

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN SCHOOLS IN KENYA

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Presentation Outline

- Contextual background
- Why guidance and counselling
- Guidance and counselling in schools
- Context for effective guidance and counselling programmes in schools
- Specifics for guidance and counselling
- Issues and concerns in schools: Contemporary issues and enhanced guidance and counselling services
- Assessment: Monitoring and evaluation
- Future of guidance and counselling in schools in Kenya

Contextual Background

- In traditional society, children were guided and counselled by parents, relatives and older siblings who inducted them in societal norms
- Stories, songs and dance, proverbs, riddles and wise sayings were a form of counsel that inculcated the values and virtues of society
- Formal education takes in certain social roles such as guidance and counselling of pupils and students
- The government of Kenya implemented Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 and Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) in 2007, that has resulted in many would be out of school children attending school

Contextual Background

- The Ministry of Education set up a guidance and counselling section in 1971 to assist pupils and students with various issues.
- The need for guidance and counselling in schools has been a government policy well articulated and emphasized in various policy documents.
- The Constitution of Kenya 2010 is very comprehensive and includes equality, equity, inclusion, integration, cohesion, non discrimination and the rights of the individual, as well as key aspects of administration
- In addition, Sub-Saharan Africa is greatly affected by HIV and AIDS and the epidemic leads to affected and infected children as well as orphaned children

Contextual Background

Several issues in Kenya and internationally have prompted a need for counselling. They include the following:

- (a) Terrorism including the 1998 bombing of the American Embassy in Nairobi in which 298 people died
- (b) There have been incidence of violence in schools in Kenya such as the deaths in St. Kizito, Bombolulu, Nyeri and Kyanguli schools
- (c) Ethnic violence in 2007 that led to an estimated 1,200 deaths and many other people displaced
- (d) Cancer and other terminal illnesses
- (e) Many other social economic factors such as gender in traditional setting, poverty, road accidents, divorce and separation that make individual susceptible to trauma

All these aspects impact on guidance and counselling in schools in Kenya

Need for Guidance and Counselling in Schools

- Character Formation and Personality Development
- Career Choices and Development
- Psychological concerns (emotional disturbance, mood, adjustment issues)
- HIV and AIDS
- Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Abuse
- Relationship and Sexuality
- Bullying and Violence in Schools
- Adolescence and Reproductive Health
- Pregnancy and Abortion

Need for Guidance and Counselling in Schools

- Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care (spiritual nourishment)
- Trauma Management
- Peace, Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation
- Disadvantaged Families and Vulnerable Groups
- Mentoring and Mentorship Programme
- Student Support Services (peer educators)
- Student Referral services
- Counsellor Support Services
- Life Skills Education

Context for Effective Guidance and Counselling Programmes in Schools

The system of educational counselling in Kenya was developed in three levels:

- (1) Education guidance and counselling (school counsellor) in schools;
- (2) Counselling psychological-educational psychology courses in colleges and universities to enhance teacher preparedness; and,
- (3) Counselling in other institutions including colleges and universities.

In several of these institutions, chaplaincy is included.

Context for Effective Guidance and Counselling in Schools

- Counsellor Competence
- Safe environment – secure environment
- Comfortable environment – lighting, air, space, furniture
- Confidentiality – trusting relationship and room
- Non-distracting clock(s)
- Furniture arrangement – chair and /or couch
- Record taking and record-keeping in confidence
- Quality assurance and quality audit
- Networking and referral

Context for Effective Guidance and Counselling in Schools – Organizational support

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Devolution
- Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)
- Teachers Service Commission (TSC)
- Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI)
- National Authority Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA)
- Universities
- Teacher Training Colleges
- Counselling and psychological associations
- Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Context for Effective Guidance and Counselling in Schools – Organizational support

- Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT)
- Kenya Union of Post Primary Teachers (KUPPET)
- Kenya Counsellors Psychologists Association (KCPA)
- Kenya Guidance and Counselling Psychological Association (KGCPA)
- Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association (KSSHA)
- Representation from Primary school head teachers
- Institutions that provide counselling psychological services and related services such as adolescence education, career information, human rights, and many others

Assessment: Monitoring and Evaluation

Question #1 - What are we looking for (aim, purpose, goal of counselling)?

Question #2 - What is the outcome of counselling (impact of programme on child, and school)

- Focus: communicates that schools have a responsibility in the growth and development of a child/ren
- Perspective: helps identify child needs
- Outcome: enables evaluate the effectiveness of guidance and counselling programmes

Challenges in Provision of Guidance and Counselling in Schools in Kenya

- Teenage pregnancy
- HIV and AIDS infected and/or affected pupils and other terminal illnesses
- Alcohol, Tobacco and drug abuse
- Career choices, placement and advancement
- Pornography
- Occultism
- Incest
- Truancy
- Time management in school, at home and in life
- Ethnicity characterized by cultural stereotypes
- Character formation (values and virtues)

**Counsellors in the school
must begin to determine
the outcome of Guidance
and Counselling
Programmes in schools**

Specifics for Counselling in the School

- There is a teacher in charge of Guidance and counselling in the school.
- Most of the teachers may not be adequately trained in guidance and counselling
- Amongst the challenges include:
 - Dual relationship of teacher and counsellor
 - Confidentiality of information received in counselling
 - Appointment and the personnel
 - Role of the teacher counsellor
 - Number of students that require help
 - Resources such as counselling room

Supportive Counselling

The type of counsellor responses/interventions include the following:

- Evaluative - judgment of behaviours, actions, attitudes
- Interpretive - informing; teaching
- Supportive - reassurance to reduce anxiety
- Probing - gather more data; questions
- Understanding - communicate empathy; reassurance and understanding
- Advising - recommendations; suggestions; psychosocial support

**Never Underestimate the
Effectiveness of a listening
caring partner in a reassuring
relationship such as
counselling . . .**

The guidance and counselling
school programme
must be:
Purposeful, Practical,
Preventive and Programmed

Guidance and Counselling of the Future

- Guidance and counselling of the future will be in a global context, conducted by more competent practitioners (professionals with knowledge and skills) and will embrace the rights of all persons.
- Purposeful counselling will prepare the young generation for their personal development, in academic studies and for the world of work (vocational guidance).
- This may include application of prevailing psychometric orientation as well as the development of intelligence tests and questionnaires on interests.

Guidance and Counselling of the Future

The system of educational Guidance and Counselling will be at three levels:

- (1) Education counsellor (school counsellor) in schools
- (2) Psychological- educational consultancies in the counties
- (3) National psychological consultancies. These include guidelines on conducting counselling in schools, colleges and universities

Guidance and Counselling of the Future

Systems of counselling will provide the following:

- Psychological Counselling and Prevention (PCP)
- Special pedagogy consultances (children with special needs)
- School educational counsellors
- Crisis intervention (pregnancy, domestic violence)
- Drug prevention (including specialized care)
- Child care and intergration
- University consultances

School guidance and counselling must lead to opportunities that enable us to provide equitable education for all students as well as support their social, emotional and academic needs.

Help seeking in counselling

All children require fitting guidance and counselling with particular focus on the following:

- Learning difficulties
- Behavior concerns
- Attention problems
- Problems at home or with peers
- Fears about war, violence, terrorism
- Depression and other mental health issues
- Coping with crisis and trauma
- Poverty, violence, or life changing events
- Advocacy of their learning and mental health needs

Guidance and Counselling of the Future

The school guidance and counselling programme must aim at the following:

- 1) Competence, self-esteem, character formation and resiliency
- 2) Promoting positive appropriate social values and the virtues of society (tolerance, self respect, respect for others)
- 3) Personal achievement according to individual talents
- 4) Positive social skills and behaviour (effective communication)
- 5) Healthy relationships (intrapersonal and inter personal skills) and connectedness

Guidance and Counselling in the School

Work undertaken by counsellors in the school is THREE dimensional, namely developmental, preventive and remedial.

- (a) *Developmental guidance programmes.* These focus on nurturing the overall emotional and social well-being of pupils. Programmes in school include career guidance and academic performance. Teacher counsellors conduct classroom and school psycho-education programmes to promote and develop the self-esteem of students.
- (b) *Preventive guidance and counselling programmes.* Personal counselling include issues that affect pupils and students. These include alcohol, tobacco and drug use, handling peer pressure, and stress management especially due to the pressure in handling of examinations . Counsellors largely seek to prevent problems arising.
- (c) *Remedial work.* There are immediate interventions to assist various pupils and students in already existing issues such as disciplinary or abuse cases, bereavement and failing academic performance. counsellors provide therapy to various pupils and students

Guidance and Counselling Activities in the School

- Teacher - child support
- Parent - child support
- Parental support
- Health clubs
- Preventive guidance and Life skills education
- Mass guidance
- Group counselling
- School chaplaincy
- Promoting (positive) values and virtues

An active school guidance and counselling programme is clearly structured and child centred

Role of a Counsellor in the School

- Assessment
- Consultation for student and systems-level change
- Prevention
- Intervention
- Staff, parent, and student education
- Research and program development
- Psychological and mental health care
- Advocacy
- Research and publications

Way Forward for Counselling in Schools

- Guidance and counselling must be an integral element of the education system and the teacher counsellor must effectively make a contributing to the child/ren through activities in practice
- Guidance and counselling must be operationalized using international counselling standards

Way Forward for Counselling in Schools

- In Kenya, at the moment, there is a greater possibility that counsellors by any name (counselling psychologist, counsellor in the school, educational psychologists, guidance and counselling teachers, psychologists), will be located in more and more educational institutions (schools, colleges and universities).
- Two major factors that will impinge on the success or otherwise of the educational guidance and counselling venture are:
 - (1) The component of the guidance and counselling programme; and as a matter of course
 - (2) The extent of acceptance by pupils, students and staff in the institutions.

Way Forward for Counselling in Schools

- Three aspects will be outstanding in the overall success of the school guidance and counselling programme:
 - (1) The attitude of the counsellor;
 - (2) The perception of clients (pupils, students and staff); and,
 - (3) Individual teachers and tutors discernment of, and the particular significance they attach to guidance and counselling in educational institutions.
- Teachers and tutors in Kenya are by and large highly receptive to guidance and counselling in schools and other educational institutions and are reasonably well informed as to its nature. Nevertheless, in some instances, the perception of counselling is skewed towards a directive/advice/solution focused conceptualisation.

Way Forward for Counselling in Schools

- Guidance and counselling services must be integrated into the wider school community.
- Counsellors and other professionals working with pupils, teachers and parents in schools and in a community must also remember that although schools are a microcosm of society, educational institutions are also complex organizations. Schools have a number of change factors working at any one time including for instance the prevalence of HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. Education is a measure of success and there is an obvious overwhelming pressure for success. In addition, there are development concerns including adolescence issues, ethnicity and cohesiveness and the threat of terrorism.

Way Forward for Counselling in Schools

- Further studies in schools and educational institutions are therefore needed in the area of guidance and counselling.
- Counselling will require a systematic analysis of all the factors affecting the successful implementation and /or integration of guidance and counselling in schools
- Guidance and counselling services must also be a comprehensive part of the National Education Policy rather than counselling for crisis management
- Overall, Counsellors and Psychologists will be guided by the Counsellors and Psychologists Act

Enhancing Professional Counselling in Schools

- It is suggested that school counsellors create a professional alliance such as Association for School Counsellors in Kenya (ASC(K))
- The government through the Ministry of Education could also establish a centre to promote guidance and counselling in schools, such as Counselling and Leadership Centre (CLC) at the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD). The Centre would:
 - (a) Coordinate guidance and counselling in schools including programme of activities and training materials in liaison with TSC and others
 - (b) Establish National standards for guidance and counselling in educational institutions (ECDE, Primary, Secondary, Colleges)

Enhancing Counselling in Schools

- An updated Careers Booklet
- Development of regulations and procedures in guidance and counselling. This would include a syllabus for guidance and counselling in schools
- Mutuality and collaboration must be key terms in guidance and counselling to enable:
 - ❑ Cooperation, linkages and referral services
 - ❑ Shared vision
 - ❑ Shared expertise and
 - ❑ Mutuality of benefits to be derived both from education and counselling
- Overall, education and counselling must adopt a multi-cultural counselling competence approach

Enhancing Counselling in Schools

- The National Education Policy highlights the need for mentoring, moulding and ensuring national values and principles of governance.
- This includes enhanced guidance and counselling services. The emphasis is on the education sector to promote guidance and counselling in schools as well as life skills development, mentorship, HIV / AIDS programmes and peace education. This must adopt a professional framework including professional ethics
- The government is to operationalize a policy framework on guidance and counselling particularly in schools and other educational institutions

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