

Students' Perception of the Effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling Services in Curbing Deviance in Selected Secondary Schools of Thika Sub-County, Kenya

Nyingi Phylis Nyambura

Abstract

The main purpose of the study was to assess the students' perception of the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in curbing deviance in secondary schools in Juja Division of Thika County. Although counseling services are usually provided in all Kenyan secondary schools, there seems to be noticeable students' anti-social behavior in schools. The study employed an ex post facto design. Quantitative data was collected by use of a questionnaire that was administered to students. In addition, qualitative data was collected through an interview that was conducted among ten (10) student counselors and a focus group discussion involving thirty six (36) peer counselors from the schools that were selected. Purposeful and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Statistical techniques that included one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test were used to test the significance and to determine whether the study objectives were achieved. All tests were based on the 0.05 level of significance. The data was analyzed using a computer program, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Before the main study, a pilot study was conducted in two secondary schools to test the validity and reliability of the instruments. The pilot study results were used to modify the research instruments accordingly. The study findings found a correlation between labeling and deviancy. Social bonds were also found to affect behavior, the study found that Kenya as a country did not have a policy document on guidance and counseling. The study also revealed that some biographical variables significantly influenced the way the respondents responded to given items while others did not. The study further revealed that the effectiveness of Kenyan secondary schools' guidance and counseling services was negatively affected by lack of recourses and training in guidance and counseling and non-counseling duties performed by school counselors. The study revealed that the private secondary schools generally registered minimal students' disturbances most likely due to the absence of deviance, resulting to proper students' academic, social and personal competencies that could have resulted from effective guidance and counseling services. These competencies, shape and influence students' behavior hence assist in curbing deviance. It was recommended that the government should adapt a national policy on guidance and counseling which should be planned on the onset of every year, infusion of guidance and counseling to the curriculum, summative and formative evaluation should be used, supervisory personnel should be commissioned and finally needs assessment should be done before planning the services. In addition, suggestions for further research were proposed.

Key words: Students' Perception, Guidance and Counseling Services, Deviance, Secondary Schools, Thika Sub-County, Kenya