

Influence Of Support Systems On The Effective Implementation Of Guidance And Counseling In Secondary Schools In Mbeere North, Kenya

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Abstract: *This study focused on the influence of support systems on effective implementation of guidance and counseling in secondary schools in Mbeere North Sub-County of Embu County. The study was guided by the following research questions; what are the support systems that can be implemented to support the provision of Guidance and Counseling in secondary schools in Mbeere North of Embu? What are the Benefits of the Effective Implementation of Guidance and Counseling services? What are the obstacles that affect the provision of guidance and counseling services? What are the strategies to be put in place to ensure the effective implementation of guidance and counseling services? The reviewed literature discussed the theories related to implementation of guidance and counseling and empirical studies according to themes based on the research questions of the study. The researcher used a mixed method approach. In this, the researcher used cross-sectional survey design for quantitative data and phenomenology for qualitative data. Using Probability sampling procedures, stratified random sampling was used to select twelve secondary schools and twelve head teachers from the sampled schools were included automatically. The twelve teachers were also selected by use of purposive sampling. The researcher had a set of questionnaire for the teachers and students and an Interview guide for the principals. The quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS version 20.0 was presented using means, frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data were coded and then categorized into themes according to research questions and presented using narrative description. The findings show that the majority of principals provided adequate support systems; the needs of students were met that helped them to improve socially and academically. According to the study lack of motivation to guidance and counseling teachers, heavy workload, lack of enough materials and facilities, lack of enough time, inadequate professional trainings and skills are all obstacles that hinder the provision of the guidance and counseling services in secondary schools in Mbeere. The researcher recommended that a well-documented policy, adequate materials and facilities, recruiting of guidance and counseling teachers, training and sensitization of all stakeholders on importance of guidance and counseling.*

Keywords: *support systems, effective implementation, guidance and counseling, secondary schools*

I. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Learning is lifelong and school education is just the start of preparation for lifelong learning. According to Cheng (2001), It is mandatory that schools strive not only to prepare students for examinations but also to equip them with

necessary skills to take full advantage of the lifelong learning opportunities provided by society. The terms “guidance and counseling” have been conceived in different ways. Cobia (2007) define them as an interaction process co-joining the counselee, who is vulnerable and who needs assistance and the counselor who is trained and educated to give this assistance.

The goal of which is to help the counselee learn to deal more effectively with himself and the reality of his environment. Guidance and counseling, is the process of helping individuals discover and develop their educational, vocational, and psychological potentials so as to achieve an optimal level of personal happiness and social usefulness (Heyden, 2011).

Early guidance programs dealt with the immediate problem of vocational placement. The complexities of the industrial economy and the unrealistic ambitions of many young people made it essential that machinery for bringing together jobs and workers be set up; vocational guidance became that machinery (Parsons, 2009). Today, school guidance programs include academic counseling for those students planning to attend college. School guidance counselors have been recognized as the primary source for psychological counseling for students; including counseling in such areas as drug abuse and teenage pregnancy and referrals to other professionals. Guidance and counseling services prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the results of their choices (Kauchak, 2011).

According to George and Laban (2006), student disturbances have been an international problem. Since 1960s student disturbances have erupted in countries such as France, Italy and the United States of America leading to reforms or fall of various regimes. In the USA, career guidance education has been seen in recent years as needing to address the career development of all students including those who join the workforce immediately out of high school. In the 1980s student disturbances in Africa erupted due to various reasons, ranging from embezzlement of school funds, communication breakdown to protests against various decrees leading to loss of lives and indefinite closures of institutions of learning.

In Nigeria, according to Nyokolo, Ayamene, Oraegbunam, Anyachabelu, Okoye and Obineli (2010) Guidance and Counseling is used to address significant new challenges in the school environment emanating from development in ICT, access to academic advising and counseling and the demands of global economy. Their research on the extent to which pupils have access to academic advising and counseling in South East public primary schools in Nigeria revealed that there was no significant advising counseling from two out of the five states studied. Further, research in Nigeria by Egbochuku (2008) indicated that there were insufficient counselors in schools; inadequate availability of counseling facilities; and that the qualifications of guidance and counseling personnel had impacted on the quality of Guidance and Counseling services they provide in secondary schools in Nigeria. Support systems are vital if Guidance and Counseling is to be successful.

The Republic of Kenya (1964), recommended among other things, that schools provide some guidance to students. The Ministry of Education appointed regular teachers to offer guidance in schools. Republic of Kenya (1974), recommended that the Ministry of Education allow the designated guidance teachers more time to attend to student's counseling needs. However, that recommendation was not implemented since more time was spent on teaching than guidance and counseling meaning that most of the students counseling needs went unattended. The Ominde report of 1964 stated the need

to re-assess expatriates' guidance in schools. He found that the provision of vocational guidance was not adequate. The 1974-1976 Development plan advised teachers to assist learners to resolve their psychological problems by providing guidance and counseling services.

The Republic of Kenya (1976), report observed that students had psychological problems which were largely ignored by the guidance services and recommended that, the teacher trainees take a compulsory course in guidance and counseling in order to enable them handle some of these psychological issues. This recommendation made it mandatory for guidance and counseling to be incorporated into the teacher training curriculum at both the college and university levels. However, the course was not adequate to prepare effective counselors because it was too academic and lacked emphasis on practical skills.

The Republic of Kenya (1988), the 1973-1983 Development plans recommended that guidance and counseling forms part of the curriculum at teacher training colleges and universities. This was emphasized in the Kamunge report of 1988 that made various recommendations for training and provision of guidance and counseling services. Among the recommendations were the decentralization of guidance and counseling to district levels; senior teachers to be responsible for running the programs; TSC to appoint guidance and counseling HODs in schools; KICD to be charged with the responsibility of developing a suitable and relevant curriculum and the resource materials such as guidance and counseling handbook; training of teacher trainers and teacher counselors; provision of guidance and counseling services in schools and colleges; development of peer education and counseling clubs. However, Mukwana (2005) found that lack of enough duration of training was a hindrance to proper implementation of career guidance and counseling in schools.

The 2001-2002 Development Plan recommended that TSC should give Study leave with full pay for any teacher going to study guidance and counseling. If effectively implemented, the above policies would ensure that learners acquire the necessary life skills required in the workplace. Although the Ministry of Education has gone to great lengths to make sure that teachers are equipped with knowledge and skills necessary to manage and cope with emerging issues and challenges involving learners, there is often, a disconnect between policy and practice especially in our examination orientated school system where non-externally examined programs are ignored notwithstanding their importance.

Holistic growth and development of student is a very important aspect. In many secondary schools this fact is missing and even if it's there much emphasis is not put in it. So, to achieve the holistic growth and development of students in school, effective Guidance and Counseling Programs in Secondary Schools is inevitable. According to Nweze and Ugochukwu (2012) stipulated that in Career decision making is a skill that counselors can use to assist students learn, it involves conscious, systematic process which students can learn and perform better practice. On the basis of this background, this study therefore, was designed to examine guidance and counseling programs in secondary schools: it

also determined issues and roles of the program in students' career decision making.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

All over the world, students experience social, personal and academic problems in school which necessitates guidance and counselling. In the developed countries, guidance and counselling programmes are at an advanced stage. In America guidance and counselling was introduced at 1890s in schools with the social reform movement. Today counsellors deal with a myriad of student issues touching on academic, social issues, and career. In developing countries Guidance and Counselling is being embraced in schools though the programmes are not given the prominence they require (Sink and MacDonald, 2008).

The need for guidance and counseling services in Kenyan secondary schools has been increasing drastically over the years leading to the action by the Ministry of Education to ensure that all secondary schools have guidance and counseling departments. Despite these efforts, the implementation of guidance and counseling has been faced with many challenges such as insufficient funding of the program, unsupportive administration and students, much workload on teacher counselors and lack of the required facilities affecting the effectiveness of the service.

The Report of the Task Force on Student Discipline and Unrest (Republic of Kenya, 2001) recognized the use of guidance and counseling in the management of student discipline and giving career guidance in schools due to its proactive approach. The fact that guidance and counseling is a recognized means of discipline management and career guidance in schools, and considering the fact that it is an institutionalized aspect of school's system in Kenya, one is forced to call to question the delivery of counseling services in view of the lapse in students' discipline in Kenya.

The fact that many schools nationwide have been experiencing indiscipline cases in schools as evidenced by student's unrests has cast doubts on the delivery of guidance and counseling programs. Not only are the unrests violent and destructive but they are also premeditated and planned and have caused maximum harm to human life (Simatwa, 2007). This scenario suggests a lack of effective alternative strategy to contain student indiscipline and Mbeere District is not an exception.

This has caused discontentment among some Stakeholders who question whether there is effective implementation of guidance and counseling in the secondary schools in Mbeere north of Embu County. Though the negative effects of failing to put proper support systems for guidance and counseling are evident, there was limited evidence that a systematic research study had so far been conducted in Secondary schools in Mbeere North of Embu County to analyze how effectively the support systems for guidance and counseling be implemented. Therefore, this study was an attempt to assess the effective implementation of support systems for guidance and counseling Mbeere North of Embu County secondary schools.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ✓ What are the support systems that can be implemented to support the provision of Guidance and Counseling in secondary schools in Mbeere North of Embu?
- ✓ What are the Benefits of the Effective Implementation of Guidance and Counseling services in Secondary Schools?
- ✓ What are the obstacles that affect the provision of guidance and counseling services to students in secondary schools in Mbeere North of Embu County?
- ✓ What are the strategies to be put in place to ensure the effective implementation of guidance and counseling services in secondary schools in Mbeere North of Embu County?

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was guided by the Psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud. Freud (1900, 1905) developed the psychoanalytical thought which emphasizes on how important the unconscious mind is in motivation of mankind and how the unconscious mind affects the concepts of personality of a person. According to Freud (1915) an effective guidance and counseling program should make the unconscious mind conscious. He believed that individuals especially teenagers do not know the factors that control their behavior patterns and emotions. The conscious mind generates experiences and sensations which an individual is used to or familiar with.

He also defines preconscious mind as one that generates easily retrievable memories such as of an event that just occurred for instance a mathematics test just taken. He describes the unconscious mind as the largest and hosts emotions and memories that are unfriendly to the conscious mind and are threatening to one's behavior. This theory is concerned with the ways counselors can be able to counsel individuals by helping them manage their drives and instincts consciously. An effectively implemented guidance and counseling program in secondary schools should promote good relations between the students and their teachers, enhance discipline among students and equip the students with general problem solving skills, (Dickson, 2012).

V. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study used mixed method research approach where quantitative and qualitative research paradigms in which, a combination of a cross sectional survey and phenomenology designs were used. The purpose of the survey is to describe existing conditions, identify the standards against which existing conditions can be compared, and investigate the relationships that may exist between event (Creswell, 2011). The cross sectional design was used in order to establish opinions and knowledge about how support systems for guidance and counseling services are implemented in the secondary schools found in Mbeere North of Embu County.

Phenomenology design was used in this study because phenomenology is a study that involves the study of the world as it appears to individuals when they lay aside the prevailing

understandings of those phenomena and revisit their immediate experience of the phenomena hence providing greater validity of the inferences made (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Accordingly, in this study, the main characteristics of phenomenology would be the participants' experiences and their interpretations. This would provide the researcher with the opportunity to construct an overall description of the meaning and the essence of the experience under focus.

The participants for this study were principals, teacher counselors and students in secondary schools in Mbeere North. Sampling was done through probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling technique permitted the researcher to specify the chance that each member of a defined population will be selected for the sample (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). Stratified random and simple random sampling techniques were used. Simple random sampling means each member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected (Mertens, 2005). Stratified sampling is the process of strategically selecting a sample in such a way that guarantees desired representation of relevant subgroups within a sample (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). Non-probability sampling in this study was purposive sampling to select the principals' and teacher counselors' samples. According to Wiersma (2009) points out that a sample should be large enough so that the validity and reliability of the data is achieved and proposes a sample of 30% of the population as being reliable. This study therefore used 30% to sample schools and teachers and Principals. The total sample size for this study was 486 subjects which include 12 schools, 12 principals, 12 teacher counselors and 456 students.

The research instruments that were used to collect data included questionnaires for teacher counselors, students for quantitative data, structured interview schedule for principals to collect qualitative and document analysis in which documents were interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around the study (Bowen, 2009). On data analysis, quantitative data collected from the respondents were cleaned and coded according to various variables and then organized for computer analysis using SPSS Version 20.0. Qualitative data was cleaned, coded to generate categories and themes based on the research questions. The researcher then presented the data in narrative form.

VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A. WAYS IN WHICH THE SUPPORT SYSTEMS HELP IN EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The study sought to find out how the students experience after sharing personal issues with the guidance and counseling teacher. The study also sought to find out if the students felt assisted after attending guidance and counseling sessions.

a. SHARING OF PERSONAL ISSUES WITH THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING TEACHER

The research set out to establish the extent to which the respondents were able to share their personal issues with the guidance and counseling teacher. The study results are presented in figure 7

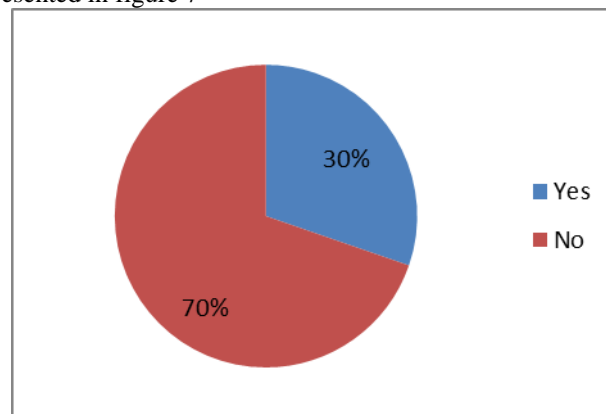


Figure 7

Figure 7 shows that majority of the respondents 82 (30%) agreed that they felt free to share their personal issues with the guidance and counseling teacher while 187 (70%) of the respondents disagreed that they felt free to share their personal issues with the guidance and counseling teacher.

b. ATTENDANCE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SESSIONS

The researcher sought to find out how the students felt after attending guidance and counseling sessions. Figure 8 shows the results.

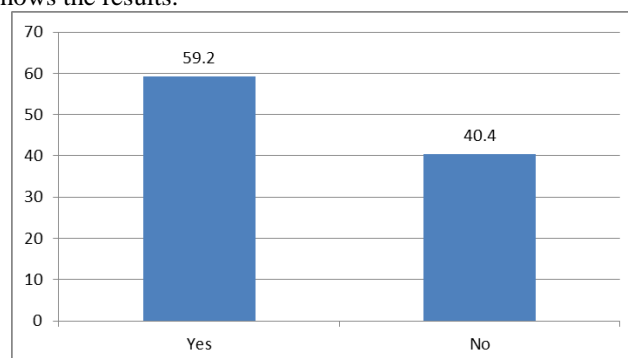


Figure 8

Figure 8 shows that majority of the respondents 167 (59.2%) agreed that after attending guidance and counseling sessions they felt assisted while 111 (40.4%) of the respondents disagreed that after attending guidance and counseling sessions they felt assisted. This was contributed by the fact that the students didn't feel free to open up to the counselor.

EFFECTS OF TEACHERS ON EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The researcher interviewed the school principals to establish the benefits to be gained by effecting implementation of guidance and counseling services. The principal from the

first low performing school explained that there is the benefit of empowerment in academic performance and discipline. He also explained that it assists the students to improve their behavior like hard word. According to the principal from the second low performing school, guidance and counseling can help reduce the number of strikes in schools and also lead to improved academic performance. The principal from the third performing school explained that guidance and counseling assists in venting off any pent-up anger, improves students' behavior that would result to riots and strikes and also helps students in coping with changes in their daily lives and environment.

The principal from the fourth low performing school explained that guidance and counseling motivates learners to perform well and cultivate good behaviours, reduces school drop outs, boosts learner's confidence, increases their creativity and innovativeness and also helps against bad peer influences, reduces cases of alcohol and drug abuse among students in the school. The principal from the fifth low performing school explained that it helps in the improvement of academic performance and also improves discipline among students. According to the principal from the sixth low performing school guidance and counseling helps reduce tension in schools, helps learners to cope with various challenges and also motivates them to perform well.

The principal from the first average performing school explained that guidance and counseling helped solve many problems that could lead to destruction of school property. On the other hand, the principal from the second average performing school explained that guidance and counseling helps learners with various problems and facing certain challenges. The principal from one of the high performing schools explained that guidance and counseling improves academic performance. In addition to that, the principal from the second high performing school explained that it brings harmony in school, minimizes indiscipline cases and improves performance.

FREQUENCY OF SEEKING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

Data were also sought on the frequency of seeking guidance and counseling services and the information obtained is presented in Figure 11.

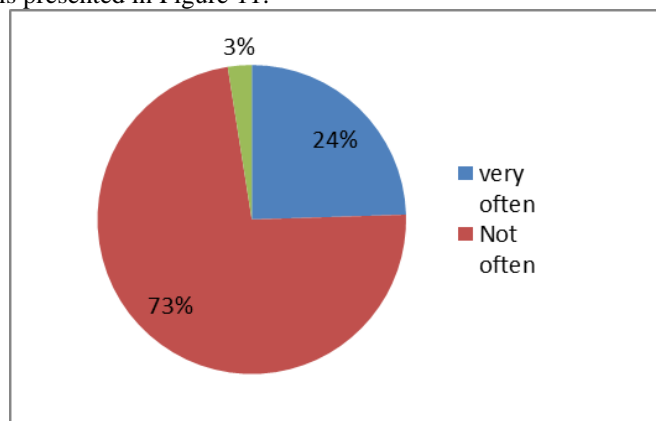


Figure 9

Figure 9 shows that majority of the student respondents 206 (73%) indicated that they attended guidance and

counseling services not often while 69 (24.5%) indicated that they attended guidance and counseling services very often and 7 (2.5%) of the respondents indicated that they attended guidance and counseling services often.

ROLE THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING IN DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

One of the key issues this study sought to investigate was on Guidance and Counseling in Discipline Management in secondary schools and the data obtained regarding this issues is presented in Table 11. Key: Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, U=Undecided, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA

Items	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Motivates learners to perform better	7.4	6.4	20.9	29.8	35.5
Helps to develop a very free and friendly atmosphere	11.7	12.4	14.5	46.8	12.8
Allows students to vent out any pent-up anger that would otherwise have been let loose to fellow students or school property	9.9	10.6	14.9	34.0	28.7
Helps reduce/bring down tension in school	14.5	13.5	11.0	43.3	17.7
Reduces suspicion and builds trust on the part of students	14.5	15.6	18.8	24.5	25.5
Assists to improve on student behavior	6.4	6.7	11.3	33.0	42.6
Helps students to cope with changes in their daily lives and environment	5.4	2.8	7.4	41.1	43.3

Table 11

Data in Table 11 shows that, the majority of the respondents 100 (35.5%) strongly agreed that guidance and counseling in their school motivates learners to perform better. On the other hand, 59 (20.9%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. In addition to that, 132 (46.8%) of the respondents agreed that guidance and counseling in their school helps to develop very free and friendly atmosphere while 41 (14.5%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Majority of the respondents 96 (34%) agreed that guidance and counseling in their school allows students to vent out any pent-up anger that would otherwise have been let lose to fellow students or school property while 42 (14.9%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Majority of the respondents 122 (43.3%) agreed that guidance and counseling in their school helps reduce/bring down tension in school while 31 (11%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Moreover, 72 (25.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed that guidance and counseling in their school reduces suspicion and builds trust on the part of students while 53 (18.8%) of the students

neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. On another hand 120 (42.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that guidance and counseling in their school assists to improve on student behavior while 32 (11.3%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Similarly, 116 (41.1%) of the respondents agreed that guidance and counseling in their school helps students cope with changes in their daily lives and environment while 21 (7.4%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

The researcher further sought to find out some of the other benefits gained by the students from having guidance and counseling services in their school. Likewise, 46 (16.3%) of the student respondents indicated that it builds on confidence/self-esteem while 6 (2.1%) indicated that it helps one overcome fear. Also, 25 (8.8%) of the respondents indicated that the other benefit gained by students from having guidance and counseling services was that it nurtures positive attitudes while 2 (0.7%) of the respondents indicated that it decreases peer pressure. In addition to that, 23 (8.1%) of the respondents indicated that the other benefit gained by having guidance and counseling services was it encourages better performance in school activities while 12 (4.2%) indicated that it decreases in indiscipline cases.

More to that, (1.8%) of the student respondents indicated that one of the other benefits gained by having guidance and counseling services in their school was it helps one move on with life while 17 (9.6%) of the respondents indicated that it fosters good relations with teachers/students/family. Moreover, 10 (3.6%) of the respondents indicated improves school culture as another benefit gained by having guidance and counseling services while 5 (1.8%) indicated it helps students cope with various emotions/challenges. Additionally, 11 (3.9) of the respondents indicated another benefit gained by having guidance and counseling services in their school as it nurtures holistic individuals with good life coping skills while 8 (2.8%) of the respondents indicated it teaches one on how to relieve stress. In addition to that, 2 (0.7%) of the respondents indicated another benefit of having guidance and counseling in school as it teaches one on how to relieve stress while the same percentage indicated that it helps them gain respect from neighboring schools. similarly, 3 (1.1%) of the students indicated the benefit of fostering equality of all students while 1 (0.4%) of the respondents indicated it enables one to choose right friends and also better choice of careers.

These findings concur with the study carried by Oye, Obi and Mohd (2013) on the Effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling in curbing students' indiscipline in public secondary schools, at Oriade, Lagos- Nigeria. He said that guidance and counseling services help to mold and improve student behavior in and out of the learning institution.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE PROVISION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES TO STUDENTS

According to the interviews conducted by the researcher, the principal from the first low performing school explained that lack of motivation to guidance and counseling teachers and heavy workload as some of the obstacles affecting guidance and counseling while the principal from the second

low performing school explained lack of motivation and lack of enough time for guidance and counseling as other obstacles. The principal from the third low performing school explained that inadequate professional training and skills in guidance and counseling, and too much teaching workloads for guidance and counseling teachers as other obstacles. The principal interviewed in the fourth low performing school indicated poor attitude amongst learners due to mistrust of the counselors, lack of guidance and counseling for many teachers and lack of facilities like guidance and counseling rooms as other obstacles. One of the principal said that;

"I have inadequate teachers in my school. It's a big challenge. Regardless of other responsibilities all teachers have a full capacity work load. This factor has contributed to teachers having no time to meet the students and developing negative attitude towards the guidance and counseling service"

The principal from the fifth low performing school explained that lack of training in guidance and counseling was an obstacle while the principal from the sixth low performing school explained that inadequate time for guidance and counseling and lack of appropriate guidance and counseling resources as other obstacles. The principal from the first average performing school explained that lack of guidance and counseling resources, lack of qualified guidance and counseling teachers and lack of seriousness among students as obstacles they were facing while the principal from the second average performing school indicated failure of teachers to take up the challenge as another obstacle. The principal from the third average performing school indicated lack of motivation, lack of well trained teachers and lack of policy to ensure continuity of guidance and counseling programs as obstacles they were facing. The principal from the high performing school explained that lack of proper guidelines on the time for guidance and counseling sessions was an obstacle while the second principal from the high performing school explained that lack of trained guidance and counseling personnel was an obstacle in their school.

The findings concur with Kamau (2012) who found out that guidance and counseling services offered in secondary schools in Kenya are influenced by a number of factors including professional qualifications of teacher-counselors, management of students' record, support from the school management and challenges and constraints facing secondary schools in providing professional guidance and counseling to student among others. The study further established that the majority of the teacher-counselors were not trained in guidance and counseling. Therefore, they did not offer professional guidance and counseling services.

The study established that most secondary school students in Starehe District had a negative attitude towards guidance and counseling. These attitudes emerge from students' lack of confidence in the teacher-counselors, lack of professionalism in the service and scarcity of time for guidance and counseling. This study recommended the provision of professional guidance and counseling in secondary schools in Kenya and that all secondary schools should have teacher-counselors appointed on the basis of their qualification and interest in the area.

STUDENTS' RESPONSE ON FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The researcher sought to find out from the students what is that which influence the effective guidance and counseling in their schools. Table 13 below shows some of those factors accordingly.

Key Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, U=Undecided, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA

Items	n =282				
	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
The teachers clearly understand the guidance and counseling policy in secondary schools	18.2	27.3	-	27.3	27.3
There are trained teacher counselors to head the department	18.2	27.3	-	36.4	18.2
There are adequate resources/materials for use during counseling sessions	9.1	36.4	-	54.5	-
Too much workload for teacher hence no time for counseling	18.2	36.4	9.1	27.3	9.1
The students do take guidance and counseling sessions seriously	27.3	27.3	-	36.4	9.1
There are private rooms for guidance and counseling sessions	9.1	27.3	-	36.4	27.3

Table 13

From Table 13 it is clear that (27.3%) of the respondents disagreed that the teachers clearly understand the guidance and counseling policy in secondary schools while the same percentage (27.3%) of respondents strongly agreed with the statement and (36.4%) of the respondents agreed that there are trained teacher counselors to head the department. A few (18.2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Majority of the respondents while (54.5%) agreed that there are adequate resources/materials for use during counseling sessions and only (9.1%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

From the same Table, (36.4%) of the respondents disagreed that too much workload for teachers hence no time for counseling while (9.1%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Further, (36.6%) of the respondents agreed that the students do take guidance and counseling sessions seriously while (27.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Some (36.4%) of the respondents agreed that there are private rooms for guidance and counseling sessions while (27.3%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

The researcher further sought to find out some of the other challenges facing guidance and counseling in schools and findings show that (36.4%) of the respondents indicated "some teachers lack adequate skills/experience to fully assist the students" as one of the other challenges facing guidance and counseling in schools. A further (27.3%) of the respondents indicated "poor relations between learners and teachers," "no appropriate time for guidance and counseling for both teachers and students" and "poor attitude by learners and teachers" as some of the other challenges facing guidance and counseling in schools. Only (9.1%) of the respondents indicated "lack of motivation," "lack of well-organized guidance and counseling programs," "inadequate guidance and counseling materials," "lack of guidance and counseling facilities," "some students do not open up/discuss personal problems," and "family issues among students" as some of the other challenges facing guidance and counseling in schools.

CHALLENGES FACING STUDENTS IN THE PROVISION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICE

The researcher sought to know what are the challenges facing guidance and counseling in schools. The table below shows the results of some of the answers from the students. Table 14 below shows the results.

Key: Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, U=Undecided, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA

Items	n =282				
	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
There are adequate resources/materials for use during counseling sessions	34.4	20.9	14.9	23.8	6.0
Too much workload for teacher hence no time for counseling	12.4	20.2	15.6	27.3	24.1
The students do not take guidance and counseling sessions seriously	25.9	15.2	14.2	25.9	18.4
There are private rooms for guidance and counseling sessions	24.1	20.6	7.4	24.8	23.0
There is time allocated to guidance and counseling in school programme	27.7	17.7	8.5	35.1	10.3

Table 14

Table 14 above shows that majority of the student respondents 97 (34.4%) strongly disagreed that there are adequate resources/materials for use during counseling sessions while 42 (14.9%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Majority of the respondents 77 (27.3%) agreed that too much workload for teachers hence no time for counseling while 44 (15.6%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. On the other hand, 73 (25.9%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the students do not take guidance and counseling sessions

seriously while the same percentage of respondents agreed with the statement.

In additional, 70 (24.8%) of the respondents agreed that there are private rooms for guidance and counseling sessions while 21 (7.4%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Majority of the respondents 99 (35.1%) agreed that there is time allocated to guidance and counseling in school program while 24 (8.5%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. On the same note 50 (17.7%) of the student respondents indicated inadequate time for counseling sessions as one of the other challenges they faced in the provision of guidance and counseling services while 55 (19.6%) of the respondents indicated lack of confidentiality by the teachers/counselors as another challenge.

Also 4 (1.4%) of the respondents indicated counseling sessions take a lot of time as one of the other challenges they were facing in the provision of guidance and counseling services while 35 (12.4%) of the respondents indicated students lack courage to approach the counselors as another challenge. More to that 43 (15.3%) of the respondents indicated students are afraid to share private issues with counselors as another challenge they were facing in the provision of guidance and counseling services while 33 (11.7%) of the respondents indicated that students do not trust the teachers as another challenge.

The findings further show that 16 (5.7%) of the respondents indicated that teachers are not equipped with proper knowledge to counsel students while 8 (2.8%) of the respondents indicated that teachers/counselors might not offer proper help. On the same, 3 (1.2%) of the respondents indicated that one of the challenge that affects provision of guidance and counseling was time wastage while 13 (4.6%) of the respondents indicated the challenge of rude teachers. Similarly, 24 (8.6%) of the respondents indicated the challenge of lots of students and few counselors while 5 (1.8%) of the respondents indicated the challenge of not all students liking guidance and counseling. Accordingly, 4 (1.4%) of the respondents indicated the challenges of being mocked by other students and lack of enough funds to run the program while 7 (2.6%) of the respondents indicated that students find it to be nonsensical as another challenge. Moreover, 2 (0.8%) of the respondents indicated lack of external counselors as one of the challenges while 4 (1.4%) of the respondents indicated lack of enough funds to run the program as another challenge affecting the provision of guidance and counseling services. In additional to, 6 (2.9%) of the respondents indicated the challenge of teachers judging them while 3 (1.2%) of the respondents indicated that the teachers do not take guidance and counseling seriously.

The findings correspond with a study by Shumba, Seotlwe and Montsi (2012) on the implementation challenges of Guidance and Counseling services which revealed that teachers were not adequately equipped through training to teach the subject and that heads of schools did not supervise the implementation of the subject mainly due to lack of knowledge and skills on the subject content.

This further concurs with the findings of Mushaandja, Haihambo and Tania (2013) who conducted a study on the major challenges facing teacher counselors in schools in

Namibia. There were a significant number of learners in Namibian schools whose psycho-social circumstances were dire as a result of a variety of socio-economic, psychological and cultural factors. The learners needed psycho-social support. Instead of appointing qualified school counselors, the Ministry of Education directed schools to appoint teacher counselors (lay counselors) to render this support.

This study attempted to identify the major challenges facing the teacher counselors. The study further revealed that the teacher counselors were facing many challenges including unavailability of appropriate space and time to counsel learners, and lack of skills to effectively address learners' psychosocial needs.

STRATEGIES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The study sought to find out the strategies that had been put in place in secondary schools to ensure effective implementation of guidance and counseling. According to the interviewed carried out in Mbeere North District where principals from low performing, average performing and high performing schools were targeted, the principals who participated in the interviewed suggested that more time should be allocated for guidance and counseling sessions while others suggested that more friendly and trustworthy teachers/counselors should be recruited in schools as some of the strategies to improve effective implementation of guidance and counseling. The principals who were interviewed also suggested that there should be provision of adequate equipment and resources for guidance and counseling in schools as well as provision of more professional counselors.

Another strategy that was suggested was that of the improvement of guidance and counseling skills and also the fulltime availability of teachers/counselors. The principals who participated in the interviews also suggested the strategy of having more peer counselors in schools and encouraging students to take guidance and counseling seriously. The interviews also revealed that the principals suggested the strategy of teachers/counselors being confidants and keeping secrets while they also believed that students should be encouraged to read more counseling books. Those interviewed also suggested that the presence of adequate female teachers/counselors as another strategy while others suggested the watching of more guidance and counseling television programs.

This concurs with Mwaura (2013) on Guidance and counseling as a measure to maintain discipline in public Secondary schools in Nyandarua South district, Kenya. The findings indicated that there was need for more orientations on guidance and counseling needs among the Head teachers. Head teachers and teachers need to be made more aware of guidance and counseling roles among the pupils. Pupil's perception on guidance and counseling was that guidance and counseling was good and effective in maintaining discipline in the schools. Pupils also need to consult their guidance and counseling teachers and other teachers whenever they have issues. They should be made aware of the need to open up in order to benefit from guidance and counseling services.

This also agrees with Cheloti (2013) who carried out a study on the effectiveness of the Head teachers' strategies used to curb drug and substance abuse in public secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings showed that majority of the head teachers and teacher counselors lacked the skills for counseling drug abusers. Teacher counselors also doubled as subject teachers hence lacked time for counseling students.

It was also suggested that there should be frequent seminars from different external counselors and that guidance and counseling sessions should be made compulsory for every student. According to the interviews conducted among the school principals, they suggested the strategy of encouraging students to open up during sessions and also provision of more private rooms for counseling. Another strategy was that of introduce guidance and counseling in all secondary schools and also benchmarking from other secondary schools on guidance and counseling activities.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude from the findings, it is clearly seen that the principals have made provision of adequate rooms for guidance and counselling sessions, employed more teachers to reduce workload and created more time for counselling. They have also availed more television programs that were relevant, purchased more guidance and counselling reference books, introduced public lectures, seminars and motivational speakers and programs as some other support systems put in place in the school.

Secondly, the principals explained that some of the benefits of implementing guidance and counseling services were empowerment in academic performance and discipline assists the students to improve their behavior, helps students in coping with changes in their daily lives and environment. The counselor respondents agreed that guidance and counseling in school motivates learners to perform better and allows students to vent out any pent-up anger that would otherwise have been let loose to fellow students or school property. The student respondents agreed that they seek guidance and counseling services and that they did not attend guidance and counseling services often. The student respondents agreed that they did benefit from guidance and counseling services and some agreed that guidance and counseling in their school motivates learners to perform better, builds on confidence/self-esteem, helps one overcome fear, decreases peer pressure, decreases indiscipline cases and nurtures holistic individuals with good life coping skills. The students agreed that the guidance and counseling services meets their needs and helps improve their academic performance.

Thirdly, on other findings, the principals also indicated lack of policy to ensure continuity of guidance and counseling programs and lack of proper guidelines on the time for guidance and counseling sessions as other obstacles that affect the provision of guidance and counseling activities. The counselor respondents indicated that guidance and counseling teachers have heavy teaching workload and that inadequate professional training and skills in guidance and counseling hinders effectiveness in guidance and counseling programs

implementation. The counselor respondents disagreed that the teachers clearly understand the guidance and counseling policy in secondary schools.

In addition, the principals explained that lack of motivation to guidance and counseling teachers, heavy workload, lack of enough time for guidance and counseling, inadequate professional trainings and skills in guidance and counseling, poor attitude amongst learners due to mistrust of the counselors, lack of guidance and counseling for many teachers and lack of facilities like guidance and counseling rooms as obstacles that hinder the provision of guidance and counseling services in school.

The counselor respondents disagreed that their school had adequate guidance and counseling teachers and that infrequent transfers have always ensured that their institution has access to trained guidance and counseling teachers. The respondents disagreed that very fair workloads in terms of curricula and extra-curricular activities have always availed the time for successful guidance and counseling activities. The counselor respondents stated that the assessment of the guidance and counseling facilities in their school in terms of office was either fair or poor.

The student respondents disagreed that there are adequate resources/materials for use during counseling sessions while some agreed that there was too much workload for teachers hence no time for counseling. The respondents agreed that the students do not take guidance and counseling sessions seriously, inadequate time for counseling sessions and lack of confidentiality by the teachers/counselors as some of the other challenges they faced in the provision of guidance and counseling services.

From the findings, the student respondents disagreed that they felt free to share their personal issues with the guidance and counseling teacher and that after attending guidance and counseling sessions they felt assisted. The student respondents also disagreed that incase of another issue they would feel comfortable to share with the guidance and counseling teacher

Lastly, the principals suggested that more time should be allocated for guidance and counseling sessions, more friendly and trustworthy teachers/counselors should be recruited in schools, provision of adequate equipment and resources for guidance and counseling in schools, improvement of guidance and counseling skills and also the fulltime availability of teachers/counselors as some of the strategies that that be used to improve the provision of guidance and counseling services. They also suggested that students should be encouraged to open up during sessions and also the strategy of benchmarking from other secondary schools on guidance and counseling activities. The counselor respondents indicated that the school administration should encourage teachers to go for guidance and counseling training and seminars, the learners should open up and share their problems in order to benefit from the counseling services provided in schools and that the learners should show the guidance and counseling teachers some appreciation/respect in order to benefit from the counseling services provided in school as strategies that can be used to improve the provision of guidance and counseling in secondary schools.

The counselor respondents indicated that frequency/regular visits by motivational speakers as one of the

support systems that can be implemented to support the provision of guidance and counseling. On the other hand, the student respondents agreed that more time should be allocated to guidance and counseling sessions on the timetables and they also disagreed that guidance and counseling should be made optional to students.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations will hopefully secondary schools and other education stakeholders to appreciate issues of guidance and counseling. The fact that these recommendations are based on primary data gives them reasonable amount of credibility. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education should sensitive teachers on the importance of training of guidance and counseling specialization. The ministry should ensure that all the teachers or would be teachers know of the advantages they will have after training on guidance and counseling as they will play a crucial role in the student's life in schools.

It is recommended that well documented policy on all guidance and counseling activities should be made mandatory in all secondary schools. This will ensure that the school administration is well guided on how to implement guidance and counseling activities in school to fully benefit the students.

Another recommendation is that the school administration should provide adequate materials for guidance and counseling. This includes the purchase of enough reference books, charts, videos on guidance and counseling activities. This will make it easier for the students to be eager to read and get more knowledge on the importance and benefits of guidance and counseling and how it can help them become better persons now and in the future.

It is recommended that the school administration should make provision and have a fully fledged guidance and counseling department. This department will be in-charge of organizing all guidance and counseling activities in school and incorporate all stakeholders in the school to ensure that the students fully benefit from the guidance and counseling services. Each department should have a fully trained head of department in guidance and counseling as they will be able to offer the guidance needed in running the program appropriately.

Another recommendation is that the school administration together with the guidance and counseling department should invite more external motivational speakers. This will enable the students to get an opportunity to listen to external people tackling different guidance and counseling aspects and how they have been handled in other schools.

It is recommended that the guidance and counseling department should encourage formation of peer counselors/groups among students. This will ensure that each student has a support system to encourage them in guidance and counseling sessions. This in turn will ensure there is more disciplined students in school and this will ensure improved academic performance among the students.

Lastly, it is recommended that the students should be sensitized on the importance of attending guidance and

counseling sessions in school. This is because they will be given adequate guidance on how to embrace life in and out of school and have a holistic view on life. In turn, the students can be used to encourage other students to participate in guidance and counseling sessions.

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