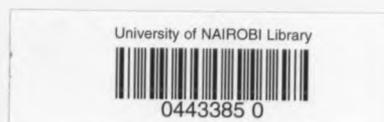


**STATUS OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING IN SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF LAIKIPIA DISTRICT**

**BY  
JOYCE WACUKA WOTUKU**

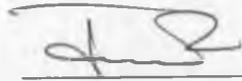
**A PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTERS OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL  
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**SEPTEMBER 2002**



## Declaration

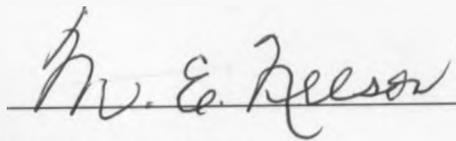
This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.



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Wotuku Joyce Wacukah

This project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.



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September 2002

## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my sons Crispus and Collins for their perseverance for my sake.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to thank my supervisor Dr. Mari E. Nelson for her help, suggestion and advice throughout the time I worked on this project.

I am also grateful to the entire staff of the Department of Education Administration and Planning University of Nairobi for their encouragement in the course of my study. Special thanks to Mr. Maina for his help with the analysis aspect of my work.

I must record my appreciation to my classmates Mr. Wilson Kamina, Zachary Njagi and James Ireri for their companionship and encouragement.

I owe very special thanks to my husband Dr Charles Kanyiri for his care and concern all the way. I am equally very appreciative and most grateful to all the students who willingly participated in this study.

Finally I thank all those who prayed for me, those who typed the work and many though unmentioned by name helped and encouraged me on the way.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
KCSE	-	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
MOE & HRD	-	Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
NCOP	-	National committee on educational objectives and policies
8-4-4-	-	System of education in Kenya which represents single years in primary school, four years in secondary and four years in university.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent and effectiveness of students counseling resources amongst secondary students in Laikipia district and the effect of sex and year of the students on the problems experienced by the students preference for counseling resources and attitudes towards seeking psychological help. In doing so the study had two broad objectives namely to assess the problems faced by secondary school students and to assess the attitude of the students toward guidance and counseling.

A sample of 400 students from Laikipia district was used in this study by students feeling questionnaires. The questionnaires provided data for analysis for five hypotheses. The data collected was tested by means of chi-square test. Frequency tables and descriptive statistics were also used to present and analyze the data.

The results obtained indicated that the number of problems students experienced was relatively independent of the sex of the student, but showed a definite stratification relating to the year of study. This was the same case as far as awareness of resources and attitudes towards psychological help was concerned.

The study findings indicated that the current counseling services in general need to be increased and those resources, for which students have a high affinity to, should be expanded. It was also recommended that the means of increasing students' awareness of available resources and the locations of those resources should be established and developed as well as improvements made on the current ones. Due to the broad nature of the study undertaken it is recommended that this study be used as a basis for further studies, dwelling in depth on the topics covered here in.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

The reality of life is that there are times when the stress from within and without cannot be sorted out clearly enough by an individual person. In such times the assistance an individual can receive from others is unavoidable. There are times when the help of non-professionals, such as friends, fail. Parents' advice and counsel may become vital in such periods but some problems may be complicated and parents may be too handicapped in giving the necessary assistance. It is in such periods that the assistance of professionals may be useful.

Wanjohi (1990) states that wherever the teaching – learning process takes place, there are attendant problems and needs. Such needs require attention of a specialist in the school.

Secondary school students' age range between thirteen and twenty years. This age, which succeeds childhood but proceeds adulthood, has been referred to as the age of adolescence. Psychologists hold that during this period the development changes that one undergoes are very intense. Anyona (1989) observes that these changes cause confusion and restlessness to the adolescents. The consequences of this confusion and restlessness lead to some problems since during this period one departs from known ways of behaviour identified with him/her to a more disturbing manner of behaviour.

According to Liniffin (1996), the pupil is the content of all school activities. The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MOE and HRD) (1999) concur with this statement because it states that pupils are the key stakeholders within a school. Managing them effectively is important in the overall management of a school. The MOE and HRD observes that the establishment of an effective and efficient guidance and counseling committee is one way in which the headteacher can manage the pupils effectively.

In Kenya, formal guidance and counseling can be traced back a few years before independence. This is because there was the realization that independence was about to come and the young nation was to start preparing for manpower development. For this reason provision of vocational guidance was seen to be necessary. Kilonzo (1980) noted that at the end of 1962, the Ministry of Labour in conjunction with the Ministry of Education decided on some ways to give vocational guidance with the help of career masters. This marked the beginning of guidance and counseling in Kenyan schools and a career handbook of secondary school leavers was launched.

In July 1971, the guidance and counseling unit in the Ministry of Education was established. However, the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (Republic of Kenya 1976) recommended the expansion of counseling services within the Ministry of Education. The committee further pointed out that guidance and counseling was expected to play an increasingly important role in the education system. The totality of the growth and development of the youth depended on guidance and

counseling to ensure the youth are appropriately integrated into the values and productive activities of the society.

The committee observed that the current guidance and counseling services of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (M.O.E.S.T) had been traditionally aimed at guiding students to various career requirements. However the committee stressed that guidance and counseling services must be concerned with the overall development of the person and not just career guidance.

Guidance and counseling programs in the Kenyan secondary school is compounded by a multitude of problems as high lighted by the government policy-documents, print media and various studies carried out in this area. Some of these problems are limited time to offer guidance and counseling services to students, lack of training for counseling personnel, lack of training materials and facilities, lack of parental involvement and support among others.

Gitonga (1999) in an attempt to establish the problems encountered by headteachers in the guidance and counseling programme, found that one of the problems was lack of adequate time. She established that few schools had specific time allocated for this purpose. Respondents in her study who were headteachers of secondary schools in Meru Central District stated that they found it absolutely difficult to set specific time for guidance and counseling due to the tight schedule of the 8-4-4 system of education.

Aduda (1995) highlights the problems that hinders effective guidance and counseling in schools is the fact that workshops and seminars for counseling and guidance are few and are carried out after long durations. Observers argue that counselors need to be appraised on the developments in counseling to cope with changing times. The guidance and counseling unit of the MOE is charged with the responsibility of organizing in service courses, seminars, and conferences for heads of schools and teachers counselors.

Amuko (1984) was able to establish through an interview method of collecting data that at the time of the study done in Kisumu District the guidance and counseling unit offices based in the region faced a severe shortage of trained personnel, lacked the necessary funds and had no transport to visit schools to see how guidance and counseling programmes were being conducted.

Gitonga (1999) investigated problems encountered by headteachers in the guidance and counseling programs. However, findings revealed that student-related problems were the main problem encountered by the headteachers during their endeavor to develop the guidance and counseling program. The study established that students were generally unwilling to admit that they had problems. Students had a wrong notion of what guidance and counseling was about. The students were afraid of being seen with the counseling teacher in the counseling room. The findings are in agreement with Kombo's study the sample consisted of 310 students, 13 parents and head teachers and guidance and counseling teachers from Nairobi Province. The investigations revealed that the students were not free to consult their teachers. Eighty five percent of the

students, fifty percent of the head teachers and forty five percent of the guidance and counseling teachers were of the view of that students were not free to consult their teachers.

As a result of these findings the respondents were asked to cite reasons for the students attitude. Among the cited reasons was lack of confidentiality among the students to approach teachers. This response was cited by fifty four point two percent of the students, forty nine point five percent of the parents, fifty percent of the guidance and counseling teachers and fifty percent of the head teachers.

According to Mwangi (1999) the attitude held by students towards seeking help determines how effectively counseling resources are used. Students with positive attitudes towards seeking help are more likely to seek counseling than those with somewhat negative ones. An understanding of students' attitude towards seeking counseling would contain help in modifying them.

Guidance and counseling services have been suggested as useful in facilitating school administration by dealing with problems of indiscipline in secondary schools. Guidance and counseling is reported to be the most preferred and most effective method of maintaining school discipline as compared to the use of corporal punishment, suspension and expulsion.

Ayieko (1988) justified the use of guidance and counseling as a method of solving discipline problems by pointing out that counseling makes students feel closer to the teacher thereby establishing a friendly relationship. It enables the teacher to get to the

root of the problem and therefore it has a long lasting effect and the client student has the freedom to talk and to realize the consequences of his/her behaviour.

The Kenya educational institutions should aim at producing youth who are academically equipped and satisfied as well as confident in themselves as individuals and their future life. Thus, this calls for serious counseling in all Kenyan schools. The youth need attention from all the areas of counseling in educational guidance/institutions. An interplay of certain factors determine how effective counseling resources are. While some have a greater effect than others, some of them are unimportant. This study will investigate three of these factors namely, students problems, preference from counseling resources and attitude towards guidance and counseling. These three factors will clearly show the status of Guidance and Counseling in Laikipia.

The first factor of concern was the problems students encounter for which counseling services need to be provided. It was prudent to begin by considering the prevailing problems that potential clients are likely to be faced with before an attempt to supply counseling services. In fact, since life is lived in the world of changes, it is important to keep constantly reviewing these problems so as to keep counseling services current and relevant. For a student there is need to solve their perception on their problems and on the available help given. Research has reported incomplete view of students in this area.

Another issue was preference for counseling resources. The person the student would approach with various problems is an important factor. It is a fundamental requirement that a client has confidence in the counselor for the counseling process to commence and proceed profitably. How much and for what problems a counselor is preferred to a large extent indicates how much confidence the client has on the counselor. With this knowledge we can seek to enhance confidence in the counselor and effectiveness in the counseling services.

Tinsley and Brown (1982), postulated that college students help-seeking preferences are functions of the nature of the problems, characteristics of the helpers and those of the potential help seekers. In another study Magoon (1974) pointed out that students typically seek somewhat different help depending on whether their concerns are of career or personal nature. These and other studies related to counselor preference have been extensively carried out in Western settings but no such studies have been reported in Kenya.

Thirdly, the attitude held by the students towards seeking help also determines how effective counseling will be. An understanding of student attitude towards seeking counseling would certainly help in modifying their behaviour. Studies done in the West have identified differential attitudes towards psychological help.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

According to the annual report of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (1998) only a few districts had established guidance and counseling programs in secondary schools. The report also pointed out that the failure to establish guidance and

counseling programs was probably due to the fact that officials entrusted with the responsibility to establish these programs are few and they give priorities to teaching over counseling.

Evidently, there has been little noticeable change with regard to counseling services in Kenya. It is still common practice for the “designated” counselors to perform the duties of a regular teacher in addition to teaching and therefore slighting the functions of counselors. On the other hand this is not surprising since most of the counselors are trained not as counselors but as teachers. Given the freedom to choose between counseling and teaching such a person would generally give priorities to teaching.

According to Maslow (1970) meeting students’ physiological and psychological needs is an important prerequisite to effective learning. Unfortunately, very little has been done in this field. Recently the Ministry of Education Science and Technology has encouraged teachers to use guidance and counseling in dealing with student since corporal punishment has been outlawed.

Studies done at different periods and using different samples have come up with research findings which show students having a somewhat negative attitude towards guidance and counseling in their schools. Despite this negative attitude exhibited by students it is still stressing that guidance and counseling are critically needed by the student. In Laikipia the problem may be rampant and this is what the researcher wants to establish.

Amukoa (1984) observes that the most striking aspect about guidance and counseling services is that it is mostly confined to form four students especially with regard to career choices. In such cases the students are provided with the information for further education, training and employment. Teachers in such circumstances assume wrongly that students in lower forms do not require guidance and counseling.

Wanjohi (1990) noted that guidance and counseling is important to students on personal matters, self understanding and how to relate with other people. He also stressed that the counselors should extend their services to all students in the school as this might improve the level of awareness in guidance and counseling in the school. This study will target the form four students and form two students as the respondents in the questionnaire. The form four respondents are chosen for this study for a specific reason. First, it is the senior most class and has valuable experience which could enrich the study. Secondly the students are preparing for the national examinations known as KCSE (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education). The basic purpose of secondary examination is to select qualified students for university education. Competition for the admission to the seven public universities have increasingly become stiff due to limited vacancies in universities the form four students are under pressure from relatives and themselves to do well in school. Indeed the students are aware that their performance in examinations has an impact on their future academic and occupational progress. In this field form four students are confronted apart from their usual daily personal problems, one would expect anxiety level to be disproportionately higher than other times in their development. While a moderate anxiety level is a necessary motivation for any learning process, usually high levels of anxiety can be disastrous to the students and the learning

process. (Reilly and Lewis 1983). The form two respondents have been chosen for this study as for comparison purpose and in the sense that they are undergoing adolescence (emotional, physical and sociological changes). The form two's are also not very new to the school compared to the form ones and therefore they can understand the school and the counseling department better.

Kenya is currently facing a national crisis of unknown magnitude chief among them being HIV/AIDS. The youth especially, the adolescent, are very vulnerable to the scourge and school administrators will need to ensure that guidance and counseling department in their schools are fully operational and popular among students.

### **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to determine the status of guidance and counseling in Laikipia District. The study addressed three main issues:

- (i) The problems students experience
- (ii) Students preference for the available counselors
- (iii) Students' attitude towards guidance and counseling.

Broadly speaking the study hoped to achieve the above through:

First, it attempted to gather information on students' problems and by so doing it will contribute to the world of knowledge on counseling. The study also investigated whether sex of students and age had any significant influence on the number of problems experienced. Secondly, the study investigated whether the students had any preference for the available counselors (help givers). Thirdly, the study investigated the students' attitude towards guidance and counseling.

## **1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study attempted to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) Investigate their preference for counseling services among the many available help givers.
- (ii) Assess the attitude of the students towards guidance and counseling in their respective schools.
- (iii) Assess the problems faced by secondary school students from Laikipia District.

## **1.5 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

The following null hypotheses were generated for testing in the study

- Ho1 There is no significant differences between male and female students in the number of problems experienced.
- Ho2 There is no significant differences between form four and two students in the number of problems experienced.
- Ho3 There is no significant difference between male and female student preference for most preferred counselors.
- Ho4 There is no significant differences between form four and two students preference for the most preferred counselors
- Ho5 There is no significance difference between male and female students attitude towards seeking help.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The need for guidance and counseling services to the students cannot be over emphasized. With the introduction of 8-4-4 and the banning of corporal punishment in

schools, social, academic, career, and discipline issues will weigh even more heavily on students. Policy makers, administrators and counselors will have to prepare to meet these needs.

It is hoped that these different groups will benefit from the findings of this study in that it will give them a picture of the outcome of the policies, methods and structure they have used in the past. They will be able to evaluate their performance and if necessary effect change.

The study will also benefit policy makers, head teachers and teachers in obtaining feedback of students' perception towards guidance and counseling. The result of the study may help to suggest measures which should be taken at all levels in schools to ensure effective counseling for the students.

Apart from adding to the world of the knowledge in guidance and counseling services in Kenyan secondary school, it will also act as a provocation and spring board from which other researchers can carry out further investigations in the field guidance and counseling.

The findings may particularly benefit the guidance and counseling unit in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in obtaining feedback on the adequacy and reference of guidance and counseling services offered in secondary schools. This will help policy makers to improve the quality and quantity of guidance and counseling programs in secondary schools.

## **1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Since this study used an ex-post facto research design, a major limitation is that a direct control of independent variables by the researcher is not possible. This is because their manifestations had already occurred or are inherently not manipulable. Therefore the independent variables could be scientifically controlled.

The research was conducted in one administrative District of Kenya, which is rural in setting. The rural setting is not likely to reflect the social class structure of the entire country. The findings of the study will therefore need to be applied to adolescents in other places with some caution. The study has to be completed within a certain time and financial constraints may curtail the extent to which the study will have been stretched.

## **1.8 THE DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Kenya as a country has secondary schools, which are spread all over the 8 provinces. Ideally it would be appropriate to include all the secondary schools in Kenya in this study. However, this is not possible because of limited financial resources available and constraints such as the time frame within which this study is to be completed. As a result secondary schools in Laikipia District are selected for the study. It will further be limited to form four and form two classes. Therefore conclusions may not be generalized to all schools in Kenya. The study is mainly concerned with the problems students experience, their preference for the available counseling services and their attitude towards guidance and counseling. The attitude of the headteachers, teachers and counselors will not be studied because they are not within the scope of study.

## 1.9 BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study assumes that: the information to be given by the students in the questionnaire is true, students will not influence each other in answering the questionnaire item, secondary schools in Laikipia have operational guidance and counseling departments. The sample will be a fair representation of the secondary students in Laikipia District.

## 1.10 DEFINITION OF SIGNIFICANT TERMS

<b>Counselor</b>	-	Any person officially recognized and working in a secondary school, concerned with the accepting the responsibilities of assisting students on their needs and problems.
<b>Counseling process</b>	-	What actually takes place in the interaction between a counselor and a counselee at any one encounter and in the overall helping session.
<b>Adolescence</b>	-	It is the period following the advent of puberty and extending to the time of what Ausubel (1954) called "executive independence", meaning the time when one does things for self. Adolescence is therefore a transitional period marking the change from childhood to adulthood.
<b>Attitude</b>	-	Refers to positive or negative pre-disposition of thinking, feeling, perceiving and behaving in a certain way towards a given situation.
<b>Guidance</b>	-	Refers to help, advice and information given to students to enable them to make their decisions on educational and vocational matters.
<b>Counseling Resources-</b>		All the personnel involved in giving any type of counseling whether professional or just lay people.

### **1.11 ORGANIZATION OF THE REST OF THE STUDY**

Chapter one consisted of introduction, background and statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and hypothesis of the study, significance, limitations, delimitations, basic assumption of the study and definition of significant terms.

Chapter two consisted of literature review. The review includes background of the study, historical background of guidance and counseling programs in Kenyan schools, problems students experience, preference for the counseling services in secondary schools and concepts of the attitude students have towards guidance and counseling.

Chapter three describes the research methodology that was used. The research methodology included, research design, target population, sample and sampling procedure, research instrumentations, data collection procedure and data analysis techniques. Chapter four consisted of analysis of the data obtained from completed questionnaire .Chapter five consisted of summary, conclusions and recommendations pertaining to this study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

The years just before independence in Kenya saw a great need for the preparation of different categories of manpower to fill up various positions that would soon become vacant after independence both in the public and private sector: The year soon after independence saw considerable expansion in both thought and action on guidance and counseling particularly in schools, as Kilonzo (1980) notes.

At the end of 1962, the Ministry of Labour in conjunction with the ministry of education decided on some ways to give vocational guidance with the help of career masters. In 1964 the employment service Department in the ministry of labour was strengthened in order to equip the service to implement as policy for the progressive introduction of vocational guidance (PP.415)

The found Report on the High Level Manpower Requirement and Resources in Kenya (1964/1970) recommended that all career masters and school libraries be supplied with a comprehensive career guide book.(Kilonzo 1980). This was followed by vocational guidance pamphlets supplied by the Employment Service Department of the Ministry of Labour.

In 1970, a career guidance book to aid secondary school leavers was produced and updated in 1971 by the Kenyanization of personnel bureau.

A key step forward was the establishment of the guidance and counseling section in the Ministry of Education: This was brought to promote guidance and counseling in

secondary schools by organizing seminars for head teachers and updating the guidance handbook. It also helped in recognizing and appointing teachers as counselors:

As can be noted this emphasis for counseling was primarily in secondary schools. This had been prompted by the huge number of unemployed school leavers since unemployment for university graduates was virtually unheard of. According to the report, Republic of Kenya (1977) handbook for Schools, Guidance and Counseling Programme in Secondary Schools was started to cater for all students with social, personal, psychological, educational and vocational problems:

### **2.3 PROBLEMS STUDENTS EXPERIENCE IN RELATION TO GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

Although some of the research done in Kenya reveal some of the problems experienced by students, none of them deals directly with investigations into the problems of secondary schools students. According to Wall (1962) the school is an Institution which is charged with a duty of academic preparation for social members. The school should therefore provide a smooth learning atmosphere and channels for achievement for all its members:

“Particularly in adolescence and under some circumstances the school may indeed become even more important than the home not merely in the acquisition of formal attainment but in broader educational growth in the shaping of personality.”

This clearly shows that education is an important factor for the future of the citizens of any country to those who undergo its process. As the school has a great influence on

the learning of students, its equally may either have negative or positive influence on them.

Pidgeon and Plowden (1972) found out the effect of teacher attitude and teacher expectation on pupil achievement and aspiration as one which operates either for the release or for the inhibition of intellectual powers and potentials. They summarize their findings into the following basic needs which every teacher requires.

- i. Positive and encouraging attitude
- ii. Teaching methods that capitalize the particular relative strengths of individual pupils.
- iii. An adequate and comprehensive system of educational guidance and record keeping
- iv. A content of teaching which is designed to stimulate and to feel the interests of the pupils.
- v. A school authority structure that permits and encourages individual development and offers opportunities of responsibility to all pupils.

Cole (1954) in Kebaya (1987) grouped adolescent problems into the following eight areas:-

Emotional, maturity, establishment of heterosexual interests, general social maturity, emancipation from home control, intellectual maturity, the beginning of economic independence, leisure time and establishment of an interest in general principles conduct.

“A problem exists any time a person is in one situation, wants to be in another, but does not know how to get there,” (Dixon 1981). All human beings therefore do experience

problems at one time or another. Secondary Students are no exception and as Lamb and Clark (1974) have noted, one important function of a School is to identify Students needs and to develop services to meet them.

Mack (1979) investigated the type of problems facing students in Nigeria and reported that many of these problems were culture based. In another study he cited cowardice as a major problem. He also noted that students were given the lowest possible status and were rudely treated by administrations.

To my knowledge, no studies have been done on students' problems in Kenyan schools. However, Kebaya (1987) asked high school students to rank eight problem areas. He reported that school work, personality and educational vocational planning were ranked as highest concerns. Anyona (1989) established that both boys and girls had psychological counseling needs in the following areas: Relationships with teachers, relationships with family, irritability, social confidence and relationship with peer and health. He further observed that both boys and girls have more counseling needs in the area of social confidence.

Kabutu (1987) noted that some of the problems affecting students were great influence of peer and unstable homes. He further found that 45% of the respondents read with a lot of interference or did not read at all at the evening. This is a pointer of thorough educational guidance services needed for students in Kenyan educational systems. Anyona ( 1989 ) observed that schools through educational guidance are expected to help individual students to be aware do their capabilities and develop them to their fullest extent in order to enable them to attain higher educational training opportunities.

Baken and Widorf (1964) observed that the first year of secondary school is generally acknowledged as a particularly stressful period during which the students face problems and pressures, many of which are related to the transition from home to boarding school. The move to secondary school often brings about a transition related crisis. Those who emerge from this crisis successfully will have acquired mastery and competence while those who fail experience psychological distress which may have long term effects. Other problems explained by new students include developmental challenges like making friends, living away from home and becoming autonomous (Walton, 1968). In summary research makes it clear that the accurate identification of clients needs in counseling is of crucial importance to the effectiveness of the counseling process, however the perception of the needs by those who give and those who receive counseling tends to differ.

At a school setting students seem to emphasize social type of problems, as priorities while the professionals would tend to emphasize the personal types. Some problems are related to time in school. The identification of clients problems, however is a wider issue than can be tackled within real counseling sessions. It seems that the counselors must make attempts to understand the potential client and his environment long before any counseling commences.

#### **2.4 PREFERENCE FOR COUNSELING RESOURCES**

The most important element in counseling is the facilitative relationship established between the counselor and the client (Cattle, 1970). The facilitation of personal growth

takes place through utilizing the inter-related technique of psychological assessment as well as the effective communication between the client and the counselor. Before the client sees the counselor, various factors will have influenced the ease with which rapport can be established. It has been established that the counselee's preconceptions about the counseling process and the counselor may serve as a barrier to the process. At least they often determine the nature of the first session (Johnson 1970). Thus, the preference of the client for the counselor is a major factor in determining the commencement, enrichment and outcome effectiveness of the facilitative relationship since client expectations and preferences can be changed to provide good counseling relationships (Gladstein, 1969), counselors have benefited from the examination of this factor.

Ziemelis (1974) examined how the initial counseling interview, process and outcome were affected by assigning clients to a more preferred or less preferred counselor. He reported that clients who receive their preferred counselor had more favourable outcomes than did those with less preferred assignments.

Various factors have been highlighted by researchers as influencing client preferences for counselors. Strong and Matrooss (1973), declared that the "public image" of mental health services providers was a critical determinant in potential clients consideration about the best sources from which to seek help. This image is a creation of several factors such as the title of the help givers perceived expertise, attractiveness, confidentiality of helper, the sex, age, race and attire of the help given.

Another factor influencing the preference for the help giver is the clients problem. Students typically seek out somewhat different help given depending upon whether their concerns are of career or personal nature. (Tinsley and Brown, 1982). In their review of literature on student counseling they found that research suggested two things:

- (i) Different types of problems are viewed as appropriate for different types of help providers.
- (ii) The nature of the client's problems influence his or her own help-seeking tendencies

Research on potential help providers showed that students perceive potential help-givers quite differently. Those different perceptions may be related to students tendency to seek help from various help providers judging from different patterns of problems the subjects reported they would consult or counselor. Tinsley and Benton (1978) reported that students were more likely to seek assistance from a peer counselor than from a clinical psychologist for personal problems. They also reported that students preferred attributes in a helper that they might most reasonably expect to find in a peer or close friends. This tendency of students to prefer helpers with qualities they would find in a close friend were also reported by Parham and Tinsely (1980).

Another factor is the information the client has about the counselor. This information has been shown to influence how the counselor is perceived. Porche and Banikiotes (1982) reported that counselors portrayed as attitudinally dissimilar to the clients were rated significantly lower in terms of attractiveness, trust worthiness, expertness and social attraction than were counselors portrayed as attitudinally similar on whose no

attitude information was presented. These findings support those reported by Good (1975) that attitude would contribute to positive counselor perception and preference.

Other studies have indicated that the way clients perceive the expertness of the counselor is affected by information available to them about the counselor's status and experience (Brooks 1974). According to McCarthy (1982) the status of the counselor affects clients' perceptions such that "experienced paraprofessionals were seen as more attractive and trustworthy than professional counselors". She also found that clients' evaluations of a counselor's expertness and attractiveness may be related to their initial expectations about the counselor e.g. clients may expect a paraprofessional to be somewhat less expert and more like themselves. This would account for rating in attractiveness and trustworthiness but not for expertness for the paraprofessionals. A professional counselor would be expected to be more expert but dissimilar to the clients. These expectations would explain the higher ratings of the professional counselor on expertness but not attractiveness and trustworthiness.

Mckee and Smouse (1983) found that high status counselors (PhD with extensive experience) were perceived as higher and more desirable than low status counselors (trainees with little experience). According to the social influence model, high status counselors were perceived to be more valid sources of assertion. Research has also demonstrated that low and high counselor credibility can influence clients' perceptions of the counselors where counselors with high credibility are perceived as significantly more expert than those counselors with low credibility (Figliolo, 1953).

Furthermore evidence suggests that perceived counselors expertise', attractiveness and trustfulness do aid in altering clients attitude towards the counselor and the help anticipated (Hepper 1982)

Sneider and Hughes (1970) asked college students to indicate their perceptions of six college help givers using a long list of objectives and their preferences for those same help givers for nine problems. Students' preferences largely depend on whether the problems were personal, social or educational-vocational. They observed that female students were more likely to discuss vocational problems with help givers than male students. Thus as researchers have reported, males and females perceive themselves as having different concerns and to some degree different resources available for help.

Feldstein (1979) assessed the effect of counselors and clients' gender and counselors' sex role in clients' perceptions. She concluded that the counselors' role had greater impact than gender of counselors. She reported that male clients not only experienced the greatest satisfaction with counselors of feminine sex role orientation but also that they had the highest regard for such counselors. Female clients were reported to have the greatest satisfaction with the highest regard for the male counselors.

Banikiotes (1981) found that women expressed more comfort disclosing to females than males and to egalitarian than traditional counselors. Further research findings on male female counselor preferences have shown that female students prefer counselors who are seen to be competent, more knowledgeable, and more able to influence. Research on gender preference has reported discrepant findings with some reporting higher male

ratings and others reporting higher female ratings on attributes such as friendliness, trustworthiness, competence, expertness and attractiveness. It is thus inconclusive

Byrne, London and Reserves (1969) observed that physical attractiveness of a counselor influence the way clients perceive them and their possible help giving, creating a stereotypical belief that “what is beautiful is good”. Their study reported that physical attractiveness subjects were thought to have socially desirable characteristics. Goldman and Lewis (1977) reported significant correlation between attractiveness and rating of social skills. Men, especially seem to attribute more positive response to a physically attractive woman (Barocas and Karoly, 1972).

Lewis and Welsh (1975) in their replication of this study with a female counselor concluded that when counselor is perceived as physically attractive, this perception may exert influence on perceptions of other counselor attributes, on the development of the counseling relationship.

Gary (1980) in this study with Scottish students found that students do not regard teachers as helpful for personal problems. Students most frequently mentioned parents as source of help. Students were more likely to mention counseling staff if they were prompted than if they were not. Counseling staff were not seen as more affective in dealing with problems than were other members of staff. In general, counseling staff were seen as more helpful in the case personal/familiar problems than other staff.

Kebaya (1987) in his study reported, that for personal- emotional problems, parents, self-actualization and students' friends were listed as highest in that order. While for educational-vocational problems, teachers, counselor, school teacher, head teacher and self-consultation were most preferred in that order.

Another factor on preference for counselors has to do with the dressing of counselors. Research has demonstrated that dress is prime importance especially to adolescents in their social interaction. (Kelly and Eicher, 1970). It can therefore be inferred that counselors' dress, especially among adolescent students, would merit preferences for counselors. Some researches e.g. Drummond (1975) have suggested that dress is related to client evaluations of counselor attraction. Others link counselors' dress to perceived counselor expertise.

Litteral (1982) reported that students differentiated their preferences for counselors based on dress. Students in their study preferred counselors dressed in fashionable, coordinated up to date three piece suits, especially for vocational concerns. These counselors were perceived as knowledgeable about what they were talking about. Students therefore saw them as good people with whom to discuss future plans. The association of a three piece suit with the preferred counselor reflect on the thinking that this type of dress indicates success and knowledge about the world of work particularly white collar jobs. The counselor who dressed in old-fashioned attire was the least preferred and was seen to convey an image of one who does not know what was going on and described as being too old for a counselor. The researcher pointed out that the

value of age held by the subject's cultures and how major career future plans were, could be important variables in considering the outcomes reported.

Tinsely (1982) in his attempt to give shape to the existing counselor preference research, suggested that students help-seeking preferences could be seen as a function of the

- (a) nature of problem
- (b) characteristics of the potential help giver.

We see this as an agreement broad outline still noting that research in this area is extensive, varied and still incomplete.

## **2.5 ATTITUDE TOWARDS SEEKING HELP**

Counseling can be conceptualized as a social influence process (Strong 1968). Like other interpersonal relationships, it involves both indirect and direct attempts by one person (the counselor) to influence the thoughts and actions of another (client), (McKee, 1983). Factors exist that enhance or diminish a counselors' ability to influence a client towards change. Since helping another human being is basically a process of enabling that person to grow in the direction of his choice (Branment, 1973), unless a person is ready for counseling it is difficult to work with him. This readiness cannot be created by the counselor or anyone else, though they may promote or retard counseling readiness. It must come from within the person. Indeed it is a widely held view that successful counseling of necessity involves some degree of voluntary client participation (Patterson, 1974). How a client perceives counseling may serve as a

barrier to the process. This perception is derived from his prior experiences in or out of counseling and the nature of his concerns, and may even keep him from seeking help.

An independent influence on both expectations and pre-conceptions about counseling is whether or not one has sought counseling before (Johnson, 1970). If a person has had poor prior counseling his attitude towards counseling and seeking it will most likely tend to be negative individuals who have had good experience in counseling view the process positively. It is likely that they will think of counseling when they face inordinate personal difficulties in the school.

For one without prior counseling experience, pre conceptions develop from a combination of things. These include what one has read, what his friends have told him, what he has seen on T.V. and what the social expectation is in his social environments (Johnson, 1970).

Dadfar and Lander (1982) reported that sex and educational level were not uniquely significant in predicting attitudes. This is in line with the results reported by Lorian (1974) and Levin (1972). They further reported that male and female non-American students had more similar attitudes than male and female American students.

Others however have reported gender as playing more significant role in determining both the attitudes towards seeking help and the tendency to actually seek this type of help.

Good and Dell (1989) reported that there appears to be distinct differences in psychological help seeking tendencies between the two sexes, as two-thirds of all clients seeking psychological help are female. Collien (1982) noted that one in three women, compared to one in seven men seek services from professionals at one point during the life time.

Wanjohi's (1990) study revealed that guidance and counseling services which are relatively new in Kenyan schools are viewed with skepticism by the students. He stressed that it was the responsibility of counselors to create awareness among the students on the importance of these services. Counselors should try to perceive the student's need from the students' perspective. Anyona (1989) from his study observed that there were no effective guidance and counseling services being offered in the schools.

Kombo, (1998) observed that students have a somewhat negative attitude towards guidance and counseling services. He urged the teachers and parents to change their approaches while offering guidance and counseling services because it was found that the parents and teachers overrelied on punishment and warning during their guidance and counseling sessions. This approach was also found to be retrogressive since students were not given an opportunity to air their views.

Gitonga, (1999) study revealed that students generally were unwilling to admit that they had problems . They refused to open up and became very un co-operative. She observed that the students had a wrong notion of what guidance and counseling was all

about. Students were afraid of being seen with the counseling teacher or in the counseling room. Students in short displayed a negative attitude towards guidance and counseling. Some share the conception and that it is an admission of weakness to seek counseling. Moser (1963) states that counseling attempts to reserve and foster the students independence and responsibility.

In school settings researchers have reported that the title of the help given is related to help seeking attitudes. In these settings perceived confidentiality could also influence student help seeking attitudes. Confidentiality in educational setting is associated with a counselor who is accountable to the headteacher in assessing the problems faced by students while at the same time acting as an agent of the student in providing counseling.

Research in student help-seeking attitudes is neither adequate nor lacking in contradictions. An example is the difference between actual user of counseling resources and a non-user as reflected by their attitudes. Berdie and Stein (1996) reported that prior counseling experience greatly affected help-seeking. Carska don (1974) reported that the differences in responses of help seekers and non-seekers were more of a function of student adjustment.

Tracey (1984) reported no significant correlation between students and attitudes towards seeking help and help seeking behaviour itself. But Fischer and turner (1970) developed a scale to measure attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help consisting of 29 items, collapsed into four factors namely recognition of need for help,

stigma tolerance, interpersonal openness and confidence in the helper. They administered it to students and responded that it discriminated actual users of psychological help from non-users vary ably with a test-retest reliability of 0.83. The research reported on attitudes in help-seeking is lacking in structure and conclusiveness. There is need of a thorough review to give it a temporary structure and identify general trends

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three describes the procedures that were used in this study to collect and analyze the data. It was organized under the following sub-headings: Research design, the target population, the sample and sampling procedure, research instruments validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis procedures.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The ex-post facto research design was found appropriate for this study because it is recommended for social researchers. Ex-post facto research is a method of eliciting possible antecedents of events, which have happened and cannot, because of this fact, be engineered or manipulated by the researcher (Cohan, 1986). Guidance and counseling programmes have been going on in schools.

Kerlinger (1973) supports the use of the ex-post facto design and asserts that much ex-post-facto research design must be done in psychology, sociology and education simply because many research problems in the social sciences do not lend themselves to experimental inquiry. The ex-post facto research design however has many weaknesses. Such weaknesses include the inability to manipulate independent variables, lack of power to randomize respondents on independent variables, of interest and risk of improper interpretation of results (Kerlinger 1973). Due to these shortcomings the

researcher should always treat the result and the interpretation of the data of ex-post facto investigations with great care and caution. (Kerlinger 1973).

### **3.3 TARGET POPULATION**

The target population for this study was composed of form two and four students in public schools in Laikipia District. According to Ministry of Education report (MOE 2000) there were thirty eight public secondary schools. Therefore the target population comprised two hundred students, that is twenty from each school, ten from form four and ten from form two and out of the ten were five girls and five boys.

### **3.4 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

In order to obtain the sample for this study a list of public secondary schools in Laikipia was obtained from the office of the District Education Officer (D.E.O.). From the list the names of the schools were written on small pieces of paper. Then the researcher randomly picked twenty schools, five girls schools, five boys schools and ten mixed schools. Two methods of selecting the sample were used. The stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used.

Stratified random sampling is preferred where simple random sample turns out to be unrepresentative of the population while stratified random sampling caters for various data of the population so that each is included in the sample in sufficient numbers and thus responses can be divided into statements on the basis of such variables as age, sex, level of education depending on the focus of the study. Basically, stratification uses the researchers knowledge of the population in order to increase the representative

ness of a sample. The data in this study was along the lines of boys, girls and mixed schools. A total two hundred students were selected to participate in the main study.

### **3.5 DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

Data pertaining to this study was gathered through the use of a questionnaire. The advantage of using a questionnaire in this research was that questions for each respondent were framed the same way therefore allowing uniformity for all the respondents. The researcher found Wanjohi's (1991) instrument relevant to the nature of this study. The instrument was developed and used for a university population. This study used a secondary school population. However, the researcher found the format of the instrument impressive since it allowed an easy scoring of the items and thus it was modeled closely in developing the instrument for this study. This instrument was very clear and it was adapted to suit the study. The instrument consisted of four sections. The first section collected biographical data that is, age, class, religion and sex.

The second section was to find out what problems students experience. Students were asked to tick against any of the presented problems that they have experienced. Fourteen different problems were presented. The third section consisted of information from the subjects on preference for counselors. The students were given a list of counselors and a list of problem. They were asked to indicate the appropriate person they would consult for help. The fourth section consisted of an attitude scale which was an adaptation of the Fischer and Turner test of attitudes towards seeking psychological help (Fischer and Turner 1970). This scale consisted of twenty five items that were collapsed into four subscales:

- (a) Recognition of need of counseling (7 items)
- (b) Stigma tolerance (4 items)
- (c) Interpersonal openness (6 items)
- (d) Confidence in help-given (8 items).

### 3.6 RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

According to Roscoe (1969), the split-half method was used to establish the co-efficient of internal consistency. This method involves splitting the statement of a test into two halves. (odd and even items). The study had twenty items which were separated into odd and even items. All odd numbered items for example 1,3,5,7..... were placed in one subset while the even numbered items for example 2,4,6,8,..... were placed in another subset. Then the scores of the two subsets are computed for each individual and then these two sets of scores were correlated using Pearson's product moment correlation co-efficient.

The correlation obtained nevertheless, represented the reliability co-efficient of only half the test and because reliability is related to the strength of the test, a correlation must be effected so as to obtain the reliability of the whole test. To make this correlation the Spearman Brown prophesy formulae indicated below was applied.

$$R_e = \frac{2r}{1 + r}$$

Where:

$R_e$  = Correlation co-efficient of the entire test.

$r$  = correlation co-efficiency obtained after correlating scores of the even numbered statements with scores of the odd numbered statements.

Reliability coefficient ranges from values of 00 and 1.00 with 1.00 indicating perfect reliability which is never attained in practice and 00 indicating no reliability.

### **3.7 VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT**

According to Borg and Gall (1989) validity is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure. For this instrument content and construct validity were established. Content validity is the degree to which the sample of test items represents the content that the test is designed to measure. Construct validity is the extent to which a particular test can be shown to measure a hypothetical construct, that is a “theoretical construction about the nature of human behaviour (Borg and Gall 1989).

To enhance validity of the questionnaire, a pre-test (pilot study) was conducted on a population similar to the target population (Mulusa 1988). The pilot study was conducted in three public secondary schools. According to Mulusa (1988), about ten cases which represent the target population in all the major aspects can be used in a pre-test. In this case the pilot study involved ten boys and ten girls from three public schools in Laikipia District. To further improve the validity of the instruments the researcher consulted some university lectures who are experts in area of counseling psychology.

## 8 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The researcher personally administered the research instrument for both the pilot and the main study. A research permit obtained from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology. Thereafter, the office of the Provincial Director of Education, Rift Valley Province and the DEO's office were contacted before the commencement of the main study. The headteachers of the schools participating in the main study were contacted to inform them of the study. A date was fixed when the study was to be conducted.

The researcher went to particular schools on the agreed date and got the class registers of forms four and two students. The names of students in those classes were written down on separate pieces of paper, folded and then put in a chalk-box. This was then shaken thoroughly before and after each withdrawal. Twenty students were required from each school, so twenty withdrawals were done.

The names of the selected students were given to the class masters/mistresses to call them. They were then told to assemble in an empty room. The researcher introduced herself to the students before presenting them with the questionnaire. She also assured them that this was not a test as there are no right or wrong answers. The researcher emphasized the importance of giving truthful information to help improve their counseling services. Lastly the respondents were instructed on how they were to answer the questionnaires. The researcher collected the questionnaires immediately the respondents completed.

### **3.9 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES**

After data collection, the information obtained through the questionnaire was coded for analysis. This was done after editing to inspect the data pieces and identify those items wrongly responded to, such as spelling mistakes in the responses and any blank spaces left unfilled by the respondents. Data was then classified according to age, sex, problems encountered, most preferred counselor and attitude towards seeking help.

Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentages, means, mode, and median were used mainly to analyze demographic data and personal information. Non-parametric statistics test was preferred for this study. This is because it does not require that the data be normally distributed but with strict conditions about parameters of the population from which the sample is drawn. Also the chi-square test being of the non-parametric group is relatively insensitive to the t and f-test that assume homogeneity of variance.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

The study was designed to examine the question of whether sex of students and year of study significantly influence the number of problems experienced by students and preference for available help givers (counseling resource) and students, attitudes towards seeking help. This chapter presents the results after testing the five null hypotheses generated for the study. The chi-square test was used to test the hypotheses. A total number of 156 questionnaires were returned fully filled. Thus the questionnaire return rate was 78%.

Table one presents the problem the students experienced. Table I indicates the order in which problems were experienced (from most to least experienced) by students in general is as follows: Time management problems, alcoholism, unexplained fear, continued lack of self confidence, spiritual religious problems, excessive worry, nervous break down, frequent prolonged nervousness, break down, not getting along well with friends, excessive guilt, not getting along well with school mates, career problems, recurrent problems in completing assignment, addictive drugs, prolonged or frequent depression, sexual problems. The following two null hypothesis were tested in relation to the problems experienced by students.

#### **Ho 1**

There is no significant difference between male and female students in the number of problems experienced. This hypothesis was accepted ( $\chi^2=0.161, p> 0.05$ ) meaning that sex does not significantly influence the number of problems experienced by the students. Thus male and female students experienced problems to a more or less equal extent.

**Table I: VARIETY AND FREQUENCY OF PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY STUDENTS OF BOTH SEXES IN THEIR YEARS OF STUDY**

PROBLEMS	FORM 2		FORM 4		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	
Nervous breakdown	3	42	65	44	207
Prolonged /frequent depression	33	21	34	32	120
Alcoholism	25	10	154	94	283
Addictive drugs	14	31	44	62	151
Prolonged/frequent nervousness	74	82	26	18	200
Excess worry	27	68	39	88	222
Continued lack of self confidence	41	76	42	98	257
Excessive guilt	72	23	66	21	182
Sexual problems	1	0	1	0	2
Not getting along with friends	12	11	74	70	197
Not getting along with school mates	26	44	70	32	172
Spiritual/religious problems	53	32	71	80	236
Unexplained fear	43	54	78	89	264
Recumbent problems in recurrent completing assignments	26	37	31	46	140
Time management problems	22	47	146	130	365
Career problems	16	54	12	89	171
Total	547	632	694	893	2,766

## Ho2

There is no significantly different between the form IV and two students in the number of problems experienced.

This hypothesis was rejected ( $\chi=27.06, P < 0.05$ ). Indicating that the year of study was significantly determinant of the number of problems experienced by students. Form 2 and 4 students reported having experienced a total of 1179 and 1587 problems respectively. This implies that the 4<sup>th</sup> year of study is the toughest in secondary school.

Table II Gives students responses on preference for help givers.

**Table II**

### **STUDENTS RESPONSES ON PREFERENCE FOR HELP GIVERS IN RELATION TO VARIOUS PROBLEMS**

	FORM2		FORM 4		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	
Close friend	122	221	136	141	620
Close relative	76	26	21	33	156
Parents/guardian	78	191	46	41	356
Head teacher	26	72	11	17	126
Deputy H/teacher	12	14	28	33	87
Guidance and counseling/master or mistress	20	131	247	236	634
Career master	93	86	92	79	350
Pastor/chaplain	68	76	36	77	257
Psychiatric nurse/doctor	10	10	12	11	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>3627</b>

From this table , we can compile a list of help givers from the most to the least preferred. This would be as follows: guidance and counseling master/mistress, close friend, parents/guardian, career master, pastor/chaplain, a close relative, head teacher, deputy head teacher, psychiatric nurse/doctor. Thus the two most preferred resources are the guidance and counseling master/mistress and a close friend. The two hypothesis tested in relation to this are presented below:-

### **Ho 3 :**

There is no significant difference between male and female student preference for the most preferred counselor .

This hypothesis was accepted ( $\chi^2=3.339, p > 0.05$ ). Meaning that sex of students was not a significant factor in determining preference for guidance and counseling center. This would indicate that as many male as female students would have chosen to go to the friends for help.

### **Ho 4**

There is no significant difference between form four and form two students preference for the guidance and counseling center .

This hypothesis was rejected ( $\chi^2=25.6, p < 0.05$ ) Meaning that duration at school was an important factor in determining students preference for guidance and counseling center. Form two led in their positive responses indicating preference for the center followed by the form four, thus the students transition from form 2 to

form 4 their preference to seek help from guidance and counseling center rises only to drop at a lower as they enter form four.

Table 3 shows the scores for students attitudes towards seeking help.

**Table 3.**

**SCORES FOR STUDENTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS SEEKING HELP**

		FORM 2			FORM 4			TOTAL
		M	F	T	M	F	T	
Recognition of need for help	8	48	121	169	39	110	149	318
Stigma tolerance	5	96	28	124	39	49	88	212
Interpersonal openness	6	26	39	65	131	54	185	250
Confidence in helper	7	59	26	85	112	51	163	248
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>1028</b>

The following null hypothesis was tested in relation to students' attitudes towards seeking help.

**Ho 5**

There is no significant difference between male and female students' attitude towards seeking help.

This hypothesis was accepted ( $\chi^2=3.22, p<0.05$ ) meaning that sex of students was not of significant effect in determining their attitudes towards seeking help. Thus both male and female students attitudes towards seeking help were basically the same.

In summary, sex of students was not an important factor in determining the number of problems students experienced preference for guidance and counseling center and students attitudes towards seeking help. However sex is significant when it came to the preference for a close friend, where more females indicated preferring to consult a close friend than did males. The year of study had significant influence on all the three variables.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This was an exploratory study on three areas related to student counseling among secondary students in Laikipia district. The study looked at the effect of sex of students and the year of study on three variables, namely students preference for counseling resources and students problems and student attitude towards seeking help. Chi-square tests were performed separately to test the hypothesis related to each item. This discussion will be entered under three headings namely: problems, preference and attitude.

#### **Problems**

The acceptance of the first hypothesis that indicated there is no significant difference between male and female students in the number of problems experienced indicate that student experience the same level of difficulties regardless of their sex. In fact both most and the least experienced problems were the same for the students, regardless of their sex or year of study.

Students were concerned most about academic/career issues and least with personal/emotional ones. Thus an explained fear of failure in examinations, time management problems recurrent problems completing assignment were the least experienced ones by both the male and female students. These results support those by Clarke (1980) and Carney (1976) who reported academic effectiveness and career planning as general major student concerns, regardless of there sex among others.

Problems of academic/career nature have also been reported as priorities in a mixed body of students by West Brooke (1978). However, Hengeller et al (1980) in his study with students reported that both male and female students rated alcohol abuse, drug abuse as more serious problems for them and their families. The fact that he included their families as part of the spheres of consideration, could account for the difference in results. On the other hand, most Laikipia students who have problems with substance abuse could be reluctant to admit it. They may not even count themselves as addicted to alcohol for instance until it influences other areas or relationships.

As mentioned earlier, this study did not find sex of students to have any significant effect on the number of problems experienced by students. Nonetheless for some problems there were marked differences in the rating of problems by male and female students. Among these are excessive worry which held second position among females suggesting that female students struggle more with worry than their male counterparts. Another one was excessive guilt which held twelfth position among females and fifth among males.

There was not getting along well with boy friends/girl friends which took seventh position among females and twelfth position among males.

This would tend to suggest that females struggle with emotional and relational problems more than their male counterparts. The year of study was found to have a significant influence on the number of problems experienced by students as indicated by the second rejection of the null hypothesis. Form two reported having experienced the highest number of problems. Although the form IV students had

been longest in the school they reported having experienced fewer problems than the form four students .

This is a pointer that life in school is getting tougher in form two. This possibility could very well be true given the problems students are experiencing at home and in school. The number of students is growing much faster than are the resources needed for their upkeep and study. These explains why they rated academic/career issues as their most critical ones. An additional possible explanation for this pattern may lay in the general tendencies of students in each year of study. The second year in secondary school tends to be a crisis time for students. By now, the seriousness of the realities of life at the secondary school has downed on them. They have been shaken by the examinations where some have to repeat and other put on academic probation. They realize that both their prestige and social status is at stake. At the same time, face a 'middle-child' type of a phenomena. They are neither getting the sympathetic understanding and attention given to form ones, nor are they senior like the form threes and fours. There may also be pressure created by adjustment pattern and behavior learnt in form one.

The form four students on the other hand are now more mature and well acquainted with life in school. They are well adjusted to both the academic and social life. They probably even rationalize some of the problems they experienced in their previous three years as normal aspect of life not worth reporting. At the same time, they will have forgotten some of the problems they actually went through while in form one, two and

three. They are also looking forward to join the university. These could be part of the reason why they recorded the number of problems they did.

### **Preferences for Counseling Services**

Hypothesis three was accepted meaning that the preference for the guidance and counseling center by the students was not really determined by their sex.

It was encouraging to note that guidance and counseling center was the most preferred resource by both male and female students. Whether this is meant that students would actually seek help from there in event of problems in real life, or that they just think they are expected to think of the center as an appropriate place to seek help from only further research can clarify.

While sex was found not to have a significant effective on students preferences for the guidance and counseling center the year of study did have a significant effect as shown by the rejection of hypothesis four . The form two students led in their preference for the guidance and counseling center with (483 favorable responses) followed by form four students, ( 151 favorable responses) this could reflect the different expectation students have for the center. The form two students who experienced more problems than all the other students, probably expect more from the center than the others. These results support those by Simon (1973) who reported that students prefer to consult psychologists to other therapists. It is however difficult to compare the current study's results with others, as most of the previous research reviewed had sought to find out more specifically what problems different helpers would be preferred for. Form two students had recorded the highest number of problems, followed by form fours. This is the same order in which the students

preferred the guidance and counseling center, which could strengthen that the second year in secondary school is a crisis period for students. They could turn to whatever resources were available and open to offer help, for their problems. They would especially have high expectations of the guidance and counseling center as it is perhaps a very obvious source of help to think about, that is officially provided.

The second most preferred helper was a close friend. Both sex of student and year of study were found to significantly influence on students preferences for their resource. The form two students with 343 favorable responses preferred to consult a close friend more than form IV students. This may reflect that the form four students had made solid friends during their time at the school whom they would take seriously and confide in. This was especially so among the form four male students who recorded a higher preference for a close than their female counterparts.

Form two female students preferred to consult a close friend than any other sub group. This may mean that supportive friends are of special importance to form two students. The trend of preference for a close friend among the males in the four years of study is the opposite of that found among females. The former starts with a lower preference for consulting a close friends which keeps on rising. It is difficult to make direct comparisons with past studies on preference as most of them tend to examine preference for helpers in relation to different types of problems however, Tinsely and Benton (1978) reported that students were as likely to seek assistance from a peer counselor as from a psychologists.

## Attitudes

Four factors were incorporated into the attitude scale. They were recognition need for help (8 items) stigma tolerance (5 items) interpersonal openness(7 items) and confidence in helper (9 items). While sex was found to be insignificant determinant of students' attitude towards seeking help, the year of study was found to be significantly relevant. This is implied by the acceptance of the fifth hypothesis. The form four students had the most positive attitudes towards seeking help. This pattern was consistent for each of the four factors in the scale.

These results partly agree with those of Dadfar and Lander (1982) who reported that sex and educational level were not uniquely significant in predicting attitudes. This variation in their finding may have resulted from the difference in sample used.

The result of the present study may be a further indication of the general trends of thinking among students in different years of study. The form four probably feel vulnerable as they are about to join university which is a new adventure. They may thus tend to be open to receive help and even expect that it would be given to them.

The form two students have by now become a bit skeptical and have adopted to attitude of whole needs. They may be going through a period of confusion so that although they experience more problems than any other group of students and although, they would wish more than anyone else to get help from the counseling center they are rebellious against the system and have negative attitude towards it. They are indeed known to be the rowdiest and the most unruly group in schools. The form four students are by now more mature, realistic and wise enough to want seek help. They will also have had practical experience in receiving help and will probably

have already established contact with different resources for help. However, it must be kept in mind that attitudes cannot always be used to predict actual behavior. Although one group may have higher attitude score than the other, the actual behavior may be quite different. Generally speaking students seem to be more conscious of their year of study than they are of their sex as regards the four factors examined in this study.

## **RECOMMEDATIONS**

1. An interaction forum should be created between the students and the counseling resources. This could be in form of a magazine through which students might be informed of available resources where to find them and how and when to seek help from them.
2. Long term planning should be emphasized to avoid situations like the current ones where facilities are few in relation to students population. This is especially so with the resources that have to do with the academics like the teaching staff library facilities etc.
3. A guidance and counseling center might be beneficial to a wider circle of students if it concentrates on preventive counseling . This would help students early enough to be able to handle minor problems which might other wise deteriorate into major ones
4. Special focus is needed on the form twos as the current trends indicated in this study spells out trouble. While they reported experiencing more problems than the other students, they had the least positive attitude towards seeking help. Ways and means need to be explored to effectively assist students at this level as they seem needy and confused.

5. The orientation program could be revised to make it more meaningful and functional for the form one students.
6. The researcher highly recommends that the guidance and counseling master/mistresses be trained to strengthen the department. In Laikipia there is only one trained counselor who serves as the District Inspector. Most of the teachers have no counseling skills. They lack confidentiality, which is a vital skill in guidance and counseling.
7. Regular inspection be done to keep teachers alert of their work.
8. Keeping of records in relation to guidance and counseling
9. Finances - The government should allocate enough resources for the guidance and counseling department in the district.

## **FURTHER RESEARCH**

For the purpose of further research, it is recommended that each of the three factors be examined in separate studies. These would enable the researcher to go into more depth in each area. As mentioned elsewhere, this was an exploratory study and it is hoped that it will provoke further research in these areas in our schools.

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## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

#### Introduction

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information that would help improve counseling facilities and resources for the benefit of students. The more honest your response are, the more it will help us achieve a purpose.

This is not a test and only honest answers are the collect ones. Your identity is not revealed and all the responses will be treated with strict confidence.

It should take you about twenty minutes to till the questionnaire. Work independently, following the instructions given for each section.

#### SECTION I

##### BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. SEX                      Male (     )              Female(     )
  
2. AGE at your last birthday     \_\_\_\_\_ years.
  
3. CLASS                      Form (     )              Form (     )
  
4. RELIGION                      Protestants (     )  
   Catholic        (     )  
   Muslim        (     )  
   Others        \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION II

### PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED

#### Instructions.

In the space provided, put a tick (✓) against any of the problems listed below that you have personally experience during your stay in school.

1. Time management problem ( )
2. Domestic problems such as poor relationship with parents or guardian( )
3. Recurrent problems in completing assignments
4. Excessive worry
5. Poor relationship(s) with those in Authority- headteacher, teachers, prefects etc
6. Poor relationship with classmates and members of the same sex.
7. Unexplainable fear of failure in examinations
8. Continued lack of self confidence
9. Sexual problems such as pornographic literature, sex movies and involvement in sexual acts.
10. Poor relationship (s) with members of the opposite sex.
11. Excessive guilt
12. Addictive drugs
13. Alcoholism
14. Prolonged / frequent depression.

## SECTION III

### PREFERENCE FOR COUNSELLOR

Instructions listed below from A-I are people or places you could seek help from in school. In the space provided, insert the appropriate letter (ABC.....) to indicate the person or place you would consult with each problem given.

#### Help Givers

- A - Close friend
- B - Close relative
- C - Parent / Guardian
- D - Headteacher
- E - Deputy Head-teacher
- F - Guidance and Counseling master / mistress
- G - Career master
- H - Pastor / Chaplain
- I - Psychiatric nurse / Doctor

#### PROBLEMS

1. Nervous breakdown
2. Prolonged or frequent depression
3. Addictive drugs
4. Excessive worry
5. Continued lack of self confidence
6. Excessive guilt
7. Sexual problems
8. Not getting along well with classmates
9. Not getting along well with parents
10. Unexplainable team of failure in examinations

11. Recurrent problems in completing assignments.
12. Career problems
13. Spiritual / religious problems
14. Nervousness

#### SECTION IV - FEELING TOWARDS GUIDANCE / COUNSELING

Instruction: Given below are number of statements for each statement indicate your level of agreement or disagreement by circling the appropriate choice from those given.

- SA - STRONGLY AGREE  
 A - AGREE  
 U - UNDECIDED  
 D - DISAGREE  
 SD - STRONGLY DISAGREE

Example: A counsellor is a stranger who cannot understand me.

SA      A      U      D      SD

1. Although there are people in school who offer counseling help, I would not have much faith in them

SA    A    U    D    SD

2. Not to have contained one's problems within oneself carries with it a burden of shame.

SA    A    U    D    SD

3. I would feel uneasy going to a counsellor because of what some people might think.

SA    A    U    D    SD

4. A person with a strong character can get over mental conflicts (confusion) by himself/herself and would have little need for external help.

SA    A    U    D    SD

5. There are times when I have felt completely lost and would have welcomed external help for a personal or emotional problem.

SA    A    U    D    SD

6. I would willingly confide intimate (very personal) matters to an appropriate person if I thought it might help me.

SA    A    U    D    SD

7. Considering the time and effort involved in seeking counseling, it is doubtful that it would really help a student like me.

SA    A    U    D    SD

8. There are certain problems which should not be discussed outside one's immediate family.

SA    A    U    D    SD

9. A person with emotional problems would probably be wise to seek counseling.

SA    A    U    D    SD

10. To have sought counseling is a bad mark on one's record.

SA    A    U    D    SD

11. Keeping one's mind on studies is a good solution for avoiding personal worries and concerns.

SA    A    U    D    SD

12. I would rather be advised by a close friend than be a counsellor.  
SA A U D SD
13. A person with social or emotional problems is not likely to solve it alone.  
He/she is more likely to solve it with a counsellor's help.  
SA A U D SD
14. I resent a person, counsellor or otherwise who wants to know my personal  
difficulties  
SA A U D SD
15. I would want to get counseling if I were worried or upset for a long period of  
time.  
SA A U D SD
16. If I thought I needed counseling I would get it no matter who knew about it.  
SA A U D SD
17. There are experiences in my life I would not discuss with anyone.  
SA A U D SD
18. If I were experiencing a crisis at this point in my life I would confide in a  
counsellor.  
SA A U D SD
19. At some future time, I might want to have counseling help.  
SA A U D SD
20. There is something admirable in a person who is willing to cope with has  
conflicts and fears without resorting to external help.  
SA A U D SD

21. It is probably best not to share everything about oneself with someone else.  
SA A U D SD
22. A person should work out his own problems. Going for counseling should be a last result.  
SA A U D SD
23. If I had to receive counseling, I would not try to cover it up.  
SA A U D SD
24. If a good friend asked my advice about a problem, I might recommend that he/she see a counsellor.  
SA A U D SD
25. It is difficult to talk about personal affairs with people who give any type of counseling.  
SA A U D SD

## APPENDIX B

### LETTER TO HEAD TEACHERS

Wotuku J. W.  
University of Nairobi  
Department of Educational  
Administration and  
Planning  
P. O Box 92  
KIKUYU.

10<sup>th</sup> February, 2002.

The Headteacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Secondary School

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: STATUS OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**A CASE STUDY OF LAIKIPIA DISTRICT.**

I am a postgraduate student in the University of Nairobi pursuing a Master of Education in Educational Administration and Planning. I am conducting a study on the secondary students problems, preference for counseling resources and attitudes towards guidance and counseling. a case study of Laikipia district.

I am hereby seeking your permission to visit your school and interview your students using questionnaires. My research is scheduled to run through 10<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2002.

The questionnaires are designed for this research purpose only, therefore the responses will be absolutely confidential and anonymously given. **No name will be required from any respondent or institution.**

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

**WOTUKU J. W.**

## APPENDIX C

### BUDGET FOR THE STUDY

ITEM	ESTIMATED COST (SHS)
1. SECRETARIAL SERVICES	
a) Typing and photocopying proposal	3,500.00
b) Typing the project	3,800.00
2. STATIONERY	
a) Foolscap papers	250.00
b) Duplicating papers	800.00
c) Pens	100.00
d) Computer Diskettes	100.00
3. TRAVELLING COSTS	
a) To pre-test questionnaire	4,500.00
b) Administering questionnaire	12,000.00
4. COMPUTER ANALYSIS COSTS	
a) Data processing	4,000.00
5. BINDING COSTS	
a) Binding proposal	500.00
b) Binding the project	<u>2000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>31550.00</u></b>

## APPENDIX D

### TIME FRAME FOR THE STUDY

Proposal writing and presentation 2002.	October 2001–January
Pre-testing of the instrument	February 2002.
Refinement of the instrument	March 2002.
Administration of the questionnaire to respondents	May 2002.
Data analysis	June – July 2002.
Write-up	August 2002.
Presentation of Project	September 2002.