

Gender Comparison in the Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling Services in Enhancing Students' adjustment to School Environment in Boarding Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract— School adjustment is the process of coping in a new school environment in order to attain the individual and school's set goals and aspirations. The government, education managers and parents have expressed the need to strengthen school Guidance and Counselling services in order to enhance students' adjustment to the school environment. Public boarding secondary schools are expected to implement Guidance and Counselling policy of the Ministry of Education and help students adjust to secondary school environment. This study investigated the Gender comparison in the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services in enhancing students' adjustment to school environment in public boarding secondary schools in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research survey design. The study target population was 36,671 comprising of 35,659 form 3 students, 506 Form 3 class teachers and 506 teachers in charge of Guidance and Counselling from boarding secondary schools in Kitui, Nyeri and Nairobi counties in Kenya. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 756 respondents comprising of 720 Form 3 students, 18 Form 3 class teachers and 18 teachers in charge of Guidance and Counselling from 18 secondary schools for the study. Questionnaires were used to collect data from Form 3 students and their class teachers while an interview schedule was used to collect data from teachers in charge of Guidance and Counseling. Using Spearman Brown Prophecy formula by split half technique reliability coefficient of 0.745, 0.746 and 0.736 were realized for students, class teachers and teachers In charge of Guidance and Counseling respectfully. This was accepted because an alpha value of 0.7 and above is considered suitable for making group inferences that are accurate. The data was analyzed by use of inferential and descriptive statistics with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 for

windows and presented in frequency distribution Tables and percentages. The findings of this study provide information to school administrators, policy makers, parents and other stakeholders on various issues that need to be addressed in Guidance and Counseling to enables students adjust to school environment. The study further suggest ways of ways of improving Guidance and Counselling services in order to make it more effective in public boarding secondary schools.

Keywords— Guidance and Counselling, student adjustment, Gender and school adjustment, school environment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education improves the quality of people's lives and may also lead to broad social benefits to individual and society (Banathy, 1992). Hawkins (2002) observes that education aims at providing a forum where teachers and scholars are able to evaluate challenges facing the society from a balanced and a comparative social economic perspective. Education plays a crucial role in securing economic and social progress and improving income distribution (Bogonko, 1992). Education is expected to prepare and equip the youth of the country to play an effective role in a nation's life (Republic of Kenya, 1999). Education equips citizens with understanding and knowledge that enables them to make informed choices about their lives and those facing the society (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Education plays a very important role in the individual as well as society's life. That is why governments emphasize on children attending school in order to get formal education. School is an institution of learning where children go to be educated (Catterall, 1998). According to Clive et al (2003) schools aim at providing an all rounded programme of instruction using the educational practices that are

appropriate to the cultural, intellectual and social needs of the students. Schools aim at promoting social responsibility (Catterall, 1998). Midgley and Maehr (2000) observes that schools encourage acceptance and tolerance to the diversity of moral, traditional and religious values. According to Potter (2001) learning institutions aims at fostering a sense of individual responsibility, self-discipline, self-reliance, creative and active lifestyle and respect for self and others. Baills and Rossi (2001) state that school activities and programmes help in strengthening students bonds with the community. School therefore, plays a crucial role in inculcating traditional and religious values, self-respect, discipline, tolerance, morality and school culture to learners. However, Learners ability to tolerate the diversity of moral, traditional and religious values as well as develop to be all rounded personalities depends on their adjustment to the school environment.

Gonder and Hymes (1994) found that a school environment has physical, social and academic aspects. The physical environment includes school buildings, the noise levels, text books, recreational facilities and the neighborhood (Lapan, 2003). Adeyemo (2001) postulates that when students join secondary schools they find themselves in a more expansive school environment, larger classroom and an environment that has more noise than what they were used to in their relatively smaller primary schools. In Kenya the ministry of education policy expects secondary schools to organize orientation to induct new students to the school system (Republic of Kenya, 2001) this study sought to determine the extent to which schools implement this policy and evaluate its effectiveness in enhancing students' adjustment to school environment.

Armacost (1990) established that boys handle stress better than girls. Van Der Walt and Knoetze (2004) observe that Guidance and Counselling normally was more effective in socializing boys to be stronger and cope with their own problems than girls. Makesh and Kaji (2014) found that boys adjust to school social environment than girls. Other researches on gender differences in school adjustment has portrayed that girls are better adjusted as compared to boys. Alexitch and Page (1997) established that in Canada girls were more responsive to university and career information from their counselling teachers than boys. Bruce and Cockreham (2004) found that in America girls to be more tolerant towards rules, more willing to make exceptions and more easily reconciled than boys

Despite the emphasis given to Guidance and Counselling in schools in Kenya there are indicators that maladjustment still remains a challenge in public boarding secondary

schools. This has casted doubts on the role being played by Guidance and Counselling in helping students to adjust to the school environment. There was therefore, need to assess the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services in enhancing student adjustment to the school environment. This study investigated whether there is significance gender difference in the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services in enhancing students' adjustment to the school environment in public boarding secondary schools in Kenya.

Objective of the Study

This study was guided by the following objective:

- i) To determine whether there is gender difference in the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services in enhancing students' adjustment to school environment in boarding secondary schools in Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) Guidance is a process, developmental in nature, by which individuals are assisted to understand, accept and utilize their aptitude, interest and attitudinal patterns in relation to their aspirations. According to Nasibi (2002) guidance is a continuing process concerned with determining and providing for the developmental needs of Learners. Guidance is considered a lifelong process that involves helping individuals either as part of a group or at personal level. Guidance is meant to equip the client with knowledge and techniques that will enable them to identify and find ways of anticipating and solving problems (Mutie&Ndambuki, 1999). Guidance is a lifelong process that involves helping individuals either as part of a group or at personal level. It is on the basis of this that this study was carried out to determine the Guidance and Counselling services offered in public boarding secondary schools in Kenya. The study found that some of the services offered by school guidance and counselling include: peer counseling, career guidance, academic counselling, personalized counselling and mentorship. The study also sought to establish whether these services were effective in enabling students adjust to school environment.

The goal of Counselling is to reduce psychological disturbance (Egan, 2002). Counselling is a service designed to help individuals to analyze themselves by relating their capabilities, achievements, interest and mode of adjustment to their new decisions (Core, 1991). The goal of Counselling is to help the counselees learn how to deal effectively with self and the reality of the environment

(Regis, 2006). The guidance-counselor's role is to help the counsees to make their decisions or choice as intelligently and as wisely as possible (Mutie&Ndambuki, 1999). Guidance aims at promoting self-understanding, developing self-direction, self-guidance and self-improvement through an increased understanding of one's limitations, resources and problems (Okeyo, 2008). Okeyo (2008) further found that counselling aims at addressing and resolving problems, help in decision making, assists one to cope with crisis and work through feelings and inner conflicts so as to improve the relationship with oneself and others. According to Kinai (2006) counseling is a face to face human encounter whose outcome is greatly dependent on the quality of counseling relationship. The key element of counseling is provision of professional service by trained and competent persons to an individual or a group in need and it is the client determines the direction and the goals to be achieved (Kinai, 2006). Counseling is a dynamic relationship between the counselor and the counselee where the counselor establishes rapport but maintains a psychological distance to avoid an overlay emotional involvement; it is a teaching learning process where the client learns new behavior and attitudes through cognitive reasoning and behavior modification (Kinai, 2006). Teachers are required to identify and counsel students who are maladjusted with an objective of helping them adjust to school environment. Teachers in charge of Guidance and Counseling to coordinate student counseling and handle cases referred to them from peer counselors and other teachers.

Counseling emphasizes the aspects of increasing client's personal responsibility for their own lives (Regis, 2006). Kasomo (2009) observes that Guidance and Counseling is useful in helping individuals face the realities of life; identify talents, interests, needs and attitudes. Republic of Kenya (1999) suggests that learners in education and training institutions are in dire need of Guidance and Counseling. Guidance and Counseling is an integral part of education process and plays the role of supplementing and complementing all other educational programmes in the school system (Mutie&Ndambuki, 1999). The aim of Guidance and Counseling is to help learners understand themselves better, discover their personal needs, evaluate their own abilities and gradually develop life goals that are individually satisfying and socially acceptable (Kenya Institute of Education, 2003). The goal of counseling service is to change the learner's behavior, beliefs and values, coping skills, decision making and emotional distress (Republic of Kenya, 2009). The aim of helping learners to change their beliefs, evaluate their abilities,

develop decision making and coping skills is to enable them to adjust to school environment. The focus of this study was to assess whether Guidance and Counselling was effective in helping learners change their beliefs, develop decision making and coping skills and whether it enhanced their adjustment to the school environment.

School Guidance and Counselling Services

Guidance and Counselling help students to make decisions, solve problems, develop positive attitudes towards self and others, establish personal goals, develop educational plans as well as select the related courses based on individual interests and talents and be responsible for one's actions and choices (Charturvedi, 2007). Rgniyd (2008) observes that Guidance and Counselling aims at stopping wastage of human manpower and physical resources by helping the individuals to find their place in the society. Counseling is the process of helping individuals to accept and use information that can help them in their present problem or cope with it successfully (Nasibi, 2002). Guidance is meant for everybody, that is, students with problems and those without problems can benefit from guidance services (Mutie and Ndambuki, 1999). In a school set up teachers are expected to give guidance to students on various aspects of school and general social life as a way of helping them adjust to school and society in general. This study assessed the extent to which Guidance and Counselling is offered in public boarding secondary school and the effectiveness of these services in helping students' adjustment to school physical social and academic environment.

In Canada and America students are provided with occupational, educational, personal, social and other types of information needed by students for planning and self-adjustment (Hartman, 1999; Schmidt, 1993). The Counselling services can either be given to an individual student or to groups of students sharing common concerns (Hartman, 1999). During counselling services, individuals are offered an opportunity for self-knowledge and self-development through individual or group interventions (UNESCO, 2000). Understanding and knowledge of oneself and the environment gained through counselling leads to personal development and good decision making (UNESCO, 2000). According to Hartman (1999) in Canadian schools, effective school Guidance and Counselling services offer educational Counselling which gives information to students who need assistance in making decisions about aspects of their education, such as the choice of subjects, courses and choice of college. Educational Counselling increases students' awareness of educational opportunities (UNESCO, 2000). It provides

students with information on learning styles and study methods as well how their attitudes, interests and work habits affect their educational opportunities (UNESCO, 2000). Through educational Counselling, students are effectively helped to select subjects and career. They are guided on effective study skills. Students are also helped to balance between the co-curricular and curriculum activities as well as prepare for examination. The purpose of educational Counselling is to help students adjust to the school academic environment and consequently actualize their potential in academic performance. This study focused on the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling in enhancing students' adjustment to school academic environment.

Personal social Counselling deals with emotional distress and behavioral difficulties that arise when individuals struggle to deal with developmental stages and tasks (UNESCO, 2000). It also aims at helping students develop and maintain a healthy and effective interpersonal relationship as well as to improve the students' self-understanding and self-esteem (Regis, 2006). Students are empowered and taught to develop positive attitudes towards themselves (UNESCO, 2000). As a result students acquire ability to acknowledge areas of expertise and develop freedom to make positive choices in life. This leads to adjustment.

Vocational Counselling involves school counsellors having individual contacts with students who they counsel in order to facilitate career development and this helps students to become aware of the many occupations to consider and decide what to do after school (UNESCO, 2000). Occupational information can also be obtained through occupational studies, vocational Counselling leaflets and career workshops (Hartman, 1999). This study intended to ascertain how the Counselling services offered in public boarding secondary school in Kenya help in enhancing students' adjustment to school environment.

Chivonivoni (2006) observes that despite government emphasis of Guidance and Counselling services in Zimbabwe some schools never offered the services. Gumbo (2002) observes that all secondary schools in Zimbabwe had circulars providing for personal social, educational, career, vocational and HIV/AIDS education Guidance and a draft of Guidance and Counselling services syllabus. According to Ngara (1998) schools timetable Guidance and Counselling, appoint school Guidance and Counselling coordinators and have separate Guidance and Counselling rooms. The Government of Zimbabwe requires that when secondary school reports are submitted annually, mention

must be made on progress of the implementation of guidance and counseling services (Murwira, 1998). Murwira (1998) further observes that each school in Zimbabwe is expected to have a team of male and female school counsellors. Mapfumo (2001) reports that courses were conducted throughout Zimbabwe for Education Officers, District Education Officers, school principals and new school counsellors on how best to institutionalize the Guidance and Counselling Services. Kasayira, Cherishe and Chipandambira (2004) found that it was the responsibility of the headmaster of the school to make sure that Guidance and Counselling Services are implemented and taken seriously in the school. The headmaster also appoints school Guidance and Counselling coordinators and is responsible for providing adequate space and time for Guidance and Counselling activities (Gumbo, 2002).

School Guidance is meant for every student, that is, guidance benefits students with problems and those without problems (Mutie and Ndambuki, 1999). In traditional context guidance involved educating the youth about the traditions and culture of the community. Guidance was done from generation to generation by elders who considered it their social responsibility (Mutie&Ndambuki, 1999). In a school set up teachers are expected to give guidance to students on various aspects of school and general social life as a way of helping them adjust and fit in the school and society in general. It was necessary to examine the effectiveness of guidance in helping students develop self-direction, self-guidance and how guidance enhances students' adjustment to school environment. Teachers are required to identify and counsel students who are maladjusted with the aim of helping them adjust to school environment. Teachers in charge of Guidance and Counselling are expected to coordinate student counselling and handle referral cases from peer counsellors and other teachers.

Guidance and Counselling is an integral part of education process and plays the role of supplementing and complementing all other educational programmes in the school system (Mutie&Ndambuki, 1999). The aim of Guidance and Counselling is to help learners understand themselves better, discover personal needs, evaluate own abilities and gradually develop life goals that are individually satisfying and socially acceptable (Kenya Institute of Education, 2003). The goal of Counselling service is to change the learner's behaviour, beliefs and values, coping skills, decision making and emotional distress (Republic of Kenya, 2009). The main aim of helping learners to change their beliefs, evaluate their

abilities, develop decision making and coping skills is to enable them to adjust to the school environment. To achieve this, school counsellors employ different counselling services. This study evaluated the nature of services offered in secondary schools and to what extent were these services effective in helping students' adjustment school.

School Orientation Service

Orientation is information or training given to students before they start new activities (Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners, 2002). Orientation in secondary school has to do with inducting or introducing students from primary school to secondary school life (Regis 2006). Orientation services are concerned with ensuring that the problems involved at those transition points where students move from familiar situation to an unfamiliar one are reduced (Hartman, 1999). That is, orientation services are given to new students to help them adjust to their new school environment. Students are introduced to schools physical facilities, social activities and academic programmes.

According to Maluwa-Banda (1998) secondary school years in Malawi are important in the adjustment of students because they represent the transition from the completely sheltered life in primary school to the freedom and responsibility of their tertiary education or employment. Regis (2006) indicates that almost everything the student encounters is new; new teachers, students, curricular programmes, physical facilities, rules, regulations and services. The student therefore, needs help in orienting to all these new factors. Rutondoki (2000) observes that the newly admitted students to secondary school feel socially and psychologically at a loss in the new environment. They no longer enjoy the psychological support of their parents and former teachers. Such students need orientation or adaptive services to help them adjust and familiarize themselves with new situation in the school they have joined (Rutondoki, 2000). The new situation always leads to a considerable period of stress and anxiety which results in a decrease in school performance, school attendance and self-image (Akos&Galssi, 2004). To Rutondoki, (2000) developmental, social and other problems of adjustment at the beginning of the secondary school period may seriously divert a student energies and attention from academic pursuit. This transition presents students with problems of an educational, vocational, social and personal nature (Regis, 2006). Mwamwenda (1995) observes that effective school Counselling services play a crucial role in helping

students negotiate these challenges. For example, secondary school students are assisted with study methods, note taking, writing skills and research skills to enhance their academic success. Students may also be assisted in choosing subjects, careers and friends (Regis, 2006). Students receiving orientation services are better adjusted because they get an opportunity to acquire pertinent information about what lays ahead (Regis 2006). Better adjusted students are able to live productively, to overcome their challenges as they arise and to objectively face their strength and limitations (Regis 2006). Orientation of new students is a crucial Guidance and Counselling service because through it students are given information about the school mission, vision, motto, routine, value, culture, rules and regulations in order to help them adjust to the school environment. It was important to evaluate the effectiveness orientation Guidance and Counselling services in enhancing students' adjustment to the school and that is the focus of this study.

Peer Counselling

Peer counselling is where students offer Guidance and Counselling to their peers (Myrick, 2003). Peer Counselling is based on the understanding that people who share the same age and demographic conditions, experiences and challenges are more inclined to listen to one another and influence one another's behaviour (UNESCO, 2000). Students tend to relate more closely to those peers with whom they are comfortable (UNESCO, 2000). Robinson (1991) Indicates that school counsellor selects peer counsellors by asking students to give names of two students to whom they would go if they had a personal problem. Students with the highest number of votes receive peer Counselling training. Peer counsellors assist school counsellors in showing new students around the school, listening to peers who have concerns and providing outreach activities (Robinson, 1991). Effective school counsellors make maximum use of peer counsellors to offer needs assessment, orientation, information and Counselling services (Myrick, 2003). This is achieved through training and coaching peer counsellors in basic listening and helping skills as well as basic skills of problems solving and decision making (Robinson, 1991). Peer counsellors in a school assist in identifying students with adjustment challenges in order to help them adjust to the school and refers those they are unable to handle to the teacher in charge of Guidance and Counselling.

Rutondoki (2000) argues that in Uganda, peer Counselling enables the students to discuss freely and express personal

problems about parents, the authority and themselves in a frank manner. Peer counsellors may help in defusing minor problems before they become crises and may provide support and information to their friends who might be experiencing normal developmental stress (De Rosenroll, 1990). Peer counsellors are first line helpers of students in a need for Counselling (Schmidt, 1993). They help students who have problems in their academic work and they befriend students who have been rejected by their peers (Schmidt, 1993). They are a bridge between a troubled student and the school counsellors and can help improve the learning climate in a school (Myrick, 2003). Presence of peer counsellors helps school counsellors have more time for the students with severe problems (Lapan, 2001). Peer counsellors can assist school counsellors in meeting the needs of a greater number of students (Schmidt, 1993). Peer counsellors play a big role of assisting new students know and adjust to the school environment by befriending them, showing them the compound, helping them understand the school rules, showing them how to use various school facilities and linking those with complicated adjustment challenges with the teachers. This study focused on the effectiveness of these Guidance and Counselling services in enhancing students' adjustment to the school environment in public day secondary schools.

School Environment

A secondary school environment has physical, social and academic aspects which students need to adjust to (Gonder&Hymes, 1994). The physical environment includes school buildings, the noise levels, text books, recreational facilities and the neighborhood (Lapan, 2003). When students join secondary school they find themselves in a more expansive school environment, larger size classroom and more noisy environment than what they were used to in their relatively smaller primary schools (Adeyemo, 2001). The expansive physical environment that new students in secondary schools find themselves in has library, laboratories, big dormitories, flush toilets, and many exercise and text books due to expanded curriculum, new games and facilities. Most of these facilities are new to some of these students and may need guidance on how to use them. This study was designed to establish how students' adjustment to school physical environment in public boarding secondary schools is addressed and the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services that school deployed.

School social environment includes constructs like peer relationship, making new acquaintances, school norms,

classroom culture and school culture (Johnston, 2004). Student who transits to secondary school find themselves in a new social environment that is, amidst new teachers, new students as well as new systems of relationship patterns (Bragget, Morris & Day, 1999). School social environment incorporates communication and interaction between teachers and students, parents and teachers as well as teachers and other stakeholders in the community (Richardson, 2002). Students also have Social concerns such as getting lost, bullying, and making friends (Schumacher, 1998). During this transition, students also imagine and experience structural problems (Kvaslund, 2000). Majority of students entering secondary schools have high expectations about the potential of their new school (Werner & Smith, 1992). Graham and Hill (2001) observe that the most common response includes looking forward to the new school, new friend and learning new things. Students lack accurate information about the culture of the secondary school environment (Kirkpatrick, 2004). Students who are unable to adjust to school social environment are likely to become social misfits. Others end up engaging in self-defeating behavior like drug abuse, truancy, indiscipline, premarital sex, organizing school unrest and burning of school. This behavior coupled with peer pressure may further lead to education wastage. To mitigate for these repercussions this study encourages establishment improvement of Guidance and Counselling Services in secondary school.

A school academic environment refers to the systems that a school has put in place to promote learning by emphasizing on academics while respecting the various levels of students' intelligence and competence (Cotton, 1996). The expectation that the school management has for students and procedures used to encourage them to succeed are also part of school academic environment (Sara, 2009). A school academic environment further includes the designed teaching procedures and the programmes that the school has put in place to facilitate student adjustment (Richardson, 2002). Academic concerns such as homework, pressure to do well, and potential drops in achievement are paramount for both students and parents (Kvaslund, 2000). The most troubling aspect in relation to school work is the increase in homework (Graham & Hill, 2001). Students have increased levels of academic pressure and assignments, and shifts in pedagogy that is less child-centered and difficult to manage (Kvaslund, 2000). Students have the perception that teachers control their work (Kvaslund, 2000). These concerns hamper students' adjustment to the school environment and results to poor academic performance.

Guidance and Counselling services are meant to address these concerns and facilitate students' adjustment to the school academic environment. This made it necessary for a study to examine the effectiveness of these services in enabling students adjust to school academic environment in Kenya

Students' Adjustment to Secondary School Environment

Adjustment, in psychology, refers to the behavioral process by which humans and other animals maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. Human beings are able to adjust to the physical, social, academic and psychological demands that arise from having interpersonal dependability with other individuals (Raju & Rahamtulla, 2007). Adjustment refers to the psychological process through which people manage or cope with the demands and challenges of everyday life. It connotes conformity; it deals with the way an individual adapts to his environment and demand of life (Ogoemeka, 2012). This includes how he relates to others (interpersonal) and how he deals with his responsibilities and inner feelings. Psychologically, adjustment helps the organism to cope with the demands and pressures of the outside world as well as the needs, desires and conflicts experiences from within (Singh, 2006). Ogoemeka (2012) further asserts that adjustment, as a process describes and explains the ways and means of an individual's adaptation to his self and his environment without reference to the quality of such adjustment or its outcome in terms of success or failure. It is an organizational behavior in life situations at home, at school, at work in growing up and in ageing. It helps one to keep out basic impulses at tolerable levels, to believe in one's own abilities and to achieve desired goals. Thus, adjustment helps for self-initiated growth and development along intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and vocational dimensions.

Features of transition from primary to secondary school include moving from known to unknown, from a smaller primary school to a larger secondary school and from having one teacher for several subjects to a different teacher for each subject (Graham & Hill, 2001). Student's perceptions of the transition are both positive and negative (Akos, 2004). The transiting students are concerned about the size and layout of secondary schools, the time table, and complicated schedules, getting picked on, not knowing anyone, potentiality getting lost, having multiple teachers, and remembering where to go (Graham & Hill, 2001).

According to Hargreaves and Earl (1990) students experience anxiety on transfer to secondary school but this anxiety passes quickly leaving students the challenge of adjusting to the many uncomfortable realities of secondary school life. These challenges can restrict students' achievement by lowering their motivation and this may lead to one dropping out school in later years (Hargreaves & Earl, 1990). However, students have a perception of protective factors and attractive features of secondary school which include having more freedom, meeting new friends, and involvement in co-curricular activities (Akos, 2004). The transition to secondary school therefore inevitably includes a period of adjustment (Bates, 1998). Transition from primary to secondary interrupts friendship and other social network that a student had built in primary school (Hertzog & Morgan, 1998). Transition from primary to secondary school is accompanied by stress (Ward, 2001). The transiting students have particular expectations about the teachers and the process of teaching and learning in secondary school (Gorwood, 1994). Many students have anxiety on transition to secondary school mainly due to the size and complexity of their new school organization, the new form of discipline and authority, new demands of work, prospects for being bullied and the possibility of losing friends (Raju and Rahamtulla, 2007). Students at transition point are both excited and anxious, both doubtful and hopeful and their perceptions of transition are both positive and negative (Akos, 2004). Students adjustment to secondary school occurs as they are making other adjustments related to their onset of puberty (Kaur, 2012). Thus, it is essential for transition programme to provide social support activities that give students the opportunity to know and develop positive relationship between the older student and the incoming students (Akos, 2004). The adjustment period may last until students are able to show that they can cope by making appropriate responses to the demands of their new environment (Ward, 2001). Students' adjustment is therefore crucial for them to be able to achieve maximum benefit from the school. Student adjustment involves learning to cope with new teachers, student, subjects, facilities and challenges. This adjustment is facilitated by effective Guidance and Counselling services. This study assessed extent to which students in public boarding secondary schools are able to cope with the challenge of school environment.

Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling in Enhancing Students' Adjustment to School

Environment

Zeedyk et al. (2003) observed that school Guidance and Counselling services have been successful in operating some type of transitional support services. School Guidance and Counselling services address developmental issues of students in three essential areas that is, educational development, career development and personal social development (Regis, 2006). Lonborg and Bowen (2004) argue that in America, effective school Guidance and Counselling services create a safe school environment. To Lapan, Gysbers and Petroski (2003) these services create greater students' feelings of safety in schools. In this kind of environment, students have a sense of belonging (Lapan, 2003). Lonborg and Bowen (2004) further found that in America students are able to make friends and hold their temper down as a result of school Guidance and Counselling service they received. Students who participated in school Guidance and Counselling services view themselves more positively and are confident of being successful in school and this enhances their adjustment to school environment.

Euvrard (1996) found that in South African high schools effective Guidance and Counselling equipped students with information, skills and attitudes which enabled them to successfully negotiate the challenges of adolescence and develop a social skill that enables them adjust to the school environment. Effective school Counselling result in fewer personality or school adjustment challenges (Euvrard, 1996). Effective school Guidance and Counselling services in America help students acquire developmental competencies such as establishing and maintaining peer relationship which in turn results to good adjustment to school environment (Euvrard (1996)). Borders and Drury (1992) cites studies in America that school increased academic achievement, academic persistence, school attendance and positive attitude towards school and others as a result of school Counselling. Maluwa-Banda (1998) observes that Malawian Secondary School Guidance and Counselling services help students understand their own interest, abilities and potentialities and develop them to their full. Students are also helped to identify educational and vocational opportunities and this motivates the students to adjust to the school as they work hard to achieve their educational and vocational goals (Jones, 1993). Lapan, Gysbers and Sun (1997) report that American schools with effective Guidance and Counselling services had student

reporting that they adjusted well to the school attained higher grades because they learnt that education was preparing them for their future because their school availed more career and college information to them and created a more positive climate. The school has physical, social and academic environment which students have to adjust to in order to actualize their potential. Guidance and Counselling is used to help students achieve this adjustment. There was therefore, a need to carry out a study to establish the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling services in preparing students for new situations and enhancing their adjustment to school environment.

Gender Comparisons on Effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling Services

Parhar, et al. (2013) in his studies in India established that there was no much different in effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling between female and male secondary school students. Winga, et al. (2011) found that there were no significant differences between boys and girls in adjustment to school environment though in the Overall the boys had higher school adjustment when compared to the girls.

Some researchers have found that in some aspects boys adjusted better than girls. Armacost (1990) established that in America guidance and Counseling was more effective in enabling boys handle stress better than girls. Van Der Walt and Knoetze (2004) observe that Guidance and Counselling normally was more effective in socializing boys to be stronger and cope with their own problems than girls. Makesh and Kaji (2014) found that Guidance and Counselling was more effective in enabling boys adjust to school social environment than girls.

Other researches on gender differences in school adjustment have portrayed that girls are better adjusted compared to boys (Wang, et al., 2008). Another study by Kiuru, et al. (2009) looked at 1494 adolescents from Finland. They used questionnaires concerning peer relations and adjustment and maladjustment. 360 peer groups were identified and only peer group members were analyzed. Results showed that members of adolescents peer groups resembled each other in terms of school adjustment and maladjustment. Members of girls' cliques resembled each other more in satisfaction with their educational choice and school engagement when compared with boys. This shows that there are gender differences in school adjustment. The gap that the current study seeks to address concerning gender differences is based on the academic achievement of the gender. Alexitch and Page (1997) established that in Canada girls were more responsive to university and career information from their

counselling teachers than boys. Bruce and Cockreham (2004) found that in America Guidance and counseling enabled girls to be more tolerant towards rules, more willing to make exceptions and more easily reconciled than boys. Singh, et al. (2014) established that in India Guidance and Counselling was significantly effective in enabling girls adjust to the school emotional environment than boys.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to assess effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling in enhancing students' adjustment to school environment in public boarding secondary school in Kenya. Descriptive survey design is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2003). In this design, the researcher does not manipulate the variables under study but examines the variables in their natural state. The study was conducted within public boarding secondary schools. The aim of the study was to assess student utilization of services in Kenya. Descriptive survey design often results in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solutions to significant problems since it produces statistical information about aspects of education that is used by policy makers, educators and other interested parties in different capacities (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This design was therefore suitable because it enabled the study to assess the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling in enhancing students' adjustment in secondary school environment in public secondary schools in Kenya.

Study Population

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. The target population for this study was 1,208,818 students in public boarding secondary schools in (Republic of Kenya, 2009). The accessible population is 151,944 students in the three counties that were sampled for the study that is Nairobi, Kitui and Nyeri. The population of form three students in these counties is 35,659.

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

According to Gay (1992) a researcher selects a sample due to various limitations that may not allow researching the whole population. However, sampling ensures that subjects selected represent the characteristics of the entire population

in question and the findings may be generalized to them. Three counties were purposively sampled for this study, that is, Nairobi, Kitui and Nyeri to represent geographically urban, rural marginal and rural potential public secondary schools strata respectively.

Schools in each of the three counties were stratified into national, Extra County and county school strata. Each stratum (national, extra- county and county schools) was further stratified into boys and girls schools. A simple random sampling design was used to select one school from each stratum (boys and girls). So there were three girls' schools and three boys' schools representing national, extra-county and county schools. Purposive sampling design was used to select of Form 3 students because they had been in secondary school for a relatively longer period and so they were likely to have more information on effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling either out of their own experience or observation of other student experiences. Simple random sampling was also used in selecting one Form 3 stream from schools with more than one stream.

The three counties used in this study have a population of 35,659 form three students. The recommended sample size for a population of 35,659 is 379 according to Kathuri and Pals (1993). According to the Ministry of Education school enrolment is 40 students per class (Republic of Kenya, 2009). The expected number of schools was 379 respondents divided by 40 which give 9 schools. However, for this study, the sample was doubled so as to minimize errors associated with sampling and also to mitigate the observed heterogeneity of the counties. In each of the schools selected for the study data was also collected from for a three class teacher and the teacher in charge of Guidance and Counselling for triangulation. Therefore, the sample size of the study was 756 respondents comprising of 720 Form 3 students, 18 form 3 class teachers and 18 teachers in charge of Guidance and Counselling. Table 1 provides summary of the sample sizes that were taken for the study.

Table.1: Sample Size

County	Form 3 population	Students Sample	Sampled Class Teachers	Counselling teachers sample	Total
Nairobi	7,943	240	6	6	246
Kitui	14,320	240	6	6	246
Nyeri	13,394	240	6	6	246
Total	35,659	720	18	18	756

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Mean of Gender Comparisons

Table 24 presents the mean comparisons on effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling in adjustment to school adjustment according to gender.

Table.24: Gender Comparison of Effectiveness Guidance and Counselling in Students' Adjustment to School Environment

	Gender	N	Mean	Sd
Effectiveness of G&C in enhancing student adjustment to the school physical environment	Boys	360	4.2781	.38407
	Girls	360	4.3072	.37854
Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling on students' adjustment to school social environment	Boys	360	4.3008	.39541
	Girls	360	4.3208	.37355
Effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling on students adjustment to school academic environment	Boys	360	4.2308	.41754
	Girls	360	4.2369	.42753

The results in Table 24 show that some mean difference existed between girls (4.3072) boys (4.278).in effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling in enhancing students' adjustment to school physical environment. This shows that Guidance and Counselling was more effective in enhancing girls' adjustment to school physical environment than boy.

However to know whether the difference was significant a t-test had to be done.

t-test on Gender Comparison

To establish whether there was a significant gender difference in means a t-test was performed. The results of the test are as shown in Table 25

Table.25: t-Test of Gender Comparison

Levine's Test for Equality of Variances							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Def.
Effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling on students adjustment to school environment	Equal variances assumed	.078	.780	-.790	718	.430	-.0184
	Equal variances not assumed			-.790	717.971	.430	-.0184

The information in Table 25 the t-test results indicate that the p value was greater than the critical p value that is, t value ($t = -0.790$, $P > 0.05$) in view of these findings there is no statistically significant gender difference in adjustment to the school environment in public boarding secondary schools. The null hypothesis (H_{01}) suggesting that there is no significant gender difference in the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling in enhancing students' adjustment to school environment in public boarding schools in Kenya was therefore accepted.

V. DISCUSSIONS

These findings concurred with finding from related studies by Parhar, et al., (2013) whose study in India established that there was no significant difference in the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling between female and male secondary school students. This differs with related studies by Armacost (1990) who established that in America guidance and Counseling was more effective in enabling boys to handle stress better than girls. Van Der Walt and Knoetze (2004) in a related study in South Africa observed that Guidance and Counselling was more effective in socializing boys to be stronger and cope with their own problems than girls. Alexitch and Page (1997) established that in Canada girls were more responsive to university and career information from their counselling teachers than boys. Bruce and Cockreham (2004) found that in America Guidance and counseling enabled girls to be more tolerant towards rules, more willing to make exceptions and more easily reconciled than boys. Singh et al (2014) established that in India Guidance and Counselling was significantly effective in enabling girls adjust to the school emotional environment than boys. On the contrary Makesh and Kaji (2014) found that Guidance and Counselling was more effective in enabling boys adjust to school social environment than girls. The differences in these studies could be attributed to the fact that each one of them was studying some aspects of students, adjustment while this study compare the overall student adjustment to school environment. From these finding it can be concluded that there are some unique differences in gender adjustment to the school environment. When these unique areas are identified and addressed effectively through Guidance and Counselling students are able to adjust better to the school environment.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study found that there was no significant gender difference in the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling

in helping students' adjustment to school environment. The T-test of the hypothesis indicated that there was no significant difference between boys and girls adjustment to the school environment. The study further found that there was no gender sensitivity in the appointment of Guidance and Counselling personnel. Majority of teachers in charge of Guidance and Counselling were females even in boys' schools. Majority of the class teachers were not only females but were newly posted. This means they lacked experience in handling students' Counselling issues. The study also established that in some girls' schools male teachers were in charge of Guidance and Counselling. The Guidance and Counselling teachers had served for many years as teachers which mean they were experienced in student affairs.

The study further established that though girls adjusted better than boys, there was no significant gender difference in the effectiveness of guidance and Counseling in enhancing students' adjustment to the school environment.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

Although the study found that there was no gender difference in the effectiveness of Guidance and Counselling, it is necessary for schools to tailor their programs to address the Guidance and Counselling issues that are unique to each gender. Boys' schools should tailor their services to address issues that affect male gender and girls' school should do the same to address Counselling issues that are unique to female gender. To enhance this, school management should be gender sensitive in appointing guidance and counselling personnel so that a bigger percentage should be of the same gender with the students. This will ensure that issues that are unique are better handled by a counsellor of the

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