

**Satisfaction with Online Personal social Counselling Information Service of Undergraduate Students of Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, 2010/2011 academic session**

By

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**ABSTRACT**

This study looked at how Satisfied the 2010/2011 undergraduate students of Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi with Online Personal/social Counselling received. Two research questions and one hypothesis were asked. Survey research design was employed, while all the 2010/2011 undergraduates were used for the study. The trial test result yielded a reliability coefficient of .875. The research questions were answered using mean, whereas inferential statistics of t- test answered the hypothesis. Findings revealed that Students expressed satisfaction with the Online Personal/social counselling received. Also, there is no significant mean difference in the satisfaction between male and female respondents. Recommendations: Personal social counselling can be provided to students into their e-mail and mobile handsets by counsellors. It can also be provided to male and female students via their e-mail and mobile handsets.

**Key words:** Satisfaction, Online Personal social Counselling, Text Message and e-mail

**Introduction**

Personal social counselling service, one of the components of guidance and counselling is very significant in addressing the personal social problems of students as attested by University of Oxford Counselling unit (2011) that Counselling Services are to help students address their personal or emotional problems that get in the way of having a good experience at the university and realizing their full academic and personal potentials. However, these counselling services are grossly inadequate in meeting the needs of the large number of students in the sense that it is delivered to them in most tertiary institutions in Nigeria through the face-to-face interaction as the case with University of Agriculture Makurdi. Conversely, technology is increasingly influencing communication in our society today as noted by Nunez (2009) that many relationships today are built and maintained via interactive media such as the Internet, cell phone, or text message. Yii-Nii, Chia-Wen & Hui-Hsing (2010) noted that Younger generation rely heavily on the internet to communicate with others, and that online consultation services match the characteristics of university students and the campus culture.

Making use of technology tools to provide counselling information to students is crucial when they are many as it is in the University of Agriculture Makurdi, where the number of the students are large, whereas personal social counselling information is still provided to them through the conventional method of counselling. E-counselling, or online counselling according to De Montfort University Leicester (2014) is an alternative to traditional face- to- face counselling. Bloom (1998) defines it as “the practice of professional counselling that occurs when client and counsellor are in separate or remote locations and utilize electronic means to communicate with each other”.

The researcher think that the conventional method of providing personal social counselling information to students of the Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi has not provided adequate opportunity for the students to have access to personal social counselling information. Thus, the researcher with the support of the staff of Information and communication Technology of the University, through the University Admin portal (<http://cp.uam.edu.ng>), make available personal social counselling information to the undergraduate students of the Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi 2010/2011 academic session into their email and as well into their Mobile handset as text message to find out their level of satisfaction. Example of such information includes: the reality of HIV/AIDS pandemic, need for HIV/AIDS screening, counselling on decent dressing, danger of drugs

to health, scholarship information, the need to shun cultism, relating well with others and mates among others

Studies shows that students can be satisfied with online personal social counselling information received. Forsyth Technical Community College (<https://www.forsythtech.edu/services-students/.../student-success-center/>) states that counsellors are available to help students deal with life issues that may affect their progress at the College, and that students can contact counsellors through phone or e-mail regarding personal concerns. Hirt, Cain, Bryant & Williams (2003) found that Undergraduates were significantly more satisfied with online personal social counselling services provided them than graduate students. Ainsworth (2002) reports that over 90% of the people who work with a therapist online testify that it helped them. Loyola University counselling centre Maryland (<http://www.loyola.edu/departments/counselingcenter/students/athletes>) provided personal social counselling online and face-face to athletes' students on issues such as: how to cope up with stress, dealing with athletic injury, depressive symptoms and difficulty sleeping, base on the report, after receiving these counselling information online, the students expressed satisfaction with relationships, doing well in athletic act and feeling generally less stressed and happy.

In the society, men and women are not rated the same in terms of using ICT tools, such as computer, the internet etc. while some are of the view that gender differences exists, some concludes that there is no gender difference in the level of satisfaction with online counselling. However, Yii-Nii, Chia-Wen & Hui-Hsing (2010) reported that a University counselling centre in Taiwan delivered counselling information online and face – to - face to students who were adapting poorly on campus and who were also at high risk at early stage on campus, found at the end of the exercise that both male and female students were satisfied with the online counselling services received from the counselling centre.

This study therefore, aimed at finding out how satisfied the undergraduate students of 2010/2011 academic session of university of Agriculture Makurdi with online personal social counselling information received. And as well to find out how satisfied male and female respondents were with the online personal social counselling information received.

### **Statement of Problem**

The researcher notice that personal social counselling information is provided to the large number of students of Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, through the conventional method, besides the counsellors are few. However, Counselling is gradually incorporating technology in delivering counselling services to its clients as stated by Varnado-Seal (undated) that the comprehensive school-counselling program has embrace technology as a means of providing up-to-date information, resources and links for students, parents, teachers, and counsellors. Also, Fenichel (2010) stated that in the private sector, and at a few selected college counselling centers, the traditional face to face therapy model is now expanding to include online technology such as informational websites, assessment and psychotherapeutic software, online support groups, and comprehensive self-help programs. This researchers therefore provided personal social counselling information to undergraduate students of 2010/2011 academic session of the Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi into their email and mobile handset as text message in order to find out their level of satisfaction.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study was to find out how satisfied the Undergraduate students of University of Agriculture Makurdi (2010/2011) academic session with Online Personal social Counselling information received

### **Research questions**

1. How satisfied were the respondents with the online personal social counselling information service provided them by the researcher?
2. What is the difference between male and female students in their level of satisfaction with the online personal social counselling information services?

**Hypothesis**

There is no significant gender mean difference in the level of satisfaction among the respondents with online personal social counselling information services.

**Significance of the study**

Providing personal social counselling information to students online will increase easy access to information thereby improving their social life. A Soft copy of this work will be uploaded on the internet for counsellors, researchers and the general public to have access to, for information sharing. Online counselling information is cost effective, its adoption by universities will reduce cost, time and manpower requirement for counselling students.

**METHODOLOGY**

Survey research design was used for the study. The study was carried out at the University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue state of Nigeria, North Central. The population of study were the candidates who registered for Post- Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) online of the University of Agriculture Makurdi, 2010/2011 academic session, where their bio data such as e-mail addresses, phone numbers, name, sex, were captured by the university portal, ICT unit. Their population was seven thousand, one hundred and thirteen (7,113).

**Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample size for this study were all the undergraduate students who were admitted into the University of Agriculture, Makurdi for the 2010/2011 academic session. Sampling technique was purposive because it comprises only students who registered for the Post- UTME online, where their bio-data were captured by the University Information and Communication Technology (ICT) unit. Thus, the researchers obtained their bio-data from the university portal.

**Instrument for Data Collection**

Satisfaction of Students with Online Personal social Counselling Information Assessment Questionnaire (SSOPCIAQ), was used by the researchers to collect data from the respondents to find out their level of satisfaction with the online Personal social counselling information received. The items were designed on the basis of a four point scale of very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied and very dissatisfied, and rating was 4,3,2,1 in that order. The instrument was however validated by experts in Guidance & Counselling and Measurement and Evaluation to ensure content and face validity.

**Reliability of the Instrument.**

The instrument of the study was pilot tested on 40 undergraduate Students of the 2009/2010 of University of Agriculture, Makurdi, who took part in the post UTME, the data obtained were subjected to reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient statistics to establish the internal consistency of the instrument. The analysis showed that: Satisfaction of Students with online Personal social counselling Information yielded Alpha reliability of .875.

**Method of Data Collection**

The instrument of the study was administered to the respondents through the University Portal (<http://portal.uam.edu.ng>) where they completed the study instrument online along with their registration forms for 2012 /2013 academic session, first semester .

**Online Personal social guidance Information provided to the Respondents**

Through the University Admin portal (<http://cp.uam.edu.ng>), the researcher provided Personal social counselling information into the respondents e-mail and mobile handset as text message after registration. These includes: the reality of HIV/AIDS pandemic, need for HIV/AIDS screening, counselling on decent dressing, danger of drugs to health, scholarship information, the need to shun cultism, relating well with others and mates among others. This aimed at helping them to adjust socially in the university environment.

**Procedures and Activities**

The investigators make available the online personal social guidance information service into the respondents' e-mail and telephone lines as text message with the support of the University Information and Communication Technology (ICT) staff. Information about the respondents such as: Name, sex, e-mail, telephone number, College/Department were gotten from the university database where the students normally do online registration. These information were used by the researcher to provide the online personal social counselling information to them into their email and mobile handsets as text message.

**Method of Data Analysis.**

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis. Mean was used to answer the research questions. To arrive at a decision, an item with 2.5 and above mean is considered satisfied, while below 2.5 is considered unsatisfied. To test the hypothesis formulated, inferential statistics of t- test was used at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results and discussion**

**Research Question 1:** How satisfied were the respondents with the online personal social counselling service provided them by the researcher?

**Table 1: Satisfaction of respondents with Online Personal social Counselling information received after registration**

S/N	Item	N	Mean	Decision
1	How satisfied were you when you received scholarship information as text message in your mobile phone?	2347	3.33	Satisfied
2	How satisfied were you when you received scholarship information in your e-mail?	2347	2.72	Satisfied
3	How satisfied were you when you received information on the consequences of joining cultism as text message in your phone?	2347	3.33	Satisfied
4	How satisfied were you when you received information on the consequences of joining cultism in your e-mail?	2347	2.64	Satisfied
5	How satisfied were you when you received information on the danger of drugs to health as text message in your mobile phone?	2347	3.32	Satisfied
6	How satisfied were you when you received information on the danger of drugs to health in your e-mail?	2347	2.82	Satisfied
7	How satisfied were you when you received information on the need for decent dressing as text message in your mobile phone?	2347	3.31	Satisfied
8	How satisfied were you when you received information on the need for decent dressing in your e-mail?	2347	2.73	Satisfied
9	How satisfied were you generally with the personal social counselling information provided to you through text message and e-mail	2347	3.31	Satisfied
	Mean of Means		3.06	Satisfied

Table one (1) shows that the respondents expressed satisfaction with the Online Personal social Counselling information received, these are: scholarship information through online text message, ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.33) and e-mail ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.72); consequences of joining cultism via online text message, ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.33) and e-mail ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.64); danger of drugs to health through online text message, ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.32) and e-mail ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.82); need for decent dressing via online text message, ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.31) and e-mail ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.73). General satisfaction with online personal social counselling information recorded a mean of 3.31, while the mean of means is 3.06.

**Research Question 2:** What is the difference between male and female students in their level of satisfaction with the online personal social counselling services?



Table two: Differences between male and female students in satisfaction with the online personal social counselling services

Items	Gender	N	Mean	Decision
10 How satisfied were you when you received scholarship information as text message in your mobile phone?	M	1418	3.39	Satisfied
	F	929	3.27	Satisfied
11 How satisfied were you when you received scholarship information in your e-mail?	M	1418	2.78	Satisfied
	F	929	2.66	Satisfied
12 How satisfied were you when you received counselling information on the consequences of joining cultism as text message in your mobile phone?	M	1418	3.34	Satisfied
	F	929	3.32	Satisfied
13 How satisfied were you when you received information on the consequences of joining cultism in your e-mail?	M	1418	2.65	Satisfied
	F	929	2.63	Satisfied
14 How satisfied were you when you received information on the danger of drugs to health as text message in your mobile phone?	M	1418	3.37	Satisfied
	F	929	3.27	Satisfied
15 How satisfied were you when you received information on the danger of drugs to health in your e-mail?	M	1418	2.83	Satisfied
	F	929	2.81	Satisfied
16 How satisfied were you when you received information on the need for decent dressing as text message in your mobile phone?	M	1418	3.36	Satisfied
	F	929	3.26	Satisfied
17 How satisfied were you when you received information on the need for decent dressing in your e-mail?	M	1418	2.75	Satisfied
	F	929	2.71	Satisfied
18 How satisfied were you generally with the personal social counselling provided to you through text message and e-mail?	M	1418	3.36	Satisfied
	F	929	3.26	Satisfied
Mean of means	M	3.09		
	F	3.02		

Table (2) shows that both male and female respondents expressed Satisfaction with online Personal social Counselling information received with the following means: scholarship information received via text message, (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.32) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.34), via e-mail. (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.78) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.66); information on the consequences of joining cultism through text message, (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.32) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.14), via e-mail, (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.65) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.63); information on the danger of drugs to health via text message, (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.31) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.33), via e-mail, (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.83) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.81); information on the need for decent dressing through text message, (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.30) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.32), via e-mail, (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.75) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.71); general satisfaction of respondents with the online personal social counselling information, (male,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.30) & (female,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.33). The mean of means are: 3.09 for male and 3.02 for female respondents

**Hypothesis:** There is no gender difference in the level of satisfaction among the respondents with online personal social counselling information received

**Table 3: Independent Sample t-test for Equality of Means for the difference in the Level of Satisfaction between Male and Female respondents with the Online Personal social Counselling information received.**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed) p	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Online Personal/ social counselling information	Male	1418	16.5529	2.74826	.07298	-.926	2345	.355	-.10696	.11550
	Female	929	16.6598	2.71818	.08918					

Table fifteen (15), gives  $t = -0.926$ ,  $df = 2345$  and  $p\text{-value} = 0.355$ . Since the  $p$  value is 0.05 level of significant, we can conclude that there is no significant difference in the level of satisfaction between male and female respondents with the personal social counselling information received.

**Discussion**

Research question one (1) sought to find out the level of satisfaction of the respondents with the online Personal social counselling information provided them after registration by the researcher. The finding indicates that the respondents were satisfied with the Online Personal social Counselling information received with an overall mean of 3.06. This could be because the respondents received the personal social counselling information with ease. Possibly, this inform why some of the respondents sent e-mail to the researcher expressing gratitude. The means of the personal social counselling information received via text messages are a little higher than that of e-mail. Maybe text message from handset is easy to have access to than e-mail. This implies that university Counsellors could use more of text message to communicate personal social counselling information to students. This finding, however, contradicts the works of Cedric & Zack (2010) which indicated that a comprehensive evaluation of online counselling and its effectiveness is not yet possible, whereas, the finding in this work indicates that online personal social counselling is possible and effective. Besides, the finding is in agreement with the BRCC report (2013) online personal social counselling and Students' Satisfaction survey, in which the result showed that: 8.1% of the students used it and were satisfied; and that 58.0% of them prefer to receive financial aid information and update through their personal e-mail and telephone text message respectively. In the same vein, Greenwood *et al.* (2008) reports that Personal social counselling information such as crisis intervention, access to faculty were made available to the students of Inver Hills Community College Minnesota during the 2008 academic year through the counselling web site, e-mail and through personal web-site developed by some counsellors to provide support for students, and that the students were satisfied with the services received. Also, Kids Help Line Australia (2002) hosted a satisfaction survey on its website to seek feedback from young people who had used Kids Help web, e-mail and telephone counselling. According to the report, 54% expressed satisfaction with the counselling provided to them. Also, 28% said that there was no-one else who they might have spoken to if they had been unable to call, and that the main reasons for satisfaction with the service are: receiving a timely response and the simple fact that the service is available.

BRCC report shows that it used the same media of communication with the researcher, that is e-mail and text message. While Greenwood *et al.* used website and e-mail, Kids Help Line Australia made use of e-mail, website and telephone to communicate counselling information to their target population. The researcher in this work used text message in addition to the e-mail to fill in the gap of Greenwood *et al.*

Research question two (2) sought to find out whether male and female differ in their level of satisfaction with the online personal social counselling information provided to them by the researcher. This finding indicates that both male and female respondents were satisfied with the online personal social counselling information received with a total means of 3.09 for male and 3.02 for female respondents. Based on this result, university counsellors can provide personal social counselling information to both male and female students through their e-mail and text message. The total mean of female respondents is slightly lower than that of male respondents. Perhaps, the rate at which females check their e-mail is lower than that of male. However, this finding is consistent with that of Yii-Nii, Chia-Wen & Hui-Hsing (2010) who found in a survey research that both male and female students showed a similar level of satisfaction and opinion towards counselling in the area of inter-personal relationship, crisis intervention and so on. According to the report, this counselling information was provided to the students both online and face-to-face by a university counselling center in Taiwan. Dhindsa & Shahrizal-Emran (2011) in Yau & Cheng (2012) reported that female students had a strong belief in the equality of both sexes in using technology activities. Mallen, Day & Green (2012) on the other hand found that women had significantly more online communication experience than did men.

Yii-Nii, Chia-Wen & Hui-Hsing report did not specify the technological tool used to deliver the personal social counselling information to the students. The researcher in this work indicated clearly the technological tools used to provide the personal social counselling information to the respondents, these include e-mail and text message

The hypothesis sought to find out whether male and female respondents differ in their level of satisfaction with online personal social counselling information provided to them by the researcher. The result reveals that there is no significant difference in the level of satisfaction between male and female respondents with the online Personal social counselling information provided to them ( $t = -0.926$ ,  $df = 2345$  and  $p\text{-value} = 0.355$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). This finding is supported by the work of Walker (1998), who established in an online counselling survey at the University of British Columbia that most new students (87.5%) were satisfied with information about campus life provided them, and that over 80% of all the students were satisfied with the personal and social transition to the university as well as adjusting to living in the university and making new friends. Similarly, Kids Help Line (2007), reported that Australian Kids Help line provides phone and e-mail counselling as well as synchronous web counselling, and that females made up the majority of the counselling sessions in 2006.

Walker's (1998) report shows that both male and female students expressed satisfaction with the online personal social counselling information received, while that of Kids Help line Australia shows that females made up the majority of the counselling sessions in 2006. The finding in this work however reveals that both male and female respondents expressed satisfaction with the online personal social counselling information received.

### Conclusion

This study looked at the satisfaction with online personal social guidance services of undergraduate students of the University of Agriculture, Makurdi, 2010/2011 academic session. The findings show that the students were satisfied with the online personal social counselling information received, therefore, the researcher concludes that, with online counselling, the location of the individual does not matter. Also, it is clear that the gender of the client does not really matter as well when provided with online personal social counselling information through ICT tools.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made: Universities' websites/portals should be further developed and incorporate the details of students' bio-data including their e-mail and phone numbers to ease individual and group counselling. Secondly, personal social counselling information can be delivered to students by counsellors via their mobile handsets as text message and e-mail addresses to complement the face-to-face counselling. Thirdly, counsellors can make available personal social counselling information services to both male and female students via their e-mail and mobile handsets as text message. Fourthly, the university system and other tertiary institutions should embrace the benefits of the use of ICT infrastructure in counselling students.

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