

Evaluation of the Challenges in the Implementation of the Guidance and Counselling Programme in Baringo County Secondary Schools, Kenya

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Abstract

The need for guidance and counselling services in all learning institutions cannot be overstated. In response to this demand, guidance and counselling programme has been implemented since 1971 and more emphasis on its services in 2001 through Legal Notice, No. 95 of the Kenya Gazette that recommended guidance and counseling departments be established in all secondary schools. However, there are indications that student's still experience problems which are manifested in form of school indiscipline, school unrest, and increased examination cheating, among others. This may be due to lapse in the implementation of the guidance and counselling programme. Thus the purpose of this study was to evaluate the challenges in the implementation of guidance and counselling programme in Baringo county secondary schools. This study employed a survey design. The population of the study was 23 extra county secondary schools, with 23 teacher counsellors. Purposive sampling was used to select the number of schools and teacher counsellors to be included in the study. The sample comprised of 23 schools and 23 teacher counsellors. A total of 23 respondents constituted the study sample. The data was collected through an open ended questionnaire. Piloting of the instrument was done to improve validity and the test items were validated by experts in the Department of Counselling, Psychology and Educational Foundations. Reliability of the TCEQ was established by use of Cronbach's alpha method and a reliability coefficient of 0.86 respectively was obtained. Descriptive statistics was utilized to analyse the data with the aid of SPSS version 20 for windows. An analysis of the findings indicated that lack of time and funding, inadequate facilities, uncooperative clients and lack of qualified personnel were among the challenges facing the implementation of the guidance and counselling programme. It was concluded that there are challenges in implementation of the guidance and counselling programme in Baringo county secondary schools. It's therefore recommended that the teacher counsellors to be provided with training, facilities and funds by the government and school administration. Its further recommended teacher counsellors to be employed on full time basis, time allocated for G&C sessions and the workload of teacher counsellors be reduced.

Keywords: Challenges, Teacher Counsellor. Guidance and Counselling Programme

1. Introduction

Changing societal and family values, traditions as well as disintegrated community; form the bases for psychological and social issues affecting students in institutions of learning (Wambu & Fisher, 2015). Mapfumo and Nkoma, (2013) noted that students experience immense socio-economic and psychological pressures in today's world, which disturb their learning process. These negative societal trends have underscored the increasing demand for the services of professional teacher counsellors to provide a comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Programme in secondary schools to effectively address the needs of students. In response to this demand, Guidance and Counselling programme was implemented in the United States and it became prominent in American schools after the World War 1 (Corsini, 1987). In support, Taylor (1971) states that school counselling was implemented in British schools in reaction to the changes in society, in family life and in schools which created conditions where greater attention to individual needs was necessary.

In Africa, the concept of Guidance and Counselling although relatively new in educational systems, has been embraced by most governments (UNESCO, 2001). Considerable progress has been made setting up administrative structures for the provision of Guidance and Counselling services in educational institutions to enhance personal, educational and vocational development of the students. Therefore Guidance and Counselling has been conceptualized as a programme of activities which has provided African countries with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in the present age of complex scientific and technological development (Okobiah & Okorodudu, 2004).

Guidance and Counselling was formally implemented in Kenyan institutions of learning in 1971 to help students deal with emotional, psychological, educational, vocational and social problems that confront them in their daily lives (Wango, 2007). The implementation of Guidance Counselling programme was based on a number of recommendations and guidelines in various Education Commissions Reports, National Development Plans and Government Sessional Papers (MOEST, 2004). To strengthen, improve and to make the programme more effective, the report of the National Committee of Education Objectives and Policies recommended the provision of resources needed for the expansion of Guidance and Counselling programme services (G.O.K,

1976). The Report of the Working Party on Education and Manpower Training For the next Decade and Beyond recommended the decentralization of the programme to district level and the establishment of the programme in schools and senior teachers to be in charge (G.O.K, 1988). The Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya recommended that guidance and counselling services be offered by professionally trained and mature teachers (G.O.K, 1999). In addition, the Ministry of Education Report on Student Discipline and Unrest in Secondary Schools (MOEST, 2001), recommended the deployment of teachers with professional qualifications in Guidance and Counselling to secondary schools to provide services in the implemented Guidance and Counselling programme. Therefore, Guidance and Counselling became an integral part of educational system in Kenya and was further emphasized after the ban of caning in 2001.

Guidance and counselling programmes in schools are geared towards promotion of the development of students. According to Eyo, Joshua and Esuong (2010) guidance and counselling programmes for secondary school students are designed to address the physical, emotional, social, vocational and academic difficulties of adolescent students. In Kenya, the purpose of guidance and counselling programme as stipulated in the Ministry of Education Handbook on Guidance and Counselling (Republic of Kenya, 2007) is to help the student meet a great variety of needs ranging from psychological and sociological to academic adjustment. Guidance and Counselling being an important part of the total programme of instruction should therefore be provided in accordance with the state laws and regulations and the Ministry of Education policies and regulation (Wango, 2007). Teacher counsellors are expected to develop effective Guidance and Counselling programmes in schools that will assist in developing all rounded individuals. To achieve this, the programme should target all areas of guidance and counselling which according to MOEST, (2004) include personal and social, vocational, health and educational guidance and counselling among others.

Despite all these expectations according to ASCA (2005), countries vary on how Guidance and Counselling programme is being implemented. While Guidance and Counselling is an easily accessible service in many developed countries, its benefits are not yet adequately exploited in developing and third world countries (Hiebert&Bezanson, 2002). In some countries the provision of G&C services is considered a luxury that should only be made available largely to choice of subjects (Gysber & Henderson, 2001). Harel and Erhard (2005) noted that school counselling role varied due to; the school counselor's preference, school level, and school principal expectations. In other cases like Korea, India, Zambia, Nigeria and Kenya, Guidance Counselling is provided by classroom teachers, who either have such duties added to their usual teaching load or teach only limited loads that also includes counselling (ASCA, 2005). In Nigeria, many secondary schools counsellors function as career masters or mistresses and they also have teaching responsibilities that take time away from their counselling roles.

The government of Kenya has supported the implementation of Guidance and Counselling services in secondary schools but the policy response remains inadequate (GOK, 2005). Findings suggest that despite the implementation of guidance and counselling in schools, the provision of guidance and counselling services is highly variable and somewhat fragmented in scope largely depending on individual schools (Wango, 2006). Although school counseling in majority of American schools is moving toward a comprehensive guidance and counseling programme approach (Gysber, 2012), Kenyan schools are still in need of coordinated guidance and counselling programmes. Lack of an organizational structure detailing how school counselling should be conducted in schools has led to inconsistencies and variations in how guidance and counselling is conducted in different schools (Wambu & Fisher, 2012).

Therefore many emerging issues that ought to have been addressed by an effective provision of Guidance and Counselling services have continued to persist. These include poor academic performance, alcohol and drug abuse, school unrest, classroom discipline cases, and examination cheating among others. These are indications that students need guidance and counselling in academic, vocational, personal and psychological issues that should be addressed by a properly implemented Guidance and Counselling programme. Thus the study sought to establish through empirical research the challenges in the implementation of Guidance and Counselling programme in Baringo county secondary schools Kenya with the view of improving this crucial service in Kenya's secondary schools.

2. Methodology

The study utilized a survey design. It is primarily concerned with determining "what is" and the state of affairs as they exist (Gall, Borg & Gall, 2007). A survey research design seeks to obtain information that discloses an existing phenomenon. This study was conducted in extra secondary schools in Baringo County. Targeted by the study were 23 teacher counsellors from the 23 extra secondary schools. A sample of 23 teacher counsellors was purposively selected for the study. Teacher Counsellor's Evaluation Questionnaire (TCEQ) was used to collect the data. The instrument of the study was developed by examining the research objectives and related literature. Open ended items were also included in the instruments design because they deepen the understanding of the response to a preceding question by obtaining additional details on the reason for the previous answer (Janice,

2011). The open ended items addressed the challenges in the implementation of the guidance and counselling programme mainly.

3. Results and Discussion

The study sought to establish the challenges in the implementing guidance and counselling programmes. Several scholars have noted that schools guidance and counselling programmes in developing countries face many challenges (Owino & Odero, 2014; Jacob & Gupta, 2013; Ngumi, 2003). The major challenges faced by G&C services providers are; inadequate facilities, lack of trained personnel and time constrains

Prior to the establishment of the challenges facing guidance and counselling programmes, the teacher counsellors were asked to rate implementation of the programmes in their respective schools. A summary of the responses of the teachers are given in Table 1.

Table 1 Teacher Counsellors' Rating of the Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in their Schools

Rating	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%) n = 23
Poor	4	17.4
Fair	15	65.2
Good	4	17.4

The results in Table 1 show that majority (65.2%) of the teacher counsellors' were of the view that guidance and counselling programme in their schools was fairly implemented. The rest of the teachers rated implementation of the programmes as poor (17.4%) and good (17.4%). The results show that guidance and counselling programmes are not implemented well in schools.

The above results are in line with the findings of Ngumi (2003) who noted that the provision of guidance and counselling in secondary schools is riddled with a number of problems which are attitudinal, structural, human and cultural. These include failure to engage in a careful diagnosis of the organizational problems that guidance and counselling was designed to solve. Nyamwange, Nyakan and Ondimu (2012) observed that many schools do not have facilities which are vital for provision of guidance and services in schools. Their study further revealed that guidance and counselling services providers did not receive sufficient support from school administration to enable them render quality services. They also identify inadequate training of services providers, negative attitudes of school heads and students, heavy teaching work load as factors that hinder delivery of quality of guidance and counselling services.

Literature reveals that implementing of guidance and counseling programmes is a challenge to most schools (Anagbogu, Nwokolo, Anyamene, Anyachebelu & Umezulike, 2013; Songok, Yunguyungu & Mulinge, 2013). According to Low (2009) there are four types of challenges of counselling in a school setting namely; internal, external, systems and personal challenges. Internal challenges are concerned with clientele groups, teachers' attitudes towards counselling and pupils' willingness to seek counselling. External challenges are issues outside the school which include culture and globalization; system challenges are things within the programme which include law establishing its practice in schools, referral procedure and resource planning. Personal challenges include skills and techniques of the counsellor including training, supervision and attitude towards the school system.

The Teacher counsellors were also asked to indicate the challenges that mitigate against the implementation of Guidance and counselling programme in their schools. An open ended item in the Teacher counsellor's questionnaire was used to capture this data. Open ended items are sometimes preferred since close-ended questions limit the respondent to a set of answers, while open ended questions allow them to express opinions without being influenced by the researcher (Ballou, 2011). The other advantage of open-ended questions is that subjects give spontaneously responses to items devoid of biases that result from giving them choices (Biemer, & Lyberg, 2003). However, open-ended questions have a number of disadvantages in comparison to close-ended ones. They include the need for extensive coding and larger item non-response (Sekaran, & Bougie, 2010). Despite these disadvantages, open ended items are among the most suitable modes of capturing detailed data. The challenges facing teacher counsellors in implementing guidance and counselling programme are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 Challenges in the Implementation of the Guidance and Counselling Programme

Challenge	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
Inadequate time	13	56.5
Clients are not cooperative	9	39.1
Lack of parental support	2	8.7
Inadequate facilities	12	52.2
Lack of finances	8	34.8
Shortage of qualified personnel	9	39.1
Teachers have heavy workload	3	13.0
Little support from school administration	2	8.7

3.1 Inadequate Time

The results in Table 2 reveal that majority of the teacher counsellors were of the view that inadequate time was the greatest challenge to the implementation of guidance and counselling in schools. This finding supports those of Oye, Obi, Mohd and Bernice (2012) who observed that most schools have no regard for guidance and counselling activities. School time-table do not make provisions for guidance and counselling activities. They found out that terms were designed without giving specific period of time for students to have any form of formal guidance and counselling encounters with professional counsellor's or selected teachers. Mushaandja, *et al* (2013) also noted lack of suitable space and time to do counseling was also key challenges across the sample. A study done by Low (2009) showed that lack of counselling in the school timetable, topped the list among others as the major challenge to counselling practice in primary schools. The findings are in line with the studies of Anagbogu and Nwokolo (2010) and Oraegbunam (2008) who listed similar challenges in their works.

3.2 Non-Cooperative Clients

The teacher counsellors identified non-cooperative clients (39.1%) as another challenge that militate against the implementing guidance and counselling programmes. They stated that it was not possible to provide clients with quality services without their cooperation. This is consistent with the results of a study conducted in Namibia by Mushaandja, *et al* (2013). They observed that learners were not willing to disclose their problems and be counseled by the teacher counselors as they did not trust the services providers. The non cooperation of clients may perhaps be due to negative attitudes towards guidance and counseling. Nyamwange *et al* (2012) established that secondary school head teachers and students generally had a negative attitude towards guidance and counselling. Such an attitude does not auger well for provision of quality guidance and counselling services in secondary schools and may explain their non-cooperation.

3.3 Lack of Parental Support

According to Low (2009), guidance and counseling teachers need to be supported in carrying out innovative activities towards provision of those services. Out of the 23 teachers who participated in the study, 8.7% pointed out lack of parental support as a challenge to implementation of guidance and counseling programme in schools. The issue raised by the counselors is similar to one of the findings of Nyaga's (2013) study which identified uncooperative parents as an obstacle to provision of guidance and counseling services in schools. A study by Oye *et al* (2012) noted that parents tend to avoid forums where their children private and domestic issues are discussed with outsiders (teacher counselors included) due to cultural reasons. It further noted that organizations that provide such forums like the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) are none existent in some schools and in places where the associations are established, parents avoid such meetings whenever they are invited. Rutondoki (2000) noted that parents in Uganda tend to resist provision of G&C services to their children because they claim that their cultural practices do not allow such services. Ogonya (2007) observed that parents in Kenya generally had negative attitudes towards G&C services.

It is important that teacher counselors are provided with the necessary support not only from the school administration but also from parents. Kimathi (2002) observed that no matter how committed and competent teacher counsellors may be, he/she cannot provide effective G&C services without the cooperation of all the stakeholders. The support of parents and society at large is crucial for the success of G&C programmes because it is only through their participation will they understand the psycho-social problems of their children and participate in formulation of solutions (Nyaga, 2011).

3.4. Inadequate Facilities

Inadequate of guidance and counseling facilities was one of the challenges highlighted by the teacher counselors. The quality guidance and counselling services require facilities such as office space, bookshelves, drawers, files, finance, time, reference books, guidance and counseling manuals and psychological test materials (Achieng,

2007). Data in Table 34 revealed that majority (52.2%) of the teachers who took part in the study considered it as a challenge. Several studies have identified inadequate facilities as a challenge to implementation of guidance and counseling programme in schools. Ngumi (2003) noted that most learning institutions lacked trained counselors, time, facilities and reference materials for use by counsellors. A study done by Anagbogu and Nwokolo (2010) revealed that necessities like computers, training the counsellors in ICT, counselling clinics, radios, televisions, one-way mirrors, generators and furniture were lacking in many schools in Nigeria.

3.5 Lack of Funding

Scholars and educators have underscored the importance of adequate funding for guidance and counselling programmes (Songok, Yungunu & Mulinge, 2013). The programmes need adequate funding as this enables them to put up infrastructure and purchase the required facilities. Kafwa (2005) pointed out that a counsellor who has adequate and relevant materials and facilities tend to be more confident, effective and productive. Lack of finance was highlighted by the teacher counsellors (34.8%) as one of the challenges faced by their schools when implementing guidance and counselling programmes in school.

Various scholars have highlighted inadequacy of funds as a challenge faced by guidance and counselling programmes in developing countries. Okere (2005) observed that most counselling programmes in schools are not properly funded. Owino and Odero (2014) observed that financial constrain is a major challenge to guidance and counselling programmes in primary schools in Kisumu West Sub county. Mushaandja *et al* (2013) also noted that lack funds, office space and time were key challenges across the sample they used in their study.

Guidance and counselling comprises a very important and vital part of educational activities in a school system. It provides help to students such that they are not tormented by their internal conflicts and do not resort to self-destructive behaviours (Songok, Yungunu & Mulinge, 2013). It is thus important that teachers who provide such services are adequately funded. Teacher counselors who are not adequately funded are forced to perform their duties without basic facilities. This demotivates them from perform their roles and any duties allocated to them (Faislat & Rasheed, 2013).

3.6 Shortage of Qualified Personnel

The success of a guidance and counseling programme depends on the knowledge and attitudes of the service providers (Kimathi, 2002). Training is therefore central for the success of G&C programme as knowledge and positive attitudes are acquired through it. However, there is an acute shortage of trained teacher counselors in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Mapfumo & Nkoma, 2013). Shortage of trained personnel was one of the challenges highlighted by the teacher counsellors (39.1%). The issue of shortage of qualified personnel has been raised by a number of scholars (Nyamwange *et al*, 2013).

Data generated by this study also revealed that majority of the teacher counsellors who participated in the study were holders of certificate in G&C and were thus considered as not adequately trained. Ngumi (2003) is of the view that teachers who undergo certificate courses do not cover sufficient guidance and counselling content in their training programmes to enable them effectively render the guidance and counselling service The data further revealed that the number of professionally trained teachers offering the counselling service was small.

Mapfumo and Nkoma (2013) assessed the preparedness and experience of personnel involved in guidance and counselling in high schools. They found that only one head teacher had the required qualification in guidance and counseling (a certificate in systemic counselling not intended solely for counsellors). They found out that teachers mandated to offer guidance and counselling in schools have teaching qualifications but no specialized training in guidance and counselling and hence lack the capacity to satisfy their guidance and counselling roles (Mapfumo, 2001). This is very different from developed countries where school counsellors hold masters degrees and are licensed before being permitted to offer guidance and counselling services (Nyamwaka *et al*, 2013).

3.7 Heavy Workload

The teacher counsellors cited heavy workload (13.0%) as an impediment to effective implementation of guidance and counselling programmes. This is supported by findings of a study by Mghweno *et al* (2014) which revealed that teacher counsellors handled the normal workload (more than 18 lessons) per week in addition to their counseling duties and any other responsibilities assigned by the school administration. This means that teacher counsellors have little time to dedicate to provision of guidance and counselling services and this compromises the quality of the counselling services. All the teacher counsellors who were involved in a study by Nyamwange *et al* (2013) also cited heavy workloads as one of the impediments to the smooth running and implementation of guidance and counselling in schools. In the light of this challenge, there is need for schools to appoint fulltime teacher counselors or reduce the workload of the teacher counselors to enable them focus on the

provision of guidance and counseling.

3.8 Support from School Administration

Inadequate support from school administration was the last item that the teacher counsellors' checked in the list of challenges of implementing guidance and counselling in schools. The results in Table 2 revealed that 8.7% of the respondents who participated in the study considered it as a challenge. Mushaandja *et al* (2013) noted that school counselors were not given adequate support by the school administrators and teachers. They attributed this to lack of sufficient information on counseling on the part of the teachers and school administrators. A study by Nyamwange *et al* (2013) also revealed that support given to teachers' counselors by their school heads is minimal. This state of affairs is unfortunate because it is hard for teacher counselors to render services without support of the school administration.

Guidance and counseling services are offered in schools because counselors attend to learners' educational, vocational, emotional, social and personal development (Yuksel-Sahin, 2009). In addition, the counselors provide information on counseling to parents and school authorities to facilitate informed planning and policy making. Majority of teachers are supportive of counseling services, because they see it as a means of ensuring an orderly school community, where the role of the counselor is to smooth out any emotional or behavioral disruptions (Cooper, Hough, & Loynd, 2005), and to help learners overcome difficult and challenging life circumstances and risk factors (Sun & Stewart, 2007). According to Mullan (1990) the successful implementation of guidance and counselling programme depends on support from the stakeholders. Its success thus, requires the support of all stakeholders; the administration, staff, students, head teachers and the community.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

It can be concluded that quite a number of challenges that face the implementation of the guidance and counselling programme include inadequate time, uncooperative clients, lack of parental support, shortage of qualified staff, heavy workload and unsupportive school administration, inadequate facilities and finance. In effect unless these challenges are addressed the impact of the implementation of G&C programmes in Baringo county extra secondary schools may not be felt as intended. It's therefore recommended that the teacher counsellors to be provided with training, facilities and funds by the government and school administration. It's further recommended teacher counsellors to be employed on full time basis, time allocated for G&C sessions and the workload of teacher counsellors be reduced to address the challenges of teacher counsellors in implementing the guidance and counselling programme.

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