



DETERMINANTS OF EFFECTIVE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMMES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KERICHO SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract:

The Kenyan government recognizes guidance and counselling as an essential service that should be given to every student. To demonstrate its seriousness, the government, through the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has officially appointed heads of departments of guidance and counselling in secondary schools to oversee the implementation and proper running of this programme. Effectiveness of this programme has however not been felt as evidenced by common unrest in many schools. Limited research has been done to examine determinants of effective provision of guidance and counselling programmes in public secondary schools in Kenya. The purpose of this study was to investigate the determinants of effective guidance and counselling programmes in public secondary schools in Kericho Sub-County, Kericho County. The objectives of the study were; to investigate the qualifications of teacher counsellors providing guidance and counselling services; establish if materials for guidance and counselling are available in Kericho Sub-County. The study was based on Carl Rogers client centered therapy. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in Kericho Sub-county in Kericho County, since various schools here experienced problems such as school dropouts, strikes, poor relationships among students despite the provision of guidance and counselling services in their schools. The target population was 2000 students of form three and 60 guidance and counselling teachers. A sample of 200 students and 18 guidance and counseling teachers were selected using stratified and simple random sampling

techniques. These figures served as a true representation of the whole population of form three students. The instruments for data collection were questionnaires, interviews, observation checklists and document analysis. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse the data. The study concluded that most teacher counsellors lack professional training on guidance and counselling and out of those who are not trained in guidance and counselling, only a few attend refresher courses every term, this hinders effective counselling in public secondary schools in Kericho County. The study also concluded that secondary schools do not have enough facilities for guidance and counselling and the rooms for counselling are not in a strategic place, which is conducive for counselling. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Teachers Service Commission should ensure guidance and counseling departments are headed by trained and qualified counselors for effectiveness and that the County government and the Ministry of Education should enhance quality assessment of G&C in all secondary schools. The findings of this study may be beneficial to policy makers in the Ministry of Education to see the need for employment of professional counsellors.

Keywords: effective guidance, counselling programmes, public secondary schools, Kenya

1. Introduction

The need for guidance and counselling services in secondary schools cannot be overstated due to increasingly difficulties of modern life that have placed heavy demands and responsibilities on secondary school students. These students are faced with numerous personal, academic, social and emotional needs and problems in which if unattended could lead to host patterns of undesirable behaviours (Weiten, 2007).

The history of guidance and counselling around the world varies greatly based on how different countries and local communities have chosen to provide personal, academic, and social competencies among the post primary students. Kaminer (2004) contends that in the United States, the school counselling profession began as a vocational guidance movement at the beginning of 20th century when a systematic school guidance program was developed and provided for the consumption by the schools.

The movement emphasized on personal issues, social and emotional adjustments in order to develop and promote students' character and avoid behavioral problems. In Japan, the goal of high school guidance counselling services is to help every student develop abilities of self-understanding, decision- making, life planning studies on the

modification of behaviour among students and action taking to be able to adjust to social and emotional adjustment (Watanabe-Muraoka, 2007).

In Kenya, guidance and counselling is an initiative that is aimed at providing information and skills to impart self-awareness and optimal use of students' potential for holistic growth and development (Muriithi, 2007). Though guidance and counseling programmes were introduced in secondary schools soon after independence and have been recognized as essential services that must be offered to every student in every school, (Republic of Kenya, 1964), little achievement has been made in the provision and reinforcement of the programmes. The Ministry of Education Science and Technology, MOEST has directed all schools in Kenya to establish guidance and counseling departments headed by a senior teacher. Corporal punishment has been banned in all Kenyan schools, Education Act, (2013) and guidance and counseling is supposed to be used to instill discipline and achieve positive growth and development in students. According to KEMI (2014), inadequate career opportunities have led to current state of high unemployment rates among school and college leavers. This requires critical career guidance yet many teachers lack skills to offer guidance and counseling.

School guidance and counselling programmes have therefore been introduced to assist students overcome the number of challenges they experience at home and at school. UNESCO (2002) states that "*African adults have become more concerned with money and are less occupied with many traditional practices that formerly contributed to the upbringing of young people*". Rapid sociological changes emanating from modernization and urbanization stress students.

UNESCO (2009) adds that migration and urbanization have resulted in a sense of isolation among the youth who have lost traditional family social networks. There is also an increase in the divorce rate and in the number of single-parent families all over the world that is also a stress factor for students (Yuk Yee and Brennan, 2004). Diverse student problems and the current economic situation have made the need for effective counselling services even more critical than in the past.

Mapfumo, (2001) adds that students experience immense psychological pressures in today's world, while UNESCO (2002) argues that the HIV/AIDS pandemic has made millions of students into orphans with uncertain future. Orphanhood in turn leads to poverty (Tladi 2006). Thus, besides academic problems of failure and dropout from schools, students face numerous psychosocial, vocational and personal-social problems (Eyo et al. 2010).

The Government of Kenya through legal notice 56(2001) banned the use of the cane, as a means of disciplining student, this was further emphasized by Kenyan

Constitution (2010) and the Education Act (2013) in its place, guidance and counselling was emphasised.

However, mechanisms for training teachers to effectively provide guidance and counselling services were not immediately provided for and it was the Christian religious education teachers who were mainly appointed to provide these services. However, serious cases of indiscipline are still reported in schools raising concerns as to whether real guidance and counselling takes place and in the right way. With current socio-technological changes and educational demands, counselling is becoming a major area of concern for in-school youths. The large number of students in schools, limited number of trained teacher counsellors, heavy work load, socio-economic and technological changes all put pressure on the teachers, students, parents and society. No wonder, there is frequent demand for counselling to help address some of these problems. Today almost all schools have established guidance and counselling programme headed by a head of department (preferably a trained teacher counsellor) together with at least five teacher counsellors, to offer guidance and counselling services in schools.

Since its introduction, many emerging issues that require guidance and counselling services have continued to persist, for instance drug abuse, physical and emotional abuse, undesirable sexual behaviour, generation gap, unemployment, religious pluralism, peer-pressure, radicalisation, violence and many others. As a result, there is need to identify the determinants of effective provision of guidance and counselling in public secondary schools. The current study sought to investigate the determinants of effective provision of guidance and counselling programmes in public secondary schools in Kericho Sub- County, Kericho County.

1.2 Research Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives.

1. To investigate the qualifications of teacher counsellors providing guidance and counselling services in public secondary schools in Kericho Sub-County
2. To establish the availability of materials for guidance and counselling in public secondary schools in Kericho Sub-County

1.3 Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the qualifications of the teacher counsellors providing guidance and counselling services in secondary schools?
2. What materials for guidance and counselling services are available?

1.4 Justification

There is continuous unrest in schools, poor academic performance, increased teenage pregnancy and drug abuse despite the establishment of guidance and counseling in schools necessitates some clear understanding on these issues with the hope of finding solutions to these problems.

It seems obvious that teachers continue to have much to offer comprehensive guidance services from their historical connection with vocational guidance to their current connection with student achievement and functioning (Baker & Gerler, 2004; Myrick, 2003). Although teachers share the same deep commitment to student success, they are frequently overlooked as valuable resources when guidance programme changes are planned and/or implemented despite the fact that they are in a unique position to provide insight and meaningful feedback as to how to maximize counselling service provision (Wilgus & Shelley, 1988).

As the demands and expectations for school counselling programmes increase, it is obvious that counsellors cannot bear the burden of providing comprehensive guidance services alone. In most cases, counsellors are also teachers in the same school. (Achieng, 2007). Since the goal of guidance and counselling is to enhance students' personal, social, vocational, and academic achievement, teachers must be utilized as an integral part of the guidance and counselling process. Thus, this study was designed to survey teacher counsellors and students as to their perceptions/attitude on school guidance and counselling programmes and suggestions for improving role functioning.

1.5 Theoretical framework: Carl Rogers's personality theory

Carl Rogers was a humanistic psychologist who agreed with the main assumptions of Abraham Maslow but added that for a person to grow they need environments that provides them with genuineness acceptance and empathy without this relationship a healthy personality will not develop, as they should, much like a tree would not grow without sunlight and water.

Rogers believed that every person can achieve his/her goals wishes and desires in life when they did so self-actualization took place. The organism has one basic desire and strives to actualize, maintain and enhance oneself. Carl Rogers maintained that we behave as we do because of the way we perceive our situations. Mcleod (2014) believed that human have one basic motive that is tendency to self-actualize i.e. to fulfil ones potential and achieve the highest level of human beingness *"we can, like a flower that will grow to its full potential if the conditions are good but this may be constrained by its environment."*

Rogers believed that people are inherently good and creative but become destructive only when a poor self-concept or external constraints override the valuing process. He believed that for a person to achieve self-actualization they must be in a state of congruence. This means that self-actualization occur with their self-image.

School counsellors can employ Carl Rogers's theory while helping learners to work to their full potential hence heading towards self-actualization.

Like Rogers, Abraham Maslow for holistic development, basic needs must be met. He proposed a hierarchy of needs, which he believed were responsible for human motivation. Once the basic human needs are fulfilled, one is ready to acquire the upper needs for example esteem needs can be fulfilled. In the person-centered model of counselling which help clients to develop and increase the sense of their personal work, ability and competence. The counsellor can accomplish this by using positive regard and empathy in order to facilitate the client's progress and worth.

Maslow noted two versions of esteem needs, a lower one and a higher one. The lower one is the need for the respect of others, the need for status recognition fame, prestige and attention. The higher one is the need for self-respect, the need for strength, competence, mastery, self-confidence, inferiority complex, weakness and helplessness. Esteem needs are also linked to people needs for status, appreciation and achievement and in this respect are similar to Alders concept of innate drive for superiority and recognition.

Alfred Adler believed that when we feel encouraged we feel capable and appreciated and we will generally act in a connected and cooperative way, when we are discouraged we may act in unhealthy ways by competing, withdrawing or giving up. It is in the finding ways of expressing and accepting encouragement, respect and social interest that help us feel fulfilled and optimistic. The above ideas if employed by school counsellors will alleviate the problems that are witnessed in a public secondary school.

2. Methodology

The study utilised the mixed methods approach where both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were used. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 2000 students of form three and 60 guidance and counselling teachers and 33 schools. A sample of 200 students and 18 guidance and counseling teachers were selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. A sample of 16 head teachers and 200 teachers representing 30% of the target population were selected purposively and through simple random sampling respectively as respondents. Validity and reliability of instruments were

ascertained. After the test-retest, the instruments attained a reliability coefficient of 0.70 using the Cronbach alpha coefficient which was considered high enough to continue with data collection.

3. Study findings

3.1 Qualifications of teacher counsellors providing guidance and counselling services

The first objective sought to establish the qualifications of teacher counsellors providing guidance and counselling services.

This was achieved by asking the teacher counsellors to give their responses and ratings on; the skills they had to provide guidance and counselling services, shortage of professional teacher counsellors and if they took refresher courses. The results are summarized in the subsequent tables and charts;

Table 1: Teacher Counsellors have skills to provide Guidance and Counselling

	Frequency	Percentage
Disagree	2	10.0
Undecided	8	40.0
Agree	10	50
Total	20	100.0

From the findings, it was noted that 2 (10%) disagreed that teacher counselors have skills to provide guidance and counselors while 8 (40%) were undecided in their responses and 10 (50%) agreed. This implies that 50% of the respondents believe that teacher counselors have skills to provide guidance and counselors. Bitu (2015) established in his study that most teacher/counselors lack professional training on guidance and counseling and out of those who are not trained in guidance and counseling, only a few have attended seminars on guidance and counseling, this hinders effective counseling in public mixed day secondary school.

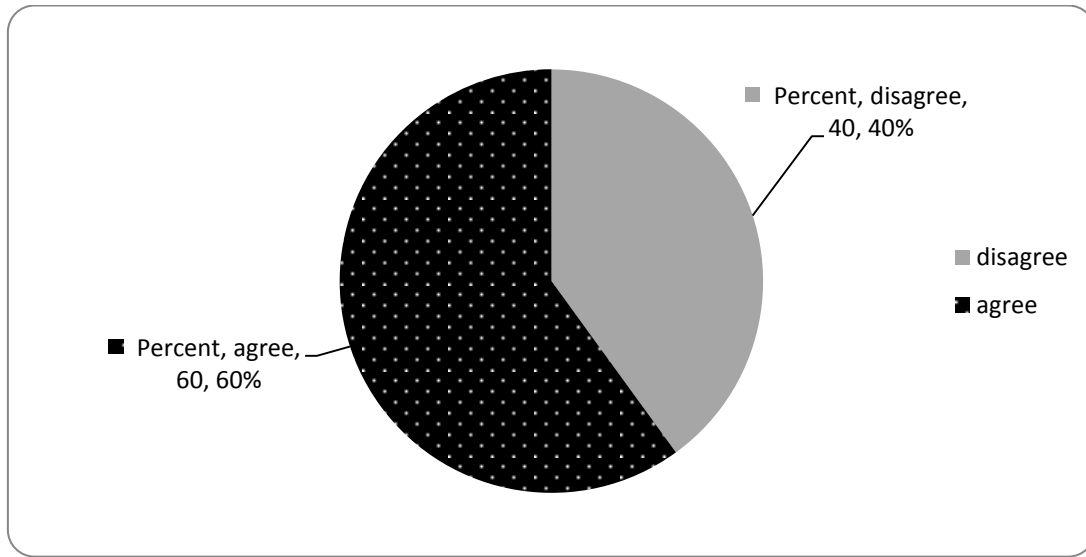


Figure 1: Teachers ratings on whether there is shortage of professional teacher counselors

Majority of the respondents 12 (60%) agreed that there was shortage of professional teacher counselors contrary to 8 (40%) who did not agree. The findings are in agreement with the study of Nyamwange et al (2012) which noted that most guidance and counseling teachers were not adequately trained on guidance and counseling. Nyaga (2011) also noted that the greatest concern affecting guidance and counseling in secondary schools was inadequate knowledge due to lack of training among teacher counselors. Despite in-service training attended by all teacher counselors, professional training is desirable for effectiveness.

Table 2: Responses of teachers' ratings on school administrative support

	Frequency	Percentage
Disagree	12	60
Undecided	2	10
Agree	6	30
Total	20	100

The results on school administration being supportive revealed that majority 12 (60%) disagreed that the school administration is not supportive while only 6 (30%) agree that they get support from the administration and only 2 (10%) were undecided. Administrative support is very important for successful provision of guidance and counseling services. Wanjohi (1990) noted that if the head teacher supports teacher counselors there is a very good response from the students on the services offered.

Table 3: Teachers ratings on refresher courses for guidance and counseling

	Frequency	Percentage
Once in three months	2	10.0
Once in a year	18	90.0
Total	20	100.0

Majority of the respondents 18 (90%) indicated that they go for refresher courses for guidance and counselling only once a year compared to 2 (10%) who indicated that they attend refresher courses once in three months.

This implies that majority of the teacher counsellors are not conversant with the current theories and trainings in guidance and counselling because they do not attend refresher courses. The National Conference on Education and training recommended that programmes be instituted for professional training of teachers handling guidance and counseling services (Mutie and Ndambuki, 2004).

Table 4: Teachers' ratings on Availability of Guidance and Counseling Resource Materials

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	2	10
No	18	80
Total	20	100.0

The findings revealed that majority 18 (90%) of the teacher counselors indicated that they do not have guidance and counseling resource materials contrary to 2 (10%) who said they have. The findings are in agreement with the findings of Nyaga (2011) which established that teacher counselors in her study reported that head teachers do not always provide all the material resources needed for effective implementation of guidance and counseling in secondary schools. The inadequate resources, coupled with other challenges facing teacher counselors makes guidance and counseling not to achieve the purpose it is intended. The findings also concur with the findings of a study by Cheruiyot & Orodho (2015) done in Bureti which established that guidance and counseling resources were not available in secondary schools in the area and this affected the quality of services given.

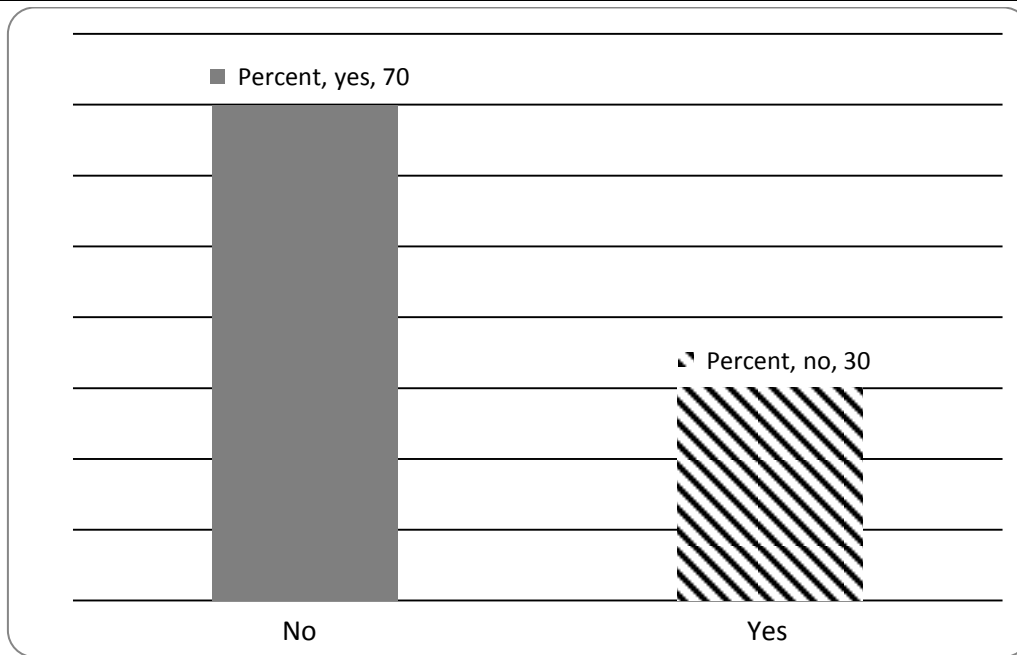
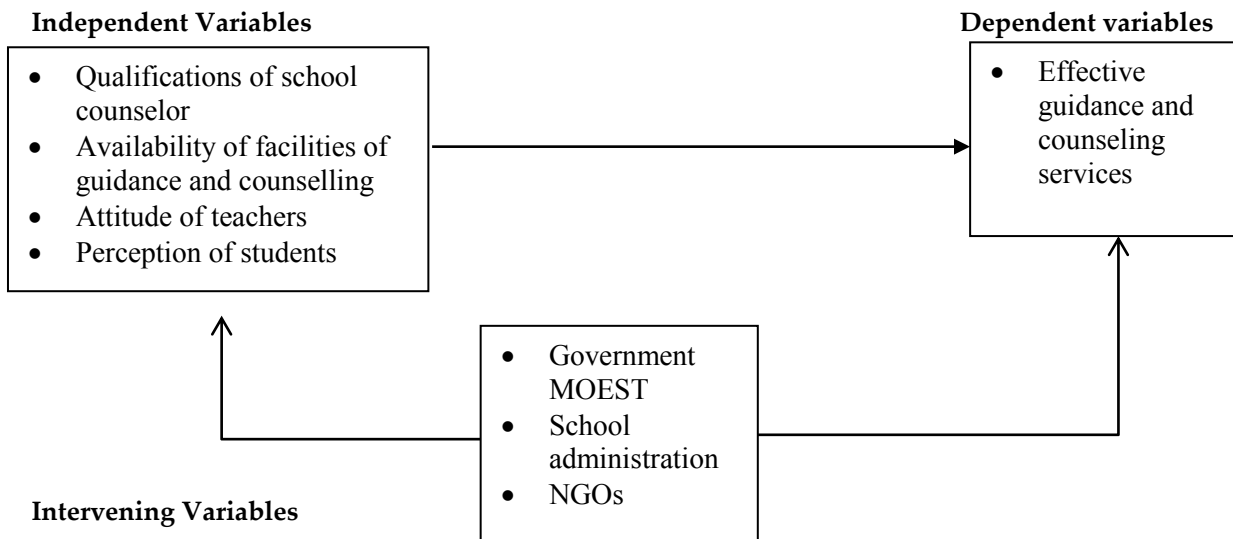


Figure 2: Teachers' ratings on guidance and counselling room located strategically

The results noted that 14 (70%) of the respondents did not agree that guidance and counselling room was located strategically while only 6(30%) who said yes. For counselling to be effective, the rooms should be strategically located and be in a private and away from destructors. Guidance and counselling rooms Chaikin, Derlega, and Miller (1976) recommended counselors should consider the physical environment of the counseling room. As noted by Phelps et.al (2008), elements important in a counselling environment include comfortable seating, carpet, subdued co-ordinated colours, natural lighting, art works, plants, large windows and views of nature. This may contribute to the students seeking counseling to be comfortable and at ease.

The findings also concur with the researcher's observation which revealed that the rooms for guidance in majority of the schools were unavailable and in some situations, they were done in staffrooms which discouraged students from seeking the services. For the schools with counseling rooms, they were located near the staffrooms.

3.2 Conceptual Framework



Source: Researcher, 2016

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework on determinants of Effective Guidance and Counseling programmes

The determinants of effective guidance and counseling programmes in secondary schools are the independent variables which include; qualifications of school counselors, availability of guidance and counseling, attitude of teachers and perception/attitudes of students. When these factors are met, there will improved guidance and counseling services in schools.

4. Conclusion

The researcher made the following conclusions based on the findings of the study:

1. That most teacher counselors lacked professional training on guidance and counseling and out of those who had trained in guidance and counseling, only a few attended refresher courses every term, this hindered effective counseling in public secondary schools in Kericho County.
2. The study also concluded that secondary schools lacked enough facilities for guidance and counselling and the rooms for counselling were not in strategic location conducive for counselling.

4.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended;

1. The Teachers service Commission should ensure guidance and counseling departments were headed by trained and qualified counselors for effectiveness.
2. The County government and the Ministry of Education should also enhance quality assessment of G&C in all secondary schools by providing enough facilities.

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