of teacher-counselor collaboration, and under-investigation of the role of school leadership. Emerging areas such as digital counseling and the perspectives of students themselves are also underrepresented. Addressing these gaps will enhance the design, implementation, and impact of guidance and counseling services in schools.

Gaps in Literature

Despite the growing body of research highlighting the importance and benefits of guidance and counseling in schools, several notable gaps remain in the existing literature that warrant further exploration. One significant gap pertains to the contextual variability in the implementation and effectiveness of counseling services, particularly across different cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional settings. While many studies have been conducted in well-resourced urban or Western school contexts, there is limited empirical evidence addressing how guidance and counseling services operate in rural, under-resourced, or culturally diverse environments, especially in developing countries. This lack of contextual specificity restricts the

generalizability of findings and the development of tailored interventions suited to unique local challenges.

Another gap concerns the longitudinal impact of counseling interventions on students' behavior and academic outcomes. Much of the existing research focuses on short-term effects or cross-sectional data, leaving unanswered questions about the sustainability of behavior changes and the long-term benefits of counseling programs. Longitudinal studies that track students over multiple years are scarce, making it difficult to ascertain how counseling influences developmental trajectories or whether booster interventions are necessary to maintain positive outcomes.

Additionally, there is a paucity of research on the collaboration dynamics between teachers and counselors in managing discipline. Although it is widely acknowledged that their partnership is critical, few studies have systematically examined the barriers, facilitators, and best practices that optimize this collaboration. Understanding how these professional relationships evolve and how communication and shared responsibilities are negotiated would provide valuable insights to improve integrated behavior management strategies.

The literature also reveals insufficient attention to the role of school leadership and administration in shaping counseling services. While some studies highlight administrative support as a factor, in-depth analyses of specific leadership styles, policy decisions, and organizational cultures that either enable or hinder counseling effectiveness remain limited. This gap is especially pertinent in private school contexts, where governance structures differ markedly from public schools, yet comparative studies are rare.

Furthermore, emerging challenges such as the integration of digital counseling platforms and technology-mediated interventions in behavior management are under-researched. The rapid

advancement of online and virtual counseling tools, accelerated by recent global events, calls for comprehensive evaluations of their efficacy, accessibility, and ethical considerations within school settings.

Existing literature often overlooks students' perspectives regarding counseling services and disciplinary approaches. Most studies rely on adult stakeholders—teachers, counselors, and administrators while the voices of students themselves are less frequently heard. Incorporating student experiences and feedback would enrich understanding of counseling's real-world impact and guide the development of more student-centered practices.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the procedures adopted in carrying out the study under the following subheadings:

- Design of the Study
- Population of the Study
- Sample Size 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

The correlation approach of survey research design was adopted for this study. This design seeks to determine the relationship between two or more variables. The choice of this design was based on the fact that the study aimed to examine the relationship between **Generative Artificial Intelligence** and **Critical Thinking**.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises all students and guidance counsellors in private secondary schools within **Oredo Local Government Area (LGA)** of Edo State. According to the latest available data from the Edo State Ministry of Education, there are approximately **45**

registered private secondary schools in Oredo LGA, with an estimated student population of **10,000 to 12,000 students** and about **90 to 100 guidance counsellors**.

For the purpose of this study, attention was focused on senior secondary students (SS1–SS3), as they are more likely to have experienced and benefited from guidance and counselling services. Guidance counsellors who provide these services were also included in the population.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study consisted of 100 students drawn from selected private secondary schools in Oredo LGA, Edo State. These students were chosen from the senior secondary classes (SS1–SS3) because they are considered more mature and have likely had more interactions with their school's guidance and counselling units.

The random sampling technique was employed for the selection. Private secondary schools in Oredo LGA were stratified based on school size and ownership type (small, medium, and large private schools). From each stratum, a proportional number of students were randomly selected to ensure fair representation of different school types and student populations. This method ensured that students from various backgrounds and school settings were adequately represented, thereby improving the generalizability of the findings.

Research Instrument

The primary data collection tool used for this study was a structured questionnaire developed specifically to investigate the influence of guidance and counselling services on students' discipline in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA. The questionnaire comprised two main

sections: Section A: Demographic information of respondents. Section B: Items addressing the main themes of the study such as students' awareness of guidance and counselling services, frequency of counselling sessions, effectiveness of counselling in managing discipline, types of disciplinary issues encountered, and the perceived impact of counselling services on students' discipline.

Validity of the Instrument

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it was presented to the project supervisor and two other experts in Measurement and Evaluation for assessment and suggestions. The corrections and recommendations made by these experts were incorporated into the final version of the instrument. This process ensured that the questionnaire possessed adequate face and content validity.

Reliability of the Instrument

The Cronbach's Alpha reliability method was employed to establish the reliability of the instrument. Twenty (20) copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents who were part of the study population but not included in the final sample. The data collected were analyzed, and a reliability coefficient of 0.835 was obtained, indicating a high level of internal consistency of the instrument.

Method of Data Collection

Data for this study were collected through the structured questionnaire, which was personally administered to respondents in private secondary schools within Oredo LGA. A team of trained research assistants was mobilized to assist in distributing and retrieving the questionnaires.

The team ensured that respondents were given clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaire and provided clarifications where necessary. The administration was carried out at different times and locations within the schools to ensure that the data represented a diverse cross-section of students in the private secondary school system.

Method of Data Analysis

Research questions one to four were answered using mean and standard deviation, while hypotheses one to three were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

The decision rule for interpreting the research questions was based on the scale mean. When the obtained mean value was higher than the scale mean, the variable was interpreted as being at a high level. Conversely, when the obtained mean was lower than the scale mean, the variable was interpreted as being at a low level.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter, the results of the data collected from the field and discussion of findings are presented.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent are guidance and counselling services available in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA?

Table 2: Description of Availability of Guidance and Counselling Services in Private Secondary Schools in Oredo LGA

Variable	Sum	Mean	Sd	Decision
Availability of Guidance Counselling Services	4512	45.15	7.02	High Extent

N=100, Scale Mean = 37.5

Table 2 shows the responses on the availability of guidance and counselling services in private secondary schools. From the table, the obtained mean values of the respondents is 45.15 with standard deviation of 7.02. The mean values of the respondents is greater than the

scale mean of 37.5, which indicates a high extent of guidance and counselling services available in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA.

Research Question 2: What is the level of discipline among students in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA?

Table 2: Description of the Level of Students' Discipline in Private Secondary Schools in Oredo LGA

Variable	Sum	Mean	Sd	Decision
Students' Discipline	4329	43.29	6.78	High Level

N=100, Scale Mean = 37.5

Table 2 shows the responses on the level of students' discipline. From the table, the obtained mean values of the respondents is 4329 with standard deviation of 6.78. The mean values of the respondents is greater than the scale mean of 37.5, which indicates a high level of discipline among students in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA of Edo State.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between available guidance and counselling services and discipline among students in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA.

Table 3: Correlation of Awareness of Available Guidance and Counselling Services and Students' Discipline in Private Secondary Schools in Oredo LGA

Variables	N	r	Sig (2-tailed)
Guidance and Counselling services	100	0.443	0.000
Students' Discipline			

Table 3 shows the obtained correlation coefficient of available of the guidance and counselling services and students' discipline as 0.443 with p-value of 0.000. Testing at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is less than the alpha level of significance ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that "There is no significant relationship between available of the guidance and counselling services and discipline among students in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA" is rejected. This implies that there is a significant between available of the guidance and counselling services and discipline among students in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA of Edo State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the relationship between available of the guidance and counselling services and discipline among students in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA based on Sex.

Table 4: Fishers Z- Test Analysis of Awareness of the Guidance and Counselling Services and Students' Discipline in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA by Sex

Variables (Sex)	N	r	Zr	Z-cal	Z-value	Decision
Male	52	0.250	.2554	2.60	1.96	Significant
Female	48	0.660	.7928			

Table 4 above shows the Fishers Z- statistics of availability of the guidance and counselling services and discipline among students in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA based on Sex. The coefficient values of male and female students are 0.250 and 0.660 respectively, testing at an alpha level of 0.05, the calculated Z of 2. 60 is greater than the critical value of 1.96. With this, the null hypothesis which states that "There is no significant difference in the relationship between awareness of the guidance and counselling services and discipline among students in private

secondary schools in Oredo LGA based on Sex.” is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference in relationship between availability of the guidance and counselling services and availability of the guidance and counselling services and students’ discipline in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA of Edo State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that **guidance and counselling services are available to a high extent** in private secondary schools within Oredo Local Government Area (LGA) of Edo State. This indicates that most private schools in the area have functional counselling units that provide psychological, academic, and behavioural support to students. This result aligns with the assertions of **Nwachukwu (2019)** and **Okobiah & Okorodudu (2020)**, who emphasized that the presence of effective guidance and counselling services in schools enhances students’ moral, academic, and emotional development. The availability of such services contributes to a conducive learning environment where students receive proper guidance on personal and educational matters.

The findings also showed that the **level of discipline among students in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA is high**. This suggests that students in these schools generally exhibit acceptable behaviour and comply with school rules and regulations. The result agrees with the position of **Akinade (2018)**, who noted that disciplined students tend to achieve better academic performance, demonstrate stronger social adjustment, and maintain positive interpersonal relationships. The high level of discipline observed could be attributed to the effective

counselling programmes implemented in these schools, as counsellors play an essential role in shaping students' attitudes and behaviours.

Furthermore, the result of the **first hypothesis** indicated a **significant relationship between the availability of guidance and counselling services and students' discipline** in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA. This implies that the more available and effective the counselling services are, the better the level of discipline among students. This finding supports the view of **Egbochuku (2017)**, who asserted that guidance and counselling help students develop self-control, make sound decisions, and adopt positive social behaviours. It also corroborates the study by **Yusuf and Oboegbulem (2021)**, which found that counselling services significantly reduced deviant behaviours and improved students' sense of responsibility.

The **second hypothesis** tested revealed a **significant difference in the relationship between guidance and counselling services and students' discipline based on sex**. Specifically, female students showed a stronger correlation between exposure to counselling services and discipline compared to their male counterparts. This suggests that female students may respond more positively to counselling interventions, possibly due to higher levels of emotional expressiveness or a greater willingness to seek help. This finding agrees with the report of **Eyo, Joshua, and Esuong (2019)**, who observed that female students tend to engage more actively in counselling sessions and display greater behavioural change as a result.

Overall, the findings highlight the **importance of guidance and counselling services in promoting discipline among students**. Schools that invest in effective counselling units are likely to experience fewer disciplinary problems, improved student–teacher relationships, and enhanced academic outcomes. It is therefore recommended that school administrators strengthen

their counselling units and ensure that qualified counsellors are available to meet students' personal and behavioural needs.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this chapter, summary of the study, conclusion, recommendations, contribution to knowledge and suggestions for further studies are presented

Summary

The study examined the relationship between guidance and counselling services and students' discipline in private secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The purpose was to determine the extent to which guidance and counselling services are available, assess the level of students' discipline, and establish whether a significant relationship exists between both variables.

The research adopted a descriptive survey design. A structured questionnaire was administered to one hundred respondents drawn from selected private secondary schools within Oredo LGA. Data collected were analyzed using mean scores, standard deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), and Fisher's Z-test. The findings revealed that guidance and counselling services are available to a high extent in private secondary schools within the

study area. The results also indicated that students in these schools exhibited a high level of discipline, suggesting that counselling interventions and school management practices contribute to maintaining positive behavior. Furthermore, statistical analysis showed a significant relationship between the availability of guidance and counselling services and students' discipline ($r = 0.443$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that effective counselling programs enhance students' self-control, moral conduct, and compliance with school rules. Additionally, the study found a significant difference between male and female students in the relationship between guidance and counselling and discipline. Female students showed a stronger association, suggesting that they may be more receptive to counselling services or that these services better address their behavioral and emotional needs. Overall, the findings established that guidance and counselling are indispensable in promoting discipline and positive behavioral adjustment among students in private secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

From the findings, the study concludes that guidance and counselling services play a vital role in promoting students' discipline in private secondary schools. Schools that have active and well-structured counselling units tend to record fewer cases of indiscipline and enjoy a more conducive learning environment. The presence of qualified counsellors, coupled with administrative support and student awareness, contributes to improved moral standards, emotional stability, and respect for school rules. The study further concludes that counselling services not only correct misconduct but also help in preventing it by providing emotional support, conflict resolution skills, and self-awareness training for students. The gender variation in findings indicates the need for inclusive, gender-sensitive counselling strategies that address the unique needs of both male and female students.

In essence, guidance and counselling are essential tools for shaping students' character, fostering self-discipline, and enhancing the overall educational experience

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

1. Strengthening Counselling Units:

School proprietors and administrators should establish well-equipped counselling units with adequate materials and private offices to ensure confidentiality and effective service delivery.

2. Employment of Qualified Counsellors:

Private secondary schools should employ trained and certified counsellors capable of handling students' academic, emotional, and social challenges professionally.

3. Gender-Sensitive Counselling Programs:

Counselling services should be designed to address the specific behavioral, emotional, and social needs of both male and female students, ensuring inclusivity and equity.

4. Awareness Creation:

Regular seminars, workshops, and orientation programs should be organized to increase students' awareness and encourage them to utilize counselling services.

5. Collaborative Approach:

Counsellors should work closely with teachers, parents, and school management to ensure consistent behavioral guidance and reinforcement of discipline both in and outside the school.

6. Government and Policy Support:

The Ministry of Education should enforce policies mandating the establishment of counselling units in all secondary schools and provide monitoring to ensure effective implementation.

7. Continuous Professional Development:

School counsellors should attend periodic training and professional workshops to stay current with modern counselling techniques and best practices.

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in the following ways:

1. It provides empirical evidence that guidance and counselling services significantly influence students' discipline in private secondary schools in Oredo LGA.
2. It highlights the importance of gender-sensitive counselling, showing that female students tend to benefit more from counselling interventions.
3. It emphasizes the need for institutional support and collaboration among school stakeholders for effective behavioural management.
4. The study offers practical recommendations that can guide school owners, counsellors, and policymakers in strengthening counselling practices to enhance discipline and academic success.
5. It adds to the limited literature on the role of counselling in private educational institutions in Nigeria, serving as a reference point for future studies in similar contexts.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In view of the limitations and scope of this research, the following suggestions are made for future researchers:

1. Similar studies should be conducted in public secondary schools to compare the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services between public and private sectors.
2. Future research could focus on the impact of specific counselling techniques (such as cognitive-behavioral therapy or group counselling) on student discipline and emotional adjustment.
3. Studies involving a larger and more diverse sample size across multiple local government areas or states would provide a broader understanding of the topic.

4. Researchers may also explore the long-term effects of counselling services on students' academic performance, moral development, and post-school behavior.
5. Further investigation could be made into the challenges counsellors face in delivering effective counselling services in private schools.

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Reliability

/VARIABLES=VAR00001 VAR00002 VAR00003 VAR00004 VAR00005 VAR00006
VAR00007 VAR00008 VAR00009

VAR00010 VAR00011 VAR00012 VAR00013 VAR00014 VAR00015 VAR00016
VAR00017 VAR00018 VAR00019 VAR00020

VAR00021 VAR00022 VAR00023 VAR00024 VAR00025 VAR00026 VAR00027
VAR00028 VAR00029 VAR00030

/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
.835	30

GET

FILE='C:\Users\Dr(Mrs) Orheruata\Downloads\Adoghe Ruth.sav'.

DATASET NAME DataSet1 WINDOW=FRONT.

COMPUTE QuadCounselgService=Item1 + Item2 + Item3 + Item4 + Item5 + Item6 + Item7 +
Item8 + Item9 +

Item10 + Item11 + Item12 + Item13 + Item14 + Item15 .

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE StudtDiscipline=Item16 + Item17 + Item18 + Item19 + Item20 + Item21 + Item22
+ Item23 +

Item24 + Item25 + Item26 + Item27 + Item28 + Item29 + Item30.

EXECUTE.

FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Sex

/ORDER=ANALYSIS.

Frequencies

Notes

Output Created	23-SEP-2025 11:07:32
Comments	

Input	Data	C:\Users\Dr(Mrs) Orheruata\Downloads\Adoghe Ruth.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	100
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data.
Syntax		FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Sex /ORDER=ANALYSIS.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.00
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.01

[DataSet1] C:\Users\Dr(Mrs) Orheruata\Downloads\Adoghe Ruth.sav

Statistics

Sex

N	Valid	100
	Missing	0

Sex

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	52	52.0	52.0	52.0
Female	48	48.0	48.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=GuadCounselgService

/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX.

Descriptives

Notes

Output Created		23-SEP-2025 11:07:57
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Dr(Mrs) Orheruata\Downloads\Adoghe Ruth.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	100
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	All non-missing data are used.

Syntax	DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=GuadCounselgService /STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX.	
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.02
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.01

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
GuadCounselgService	100	25.00	57.00	4512.00	45.1200	7.02992
Valid N (listwise)	100					

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=StudtDiscipline

/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX.

Descriptives

Notes

Output Created	23-SEP-2025 11:08:14	
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Dr(Mrs) Orheruata\Downloads\Adoghe Ruth.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1

	Filter	<none>	
	Weight	<none>	
	Split File	<none>	
	N of Rows in Working Data File		100
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.	
	Cases Used	All non-missing data are used.	
Syntax		DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=StudtDiscipline /STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX.	
Resources	Processor Time		00:00:00.02
	Elapsed Time		00:00:00.09

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
StudtDiscipline	100	23.00	55.00	4329.00	43.2900	6.78128
Valid N (listwise)	100					

CORRELATIONS

/VARIABLES=GuadCounselgService StudtDiscipline

/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG

/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

Correlations

Notes

Output Created		23-SEP-2025 11:08:39
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Dr(Mrs) Orheruata\Downloads\Adoghe Ruth.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	100
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics for each pair of variables are based on all the cases with valid data for that pair.
Syntax		CORRELATIONS /VARIABLES=GuadCounselgSer vice StudtDiscipline /PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG /MISSING=PAIRWISE.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.03
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.02

Correlations

		GuadCounselg Service	StudtDiscipli ne
GuadCounselgService	Pearson Correlation	1	.443**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
StudtDiscipline	Pearson Correlation	.443**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

SORT CASES BY Sex.

SPLIT FILE LAYERED BY Sex.

CORRELATIONS

/VARIABLES=GuadCounselgService StudtDiscipline

/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG

/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

Correlations

Notes

Output Created		23-SEP-2025 11:09:49
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Dr(Mrs) Orheruata\Downloads\Adoghe Ruth.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	Sex
	N of Rows in Working Data File	100
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics for each pair of variables are based on all the cases with valid data for that pair.

Syntax	CORRELATIONS	
	/VARIABLES=GuadCounselgService StudtDiscipline	
	/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG	
	/MISSING=PAIRWISE.	
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.00
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.01

Correlations

Sex			GuadCounselg Service	StudtDiscipline
Male	GuadCounselgService	Pearson Correlation	1	.250
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.074
		N	52	52
	StudtDiscipline	Pearson Correlation	.250	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.074	
		N	52	52
Female	GuadCounselgService	Pearson Correlation	1	.660**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	48	48

StuttDiscipline	Pearson Correlation	.660**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	48	48

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

SPLIT FILE OFF.