

Guidance and Counselling as a Strategy for Social Protection in Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract

Guidance and Counselling has been identified as a strategy for social protection in schools because it helps to cushion the students from risk both from within and outside the school environment. This study therefore investigated guidance and counselling in secondary schools and challenges faced, in Nandi County, Kenya. The methodology employed was ex-post facto design, with the use of stratified random sampling approach to identify schools and participants in the sampled schools. Interviews, questionnaires, document and resources study was used for data collection. Findings revealed that a majority of the teacher-counsellors were not trained in guidance and counselling, most of the teachers did not keep any records and the few who kept had students' attendance files and personal/background information files only. Other than the teacher-counsellors, parents, students, chaplains, peer counsellors, teachers, head teachers and their deputies played a significant role in guidance and counselling services. Harmonising all their activities posed a challenge. The study further established that, students' attitudes towards guidance and counselling was negative and that time for counselling students was inadequate. Recommendations were made to the Ministry of Education, head teachers, other administrators and the teacher-counsellors on the need to put in place workable schedules to improve the level of professionalism and consequently effectiveness of guidance and counselling in secondary schools in enhancing social protection.

Key words: *guidance, counselling, social protection, strategy*

Introduction

The Government of Kenya through legal notice 56/2001 banned the use of the cane, as a means of disciplining students, in the year 2001. In its place, Guidance and Counselling was introduced. However mechanisms for training teachers to effectively provide guidance and counselling services were not immediately provided for and it was the 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 in order to protect the students from vulnerability that arises from the heinous activities.

In recent years, social protection has emerged as a major new focus in efforts to

reduce poverty around the world. Social protection can be understood as a set of public actions which address not only income poverty and economic shocks, but also social vulnerability, thus taking into account the inter-relationship between exclusion and poverty. Through income or in-kind support and programmes designed to increase access to services (such as health, education and nutrition), social protection helps realize the human rights of children and families. Social protection strategies are also a crucial element of effective policy responses to adverse economic conditions, addressing not only vulnerabilities caused or exacerbated by recent crises in school and out of school but also increasing preparedness to future uncertainty, (UNICEF 2010).

Making social protection more child-

sensitive has the potential to benefit not only children, but also their families, their communities and national development as a whole. Child-sensitive social protection systems mitigate the effects of poverty on families, strengthen families in their child care role, and enhance access to basic services for the poorest and most marginalized. Since many at-risk children live outside family care, child-sensitive social protection systems must be responsive to this vulnerable group, as well as to children facing abuse or discrimination at home.

Statement of the Problem

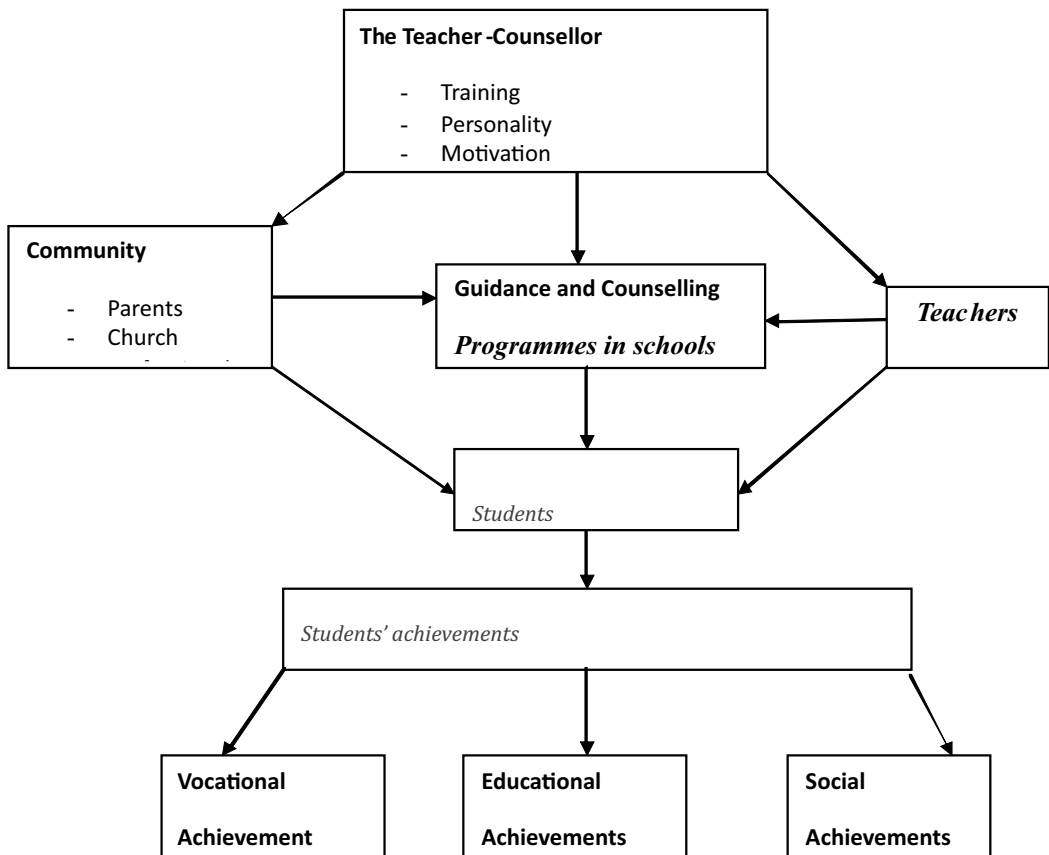
In September 2001, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology constituted a task force to gather views and information from all stakeholders in education, on causes of unrest and indiscipline in secondary schools, and make recommendations on actions to be taken to address the emerging issues. The task force carried out a country-wide research to establish causes of unrest, and some of the heinous acts committed by students among others, the Kyanguli incident in Machakos where 68 students were burnt to death, St. Kizito in Embu where 19 girls died and Nyeri high school where 4 prefects were burnt to death, (Republic of Kenya 2001).

Education Act (1980), Legal Notice number (40/1972) and the head teachers' manual (1975), clearly emphasize that students' discipline and behaviour must conform to societal norms and expectations. Their conduct must be commensurate with their status as students. However teacher-counsellors have to deal with many people from very diverse backgrounds and in addition, challenges in the modern society such as, HIV and Aids, drug abuse, career middle unemployment, heterosexuality and delinquency. All these issues pose great challenges to the department of Guidance and Counselling in Kenyan Secondary Schools. Therefore, the study sought to

find out the success of guidance and counselling as a strategy for social protection in secondary schools in Nandi County, Kenya.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to establish the success of Guidance and Counselling in Secondary schools in Nandi County and recommend workable solutions to be able to enhance its effectiveness in social protection.



Relationship of contributors to success of Guidance and Counselling Services to Schools

A professional teacher-counsellor needs to go through rigorous training over a period of time. The right personality is essential and so is motivation to do their job. The success of Guidance and Counselling programmes requires the collaborative participation of the parents, teachers, students, school administration and the professional community.

Methodology

The study utilized ex-post facto research design. The respondents were purposively selected for the study. They included the head teachers, teacher counsellors, teachers and students. Questionnaires, interview guides, document analysis guide and resource studies were used to collect data. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse data.

Results

This is conducted under following

1. The level of professional training of the teacher-counsellor in Guidance and Counselling and effects on performance of Guidance and Counselling tasks.
2. Types of Guidance and Counselling services offered in secondary schools by teacher-counsellors.
3. Challenges faced by teacher-counsellors in Guidance and Counselling.

The level of professional training of the teacher-counsellor in Guidance and Counselling and effects on performance of Guidance and Counselling tasks.

Table1. Qualifications of the teacher-counsellors in Guidance and Counselling

Qualifications / training in Guidance and Counselling	F	Percentage
Graduate	0	0
Diploma	0	0
KESI training (Induction courses)	3	16.7
1 – 5 day seminars	7	38.9
None	8	44.4
Total	18	100

Table 1 depicting qualifications of the teacher-counsellors in Guidance and Counselling above, reveals that 3 (16.7) teacher-counsellors have been trained by KESI through a two-week induction course in Guidance and Counselling. 7 (38.9) have attended 1 – 5 day seminar courses on issues pertaining to Guidance and Counselling and 8 (44.4) have never attended any course in Guidance and Counselling. It is evident that most 15 (83.3) of the teacher-counsellors are untrained in Guidance and Counselling. The reasons given by teachers for not

having attended any training ranged from head teachers not getting information on time to lack of money to send the teacher-counsellors for seminars.

From the interview, the teachers also revealed that from the onset of free primary education, KESI which is charged with the responsibility of training teachers had concentrated on training head teachers on school management, especially in school finances, therefore, temporarily leaving out other areas which include Guidance and Counselling.

Table2. Teacher-counsellors experience as Head of Department

Length of service (years)	F	Percentage
0 – 2	9	50
2 – 4	6	33.3
4 – 6	3	16.7
6 – 8	0	00
Total	18	100

In response to the interview questions on the length of service of the teacher-counsellor as Head of Department, Table 2 shows that 3 (16.7) teachers-counsellors have been H.O.Ds, Guidance and Counselling for more than 4 years and 9 (50) have served for less than 2 years, indicating that the majority 15 (83.3) have worked for less than 4 years. This could be because the emphasis on Guidance and Counselling was put in place after the government banned corporal punishment in Kenyan schools in 2001 through legal notice number 56/2001. This was also in

line with the task force on student discipline and unrest in secondary schools' (2001) recommendations that all secondary schools were expected to establish and sustain viable Guidance and Counselling programmes and a teacher appointed to coordinate the programmes in school. These teachers are designated as Heads of Departments and are appointed by the T.S.C, or internally by the B.O.G.

Types of Guidance and Counselling services are offered in secondary schools

Table3. Student responses on Guidance and Counselling services offered in secondary schools.

Guidance and Counselling services offered	F	Percentages
Choice of subjects for future careers	649	22.6
Social problems	593	20.7
Academics	1356	47.3
None	257	9.0
Others: spiritual, health	318	11.1

Table4. Teachers' responses on Guidance and Counselling Services offered in secondary schools

Guidance and Counselling services offered	frequency	Percentage
Vocational	30	18.40
Academic	160	98.16
Social	104	63.80
Personal	99	62.74
Others: spiritual, health (medical)	60	36.81

Tables 3 and 4 reveal that academic guidance takes the lead in the services offered to students by Guidance and Counselling teachers in secondary schools. 1356 (47.3) of the students and 160 (98.16) of the teachers ranked academic Guidance and Counselling as the highest service offered.

From the students' responses in table.3, choice of subjects for future careers came second 649 (22.6) followed by social problems 592 (20.7), spiritual and health 318 (11.1) respectively. While 257 (9.0) of the students indicated that they have never attended any type of Counselling.

According to the teachers' response in table 4, the reason why vocational Counselling takes the least 30 (18.40) in relation to academic 160(98.16) is because in most schools it was revealed that the

teacher in charge of careers is also a member of Counselling committee hence can do both concurrently.

Reasons attributed to the high score in academic Counselling 160 (98.16) and 1356(47.3) are as follows

1. Academic Guidance and Counselling is in line with the core function of the school being academic.
2. The professional qualification of the teachers who are masters in their subject areas overrides their new responsibility of Guidance and Counselling and
3. The current emphasis placed on the performance has made teachers take a keen interest in their subject areas.

Whereas academic Counselling takes

the lead, medical (health) and spiritual Counselling as indicated by 318 (11.1) students and 60 (36.81) teachers respectively, ranks lower because the teacher-counsellors have no training in

the medical field, and therefore, limited in medical Counselling. Some schools have nurses and chaplains or priests to help in spiritual matters.

Table5. Teacher-counsellors responses on services offered in secondary schools

Services	F	Percentage
Academics	18	100
Careers	10	55.6
Social	8	44.4
Medical / health	5	28.0

From the interviews conducted on teacher-counsellors, Table 5 reveals that 18 (100) offered academic Guidance and Counselling as a priority, whereas most 13 (72.2) could not deal with psychological or health issues. This is because teachers have no training linking them to the health (medical) field hence teacher-counsellors have no experience. However the following were established

1. Academic, career, spiritual, social and health Guidance and Counselling services were offered by the teacher-counsellors in secondary schools in Nandi District.
2. Academic Guidance and Counselling appeared the most emphasized type in all the sampled schools.
3. Two reasons were given by the teachers on the emphasis on academic counselling.
 - a). Teachers have very limited time for Guidance and Counselling hence provision of academic Guidance and Counselling is in line with the teaching that goes on.
 - b). Emphasis on excellence in academic performance drive teachers to emphasize academic Guidance and Counselling.
4. Health (psychological) Counselling is rarely provided and the reason given was that teachers have no knowledge in medical field.

From the findings stated above

- a). Teacher-counsellors are charged

with the provision of several services in Guidance and Counselling.

- b). Other than the teacher-counsellor, other persons are actively involved in the provision of the services listed above. For instance, careers, spiritual or health are provided by careers teacher, priest or the nurse respectively.
- c). Academic guidance takes the lead because all the teachers are involved in their subject areas.
- d). Teacher-counsellors are not professionally qualified in Guidance and Counselling.

Table 6 Document and Resources studied

ITEM AVAILABILITY		
Documents / Resources	Available	Not Available
	No/Percentage	No/Percentage
Offices (Rooms / Guidance and Counselling Centre)	11 (61.1)	7 (38.9)
Reference books	2 (11.1)	16 (88.9)
Section in the library for Guidance and Counselling literature	00 (00)	18 (100)
Notice board for Guidance and Counselling announcements	00 (00)	18 (100)
Good general organisation of guidance and Counselling department(filing, shelving, posters)	3 (16.7)	15 (83.3)
Students personal information files (confidential files / records)	2 (11.1)	16 (88.9)
Programmes (correspondence, time tables etc.)	2 (11.1)	16 (88.9)

From the document and resources, the study conducted in the 18 sampled schools, Table 6. reveals that majority 11 (61.1) of the schools have offices or rooms from where Guidance and Counselling activities are conducted. A slightly smaller proportion 7 (38.9) lacks this important facility. The slightly higher percentage of schools having the rooms or offices are in line with the MOEST recommendations, Republic of Kenya (2000) that the Headteacher has to recognize the importance of privacy and respect for confidentiality of Counselling relationships by providing a room or office.

Almost all the schools 16 (88.9) have no reference materials or books and only 2 (11.1) have a few references, which are usually kept by the teacher-counsellor in Guidance and Counselling office. All the schools under study had not reserved section in their school library for Guidance and Counselling materials or career literature for career counselling which students could refer to. This shows that students are not exposed to Guidance and

Counselling materials and career literature apart from the face-to-face Counselling they receive from their teacher-counsellors. It is necessary to have Guidance and Counselling centres stocked with newspapers, magazines, books, films and other relevant materials that can help students (Mutie and Ndambuki 1999).

On related issues all the 18 (100) schools checked, had no notice boards set aside for Guidance and counselling materials and announcements. However, teacher-counsellors revealed that they utilize the schools' assemblies to pass information to both the teachers and students. This shows that schools neglect the issue of placing Guidance and Counselling materials and announcements on the notice boards and yet issues and concerns about Guidance and Counselling are raised even in the print media very often. In almost all the schools 16(88.9), Teacher-counsellors kept no records on students, for example, personal information files, academic records or health records while a small proportion 2(11.1)

indicated that the departments kept students' information records.

On the general organization of the department, 3(16.7) of the schools had well organized offices, strategically placed, always opened with good filing, shelving and posters in place while 15(83.3) which include the 7(38.9) that had no offices or rooms and were operating from the staff rooms, which in most cases are congested, and lacked organization, therefore, no privacy and confidentiality.

Regarding whether the Guidance and Counselling programmes had a timetable or not, majority 16(8.9) had no programmes organized and put on timetable. In any case, both teachers and students indicated that Guidance and Counselling takes place when a need arises. This reveals that Guidance and Counselling is done haphazardly in most schools. This really affects the effectiveness of the programmes or teacher-counsellor as MOEST (1977) noted that lack of specific time set aside for Guidance and Counselling was hampering the success of the programmes. It, therefore, advocated for specific times set aside for school timetable for Guidance and Counselling programmes.

Drawing from Table 6, it can be concluded that the provision and organization of resources in Guidance and Counselling departments are still wanting, and therefore, there is a need for schools to implement the MOEST recommendations of the Wangai report (Republic of Kenya 2001), that required the head teachers to provide material, equipment and facilities such as an office, filing space, forms for securing data from the learners, folders to contain counselling notes, shelves for books, filing cabinets, notice boards, desks and chairs. Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) add that the provision of the guidance programmes must be made in the school time table as well as in the budget to facilitate guidance activities such as maintenance of cumulative records,

arranging for career and orientation talks, screening of films or plant tours.

Drawing from the documents and resources studied, the following findings were highlighted:-

- a). Almost all the schools (88.9) have no reference material or books.
- b). Majority (88.9) of the teacher-counsellors kept no records on student's personal information.
- c). On Guidance and Counselling programmes, 2(11.1) of the teachers had correspondence and timetable records whereas 16(88.9) had no programmes, correspondence and timetables on records.

Findings therefore indicate that:-

- a). Majority of the teacher-counsellors in Nandi County kept no records on students in their offices.
- b). 16 (88.9) of the teacher-counsellors had no reference materials or books in that area.
- c). The general organization of Guidance and Counselling departments are wanting for even the available offices or rooms, quite a good proportion 15(83.3) had no files, shelves and even posters.
- d). However, most 11(61.1) of the schools in the districts had Guidance and Counselling services.

Table 7 Teachers response on persons offering Guidance and Counselling services in schools

Response	f	Percentage
Teacher in charge of guiding and Counselling	55	33.742
Class teacher	44	26.994
Head teacher, Deputy head teacher	20	12.27
Others: priest, chaplain, peer counsellors	44	26.994
Total	163	100

When teachers were asked to give the most appropriate person to offer Guidance and Counselling in schools as reflected in Table 7, majority 55 (33.7) indicated the teacher in charge of Guidance and Counselling, 44 (27) indicated class teachers, 20(12.27) indicated head teacher and the deputy head teacher, while another high proportion 44 (27) included the chaplain, priest and the peer counsellors. This is an indication that peer counsellors would function effectively and would go along away in helping solve some problems that students may not be free to “open up” to their teachers. It also reveals that the head teachers and the deputies, who are in charge of discipline in the school, play a crucial role in Guidance and Counselling. Therefore, it can be concluded that co-ordination between parents, teachers, students, teacher-counsellors, head teacher and deputy head teacher are necessary if the students were to be helped in Guidance and Counselling services.

From the interviews administered to the teacher counsellors, it was revealed that all the 18(100) schools do have a teacher in charge of careers. It was revealed that the following persons take an active part in Guidance and Counselling in secondary schools other than the teacher-counsellors.

- a). ● Parents
- Class teachers

- Chaplains
 - Peer counsellors
 - Teachers in Guidance and Counselling committee
 - Students' own friends (both Students and none students)
 - Other teachers in school
- b). It was also discovered that the head teachers and the deputy head teachers who are known to be in charge of discipline in schools played a crucial role as Guidance and Counselling providers.
- c). Guidance and Counselling committees are in existence but not functional in most schools.

It is clear from the findings indicated above that both the school and the parent community were involved in Guidance and Counselling programmes in school.

Challenges faced by the teacher-counsellors in their departments.

The teacher-counsellors (H.O.Ds) and the rest of the teachers, head teachers included, were asked to give the major problems that make Guidance and Counselling ineffective in their schools and the most common problems were listed as follows;

1. Lack of Guidance and Counselling facilities and resources (office, literature etc.)
2. Lack of adequate time for Counselling students.
3. Incompetence of the teacher-counsellor.

- 4. Students negative attitude towards Guidance and Counselling (students do not seek for Guidance and Counselling services)
- 5. Lack of cooperation from the parents.
- 6. Head teachers not supportive
- 7. Lack of confidentiality of the teacher-counsellor (teacher-counsellor do not keep information private).

Table8. Teachers' response on students' attitudes towards Guidance and Counselling

Response	F	Percentage
Positive	60	36.8
Negative	48	29.5
Do not know	22	14.22
Others (depends on the issue at hand)	33	19.02
Total	163	100

According to the teachers, majority 60(36.8) of the students are positive towards Guidance and Counselling programmes. 48(29.5) showed that students are negative and 22(14.72) could not tell, while 33(19.0) indicated they could either be positive or negative depending on the type and form of Guidance and Counselling offered. The

negative attitude toward Guidance and Counselling especially, in relation to personal problems, could be attributed to the lack of confidentiality, whereas they could be positive if it is academic or if the Guidance and Counselling is in the form of career talks, plant tours or watching a film or video tapes which are more entertaining.

Table 9 Workload for the teacher-counsellor

Lessons per week	f	Percentage
13-18	0	0
20-22	4	22.2
22-24	2	11.1
24-29	10	55.6
29-32	2	11.1

Table 10 students' response on time availed to them by the teacher-counsellor

Response	F	Percentage
Always	377	13.2
Sometimes	935	32.62
Rarely	1148	40
Never	406	14.2

According to Table 9, it is revealed that majority 12(66.7) of the teacher-counsellors had lessons between 24-32 per week which gives little room for sufficient time for Guidance and Counseling in schools, whereas 4 (33.3) had between 22-24 lessons and at the same time one is supposed to attend to students even at individual level, which is still uncomfortable for a Head of Department.

Table 10 shows that a majority 1148(40) of the students said they are rarely given

enough time to air their problems to the teacher-counsellor and 406 (14.2) strongly put it that they are never given enough time at all. However, a good proportion indicated that they are sometimes given time and a slightly small proportion indicated that they get enough time always.

From the two tables it is clear that heavy workload, on the part of the teacher-counsellor is a hindrance to effective Guidance and Counselling.

Table 11 Specific timetables set aside for Guidance and Counselling programmes.

Responses	F	Percentage
Programmes time tabled	13	16.7
Programmes not time tabled	15	83.3
Total	18	100

Teacher-counsellors were asked if Guidance and Counselling sessions were timetabled, and from the findings in Table 11, shows that 3(16.7) had their programmes timetabled whereas 15(83.3)

had no time tables, meaning Guidance and Counselling programmes were haphazardly conducted depending on the need and availability of time.

Table 12 Adequacy of Guidance and Counselling facilities

Facilities	F	Percentage
Adequate	0	0
Not Adequate	18	100

From the interview, all 18(100) teacher-counsellors admitted that facilities for Guidance and Counselling in their schools were not adequate hence making them ineffective in their work.

Table 13 confidentiality of the teacher-counsellor

Response	F	Percentage
Always	22	13.50
Most times	26	16.0
Rarely	87	53.4
Not at all	28	17.18
Total	163	100

The teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which the teacher-counsellor in their schools keep information on clients confidential and as shown in the Table 13, majority 115(70.6) showed that there is no confidentiality, 22 (13.5) indicated there is

good standard of confidentiality and 36(16.0) shows that in most times, they keep the information confidential. This could be the reason why students have a negative attitude towards Guidance and Counselling services.

Table 14 Communication with the parents of the counselled students

Response	F	Percentage
Always	10	6.13
Most times	20	12.27
Rarely	81	49.7
Not at all	52	31.90
Total	163	100

Table 14 shows the responses from the teachers on communication between the teacher-counsellor and the parents of the counselled students, 81(49.7) said they rarely communicate unless it is very crucial like when a student cannot improve completely and may be on discipline cases that require suspension or expulsion. In most cases that are extreme, communication is done by either the head teacher or the deputy head teacher. 52(31.9) said there is no communication attempt made at all. From these findings it can be concluded that teacher-counsellors are not effective in their work.

Conclusions

From the findings and discussions the following conclusions were made from the study:-

1. There is a significant relationship between the level of professionalism and effectiveness of the teacher-counsellors in student Guidance and Counselling.
2. Majority of the teacher-counsellors are not trained in Guidance and Counselling.
3. Relatively a good number of Guidance and Counselling services

are offered by teacher-counsellors in secondary schools that are in line with the needs of individual students.

4. Majority of the teacher-counsellors kept no records on the students.
5. Other than the teacher-counsellors, parents, peer counsellors, chaplains, students' body, teachers, head teachers and their deputies play a crucial role in Guidance and Counselling programmes.
6. Students' negative attitudes towards Guidance and Counselling.
7. Inadequate time for Guidance and Counselling activities
8. Lack of facilities
9. Lack of support from the parents and school administration because it's not a priority as compared to academics
7. The general provision and management of facilities and resources is still wanting and the provision of an empty room is not enough to effectively run Guidance and Counselling activities in secondary schools.

Recommendations

The findings and conclusions of this study are useful to the Ministry of Education, secondary schools head teachers and all people that they head other educational institutions and all teacher-counsellors. Some recommendations are made below for them to possibly adopt in order to improve the performance of the teacher-counsellors and the Guidance and Counselling departments.

1. Students should be educated and encouraged on the advantages of seeking Guidance and Counselling services.
2. There should be specified times and days when students are supposed to see their teacher-counsellors for Guidance and Counselling and be referred to on the school timetable.
3. The government (MOEST) should train teachers on Guidance and

Counselling and deploy them to schools.

4. Already appointed teacher-counsellors should be trained and refresher courses be provided more frequently so as to inject new knowledge consistently to the teacher-counsellors.
5. Teacher-counsellors' workload should be reduced to give room for Guidance and Counselling programmes and activities.
6. Parents and the entire school community are sensitized on the importance and role of Guidance and Counselling programmes in schools.
7. Schools should provide well equipped Guidance and Counselling offices as Guidance and Counselling activities can be effectively coordinated and provided to the students in such an environment.
8. Peer counsellors should be trained and their activities be monitored by teacher-counsellors.
9. The university and teacher training colleges should offer guidance and Counselling as one of the core study subjects.

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Influence of Students' Involvement in Maintenance of Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Westlands District, Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

This study set out to investigate the influence of students' involvement in maintenance of discipline in public secondary schools in Westlands District, Nairobi County, Kenya. The study sought to identify discipline challenges exhibited by students in public secondary schools in Westlands District and determine ways in which secondary school head teachers involved students in maintenance of discipline. Research questions were formulated from this objectives. The ex post facto research design was employed in the study. Questionnaires were used to gather data from students, teachers and head teachers. Four schools out of ten in the district were used in the study. Stratified random sampling was used to select: 1 national school out of 3, 2 provincial schools out of 5 and 1 district school out of 2. Stratified random sampling was used to select 400 students, 100 from each school and 40 teachers, 10 from each school. After checking the authenticity of the data collected, the content was analysed through descriptive data analysis. Responses to open-ended questions were paraphrased to standardize them. The data collected was then coded by assigning each answer a number and content analysis done.

Key Words: *maintenance of discipline, student involvement, public secondary schools, administration, Kenya Secondary School Students Council (K.S.S.S.C).*