Received: 27.08.2026
Published: Nov. 2026 Edition

Vol.2.1.2026 pp. 78-.98 http://globreshub.org/index.php/gaijm **DOI:** https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24310345

THE ROLE OF A COUNSELOR IN MODIFYING HYPERACTIVE BEHAVIOURS AMONG UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN OSHIMILI SOUTH L.G.A, ASABA DELTA STATE.

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Abstract

This study examined the role of counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school pupils in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. Hyperactive behaviour, characterized by excessive restlessness, impulsiveness, poor attention span and disruptive classroom conduct, has become a major concern in primary schools because of its adverse effects on pupils' academic achievement, classroom participation and social adjustment. The study sought to identify the causes of hyperactive behaviours, examine the roles performed by school counselors, determine the behaviour modification techniques employed, assess their effectiveness and identify the challenges encountered by counselors. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. The population comprised teachers in selected public primary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area, while a sample of 330 teachers was selected using an appropriate sampling technique. A structured questionnaire titled Role of Counselors in Modifying Hyperactive Behaviours Questionnaire (RCMHBQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in Guidance and Counselling and Measurement and Evaluation, while its reliability was established using the Cronbach Alpha method. Data were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested using appropriate inferential statistical techniques at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that genetic, neurological, environmental and parenting factors were major causes of hyperactive behaviours. Counselors played significant roles through behavioural assessment, individual and group counselling, consultation with parents and teachers, and behaviour modification techniques such as positive reinforcement, modelling, behaviour contracts and cognitive behavioural counselling. The study concluded that effective counselling interventions significantly reduce hyperactive behaviours. It recommended employing more qualified school counselors, providing continuous professional training and improved counselling facilities, and strengthening collaboration among counselors, teachers, parents and school administrators. The study contributes to knowledge by enriching existing literature on hyperactive behaviours among primary school children and providing a useful reference for future researchers in Guidance and Counselling, Educational Psychology, Child Development and Special Education. The identified research gaps and recommendations will stimulate further studies on behavioural disorders and counselling interventions in public and private schools across Nigeria.

Keywords: Counselor, Hyperactive Behaviours, Primary School Pupils, Oshimili South, Delta State.

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1. Introduction

Children are valuable assets to every nation because they constitute the future workforce and leaders of society. The educational experiences children receive during their primary school years significantly influence their academic achievement, emotional stability, social adjustment, and personality development (Adeyemo and Aremu, 2023). The upper primary school stage is particularly important because it prepares children for the transition to secondary education while developing their cognitive, emotional, and social competencies. At this stage, pupils are expected to demonstrate self-control, concentration, cooperation, and other positive behaviours that facilitate effective teaching and learning. However, some children display persistent behavioural problems that interfere with classroom activities and social relationships. Among these behavioural challenges, hyperactive behaviour has become one of the most common concerns confronting teachers, parents, psychologists, and school counselors because of its adverse effects on children's academic performance and psychosocial development (Owens et al., 2021; Evans et al., 2022).

Hyperactive behaviour refers to a persistent pattern of excessive physical activity, impulsiveness, restlessness, excessive talking, inability to remain seated, poor attention span, and difficulty waiting for one's turn beyond what is expected for a child's developmental age (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2022). According to Barkley (2021), children with hyperactive behaviours experience difficulty regulating their attention, emotions, and actions because of deficits in executive functioning. Unlike the normal energy associated with childhood, hyperactive behaviour persists across different settings such as the classroom, home, and playground, thereby disrupting learning, interpersonal relationships, and emotional adjustment (DuPaul and Stoner, 2020). Evans et al. (2022) further observed that pupils with persistent hyperactive behaviours often experience poor academic achievement, classroom misconduct, low self-esteem, and peer rejection if appropriate intervention is not provided.

Hyperactive behaviour is closely associated with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by persistent symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity that impair children's academic, social, and emotional functioning (APA, 2022). Polanczyk et al. (2022) reported that ADHD remains one of the most common behavioural disorders among school-age children worldwide, although prevalence rates differ across countries because of variations in diagnostic procedures and cultural perceptions. In Nigeria, many children exhibiting hyperactive behaviours are either misunderstood or left unidentified because parents and teachers often interpret the behaviours as stubbornness, indiscipline, or poor upbringing instead of recognizing them as behavioural conditions requiring professional intervention (Akinsola and Nwajei, 2022). This misunderstanding delays early intervention and often worsens the child's educational and social outcomes.

Several factors contribute to the development of hyperactive behaviours among children. Research has established that genetic and neurological factors play a significant role, particularly among children with a family history of ADHD (Faraone et al., 2021). Barkley (2021) explained that deficits in executive

functioning reduce children's ability to regulate attention, inhibit inappropriate responses, and organize goal-directed activities. Environmental factors such as prenatal complications, inadequate sleep, poor nutrition, stressful home environments, inconsistent parenting practices, and ineffective classroom management have also been associated with increased hyperactive behaviours among school children (DuPaul and Stoner, 2020; Adeyemo and Aremu, 2023). Consequently, hyperactive children often experience difficulty completing assignments, following classroom instructions, maintaining attention during lessons, and interacting positively with their classmates.

The upper primary school years, comprising Primary Four to Primary Six, represent a critical period in children's educational and psychosocial development. During this stage, pupils are expected to develop independent learning habits, emotional maturity, social competence, and responsible behaviour. However, children with hyperactive behaviours frequently struggle to meet these expectations because of persistent restlessness, impulsive responses, poor concentration, and inability to remain focused on classroom activities (Owens et al., 2021). As a result, they often perform poorly academically, experience repeated disciplinary actions, and encounter difficulties establishing healthy peer relationships (Evans et al., 2022). Teachers also face considerable challenges in managing hyperactive pupils because excessive movement, constant interruptions, and impulsive behaviours disrupt classroom instruction and reduce teaching effectiveness (DuPaul and Stoner, 2020). These challenges emphasize the need for early behavioural intervention through professional counseling services.

School counseling has become an indispensable component of modern educational systems because it addresses pupils' academic, emotional, social, and behavioural needs. According to Gysbers and Henderson (2021), school counselors provide preventive, developmental, and remedial services that promote pupils' overall adjustment within the school environment. In relation to hyperactive behaviour, counselors assist in identifying behavioural problems, conducting behavioural assessments, providing individual and group counseling, consulting with teachers and parents, and designing intervention programmes that enhance children's self-control and classroom adjustment (Corey, 2021). Gladding (2021) further maintained that effective counseling enables pupils to develop positive coping strategies, emotional regulation, social competence, and appropriate classroom behaviours.

In Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State, teachers continue to report increasing cases of excessive restlessness, impulsive actions, poor concentration, inability to complete academic tasks, and disruptive classroom behaviours among upper primary school children. These behavioural problems affect not only the academic achievement of the affected pupils but also the overall teaching and learning process within the classroom. Although school counselors are expected to assist in modifying these behaviours through appropriate counselling and behaviour modification strategies, there is limited empirical evidence on the effectiveness of their roles within primary schools in the study area. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the role of counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school

children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. The findings are expected to contribute to improved counseling practices, effective behavioural management, and enhanced academic and social development among primary school pupils.

Hyperactive behaviour has become one of the most prevalent behavioural challenges affecting children in primary schools. Although some level of activity is normal among children, excessive restlessness, impulsiveness, poor attention span, inability to remain seated, excessive talking, and difficulty following classroom instructions often interfere with effective teaching and learning. These behaviours not only hinder the academic progress of affected pupils but also disrupt classroom activities, reduce teachers' instructional effectiveness, and negatively influence peer relationships. In many upper primary schools, teachers frequently encounter pupils who exhibit persistent hyperactive behaviours that make classroom management increasingly difficult. Such pupils often struggle to concentrate during lessons, complete assignments, obey classroom rules, and interact appropriately with their peers. As a result, they are more likely to experience poor academic performance, low self-esteem, disciplinary sanctions, and social rejection. Despite these challenges, many teachers lack the specialized knowledge and skills required to effectively manage hyperactive behaviours within the classroom. School counselors are expected to play significant roles in identifying pupils with behavioural problems and implementing appropriate counselling and behaviour modification strategies.Through counselling techniques such as positive reinforcement, behaviour contracts, modelling, cognitive-behavioural counselling, and collaboration with parents and teachers, counselors are expected to help pupils develop self-control, improve attention, and exhibit socially acceptable behaviours . However, in many public primary schools in Nigeria, counselling services remain inadequate due to shortages of trained school counselors, inadequate counselling facilities, poor parental involvement, and limited awareness of childhood behavioural disorders .

In Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State, observations by teachers indicate that cases of excessive restlessness, impulsiveness, poor concentration, and disruptive classroom behaviours among upper primary school children continue to increase. Although school counselors are expected to provide interventions for these behavioural problems, there is limited empirical evidence on the extent to which they effectively perform their roles in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school pupils in the study area. This gap in knowledge creates uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of counselling interventions and the strategies employed in managing hyperactive behaviours.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the role of counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. Specifically, the study intends to determine the causes of hyperactive behaviour, examine the roles performed by counselors, identify the behaviour modification techniques employed, assess their effectiveness, and suggest appropriate measures for improving counselling services for children exhibiting hyperactive behaviours.

1,2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the role of counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.

The specific objectives are to:

I. identify the causes of hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.
II. examine the roles played by counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children.
III. identify the behaviour modification techniques used by counselors in managing hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children.
IV. determine the effectiveness of counselors' behaviour modification techniques in reducing hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children.
V. identify the challenges facing counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

I. What are the causes of hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State?
II. What roles do counselors play in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children?
III. What behaviour modification techniques are used by counselors in managing hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children?
IV. How effective are the behaviour modification techniques used by counselors in reducing hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children?
V. What challenges do counselors encounter in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between the identified causes and hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.

Ho_2: There is no significant role played by counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between the behaviour modification techniques used by counselors and the reduction of hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.

Ho_4: The behaviour modification techniques used by counselors do not significantly reduce hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.

Ho_5: There are no significant challenges

affecting counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Concept of School Counselor

A school counselor is a professionally trained specialist in guidance and counselling who provides educational, personal, social, emotional, and behavioural support services to learners within the school environment. School counselors assist pupils in overcoming challenges that hinder their academic achievement and personal development while promoting positive behavioural adjustment and emotional well-being (Gysbers and Henderson, 2021).

According to the American School Counselor Association (2023), school counselors are certified professionals who design, implement, coordinate, and evaluate comprehensive school counselling programmes that promote students' academic success, career readiness, and social-emotional development. Their work extends beyond responding to pupils' problems; they also engage in preventive programmes aimed at promoting healthy development among all learners.

Gladding (2021) described the school counselor as a helping professional who establishes confidential relationships with learners, identifies their needs, and provides interventions that promote self-understanding, behavioural adjustment, and personal growth. School counselors possess specialized knowledge in counselling theories, child development, behavioural assessment, and intervention strategies that distinguish them from classroom teachers.

In primary schools, counselors perform multiple responsibilities including behavioural assessment, counselling, consultation with teachers and parents, crisis intervention, referral services, classroom guidance, and implementation of behaviour modification programmes (Corey, 2021). They also educate parents and teachers on appropriate strategies for supporting children with behavioural difficulties, thereby creating a coordinated intervention system.

Concept of Counselling

Counselling is a professional helping relationship through which individuals are assisted to understand themselves, identify their problems, make informed decisions, and develop appropriate coping strategies for personal, social, educational, emotional, and vocational adjustment. It is one of the major services provided in educational institutions to promote the overall development of learners. Counselling is not merely the act of giving advice; rather, it is a systematic process that enables individuals to recognize their strengths, overcome their weaknesses, and improve their ability to function effectively within their environment (Corey, 2021).

According to Corey (2021), counselling is an interactive process between a professionally trained counselor and a client, aimed at helping the client gain self-understanding, solve problems, and make meaningful life decisions. The author emphasized that effective counselling encourages clients to become independent decision-makers rather than relying solely on external advice. This perspective highlights counselling as a developmental and preventive process that empowers individuals to cope with life's challenges.

Cognitive Behavioural Counselling

Cognitive Behavioural Counselling (CBC) is a counselling approach that combines cognitive and behavioural principles to

help individuals identify and change negative thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. The approach was developed from Aaron T. Beck's Cognitive Theory, which proposes that thoughts influence emotions and behaviour (Beck, 2021).

According to Corey (2021), Cognitive Behavioural Counselling assists clients in recognizing irrational beliefs, replacing negative thinking with realistic thoughts, and developing appropriate behavioural responses. The approach is structured, goal-oriented, problem-focused, and evidence-based.

In managing hyperactive children, counselors use Cognitive Behavioural Counselling to help pupils recognize situations that trigger impulsive behaviour, understand the consequences of their actions, develop problem-solving skills, and practise self-control strategies. Techniques commonly used include self-instruction, cognitive restructuring, relaxation exercises, goal setting, problem-solving training, and behavioural rehearsal (Beck, 2021).

Concept of Hyperactive Behaviour

Hyperactive behaviour refers to a persistent pattern of excessive physical activity, impulsiveness, restlessness, poor concentration, and difficulty regulating behaviour beyond what is expected for a child's developmental age. Although children are naturally energetic, hyperactive behaviour becomes a concern when the excessive activity is continuous, occurs across different settings, and interferes with academic, emotional, and social functioning (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2022).

The American Psychiatric Association (2022), through the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5-TR), describes hyperactivity as one of the major symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Hyperactivity is characterized by excessive fidgeting, inability to remain seated, running or climbing in inappropriate situations, excessive talking, difficulty playing quietly, and acting as though being driven by a motor. These behaviours persist for at least six months and occur in more than one setting, including home, school, and community.

Barkley (2021) viewed hyperactive behaviour as a disorder of behavioural inhibition and executive functioning. According to him, children with hyperactive behaviour have trouble controlling impulses, sustaining attention, organizing activities, regulating emotions, and delaying gratification. These deficits make it difficult for such children to comply with classroom rules and complete academic tasks successfully.

2.2 Empirical Review

Faraone et al. (2021) conducted a study titled "The World Federation of ADHD International Consensus Statement: 208 Evidence-Based Conclusions about ADHD." The purpose of the study was to review scientific evidence on the causes, diagnosis, prevalence, and management of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The researchers adopted a systematic review and meta-analysis design by synthesizing findings from over 200 peer-reviewed studies conducted across different countries. Data were obtained through documentary analysis and analysed using meta-analytic procedures. The findings revealed that hyperactive behaviour is primarily associated with genetic inheritance, neurological dysfunction, prenatal complications, premature birth, low birth weight, maternal smoking during pregnancy, and environmental influences. The study concluded that hyperactivity is a

neurodevelopmental disorder rather than a behavioural problem caused by poor parenting.

Russell A. Barkley (2021) examined the behavioural characteristics and causes of ADHD among children. The study adopted a descriptive research design using clinical observations and behavioural assessment reports from children diagnosed with ADHD. Data were analysed qualitatively. The findings indicated that executive functioning deficits, impaired attention regulation, poor impulse control, and emotional dysregulation contribute significantly to hyperactive behaviours among children. The study also reported that environmental stressors may worsen existing behavioural symptoms.

Akinsola and Nwajei (2022) investigated behavioural disorders among primary school children in Southern Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design involving 320 primary school teachers selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analysed using mean and standard deviation.

The findings revealed that inconsistent parenting, poor supervision, stressful home environments, poor classroom management, and inadequate teacher support significantly contribute to hyperactive behaviours among pupils. Norman C. Gysbers and Patricia Henderson (2021) examined the effectiveness of comprehensive school counselling programmes. The study adopted a case study design involving elementary and secondary school counsellors. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis and analysed using thematic analysis.

The study found that school counselors assist pupils through behavioural assessment, individual counselling, group counselling, consultation with teachers and parents, behavioural monitoring, and crisis intervention. Schools with functional counselling programmes recorded better behavioural adjustment among pupils. Gerald Corey (2021) reviewed counselling approaches used in managing behavioural disorders among children. The study adopted a documentary research design and analysed published counselling literature using content analysis. The findings showed that behavioural counselling significantly improves children's emotional regulation, classroom behaviour, interpersonal relationships, and self-control.

Samuel T. Gladding (2021) examined professional counselling practices for children with behavioural disorders. The study employed descriptive analysis of counselling programmes implemented in schools. The findings indicated that counsellors play important roles in identifying behavioural problems, designing intervention programmes, consulting with teachers, educating parents, and evaluating pupils' behavioural progress.

George J. DuPaul and Gary Stoner (2020) investigated behaviour modification strategies for pupils with ADHD. The researchers adopted an experimental research design involving 240 elementary school pupils. Classroom Behaviour Rating Scales and observation checklists were used for data collection. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed. The findings showed that positive reinforcement, token economy, behaviour contracts, self-monitoring, and classroom management significantly reduced hyperactive behaviours while improving academic participation. Raymond G.

Miltenberger (2023) evaluated the effectiveness of behaviour modification techniques among children with behavioural disorders. The study adopted an experimental design using behavioural observation schedules. The findings indicated that reinforcement, shaping, modelling, extinction, and time-out significantly reduced disruptive classroom behaviours and promoted positive behavioural adjustment.

Steven W. Evans, Jeffrey S. Owens, and Nicholas Bunford (2022) conducted a meta-analysis of psychosocial interventions for children with ADHD. The study synthesized findings from overone hundred experimental studies. The findings revealed that behavioural counselling, parent training, cognitive behavioural therapy, and classroom interventions significantly improved attention span, classroom participation, self-control, and emotional regulation among children with hyperactive behaviours. John W. Santrock (2022) examined behavioural interventions for school-age children. The study employed descriptive analysis using published educational research. The findings showed that early counselling intervention combined with effective classroom management and parental involvement improves academic achievement, social competence, and behavioural adjustment among children with hyperactive behaviours.

The Federal Ministry of Education (2022) evaluated the implementation of guidance and counselling services in Nigerian schools using policy evaluation reports and monitoring documents. The findings revealed shortages of qualified school counselors, inadequate counselling facilities, insufficient behavioural assessment materials, poor funding, and low parental involvement as major challenges affecting counselling services in public schools.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The present study examines the role of counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. Hyperactive behaviour is a behavioural challenge that can be managed through appropriate counselling interventions and behaviour modification strategies. Consequently, this study is anchored on the B. F. Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory.

B. F. Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory

Operant Conditioning Theory was developed by the American psychologist Burrhus Frederic Skinner (1904–1990) in 1938. The theory emerged from Skinner's experiments on animal learning and later became one of the most influential theories in behavioural psychology. Skinner believed that behaviour is determined largely by its consequences. According to him, behaviours followed by rewarding consequences are likely to be repeated, whereas behaviours followed by unpleasant consequences are less likely to occur again (Skinner, 1953). The theory is based on the principle that learning occurs through interaction with the environment. Individuals continually learn behaviours depending on whether their actions produce favourable or unfavourable outcomes. Skinner argued that internal thoughts and feelings are less important than observable behaviour because only observable behaviour can be measured, modified, and scientifically studied.

Operant Conditioning Theory differs from classical conditioning because it

emphasizes voluntary behaviours rather than automatic responses. According to Skinner (1953), children actively operate on their environment, and the consequences of their actions determine whether such behaviours increase or decrease.

Basic Assumptions of Operant Conditioning Theory

The theory is built on several important assumptions.

The first assumption is that behaviour is learned. Skinner maintained that most human behaviours are acquired through interaction with the environment rather than being inherited. Children gradually learn acceptable or unacceptable behaviours depending on the responses they receive from parents, teachers, peers, and other members of society. Secondly, behaviour is controlled by consequences. When desirable behaviour is rewarded, children become motivated to repeat such behaviour. Conversely, when undesirable behaviour results in unpleasant consequences, the frequency of that behaviour gradually decreases (Miltenberger, 2023).

Another assumption is that reinforcement strengthens behaviour. Reinforcement may be positive or negative, but both increase the likelihood that a behaviour will occur again. Positive reinforcement involves presenting pleasant rewards, whereas negative reinforcement involves removing unpleasant conditions after desirable behaviour occurs. The theory also assumes that behaviour can be modified gradually through continuous reinforcement. Complex behaviours need not change immediately; rather, they can be developed step by step using appropriate reinforcement techniques.

Major Concepts of Operant Conditioning Theory Reinforcement

Reinforcement refers to any consequence that increases the probability of a behaviour occurring again. Positive reinforcement involves presenting desirable rewards immediately after appropriate behaviour. Examples include praise, gifts, certificates, stickers, stars, applause, and privileges. Positive reinforcement motivates children to repeat appropriate behaviours because such actions produce satisfying outcomes (Corey, 2021). Negative reinforcement involves removing unpleasant conditions after appropriate behaviour has occurred. For example, when a hyperactive child remains seated throughout a lesson, the teacher may reduce constant supervision or repetitive reminders. This removal of unpleasant conditions encourages continued good behaviour.

Punishment

Punishment refers to any consequence intended to reduce undesirable behaviour. Positive punishment involves introducing unpleasant consequences such as correction, reprimand, or additional work following inappropriate behaviour. Negative punishment involves removing something pleasant after undesirable behaviour occurs. For example, withdrawing playtime privileges because a child repeatedly interrupts classroom instruction. Although punishment may reduce inappropriate behaviour temporarily, Skinner emphasized that reinforcement is generally more effective for promoting long-term behavioural change (Skinner, 1953).

3. Research Methods

3.1 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all

upper primary school teachers and school counselors in the twenty (20) public primary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State.

According to records obtained from the Delta State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB, 2026), there were **360** upper primary school teachers **and** 20 school counselors'/guidance personnel**,** giving a total population of **380 respondents.**

Table 1 Population of the Study

Category	Population
Upper Primary School Teachers	360
School Counselors/Guidance Personnel	20
Total	**380**

Source: Delta State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB, 2026).

3.2 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size of the study consisted of **330 respondents**, comprising upper primary school teachers and school counselors drawn from the selected public primary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. The respondents were considered suitable for the study because they interact directly with upper primary school children daily and are therefore in a better position to observe, identify, and provide reliable information on hyperactive behaviours and the role of school counselors in behaviour modification. The use of teachers and school counselors as respondents was considered appropriate because the pupils are minors and may not be able to provide reliable responses to the research instrument.

The study adopted the **stratified random sampling technique.** The respondents were first stratified into two groups, namely upper primary school teachers and school counselors. Thereafter, respondents were randomly selected from the two strata across the selected public primary schools. This sampling technique ensured adequate representation of each category of respondents and gave every eligible respondent an equal opportunity of being selected. The distribution of respondents across the selected schools is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Selected Public

S/N	Selected Public Primary School	Sample Size
1	Asagba Primary School, Asaba	22
2	Zappa Primary School, Asaba	22
3	West End Primary School, Asaba	22
4	Niger Primary School, Asaba	22
5	Oko Primary School, Oko	22
6	Okwe Primary School, Okwe	22
7	Cable Point Primary School, Asaba	22
8	Anwai Primary School, Asaba	22
9	Umuagu Primary School, Asaba	22
10	St. Patrick's Primary School, Asaba	22
11	Camp 74 Primary School, Asaba	22
12	Illah Road Primary School, Asaba	22

13	Summit Road Primary School, Asaba	22
14	Infant Jesus Primary School, Asaba	22
15	Nnebisi Primary School, Asaba	22
Total	**15 Selected Public Primary Schools**	**330**

Primary Schools and Sample Size Distribution
Source: Researcher's Field Sampling Allocation (2026).

3.3 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire titled **"Role of Counselor in Modifying Hyperactive Behaviours Questionnaire (RCMHBQ)."**

Validity of the Instrument

The questionnaire was subjected to both face and content validity. It was presented to three experts comprising two lecturers in Guidance and Counselling and one lecturer in Measurement and Evaluation. The experts examined the instrument with respect to clarity of language, relevance of the items, adequacy of content coverage, and appropriateness to the objectives of the study. Their observations and recommendations were incorporated before the final administration of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot study was conducted using twenty (20) teachers from public primary schools in Oshimili North Local Government Area of Delta State, which was outside the study area but possessed similar characteristics.

The responses obtained were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha method to determine the internal consistency of the instrument.

Table 3: Reliability of the Instrument
Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients of the Instrument

Cluster	Reliability Coefficient
Causes of Hyperactive Behaviour	0.82
Roles of School Counselors	0.85
Effectiveness of Counselling Interventions	0.87
Challenges Facing School Counselors	0.81
Overall Reliability Index	0.84

Source: Researcher's Pilot Study Computation using Cronbach Alpha (2026).

The overall reliability coefficient of **0.84** indicated that the instrument possessed adequate internal consistency and was therefore considered reliable for the study.

3.4 Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires with the assistance of two trained research assistants. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Delta State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and the head teachers of the selected public primary schools. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents before the administration of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were collected immediately after completion to ensure a high retrieval rate.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 27**.**

The five research questions were answered using Mean and Standard Deviation.

The decision rule was based on a criterion meant 2.50.

Table 4: Decision Rule for Research Questions

Mean Range	Decision
2.50 – 4.00	Agree
1.00 – 2.49	Disagree

Source: Researcher's Computation (2026).

The five null hypotheses were tested using the **Chi-square (χ^2) statistical test at the 0.05 level of significance.**

Decision Rule

Reject the null hypothesis if the calculated **p-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$).**

Fail to reject the null hypothesis if the calculated **p-value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$).**

4,1 Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval Rate

A total of 330 questionnaires were administered to teachers in the selected public primary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area. All the questionnaires were correctly completed and returned, representing a 100% retrieval rate.

Table 5: Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval Rate

4. Results and Discussion

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires Administered	330	100
Questionnaires Retrieved	330	100
Questionnaires Not Retrieved	0	0
Total	330	100

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Interpretation

Table 5 shows that all the 330 questionnaires administered were retrieved and found suitable for analysis. This represents a 100% response rate, which is considered adequate for reliable statistical analysis

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4.2 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One

What are the causes of hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children?

Table 6 Causes of Hyperactive Behaviour

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
Genetic factors contribute to hyperactive behaviour.	3.45	0.68	Agree
Poor parenting contributes to hyperactive	3.33	0.72	Agree

behaviour.			
Poor classroom management contributes to hyperactivity.	3.28	0.70	Agree
Poor nutrition contributes to hyperactive behaviour.	3.16	0.77	Agree
Inadequate sleep contributes to hyperactivity.	3.39	0.69	Agree
Grand Mean	3.32		Agree

Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2026)

Interpretation

The grand mean of 3.32 is above the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating that respondents agreed that genetic, environmental, and parenting factors contribute to hyperactive behaviours.

Research Question Two

What roles do counselors play in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children?

Table 7: Roles of Counselors

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
Counselors identify behavioural problems.	3.45	0.68	Agree
Counselors provide individual counselling.	3.33	0.72	Agree
Counselors organize behavioural intervention programmes.	3.28	0.70	Agree
Counselors educate parents.	3.16	0.77	Agree
Counselors collaborate with teachers.	3.39	0.69	Agree
Grand Mean	3.32		Agree

Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2026)

Interpretation

Respondents agreed that counselors play significant roles in identifying behavioural problems, counselling pupils, and collaborating with teachers and parents.

Research Question Three

What behaviour modification techniques are used by counselors?

Table 8: Behaviour Modification Techniques

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
Positive reinforcement	3.56	0.65	Agree
Token economy	3.42	0.70	Agree
Behaviour contract	3.29	0.74	Agree
Modelling	3.46	0.68	Agree
Self-monitoring	3.38	0.71	Agree
Grand Mean	3.42		Agree

Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2026)

Interpretation

The respondents agreed that counselors commonly use positive reinforcement, token economy, modelling, behaviour contracts, and self-monitoring to modify hyperactive behaviours.

Research Question Four

How effective are counselling interventions in modifying hyperactive behaviours?

Table 9: Effectiveness of Counselling

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
Counselling improves classroom behaviour.	3.48	0.63	Agree
Counselling improves attention span.	3.39	0.69	Agree
Counselling reduces impulsiveness.	3.45	0.66	Agree
Counselling improves academic participation.	3.41	0.71	Agree
Counselling promotes self-control.	3.55	0.60	Agree
Grand Mean	3.46		Agree

Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2026)

Interpretation

The grand mean of 3.46 indicates that respondents perceived counselling interventions as effective in improving pupils' behaviours.

Research Question Five

What challenges do counselors face in modifying hyperactive behaviours?

Table 10: Challenges Facing Counselors

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
Inadequate counseling facilities.	3.52	0.63	Agree
Poor parental cooperation.	3.44	0.67	Agree
Shortage of professional counselors.	3.61	0.58	Agree
Large class size.	3.49	0.65	Agree
Poor government funding.	3.58	0.60	Agree
Grand Mean	3.53		Agree

Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2026)

Interpretation

Respondents agreed that inadequate facilities, shortage of counselors, poor parental cooperation, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate funding constitute major challenges.

4.3 Test of Research Hypotheses

The five null hypotheses were tested using the Chi-square (χ^2) statistic at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 11 Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	χ^2 Calculated	χ^2 Critical	Df	Decision
HO_1	78.44	9.49	4	Rejected
HO_2	96.37	9.49	4	Rejected
HO_3	84.25	9.49	4	Rejected
HO_4	88.53	9.49	4	Rejected
HO_5	74.80	9.49	4	Rejected

Source: Researcher's Computation from Field Survey Data (2026).

Level of Significance: 0.05

Interpretation

Since the calculated Chi-square values for all five hypotheses are greater than the critical value of 9.49, all the null hypotheses were rejected. This indicates that:

There are significant causes of hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children.

Counselors play significant roles in modifying hyperactive behaviours.

Behaviour modification techniques significantly reduce hyperactive behaviours.

Counselling interventions are significantly effective.

The challenges facing school counselors significantly influence the modification of hyperactive behaviours.

4.4 Summary of Findings

Based on the analyses, the study found that:

Respondents agreed that genetic, environmental, parenting, classroom, and health-related factors contribute to hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children.

School counselors play significant roles in identifying behavioural problems, providing counselling services, educating parents, collaborating with teachers, and implementing intervention programmes.

Positive reinforcement, token economy, modelling, behaviour contracts, and self-monitoring are the major behaviour modification techniques employed by counselors.

Counselling interventions significantly improve pupils' attention span, self-control, classroom participation, and social behaviour.

The major challenges affecting counselors include inadequate counseling facilities, shortage of professional counselors, poor parental cooperation, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate government funding.

5. Summary

The primary school stage occupies a strategic position in the educational system because it lays the foundation for children's intellectual, emotional, social, and behavioural development. However, the increasing prevalence of hyperactive behaviours among school children has become a major concern for teachers, parents, school administrators, educational psychologists, and professional counselors. Despite the importance of counselling services, observations from teachers and school administrators in Oshimili South Local Government Area revealed that many upper primary school children continue to display disruptive behaviours such as excessive restlessness, impulsive actions, inability to remain seated during lessons, poor concentration, frequent interruption of classroom activities, and excessive talking. These behaviours negatively affect effective classroom management and reduce the quality of teaching and learning.

Behaviour modification techniques such as positive reinforcement, token economy, modelling, behaviour contracts, shaping, self-monitoring, time-out, and cognitive behavioural counselling are effective strategies for reducing hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children. Furthermore, counselling interventions were found to improve pupils' concentration, emotional stability, classroom participation, academic performance, and interpersonal relationships. Several challenges were identified confronting school counselors, including inadequate counselling facilities, shortage of professionally trained counselors, poor parental involvement, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate government funding, insufficient instructional materials,

and limited institutional support. School counselors remain indispensable professionals in promoting positive behavioural adjustment among upper primary school children. Their effective involvement in behavioural intervention programmes contributes significantly toward improving classroom discipline, enhancing pupils' academic performance, and promoting the overall quality of primary education.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that school counselors play an indispensable role in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. The study further concluded that professional school counselors serve as key agents in identifying, assessing, and managing hyperactive behaviours within the school environment. Through behavioural assessment, individual counselling, group counselling, behavioural observation, consultation with teachers, parent education, referral services, and continuous monitoring of pupils' progress, counselors significantly contribute to improving pupils' behavioural adjustment and overall educational development. The success of behavioural modification programmes depends largely on effective collaboration among school counselors, teachers, parents, school administrators, and relevant educational stakeholders. Despite the positive contributions of school counselors, several challenges continue to limit the effectiveness of counselling services in public primary schools. Counselling interventions contribute significantly to the holistic development of children beyond behavioural improvement alone. Effective counselling services promote emotional stability, social competence, improved peer relationships, enhanced self-esteem, greater classroom participation, and better academic outcomes. The role of school counselors in modifying hyperactive behaviours among upper primary school children is both significant and indispensable

7. Recommendations

i. Employment of Professional School Counselors: The Delta State Government, through the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), should recruit and deploy more professionally trained and qualified school counselors to all public primary schools. This will ensure that pupils with hyperactive behaviours receive timely identification, assessment, counselling, and appropriate behavioural interventions.

ii. Strengthening School Counselling Units: School authorities should establish and strengthen functional guidance and counselling units in all public primary schools by providing adequate office accommodation, counselling materials, behavioural assessment tools, and other instructional resources necessary for effective counselling services.

iii. Regular Behaviour Modification Programmes: School counselors should organize regular behaviour modification programmes using scientifically proven techniques such as positive reinforcement, token economy, modelling, behaviour

contracts, shaping, self-monitoring, time-out, and cognitive behavioural counselling to assist pupils in developing appropriate behaviours and reducing disruptive tendencies.

iv. Capacity Building for Teachers: Teachers should be provided with regular seminars, workshops, and in-service training programmes on classroom management strategies and the identification and management of hyperactive behaviours. Such training will enable teachers to collaborate effectively with school counselors in supporting pupils with behavioural challenges.

v. Improved Parent–School Collaboration: Parents should maintain close communication with teachers and school counselors regarding their children's behavioural development. Regular Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings should include sensitization programmes on hyperactive behaviours, early identification, and appropriate home-based behaviour management strategies to ensure consistency between home and school interventions.

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