

ABSTRACT

Guidance and counseling services in secondary schools are meant to assist students to develop their academic, social and personal competencies in order to make realistic choices and relevant decisions in life, to reduce indiscipline and students unrest. This means that the success of guidance and counseling programme in a given school can lead to behavior change. It is in this realization that this study was carried out. The aim of the study was to examine the factors influencing performance of guidance and counseling programmes in public secondary schools in Kwale County, Kenya. This study was guided by the following objectives: To examine the influence of teacher counselors training on the performance of guidance and counseling programme in public secondary schools in Kwale County; To investigate the influence of availability of guidance and counseling facilities on the performance of guidance and counseling programme in public secondary schools in Kwale County; and To examine the extent to which students' attitude towards guidance and counseling services influence the performance of guidance and counseling programme in public secondary schools in Kwale County. The theories used were the Person Centered Theory (PCT) and the theory of planned behavior. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population of this study was 7, 101 students in the upper classes and the 54 guidance and counseling teachers from these schools. 710 students' respondents who were randomly sampled through simple random sampling and, then a population census was done on the guidance and counselling teachers from the 54 schools which made a total of 764 sample population. Questionnaires and focused group discussions were the main instruments of data collection that were used. Data was presented using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings indicate that seventy percent of the respondents supported the idea that teachers' or counselors' training has a significant influence on the performance of the guidance and counseling programmes in public secondary schools in the area. The findings continued to indicate that ninety percent of the respondents supported the idea that guidance and counseling facilities significantly influence the guidance and counseling programmes in their schools. The study concluded that teacher counselors' training has a significant influence on the performance of G&C programmes in various schools in Kwale County. Schools have few numbers of trained teachers as guidance and counselor experts and some have not done any effort of supporting their teachers to enroll in guidance and counseling courses so as to enable them implement the programme effectively at various levels. Generally, the findings indicated that students' attitude is the most significant factor influencing the performance of guidance and counselling in schools followed by guidance and counselling facilities and finally teacher's/counselor's training. Based on the results the study recommended that schools need to liaise with the ministry of education and other stakeholders to hire experts/ counselors who are well trained to handle the issues surrounding the development of the youth in the 21st century. Also, schools should set a standalone guidance and counseling office that is fully equipped with guidance and counseling materials and furniture for better performance of guidance and counseling programmes in their schools. Finally, students' attitudes towards guidance and counseling need to be stimulated positively for better guidance and counseling results. The students should be sensitized on the importance of seeking for guidance and counseling services and how this can enable them perform better in life.