



THE ROLE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMMES TOWARDS EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KWABRE EAST DISTRICT OF THE ASHANTI REGION OF GHANA

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Abstract:

This study was conducted to investigate the role of guidance and counselling programmes towards effective teaching and learning in Senior High Schools in the Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This study seeks to obtain descriptive and self-reported information from teachers, students and school counselors. The study involved public senior high schools in the Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region of Ghana. A total of 380 participants were selected and used for the study. Questionnaire and interview were the main instrument used for data collection. The researcher used 10 % of the accessible population as the sample size of the study. The questionnaires had open ended and closed-ended items. Data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences [SPSS], version 20. The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics. (Frequencies and percentage) Data was presented in tables, graphs and charts. Results from the study revealed that majority (54 %) of the students were females while 46 % were males. Most of the students representing (97 %) in the various senior high schools were between the age range of 10-20 years. Appraisal service, counselling service and consultation service were observed to be available as majority of the students agreed to that effect. The results show that majority of the students were not sure that guidance and counselling coordinators provide advice on placement and embark on follow up exercise. It was observed that guidance and counselling coordinators play a major role in prescribing disciplinary actions for students who go contrary to school rules and regulations, given advice on matters relating to students welfare, discipline and morality, counselling students on emotions and behaviour adjustments, provide referral service, assist students in teaching and learning and able to help students develop social skills. The study concludes that the role of guidance and counselling programmes towards effective teaching learning in senior high school is very important in the development of students.

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1. Introduction

Globally, guidance and counselling services are essential elements in discipline management of people in all societies. It could be difficult for any society to function well without the exercise of discipline (Orodho, 2013). It is worthy to note that growing up children needs additional supports as the transition from childhood to adulthood is a difficult one. Apart from the influence of the family, the other major influence on the young person's life is the school and the school environment (Okoye, 2010). The best influence of the school is to help each young person to cope with the changes associated with adolescence, to develop a sense of responsibility, to make definite and considerable personal decisions. In short, families and schools have a duty to assist young people in their self-growth towards becoming a self-fulfilled and well-adjusted adult.

School guidance and counselling programmes have therefore been introduced to assist students overcome the number of challenges they experience at home and at school. Orodho (2013) states that because of many pressures imposed on the family, parents tend to have little time with their children to give them the necessary guidance. The parents expect the school to provide solutions to the indiscipline in secondary schools caused by their children. Okoye (2010) adds that "*African adults have become more concerned with earning money and are less occupied with many traditional practices that formerly contributed to the upbringing of young people*", as a result guidance and counselling has become an important educational tool in shaping the total development of the child hence the need for schools to have counselors who will assist the child in molding their future through counselling therapy (Goodstein *et al.*, 2006). The school counsellor is seen as a role model and highly respected by students. In the 2020 West African Senior high School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) conducted by the West African Examination Council (WEAC) in Ghana, some schools across the country including the Ashanti Region went on rampage and destroyed property worth thousands of cedis due to the fact that exams supervisors do not allow them to cheat. In the previous year's similar incidents have also being recorded reflecting on indiscipline in the senior high schools. It was upon this background that the researcher intends to find out the challenges to effective utilization of guidance and counselling programmes in senior high schools in the Kwabre East district of the Ashanti region of Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Guidance and counselling in schools are directed towards helping students to realize their full potential and in preparation for adult and working life. Secondary level school counselling programmes have been included in most educational systems of the modern world to target adolescents. This is to help them make the right choices about their identities, who they wish to become, and to help them find acceptable ways of developing

themselves and their careers in order to contribute meaningfully to society. Despite the institution of Guidance and Counselling Units in most Ghanaian senior high schools, most students are still battling with difficulties such as no or little motivation to study, floating school rules and regulations, making wrong career choices and others. These challenges students face ought to be the core mandate of Guidance and counselling service providers in schools. Hence the question that bothers the minds of people are : does the guidance and counselling units instituted in the Senior High Schools not performing their roles, are students even aware of their existence and its importance in their academic and personal life or they are there in the schools but act as white elephants. These are the questions bothering the mind of the researcher. Further, literature reviewed indicated that, it appears no empirical study on the issue under discussion has been conducted in this study area, in order to fill this gap and answer the questions bothering the researcher, this study sought to investigate the role of guidance and counselling services in Senior High Schools in the Kwabre East district of the Ashanti region of Ghana.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- 1) To examine guidance and counselling service available for senior high school students in the Kwabre East district.
- 2) To identify the role of guidance and counselling coordinators in senior high school students in the Kwabre East district.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What are some of the guidance and counselling service available for senior high school students in the Kwabre East district?
- 2) What are the roles of guidance and counselling coordinators in senior high schools?

1.4 Literature Review

1.4.1 The Concept of Guidance and Counselling

Guidance and counselling encompasses those services and programmes of the school, which are specifically intended to promote educational, career, and personal-social development of students (Ojo, 2005). Mutie & Ndambuki (2000) maintains that guidance services include processes of consultation, co-ordination, collaboration, instruction, information-giving, appraisal, referral, and institutional support. As a process, Ojo (2005) add that guidance involves a series of actions or progressive steps, which move towards a goal. As a service, it involves four major services, namely, those of educational, vocational, personal and social guidance. Educational guidance, in so far as it can be distinguished from any other form of guidance, is concerned with the provision of

assistance to pupils in their choices in, and adjustment to, the curriculum and school life in general. Educational guidance is, therefore, essential in the counselling service (UNESCO, 2000). School guidance, according to Ojo (2005), has two broad goals, first to guide young people to pursue the right type of education is necessary, and second to ensure that the right balance is kept in order to meet the human resource needs of a nation. Vocational guidance is a process for helping individuals to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter it and develop in it (UNESCO, 2000). Vocational motivation requires that a person's interests, aptitudes and personality, be suitable for his/her work. Vocational guidance plays its part by providing individuals with an understanding of the world of work and essential human needs, and familiarising individuals with such terms as the dignity of labour and work value.

1.4.2 Overview of Guidance and Counselling in Educational Systems

According to Yuen (2002) the rationale for school counselling is that students' behaviour to a large extent determines their performance in academic work. Schools, globally, are increasingly turning from the use of harsh corporal punishment to the use of counselling as a way of controlling behaviour. This grand gesture among schools globally is rooted in some rationalized arguments that counselling is a more effective way to achieve desired behaviour among students. Orodho (2014) maintain that recent developments in education, especially the opportunity for free and universal education, have resulted in a new scale of problems in schools and the nations at large. Many children go to school without knowing what they are supposed to do and leave school without any idea of what type of jobs or careers they should follow. In addition, they have little understanding of themselves and their socio-economic and political environment.

1.4.3 Roles of Guidance and Counselling Coordinators Schools

The roles of guidance and counselling programme is to bring about the maximum development and self-realization of human potential for the benefit of the individual and society. Makinde (1984) observes that the school counsellor is concerned with facilitating the optimum development of students. This is supported by Ojo (2005); Mutie and Ndambuki (2000) who argue that the programme is supposed to develop the learner's intellectual abilities, develop a balanced personality and to have a complete person intellectually, spiritually, morally and socially. Guidance and counselling programme is therefore aimed at assisting students to harmonize their abilities, interests and values, thereby enabling them to develop their potential fully. Self-knowledge helps one to formulate life goals and plans which are realistic.

Borrow (1983) observes that it is the role of guidance and counselling programme to provide the students with the necessary information about the courses availability and the qualifications required for each course. Such information will assist students develop realistic self-concept according to their academic capabilities. Most secondary school students are in the adolescent stage. According to Orodho (2013), during this time

adolescent experience alienation, which is a syndrome comprising of distrust, anxiety, pessimism, egocentrism, meaninglessness, normlessness and powerlessness. They observe that guidance and counselling is therefore needed during this adolescence stage to assist them understand their developmental stage and adjust to school life. Guidance and counselling programme also help students choose and pursue achievable careers. According to Borrow (1983) the world is highly complex and dynamic which makes career choice very difficult. He reckons that time change, people change, technology progresses and these challenges everyone to change to new ways of living and working. The students need guidance and counselling programs to inform them about various jobs and openings available, the qualification required plus the responsibilities involved and the nature of the work so that they can decide and have clear occupational goals. The programme also plays the role of intercepting and assisting disadvantaged students and also checks on school drop-out. Makinde (1984) observes that one of the roles for school counsellor is to help students who are experiencing difficulties. Students from disadvantaged families of the society have many problems and needs which, are to be dealt with in guidance and counselling programme. Lindsay (1983) argues that such students may experience difficulty in adjustment with peers, teachers and the environment thus guidance programme helps such students to adjust and utilize the guidance facilities available fully. Majority of the disadvantaged students later acquire low qualifications for the world of work. This poor achievement may even marginalize them more if guidance programme does not intervene; some may even drop out of school, thus the guidance programme is well suited for assisting the students (Nnabuike, 2007).

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Guidance and counseling theories are tools used by counselors to help them become more effective observed by Engelks and Vandergoot (1982) counselors integrated those theories in their counseling framework to direct them in decision they made and methods of guidance and counseling they used. This study was guided by the following theories: Social learning theory and personality theory. Social learning theory as proposed by Albert Bandura in 1986 stress that behavior is not solely determine by inner drives or the environment, but is a result of an interactive association between inner processes and environmental variables. The inner processes are covert events based on earlier experiences and are controlled by external environment al influence to bring about overt responses observed by Feltham and Horton (2006). Bandura view verbal representation and imaginable representation of the environmental guide a person's behavior. Thus, one can use both insight and foresight to solve his or her problems. Learning also occurs through observational learning in a process known modeling. Therefore, student can acquire competencies such as academic, social and personal through modeling. The counselor needs to act as a role model to the student in each of the environment. These

processes can be enhanced through guided participation, modeling and system desensitization.

1.6 Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This method is appropriate for obtaining factual and attitudinal information. This study seeks to obtain descriptive and self-reported information from teachers, school counselors and head teachers. The study involved public senior high schools in the Kwabre East Municipality of Ashanti Region of Ghana. A total of 380 participants were selected and used for the study. Questionnaire and interview were the main instrument used for data collection. The researcher used 10 % of the accessible population as the sample size of the study. The questionnaire and interview schedule were used to collect the raw data. The questionnaires had open ended and closed-ended items. In the study, the items were considered reliable if they yield a reliability coefficient of 0.70 and above. Reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained indicating that the research instruments were reliable and therefore adopted for data collection.

1.7 Data Analysis Procedure

The raw data collected was first examined and organized by the researcher. The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics. (Frequencies and percentage) Data was presented in tables, graphs and charts. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, version 20) was also used to analyse the data.

1.8 Results and Discussion

Data was collected by use of questionnaires and interview schedules. The collected data was analysed. Results were presented for each of the theme drawn from the objectives and were interpreted and discussed.

1.8.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Results from the study revealed that majority (54 %) of the students were females while 46 % were males. This means that more females in the Senior High Schools in the Kwabre East District responded to the questionnaire. The result obtained also implies that female students are more sensitive to guidance and counselling as compared to their male counterparts. This result is in agreement with the findings of Kipkemboi *et al.* (2016) who examined the role of guidance and counselling in improving students' discipline and academic performance and reported 56.5 % and 43.5 % female and male students respectively. Most of the students representing (97 %) in the various senior high schools were between the age range of 10-20 years. Most of the students were at the peak of adolescent age and require guidance and counselling.

1.9 Guidance and Counselling Service available for Students

The results on guidance and counselling service available for senior high school students in the Kwabre East Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Guidance and counselling service available for students

Guidance and Counselling service	Available	Not Available	Not sure
Availability of information	44 (11.5 %)	263 (69.2 %)	73 (19.2)
Given orientation	360 (94.6)	20 (5.4 %)	0 (0.0 %)
Appraisal	205 (53.8 %)	61 (16.2)	114 (30.0 %)
Counselling students	330 (86.9 %)	32 (8.5 %)	18 (4.6 %)
Consultation	208 (54.6 %)	44 (11.5 %)	129 (33.8 %)
Advice on placement	120 (31.5 %)	94 (24.6 %)	167 (43.8 %)
Follow up	132 (34.6 %)	47 (12.3 %)	202 (53.1 %)

Key: % = percentage.

From the results in Table 1, with regard to information service in the schools, few 44 (11.5 %) of the students responded that information service was available while 73 (19.2 %) of the students were not sure. However, it is evident that 263 (69.2 %) of the students reported that information service was not available which affects guidance and counselling service in the school (Ajowi and Simatwa, 2010). Most of the student (360) representing 94.6 % admitted that they are given orientation service while few of the students 20 (5.4 %) were not sure of that. This implies that the students are fully aware of the school rules and regulations to be followed as a student. Hence, students are expected to obey the rules and regulations and comply (Akinade, 2012).

Appraisal service was observed to be available for students as majority (205) of them representing 53.8 % agreed to the effect while 16.2 % indicated that it is not available. However, 114 students representing 30 % of the total population were not sure that appraisal service was available. The availability of appraisal service in the various senior high schools is an indication that students are able to know themselves with regards to their potentials, academic ability, behaviour and personal interest which will help them to achieve their academic goals (Egbo, 2013).

Counselling service was observed to be available for students as majority (330) of the students representing 86.9 % agreed to that effect while 8.5 % indicated not available. However, 18 of the students representing 4.6 % of the total population were not sure that counselling service was available. The availability of counseling service indicates that most students will have the opportunity to interact with counsellors in solving most of their problems as reported by La'ah (2015). La'ah (2015) further reported that the

availability of counseling service allows effective interactions between students and counsellors which also promote effective teaching and learning.

Consultation service was observed to be available for students as majority (208) of the students representing 54.6 % agreed to that effect while few (44) of the students representing 11.5 % indicated not available. However, 129 of the students representing 33.8 % of the total population were not sure that consultation service was available. This implies that majority of the student will have the opportunity to share their problems with counselors (La'ah, 2015).

According to Egbo (2013), the main objective for guidance and counselling in the various senior high schools is to solve most of the problems students' encounter which is associated with teaching and learning in school. Therefore, consultation service under guidance and counselling programme in the senior high school aimed towards effective teaching and learning.

Majority (167) of the students representing 43.8 % were not sure that guidance and counselling coordinators provide advice on placement while few (94) of them representing 24.6 % indicated that, school counsellors does not provide placement service. On the other hand, 94 (24.6 %) of the students emphasized clearly that placement service was available. This result implies that majority of the students had no knowledge on placement service whether on programme of study, career and their health-related issues. This will go a long way to affect their choice of selecting a programme of study as well as their academic performance (Anyi, 2017).

Majority (202) of the students representing 53.1 % were not sure that guidance and counselling coordinators embark on follow up exercise while few (47) of them representing 12.3 % indicated that, follow up service was not available. Meanwhile, 132 (34.6 %) of the students accepted the availability of follow up service. The ultimate goal of the follow up service in guidance and counselling in schools is to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the programme in improving quality teaching and learning (Anyi, 2017). In this situation where guidance and counselling coordinators does not embark on follow up service, the effectiveness of the programme can not be assessed. Again, this implies that coordinators will not know the success of the programme (La'ah, 2015).

1.10 Roles of Guidance and Counselling Coordinators

Result on the role of guidance and counselling coordinators in senior high school students in the Kwabre East Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana is shown in Table 2.

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Table 2: Roles of guidance and counselling coordinators

Roles of guidance and counselling coordinators	Response levels			
	SA	A	D	SD
Assistance to students.	56 (14.6 %)	120 (31.5 %)	137 (36.2 %)	67 (17.7 %)
Prescribe disciplinary actions.	219 (57.7 %)	126 (33.1 %)	15 (3.8 %)	20 (5.4 %)
Advise schools on matters concerning student's welfare.	114 (30.0 %)	190 (50.0 %)	50 (13.1 %)	26 (6.9 %)
Advise schools on matters relating to discipline and morality.	219 (57.7 %)	137 (36.2 %)	23 (6.2 %)	0 (0.0 %)
Counselling students on emotions and behavior adjustments.	79 (20.8 %)	219 (57.7 %)	70 (18.5 %)	12 (3.1 %)
Referral service.	91 (23.8 %)	184 (48.5 %)	73 (19.2 %)	32 (8.5 %)
Assisting students in teaching and learning.	44 (11.5 %)	190 (50.0 %)	132 (34.6 %)	15 (3.8 %)
Hold discussions with parent.	20 (5.4 %)	105 (27.7 %)	196 (51.5 %)	58 (15.4 %)
Resolving student-teacher misunderstanding.	67 (17.7 %)	114 (30.0 %)	175 (46.2 %)	23 (6.2 %)
Assisting students to develop social skills.	67 (17.7 %)	231 (60.8 %)	35 (9.2 %)	47 (12.3 %)

Key: % = Percentage, SA = Strongly agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree and SD = Strongly disagree

Counsellors play a key role in assisting students in choosing a programme of study. However, few of the students 56 (14.6 %) and 120 (31.5 %) strongly agreed and agreed to that effect while majority of the students 137 (36.2 %) and 67 (17.7 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed to that effect. This implies that counsellors do not assist majority of the students in choosing their programme of study. Hence, students either follow their peers or do try and error in choosing their programme of study (Anyi, 2017). Similar findings were reported by Heyden (2011) who observed that in most second cycle institutions, counsellors play a little role in helping students to choosing a programme of study.

From the results in Table 4.3, majority of the students 219 (57.7 %) and 126 (33.1 %) strongly agreed and agreed to the fact that guidance and counselling coordinators prescribe disciplinary actions for students who go contrary to school rules and regulations. Meanwhile, few of the students 15 (3.8 %) and 20 (5.4 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed to that effect. This will ensure discipline in the various senior high schools and there will be improvement in students' academic performance. According to Chianu (2007) corporal punishment in primary and secondary schools ensure discipline among students which results in high academic performance. Similarly, Anyi (2017) also confirms that counselors prescribe disciplinary actions for students when they go wrong. On the issues of guidance and counselling coordinators given advice on matters relating to students welfare, discipline and morality, majority of the students 114 (30.0 %) and 190

(50.0 %) strongly agreed and agreed to the welfare issues while 219 (57.7 %) and 137 (36.2 %) strongly agreed and agreed to matters relating to discipline and morality. Only few 76 (20 %) and 23 (6.2 %) of the students disagreed on the issues of guidance and counselling coordinators given advice on matters relating to students' welfare, discipline and morality. These imply that guidance and counselling coordinators takes matters relating to students' welfare very serious and protect students' interest. Again, students will be able to demonstrate good behaviour due to the effective guidance and counselling service often received. Results of this study are in agreement to the observation made by Ndu (2004) and La'ah (2015).

Counselling students on emotions and behavior adjustments was observed to be the common practices by counsellors as majority of the student 79 (20.8 %) and 219 (57.7 %) strongly agreed and agreed to that effect while only few 70 (18.5 %) and 12 (3.1 %) of them disagreed and strongly disagreed to that assertion. Counsellors also provide referral service as majority 91 (23.8 %) and 184 (48.5 %) of the student strongly agreed and agreed to that effect while only few 70 (18.5 %) and 12 (3.1 %) of them disagreed and strongly disagreed to that assertion. This implies that student with special needs upon counselling can be referred to expert for immediate attention (La'ah, 2015). Similarly, Anyi (2017) reported that counsellors quiet often counsel students when they are emotional stress, behavior adjustments and provide referral service to students. Results from Table 2, revealed that guidance and counselling coordinators assist students in teaching and learning as majority 44 (11.5 %) and 190 (50.0 %) of the students strongly agreed and agreed to that effect while few 132 (34.6 %) and 15 (3.8 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed to that effect. This assistance in teaching and learning will improve students' academic performance as reported by Egbo (2013). Furthermore, Anyi (2017) also reported a significant increased in students' academic performance due to the assistance received from guidance and counselling coordinators.

Majority representing 196 (51.5 %) and 58 (15.4 %) of the students disagreed and strongly disagreed to that to the fact that guidance and counselling coordinators hold discussion with parents on their children's placement or planning with regards to their education while few representing 20 (5.4 %) and 105 (27.7 %) of the students strongly agreed and agreed to that assertion. Majority representing 175 (46.2 %) and 23 (6.2 %) of the students disagreed and strongly disagreed to that to the fact that guidance and counselling coordinators resolve student-teacher misunderstanding while few representing 67 (17.7 %) and 114 (30.0 %) of the students strongly agreed and agreed to that assertion. Assisting students to develop social skills was observed to be a priority by guidance and counselling coordinators as majority representing 67 (17.7 %) and 231 (60.8 %) of the students strongly agreed and agreed to that assertion while few, representing 35 (9.2 %) and 47 (12.3 %) of the student population disagreed and strongly disagreed to that effect. Assisting students to develop social skills help the students to put up a decent behaviour towards teaching and learning (Egbo, 2013).

2. Conclusions

The study concludes guidance and counselling coordinators makes information available for students through orientation service, appraisal service, one and one consultation and counselling service which allow students to know themselves with regards to their potentials, academic ability, behaviour and personal interest which will help them to achieve their academic goals. The study further concludes that the role of guidance and counselling programmes towards effective teaching learning in senior high school is very important in the development of students.

2.1 Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations;

- 1) Guidance and counseling service is not only for students who have deviated from the norms but should be focuses on all students.
- 2) Guidance and counselling coordinators should be well trained on how to carry out their duties professionally to build trust among students.
- 3) Guidance and counselling coordinators should invite guest speakers who will provide the counselling services to the students in areas of concern when the need arise.
- 4) The ministry of education should come up with a functional guidance, policy framework and counseling department which encourages teachers at all level to be trained and get equipped with guidance and counseling skills in order to function effectively.

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