

The Impact Of Guidance And Counseling On Students' Academic Performance In Uganda The Case Of Selected Secondary Schools In Nakisanga Sub County Mukono District

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Abstract

Students' academic performance is the center for which the whole education system resolves. The success and failure of any institutional institution relies on its system, inputs and strategies. Guidance and counseling among senior secondary schools in Uganda is seen as a strategy to build a morally, God fearing, and a more strategic, skilled work force. The study adopted social learning theory of career decision making as learning is the interaction with environment and genetic endowment. The study was guided by three objective namely; to examine the effect of guidance and counseling on shaping students behavior, examine the impact of Guidance and Counseling on Career Issues among secondary schools students in Nakisunga sub county Mukono district and to establish the relationship between guidance and counseling programs and students' academic performance among secondary schools in Nakisunga sub county Mukono district with a descriptive research design and a population of 99 respondents from Nakisunga sub county Mukono district. The study revealed that guidance and counseling shapes students behavior to encourage care givers to continue providing for them, creates an appropriate environment for learning, safe secure environment, student become attentive, cooperative and encouraging teachers to love, care and like teaching them, it improves student's outlook, choice, his/her persistence, his/her efforts in learning and how he/she relates to the people that make up the school community and it recommends. The study obtained a positive relationship between guidance and counseling in Nakisunga Sub County.

Keywords: Guidance, Counseling, Students, Academic and Performance

Background Of The Study

(Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022) defined student academic performance as the level of students' performance, achievement or success in school. (Lydia et al., 2023) defined academic performance as the process of developing the abilities and potential of individual students to prepare them for success in a particular society or culture and (Winny et al., 2023) defines academic performance as the success achieved in studying work, experiments and work in school and a lot of conscious effort. However, this study will define academic performance as students' performance in the relevant subject, behavior and even school attendance. However, students' academic performance cannot be achieved without defined procedures and methods. Counseling services were highlighted as an important weapon to achieve educational goals. (UMAR & NASIRU, 2014) defined counseling as assistance provided by qualified and trained individuals to individuals of any age to help them manage their own life activities, develop their own opinions, make their own decisions. and carry their own burdens. On the other hand (Christopher et al., 2022) defined counseling as a process that allows an individual to know himself, as well as his current and possible future situation, so that he can make a significant contribution to society and solve his own problems through a personal relationship with a counselor (Alex et al. ., 2023). Counseling is an effective tool for solving problems

Received: 19.07.2024

Accepted: 23.07.2024

Published on: 30.07.2024

and emotional problems. The student-counselor relationship offers unique opportunities for the counselor to achieve a reconciliation of self and the universe of experience. Consulting is simply a subset of consulting. Counseling includes personal assistance provided by someone; it is designed to help a person decide where they want to go, what they want to do, or how best to achieve their goal; counseling helps to solve problems that arise in life (Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022). Ngale, (2009) argues that guidance programs in collaboration with all staff are effective in meeting the academic needs of all students. Increasing mental health problems among young people point to the need for guidance and counseling in schools to respond to individual students in need (Mark et al., 2023). According to (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara, et al., 2023), the government of Tanzania calls for the establishment of guidance and counseling services in universities and other institutions. However, there is little information on the implementation and evaluation of this program to verify its achievement in a real-world setting. This is because in order to be properly informed, students need the help of trained counseling staff (Ntirandekura, Ainebyoona, et al., 2022). It focuses on the issue of the availability of counseling facilities, on the contextual constraints that prevent the provision of counseling services to students. In Uganda, the government's White Paper (1992) on education recognized the importance of the guidance movement. This document recognized the importance of guidance at all levels of education. He recommended that every school from primary to tertiary should have at least one teacher responsible for guidance and counseling (Nancy & Prudence, 2024). (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022) adds that the Ministry of Education and Sports requires all schools to have dedicated time throughout the course for secondary school counseling programs in Mukono district inclusive. Nakisunga as one of the sub-counties in Mukono District are also highlighted by secondary schools in the sub-county (Victoria et al., 2023). The Sub County is located in Kyagwe District of Mukono District in the prominent Kingdom of Buganda in the Central Region of Uganda, lying between 0° 17' 7" North and 32° 46' 46" East coordinates. The sub-district headquarters is located 60 km east of the capital Kampala, with a population that relies on rain-fed agriculture. The factors of the sub-district forced the researcher to take it as a case study (Turyatamba & Turyasingura, 2024). According to Bandura, imitation involves the actual reproduction of observed movement activities. This theory is a bridge between behaviorist learning theories and cognitive learning theories because it includes attention, memory and motivation (Micheal et al., 2023). The theory observes that people can learn new information and behavior by observing other people. This theory focuses on teaching students about career decision alternatives and uses the concept of learning as an interaction with environment and genetic makeup and emphasizes the role of instrumental and associative learning (Richard et al., 2023). Applying this theory to practice involves the practitioner's effort to identify and correct any incorrect beliefs the student may have about the decision-making process. This theory was developed to address the questions: why people enter particular educational courses or occupations; why they may change direction during their lifetime; and why they may express different preferences for different activities at different times in their lives (Anthony, Kazaara, & Kazaara, 2023).

Problem statement

Counseling and counseling services have been offered in schools for several decades to improve student academics and behavior. However, the persistent failure of students in academics and misbehavior is increasing day by day (Christopher et al., 2022). Despite the importance of guidance and counseling among students, maladaptive behaviors against the goals of guidance and counseling are increasing among students today (Anthony, Kazaara, Kazaara et al., 2023).

Okuda (2013) opines that almost all schools and institutions across the country have their day-to-day operations paralyzed by student-led strikes, absenteeism, subject inconsistency, teenage pregnancy, truancy, drug abuse, sexual experimentation and early school leaving among others. led to poor academic development (Faith et al., 2023). This unsavory behavior is attributed in part to the lack of well-established effective counseling programs in many of the nation's high schools. If school counselors are equipped with the required knowledge and supported to implement guidance and counseling among our schools (Victoria et al., 2023). These services must achieve the desired goal of each parent. Therefore, the current study supported the impact that counseling services have on students' academic performance.

Specific objectives

1. To examine the effect of guidance and counseling on shaping students' behaviors.
2. To examine the impact of Guidance and Counseling in developing students interests towards Career development.
3. To establish the relationship between guidance and counseling programs and students' academic performance among secondary schools.

Methodology

(Olanrewaju et al., 2021b) defined research design as arranging the conditions for collection and analysis in a way that intends to combine the relevance of the research purpose with economy in the process. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. According to (Nafiu et al., 2017), a population is a group of individuals, subjects, or objects that are sampled for measurement. The target population for the study was 1000 persons consisting of school principals, teachers, school counsellors, students and educators from Nakisunga Sub District. (Kinyata & Abiodun, 2020), argue that the main consideration for determining sample size is the ability to collect in-depth data at an affordable cost in terms of time, finance and resources. According to (Nafiu & Ph, 2012), the ideal sample size should be between 10%-30%. The researcher selected 127 (12.7%) respondents who consisted of 30 school principals using the purposive sampling method, 50 teachers using the cluster sampling method, 15 school counselors using the purposive sampling method, 30 students using the simple random sampling method, and 2 sub-county education officials Nakisunga using purposive selection. sampling method (Lu et al., 2013). However, the researcher positively collected 99 questionnaires from the respondents. Primary data were obtained using questionnaires and interview guides that were given to the respondents, as they were the ones who provided first-hand information about the subject under investigation (Maiga et al., 2021). Secondary data was obtained from sources like; Nakisunga County Annual Reports and Journal Articles, School News and Internet. The study incorporated the use of various methods in the data collection process in an effort to come up with

Received: 19.07.2024

Accepted: 23.07.2024

Published on: 30.07.2024

reliable, specific and credible research findings. Therefore, the researcher used questionnaires and interview guides in the primary data collection process. (Rasheed et al., 2022), argues that the primary method of data collection involves the researcher himself using qualitative or qualitative methods. The advantage of using this method is that the data collected is unique to the researcher and there is no alteration of the data. There are many methods of primary data but the study focused on; A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts to collect information from respondents. The study used questionnaires as the main data collection method. Interviewing involves asking questions and eliciting responses from study participants (Olanrewaju et al., 2021a). Quantitative secondary data were obtained, among others, from the school counselor's student record book, benefit record book, district magazines. Qualitative data were obtained from semi-structured and structured interviews, focus group transcripts, observational notes, and other personal research-related documents related to the study. Respondents were provided with open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires and self-administered questionnaires (Olanrewaju et al., 2021a). The questionnaires were aimed at answering questions in accordance with the objectives of the study. An interview guide was developed with a set of questions that the researcher asked the respondents during the interview and were open-ended in nature. The researcher personally recorded the answers provided by the respondents of the study during the interview process (Aslam et al., 2022). This instrument was used to collect information from respondents selected from secondary schools in Nakisunga Sub County. The study used a 5-point Likert scale to measure the variables that were consistent with the assessment of guidance and counseling to arrive at the findings. The scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree). Editing of the collected data was done to make the data ready and easier for presentation (Rasheed et al., 2022). The completed questionnaires were edited one by one to correct errors made by the respondents. Data has been edited to check for accuracy, completeness, consistency and uniformity. The edited data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were grouped and statistical descriptions such as tables showing frequencies and percentages were used for better interpretation (Jallow et al., 2021). However, qualitative data were analyzed to identify responses from respondents that were relevant to the research problem at hand. Primarily, these data were analyzed by explaining the facts collected from the area within which the researcher was able to quote the responses of the respondents. Data were analyzed in the form of tables, frequencies and percentages using SPSS & STATA (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by their perspective on the impact of shaping students' behavior in senior secondary schools in Nakisunga sub county Mukono district

No	Statement	Agree		Not sure		Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1.	Demands respect from each other	95	96	4	4		

Received: 19.07.2024

Accepted: 23.07.2024

Published on: 30.07.2024

2.	Respectful behavior allows fellow students who really do want to learn and do well to do just that without the distraction	73	74	15	15	11	11
3.	It encourages care givers to continue providing to the student	99	100				
4.	It helps teachers and administrators who are in that school to help students through school activities positively	71	72	5	5	23	23
5.	It creates an appropriate environment for learning	99	100				
6.	Good behaviors provide valuable and speedy feedback among teachers and students	69	70	9	9	21	21
7.	Good behaviors create a safe secure environment	99	100				

Source: Primary source 2023

The data in table 1 clearly shows the impact of shaping students behaviors in secondary schools in Nakisunga sub county Mukono district. Considering the effect, all the respondents 99 (100%) indicated that teaching good behaviors encourages care givers to continue providing to the student and creates an appropriate environment for learning without any respondent with a different idea and good behaviors create a safe secure environment.

Similarly, the majority 95 (96%) of the respondents agreed that teaching good behaviors demands respect from each other in the society or environment while 4 (6%) of respondents were not sure of the impact of behaviors. With respect to allowing fellow students who really do want to learn and do well to do just that without the distraction majority 73 (74%) of the respondents agreed, 15 (15%) of them were not sure while 11 (11%) of them disagreed about the behavior.

When respondents asked about helping teachers and administrators to help students through school activities positively, more than half of the respondents 71 (72%) agreed 5 (5%) were not sure of the impact while 23 (23%) of the respondents disagreed. With respect to providing valuable and speedy feedback among teachers and students, majority 69 (70%) of the respondents agreed, 9 (9%) were not sure while 21 (21%) of the respondents disagreed.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents' perceptions on the impact of Guidance and Counseling on student's career issues in senior secondary schools in Nakisunga Sub County

No.	Statement	Agree		Not sure		Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%

Received: 19.07.2024

Accepted: 23.07.2024

Published on: 30.07.2024

1.	Helps in identifying career options	99	100				
2.	It is a linkage between behavior and academic or career success	99	100				
3.	It helps one to understand and share ones goals confidently with others and get help where need is	99	100				
4.	Helps students setup realistic goals	93	94			6	6
5.	Helps in resolving career disputes among family members	99	100				
6.	Guidance gives a clear career road map	69	70	21	21	9	9
7.	Helps in growing connections with domain experts.	79	80			20	20
8	Allows students explore various career options.	99	100				
9	It gives a broad perspective to explore career skills.	89	90	6	6	4	4
10	Narrows careers to make one positive career	73	74	9	9	17	17

Source: Primary source 2023

The data in table 2 clearly shows the impact of Guidance and Counseling on students career issues in senior secondary schools in Nakisunga Sub County. Considering the impact resulting from guidance and counseling on career choices, 99 (100%) of the respondents agreed that guidance and counseling results to identifying career options, it links behavior and academic or career success it allows students explore various career options, it also helps in resolving career disputes among family members and helps one to understand and share ones goals confidently with others and get help where need is identified. Furthermore, the study examined setting up realistic goals and 93 (94%) of the respondents agreed while 6 (6%) disagreed. More further, 89 (90%) of the respondents agreed that guidance and counseling gives a broad perspective to explore career skills, 6 (6%) of the respondents were not sure while 4 (4%) disagreed of the impact.

79 (80%) of the respondent furthermore, agreed that guidance and counseling results into growing connections with domain experts while 20 (20%) of them disagreed to the result. With respect to Narrowing careers to make one positive career, 73 (74%) of the respondents agreed, 9 (9%) were not sure while 17 (17%) disagreed on the impact. Lastly, more than half 69 (70%) of the respondents agreed that guidance and counseling gives a clear career road map, 21 (21%) of the respondents were not sure while 9 (9%) disagreed to the outcome.

Received: 19.07.2024

Accepted: 23.07.2024

Published on: 30.07.2024

Table 3: Relationship between guidance and counseling and students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Nakisunga sub county Mukono district

		guidance and counseling	students' academic performance
guidance and counseling	Pearson Correlation	1	.606**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	99	99
students' academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.606**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	99	99
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source; Primary Data, 2024

This table presents results of the Pearson correlation analysis conducted to determine the relationship between guidance and counseling and students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Nakisunga sub county, Mukono district. The analysis revealed that there was a positive and statistically significant correlation between guidance and counseling and students' academic performance, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.606 and a significance level of 0.000 which is less than 0.01. This indicates that as the level of guidance and counseling provided to students increases, their academic performance also tends to increase. Specifically, the correlation coefficient of 0.606 suggests that there is a moderate to strong positive relationship between the two variables, implying that better guidance and counseling is associated with improved examination scores and general learning achievement among seniors in secondary school. The significant correlation provides empirical evidence to educational stakeholders on the potential impact that strengthening guidance and counseling programs can have towards enhancing students' academic outcomes.

Discussion of findings**Effect of guidance and counseling on shaping students' behaviors**

The study on the first objective examined the effect of guidance and counseling on shaping students behavior and the results show that guidance and counseling services encourages students to respect each other, allow other students to learn in a safe and conducive learning environment and provides parents, guardians and teachers to continue providing the necessary to the students as required for effective learning. Safe and vibrant learning environment pay ways of consultation from teachers and encourages discussions among students (Cand et al., 2022). The study findings are related to (Lewis, 2001), who opined that guidance and counseling enable students experience connection to the teacher and therefore lead to promoting friendly healthy associations between students, teachers and parents.

Received: 19.07.2024**Accepted: 23.07.2024****Published on: 30.07.2024**

The study furthermore, revealed that guidance and counseling helps teachers and administrators who are in the school to take students through the school activities positively. When students show positive behaviors towards teachers and administrators, the teacher is in position of covering a wide range of study content coverage and encourages learning from one another. The study finding is found to corroborate to (Emmanuel et al., 2023) whose study observed that proper student's behavior promote extra learning and encourages further research and intervention.

The study also revealed that guidance and counseling create an appropriate environment for learning. It provides valuable and speedy feedback among students and teachers and creates a safe secure environment. It is in line to the republic of Kenya (2021) report about guidance and counseling, collaborate to the current study, it noted that guidance and counseling is essential in promoting discipline. Its service helps students to value themselves and their function as individuals who build the nation and to grow with the right attitudes.

The impact of Guidance and Counseling on student's career issues

Basing on the findings from the second objective, which states the impact of guidance and counseling on students career issues, the study revealed that guidance and counseling results to identifying career options, it links behavior and academic or career success, it gives students an opportunity to explore various career options, it also helps in resolving career disputes among family members and helps one to understand and share ones goals confidently with others and get help where need is identified. If students are provided with qualified counselor, he or she is in position of guiding, act as a role model, mentor and provide an insight to the students' career opportunities which all links students to better academic performance. The findings are in corroboration to (UMAR & NASIRU, 2014) views that guidance and counseling focuses to highlight the important influences that impact the career decision making of students. Guidance and counseling teachers helps in mentoring of students in terms of their career success.

Also (Richard et al., 2023) asserted that guidance and counseling services help students' while making decisions on their future careers. Some students choose subjects without knowledge of what career the subject can enable them to take later in life. Others fail to put extra effort on subjects capable of enhancing them into certain careers they would wish to take on finishing high schools. According to Ibrahim, et, al., (2014) guidance and counseling helps improve academic performance. This is because G&C helps students in understanding one's strengths, limitations and how to solve problems. It also has positive effect on how to nurture students who have varying abilities, capacities, interest and unlimited potential.

Conclusion

There is no any other place that is sought to be safe and effective for children than schools. Guidance and counseling as one of the programs highlighted by the curriculums among senior secondary schools, is believed to focuses on building students' mental capacities by the help of a qualified counselor. The current study examined the effect of guidance and counseling on students' academic performance and the study revealed that guidance and counseling shape student's behavior to fit in any society. Student's behaviors encourage or discourages care givers to continue providing to the student, creates an appropriate environment for learning, safe secure environment, student become attentive, cooperative and encouraging teachers to teach

Received: 19.07.2024

Accepted: 23.07.2024

Published on: 30.07.2024

them. guidance and counseling services help students identify career options, link behaviors and academic success, gives students an opportunity to explore various career options, helps in resolving career disputes and helps one to share and ones goals confidently with others and get help where need is identified. It was observed that the existence of guidance and counseling leads to positive academic performance among students who engage in the services. It is concluded that guidance and counseling create a positive environment for students' performance.

Recommendations

i. Basing on the study findings, it is observed that most of senior secondary schools in Nakisunga Sub County do not provide counseling services to the students. It is recommended that senior secondary schools should include guidance and counseling service in their schools if they are to improve on their students' academic performance. ii. Schools in Nakisunga Sub County should hire qualified counselors to provide students with better counseling services that are meant to improve students' performance.

The government is advised to prioritize and monitors all schools so as they provide counseling services to the students which is seen as an important factor in improving students' academic performance in Nakisunga Sub County.

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Received: 19.07.2024

Accepted: 23.07.2024

Published on: 30.07.2024

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