

Secondary School Students' Perceptions of the Influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on Their Overall School Adjustment in Relation to School Type

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Abstract

Secondary school adjustment is the process of students coping in school environment in order to attain the individual and school's set goals and aspirations. All public secondary schools (day and boarding) are required to implement guidance and counselling services to assist students in school adjustment (emotional, social and academic). This study looks at the perceptions of students on the influence of guidance and counselling on overall school adjustment based on school type. This study used causal comparative research design. The target population involved students in single- sex boarding schools, mixed sex boarding schools and mixed day schools in Keiyo North Sub County, Kenya. Students in form one to four participated in the study. Stratified and simple random sampling methods were used to select students from 7 (3 single sex, 1 mixed boarding and 3 mixed day secondary schools). Data was collected through the use of questionnaire and interview. This is because the study adopted a mixed approach research methodology. Research findings showed that there existed significant difference on students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on school adjustment in relation to the type of schools they came from. Students from girls' schools had higher perception scores compared to those from mixed schools and those from boys' schools. The study recommends that there is need for teacher counsellors in mixed and day secondary schools to devise guidance and counselling activities to meet the needs of students who need emotional, social and academic adjustments.

Keywords: overall, school, adjustment, school type

1. Introduction

Majority of students in secondary schools encounter difficult situations while at school (Mutie & Ndambuki, 2003). Topister, Songok, Ong'unya and Nabwire (2014) noted that students in secondary schools need to make well informed decision which would assist them in academic activities, extracurricular activities, and how to socially adjust to parents, teachers and their peers. Mugambi (2017) said that school adjustment is the process of coping in a new school environment in order to attain the individual and school's set goals and aspirations. For instance, when they join boarding schools, they have to share boarding facilities with other students from various social economic backgrounds while those joining mixed schools have to adjust to interact with peers from different genders. Students who are well adjusted to the school social environment will relate well with teachers and other students. Adjustment of students to the school social environment is also indicated by their love for the school, adhering to the school rules and regulations, participating in co- curricular activities, helping the needy students and participating in class activities (Mugambi, Karimi & Kipng'eno, 2015).

Therefore for improved academic performance, social life and emotional well being adjustment, it is essential for all secondary schools (public or private) to have a functioning guidance and counseling departments to prepare and help students cope with various life situations. School guidance and counselling programmes have therefore been introduced to assist students overcome the number of challenges they experience at home and at school (Oyieyo (2012).

Guidance and cotselling is a cultural invention that is as old as human being (Adeusi, Olujide & Omotola, 2016). It is often referred to as a helping relationship between a trained personnel (teacher counsellor) and untrained individual (secondary school students. guidance and counselling has made a huge contribution to the life of millions as we live in a complex, busy, and changing world for effective decision making. Governments, school teachers, head teachers and parents have expressed the need to strengthen school guidance and counseling services in order to enhance students' adjustment to the school environment (Ubah, Onwuasoanya & Eze, 2012). The Government of Kenya emphasizes on Guidance and Counselling as a means of assisting students adjust to the school environment and the society (Republic of Kenya, 2009). The goal of guidance and counselling service is to change the learner's behaviour, beliefs and values, coping skills, decision making and emotional distress (Republic of Kenya, 2009). Despite the emphasis given to guidance and counselling in schools, incidents of students indiscipline (cheating, strikes, immoral behaviours) have been recorded. Topister et al (2014) found out that the prevalence of use of alcohol and substance abuse among students between 2004 and 2008 was at 70.0%, while sexual immorality was 54.0% and 34.0% was for cases of unrest. Mugambi et al (2015) found out that absenteeism, school dropout, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, violence, aggressive behaviour, school phobia and withdrawal from school activities are reported in secondary schools (Republic of Kenya, 2001). This suggests

that students are maladjusted to the school social environment. Students' maladjustment to the school social environment leads to poor academic performance and education wastage. There have been efforts aimed at solving student behaviour problems in secondary schools in Kenya (Awuor, Jairo and Raburu, 2018). Guidance and counselling programme has a pivotal role in assisting students adopt acceptable behaviour in the school environment. However, research studies determining students perceptions of guidance and counselling services role in whole school adjustment based on school type is scanty. It was therefore important to investigate secondary school students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on their overall school adjustment in relation to school type in Keiyo North Sub County, Kenya.

The researchers chose Keiyo Sub-county because of various reasons: first is that the sub -county has the various types of schools, single sex boarding schools, mixed boarding schools and mixed day schools. Secondly, guidance and counselling services have been introduced in all these types of schools as it is one of the requirements of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST), yet the students' perceptions of the influence that these services have had on their school adjustment have not been investigated adequately. Moreover, secondary schools in the sub-county register relatively poor academic performance for example it has consistently registered a mean grade of below 6.9 in the last five consecutive years. Furthermore several secondary schools have experienced cases of student unrest and school drop- out among students (Keiyo Sub-county Education Office).

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The aim of this paper is to assess whether there exist significant difference on students perceptions of the influence of guidance and counseling services on overall school adjustment based on the type of school they are in.

1.2 Research Hypothesis

H01 There are no significant statistical differences in secondary school students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on their overall school adjustment in relation to school type

2. Literature Review

This study aimed at establishing whether the type of school attended was an important factor in the students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on their overall school adjustment. The types of schools that were considered were single sex boarding schools, mixed boarding schools and mixed day schools. First of all, type of school and adjustment has also been of interest to researchers. Raju and Rahamtulla (2007) carried out a study in which the type of school was categorized into four groups on the basis of management of the school. The categories of schools were private unaided English medium schools, municipal schools, Zila Parishad schools and private aided schools. Significant differences were observed among the four schools on academic and emotional factors of adjustment. On the academic dimensions, Zilla Parishad schools were found to have higher mean scores than students from other type of schools. These students felt they could easily get cooperation from fellow students and that they could also finish their studies adequately. In the emotional adjustment dimensions, private unaided English medium schools students were reported to be better adjusted than students from the other types of schools. In yet another research from India involving urban higher secondary and rural secondary schools of Ahmedabad District, it was found out that there is no difference between adjustment levels these two groups in terms of emotional adjustment, social adjustment and also overall adjustment (Rashmikant & Shree, 2014).

Yellaiah (2012) found no significant difference between government and private school students and rural and urban schools in academic adjustment. Yet another study by Chauhan (2003) reported differences in adjustment of higher secondary school students than lower secondary school students. Could such differences be a reflection of the kind of psycho social support provided by significant other in the school environment? This study was interested in determining students perceived the guidance and counselling services provided in their various schools influenced their school adjustment. Secondly, there are studies that have focused on guidance and counselling services and school adjustment. One such study was carried out in Kenya by Gatua (2012). This is a study involving urban and rural public type of schools that was carried out with the aim of investigating the impact of guidance and counselling services on students' social and emotional adjustment. The findings indicated that that guidance and counselling services in secondary schools had high levels of impact on students' social and emotional adjustment whereby rural schools indicated higher levels of impact of the services than urban schools. Another researcher, Chireshe (2011) in a study carried out in a Zimbabwean secondary school concerning students' perceptions of the benefits of guidance and counselling services reported that students from rural boarding secondary schools viewed guidance and counselling services more positively than those from other type of schools.

Mugambi (2017) investigated the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services in enhancing students'

adjustment to school academic environment in public boarding secondary schools in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research survey design. The study target population was 36,671 comprising of 35,659 Form 3 students, 506 Form 3 class teachers and 506 teachers in charge of Guidance and Counselling from boarding secondary schools in Kitui, Nyeri and Nairobi counties in Kenya. The study also found out that Guidance and Counselling were effective in helping students adjust to school physical, social and academic environment. However, students' perceptions on the influence of guidance and counselling services on their school adjustment in relation to school type in terms of single sex boarding schools, mixed boarding schools and mixed day schools is missing in literature. Therefore this study intended to fill this literature gap.

3. Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in secondary schools in Keiyo North Sub-county. Keiyo Sub -county is one of the four sub-counties in Elgeyo Marakwet County in the Rift Valley region of Kenya. The study was guided by ex post facto research design. This design is a systematic empirical inquiry in which the researcher has no ability to control the independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred and therefore cannot be manipulated by the researcher. The study targeted 8001 Form 1 to Form 4 students from 21 public secondary schools in the sub county. Stratified sampling was used to select one third (7 schools) of the schools that were included in the study. To get the desired sample size of students, a table designed by Kathuri & Pals (1993) was used to select the sample of 367 respondents. Questionnaire and interview schedule was used to collect data for the study. Data analysis was done using; frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviation and ANOVA for quantitative data. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data from interviews.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Type of School Attended by Respondents

The study sought to find out the type of school that respondents came from. The results are presented in Figure 1.

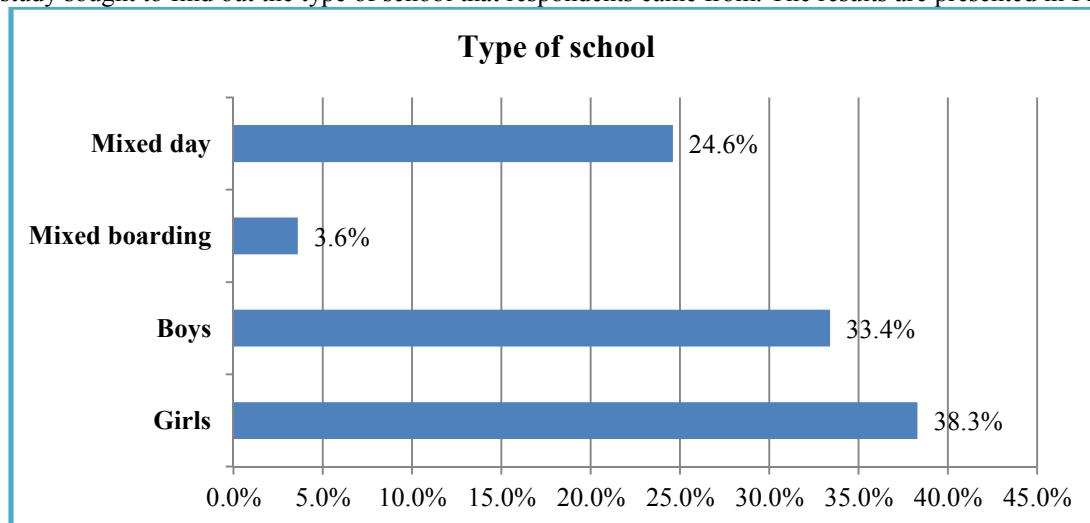


Figure 1: Type of School

Figure 1 shows that most, 126 (38.3%) of students were from girls boarding, 110 (33.4%) came from boys secondary schools, 81 (24.6%) were from mixed day secondary schools while 12 (3.6%) were from mixed boarding schools. The implication is that guidance and counselling services are provided in each type of school and student respondents from each from each type of school were captured in their existing proportions.

4.2 Ratings of Services in Relation to School Type

It was also important to describe the ratings of guidance of counselling services in relation to school type. The findings presented in Table 4.4 show that only 11.9% of students in girls' schools rated the services as poor. They were followed by students in mixed boarding schools whereby 16.6% of the students who participated rated the service as poor. Next was mixed day at 17.3%. The highest percentage of those who rated as poor at 49% were from boys' schools. The findings also show the highest percentage of students who rated the services as average was from mixed boarding schools at 66.6% while the lowest percentage was from boys' boarding at 29%. On the hand, the findings show that the highest percentage of students who rated guidance and counselling as good was from mixed day schools at 43.2% next was from girls' boarding schools at 22.5% followed by boys' boarding schools at 21.8% and lastly mixed boarding schools at 16.6%. The interpretation of the findings is that guidance and counselling services provision in all types of schools in Keiyo Sub-county is wanting since less than half of the respondents in each type of school rated them as good. Thus it can be concluded that service

provision in all types of schools need to be improved so that a good percentage of students can rate it highly.

Table 1 Description of School Type and Ratings of Services

Type of school	Ratings			N
	Poor	Average	Good	
Girls' boarding	15 (11.9%)	37(29.3%)	74(22.5%)	126
Boys' boarding	54 (49%)	32 (29%)	24 (21.8%)	110
Mixed boarding	2 (16.6%)	8 (66.6%)	2 (16.6 %)	12
Mixed day	14 (17.3%)	32 (39.5%)	35 (43.2%)	8
Total	85 (25.8%)	109 (33.1%)	135 (41.0)	329

4.3 School Type and Influence of Services on Overall School Adjustment

The objective of the study was to determine the secondary school students' perceptions on the influence of guidance and counselling services on overall school adjustment in relation to school type. To achieve this objective, the following question was asked: Are there significant statistical differences in secondary school students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling on their overall school adjustment in relation to school type? The fifth null hypothesis stated; there are no significant statistical differences in secondary school students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on overall school adjustment in relation to school type. To answer the research question, combined values for overall school adjustment were compared with scores for school type. The responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Description of School Type and influence of Services on Overall School Adjustment

Overall School Adjustment					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	
Girls	126	3.7302	.79411	.07074	3.5901
Boys	110	3.2545	1.03548	.09873	3.0589
Mixed boarding	12	3.1667	.38925	.11237	2.9193
Mixed day	81	3.6173	.66272	.07364	3.4707
Total	329	3.5228	.86968	.04795	3.4285

Results in Table 2 show that students from girls' ($M=3.73$ and $SD=0.79$) and mixed day ($M=3.61$ and $SD=0.66$) secondary schools had more positive perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on school adjustment as compared to students from boys' ($M=3.25$ and $SD=1.03$) and mixed boarding secondary schools ($M=3.16$ and $SD=0.38$) who were undecided. The results are further graphically presented Figure 2.

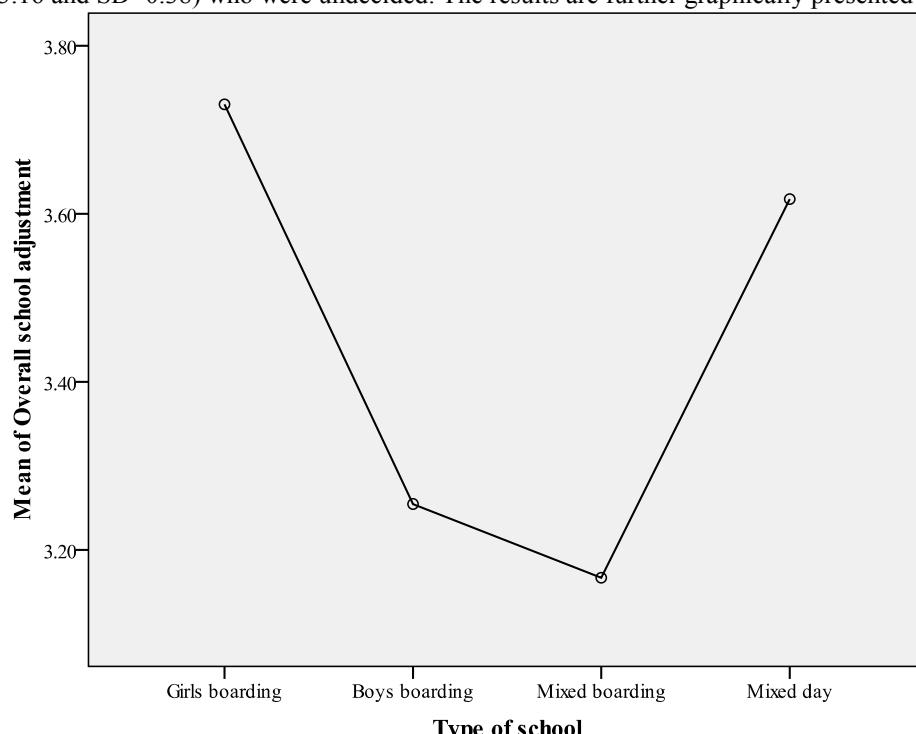


Figure 2: School Type and Influence of Services on Overall School Adjustment

Results in Figure 2 show that students from girls' schools and those from mixed day secondary schools have more positive perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on overall school

adjustment compared to students from other types of school. Students from mixed boarding schools had the least positive perceptions. This implies that guidance and counselling services provision in secondary school may not be uniformly provided thus making students perceive the influence on overall adjustment differently.

To test the hypothesis, a One Way ANOVA was computed at 95% confidence level. The results of the analysis are given in Table 3.

Table 3 ANOVA on School Type and Influence of Services on Overall School Adjustment

Overall School Adjustment	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.578	3	5.193	7.259	.001
Within Groups	232.501	325	.715		
Total	248.079	328			

The obtained ANOVA values were $F(3, 325) = 7.259$, $p=0.001$ and the critical values were $F(3, 325) = 3.49$, $p=0.05$. It is clear that the calculated F values were higher than the critical values which led to rejection of null hypothesis and the deduction that there existed significant statistical differences in secondary school students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on their overall school adjustment based on their school type. Moreover, the p-values are less than 0.05 suggesting that students from girls', boys', mixed day and mixed boarding perceive differently on the influence of guidance and counselling services on their school adjustments in secondary schools in Keiyo Sub-county.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The study investigated secondary school students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on their overall school adjustment in relation to school type. In this study, the type of school was based on the kind of students the schools admitted. These types of schools comprised of; girls' schools, boys' schools, mixed day schools and mixed boarding schools. Descriptive results revealed that students from girls secondary schools had higher positive perceptions ($M=3.73$) followed by those from mixed day secondary ($M=3.61$) on the influence of guidance and counselling services on overall school adjustment on the basis of school type. The other categories of schools; boys ($M=3.25$) and mixed boarding ($M=3.16$) students were undecided. This showed that students' perceptions on the influence of guidance and counselling on school adjustment varied across different types of schools. Computed analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that computed F- values were higher than the critical F-values leading to rejection of the fifth null hypothesis. The research deducted that there existed significant statistical difference ($p<0.05$) in secondary school students' perceptions of the influence of guidance and counselling services on their overall school adjustment as far as school type was concerned. This implied that perceptions of students varied across their school categories. These findings are in line with similar studies (Chireshe, 2011; Gatua, 2012; Ng'eno, 2012; Raju et al., 2007 and Rashmikant et al., 2014) targeting different types of schools although the schools were not classified on the basis of single sex or mixed boarding and day schools. However the results are contrary to the findings reported by Yellaiah (2012) who found no significant differences between schools classified as government and private schools and rural and urban schools in the domain of academic adjustment. These findings seem to suggest that guidance and counselling services are not provided uniformly in the different types of schools.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

One Way ANOVA also revealed that students from girls' schools and from mixed day schools perceived the influence of guidance and counselling services as higher than their counterparts from boys' schools and mixed boarding schools. It is imperative to conclude that guidance and counselling services in secondary schools have not been provided to the expected levels in all schools and this has resulted in some students perceiving its influence on their school adjustment differently. It is important to note that the provision of adequate guidance and counselling services in all schools have been emphasized by the various stakeholders yet this seems not to be the case in secondary schools in Keiyo Sub-county. It can be concluded from these differences in students' perceptions that guidance and counselling services was not provided uniformly in all types of schools in the sub county. All secondary schools should allocate specific time should be allocated for guidance and counselling activities. Indeed, guidance and counselling should be part of the school programme. This is because study revealed that students were always occupied in other school activities leaving no time for guidance and counselling activities.

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