Influence of a Tripartite Framework of Guidance and Counseling on Student Outcomes in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Public secondary schools in Kenya are expected to implement guidance and counseling policy as directed by the Ministry of Education. However, guidance and counselling policy is not supported by a framework for implementation that takes into account the contextual realities of basic education in Kenya. This study sought to contribute to knowledge by originating and testing a tripartite framework of guidance and counseling for application in secondary schools in Kenya. The main objective of the study was to investigate the influence of tripartite framework of guidance and counseling in the outcomes of students of selected public secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study was anchored on Person-Centered Theory and Social Learning Theory. Phenomenology was the selected research design. Data were collected using Narrative Assessment Interviews. This was undertaken with a purposive sample of 27 students drawn from three public secondary schools who successfully completed an eight-week long guidance and counselling program based on the tripartite framework. The data were transcribed and assigned codes before grouping the codes into themes. The study established that positive behavior change was the single overarching theme throughout the findings. This was reflected in parental involvement, trust enhancement, self-awareness and appreciation, self-discipline and parent-child bonding. The study concluded that the tripartite framework of guidance and counseling had a positive and compelling influence on student outcomes in the selected public secondary Schools in Kenya. Implementation of the framework resulted in immediate transformative behavior change that potentially set the students up not just for long-run future academic success but potentially holistic life outcomes. Incorporation of the tripartite framework of guidance and counseling into the school curriculum was endorsed by the study participants, and this should be adapted in public secondary schools in Kenya. In order to ascertain the suitability of the model across all public schools, replication of the study in other public secondary schools especially within a rural setting is recommended.

Key Words: Guidance and Counselling, Tripartite Framework, Narrative Assessment Interviews

INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling refers to the branch of psychological counseling practiced within a school system with the aim to achieve holistic development and wellbeing of students (Bolu-Steve & Oredugba, 2017; Salgong et al., 2016). It is intended to equip students to develop holistically, to help them with psychological problems and empower them to navigate successfully through difficult and challenging situations (Lai-Yeung, 2014). It also aims to assist students to understand and clarify their views of life, and to learn to attain their self-determined goals through meaningful, well informed choices and through resolution of challenges of emotional or interpersonal nature (Adeusi et al., 2016). Its scope covers all aspects that enhance student's journey, including; non-academic and academic performances, preparation for and adaptations into vocations, and abilities meant for use in resolving personal, social and psychological problems (Anyi, 2017; Egbo, 2015).

The guidance aspect of guidance and counseling entails providing direction or advice as in a decision or

course of action, showing the way; setting and helping to drive, lead, assist, pilot and steer ideals into students by counseling professionals to enhance the achievement of educational goals (Egbo, 2015). The counseling part of guidance and counseling on the other hand entails a learning process in which a counselor helps students to learn, understand themselves and their environment (Anyi, 2017). This process also enables the students to be in a position to choose the right type of behaviours that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and excel in their education (Anyi, 2017). Thus, the counselor plays the roles of adviser as well as that of the counselor (Subasinghe, 2016).

In most African nations, guidance and counseling is as ancient as the beginning of mankind. This ensured all areas of life were well catered for. Problems and management of issues was done from a collective view. Before industrialization and modernization, Africans met their counseling needs through deep rooted traditional systems. The African framework was simple: it had the traditional counselor (who was an individual who held a respected role within the community such as an elder or spiritual leader), the client, client's family and the community. The framework included all of the client's primary connections, making it a well-supported process (Chiboola, 2019). This is contrasted to the current situation in Kenya where guidance and counselling roles have since been assumed by a trained teacher who is assigned guidance and counselling responsibility (Cheruiot, 2017).

In Kenya, formal guidance and counseling was introduced in the early 1970s with the institution of a guidance and counseling unit within the Ministry of Education (Ochola, 2015; Cheruiot, 2017). The introduction of guidance and counseling in Kenya emerged from the need to address discipline issues, which has led to the association of counseling with disciplinary measures taken against students with problem behaviours (Wambu & Fisher, 2015). To emphasize the importance of guidance and counseling services, the Ministry of education published a guidance and counseling handbook in the year 1973 which was the first official handbook for guidance and counseling for secondary schools which was later revised and updated in the year 1977 (Cheruiot, 2017).

In the last decade, there have been increased call for enhancing school counseling in Kenya owing to many cases of mental health problems in schools (Khasakala et al., 2013). Against a backdrop of breakdown of African collectivism that provided the much needed and timely psychoeducation and support system for personal development and growth, social unrest in schools has been on the rise with serious damages like burning of schools. Besides that, pressure to attain exceptional performance in national exams has also been overwhelming. Although studies on the effects of guidance and counseling have shown positive results on student's grades (Arfasa, 2018), no known framework of guidance and counseling has been developed and tested to inform practice in Kenya. As per the current position of the ministry's guidance and counseling policy, one of its goals is to transform the counseling practice for improved education to realize sustained socio-economic development.

A well implemented guidance and counselling policy plays a positive role in the attainment of student outcomes as evidenced by the effectiveness of the American School Counselor Association framework in the western world (Caitlin, 2018; Mau et al., 2016). Public secondary schools in Kenya are thus expected to implement guidance and counseling policy as directed by The Ministry of Education expects guidance and counseling policy. However, guidance and counselling policy is not supported by a framework for implementation that takes into account the contextual realities of basic education in Kenya. Prevailing evidence suggests that the main reason guidance and counseling has not consistently been effectual is because of unmethodical implementation. Wambeti and Mwenda (2016) argue that for effectiveness in school guidance and counseling, a sure support system where the counselor works together with the student and the parent is paramount.

The policies and guidelines from the ministry instruct school heads to appoint a suitable teacher to head the counseling unit yet a framework / support structure on how to carry out the guidance and counseling

effectively is not in place.

A few scholarly attempts have advanced the idea of school guidance and counseling by demonstrating a link between the collaboration of school counselors, parents and staff and student academic achievement and proposing the development of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program in schools (Irungu, 2019; Nyanyal, 2019; Wambu & Fisher, 2015). The problem of this research was that there is limited empirically tested framework or theory of guidance and counseling that can be effectively applied in Kenyan public secondary schools. Therefore, this study sought to address this gap in theory and practice by originating and testing a tripartite framework of guidance and counseling for application in secondary schools in Kenya. The main objective of this study was to investigate the influence of tripartite framework of guidance and counseling in the outcomes of students of public secondary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Counselors, by their training, are expected to be friends with the school child, listen to the child's complains, short comings and proffer guidance to the child in a quest of molding the child in the right part to take in their life pursuit (Nkechi et al., 2016). The counselor and the client must build a relationship in which the counselor succeeds to empower the client to take action towards change in the solution finding process (Bobga, 2016). However, a growing body of perception studies have examined stakeholder perceptions towards guidance and counseling with mixed results (Arfasa, 2018; Aziz, 2015; Momanyi, 2013; Nduta & Gichuho, 2013). In the global front, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) posit that there exist a relationship between school counseling and student outcomes (ASCA, 2020). Counsellors achieve this by working with students experiencing mental health problems, family and social issues and help the students develop mindsets and behaviors necessary for personal growth and attainment of desired outcomes. The association came up with a framework for school counseling programs referred to as the ASCA National Model which outlines the components of a comprehensive school counseling program. The model recognizes the importance of collaboration between the school counselor, parents and educators to foster an environment conducive for academic achievement. The ASCA framework has four components: foundation, management, delivery and accountability. It is an ideal framework that assumes an environment where resources are abundant and the national education infrastructure is robust. However, this is far from the reality in most public schools in Africa.

With respect to ASCA framework, Caitlin (2019) studied principals' perception of the role of school guidance and counseling and their importance and whether ASCA model influenced their perception. The results showed that school principals perceived the ASCA framework very highly, implying that they were generally supportive of the model. The study however acknowledged a number of methodological and conceptual limitations and recommended that continued research explore the belief of principals about school guidance and counselors working in a therapeutic, clinical mode.

Mau et al. (2016) studied the current role and practices of American high school counselors in relation to ASCA framework. The study, which was carried out between 2002 and 2012 sampled 852 counselors from 944 private high schools across the United States. The major objectives of the study were to establish the goals of counseling programs in the schools, establish services provided by counselors in the schools as well as how they spent time engaging in the services, and how their expectations for student performance compared to those of school administrators and teachers. Results showed that preparing students for post-secondary schooling was the most important goal of school counselors, followed by performance in high school and personal growth and development. This implies that guidance and counselling aims go beyond the narrow metric of academic peformance to the development of a holistic person. A key finding of the study was that a significant aspect of school counselor's time was invested in course scheduling than on personal problems or academic development, suggesting that the high school students were not presenting

with personal problems. An important finding was also that the counselors had the belief in the potential of all students – a perspective that was also observed among school teachers and administrators. This led to the researchers' conclusion that the practice was fairly aligned to ASCA framework. However, it should be noticed that the study evaluated ASCA as a homegrown framework which was relevant to the American educational context with limited resemblance to the Kenyan scenario. Furthermore, the study by Mau et al. (2016) was not anchored on a particular theory. The study applied descriptive survey design whereby participants responded to an online research tool, which was largely dependent on the respondents' recall ability.

Shi and Brown (2020) resolved part of the identified gaps in Mau et al.'s (2016) study by investigating school counselors counseling practices and student outcomes. Brown used high school longitudinal data collected in the year 2009 as a basis for investigating school counselors' caseloads and what they spent their time on in relation to academic outcomes. Consistent with the findings reported by Mau et al. (2016), the results showed that school counselors spent more time helping students with course scheduling and personal development. A significant finding in the study by Shi and Brown (2020) was that school counseling practice was predictive of enrolment in university. This signals the efficacy of ASCA model for better academic achievements among high school students in the USA. However, while ASCA model is comprehensive in that it covers all the basic principles of an effective guidance and counseling program, there is limited empirical validation of the model outside America. At best, the framework can apply in a private secondary school for which longitudinal data is available. The association itself is quoted as saying that there is no single common set of core principles of counseling, suggesting that it recognizes the dynamic and nuanced nature of guidance and counseling (Nelson et al., 2015).

Another model called Physical, Affective, Cognitive, Economic and Social (PACES), also originating from the United States was proposed by Nelson et al. (2015) to aid guidance and counseling personnel to enrich students' academic performance. This model has five interactive domains of student wellbeing. They are: physical, affective, cognitive, economic and social. An important belief held by Nelson et al. is that the wellbeing of students is a function of families, social groups, schools and communities. While the model presents what the authors refer to as a holistic framework useful for aiding school counselors in designing programs that addresses the multi-dimensional wellbeing of students, it is a hypothetical model without documented evidence of empirical validation even in the US where it originated.

Unlike the PACEs model, the Student Success Skills (SSS) model, has been the subject of multiple empirical validation. Mariani et al. (2014) are among the scholars who have explored the efficacy of this model. They evaluated the SSS program on student learning behavior and wellness outcomes. Their meta-analysis of five SSS studies yielded a large effect size impact of the program on students' academic achievement. The SSS model depict student success as a function of skills, confidence and effort. Although the study enhanced the generalizability of research findings of the individual studies included in their sample, it was based on meta-analysis, differences in methodologies among the studies limits making of meaningful comparison from one study to another. The study also used a modest sample of articles that may not be adequate to draw reliable conclusions about the SSS framework's explanatory power on academic performance.

Lemberger et al. (2015) also investigated the effects of SSS program on, among others, academic achievement in a low income middle school district in the USA. Their sample was 193 middle school students in a predominantly Hispanic and economically challenged school district in the southwestern USA. The purpose of their study was to determine executive functioning and feelings of connectedness and students' academic performance in relation to SSS. The methodology involved providing SSS training to school counselors who in turn provided classroom guidance aspects of the SSS program to seventh-graders. Participating students filled two pre-treatment surveys after which, half of the students attended guidance lessons comprising of 1 hour lesson weekly for 5 weeks and the other half did not take SSS guidance lessons

until after a post-test was administered to the students. Using multilevel regression analyses in a two-level randomized design, the authors found treatment effects for mathematics and reading achievement, suggesting that the model made a positive contribution to academic performance. The research offers one of the most scientific account of the value of the SSS framework of guidance and counseling. However, the generalizability of the study results to a non-western student population is not possible given differences in socioeconomic and cultural contexts that undergird student outcomes.

Outside North America, research done by Karatas and Kaya (2015) focused on exploring the perception of school administrators towards the roles and duties of school counselors. The study applied phenomenological design to 13 school administrators in secondary schools in downtown Diyarbakir, Turkey. The findings showed that the perception of school administrators was positive, an outcome linked to a high level of awareness. In contrast to the study by Caitlin (2019), the research by Karatas and Kaya (2015) did not investigate these stakeholder perceptions within a particular guidance and counseling framework.

Regionally, Kiweewa et al. (2017) examined efforts at incorporating comprehensive guidance and counseling models in school curricula in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study adopted a literature review methodology anchored on a critical aspects of child and adolescent development theory. Their objective was to review past efforts to advance school guidance and counseling in in the region, call for its integration in school curricula and propose effective frameworks for scaling up practice in resource-poor settings in the region. The data scope spanned literature on practice in Senegal, Nigeria, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Uganda and Kenya. They established that school guidance and counseling in Africa have adapted frameworks from the western world, though culturally adapted versions such as the integration of local spiritual leaders in the school guidance and counselling ecosystem are the ones that are successful. In proposing a framework for guidance and counseling, they made extensive reference to a Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (CGCP) which focuses on implementing a guidance curriculum and providing system support to the school community besides providing students with individual planning assistance and responsive services to personal crises. However, the CGCP, also known as the Missouri Model, is a western model which, though recognizing the need to be responsive to local context, was not developed for application in non-western contexts. Kiweewa et al. (2017) themselves underscored the need for empirical evidence regarding the relevance of existing or proposed models to the local cultures. The current study is a response to this call for research.

Disassa and Into (2019) explored modern counseling approaches to the western system based on practices in Ethiopia. The researchers applied qualitative design. Data was collected from two large institutions that used modern counseling systems: a mental health hospital and a faith-based counseling center. Respondents in the study were recent graduates from psychology departments from four universities in Ethiopia. A sample of six counselors from the respective organizations participated in a focus group discussion. The study found that western frameworks of counseling were applied by the institutions without due regard to local community practices. Further results revealed that the methods employed, techniques, and procedures used by the existing counseling systems were poorly organized. The researchers concluded that locally developed techniques, methods and principles of counseling services could be of great benefit to the community. The study however focused on counseling outside of the school context.

Aziz (2015) studied the perceptions of basic school teachers towards counseling services in Khartoum Locality in Sudan. The study established that the perception was positive. In light of the subsequent findings which claim that the perception was negative, it can be surmised that contextual differences exists. The study was not comprehensive however,

because it did not include the perceptions of important stakeholders such as the teacher counselors, parents

and the school administrators.

Agi and Okirigwe (2018) investigated teachers' perception of counselors' role and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in River State of Nigeria. The study established that the attitudes held by teachers was not supportive of guidance and counseling. They concluded that guidance and counseling is not fully embraced by school principals, teachers and students. However, the conclusions were based on the perspectives of the teachers only, which provides a one-sided view of the state of affairs.

Nduta and Guchuho (2013) examined stakeholder involvement and perception towards guidance and counseling in Kambaa Division Secondary Schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study, which was carried out among public secondary schools, found that parents rarely got involved in guidance and counseling services. This suggests that the parents did not have the right perception towards school guidance and counseling, which may have been a hindrance to guidance and counseling effectiveness. The study was however not based on a particular guidance and counseling framework.

Momanyi (2013) undertook a cross-sectional survey of students, teachers and principals from six public secondary schools in Kenya to determine their perception towards guidance and counseling. Results showed that teachers and students had negative attitude towards guidance and counseling and adversely affected counseling effectiveness. Further findings revealed that there was a general lack of awareness and knowledge of counseling among both teachers and students, which potentially contributed to counseling ineffectiveness. However, the research did not explore guidance and counseling frameworks and the perceptions that the teachers had towards the framework.

Kanga et al. (2015) studied the practice of guidance and counseling in Kenyan public secondary schools using descriptive research design. Data was collected from a random sample of 756 respondents comprising of students and teachers in charge of guidance and counseling. Quantitative data analysis techniques were used to analyze the data. Results revealed that guidance and counseling services in secondary schools were dominated by group guidance with almost no individual Counseling. Majority of students in their study preferred either to go for counseling to a colleague or not go for it at all, signaling a lack of trust for counselors. They recommended strengthening individual counseling in secondary schools. However, the outcomes of the practice in terms of academic performance was not evaluated. Further, the study was not informed by a guiding theoretical framework.

In an attempt to bridge the gap in Kanga et al.'s (2015 study, Ochola (2015) undertook a study to investigate the relationship between guidance and counseling program and students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kisumu East District, Kenya. The study set out to establish the relationship between qualification of the school guidance and counseling personnel, their responsiveness to student needs, collaboration among stakeholders in the school community, resource allocation to guidance and counseling and academic achievement of the students. Correlational design was used. A sample of 348 was targeted through multistage sampling. From the study results, qualifications of the guidance and counseling personnel; responsive services; resource allocation; and collaboration between school counselors, parents and other staff, were found to have strong and positive significant correlations with students' academic achievement. The study however did not examine or test guidance and counseling theories or models, while the conceptual framework applied was narrow in focus to competence of the guidance and counseling practitioner, community collaboration and resource allocation.

From the review of literature, the research output is not only mixed in as much as the dominant findings are on the affirmative, there is a conspicous absence of homegrown frameworks that have been tried and tested outside of the western world. As a result, little is known about a suitable framework that can inform guidance and counselling practice in Kenya in light of the potential nuances that charactersise the learning environment from one country to the next. This gap in knowledge inspired the current empirical inquiry.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Three theories provided a broad-based lens through which the tripartite framework of guidance and counselling and its implications on student outcomes was understood. The anchor theory was the The Afrocentric theory of human personhood. This was complemented by Person-Centered Theory (PCT) and Social Learning Theory (SLT). The Afrocentric theory of human personhood is a perspective that seeks to articulate a unique understanding of what it means to be human from an African-centered viewpoint (Nwoye, 2017). The theory recognizes the interconnectedness of individuals with their community, ancestors, and the natural world. It highlights the communal nature of personhood, emphasizing the idea that an individual's identity and well-being are inseparable from their social, cultural, and historical contexts. In this view, the community plays a central role in shaping and defining an individual's sense of self (Imafidon, 2021).

According to Bent-Goodley et al. (2017), an essential aspect of Afrocentric theory is the recognition and affirmation of African cultural values, knowledge systems, and spirituality. It acknowledges the importance of African traditions, rituals, and oral history in shaping individual and collective identities. Thus, recognizing the significance of community and family, school counselors can collaborate with families and community members to create a supportive and culturally relevant counseling environment. Involving parents, elders, and community leaders in counseling sessions can provide valuable insights and support the holistic development of students. The Afrocentric theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of various aspects of an individual's life. School counselors can adopt a holistic approach that addresses not only academic concerns but also social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of students' lives (Mabvurira et al., 2021).

In as much as PCT is a western idea, it was used to complement Afrocentric theory due to its focus on the individual. Forwarded in the 1950s by Carl Rodgers, the basic assumption of PCT is that all human beings have the potential to be good, self-directing, progressive, positive and can understand and resolve their own problems without a lot of direct external intervention (Eremie & Ubulom, 2016). As long as the environment is conducive, PCT posits that every individual can actualize their full potential (Patel, 2016). The focus of PCT approach is therefore on the client rather than the presenting problem. It accords greater attention and resources on capacities rather than constraints, health rather than illness, and it facilitates wellbeing and resilience by developing one's potentialities (Zucconi, 2016).

Carl Rogers proposed three basic conditions for change namely: congruence (an alignment between how one feels and what they say and do), positive regard (demonstration of acceptance and value for the client, including their feelings and views), and empathy (getting into and becoming acquainted with another's personal, perceptual world) (Cogbill, 2018). In PCT, clients are helped to become more confident, realistic and to love themselves by integrating and making use of their own resources and potential. The theory rests on the idea that by mere existence, each and every individual is valuable (Patel, 2016). The role of the counselor is to create a climate of trust, genuine care and respect which provides a warm and accepting relationship (Eremie & Ubulom, 2016). PCT assumes that in any counseling interaction, the therapist is in a state of internal agreement in contrast to the client who is anxious, vulnerable and in a state of internal disagreement (Mercier, 2016).

Since its development, PCT has been one of the most popular approaches to counseling practice due to its grounding on a positive view of humanity (Bachkirova & Borrington, 2018). However, its popularity notwithstanding, the theory has also been the subject of growing criticism due to weaknesses that have been identified. In the words of Cogbill (2018, p. 22), "it does not analyze how perceptions of race, gender, and other sociocultural factors affect the way individuals view, think about, and treat one another". Bazzano (2016) also faults it for lacking a clear ontological stance.

The limitations notwithstanding, PCT theory was applied in the current study because it shares the philosophical standpoint of the Tripartite Framework of School Guidance and Counseling. For instance, like the Tripartite Framework, the theory is facilitative in the sense that it fosters an environment of trust, mutual understanding and most importantly, it is empowering to the client. The concept of therapeutic dyad, which is inherent in the theory, relate to the study objectives, which explored the three dyadic relationships: counselor-student professional relationship, counselor-parent professional relationship and parent-child attachment relationship and how, with the facilitation of the school guidance and counselor, the three parties can meet at a field of mutuality and trust.

The study also applied SLT propounded by Albert Bandura in the 1970s. This was inspired by the notion that learning result out of the one's interaction with others in their social context (Alshobramy, 2019). In his seminal work observing children who were participants of a social modeling experiment, Bandura (1971) argued that an individual can acquire new patterns of behavior simply by observing the behavior of others and imitating the observed behavior. This suggests that the behavior and actions of learners are shaped in the social context in which they live following a process of observation, imitation and modeling. This by extension means that the individuals that learners interact with model the behavior that children acquire (Saltali, 2018).

Central to SLT, is the concept of human agency, meaning that the theory subscribes to the notion that every individual has the capacity to self-direct by controlling their thinking process, their motivation and their action (Abdullah, 2019). This sense of agency is exercised using one's self-regulative capabilities like self-goal setting and implementation of strategies for their attainment (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). At the same time, the theory posits that "human development and functioning result from a reciprocal triadic relationship between internal stimuli, external stimuli, and behavior" (Melo-Dias & Fernandes da Silva, 2019, p. 101). As it pertains to learning, it draws attention to four facilitators: the social interaction, the individual, the context, the community and the desired behavior (Mkhalalati & Taylor, 2019).

Like any other theory, SLT theory has been found to have its weaknesses, among which, is that it does not offer a strong foundation for relationship-sustaining interventions (Johnson & Bradsbury, 2015). Yet despite its limitations, the theory has influenced studies in education including in allied fields such as guidance and counseling. In this study, the counselor in the therapy process played the part of role model both to the parent and the student during dyadic interactions that characterize the Tripartite Framework. Through observations, parents were expected to model unconditional positive regards that the counselor accords to the client, which strengthens parent-child attachment bond necessary to reach the field of mutuality and trust.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Phenomenology was the selected research design. This is because it afforded the researcher "a wealth and depth of information which is not usually afforded by other methods" (Astalin, 2013). Among the hallmarks of phenomenology, as with any other qualitative design, is its concern with a rich and vivid description and chronological narrative of facts and events relevant to the case (Cohen et al., 2013). It allows for an in-depth appreciation of the phenomenon under investigation from the research participants' perspective in light of the particular institutional and cultural context (Palmer & Bolderston, 2018). It has been argued that phenomenology is suitable for studies which seek to answer the question of 'how' and 'why' when there is need to put the contextual conditions into perspective" (Baxter, & Jack, 2008 as cited in Starman, 2013, p. 42).

The study was undertaken in Nairobi County, Kenya. Nairobi County is considered the most suitable for this study. In a study by Opere et al. (2019) on schools violence as a cause of unrest in public secondary schools in Nairobi, it was established that the intensity of unrest is higher in mixed public day secondary schools.

The highest proportion of incidences of unrest was registered in mixed day public secondary schools. The study was based on a purposive sample of 27 students drawn from three public secondary schools who participated in an eight week long counselling program basedon Majimbo's (2017b) Tripartite Framework of Guidance and Counselling.

Data were collected using Narrative Assessment Interviews. Narrative Assessment Interviews is a data collection method that facilitates collection of people's own experiences. In Narrative assessment interviews, the interviewee determines the content and momentum of the conversation, as there is no established agenda besides collecting the participant's experience (Anderson & Kirkpatrick 2015). In this study the researcher was interested in the personal experience of the students and their parents as well as school principals and guidance and counseling masters.

Narrative assessment interviews was conducted to gain a more nuanced perspective of the effectiveness of the Tripartite Framework. According to Anderson and Kirkpatrick (2015), narrative interviews is a qualitative method of data collection that places research participants at the heart of a study by collecting their own stories about their experiences including during counseling sessions and can enable the researcher to better understand participants' perceptions and behaviours. Narrative assessment interview is a type of qualitative interview that helps counselors assess the outcomes of counseling through the change identified in the client's self-story (Meier, 2012; Rodgers & Elliott, 2015, in Gelo & Riekens, 2015).

Gelo et al. (2015) enlist three stages of narrative assessment interview protocol that will be followed in the current study. The first stage entailed undertaking a brief semi-structured interview after the first counseling session. This stage helped in the exploration of the participants' story about themselves and their views about how they are perceived. Student respondents were asked to describe themselves, how someone close to them describe them and what they could change about who they are if they could do so. The latter provided a concrete reference point for research participants to reflect on at the end of counseling. The second stage entailed probling, which was undertaken to explore further the story that emerges, by among others, prompting respondents (i.e the parents and the students) to give examples to illustrate their points. Subsequently, the researcher comprehensively summarized the main aspects of this initial interview in order to have a written record of the key descriptors. The last of the three stages is a post-hoc reflection interview where research participants critically reflected on the initial interview so as to establish any change during the counseling period.

Trustworthiness and credibility was applied to the implementation process of the Tripartite Framework itself since this is a qualitative process. These were ensured by triangulating observational methods with the conversations that emanate during dyadic and triadic sessions with the participants. For each participant, a detailed description of the process and outcomes of the therapy sessions was documented. These formed part of an audit trail that was be kept throughout the process for verification whenever needed.

Data from narrative assessment interviews were first transcribed, then coded through thematic analysis and subsequently the codes grouped into five categories: parental involvement, trust enhancement, self-awareness and appreciation, self-discipline, and, parent-child bonding. These categories converged towards a single overarching theme of positive behavior change. The process entailed a rigorous and scientific approach to organizing, describing and reporting themes emerging from a mass of raw data (Nowell et al., 2017). There are six phases that were followed in analyzing qualitative data of this research as recommended by Nowell et al., (2017). The first phase entailed familiarization with the data by documenting potential code themes from field notes, transcripts and reflexive journals. In the second stage, the researcher generated initial codes using a coding framework while maintaining an audit trail of all codes generated. The coding framework contained definitions and exemplar texts following a deductive-inductive approach (Nowell et al., 2017). The third phase involved searching for themes by attempting to make sense

of the connection between various strings of text and codes. Subsequently, the researcher returned to the raw data during the fourth stage in order to review the themes and sub-themes further. The themes were then defined and named during the fifth stage. Lastly, a detailed description of the coding and analysis process was made. This sixth and final stage involved a thick description of the research context. Report writing included presentation of short quotes to demonstrate theme prevalence and to aid in making sense of the specific points. Excerpts of raw data were also embedded within the discourse to illustrate the findings to further demonstrate the merits of the interpretations.

The researcher took a raft of ethical measures to ensure that all the ethical requirements were fulfilled and ethical protocols followed. Specifically, there were a number of ethical considerations that were taken into account. These included privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, beneficence, protection from harm, informed consent, voluntary participation and truthful reporting (Akaranga & Makau, 2016; Fareo, 2020; Nowell et al., 2017).These tenets are anchored on the principle of guidance and counseling which stipulates that the orientation of guidance and counseling should be cooperation rather than compulsion (Egbo, 2015).

Firstly was the issue of informed consent. The research participants were adequately made aware of the aims and objectives of the research, the procedures that was followed and the risks and benefits of participation. This was particularly important for the current study because some of the research participants were underage. In this case, informed consent was obtained from their parents who were also recruited into the study. An informed consent form was drafted for this purpose. This detailed: contact details of the researcher, the purpose and time span of the study, responsibilities of participants and that of the researcher as the principal investigator plus her assistants, voluntary participation and rights of withdrawal and extent of confidentiality. Although students may have been referred to the counselor by their parents, teachers or other significant person, their right to voluntary participation was clearly explained to them and they were given the choice to enlist themselves as research participants or decline.

The second ethical principle adhered to was confidentiality and non-disclosure. This is one of the hallmarks of research and practice in the field of psychology and was fully adhered to. Although full anonymity of research participants may not be possible given the nature and context of the research as well as the stakeholders involved and their legitimate right to know what is going on, a number of measures were put in place to ensure that the identity of the research participants are protected and kept confidential as much as possible. Firstly, pseudonyms were used in place of actual names so as to protect the identity of the research participants when reporting the findings. According to Allen and Wiles (2015), pseudonyms are false names or aliases used to preserve the anonymity of research participants. This way, the identity of the research participants cannot be associated with the research findings in any way. In this respect, approval was sought from the research participants on the choice of pseudonyms.

Anyi (2017) argues that guidance and counselors are often confronted with an ethical dilemma concerning the principle of non-disclosure. This is reflected in his observation that while students who go for counseling expect that their secrets or privileged information be kept secret or confidential and not exposed to others, referral agents such as teachers, peers, parents, principals on their part expect counselors to divulge such information to them, failure to which, may raise suspicion of the activities and motives of the counselor. This notwithstanding, non-disclosure was maintained at all times and consent was obtained from research participants where confidential information is to be shared with relevant persons such as the child's parent, teacher or school administrator. Confidentiality also included taking data protection measures such as using pseudonyms and code phrases to identify participants, keeping case files under lock and key and electronic data files. Data of the participants were destroyed once the research work was complete.

Thirdly, although this study carried no known risk to research participants, contingency plans were made to cater for any expenses that were incurred by the research participants in order to participate in the study such as travel and venue costs directly attributable to their involvement in the study. Any discomfort or

potential emotional burden occasioned by the research was mitigated during the counseling sessions.

The nature of the study necessitated that the tripartite framework of guidance and counselling be experimented only on those students who volunteered themselves. For this reason, the study was exposed to self-selection bias hence the sample was not an accurate representation of the study population. An attempt was made to minimize this limitation by implementing the framework in three different public schools so as to reflect the diversity of the target population.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis entailed the assignment of codes and grouping of codes into themes. The theme of positive behavior change was the single overarching theme throughout the dataset. This is in line with the definitive purpose of guidance and counselling as expressed in extant literature (Bolu-Steve & Oredugba, 2017; Salgong et al., 2016) which characterize it as an intervention whose aim to achieve holistic development of students. This manifested through five predominant sub-themes namely: parental involvement, trust, self-awareness and appreciation, self-discipline and parent-child bonding

Parental Involvement

One of the most salient sub-themes apparent in the data was parental involvement, with a consensus established regarding the notion of improved relationship with parents. This was evident in the confession of most of the participants that the tripartite process helped a lot in increasing parents' understanding of the needs and concerns of their children. Parental involvement was particularly evident in the remarks of student 01 who reflected thus; *"It has helped a lot with the relationship, like nowadays, my mother concentrates a lot on what I want. Like books, revision books and other stuff."* This means that the tripartite model of guidance and counselling triggered parental interest in the education of their children, something which was initially non-existence for most of the students. This finding agrees with Anyi (2017) who submitted that one of the objectives of guidance and counseling is to work with significant others such as parents in the life of the student, helping them to understand the needs and problems of the student with the purpose of creating, arousing and sustaining their interest in and their understanding of the student's needs, problems and goals so that the student could be optimally helped to attain those goals, handle those problems and meet those needs. The finding affirms the efficacy of Field C of Majimbo's (2017b) tripartite framework of guidance and counselling wherein the counselor interacts with and empowers the parent to adopt a child-centered approach based on the notion that parents have a natural gravitation towards imposing their own expectations, preferences and aspirations on the children.

Further results showed that parental involvement was also made possible through increased understanding between students and their parents, which potentially increased their awareness of the challenges the students underwent in their education journey. It is surmised from these results that the enhanced parental involvement potentially set up the students for future academic performance due to the mutuality that accrue from parental involvement. This affirms Majimbo's (2017) tripartite framework which vouched for parental involvement in the educational life of students through mutual understanding and child-centered engagements. For instance, student 02 had the following to say; *"For me, it was helpful because it has increased the understanding between me and my parents. And I have been able to understand my needs and how they can be able to provide them."* This means that the experience fostered in the participants interpersonal skills that became handy in bettering their communication with parents.

The foregoing finding is in line with Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) who argued that the role of the counsellor is to propose activities that support parental involvement, which includes, among others, providing information to parents about their child's development, health, safety, or home conditions that can support student learning. Accordingly, there evidence of increased interest and investment of parents in the

education of their children. For example, student 03 testified; *"For now, my mum has enrolled me in a tuition in which am going throughout the week and it is helping me a lot and also she has also promised to buy the books that I need for my revision and other things."* This is an indication of immediate positive behavior change on the part of parents that may in the long-run affect the academic performance of the students positively.

A positive attitude towards the tripartite framework was also observed in the manner in which the participants appreciated it. The framework was noted to have a motivational effect on the students and vouched for its full implementation. For instance, student 03 had the following to say; *"What I've realized from most of my classmates, most of them are demotivated and so on. If the model were to be incorporated in to the school curriculum it will help a lot because you'll find that the parents will be able to understand the problems which their children are undergoing and also the teachers can be able to help the parents understand what their children are undergoing so as to find a solution ...."*

From the foregoing verbatim excerpt, it can be surmised that parental understanding is a precondition for students' opening up as understanding reduces negative self-talk and self-esteem of the students is enhanced. This may potentially be due to a reduction in negative energy that parents hitherto projected on their children. This finding is in line with the results of a study by Kiptala and Kipruto (2021) which investigated students' perception of the influence of guidance and counselling services on academic performance in Baringo County and found that students had a positive perception of guidance and counselling effect on school outcomes. In the present study, parental understanding also culminated into reduced ignorance of the educational requirements of their children. From the perspective of the participants, the sessions held with them was a success as it unlocked stalemates between the parents and their children and brokered positive behavior change of parents towards the children. For instance, student 05 expressed thus; *"...Some few topics that we talked during the session which involved my parents, which was a problem on my parents side, which changed. The counselling sessions were fruitful."*

Trust Enhancement

The sub-theme of trust was consistent across all the participants in the participants. This was apparent in the acknowledgement by most of the students that as a result of the sessions, they were more open and trusting than before. For instance, student 02 testified thus; *"Mostly I would keep things to myself and not open up to people because I normally don't trust people easily. Although I have friends, but there are those secrets that I keep from them in which when I came here and I found out that I can be more open to people and become more social because for me I don't let's say socialize with people a lot, so I became more social and more open to people."* This finding underscores the perspective of Akar and Sen (2017) that trust is at the very heart of counseling. This means that the process increased participants' social skills, which is a necessary ingredient for stress management and increased prospects of obtaining help. This was further evident in the testimonies of students who narrated that the experience activated their ability to be forthright in their social context. For example, Student 05 asserted; *"Right now I can even ask my friends about something that I need to be helped or even teachers so I feel open."* This finding is consistent with the argument advanced by Eremie and Ubulom (2016) who held that the role of the counselor is to create a climate of trust, genuine care and respect which provides a warm and accepting relationship.

Related to the foregoing results was the observation that the tripartite framework sessions built in participants courage that further enhanced their openness and ability to interact positively within their social environment. A case in point is student 06 who compared the state of affairs before and after going through the sessions thus; *"Before, I didn't see if it would work. I had a doubt, but when I continued coming to this session, at least I feel like am relieved.....since I never used to open up to anyone, but at least now I can be open since they are my peers. When we are studying there, we are combined with my friends, then when they open up, I also feel it's my time to open up and share my problems.... I have been able to improve on my*

confidence". This means that the tripartite model technically fostered peer counselling, whose benefits included confidence building through imitation. As implied in the verbatim results, the present study concurred with Majimbo's (2017b) empirical results which showed that attachment security is a necessary base that empowers students to seek out, interact and learn. This is also in line with Social Learning Theory (Alshobramy, 2019) based on Bandura's (1971) social modelling experiment which established that an individual can acquire new patterns of behavior simply by observing the behavior of others and imitating the observed behavior.

Self-awareness and Appreciation

The notion of enhanced self-awareness and appreciation was also evident across the participating students, most of whom were hitherto suffering from very low self-esteem. This was demonstrated in the instilled sense of positive mental attitude and life appreciation despite their realities as exhibited in the following verbatim example;"*Before I started the process I felt like I can't do anything constructive but now, I feel more positive about myself... It has encouraged me to have a positive attitude about myself and even it has encouraged me to appreciate life more and give me courage to talk to my teachers so that they can give me advice on the subjects*" (Student 04).

From the foregoing results, it can be inferred that participation in the tripartite framework of guidance and counselling bore results in terms of positivity, life appreciation and courage which are key ingredients for effective human functioning. Further testimonies of transformation also provided evidence of participants' transition from negative self-talk to development of self-courage. This was reflected in the testimony of student 07 who said; "*Now am feeling like I've gained some courage in reading but before, I did not have the courage.... Before, I was feeling like a loser but now I feel like I am going to the place there to talk...*" This means that with self-awareness came enhanced self-expression and socialization skills. As a result, some participants exuded confidence of being able to express themselves to the extent of making a public speech in front of a crowd. This was reflected in the comment of student 12 who affirmed thus; "*My esteem was not that very high. But now I have high self-esteem. I can express my feelings. Yes. I can even stand in front of people and talk to them.*" The results affirm elements of the SSS model which, according to Mariani et al. (2014) maintains that once students become more confident, they are willing to put forth more effort, which in turn leads directly to improved academic and social outcomes.

Related results revealed that the tripartite framework sessions enabled some students to become more self-aware and intentional about instigating positive change for their future. This was evident in the expression of student 08 thus: "*Before I was not that person who had interest in maybe looking at my future and knowing what I can do to brighten it. But now I understand it so well. And I know that one day I will make it.*" This is in keeping with the notion advanced by Anyi (2017) that counseling part of guidance and counseling entails a learning process in which a counselor helps students to understand themselves and their environment. It affirms Frank Parson's theory (Atli, 2016; Patton & McMahon, 2014) which, although does not emphasize the role of the parent in the therapy process, puts emphasis on student's recognition and clarification of own abilities, interests, emotions as well as necessities, conditions and opportunities.

Self-discipline

Most of the participants realized transformation in terms of self-discipline, most manifestly in better time management and focus on their studies. Time-management was a recurrent feature of the manifest expressions accruing from the post-hoc interviews. Respondents expressed that before the tripartite, they lacked focus and were often distracted by time-wasters. However, this changed after participating in the tripartite framework sessions. Sample verbatim excerpts of the expressions of the participants include the following: "*You know back then I used to be lazy. I didn't use to follow my timetable well. At least I have*

learnt how to plan my timetable well. I have developed it at least" (Student 06); "*I learned how to manage my time. Because before this I was just that person who could not seriously read or not spend my time on books*" (Student 8); and "*I am able to conduct and follow my calendar, which I have been making and not following to, that is, a lot of my time I've been spending just sleeping or doing nonsense things rather than taking my books and follow my timetable that is meant to for me to follow*" (Student 16).

From the verbatim comments, it is clear that self-direction, discipline and determination accrued from the students' participation in the tripartite framework of guidance and counselling sessions. This agrees with Adeusi et al. (2016) who argued that guidance and counselling aim to assist students to understand and clarify their views of life, and to learn to attain their self-determined goals through meaningful and well informed choices. The findings are in line with the concept of human agency element of SLT theory which, from the view point of Abdullah (2019), is characterized by the proposition that every individual has the capacity to self-direct by controlling their thinking process, their motivation and their action.

Parent-child bonding

Synthesis of the post-hoc interviews with participants also revealed that parent-child bonding was another sub-theme expressed by most respondents. Some of the participants were now able to spend quality time with their parents and this has led to a sense of closeness between students and their parents. Verbatim expressions demonstrate the positive effect of the tripartite model of guidance and counselling on parent-child relationship. A sampling of these included: "*Now, the relationship with my parents. It has improved I find time to talk with them, sit with them talk about my personal problems and they understand me*" (Student 4). "*There's been a change within the feeling because there's been a better relationship between me and my mom*" (Student 10); " *… It has even brought a lot of social communication with my parents. Very close now. We are very close to each other. And my parents, they has improved*" (Student 15).

The findings suggest that participation in the treatment fostered parent-child attachment, thereby affirming Chambers' (2017) emphasis that the attachment bond that exist between parents and their offspring is the most fundamental process of human development prospects. The evidence demonstrate what Zilberstein (2014) observed, that secure-attached children have confidence in their parents' availability and support because the parents are responsive and sensitive to the child's developmental needs. It can be argued that the parent-child bonding that improved after participation in the tripartite framework of guidance and counselling conferred in the students' sense of emotional security which potentially served as a launching pad for future academic success. This agrees with Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) perspective that concept of safety and emotional security is at the heart of parent-student attachment relationship, which is found to play a role in the education of adolescent students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study leads to the conclusion that the influence of tripartite framework of guidance and counseling on student outcomes in selected public secondary Schools in Kenya was positive and compelling. Implementation of the framework resulted in immediate transformative behavior change that potentially set the students up not just for long-run future academic success but potentially holistic life outcomes. This was reflected in the positive behavior change in the key parties. Parental involvement enhanced parent-child bonding which increased attachment security. The treatment also led to the cultivation of a positive mental attitude to life and education, triggering self-awareness and appreciation and activating their potential for self-discipline and direction. Incorporation of the tripatite framework of guidance and counseling into the school curriculum was endorsed, and this should be adapted moving forward. In order to ascertain the suitability of the model across all public schools, replication of the study in other public secondary schools especially within a rural setting is recommended.

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