

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PRACTICES BY TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KISUMU WEST SUB COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study found out Guidance and Counseling practices by teachers in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County. The research objective was to: identify G&C practices, find out how learners respond to G&C practices in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County. The practices by teachers was independent variable while G&C dependent variable. The behavioral theory of B.F. Skinner was adopted. *Ex post facto research design* was used for this study. The study population comprised 504 prefects, 126 head teachers, 126 G&C teachers from all the 126 primary schools in the Sub County. Saturated sampling was used to obtain 126 head teachers and 504 prefects; purposive sampling was used to obtain 126 Guidance and counseling teachers. Descriptive statistics in frequencies and percentages were used to analyze data generated by questionnaires and focus group discussions using summary tables, data from interviews were transcribed and organized into themes, categories and sub-categories as they emerged in the study. The validity and reliability of the questionnaires were enhanced through pilot study done in 4 schools which were not used in the study. Validity of the instruments was done by Supervisors in the Department of Psychology/Educational Foundation. The findings showed that: majority (76%) responded teachers use referrals, (70%) agreed teachers use group G&C, Majority (78%) agreed teachers use individual G&C, and teachers were not confidential on pupils' information as reported by most respondents (58%). On how pupils respond to G&C, majority (57.1%) agreed that it was fast; majority (47.6%) responded that teachers' response was fast. Based on these findings, it was recommended that: The Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs should fund G&C in primary schools to cater for in-service courses, Seminars, and training of teachers; Parents should be sensitized on the importance of G&C on the behavior change of their children. The results of this study may assist teachers in primary schools to streamline G&C Practices to meet pupils' needs.

Keywords: Guidance, Counseling, Practices, Teachers, Pupils.

INTRODUCTION

In America, School administrators spell out policy of School Guidance and Counseling services as a value and an equal partner in the Education system and provide reasons why students need to acquire competencies (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). Corey, (2005) stated that group therapy had some unique characteristics that made them an effective way of helping people change. Hartman (1999) in Canada reported that school counselors facilitate the referral process for students and families who need outside support.

In Botswana, counseling services are based on individuals' uniqueness, dignity, value, respect and that evaluation services are provided that included questionnaires, tests, interviews, observations and inspection of records (UNESCO, 2000). A study by Chirese, (2006) in Zimbabwe mentioned the key components of effective School Guidance and Counseling services offered as follows: policy and mission statements, services planning, needs assessment, responsive services, peer counseling, and services evaluation. In Uganda, peer counseling enables the adolescents to discuss freely and express personal problems about parents, authority and themselves in a free manner (Rutondoki, 2001).

In Kenya, the guidance and counseling teacher may use either individual or group guidance and counseling in the school. Individual counseling is a process of facilitating one to one, face to face counseling with a person who may be having a specific problem and is not ready to share his or her problem in the presence of others apart from the one counseling him or her (MOEST, 2004). Okoth, (2002) explains that guidance groups are concerned with effective discussion about the impact of information and problems arising from some personal adjustment and difficulties and that group guidance and group counseling overlap. Wango & Mungai, (2007) in Kenya emphasized that individuals are counselled and guided in order to help them develop their potentials. Okoth, (2002) further argued that a counselor trained in individual counseling might find herself in difficulty if she attempted group counseling without training in group interactions. Group counseling is a useful way of helping the adolescents for whom peer group values are important (ibid, 2002).

Guidance and counseling program coordinates all guidance and counseling activities in primary schools and these practices include: individual and group guidance and counseling, peer counseling, how teachers get their clients(pupils), issues that are addressed in counseling sessions, confidentiality, services evaluation, and referral cases (MOEST, 2004). Learners may be faced with the following problems that require referral: severe emotional disorder, rape/defilement, sexual abuse, suicidal tendencies, depression, drug and substance abuse and family related problems or issues (ibid, 2004). According to Mutie and Ndambuki (1999), they explained that nothing influences the outcome of a counseling session more than the helper's attitude is it either positive or negative. Positive attitude can be learned and practiced and includes the following: respect, sincerity, un conditional positive regard, empathy, self-disclosure, and confrontation. Republic of Kenya, (2002a) reported that providing G&C to pupils is one of the duties and responsibilities of teachers. Guidance and counseling practices include: Functional educational guidance and counseling program which plays an important role in creating a conducive environment for learning and enables pupils to realize their fullest potential, minimize frustrations, balance academic work and recreation, and undergo smooth transition from primary to secondary schools (MOEST, 2004). KIE, (2004) states that a viable G&C program strives three things, namely: open communication, trust and confidentiality. A study by Kute, (2008) in Kenya noted that students, particularly the adolescents valued the level in which their issues are treated; they are concerned about their self-image/esteem. They value confidentiality and do not wish to be seen to be having issues or problems.

Simatwa, (2007) in Kenya reiterated that Guidance and counseling need to be carried out in the aspect of love, respect, and acceptance and that a teacher must not hate a student no matter how wrong the student may be. Guidance and counseling and freedom of choice is vital in the

maintenance of discipline in schools and that students resent unrealistic restrictions and struggle against them but they respond to trust positively (Simatwa, 2007). Auni, (2009) in Kenya reported that G&C programs had inadequately contributed to students' social adjustment in Public Secondary Schools and that ineffective strategies of G&C were being used in Schools. This was supported by Ajowi, (2005) which reported that guidance and counseling was minimally used to address students' disciplinary problems which was punishment dominated. Ajowi, (2005) showed that there was no harmony between G&C department and disciplinary committees in schools.

Wangai, (2002) highlighted the importance of G&C in schools by arguing that students if motivated by teachers, will do better things related to learning but when ignored would be maladjusted and affect their learning. However, Simatwa, (2007) observes that cases of students' indiscipline have increased in schools. In support of Simatwa, (2007), Kaloki, (2006) contends that the discipline situation in schools has taken a turn for the worse. On pupils' indiscipline or rebellion in schools, T.S.C warns teachers over beating pupils that they risked being sacked, instead, they should apply guidance and counseling to address the issue amongst learners (Mutambo, 2012). A similar report by Ogonya, (2007) in Kenya observes that pupils' discipline is at its lowest ebb in primary schools yet the teachers have no alternative but to apply guidance and counseling. This study differed with Simatwa (2007), Ogonya, (2007) which dwelt on students' and pupils' discipline but did not to find out how teachers were practicing G&C in schools.

Eyo, Joshua and Esuong, (2006) state that students were positive towards G&C services provided by counselors in Calabar schools, Nigeria. Kimathi, (2012) in Kenya supported Eyo, Joshua and Esuong, (2006) that students in public secondary schools in Central Division, Machakos District sought for G&C services for their personal difficulties. Mutindi, (2010) in Kenya, however, differs with Eyo, Joshua and Esuong, (2006) when she argued that students in public secondary schools in Nairobi province had negative attitude towards G&C. In support of Mutindi, (2010) Links, (2012) in Kenya argued that students had negative attitude towards guidance and counseling due to lack of confidence in teacher counselors, lack of professionalism in the service and scarcity of time for G&C. This study differs with Mutindi, (2010) which concentrated on attitudes of students towards G&C leaving out how pupils respond to G&C services. Moreover, Mutindi, (2010) and Kimathi, (2012) concentrated in secondary schools while this study focuses on primary schools.

Statement of the Problem

Guidance and counseling has not been properly established in primary schools despite the Government policy directing that all schools should have G&C. As a result, cases of pupils' indiscipline and personal problems have increased in primary schools in Kenya. Primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County have had cases of pupils', drop out, unwanted pregnancy, drug abuse, absenteeism, early marriage, irresponsible sexual behavior, defilement as major problems; therefore, it was not clear whether or not teachers in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County were practicing G&C.

Purpose of the Study and Research Objectives

The purpose of this study was to find out G&C practices by teachers in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County. The research objectives were to: identify G&C practices by teachers, find out how learners respond to G&C practices in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County. This study attempted to answer the following research questions: What are the G&C practices by teachers in primary Schools in Kisumu West Sub County? How are the pupils responding to G&C practices by teachers in primary Schools in Kisumu West Sub County?

Significance of the Study

The results of this study may assist teachers in primary schools to streamline G&C Practices to meet pupils' needs. This study may be helpful to the head teachers of primary schools in assessing the quality of G&C in their schools. This study may make the pupils aware of G&C Practices available in their schools.

METHODOLOGY

To enhance reliability of the instruments, piloting was conducted in 4 primary schools which were not used in the study sample (Frankel & Wallen, 1996). The validity of the instruments was tested by presenting copies of the same to the Supervisors/ experts from Department of Psychology/Educational foundation who critically studied them and determined their validity and viability for research (Orodho, 2008). Content validity was adopted for this study.

The study population consisted of 126 head teachers, 126 G&C teachers and 504 pupils in 126 primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County (DEO, Kisumu West, 2012). Out of 126 primary schools, there were two girls' boarding schools and one mixed day and boarding primary.

Saturated sampling was used to sample 126 schools in public primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996). The sampling technique gave a fair representation between the single sex and mixed schools. Saturated sampling was convenient because these schools were few and all of them had equal opportunity to participate (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996). Other sampling techniques that were used were as follows: All the 126 head teachers and G&C teachers were sampled using purposive sampling because they had information on G&C services in their schools. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that purposive sampling is a technique that allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of his or her study. They were put into male and female stratum. Simple random sampling was used to arrive at: 126 prefects in focus group discussion and 42 head teachers for interview. There were 3 prefects per group totaling to 42 groups. Simple random sampling enables individuals in the defined population to have equal chance of being selected as a member of the sample (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

Table 1 shows sample framework for population and sample for this study:

Table 1: Sample framework on population and sample study in Kisumu West Sub County

| Category | of | Population | Sample | Percentage |
|---------------------|----|------------|--------|------------|
| Participants | | | | |
| Head teachers | | 126 | 126 | 100% |
| G&C Teachers | | 126 | 126 | 100% |
| Prefects | | 126 | 126 | 33% |

Source: DEO's Office, Kisumu West

Data Analysis

Data for the study was obtained from questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews. Data collected using questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics are measures of central tendency, graphs and tables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Responses from questionnaires and focus group discussions were tallied and converted to percentages. Likert scale was used in this study as follows; 1: Strongly Agree (SA); 2: Agree (A); 3: Undecided (U); 4: Disagree (D); 5: Strongly Disagree (SD) to code the G&C teachers', head teachers' views on the attitude of teachers towards G&C in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County (Mugenda et al., 2003). The researcher started by sorting, editing, coding, and classifying according to various categories. Thereafter, tallied, and changed them into percentages which were analyzed according to the degree of responses.

There were tabulation and computation of frequencies and percentages of quantitative data from close ended questions. Qualitative data from interview schedule was videotaped, reviewed, transcribed, and written in verbatim according to various themes, categories and sub categories and sub categories as they emerged during the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The following table shows G& C Teacher distribution by Age Group and Gender

The age and gender of respondents were important in order to find out how they responded to G&C in their schools.

Table 2: Guidance and Counseling Teacher distribution by Age Group and Gender

| Age Group (years) | Gender | | | | Total | |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|----------|
| | Male | | Female | | | |
| | f | (%) | f | (%) | f | (%) |
| Below 30 Years | 8 | (8.7) | 3 | (3.3) | 11 | (12.0) |
| 30 - 40 Years | 25 | (27.2) | 13 | (14.1) | 38 | (41.30) |
| 41 - 50 Years | 20 | (21.7) | 11 | (12.0) | 31 | (33.7) |
| Over 50 Years | 9 | (9.8) | 3 | (3.3) | 12 | (13.0) |
| Total | 62 | (67.4) | 30 | (32.6) | 92 | (100.00) |

The results in Table 1 reveals that among the 92 teachers, many of them 62 (67.4%) were male while 30 (32.6%) were female. The majority of the teachers 38(41.30%) were aged between 30

to 40 years, while 31 (33.7%) were aged between 41 to 50 years while those above 50 years were 12 (13.0%). About 11 (12.0%) were aged below 30 years.

The results in Table 2 show Head teachers' distribution by experience. Head teachers' experience was vital for this study because they were likely to have varied and a lot of information depending on how long they had stayed in leadership.

Table 3: Head Teachers' Distribution by Experience. Head teacher n = 82

| Head Teachers' Experience | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 0-5 Yrs | 21 | 25.61 |
| 5-10 Yrs | 34 | 41.46 |
| 10-15 Yrs | 13 | 15.85 |
| 15-20 Yrs | 9 | 10.98 |
| Over 20years | 5 | 6.10 |

Table 4 reveals that majority of 34 (41.46%) head teachers had experience of 5 to 10 years, followed by 21 (25.61%) who had ha experience for between 0 to 5 years, 13 (15.85%) for between 10 to 15 years, 9(10.98%) had experience of 15 to 20 years while 5(6.10%) had over 20 years of experience.

Table 3 shows Guidance and counseling teachers' distribution by experience as required in the questionnaires

**Table 4: Guidance and Counseling Teacher Distribution by Experience
G&C teacher n = 92**

| Teachers' Experience in guidance and counseling. | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Below 1 Year | 18 | 19.6 |
| 1 - 3 Years | 29 | 31.5 |
| 4 - 6 Years | 40 | 43.5 |
| Above 6 Years | 5 | 5.4 |

Guidance and Counselling Practices by Teachers in Primary Schools

The first objective was to identify guidance and counselling practices by teachers in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County. The practices were stratified as; individual guidance and counselling, group guidance and counselling, referrals and confidentiality.

The study was interested in examining head teachers whether or not the following G&C practices: individual and group G&C, Confidentiality and making referrals were used by teachers.

Table 1 shows Guidance and counseling practices by teachers as responded by head teachers.

Table 1: Guidance and counseling practices by teachers as responded by head teachers
Head teachers' response n=82

| | SA f(%) | A f(%) | U f(%) | D f(%) | SD f(%) | MEAN | S/DEV |
|--|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------|-------|
| Teachers like making referral cases on pupils with severe problems | 33(40.2) | 24(29.3) | 5(6.1) | 12(14.6) | 8(9.8) | 3.756 | 1.375 |
| Teachers use individual guidance and counseling on pupils' discipline/academic performance | 17(20.7) | 45(54.9) | 6(7.3) | 11(13.4) | 3(3.7) | 3.756 | 1.049 |
| Teachers use group guidance and counseling on pupils' discipline/academic performance | 9(11.0) | 41(50.0) | 14(17.1) | 12(14.6) | 6(7.3) | 3.427 | 1.100 |
| Teachers keep client/pupils' confidentiality | 10(12.2) | 15(18.3) | 9(11) | 30(36.6) | 18(22) | 2.622 | 1.339 |

N= 82

INTERPRETATION

4.1 -5.0: Strongly Agree

3.1 – 4.0: Agree

3.0: Undecided

2.1 -2.9: Disagree

1.0-1.9: Strongly Disagree

The results in Table 1 reveal that the mean response for teachers on listed statements concerning their attitude on G&C practices was (3.646) in the likert scale with a standard deviation of (1.175). This was interpreted to mean that the respondents agreed with the 3 listed statements concerning teachers' attitude to individual, group guidance and counseling. Specifically they agreed that teachers like making referral cases on pupils with severe problems (3.756), teachers use individual guidance and counseling (3.756) and group guidance and counseling on pupils' discipline/personal problems (3.427).

Slightly more than a half of the head teachers (23 out of 42) interviewed reported that pupils' discipline was average; they reiterated that cases of pupils' indiscipline were still there, others (14 out of 42) reported that pupils' discipline was below average.

However, this study noted that majority of head teachers (58%) reported that teachers were not confidential on what clients confided in them, (30%) disagreed and (12%) were neutral.

Table 2: Guidance and counseling practices by teachers as responded by Guidance and counseling teachers**Guidance and counseling teachers' response n=92**

| | SA f(%) | A f(%) | U f(%) | D f(%) | SD f(%) | MEAN | S/DEV |
|---|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------|-------|
| Teachers like making referral cases on pupils with severe problems | 36(39.1) | 40(43.5) | 5(5.4) | 7(7.6) | 5(5.4) | 4.065 | 1.036 |
| Teachers use individual guidance and counseling on pupils discipline/academic performance | 27(29.3) | 46(50.0) | 7(7.6) | 8(8.7) | 4(4.3) | 3.913 | 1.055 |
| Teachers use group guidance and counseling on pupils' discipline/academic performance | 27(29.3) | 46(50.0) | 7(7.6) | 8(8.7) | 4(4.3) | 3.913 | 1.055 |
| Teachers keep client/pupils' confidentiality | 15(16.3) | 13(14.1) | 12(13.4) | 30(32.6) | 22(23.9) | 2.663 | 1.409 |

INTERPRETATION

4.1 -5.0: Strongly Agree

3.1 – 4.0: Agree

3.0: Neutral

2.1 -2.9: Disagree

1.0-1.9: Strongly Disagree

The results in table 2 reveal that majority of G&C teachers (43.5%) agreed that teachers like making referrals on pupils with severe problems that require G&C, followed by (39.1%) who strongly agreed.

On whether teachers use individual guidance and counseling on pupils discipline/academic performance, majority of G&C teachers (50%) agreed, followed by (29.3%) strongly agree, (7.6%) neutral, (8.7%) disagreed and (4.3%) strongly disagreed.

On whether teachers use group guidance and counseling on pupils discipline/academic performance, majority of G&C teachers (50%) agreed, followed by (29.3%) strongly agree, (7.6%) neutral, (8.7%) disagreed and (4.3%) strongly disagreed.

Most of the G&C teachers (32.6%) disagreed with the statement that teachers kept information entrusted to them by pupils confidential during G&C sessions, followed by (23.9%) who strongly disagreed, (16.3%) strongly agreed, (14.1%) agreed, (13.4%) remained neutral. Both head teachers and G&C teachers: (76%) agreed teachers liked making referrals, (15%) disagreed, (9%) undecided, (78%) agreed teachers use individual G&C,(14%) disagreed, (8%)

undecided, (70%) agreed teachers use group G&C, (17%) disagreed, (13%) undecided; (58%) disagreed teachers were confidential, (30%) agreed, (12%) were neutral.

DISCUSSION

Responses from head teachers and G&C teachers showed that teachers like making referrals on pupils with severe problems that require G&C, used individual guidance and counseling on pupils' discipline/academic performance, used group guidance and counseling on pupils' discipline/academic performance.

Majority of respondents disagreed that teachers kept information entrusted to them by pupils. This showed that teachers were not confidential on information entrusted to them by pupils. This was against a study by Kute (2008) which noted that students valued confidentiality and did not wish to be seen to be having problems.

Pupils' response to G&C Practices

The second objective was to find out how pupils respond to G&C practices in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County. Prefects were asked how pupils respond to G&C and how teachers responded to pupils seeking guidance and counselling, their responses were as follows:

Table 3: Responses from prefects on how teachers responded to pupils seeking guidance and counselling and how pupils respond to G&C

Prefects n=42

| | Very fast | | Fast | | Slow | | Very slow | |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----------|------|
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| How pupils respond to G&C | 7 | 16.7 | 23 | 54.8 | 8 | 19 | 4 | 9.5 |
| How teachers respond to pupils seeking G&C | 12 | 28.6 | 20 | 47.6 | 4 | 9.5 | 6 | 14.3 |
| Total | 19 | | 43 | | 12 | | 10 | |

Majority of prefects (54.8%) reported that pupils' response was fast, followed by (19%) slow, (16.7%) very fast, (9.5%) very slow. On how teachers respond to pupils seeking G&C, majority of prefects (47.6%) fast, (28.6%) very fast, (14.3%) very slow, (9.5%) slow.

The pupils' response towards G&C was fast. This study is similar to Kimathi, (2012) that students in public secondary schools in Central Division, Machakos District sought for G&C services for their personal difficulties. The finding of this study differs with Mutindi, (2010) and Link, (2012) that students in public secondary schools in Nairobi province had negative attitude towards G&C.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

Guidance and Counseling Practices by Teachers

This study concluded that;

- i) Teachers liked making referrals on pupils' problems they could not handle.
- ii) Teachers used individual G&C on pupils' discipline and personal problems.
- iii) Teachers used group G&C on pupils' discipline and personal problems.
- iv) Teachers were not confidential on information confided to them by pupils.

Pupils' response to G&C practices in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County

This study concluded that pupils' response towards G&C was fast. Teachers responded fast to pupils in problems that required G&C.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that:

Teachers practiced Guidance and Counseling in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County. Pupils' response towards seeking help through G&C was fast. The teachers' response to pupils seeking help through G&C was also fast; therefore, this study concluded that Guidance and Counseling was being practiced in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) The Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs should provide for funds to cater for in-service courses, Seminars, and training of teachers in G&C.
- ii) Parents should be sensitized on the importance of G&C on pupils' behavior change.

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