

Influence of Guidance and Counselling on Academic Performance of Students in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Molo Sub County, Nakuru County, Kenya

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Abstract: *This study sought to establish the influence of guidance and programme on academic performance of students in secondary schools in Molo Sub County, Nakuru County. The study adopted an ex post facto design and targeted 1385 Form Four students and 24 teacher counselors in 24 public secondary schools in Molo Sub County. Random sampling was used to select a sample size of 86 students and 12 teacher counselors. Data was collected by the use of questionnaires. Descriptive statistics comprising means and standard deviations were used to analyse the data. Inferential statistics which included Pearson's correlation was used in data analysis. The hypotheses were tested at 0.01 level of significance. Data was analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 for windows. The study concludes that guidance and programmes have a positive impact on the academic performance of students. Based on the study findings, it is recommended that teacher counselors should implement all the services required for a guidance and programme. Also guidance and programme should be strengthened in order to improve the academic performance of secondary schools in the area.*

Keywords: Public schools, Effective, Guidance and counseling, Guidance, Academic performance

1. Introduction

Guidance and Counselling are two closely interrelated concepts. According to Makinde (1984) and Patterson (1977), guidance refers to a broad area of all educational activities and services aimed at assisting individual students to understand themselves and adjust to school life. Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) defined as a learning-oriented process which occurs in an interactive relationship with the aim of helping the clients to learn more about themselves. Guidance and is therefore aimed at bringing about maximum development and self-realization of human potential for the benefit of the individual and the society. In schools, the programme assists students in harmonizing their abilities, interests and values and enables them to develop their full potential. The development of guidance and originated from Europe and the United States of America in 1900s. In Africa, the genesis of modern guidance and dates back to 1960s. In Kenya, the genesis of formal guidance and programme dates back to as early as 1960s (Kilonzo, 1984). The programme was introduced in 1963 during the first Guidance and Career Conference held to discuss career choices among students in learning institutions (Oketch & Ngumba, 1999). The programme was later reinforced by the 1975 National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (NCEOP). The commission emphasized the need to reinforce and empower guidance and in order for it to effectively achieve its objectives in schools. Since then the Ministry of Education has directed all learning institutions to establish guidance and programmes as a continuous sequential education process aimed at bridging the gap between one education level and another. The need to strengthen guidance and has been further reinforced by the government directive to ban corporal punishment in schools (GOK, 2001). Gichinga (1995) observes that guidance and

has had impact in secondary schools in Kenya. Despite the ministerial directive to implement guidance and programme in all learning institutions, academic performance in most secondary schools in the country has been declining while disciplinary problems have been increasing over time. For instance, Nakuru County has been registering poor and fluctuating academic performance over the recent years in the national Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE). This necessitated the need to find out whether guidance and programme had any influence on academic performance of secondary school students in Molo Sub County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Academic performance of secondary schools in Molo Sub County has been declining over time (Nakuru County Education Office, 2006). This has a negative reflection on the various programmes put in place to promote academic performance in the area. The main concern is the role of guidance and programme in facilitating better achievement in academic performance. Little information is available on the extent to which guidance and programme has been used to assist in raising the academic performance of secondary school students. This study sought to provide some insights into these issues and establish the influence of guidance and on academic performance of secondary school students in Molo Sub County.

1.3 Objective of the Study

To establish the influence of guidance and on academic performance of secondary school students in Molo Sub County

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

Two theories guided this study namely person-centered theory and social learning theory as discussed below.

2.1.1 Person-Centered Theory

This theory focuses on the human interaction between the counselor and the client. Rogers (1980) called it the Person-centered theory in order to suggest that his principles extended beyond the client-therapist relationship to encompass all human interaction. The current person-centered theory is understood as a process of helping clients discover new and more satisfying personal meanings about themselves and the world they inhabit. The student will drive towards growth, health and adjustment (Makinde, 1984). The model assumes that human interaction is only possible when certain conditions prevail. In the case of guidance and, these conditions should prevail in the counsellor's demonstration in the counsellor-client orientation. According to Omulema (2000), these conditions include counsellor's demonstration of empathy, unconditional positive regard and warmth to the client. He notes that growth occurs in an acceptance, warm, empathetic, non-judgmental environment that allows students the freedom to explore their thoughts and feelings and to solve their own problems. Guidance and programme that lacks these characteristics culminate into poor performance of students in school. When a counsellor communicates the above conditions, those being helped will become less defensive and more open to themselves and their world and they will behave in more social and constructive ways. Many students harbor feelings of failure in academics and thus have low self esteem, but a counsellor is able to counter the feelings by working towards fostering the students, capacity to hope and believe that they are capable of overcoming academic failures they are experiencing and even end up performing their best potentialities. A conducive environment for the student should be provided and teachers should provide room for self-actualization by being friendly, loving, competent and responsible. Teacher counsellor should also help the student set goals and allow positive self recognition after attaining set goals and aspirations that will boost success in academic performance. Therefore, a good environment should be created by teacher counsellor.

2.1.2 Social Learning Theory

Learning is a process where behaviours are learnt or acquired from the environment. One way of learning is through social observation and imitation. This theory is advanced by Albert Bandura (1986). This theory explains delinquency as a behaviour learnt through the complex process of socialization. The theory postulates that the behaviour is reflective of people observing and imitating others and imagining the consequence of their own behaviour. The theory advocates that human behaviour is modified using learning principles to change behaviour (Omulema, 2000). The behavioural approach emphasizes that the client defines goals in behavioural terms, provide resources and encouragement in helping clients more towards goals and helps clients with different problems

(Patterson, 1973). Teacher counselors can therefore apply this in students concerning their academic performance. Makinde (1984) notes that effectiveness of is assessed by changes in the specific student's behaviour. This implies that can use behavioural to create a conducive environment for the students to modify their behaviours in order to solve their academic problems through creation of learning conditions. Teacher counselors can use behavioural techniques like self management programmes and self directed behaviours which may deal with learning, studying and time management skills in schools. This will foster the students' academic performance. The student will drive towards growth, health and adjustment (Makinde, 1984). Therefore, a good environment created by the teacher counsellor can provide room for good self-concept that will boost success in academic performance.

2.2 Empirical Review

Formal guidance and in the world originated in Europe and the United States of America in 1900s. By 1911 an organized guidance programme in the United States of America was in place to cater for students' needs. The emphasis was on vocational information, awareness of the world of work, location of employment and reduction of examination anxiety (Makinde, 1984). Bor, Landy, Gill and Bruce (2002) have noted that guidance and has changed rapidly and that understanding the functions of school guidance and is important. Kilonzo (1984) states that, in Kenya the concept of guidance and was introduced in late 1960's and formalized through the Ministry of Education in 1971. Gichinga (1995) has rightly noted that, the need for formal guidance and is recognized at the present time more than ever before. In pursuit of formal guidance, the Government of Kenya has set up various education commissions that have come up with government policy on guidance and . Angaha (1987) observes that, the government of Kenya recognizes that guidance and is an essential service that must be offered to every student in schools in Kenya. The MOE has also made attempts in seeing to it that, an operational and effective guidance and programme is implemented in all learning institutions.

2.2.1 Role of Guidance and in Secondary Schools

The objective of guidance and programme is to bring about maximum development and self-realization of human potential for the benefit of the individual and society. Makinde (1984) observes that the school counsellor is concerned with facilitating the optimum development of students. This is supported by Bennars (1994) and Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) who argued that the programme is supposed to develop the learner's intellectual abilities and develop a balanced personality. Guidance and programme is therefore aimed at assisting students to harmonize their abilities, interests and values, thereby enabling them to develop their potential fully. Self-knowledge helps one to formulate life goals and plans which are realistic. In secondary schools, there is need for students to make proper subject choices that will lead to career choices after the four year course. Borrow (1983) observes that it is the role of guidance and programme to provide the students with the necessary information about the courses availability and the qualifications required for each course. Such information

will assist students develop realistic self-concept according to their academic capabilities. Most secondary school students are in the adolescent stage, according to Robert and Elizabeth (1983), during this time, adolescents experience alienation which is a syndrome comprising of distrust, anxiety, pessimism, egocentrism, meaninglessness, normlessness and powerlessness. They observe that guidance and is therefore needed during this adolescence stage to assist them understand their developmental stage and adjust to school life. Guidance and programmes also help students choose and pursue achievable careers. According to Borrow (1983) the world is highly complex and dynamic which makes career choice very difficult. He reckons that time changes, people change, technology progresses and these challenge everyone to change to new ways of living and working. The students need guidance and programmes to inform them about various jobs and openings available, the qualification required plus the responsibilities involved and the nature of the work so that they can decide and have clear occupational goals. The programme also plays the role of intercepting and assisting disadvantaged students and also checks on school drop-out. Makinde (1984) observes that one of the roles for school counsellor is to help students who are experiencing difficulties. Students from disadvantaged families of the society have many problems and needs which are to be dealt with in guidance and programmes. Lindsay (1983) argues that such students may experience difficulties in adjustment with peers, teachers and the environment thus guidance programmes help such students to adjust and utilize the guidance facilities available fully. Majority of the disadvantaged students later acquire low qualifications for the world of work. This poor achievement may even marginalize them more if guidance programmes do not intervene; some may even drop out of school, thus the guidance programme is well suited for assisting the students.

2.2.2 An Effective Guidance and Programme in Secondary Schools

According to Zeran and Antony (1962) an effective guidance and programme is essential in every school. An organized guidance and programme will offer right environment for the growth and development of the students and offer quality education. Gichinga (1995) acknowledges that there has been steady growth of guidance and programme in the secondary schools in Kenya. The major emphasis has been on vocational and educational guidance and aimed at fostering personal/social development. An effective guidance and programme should be led by a trained counselor who is responsible for coordinating guidance and activities in the school. Makinde (1984) observes that the trained counsellor is a leader and consultant in the school's student appraisal programmes and also help to plan and develop guidance and programmes and the curriculum in relation to students' needs. Kyungu (1994) argues that effective guidance and programmes should have active cooperation of teachers, teacher counselors and administrators. The school should make arrangements to enlist the support of the parents and introduce them to the idea of guidance and therefore, in effective guidance and programmes, various guidance and services are offered to assist students in personal development and psychological growth towards maturity.

2.2.3 Causes of Poor Academic Performance in Schools

Teachers, parents, peers and personal motivation strongly influence a student's academic self-concept and academic achievement. Napier (1972) observes that leaving secondary school students on their own to develop self-reliance, self-understanding, self-direction and problem-solving skills without proper guidance from trained counselors will not yield lasting results. There are a lot of problems which cause students to attain poor academic performance. These include: anxiety, poor self-concept, and sexuality, poor methods of study, poor reading techniques, organ disabilities and indiscipline.

2.2.3.1 Anxiety

According to (Mandler & Sarason, 1952) anxiety exists when individuals are at odds with themselves. The underlying conflict springs from a clash between incompatible impulses, desires and values. Secondary school students are in adolescence stage, whereby many adolescents are seriously confronted for the first time with facts about themselves and in specific their academic performance. This brings forth conflict and frustration in them that produce anxiety and tension thus affecting their concentration in studies and they end up performing poorly in academics.

2.2.3.2 Poor Self-Concept

Self-concept is the sense of self. Its basis is one's knowledge of what he/she has been and has done. Self concept helps a student to understand himself/herself and regulate their behaviour. Teachers, parents, peers, personal motivation and the student's gender strongly influence a student's academic self-concept and academic achievement. Teacher's approval/disapproval patterns are directly related to pupil's academic self-concepts (Davidson & Lang, 1960). The more positive a student believes about his/her teacher's evaluation of him/her, the better his/her academic achievement as measured by grades, and vice versa. The teacher bears a major responsibility for helping student's develop positive academic self-concepts. According to Makinde (1984), most students in secondary schools being in adolescence have poor self-concept as they undertake the tasks for adolescents. Lindsay (1983) supports this by observing that the adolescents compare their real and ideal selves and judge themselves by how well they perform in academics. Self-concept remains fairly stable during adolescence especially for the students whose view of themselves was initially positive (Engel, 1959). Hence, the individual's academic self-concept is a learned structure which grows through training, identification with individual peers, teachers and significant others. The self - concept of an individual is effectively assessed from self-reports in academic and non-academic domains (Marsh, 1990). Since the academic self concept is such a major factor influencing development and learning, the school must assume a prominent role in helping students to develop a more adequate academic self concept.

2.2.3.3 Poor Methods of Study

A student with self-knowledge will develop a powerful motive or aim in academic achievement. Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) observe that poor organization, laziness, being easily distracted and lack of self-confidence are among issues that contribute to a student's poor academic performance. But he emphasizes that through academic;

teacher counselors can motivate students and help them improve their academic standards. To achieve academic success, a student needs to be trained on effective study methods and examination techniques.

2.2.3.4 Poor Reading Techniques

Many secondary students are faced with academic problems such as poor reading habits, whereby most of them are slow readers and do not comprehend what they read. Lack of recognition of underlying framework and the main points in information already acquired has contributed to students' poor academic performance. Poor concentration has been an issue to many students who have performed poorly. Academic is thus a good remedy for students with reading problem by training them to have effective reading.

2.2.3.5 Indiscipline

Indiscipline being act of disorder in a student against the established norms in a school has widely affected many students' academic performance. Lindsay (1983) observes that there are two reasons why adolescents result in indiscipline. These are internal and external reasons. The internal reasons involve fulfilling the needs of the adolescent while the external reasons include individual, administrative and the social community causes. When the students' needs are not met, then they are frustrated and this affects their academic performance".

3. Methodology

The ex post facto research design was employed in the study. This design examines the effects of a naturally occurring treatment after changes have occurred rather than creating a treatment. Survey method was employed to gather data from sampled schools. The independent variable which is guidance and programme was presumed to have been established in schools and hence the research was interested on its influence on academic performance. The study was conducted in Molo Sub County of Nakuru County. The area was chosen as a research site due to the available evidence of poor academic performance among students in national examinations. This had pointed out to a lapse in the guidance and programme in addressing the various educational, social, personal, psychological and vocational challenges facing students in schools. The target population included all the Form Four students and teacher counselors in 24 public secondary schools with a population of 1385 students. Descriptive statistics comprising means and standard deviations were used to analyze the data. Inferential statistics which included Pearson's correlation was used in data analysis. The hypotheses were tested at 0.01 level of significance.

4. Results

The results on academic performance are presented in Table 1. Academic performance among the sampled students was measured using the mean grade scores of their second term Mock examinations. The scores varied from a minimum of 1 point to a maximum of 12 points.

Table 1: Academic Performance

Mean Score Grade	Points	Frequency	Percent
E	1	2	2.3
D-	2	7	8.1
D	3	10	11.6
D+	4	12	13.9
C-	5	15	17.4
C	6	16	18.6
C+	7	9	10.6
B-	8	3	3.4
B	9	4	4.7
B+	10	3	3.4
A-	11	3	3.4
A	12	2	2.3
Total		86	100

As indicated in Table 1, 80% of the students recorded a mean grade score of between 2 points (D-) and 7 points (C+). On the overall, the sampled students registered a mean grade score of 5.54 points with a mode of 6 points (C). These results suggest average levels of academic performance among the sampled students. It also points out to the overall levels of academic performance among schools on Molo Sub County given the fact that the examinations were done one term to the final national examinations. Therefore, the results could highly reflect the expected performance in the national examinations. The teacher counselors from the sampled schools also rated the level of academic performance of students in their schools as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Academic Performance of Students

Teacher counselors		
Frequency	Frequency	Per cent
Average	7	70.0
Good	2	20.0
Very good	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

Table 2 indicates that majority of the teacher counselors (70 %) rated the level of academic performance of their students as average, while 10 per cent, rated it as being very good. This generally indicates average level of academic performance of students in the study area. The teacher counselors who rated the level of academic performance in their schools as average attributed it to a number of factors. Table 3 summarizes these factors.

Table 3: Factors Limiting Academic Performance

Factors	Frequency	Per cent
Poor self concept	3	42.9
Poor reading/study habits	2	28.5
Indiscipline	1	14.3
Lack of facilities and resources	1	14.3
Total	7	100.0

From Table 3, it is observed that 42.9 per cent of the teacher counselors attributed average academic performance of their students to poor self concept. The teacher counselors reported that most of their students had developed poor self-concept by not believing in their capability to perform well in academic work. They thought of themselves as failure and believed negatively about their teacher's evaluation. This had affected their academic performance. Makinde (1984) and

Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) support these findings by observing that most students in secondary schools being in adolescence have poor self-concept as they undertake the tasks for adolescents. They compare their real and ideal selves and judge themselves by how well they perform in academics.

Poor reading/study habits among students also contribute to low level of academic performance. 28.5 per cent of the teacher counselors noted that some of their students did not have good study habits. The students did not know how to concentrate and utilize well their limited study time. Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) observe that poor concentration in academic work has been an issue to many students who have performed poorly. 14.3% of the teacher counselors reported that most secondary schools in the area are also characterized by frequent cases of indiscipline among its students which affect their academic achievements. The indiscipline students act contrary to the school rules and regulations and are always at loggerheads with the establishment. Lastly, lack of enough facilities and resources in the school affect the academic performance of the students. Students and teachers are forced to do without some necessary facilities and resources and therefore lag behind in terms of syllabi coverage. The study also sought to establish factors that promote academic performance in those schools where academic performance is reported to be at least good. The teacher counselors who rated the level of academic performance in their schools as at least good attribute it to a number of factors. Table 4 summarizes these factors.

Table 4: Factors Promoting Academic Performance

Factors	Frequency	Per cent
Cooperation and dedication among teachers	3	100.0
Involvement of guidance and	2	66.7
Determination and dedication	3	100.0
Support of parents	3	100.0
Availability of facilities and resources	3	100.0
Discipline	2	66.7

Table 5: Pearson’s Correlation of Career and Academic Performance

Variables	Statistics	Attitude towards career	Academic Performance
Attitude towards career	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 86	.336(**) .000 86
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.336(**) .000 86	1 86

An examination of Table 5 indicates that there was a positive and significant relationship between attitude and academic performance ($r = .336, p < 0.01$). Since $p < 0.01$, there is a significant relationship between students’ attitude toward career and academic performance. This suggests that the higher the level of attitude of the students towards career (effectiveness of guidance and) in their schools, the higher was their level of academic performance, and vice versa. Students who valued career were more likely to seek for the services of the guidance and in addressing their academic challenges and therefore end up making rational academic decisions.

Table 4 indicates that cooperation and dedication among teachers, involvement of guidance and services (especially career), determination and dedication of students, support of parents, availability of facilities and resources, and discipline among students were responsible for the high level of academic performance in the school. The respondents noted that all these factors complement each other to positively influence the academic performance of their students.

4.1 Guidance and Academic Performance

Results on the relationship between the level of effectiveness of guidance and academic performance are presented in this section. In this study, level of attitude of students toward career was used as a proxy measure of the effectiveness of guidance and. This was based on the premise that career is one of the services of guidance and that is specially designed to assist students in making proper academic decisions in school. Therefore the level of attitude of the students toward career closely reflected the effectiveness of guidance and in addressing academic challenges facing students. Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between attitude of the students toward career and academic performance and whether it was significant or not. In this case, attitude toward career was treated as the independent variable while academic performance was the dependent variable. Attitude toward career was measured on a 5-point Likert Scale using 11 statements with a total score varying from 11 to 55. Academic performance, on the other hand, was measured using the mean grade scores of the second term mock examinations of the selected students. The scores varied from a minimum of 1 point (mean grade of E) to a maximum of 12 points (mean grade of A). Table 5 shows a correlation coefficient matrix of attitude toward career and academic performance mean score.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study concludes that there is low academic performance by majority of the students. However, guidance and programme has a positive impact on the academic performance of students. From the above conclusions, it is recommended that teacher counselors should implement all the services required for a guidance and programme. Teacher counselors should also take advantage of the positive attitude of the students to enhance career in their schools. Guidance and programme should be

strengthened in order to improve the academic performance of secondary schools in the area.

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