

Effectiveness of Teacher Counsellors' Delivery of Guidance and Counselling Services towards Enhancing Discipline among Students in Olokurto Division, Narok County, Kenya

Kamundia I. Robert
Maasai Mara University P.O. Box 861 – 20500, Narok

Dr. Thomas N. Kinga, PhD
Kenyatta University P.O. BOX 43844-00100 Nairobi

Abstract

While education is expected to change the behaviour of learners positively by moulding them into self respecting and self-reliant individuals, discipline related issues have been at the fore of educational debates as students encounter challenges associated with adolescence. Cases of truancy, drug abuse, immorality, destruction of property and loss of life, are however, indicators of the existence of a conflict between educational aims and discipline among secondary school students. This is despite the provision of guidance and counselling services in schools, hence the need to examine the effectiveness of guidance and counselling in enhancing discipline among secondary school students. The objective of study was to examine the effectiveness of examine the effectiveness of teacher counsellors' service delivery of guidance and counselling services towards enhancing discipline among secondary school students in Olokurto Division, Narok County, Kenya. Descriptive survey design was employed in the study and a questionnaire was used obtain data from respondents. Person centred theory advanced by Carl Rogers guided the study. The study population comprised 861 students, 12 teacher counsellors and 6 deputy principals drawn from the six public secondary schools in the division. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed to sample 129 students for the study. Schools, deputy principals and teacher counsellors in the division were purposively sampled. Using test-retest method, the instruments yielded a reliability coefficient of $r = 0.76$, thus accepted for the study. Data were analyzed using the SPSS software version 20.0 and presented in tables, charts, graphs, means, frequencies and percentages. The study established that teacher counsellors could not effectively deliver guidance and counselling services due to their low levels of training, heavy workload, lack of resources and facilities. The study recommends training of guidance and counselling teachers, reduction of teaching load for teacher counsellors and strengthening of school guidance and counselling departments through provision of resources and facilities. The findings and recommendations of this study, if implemented will be useful to policy makers in the Ministry of Education, heads of secondary schools, counselling personnel and students through improved services from more informed teacher counsellors.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Teacher Counsellor, Discipline, Narok County.

Discipline related issues have been at the forefront of education debates where most problems that students encounter are associated with their developmental changes that adolescent go through. During this period, adolescents undergo emotional and physical changes, emotional traumas and exhibit behavioural problems which are not only harmful for their health but are also in conflict with school expectation and social norms (Kinara, 2003). This being a trying period to their physical, emotional, psychological and academic development, the students try all sorts of adjustment mechanisms to get their needs fulfilled (Mangal, 2007).

Troublesome adolescent stages have been documented as societal concerns for centuries, thus calling on parents, pastors, teachers, peers and significant others to assist students by providing effective guidance and counselling to forestall destruction, injuries and loss of life. According to Fieldman and Elliot (1990) these behavioural challenges are associated with negative health, school administrators' failure, drug addiction, sexuality and associated infections, pregnancy, injury and death. The study concurs with their observation since drug and substance addiction has ruined the health, academic achievement and careers of many. Effective guidance and counselling should enable students deal with psychological problems that they may experience and make rational decisions on how to solve or cope with the challenges that they may encounter. Republic of Kenya (1999) recommends that guidance and counselling in educational institutions be an active and available service on daily basis to all students.

Objective

Examine the effectiveness of teacher counsellors' delivery of guidance and counselling services towards enhancing discipline among secondary school students.

Literature Review

Teacher counsellors serve as leaders, team members and are an integral part of the student education programme having switched emphasis from service for some students to programme centred for every student (Bowers & Hatch, 2000). Effectiveness requires that counsellors strive to become proficient in the knowledge and use of basic counselling techniques. These techniques include attending skills, listening, reasoning by reflecting, teaching and filtering, (Sikolia & Lutomia, 2002). Counselling involves enabling the affected person have a realistic view of life, have a sense of continuity, see causes and consequences of his actions, set achievable goals, recognize that being part of a given community, one is governed by the prevailing social rules, thus make acceptable choices and objectives, (Otiende, 1998). In concurrence with this assertion, Ndong (2004) posits that there is need to have counsellors in learning institutions to abate the increasing rate of antisocial behaviour and indiscipline cases among students. Ndirangu (2000) asserts that counselling is one of the possible solutions to indiscipline among students and the work of the teacher-counsellor needs to be enhanced since counselling is an urgently needed service in educational institutions. He further says that such a counsellor should be well equipped with counselling knowledge, skills and techniques to handle the challenges that one faces in the process of providing the required services.

For effective delivery of counselling services, resources should also be availed and spent on the provision of guidance and counselling manuals that suit the Kenya situation with the aim of enhancing discipline among students. Manduku (2002) recommends the strengthening of guidance and counselling programmes by training teachers, setting up guidance and counselling committees in schools and providing guidance and counselling facilities such as rooms stocked with reading materials for the school fraternity to get informed. Well trained teacher counsellors help students to resolve or cope with developmental concerns and their work differentiates according to developmental concerns and stages of their understanding of self, peers, group, family and school as they continue gaining communication and decision making skills as well as character values. Wanjohi (1990) in a study on the role of teacher counsellors in Nyeri District secondary schools posits that counsellors dealt with personal matters concerning students, maintaining that such matters should be given preference. The study however did not explore explicitly on developing the students' discipline which this study takes as dependent on the effectiveness of the teacher counsellor's delivery of guidance and counselling services.

Nkuubi (1989) argues that individual cultures and relationships should also be part of their training to enable them attend to students' counselling needs effectively. He further points out that the teacher counsellor should be interested in improving the students' ability to deal with external circumstances that confront the student. In view of these observations, the study notes that teacher counsellors should strive to deal with the external forces that confront the students and include the values that modify their conscience aimed at making them live morally upright live as desired socially. Schmidt, (2003) reinforces the argument adding that professional teacher counsellors should aim at meeting the needs of students in three basic domains: academic development, coordinating counselling activities and collaboration. This calls for expert counselling sensitivity on the side of the teacher counsellor where the student should be made to drop restrictions of self consciousness in favour of keen self awareness. It is therefore imperative that counsellors know their students as individuals and perceive the essential dignity and worth of every student. According to the human resource department MOEST (1999), the teacher counsellor is expected to effectively carry out the following activities: -

- i. Holding regular meetings with students to sensitize them on the negative effects of taking drugs, dangers of pre-marital sex, undesirable behaviour and misconduct.
- ii. Meeting the students collectively to give them talks on a wide range of topical issues to create awareness and understanding amongst them.
- iii. Arranging to meet individual students to give them counselling concerning their individual problems and conflicts with a view to shaping and correcting them.
- iv. Holding regular meetings to advice students especially in career choices and prospects of joining particular institutions.
- v. Inviting guest speakers who are specialists in specific areas to give talks to students.
- vi. Keeping detailed and confidential records of individual students concerning their background.
- vii. Motivating and guiding students towards social adjustments, behaviour change, time management and academic performance.
- viii. Inviting parents of individual students to school so that undesirable behaviour can be arrested.
- ix. Recommending to the principal students who should be given certain duties and responsibilities such as prefects and monitors.

The researchers however observe that though these roles could have been appropriate at the time, they ignored the fact that the teacher counsellor could not carry out all the above roles without collaborating with the other teachers and heads of departments in the school for better provision of guidance and counselling services to the students. Mutie and Ndambuki (2004) assert that guidance and counselling teachers help to minimize incidences of indiscipline by giving students a sense of direction, purpose and a sense of fulfillment where

proper utilization of time spent in and out of the classroom is well accounted for. While this study supports their assertion, the teacher counsellor may not effectively provide guidance and counselling without collaboration and networking with colleagues to ensure that there is no communication breakdown.

Poor communication process is likely to lead to distress and anxiety in the absence of the teacher-counsellor, hence the need for comprehensively designed guidance and counselling programmes for use in assessment procedures with a gender perspective in order to enrich their services to the students. A teacher well grounded with counselling skills with also require knowledge of some cultural values and beliefs of the clients (students) because cultural misinterpretation may lead to long term damage to the client, an argument that Witmer (1990) supports. Since counselling is a purposeful process that leads clients to more understanding of themselves and others, the teacher counsellor should be able to use the appropriate counselling skills. The counsellors must therefore go beyond the mere interest in the subject and equip themselves with the prerequisite knowledge, skills and techniques that will enable them guide the students towards acceptable behaviour.

The current challenges associated with students' indiscipline have generated a big debate where teachers blame bad policies stipulated by the education ministry as well as parents for pampering their children while at home. Parents on the other hand blame teachers for being too busy to care about their children. These accusations and counter accusations place the teacher counsellor at the centre of the debate. Teacher counsellors therefore should be a source of moral modelling for their students through networking and collaboration, (Wynne, 1995) in addition to tactfully and firmly criticizing unsatisfactory school policies and proposing constructive improvement. Looking at Wynne's ideas, one realizes that teacher counsellors should be well informed about student problems and challenges, needs and worries should not escape their attention. Auda (1995) argues that, apart from educational psychology courses, most counsellors are not versed or qualified in guidance and counselling service delivery. The researcher observes that for effective delivery of counselling services, teacher counsellors need to commit and sacrifice time in order to keep themselves abreast with the current information on counselling for better delivery of guidance and counselling services to the students.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was employed in the study to examine the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in enhancing discipline among secondary school students. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) observe that descriptive survey involves describing, analyzing and assessing attitudes, opinions towards individuals, organizations and procedures. Rubin and Babbie (2010) argue that surveys help make more generalized findings. This design was found appropriate for the study since the researcher was seeking information concerning the current status on the effectiveness of guidance and counselling in enhancing discipline among students in Oloruko Division of Narok County. Questionnaires with multiple responses were used for data collection from the respondents. Qualitative data from the responses were organised thematically according to research objective. Quantitative data analyzed using descriptive statistics which included frequencies and percentages. Discussions were presented in tables, charts, graphs, means, percentages and frequencies. Analysis was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

The study was conducted in the 6 public secondary schools in Oloruko Division, Narok County with a target population of 861 comprised of form one to form four students, 12 teacher counsellors and 6 deputy principals. A male and a female teacher counsellor purposively sampled from each school to ensure gender representation. Teacher counsellors participated in the study because they provide guidance and counselling services to students. Students were sampled using stratified sampling techniques and classes formed the strata. Kothari (2004) posits that stratified sampling yields more reliable and detailed data. It also ensures that no sub-population is omitted (Orodho, 2004). Simple random sampling technique was then employed to sample students in each stratum to ensure that every student had an equal chance to participate in the study.

Questionnaires with multiple responses were used for data collection from the respondents. Using test – retest method, the instruments yielded a reliability coefficient of $r = 0.76$, thus accepted for the study. Qualitative data from the responses were organized thematically according to research objective. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics which included frequencies and percentages. Analysis was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 while discussions were presented in tables, charts, graphs, means, percentages and frequencies.

Results and Discussions

Teacher Counsellors' Demographic Information

Teachers' demographic information included age brackets, gender, training levels and school category.

Figure 1 shows that 60% of the teacher counsellors were within 25- 30 age bracket while 20% were in the 31 - 35 and 36 – 40 years age brackets respectively. None of the teacher counsellors was over 40 years of age. The study notes that most of the teacher counsellors had neither acquired adequate knowledge, skills and techniques in guidance and counselling nor experience in the provision of counselling services due to their age

and low training levels.

The study concurs with Mutie and Ndambuki, (2004) and Republic of Kenya (1964) who advocate for the training of counsellors and inclusion of guidance and counselling in the teachers' curriculum respectively.

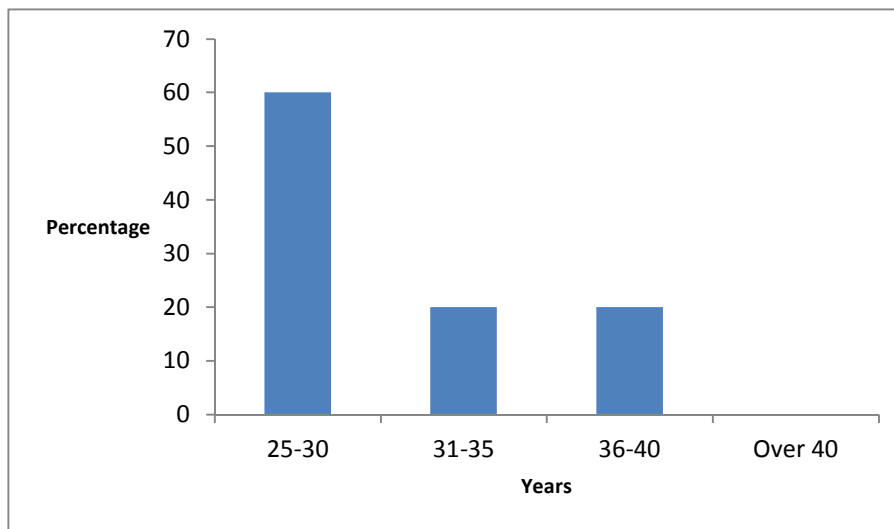


Figure 1: Age Brackets of Teacher Counsellors

Gender of Teacher Counsellors

Figure 2 shows that 60% of the counsellors were female while 40% were male teachers. Most students may not to receive counselling as frequently as they should due to gender disparity and population of teacher counsellors thus affecting discipline levels among students. This implied that the few male teachers available were not adequate to effectively offer counselling to students and this could compromise discipline among students especially in the area of study since cultural activities and traditional beliefs did not recognize the authority of women. For instance, moranism as a rite of passage was highly valued than education among boys while girls were married off at an early age (UNESCO, 2005).

Findings indicate that there was a shortage of guidance and counselling personnel in schools since the available counsellors could not effectively provide guidance and counselling services to 861 students in Olokurto division alongside attending to their teaching duties.

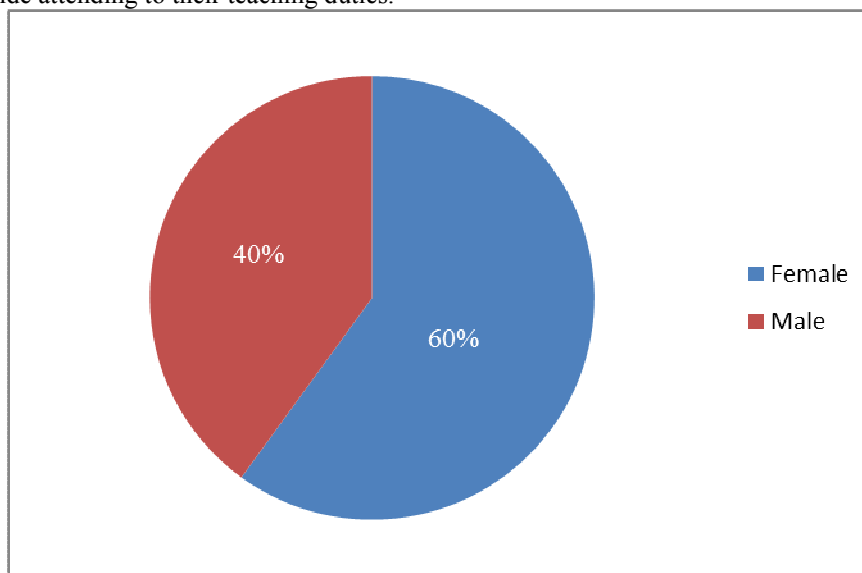


Figure 2: Gender of Teacher Counsellors

Training Levels of Teacher Counsellors

Effectiveness of service delivery requires training of guidance and counselling teachers, provision of resources and facilities including the setting up of operational guidance and counselling departments in learning institutions. The study sought to establish the training levels of guidance and counselling teachers alongside

those of deputy principals in order to determine their ability to offer effective counselling services to students. Figure 3 indicates that 80% of the teacher counsellors had only received basic training at certificate and 20% at induction level while only 20% of the deputy principals lacked formal training. Others had received training one each at induction, certificate, diploma and degree levels respectively. The notes that study low training levels of teacher counsellors, denied them access to adequate knowledge, skills and techniques that could enable them address students' areas of concern and help curb indiscipline cases.

Nyaga (2011) stresses the need for the teacher counsellor's personal development which should be an on process to enable them provide adequate training to the peer counsellors who in turn act as liaisons between the students, teacher counsellors and school administration. Fuster (2002) argues that provision of effective guidance and counselling services enables students to develop academic, social and personal competences while preventing occurrence of antisocial behaviour. The study notes that adequate provision of knowledge, skills and techniques in guidance and counselling issues could be the ultimate solution to forestalling riots, strikes and other indiscipline cases in educational institutions. This helps reduce indiscipline cases and academic wastage among students as they become focused and goal oriented.

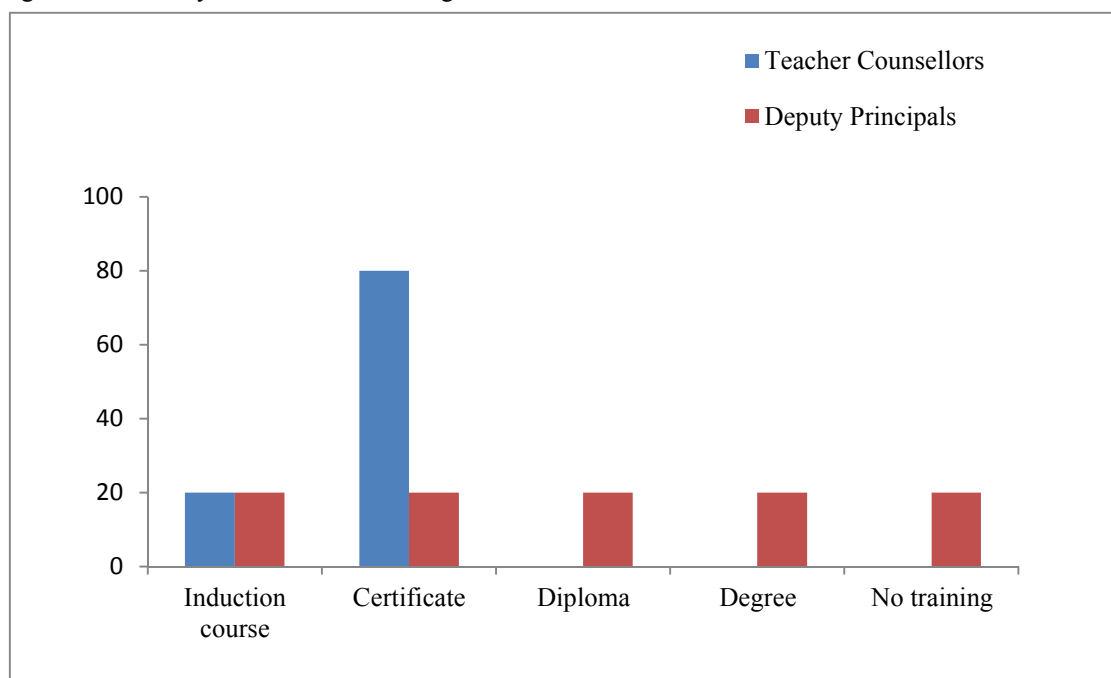


Figure 3: Training Levels of Teacher Counsellors and Deputy Principals

Effectiveness of Teacher Counsellors' Delivery of Guidance and Counselling

The basis of effective counselling is a positive attitude and a strong desire to help others. The study sought to establish who provided guidance and counselling services for enhancing discipline among students. Figure 4 indicates that principals 18 (14.2%), deputy principals 49(38%), teacher counsellors 44 (34.6%) and peer counsellors 16 (12.6%) were all providing guidance and counselling but there appeared to be no one in charge of the programme in the schools.

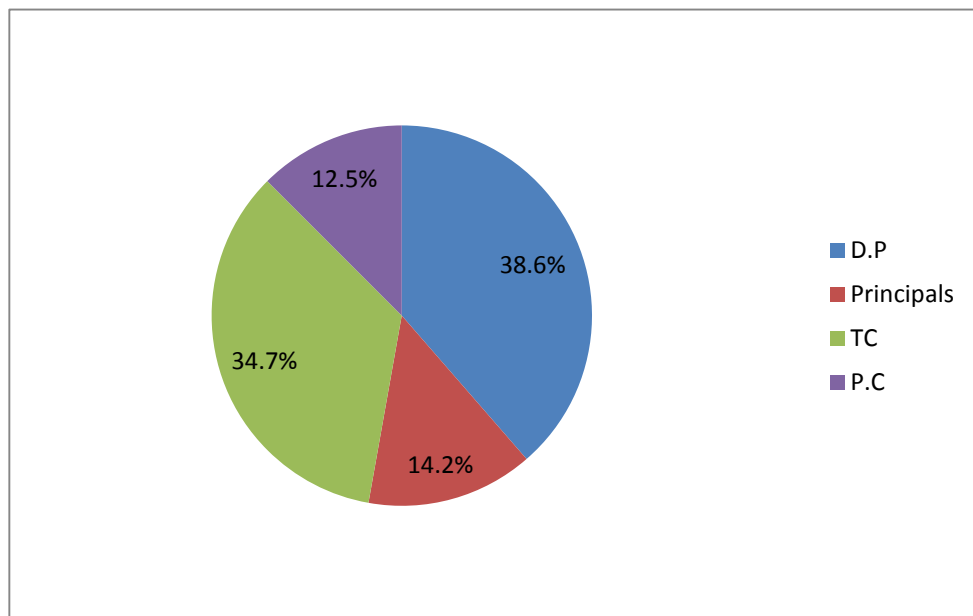


Figure 4: Students' Responses on Guidance and Counselling Providers

Students' responses on Effectiveness of Teacher counsellors' service delivery

On the effectiveness of teacher counsellors' delivery of guidance and counselling services towards enhancing discipline, the students' responses as presented in table 19 indicate that 31.6% of the students strongly agreed that peer counsellors were receiving training. 36.2% agreed while 16.5% were not sure and 6.3% strongly disagreed. While only 2.4% strongly disagreed 59.8% strongly agreed that guest speakers were being invited to give motivational talks with 32.8% strongly agreeing that teacher counsellors were organizing discussion meetings for career and vocational choice. The table also indicates that 19.5% of the students were not sure whether teacher counsellors identified those who required counselling and a further 15.7% strongly disagreed.

The study notes that peer counsellors were not adequately trained and students lacked information on guidance and counselling due to poor display or lack of it. Mutie and Ndambuki (2004) assert that guidance and counselling teachers help to minimize incidences of indiscipline by giving students a sense of direction, purpose and a sense of fulfilment where proper utilization of time spent in and out of the classroom is well accounted for. The researcher notes that effective counselling services aid teacher counsellors in identifying students' personal problems and provide advice in time while internal issues are taken in confidence and genuine empathy.

Table 1

Students' responses on Teacher Counsellors' Effectiveness in delivery of Guidance and Counselling services

Statements	SA	A	NS	D	SD	TOTAL
The teacher counsellor ensures peer counsellors are trained to provide services to other students	31.6	36.2	16.5	9.4	6.3	100 (127)
Teacher counsellors routinely organize guidance and counselling programs	30.0	41.7	11.8	5.5	30.0	100 (127)
The counsellors invited guest speakers for motivational talk and guidance to students	59.8	26.8	8.7	2.4	2.4	100 (127)
Teacher counsellors display guidance and counselling information on notice boards	22.8	24.4	17.3	15.0	20.5	100 (127)
Teacher counsellors identify Students who required counselling services	26.9	28.3	19.7	15.7	9.4	100 (127)
They promote the development and growth of good study habits and time management	55.9	37.0	5.4	0.8	0.8	100 (127)
Teacher counsellors organize discussions meetings for career and vocational choice	32.8	33.9	15.0	7.9	11.0	100 (127)

Teacher Counsellors' responses on Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling service Delivery

To establish the effectiveness of the teacher counsellors' service delivery towards enhancing discipline among students, their responses were as presented in table 2. 50% of the teacher counsellors strongly agreed that peer counsellors had received training while 50% said they routinely organized counselling programmes in their schools. On the organization of discussion meetings for career and vocational choice 30% strongly agreed while 40% agreed. Only 10% were not sure, disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were being held.

The table also shows that 30% of the teacher counsellors were not sure if information concerning guidance and counselling was being displayed. In regard to the invitation of guest speakers, 20% of the teacher counsellors reported that this never took place in their schools while 60% strongly agreed that guests were being invited. This generally implies that teacher counsellors were carrying their role as service providers.

Fuster (2002) emphasizes the importance of providing effective guidance and counselling noting that it enables students to develop academic, social and personal competences and prevents occurrence of antisocial behaviour. Manduku (2002) argues that effective guidance and counselling could only be attained if teacher counsellors were trained, facilities and resources for guidance and counselling provided.

The study notes that, for counsellors to effectively deliver counselling services to the students, help reduce indiscipline cases and academic wastage, they must be well grounded with counselling knowledge, skills and techniques. To enhance discipline, school managers should provide training opportunities for the counsellors in order to equip them with knowledge and techniques and also facilitate provision of required resources for effective provision of counselling services in their schools.

Table 2
Teacher Counsellors' Responses on Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling Delivery

Statements	Responses (percent)					
	SA	A	NS	D	SD	TOTAL
Teacher counsellor ensures that peer counsellors are trained to provide services to other students	10.0	50.0	30.0	10.0	0.0	100.0 (10)
Teacher counsellor routinely organizes guidance and counselling sessions	30.0	50.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	100.0 (10)
The counsellor ensure that guest speakers are invited for motivational talks and guidance to students	10.0	60.0	20.0	10.0	0.0	100.0 (10)
Teacher counsellor display information on guidance and counselling issues on the notice boards	0.0	40.0	30.0	20.0	10.0	100.0 (10)
Teacher counsellor identifies students who require counselling services	30.0	50.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	100.0 (10)
Teacher counsellor organizes discussions meeting for career and vocational choice	30.0	40.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	100.0 (10)
Teacher counsellor links guidance and counselling department to other departments in the school	20.0	60.0	10.0	0.0	10.0	100.0 (10)

Conclusion

Teacher Counsellors had only acquired basic knowledge in guidance and counselling and were therefore not adequately trained to effectively deliver counselling services towards enhancing discipline among students.

They lacked knowledge, skills and techniques to handle the difficult issues and challenges that students encountered in their daily school activities.

The study further established that teacher counsellors had heavy workloads while schools lacked resources and facilities for effective delivery of guidance and counselling services to the student, hence the numerous indiscipline cases in learning institutions.

Recommendations

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should frequently organize workshops, seminars and courses for teacher counsellors in order to equip them with knowledge, skills and techniques to enable them provide effective guidance and counselling services, thus enhance discipline among students.

Policy guidelines, resources, materials, reference books and facilities should be provided to help students improve their behaviour positively, hence enable institutions enhance discipline among students.

Competent counsellors should be engaged in the provision of effective guidance and counselling services and teacher counsellors' workload be reduced to allow more time to enable them offer counselling to the students and thereby enhance discipline.

References

- Aduda, D. (1995, Sept 10). Schools Provide Inadequate Counselling Services-Daily Nation.
- Bowers & Hatch (2002) The ASCA national model: A Framework for School Counselling Programmes. Alexandria VA: American School Counselling Association.
- Fuster, J.M. (2002). Personal Counselling; Bombay: St Paul Press.
- Gay, L., Mills, E. & Airasian, P. (2009). Educational Research: Competences for Analysis and Application (9th Ed) Upper Saddle River: Columbus Prentice Hall.
- Kinara, I. (2002). The Perception of Secondary School Students on the Importance of Guidance and Counselling in Kisii Central Nyanza: M. A. Thesis: University of Nairobi
- Lutomia, G. & Sikolia, L. (2002) Guidance and Counselling: Nairobi, Uzima Publishing House.
- Mugenda, O. & Mugenda, A. (1999) Research Methods: Qualitative and Qualitative Approaches. Nairobi Acts Press.
- Mutie, E. & Ndambuki, P. (1999) Guidance and Counselling for Schools and Colleges; Nairobi Kenya: Oxford Press.
- Ndirangu, J. (2000). Youth in Danger: A Handbook for Teachers, Students, Parents, Pastors and Community Workers: Nairobi Uzima.

- Ndondo, O. (2004). *Guidance and Counselling for Schools and Colleges* Nairobi: Oxford University Press.
- Nkuubi, P. (1987). *Counselling Adolescents in High Schools*: Unpublished Med Thesis: Kenyatta University.
- Nyaga, V. K. (2011) *Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling Services on University Students Development of Academic, Social and Personal Competencies: Comparative Study of Public and Private Universities in Kenya*: Phd Thesis, Chuka University.
- Orodho, J. (2004). *Essentials of Educational and Social Sciences Research Methods*: Nairobi: Pauline's Publication Africa.
- Otiende, E. (1988). *Social Education and Ethics for Secondary Schools*: Longman Kenya, Nairobi.
- Schmidt, J. (2003). *Counselling in Schools: Essential Services and Comprehensive Programmes*: National Academy Press, Washington D.C.
- Wangombe, A. (2008). *Adolescence Behaviour Problems Faced by School Administrators in Boys Boarding Secondary Schools, Kirinyaga District*: Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis: Nairobi University.
- Witmer, J. (1990). *Consultancy on Establishing Guidance and Counselling Education at the University of Botswana*: Ohio University College of Education.