PRINCIPALS' AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES AND MAINTENCE OF DISCIPLINE IN SECONDARY SCHOLS OF NYAMIRA DISTRICT,KENYA

Student Name: NYAEGAH JOHN OURU

Project Supervisor(s): DR.GENEVIEVE WANJALA,DR GRACE NYAGA

ABSTRACT The main purpose of the study was to investigate secondary school principals' and students' attitudes towards provision of guidance and counselling services and maintenance of discipline in secondary schools of Nyamira District. The study also sought to determine the importance of guidance and counselling in the running of schools and establish whether principals were trained to guide and counsel students. The study further sought to establish problems that hindered provision of guidance and counselling services in secondary schools of that district Literature review was organized under various sub-headings. These were: the concept of attitude, meaning of the terms guidance and counselling, the scope of guidance and counselling programme, and the objectives of guidance and counselling services in schools. In this study, questionnaires for principals, students and teacher-counseJIors were used as research instruments. The questionnaires were each divided into three parts. The first part sought demographic information of the respondents and schools. The second part contained attitude items while the third part contained open-ended questions. Besides that, the study used interview schedules for principals and also observation schedule. The study was Ex-Post Facto in design. Subjects for this study were eighty (80) principals, eighty (80) teacher-counsellors and four hundred and four (404) students drawn from sixty (60) public and twenty (20) private secondary schools. A pilot study was conducted in the neighbouring six schools of Kisii Central District randomly drawn from the mixed boarding and day schools' category, which had the majority of the schools in the district and this led to the modification of the research instruments. The reliability of the instruments was 0.9 for principals' questionnaire, 0.93 and 0.92 for students' and teacher-counsellors' questionnaire respectively. A two-tailed T-test and One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used for data analysis. The T-test was used to test for significant differences between principals' attitudes towards guidance and counselling in relation to their gender, and school category. ANOVA was used to test for significant differences between principals' attitudes towards guidance and counselling and their age, teaching and administrative experiences. From the analyzed data, it emerged that only 24.4% of the principals were conversant with the objectives of guidance and counselling services in schools. The study also showed that principals and students were not adequately informed about the role of the teacher-counsellors. Besides, principals and teacher .•.. c ounsellors lacked training in guidance and counselling skills and therefore they felt incompetent to guide and counsel. Despite this, ninety percent (90%) of the respondents were found to have a positive attitude towards provision of guidance and counselling in schools. The study further revealed that the Guidance and Counselling Unit of the Ministry of Education provided a few course materials for guidance and counselling and also organized very few seminars, workshops and in-service courses in a year to acquaint principals and teacher-counsellors on matters pertaining to guidance and counselling. In addition, it was established that the success of guidance and counselling services in schools was main ly hindered by lack of adequate parental support and lack of trained personnel in guidance and counselling skills. The study came up with six recommendations. First, that enough seminars, workshops and in-service courses should be organized for principals and teachers in order to equip them with current counselling techniques, enhance favourable attitudes towards guidance andcounselling and educate them more on the objectives and scope of the guidance and counselling programme. Secondly, it was strongly recommended that more District Coordinators be appointed and have them stationed at the District's Education Offices to co-ordinate, supervise and evaluate guidance and counselling activities. Thirdly, the Guidance and

Counselling Unit of the Ministry of Education should play its role of organizing seminars, in-servicing teacher-counsellors and principals frequently, and provide the required literature especially career booklets on time. Fourthly, it was recommended that time for guidance and counselling should be scheduled in the school timetable. This was to allow for planned guidance and counselling activities. The fifth recommendation was that; the role of the teacher¬counsellors should be clearly spelt out, and their workload be reduced to enable them spend more time w ith students. Lastly, efforts should be made to persuade students and parents to take guidance and counselling seriously. Suggestions were made for further research to be carried out on principals' involvement in guidance and counselling by using a wider sample and a larger area and also on students' perception on how principals handle students' educational, vocational and psychological needs.