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THE LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF GUIDANCE AND
COUNSELLING AT KOMENDA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study explored the nature of guidance and counselling services available for the students in Komenda College of Education.

Methodology: The descriptive survey design was used for the study. A sample of 185 students consisting of 95 level 200 students and 90 level 300 students were sampled from the population. The major instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. Questionnaire was used because it is the most appropriate instrument that could be used to collect data on the variables for the study. Content-related evidence of validity was established for the instrument. The researchers personally administered the questionnaire. The entry of quantitative data and analysis was done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Findings: The results from the study showed that guidance and counselling services were vibrant and visible in Komenda College of Education. The study revealed that Seventy-five per cent (75%) of the respondents claimed that attitudes of Guidance and Counselling Coordinators and Tutors were very appropriate for counselling services. All types of guidance and counselling services were rendered in the college. The study further revealed that some students had negative attitudes towards accessing guidance and counselling services.

Unique Contribution to Practice and Policy: The researchers therefore recommend that, school authorities should be provided with needed logistics for effective guidance and counselling services in schools and colleges. Also, there should be in-service trainings and refresher courses and seminars for guidance and counselling coordinators to up-date their skills in guidance and counselling. Finally, the Ghana Education Service should organise periodic educational programmes for both teachers and students on the role of guidance and counselling in schools and colleges.

Key words: *Guidance, counselling, awareness, student teachers, effectiveness, development, services.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Long before the advent of formal, organized and scientific education, the traditional African educators functioned basically as advisers. While some functioned as sages who advised the youth on various aspects of social life such as work, marriage, morals and other societal conducts and sanctions. Others operated through such media as forces of nature and other agencies, poetry, music, traditional medicine, religious beliefs and practices to bring to bear the individual societal and psychological checks (Yusuf, 2014; Agbaje, 2017, Kanus, 2018;). Prior to the formalisation of guidance and counselling services in Ghana's educational system, there existed forms of guiding learners through voluntary and non-formalized means (Taylor & Buku, 2006, Nartey, 2014; Ocansey & Gyimah, 2016; Asiedu-Yirenkyi, 2019). Taylor and Buku (2006), claimed that this kind of voluntary services were administered in schools by heads of institutions, housemasters and mistresses, teachers, chaplains and in some instances school prefects. Such voluntary services were in the form of:

- a. Providing places and opportunities for the youth for socialization and recreation;
- b. Consulting and advising the youth on moral issues;
- c. Assisting and advising the youth with their financial problems and issues;
- d. Organizing orientation programmes for newly admitted students;
- e. Assisting the youth to solve their personal-social problems;
- f. Guiding the youth through Sunday school lessons and discussions to develop them both morally and spiritually.

Outside the school, parents, guardians, adults and family elders guided their children, wards and relatives as they were naturally expected by the society (Taylor & Buku, 2006). In churches, priests and pastors and Sunday School Teachers were significant guidance officers. They also rendered peer counselling which took place among age mates and classmates (Atta-Frimpong, 2013; Appiah, 2013). Although this form of voluntary guidance in all sectors of the society existed, the guidance needs of the people seemed not to be adequately met. On that that note serious work in establishing guidance and counselling services in schools, began in the late 1960's when the Curriculum Research Development Division [CRDD] was instituted to cater for programmes in schools, education for the handicapped and guidance and counselling for all students (Asiedu-Yirenkyi, Kyere, & Ofori, 2019; Ofori, 2013). This early attempt did not yield much results because of differences in opinion in the levels of education (Ofori, 2013).

Makinde (1990) as cited in Bempah (2010), observed that guidance and counselling services have become necessary due to the greater complexity of modern living with its increased pressure which can be seen from maladaptive behaviours and hindrances to learning. Guidance should, therefore aim at correction of maladjustment behaviours (Oliha & Audu, 2010; Jumana & Meera, 2016; Nwawube, 2019). Generally, the student body is heterogeneous in composition. It represents many people from different cultural backgrounds being trained to take care of oneself but this at times tends to develop negative influence among individuals (Carter, 2010; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Banks, 2015; Howard, 2019). A good number of studies have shown that many students abuse their freedom, break bounds with impunity, not adhere to the dressing code, sneak to town at night get smoked and drunk which eventually affect their academic performance and their total personality development (Kagohara, 2011; Fix, & Fix, 2015; Goss & Sonnemann, 2017; Hepburn, Beamish & Alston-

Knox, 2020;). These unproductive moral attitudes of students clearly indicate that perhaps sufficient and effective guidance and counselling services are not offered to students. There is therefore the need for continuous studies in this light, to help identify the effective implementation of guidance and counselling services among the students of colleges of education in general.

The decision to establish a systematic guidance and counselling services in schools came to force during the implementation of the New Structure and Content of Education in Ghana, the Ghana Education Service [GES] in 1976, by the circular N^o GES/DG/040/9A, which gave Ghana Education Services (GES) the mandate to establish systematic guidance and counselling programmes in all second cycle institutions GES (Ofori, 2013; Namale & Awabil, 2018; Asiedu-Yirenkyi, Kyere, & Ofori, 2019;). The aims and objectives of guidance and counselling services as spelt out in the policy statement of the Ghana government were goal – oriented and focused on the holistic growth and development of the Ghanaian students. A number of researchers and authors contend that guidance and counselling programmes need to become more closely aligned with state and national standards for schools' counsellors (Lam & Hui, 2010; Aba-Afari, 2011; Nyarko-Sampson, 2013; Awinsong, Dawson, & Gidiglo, 2015, Sedofia, & Kumassah, 2020). Nevertheless, as part of the curriculum and course structure, Colleges of Education are to offer effective guidance and counselling services (Nyarko–Sampson, 2010; Aidoo, 2011; Nyarko-Sampson, 2013). This is because it has become more relevant aspect of school curriculum in this modern complex world (Aidoo, 2011).

A society or school system that ignores this reality faces an unprecedented wave of educational system. Out of guidance and counselling services come a whole lot of services that help to guide, direct and lead students to be educationally prepared, occupationally competent and socially adjusted (Lam, & Hui, 2010, Ramakrishnan & Jalajakumari, 2013; Hughes, 2014). One cannot pretend as if the difficulties in guiding students do not exist in educational institutions in Ghana. It seems that some Schools and Colleges of Education have in the past not fulfilled the functions and mandate of guidance and counselling services appropriately and effectively. There have been some lapses in guidance and counselling programmes (Aidoo, 2011; Ocansey & Gyimah, 2016). Nevertheless, per the findings of recent studies, students in colleges of education have seemingly been deprived of guidance and counselling services and their problems are still with them for all these years (Nyarko–Sampson, 2010; Aidoo, 2011; Atta-Frimpong, 2013; Appiah, 2013; Nyarko-Sampson, 2013; Sedofia & Kumassah, 2020). It is no wonder, that the study by Abotsi, Dsane, Babah and Kwarteng (2019) found out that some of the students of the colleges of education lack study skills and habits and they are academically weak, lack self-esteem and seems to have no inclination even to the career development and opportunities available to them.

Guidance can therefore be seen as an” umbrella” term that refers to all that is done to protect and guide the development of an individual. It is the help given by one person to another in making prudent choices and adjustments and in solving problems (Oladele, 2000). According to Blanchard and Flaum (1969) as cited in Oladele (2000), guidance is the purposeful direction of the growth of an individual in five worlds. These are physical, mental, social, emotional and psychological. The most important aspect of these worlds is how the individual person perceives it. A person's perception changes from time to time with his experiences. For example, one may spend a lot of money on an article and clothing these days. If the article is no longer valued, then the perception and attitudes change leading to the

type of behaviour one shows towards an object. Guidance is a developmental approach. Developmental guidance has been suggested as having its prime concern towards positive growth of all maturing students (Oye; Obi, Mohd & Bernice, 2012; Sun & Yuen, 2012; Ramakrishnan & Jalajakumari, 2013; Gysbers & Henderson, 2014).

The concept of guidance as a developmental process, stresses the help to all students in all areas of their, educational, emotional and personal social experiences at all stages of life. Shertzer and Stone (1976) as cited in Singh (2018).claim that the focus of the developmental process lies in assisting the individuals to evaluate self and personal experiences through interaction with the counsellor. Guidance as a developmental effort recognizes human development as a process of building a particular life style which involves a set of general patterns of coping with their environment (Blocher, 2000).

Developmental theorists consider guidance to enable the country to identify her talented youth and nurtures them to the optimal level of social, educational and economic development (Olayinka, 1978 as cited in Oladele, 2000). A developmental task, according to Havighurst (1953) as cited in Freitas et al., (2013), is the one that arises at a certain time in life of an individual, an achievement of which will lead to success and happiness. Successfully completing a developmental task will help an individual acquires the skills necessary to meet additional task that will occur in the future (Havighurst, 1953). According to Freitas et al., (2013), Havighurst (1972) summed these developmental tasks as follows:

1. Accepting one's physique and using it effectively;
2. Achieving new and more mature relations with age mates of both sexes;
3. Achieving a masculine or feminine social sex role;
4. Achieving emotional independence from parents and other adults;
5. Preparing for an economic career;
6. Preparing for marriage and family life;
7. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour;
8. Acquiring a set of values and ethical system as a guide to behaviour – developing an ideology.

Mathew (1962), as cited in Singh (2018), lists four process areas that correspond to guidance needs. These are: the need for appraisal and understanding, the need for adjustment to self as well as to environmental demands and realities, the need for orientation toward present and future conditions and the need for development of personal potentialities. Thus, guidance should serve the purpose of making sure that the students, teachers and the parents understand various places of the individuals' development and their impact upon the growth, adjustment and decision-making process (Singh, 2018). Also, Kehas (1960) as cited in Singh (2018) sees guidance as being essentially concerned with personal development. This concept of personal development assumes that it is desirable for individuals to have the opportunity both to think about the kind of self they are building and have built, and to confront themselves with the meanings they attribute to their experiences and consequences such attributions will have on their future. To such students there is emotional stress, which should be properly handled by guidance and counselling coordinators and other tutors' co-operation for the total development of students as useful beings in the new and wider society at large (Gibson & Mitchell, 1978).

2. The Need for Guidance and Counselling Training for Teachers

Apart from subject teaching, teachers are entrusted with many responsibilities nowadays. Guidance and counselling services are some of their major duties. In the guidance and counselling literature, these two words generally take on different meanings. The former refers to helping students' whole-person development, while the latter is frequently targeted at helping students with problems. In other words, guidance services is preventive and developmental in nature whereas counselling is more of supportive, remedial work (Lai-Yeung, 2014; Lam & Hui, 2010; Nyamwaka, Ondima, Nyamwange, Ombaba, & Magaki, 2013; Hearne & Galvin, 2015).

Again, an examination of available literature, confirmed that increased substance abuse, break-up of cultural norms, stress from overloaded curriculum, lack of guidance from parents and teachers, the poor healthy relationships, mismanagement of instructional time, engaging in unrewarding disciplines and the general lawlessness in many of African countries, have been proposed as some of the reasons exacerbated by the absence of guidance and counselling services in our educational settings (Buku & Mwanzia, 2004). This study thus explored the nature and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services available for students in Komenda College of Education

Objectives

1. To ascertain the types of guidance services provided to the students of Komenda College of Education.
2. To determine the factors that affect students' utilization of guidance and counseling services in Komenda College of Education.

Research Questions

1. What Guidance and Counselling services are provided for the students of Komenda College of Education?
2. What factors affect students' utilization of the guidance and counselling services at Komenda College of Education?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework applied for the study was Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory of Child Development (1979). The concept depicts four ecological systems which an individual will potentially interact with each nested within the others. Viewed from the innermost system outwards, which illustrates four systems; Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem and Macrosystem. This has to do with the interactions every individual has with the ecology. These model identified by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory of Child Development (1979) is in line with personal-social guidance and counselling services. In behaviour counselling individual interactions with the environment plays a major role in ensuring effectiveness of guidance and counselling services. In this context the researchers found it very prudent to use this theory.

3. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. . A sample of 185 students consisting of 95 level 200 students and 90 level 300 students were randomly selected from the population. The major instrument for the collection of data was questionnaire. Questionnaire was used because it is the most appropriate instrument that can be used to

collect data on the variables for the study. Content-related evidence of validity was established for the instrument. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire. The entry of quantitative data and analysis was done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results from the data analysis were carried out in frequencies, percentages and presented in Tables.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Research Question 1: What Guidance and Counselling services are provided for the students of Komenda College of Education?

Educational institutions are mandated to render Guidance and Counselling services by Ghana Education Service. These services are supposed to assist students in all spheres of student life. Table 1 elicits information on Guidance and Counselling services which are provided for students of Komenda College of Education.

Table 1: Provision of Guidance and Counselling Services in Komenda College of Education

Guidance and Counselling Services	Yes	No
Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	
Information services	118 (64)	67 (36)
Orientation services	134 (72)	51 (28)
Placement services	43 (23)	142 (77)
Consultation services	53 (29)	132 (71)
Appraisal services	72 (39)	113(61)
Follow-up services	55 (30)	130 (70)
Counselling services	83 (45)	102 (55)

Source: Field data 2019

Percentage ranges: $\geq 50\%$; surely provided, $< 50\%$; rarely provided

Results from the table indicate that orientation (72%) and information (64%) services were the most provided services in Komenda College of Education with placement and consultation services, the least provided. Orientation and information services were widely provided because of their nature and what they are supposed to offer. They are very critical especially when people are new in an environment. The objective of this paper was to ascertain if students were aware of the existence or otherwise of guidance and counselling services on campus. The views of the respondents were solicited and presented in the table 2.

Table 2: Existence of Guidance and Counselling Centre at Komenda College of Education

	Aware		Not Aware		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Second Year Students	83	44.9	12	6.5	95	51.4
Third Year Students	74	40.0	16	8.6	90	48.6
Total	157	84.9	28	15.1	185	100

Source: Field data, 2019

Results from Table 2 indicates that majority of the students (85.9%) asserted that a Guidance and Counselling services exist on campus. Guidance and Counselling now forms an integral part of the school services. To make Guidance and Counselling services very formidable and available to all educational institutions in Ghana, the Ghana Education Service has included it in the teacher education syllabuses, so that all pre-service teachers coming from Colleges of Education may be able to render guidance and counselling services to their students (Ministry of Education, 1994). Guidance and Counselling has also been included in the curriculum of the Faculty of Education of the University of Cape Coast and that of the University of Education, Winneba. This is buttressed by Ndego (2010) who stressed in his study that guidance and counselling services are run for students in the Tano North District of the Brong Ahafo Region.

To detect learning defects which may lead to the phenomenon of early drop-outs, the Ghana Education Service plans to develop diagnostic tests appropriately normed for use in Ghana at various levels of education. Such instruments in the hands of competent Guidance and Counselling officers will facilitate early detection of students with special needs for appropriate intervention strategies.

The Ghana Education Service has established Guidance and Counselling units in all the regional and district education offices to provide and co-ordinate the rendering of Guidance and Counselling services in all educational institutions. In the light of this, Special Education has been made a subject of study in the syllabus of Colleges in the country. This is to enable the teacher trainees to acquire the needed skills to detect and handle exceptional individuals properly.

Some second-cycle institutions under the Ghana Education Service have Guidance and Counselling Co-ordinators. Steps are taken to ensure that the rest are provided with qualified guidance personnel. Regular in-service training are organized for all the guidance personnel in the regional and district offices and those in the institutions. In the Technical Institutes there are Industrial Liaison Officers working closely with the guidance personnel to arrange industrial visits for the students, as well as industrial attachments for both teachers and students (The Ghana Education Service, 1983). The need has been felt to intensify educational and vocational guidance for schools. In this connection, steps are taken to make both boys and

girls aware, right from primary schools, of the equal opportunities for technical and vocational education programmes for both sexes.

The Labour Department of the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare has a unit known as National Employment Service which, among other things, gives vocational guidance and employment counselling. The Ghana Education Service provides guidance services in the schools in collaboration with this unit. Both the Labour Department and the Ghana Education Service provide facilities for vocational guidance to young persons. They help them to make the right choice of programmes and to acquire the right skills for employment.

Research Question 2: What factors affect students' utilization of the guidance and counselling services at Komenda College of Education?

Utilization of guidance and counselling services have been studied extensively. As to whether students would use a particular service depended on a number of factors. Table 3 shows the results of factors that influence the use of guidance and counselling services by students of Komenda College of Education. The results from Table 3 shows that attitudes of guidance and counselling coordinators (74%) and attitudes of other tutors (72%) constitute the greatest factors that encourage students utilization of guidance and counselling services in Komenda College of Education with 'perception of society about people who visit counsellors' (46%) and 'fear that information given will not be kept confidential' (46%) the least.

Table 3: Factors that Influence Patronage of Guidance and Counselling Services

Factors	Encourage freq. (%)	Discourage freq. (%)
Attitude of guidance and counselling coordinator(s)	136 (74)	45 (24)
Attitude of other students	124 (67)	56 (30)
Attitude of tutors	134 (72)	46 (25)
The types of guidance and counselling services provided	125 (68)	55 (30)
The location of guidance and counselling centres	109 (59)	72 (39)
Perceptions of the society about People who visit counselling centres	90 (47)	86 (51)
Fear that information given will not Be kept confidential	85 (46)	94 (51)

Source: Field data, 2019

Percentage range: >70%; strong, 70-50; moderate, <50; weak

Attitudes have been found to affect the implementation and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in Komenda College of Education. This assertion is supported by Hui (2002). A whole-school approach to guidance. Negative attitudes of some school counsellors affected the effectiveness of the guidance and counselling services (Reynolds & Cheek, 2002). Some counsellors are not well remunerated for this additional duty they are performing. Some are classroom teachers and had to combine their normal classroom teaching with guidance and counselling services they render to students.

Research Question 3: To what Extent do St Research Question 5: To what Extent do Students of Komenda College of Education Utilize Guidance and Counselling Services?

The extent of the utilization of the guidance and counselling services among students was determined by calculating frequency and percentage counts. The result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Utilisation of Guidance and Counselling Services

Guidance and Counselling Services	Yes	No
	freq.(%)	freq.(%)
Information services	72(39)	133(61)
Orientation services	76(41)	109(59)
Placement services	31(17)	154(83)
Consultation services	56(30)	129(70)
Appraisal services	50(27)	135(73)
Follow-up services	36(20)	149(80)
Counselling services	62(33)	123(67)

Source: field data, 2019

Table 5 indicates that far more than half of the students; 133(61%), 109(59%), 154(83%), 129(70%), 135(73%), 149(80%) and 123(67%) do not use information, orientation, placement, consultation, appraisal, follow-up and counselling services, respectively. Only a few students utilise the guidance and counselling services provided in the Komenda College of Education. Hence, a greater number of the students do not use the guidance and counselling services available to them in the Komenda College of Education. Accessing guidance and counselling programmes at any setting is both individual's and guidance provider's initiative.

Do students of Komenda College of Education Utilize Guidance and Counselling Services?

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Discussions

The findings from the study showed that the attitudes of some teachers, parents, students influence the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in schools and colleges. This findings confirms what Hepburn, Beamish & Alston-Knox, (2020) asserted that unproductive moral attitudes of students clearly indicate that perhaps sufficient and effective guidance and counselling services are not offered to students

Despite students' awareness of guidance and counselling services rendered, there were identified problems such as misconceptions, unavailability of resources, teachers not making appropriate referrals, hinder effective guidance and counselling services in the college. This confirms the assertions made by Ramakrishnan & Jalajakumari, 2013; Hughes, 2014) that one cannot pretend as if the difficulties in guiding students do not exist in educational institutions in Ghana. It seems that some Schools and Colleges of Education have in the past not fulfilled the functions and mandate of guidance and counselling services appropriately and effectively.

From the findings, it was identified that there were some lack of patronage of the guidance and counselling services that influence the services negatively. This agrees with the findings of recent studies by Appiah, 2013; Nyarko-Sampson, 2013; Sedofia & Kumassah, 2020) that students of colleges of education have seemingly been deprived of guidance and counselling services and their problems are still with them for all these years.

Findings

The findings from indicates that majority of the students are aware of the existence of the guidance and counselling services rendered at Komenda College of Education. Majority of students in the college access guidance and counselling services but not so encouraging due to the fact that some students were not sure if information that they give could be kept confidential. The finding also indicated that though there were qualified and competent teachers to handle guidance and counselling problems yet they need some form of in-service training or seminars to up-date they counselling skills. The findings further revealed that attitudes of some guidance and counselling coordinators, teachers, headmasters, students and parents interfere with effective guidance and counselling services in the college. Also, people have some misconception about guidance and counselling that their secrets would be disclosed to the public domain.

Conclusion

Based on the on the findings from the study, it was concluded that guidance and counselling unit is alive and visible in Komenda College of Education. Though the unit is mandated to provide range of services to students in the Komenda College of Education it was identified that very few students access the guidance and counselling serves available to them. It also revealed that the patronage of guidance and counselling services depend chiefly on the attitudes of teachers, guidance and counselling coordinators, headmasters, parents and students. The findings also supported that students in Komenda College of Education are fully aware of the guidance and counselling services in the college. It was further revealed that students in Komenda College of Education patronise all the services but need much improvement. Perceptions of the society about the services of guidance and counselling also showed negative patronage. The number of students who visited counselling centres were not encouraging for effective services. Some students were suspicious that their information given at the counselling centres might not be kept confidential.

Recommendations

1. The researchers recommend that there should be special offices earmarked for guidance and counseling services.
2. There should be frequent in-services trainings, workshops and seminars for guidance and counseling coordinators to equip them with appropriate guidance and counseling skills to make them function well.
3. The guidance and counseling coordinators should be given appropriate and required resources to make them perform effectively and efficiently.
4. Teacher should be encouraged to make referral of cases that are beyond their control.

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