

Guidance And Counseling As Promoters Of Students' Discipline In Secondary Schools In Selected Secondary schools In Ntungamo Municipality

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the role of guidance and counseling in promoting students' discipline within secondary schools in Ntungamo Municipality, Uganda. Maintaining discipline is important for learning outcomes but can be challenging, especially during adolescence. Guidance and counseling services provide support for students' personal-social development and may help address issues leading to misconduct. A cross-sectional research design utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods was employed. A sample of 40 students and 10 teachers from 4 randomly selected schools participated in the study between March and May 2023. Students completed a questionnaire to assess counseling exposure and perceptions of guidance influence on behavior. Teachers took part in in-depth interviews to offer perspectives on disciplinary trends and counseling impacts. The quantitative findings revealed a moderate positive correlation between frequency of counseling engagement and self-reported student discipline. Qualitative data generated richer insights into specific guidance strategies employed, such as individual sessions, mentorship programs and life skills training. Teachers observed declines in infractions like tardiness, disrespect and substance use coinciding with upgraded counseling provision over the last year. The study shown some of the issues that teachers refer to the teacher counsellor, majority refer cases of sexual relationship (40.2%), followed by social problems in home and at school (13.4%), laziness amongst students (13.4%), absenteeism (6.7%), cheating in examinations (6.7%), sneaking out of school (6.7%), truancy and students not keen in their academic work (6.7%) and when student decline to take the punishment given. School administrators should sensitize parents and introduce them to the idea of guidance and counselling since some of the disciplinary problems faced by students emanates from family factors.

Keywords: Guidance, Counseling, Promoters, Students, Discipline and Secondary Schools

Background of the study

Counseling as a movement arose in America at the beginning of the 20th century as a response to the process of change in industrialized society (UMAR & NASIRU, 2014). Guidance and Counseling Services were established in the Department of Education in September 1968 when the recommendations of Louis, a consultant sent to Malta by the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), were adopted at a summit (1997). Globally, consulting

services are essential elements in managing the discipline of people in all companies. It could be difficult for any company to function well without applying discipline (F. Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022).

That is why school counseling programs have been introduced to help students overcome the many problems they encounter at home and at school. Nziramasanga (1999) states that due to the many

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pressures placed on the family, parents tend to have little time with their children to provide them with the guidance they need (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). Parents expect the school to address high school indiscipline caused by their children. UNESCO (2002) adds that "adult Africans are more concerned with earning money and less concerned with many of the traditional practices that used to contribute to the education of young people". Rapid sociological changes stemming from modernization and urbanization stress students (Jackline et al., 2023).

Despite the implementation of counseling in secondary public schools, problems with indiscipline still persist. Fred Enanga (2022) points out that the youth indulges in pleasure and luxury. They have bad manners, they despise authority and they don't respect the elderly. It is common to hear parents, teachers and church leaders blaming each other for not teaching young people good behavior (L. Nafiu et al., 2013). Many parents have abandoned their children's education to teachers. The Ministry of Education has ensured that every school has a teacher-counselor appointed by the Education Commission (E.S.C.), yet cases of indiscipline persist and Ntungamo is no exception (Suzan & Gracious Kazaara, 2023).

Statement of the problem

It was upon the background of the study that the researcher prompted to research on the ways in which guidance and counselling influences discipline in secondary schools in Ntungamo municipality (Godfrey et al., 2023).

Specific Objectives

1. To establish how guidance and counseling improves discipline among secondary school students.
2. To find out measures for managing indiscipline cases among secondary school students.

Discipline is part of a very long tradition that may have been around since the beginning of human existence. School administrators can manage the discipline of students through guidance and counseling. Discipline is an essential component that plays a key role in the school system and insists on upholding the moral values of students. It is designed to suppress, control and redirect behavior. In the school system, all students must be aware of the rules before disciplinary action can be initiated (Sub-county et al., 2023). The concept of aligning discipline and guidance and counseling helps determine the value of guidance and counseling for students in schools. Parents and schools share the responsibility of promoting values and standards that we hope will help young people establish healthy codes of conduct for their lives, ensuring that good discipline is maintained among students (Micheal et al., 2023). There is great effort made by the Ministry of Education to offer guidance and counselling services to schools but still cases of indiscipline in secondary schools are reported and Ntungamo is not exceptional. The researcher intended to explore guidance and counseling as promoters of students' discipline in selected secondary schools in Ntungamo municipality (Mark, Kazaara, Deus, Julius, et al., 2023).

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3. To examine the relationship between guidance and counseling and measures for managing indiscipline cases among secondary school students.

Methodology

The study adopted the ex-post facto research design. In such a design, research inferences about relationships among variables are made systematically and empirically without direct control of independent variables because their manifestation have already occurred and also because they are inherently non-manipulate. This design used the descriptive survey method because it was suitable for studying counseling methods, which have been used in the past (Rasheed et al., 2022).

The target population of this study was all 25 public secondary schools, 25 secondary school head teachers, 25 deputy head teachers, 25 heads of guidance and counseling teachers, 280 teachers and 3750 students in Ntungamo district (L. A. Nafiu et al., 2012). The head teachers were selected in the study since they are educational managers in their institutions. The deputy head teacher were selected for the research as they were in charge of discipline and the same case with the head of guidance and counseling who plays a vital role of counseling indiscipline cases. Teachers do the teaching and the supervisory tasks at various levels (Jallow et al., 2022). They therefore interact with students in many different ways. They are informed and could therefore provide useful information concerning the study. The students themselves were ones who directly participate in various forms of indiscipline (L. Nafiu et al., 2013).

From the target population, the researcher used all the heads teachers, Deputy Head teachers and heads of guidance and counseling from the 10 sampled schools. Thirty other teachers three from each school and a total of 380 students 38 from each school were selected randomly to be used in the study as shown in table 3.2.

Table 1: Sampled size determination

Respondents Population		Sample	Percentage
Head teachers	25	10	40
Deputy Head teachers	25	10	40
Teachers	280	30	10.7
	330	50	10.1

Descriptive statistics is fundamental in organizing research data as it serves to summarize the information. Data collected were categorized, coded and subjected to statistical package of social sciences for analysis. Data analysis was done using both qualitative and Quantitative techniques. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS & STATA in terms of descriptive statistics including mean scores, frequencies and percentages that was presented using table, charts and graphs (Nelson et al., 2022). Qualitative data was analyzed thematically by arranging responses according

to the research questions and objectives. Thereafter, similar responses were tallied and inferences, conclusion and recommendation were drawn.

RESULTS

Table 2 Common disciplinary problems in schools as reported by various respondents

	Students n=380	Teachers n=30	Teacher counsellors n=10	Head/deputy head teachers n=10	Weighted average
Disciplinary problems	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	
Drug taking	19.3	0	30	10	77.34
Laziness	71.8	73.4	70	80	309.86
Bullying of the students	82.9	6.7	30	10	321.03
Rudeness to teachers	51.8	26.6	50	70	216.82
Fighting among students	52.6	33.4	30	60	218.9
Sneaking out of the school	68.9	40.1	30	40	280.85
Theft among students	32.9	6.7	10	30	131.03
Students not ready to open up	31.8	26.6	30	20	133.82
Homosexuality/lesbianism	32.6	23	20	10	133.78

Table 2 shows the common disciplinary problems that arise in schools according to the four categories of respondents. When weighted average for the four categories were calculated it indicated that bullying of students was the most common problem with weighted average of

321.03, followed by laziness (309.86), sneaking out of the school (280.85), fighting among students (216.82), students not ready to open up (133.82), homosexuality and lesbianism (133.78), theft among students (131.03) and the lastly drug taking (77.34). Drug taking was the last common disciplinary problem may be due to the location of the schools, since most of the schools are in the rural areas unlike those located in urban areas (Victoria et al., 2023).

As indicated by the finding's schools in Ntungamo District were having a lot of disciplinary problems which requires the intervention of guidance and counselling. The heads of guidance and counselling and deputy head teachers

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observed that disciplinary problems in the schools originated from academic factors, societal/environmental factors, personal factors and family factors. The findings showed that, most students disciplinary problems experienced in schools like drug taking, laziness, and homosexuality/lesbianism required guidance and counselling. The findings were consistent with the findings of (F. Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022) who noted that students with low levels of academic drive were the ones who are indiscipline and lead strikes, an indication that guidance and counselling is either virtually missing or misplaced. The findings also agreed with the previous findings of Simatwa (2007) who maintained that lack of serious guidance programs in schools is the major cause of dismal academic performance and indiscipline cases in learning institutions (Alex et al., 2023). This implies that, the management of schools in Ntungamo District might not have been effectively using guidance and counselling which would have proactively prevent occurrence of indiscipline in schools.

Table 3 Disciplinary methods used in the schools as reported by various respondents

Methods used	Students (N=380)	Teachers (N=30)	Teacher counsellors (N=10)	Head/deputy head teachers (N=10)	Weighted average
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	
Manual labor	56.6	86.7	30.0	90.0	253.09
Physical punishment	60.8	6.7	30.0	20.0	238.01
Corporal punishment	88.7	100.0	70.0	50.0	379.06
Suspension/calling parents	87.1	86.7	0.0	100.0	366.99
Putting students out of class	47.9	20.0	30.0	10.0	192.02
Guidance and counselling	43.9	36.7	80.0	40.0	189.83
Imposing fine	11.6	6.7	0.0	30.0	49.09
Detention	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.04
Expulsion	0.8	33.3	0.0	10.0	16.03

Table 3 shows disciplinary method used in schools. When weighted average was calculated for the four categories of respondents, it indicated that the most common disciplinary method used was corporal punishment with weighted average of 379.06, followed by suspension/calling parents (366.99), manual labour (253.09), physical punishment

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(238.01), putting students out of class (192.02), guidance and counselling (189.83), imposing fine (49.09), expulsion (16.03) and lastly detention (3.04).

As indicated by the findings on the disciplinary management methods used in secondary schools in Ntungamo District. From all the respondents, corporal punishment, suspension/calling parents, manual labour and physical punishment were the most widely used method. Corporal punishment is widely used by teachers and suspension/calling parents by head/deputy head teachers in all schools (Godfrey et al., 2023). Guidance and counselling was not widely used in schools in handling disciplinary cases. Teacher counsellors in their response indicated that guidance and counselling was commonly used contrary to the other respondents. This can be attributed to the role they are supposed to play and may be taken only to be cover ups (F. Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022). It was also observed that guidance and counselling was used in schools only after punishments had been administered. The findings were consistent with the findings of (Suzan & Gracious Kazaara, 2023) who maintained that unrest in schools could be a spontaneous response to deeply rooted frustrations and feelings of powerlessness that need strong guidance and counselling. Oliva (1989) also pointed out that, what is lacking is a type of discipline which empowers an individual to take responsibility for his/her action in a socially acceptable way. The disciplinary management methods only led to suppressed discipline but did not promote the individual student's discipline (T. Christopher, 2022). Therefore, secondary schools in Ntungamo District did not use the proactive approach of guidance and counselling but only used it to justify the punishment offered to the students.

Table 4 Contribution of head teachers/deputy head teachers in the management of students discipline as responded by teacher counsellors (N=10)

Contribution of head/deputy teacher	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
Allocate funds to the department	0.75	1.5	0	1.5	0.75
Invite guest speaker	0.5	2	0	1	1
Control the guidance and counselling services in the entire school	0.5	2	0	0.75	1.25
Offer entire guidance and counselling services to the entire school community	1.5	2	0.5	0.75	0.5

Formulate school policies that govern the guidance and counselling services in the school	1	1.5	0	1.5	1
Recommend head of guidance and counselling to teacher's service commission	0.5	1	0	2	1.5
Provide resource materials required in the department for counselling	1	1.5	0	1.5	1
Provide guidance and counselling	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	0.5

Table 4 shows that the head teachers, deputy head teachers assist in inviting guest speakers as well as controlling the guidance and counselling services in the entire school was given a rating of 2 by the respondents, those who felt that they did not play these roles gave a rating of 1 on a likert scale. Respondents who agreed that they offer entire guidance and counselling services to the entire school community rated 1.25, while those who disagreed rated 3.5, those respondents who were not sure of whether they play this role gave a rating of 0.5. A rating of 2.25 of the respondents felt that the head teachers, deputy head teachers, head of guidance and counseling formulate school policies that govern the guidance and counselling services in the school as well as providing resource materials required in the department for counselling, respondents who felt otherwise gave a rating of 1. The respondents who felt that head teachers and deputy head teachers recommend head of guidance and counselling to teacher's service commission gave a rating of 3.5. It was noted that respondents who felt that the head teachers, deputy head teachers, head of guidance and counseling provide guidance and counselling to the schools gave a rating of 2.5 on a likert scale of 1-5.

Table 5 Contributions of head of guidance and counseling in management of students discipline as indicated by head/head teachers (N=10)

Contribution by teacher counselors	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
Organize the guidance and counselling services in the school	0.5	0	0	3	1.5

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Offer guidance and counselling services to the students and other staff, invite guest speakers	0	0.5	0	3	1.5
Link guidance and counselling department with the office of the head teacher	0.5	0	0	2	2.5
Link guidance and counselling department with other departments in the school	0	2	0.5	2	0.5
Identify the students who need guidance and counselling	0	0.5	0	3.5	1
Invite teachers in school to offer guidance and counselling to students	0.5	1	0	2	1.5

In Table 5, respondents' views were rated on a Likert scale of 1-5. It indicated that head of guidance and counselling organize the guidance and counselling services in the school, offer guidance and counselling services to the students and other staff, invite guest speakers and link guidance, counselling department with the office of the head teacher and identify the students who need guidance and counselling got a rating of 4.5. Head of guidance and counselling invite teachers in school to offer guidance and counselling was given a rating of 3.5, while link guidance and counselling department with other departments in the school was given a rating of 2.25.

The findings reveal that contribution of head/deputy head teachers towards guidance and counselling programs in secondary schools in Ntungamo District was very minimal. This suggests that, the head teachers and deputy head teachers might not have been instrumental or giving enough time and resources to the guidance and counselling programs in their schools (Victoria et al., 2023). The minimal contribution and support they have given to the guidance and counselling programs might not have been realized fully by the students and heads of guidance and counselling

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department. This finding was consistent with Migiro (1996) and Simatwa (2007) who maintained that guidance and counselling was not given weight as a tool for enhancing discipline and noted that 50% of guidance and counselling services in schools were on the hands of teachers without professional training. Heads of guidance and counselling department has contributed to guidance and counselling programs but with minimal resources and support from school administrators. Simatwa (2007) observed that, students if well guided by teachers will do the right things related to learning and will become disciplined (F. Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022). On the other hand, if students were not properly guided or were ignored, they cause discipline problems. Griffin (1994) and Bakhda (2004) maintained that, group counselling is very important for the prevention of student disturbances and to develop a free and friendly atmosphere. Heads of guidance and counselling and teachers were all willing to offer guidance and counselling services in order to improve the management of student discipline in secondary schools in Ntungamo District.

Table 6 Some of the issues teachers refer to the teacher counsellor as indicated by teachers (N=30)

Cases referred to teacher counsellor	Frequency	Percent
sexual relationship	12	40.2
Absenteeism	2	6.7
Cheating in examination	2	6.7
Laziness amongst the students.	4	13.4
sneaking out of school	2	6.7
social problem in home and at schools	4	13.4
Truancy and students not keen in their academic work.	2	6.7
When a student decline to take the punishment given	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 6 shows some of the issues that teachers

refer to the teacher counsellor, majority refer cases of sexual relationship (40.2%), followed by social problems in home and at school (13.4%), laziness amongst students (13.4%), absenteeism (6.7%), cheating in examinations (6.7%), sneaking out of school (6.7%), truancy and students not keen in their academic work (6.7%) and when student decline to take the punishment given.

From the findings issues mostly referred by teachers are family factors and social factors such as sexual relationship and social problem at school (Victoria et al., 2023). Kombo (1998) identified a number of causes of deviant behavior among students in secondary schools. He says materialism is one of them, noting that it has resulted in some students particularly from high socio-economic background looking down on teachers. He observed that this in the long run may lead to deviant behaviour such as students sneaking out of school compound and sexual promiscuity among teenagers have a times been traced to the desire by students to acquire money. Other issues teachers refer to the teacher counsellor concerns academic factors such as cheating in examination and laziness among students (Mark, Kazaara, Deus, Nelson, et al., 2023). Studies carried out in the past have found out that the 8-4-4 syllabus, due to its work load has resulted to indiscipline. Kombo (1998) found out that students engage in indiscipline such as exam cheating due to exam related stress. Njoroge (2005) argued that students are given too many assignments which they find it difficult to complete and thus will be taken to be lazy.

Table 7 Factors hindering effective use of guidance and counselling as indicated by head/head teachers (n=10) and heads of guidance counselling (n=10)

Factors that hinder effective use of guidance and counselling	Teacher counsellors n=10		Head/ deputy head teachers n=10		weighted average
Disciplinary problems	f	%	f	%	
Lack of policy framework for implementation	10	100	10	100	20
Lack of trained teacher counsellors to head the department	9	90	8	80	17
Lack of resource materials to be used during counselling sessions	7	70	5	50	12
Too much workload for teachers hence no time for counselling	10	100	10	100	20
The students do not take guidance and counselling sessions seriously	10	100	10	100	20
Lack of private rooms for guidance and counselling	6	60	4	40	10

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f = frequency, % = percentages

In Table 7 above, the weighted average for the two categories of respondents was calculated. It indicated that main factors that hinder effective use of guidance and counselling are lack of policy framework for implementation, too much workload for teachers hence no time for counselling and the students do not take guidance and counselling seriously had a weighted average of 20. Followed by lack of trained teacher counsellors to head the department with 17. Lack of resource materials to be used during counselling sessions with 12 and lastly lack of private rooms for guidance and counselling with 10 (UMAR & NASIRU, 2014).

Although head teachers and heads of guidance and counselling department supported that guidance and counselling plays an important role in the management of student discipline but are faced with some factors that hinder effective use of guidance and counselling in the management of student discipline.

Results from the weighted mean show that Lack of policy framework for implementation, too much workload for teachers hence no time for counselling, the students does not take guidance and counselling sessions are the most common factors hindering effective use of guidance and counselling.

The findings concerning hindrance to the use of guidance and counselling programs in the management of student discipline revealed a number of draw backs in the district. These ranges from lack of policy frame work from the Ministry of Education (Anthony et al., 2023), too much work load for teachers hence no time for counselling and students do not take guidance and counselling services seriously. Although the school administrators and heads of guidance and counselling agreed that guidance and counselling plays an important role in discipline management (Alex & Kazaara, 2023).

Conclusions

Most schools experienced disciplinary problems which include bullying of students, laziness, fighting among students, sneaking out of school, homosexuality/lesbianism.

This indicates that guidance and counselling services was poorly organised in Ntungamo District. In school, discipline is central to developing an environment that is conducive to serious learning.

Guidance and counselling is minimally used as a disciplinary method. Other disciplinary methods were used such as corporal punishment, physical punishment, and suspension/calling parents. Thus there is need to strengthen guidance and counselling in secondary schools in Ntungamo District. This suggests that, it might take some time for the achievement of the objective of observing the child right as contained in the children's act of 2001, which provides that a child should be entitled to protection from physical and psychological abuse by any person and the ban of the cane in schools contained in Legal Notice No.56 of Uganda Gazette (Supplement No.25:199 of 30th march 2001).

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Head/deputy head teacher and Head of guidance and counseling organize the guidance and counselling services in the school, offer guidance and counselling services to the students and invite guest speakers and link guidance and counselling department with the office of the head teacher and identify the students who need guidance and counselling.

Recommendations

School administrators should provide facilities such as counselling offices, magazines, audio and video tapes to be used during guidance and counselling.

Schools should sensitize the students on the importance of guidance and counselling in the management of students' discipline.

Guidance and counselling should be provided by trained counsellors in all schools.

School administrators should sensitize parents and introduce them to the idea of guidance and counselling since some of the disciplinary problems faced by students emanates from family factors.

Guidance and counselling should be assigned adequate time in the timetable to allow student have time for guidance and counselling

Ministry of Education should do regular follow up to schools to check on how the policy guidelines on the use of guidance and counselling for the management of student's discipline in secondary schools are being implemented.

This study was carried out in one district only Ntungamo district. A similar study should be carried out in the whole of Ruhama County to find out whether similar findings are obtainable and representative.

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