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Influence of Career Guidance and Counselling Service on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Enugu East sub-country Enugu, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate influence of career guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu East, Enugu. A descriptive survey research design was employed in the study. The population of the study was 33 principals, 33 heads of guidance and counselling departments and all 7903 students in 33 public secondary schools in Enugu East, Sub-county. The sample consisted of 16 schools, 16 principals, 16 guidance and counselling heads of departments, and 381 students. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The null hypothesis was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at a 0.05 level of significance. The study found that career guidance and counselling services demonstrated a positive significant influence on academic performance ($f = 15.179, p \leq 0.00$), with students achieving higher grades benefiting more from those services. The study recommended that Schools should enhance career guidance and counselling services by developing initiatives that specifically target combating career stereotyping. The findings of this study may be of significance to teacher counsellors, teachers, students, school administrators and entire community because they may provide information on how career guidance and counselling services can be used effectively to improve academic performance among secondary school students.

Keywords: *academic performance, counselling, career guidance, counselling service and guidance.*

Introduction

According to Ogawa (2010), education is a major human quality component that is necessary for generation of high income and development of economic and social accountability. Knowledge is transferred to many people within a nation through education. In a number of education systems across the world, education at secondary school level enables individuals to get entry to university or any other college. Therefore, education at secondary level is critical in strengthening economic growth within framework of global experience (Fairmon, 2010).

Students are the most critical asset in any educational learning institution. Students' good academic performance is an essential aspect of any education system worldwide (Ali, Jusoff, Ali, Mukhart and Salamat, 2014). Good academic performance can be defined as an outcome of education, and also extent to which students, teachers or institutions have achieved their educational goals (Ward Stocker and Murray-Ward, 2018). Poor academic performance is performance adjudged by examinee and significant others as falling below expected standard. Secondary school student's academic performance is directly proportional to countries' social-economic enhancement. Secondary school students' academic performance is a crucial predictor of quality of graduates at higher levels of education who eventually become best workforce and

leaders in a nation and ultimately impact the nation's social and economic development. According to Pintrich and De Groot (2011), secondary school students' better academic attainment is necessary for developing success of young people in society. Therefore, it is very important for secondary school students to achieve higher academic performance at this level because education is seen as a pathway for attaining social mobility, and therefore, it should bestow a person with right skills and experience so as to tackle proper responsibilities within societies without any discrimination.

According to Raineri and Gerber (2014), numerous factors in terms of psychosocial, student, teacher and managerial factors appear to be vital in success or failure of secondary school student's academic matters. However, when all these factors are in place, students need to be ready to learn. Dorothy Colletha and Theracia (2021) noted that secondary school students face a number of problems during adolescence stage, which affects their readiness to learn. In most cases, students in secondary schools' face problems that, if not dealt with accordingly, will lead to frustrations and developmental difficulties that affect their well-being, which in turn affects their academic performance. Thompson (2012) points out that family dysfunction, substance use, truancy, and sexual harassment, students' inability to manage their time, peer pressure and potential drop out of school are some of the problems which affect students in their learning endeavor.

Guidance and counselling are two closely interrelated concepts, and each determines the availability and effectiveness of the other. According to Okita (2012), guidance refers to a broad area of all educational activities aimed at assisting individual students to understand themselves and adjust to school life. On the other hand, counselling is defined as an interpersonal relationship in which one person (the counsellor) attempts to help another person (the student) understand and cope with problems emanating from social, emotional, educational, psychological or vocational issues (Oye *et al.*, 2012). Guidance and counselling are therefore aimed at bringing about maximum development and self-realization of human potential for the benefit of individuals and society. School guidance and counselling services assist students in harmonizing their abilities, interests, and values and enable them to develop to their full potential.

According to Eyo, Joshua, and Tosoung (2010), guidance and counselling are programs of services provided to individuals based on their needs and influence of environmental factors. The role of guidance and counselling services in secondary schools cannot be overemphasized. They assist secondary school students in adapting to the complexity of modern life, which has placed a lot of demands and responsibilities on them (Gitau, 2014). These guidance and counselling services that are provided in secondary schools include orientation service, appraisal or individual inventory, information, career guidance and counselling, placement, referral, remedial, follow-up, research, and evaluation services (Namale and Awabil, 2018). The four services that are most relevant to academic performance of students are orientation, career guidance and counselling, appraisal/ individual inventory and information services. These four services were the focus of this study.

Guidance and counselling services are aimed at helping to address various problems that students face during years they are receiving education in school. These services are provided to students so that they can understand their potential with respect to various fields of education, enabling them to make educational plans based on their abilities, goals and interests. Guidance and counselling services help students develop good study habits and adjust to the school environment (Pandey, 2016).

There have been a number of studies which have investigated influence of guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students. A study conducted by Eremia and Jackson (2019) examined the influence of guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students in River State in Nigeria. The study used a sample of 664 respondents, including principals, teacher counsellors, and senior secondary school students. The study used a survey research design. Data was collected using a researcher-designed questionnaire. Data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and Z-test. The study recommended that guidance and counselling services should be strengthened in order to improve academic performance in the area.

A similar study by Bernard and Achegbulu (2018) which sought to establish the influence of guidance and counselling programs on the academic performance of secondary school students in Makurdi Local

Government Area of Benue State. The study adopted *an ex post facto* research design. A sample size of 196 students, 10 teacher counsellors and 10 head teachers were selected from 10 schools. Data was collected using questionnaires on selected respondents. The study found that guidance and counselling programs in schools had a positive influence on students' academic performance. Academic performance is one of predictors of successful life, students who perform well are academically advantaged. Despite the ministerial directive to implement guidance and counselling programs in all secondary schools in the country, academic performance in most secondary schools has been low, while disciplinary problems have been increasing over time.

In Kitui-West Sub-county, where rains are unreliable, education is a major investment that determines the livelihood of many people. Many parents have invested heavily in education of their children. According to Njihia (2023), dismal performance of secondary schools in Enugu East, Sub-county has caused a lot of public outcries among education stakeholders in the Sub-county. It is clear that thousands of young secondary school leavers are likely to be wasted since they will join low wage-earning careers in later life because secondary schools, they attended did not help them acquire a good education to enable them to succeed in life (World Bank, 2017). This has necessitated need to find out whether guidance and counselling services had any influence on academic performance of Secondary schools in Enugu East, Enugu.

Literature on the influence of guidance and counselling services on secondary school students' academic performance is minimal in Nigeria. However, a study conducted by Odhiambo (2014) titled *Influence of Guidance and Counselling Program on Academic Performance of Students in Nigeria* which sought to establish the influence of guidance and counselling programs on academic performance of students in secondary schools, affirms that school guidance and counselling programs have a positive impact on academic performance of students. Poor academic performance calls for the need to find out whether guidance and counselling services have an influence on secondary school student's academic performance. Thus, it was important for this study to investigate influence of orientation, career guidance and counselling, appraisal and information services on the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu East, Sub-county. There was limited literature on these variables locally; hence, there was need to study them in order to add more research literature on studies relating to widely publicized influence of guidance and counselling services. Therefore, the current study aimed at investigate influence of guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu East, Sub-county.

Statement of the Problem

In school, success is measured by the level of students' academic performance, which has remained a top priority for parents, teachers and other academic stakeholders. According to Ajayi, Lawani, and Saloni (2012), issue of poor academic performance is crucial because it is a must that students attain a certain number of subjects to be admitted to higher levels of educational learning institutions. A poor academic performance trend has been registered in Nigeria's Certificate of Secondary Education. This may have far-reaching implications for students in terms of missing rewarding career opportunities and social economic wastage, which is of great concern to all stakeholders in education.

Statistics from Enugu East, Sub-county Education Office (2023) and KNEC (2023) show that performance of students has also been comparatively low for the last three years. This is despite the fact that schools in Enugu East, Sub-county have adequate infrastructure and manpower resources. Few students who were admitted to universities were not selected to pursue prestigious courses since they had not scored high grades for those prestigious courses. After completion of their courses, they do not stand a chance to compete with their counterparts for employment. If Enugu East, Sub-county is left in such a situation, it will remain behind in matters of development and school leavers in the Sub-county will not favorably compete for lucrative job opportunities. This has a negative reflection on various programs put in place by the government to promote academic performance in the country.

Earlier researchers attributed this low academic performance to indiscipline, drug use, students' social and economic background, school type, students' personality and challenging attitude of students (Ndulu and Moronga, 2015, Republic of Nigeria, 2017). The main concern in this study was to determine influence of

guidance and counselling services in facilitating academic performance. There is no much empirical research on how guidance and counselling services have been used to assist schools in raising academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu East, Sub-county. This study sought to establish influence of career guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu East, Enugu.

Research Objective

To determine the influence of career guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu East, Enugu, Nigeria .

Significance of the Study

The study on influence of guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students may be of importance to teacher counsellors and teachers in the following ways: the study is expected to provide guidance and counselling teachers with information on deficiencies that secondary school have in terms of guidance and counselling service and how their influence academic performance. This will be useful in designing guidance and counselling services aimed at helping students become more efficient learners. The study may be of significance to teachers as findings will show proportion of students who may require guidance and counselling interventions in order to improve their academic performance.

Scope of the Study

The study was geographically limited to Nigeria, particularly Enugu, which covered Enugu East, sub-county. The study focused on 33 public secondary schools for the purpose of this study from two and three students, heads of guidance and counselling departments and school principals were selected to participate in the study.

Literature Review

Career guidance and counselling services is one of significant components of guidance and counselling programs in secondary schools. According to Seligman (2010) career refers to the sequence of roles or position, including leisure, work and educational pursuits that may encompass a number of jobs, vocation or occupations one engages in during his working life. It is a job for which it is possible for one to advance during one's work so that he or she may get greater responsibilities and earn more money. Kola (2011) also defines a career as total lifelong experience of work that come to serve as a means of earning a livelihood.

Career choice previously was not as difficult as it is today. There were fewer job opportunities, and teachers, parents, and religious bodies were aware of existing opportunities as well as entry requirements for careers. In today's world, situation secondary school students hardly have full knowledge of the requirements of each career and can no longer keep track of numerous career opportunities (Issa and Nwalo, 2018). According to Borrow (2013), world is highly complex and dynamic, which makes career choices very difficult. He reckons that people change, time changes, and technology progresses, which challenges everyone to change to new ways of living and working. Career guidance and counselling is a process of helping an individual to choose an occupation, prepare for it, and enter into it and progress in it Mutie and Ndambuki (2014). Career guidance and counselling include three main components vocational information, career education and career counselling (Watts and Fretwell, 2014). Career guidance and counselling in schools usually focus on vocational information/ counselling, which is also called career/ or occupational information by some authors.

Oncansy, Ford, Awabil and Otopial (2015) defined vocational counselling as valid and usable data about positions, jobs and occupations, including requirements for entrance and conditions for work, including duties, rewards and sources for further information. It is during the process of career guidance and counselling that counsellor helps students decide, in an aware and independent way, which occupation or profession they want to take Issa and Nwalo (2018). When considering educational stage at which a career choice is made, secondary school is the best level for making career choice. According to Watts and Fretwell (2014), in general, the aim of career guidance is to help students make decisions based on their interests, passion and abilities while taking into account current and future careers. Students are encouraged

to learn more about world of employment across different industries so that they may take right steps to obtain their objectives, goals and aspirations. Through career guidance and counselling, students are assisted in choosing subject combinations, getting information on available career opportunities and planning for their future careers. Career guidance and counselling also assist students in understanding world of work, becoming aware of their personal abilities, skills, and interests, and informing them of training courses and employment opportunities in relation to their aspirations.

According to Zunker (2012), career guidance and counselling also assist students in understanding process of making career choices and possible consequences of their choices, assisting them in carrying out their assessment, aptitude testing and career inventories, and motivating them to respect and honor their educational pursuits. Career guidance and counselling involves eleven different activities, such as informing students about current and future opportunities in the job market, advising, teaching, assessing, enabling, advocating, giving feedback, networking, managing and system change.

According to Hill and Nathan (2016), successful career guidance and counselling services provision to students in secondary schools should involve career programs, which can comprise use of books, professional journals, mass media, video, internet, occupational flyers, career counsellor, teachers and exposing students to role models. The use of career guidance and counselling services such as career visits, career workshops, internet programs, and other related services can help secondary school students get career information that is available within and outside the country. Individuals need to understand what exists in the world of work so that they can examine different career options available and decide their relevance to their characteristics. Occupational information in terms of valid and usable data about different career positions, duties, options, entrance requirements, conditions of work, rewards offered and advancement patterns are very crucial in career decision-making. To select a career, an individual should have information that indicates a clear understanding of abilities, interests, ambitions, limitations, resources, his/her attitudes, and causes. An individual should have knowledge of the requirements and conditions for success, compensation, advantages and disadvantages and prospects in different lines of work (Sharf, 2013).

Eremie and Bethel-Eke (2020) conducted a study to investigate influence of guidance and counselling services on career choice and academic achievement of secondary school students in Rivers State. The research adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 66,164 respondents. A simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 366 students. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The study found that there was no significant difference in the opinion of the students on the extent to which educational, vocational and personal social counselling influence career choice and academic achievement of secondary school students in River State. The study concluded that guidance and counselling services such as educational and vocational counselling programs in school assist students to harmonize their abilities, interests and values and, thereby, help them to develop to their full potential. The study recommended that schools should be supplied with sufficient manpower in terms of trained counsellors who will be able to guide, direct and assist students towards achieving their ultimate goals in life. This study by Eremie and Bethel-Eke (2020) was carried out among students only. The current study was carried out among students, guidance and counselling heads of departments and principals.

Hossain and Faisal (2018) carried out research that aimed at giving an overview of available guidance and counseling services in schools in Bangladesh. The researchers used a qualitative research methodology, with ten schools participating. A semistructured interview schedule was used to collect data from school administrators, teachers and students. The study established that, in terms of career guidance and counselling services, there existed different types of student information, which included records of students' progress in terms of academics, extra-curricular activities, level of aspirations, personal traits, interest and aptitude, educational information which included prospectus from different relevant institutions, books, pamphlets, scholarships, student loan offered by different external government and non-government bodies, and leaflet or handbooks on study skills.

The research by Hossain and Faisal (2018) further found that in almost all schools, there was student career guidance and counselling service, which included information only about academic progress throughout the year.

Theoretical Framework

The study was based on the Person-centred theory by Carl Rodgers (1980). Personcentred theory focuses on human interactions. It emphasises on assisting people in their growth process so that they can better cope with problems which are currently facing them and thus acquire experience which will help them in dealing with future problems Corey (2013). Person-centred theory insists on necessity of positive self-concept, which develops as a result of students being loved and accepted as they are. Person-centred theory can be understood as a process of helping students discover new and more satisfying personal meanings about themselves and the world they inhabit. The application of person-centred theory in secondary school setting bears in mind the fact that secondary school students are children in their adolescence stage and, therefore, have vocational, educational, psycho-social, and personal needs. When these needs are met, student will strive towards health, growth and adjustment.

Person-centred theory assumes that human interaction is only possible when certain conditions are in place. These conditions include being friendly and warm and providing unconditional positive regard to the client and counsellor demonstration of empathy (Corey, 2013). Guidance and counselling services that provide these characteristics lead to good academic performance of students in schools. When guidance and counselling teachers communicate above conditions, those being helped will become less defensive and more open to themselves and world around them, and they will behave in more social and constructive ways. Many students harbour feelings of academic failure, which may lead to low self-esteem.

According to Corey (2013), well, implemented guidance and counselling services will assist students in countering those feelings by working towards fostering student's capacity of hope and belief that they are capable of overcoming academic failure they are experiencing and even end up performing to their best potentialities (Corey, 2013).

A conducive environment should be provided. Teacher counsellors should provide room for self-actualisation by being loving, competent, responsible and friendly. Teacher counsellors should also help students' set goals and allow positive selfrecognition after attaining set goals and aspirations that will lead to good academic performance. This calls for need of good environment to be created by teacher counsellors.

Method

Research Design

The current study employed descriptive survey research design, which is design employed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning current state of phenomenon, whenever possible, draw varied general conclusions from facts discovered.

Location of the Study

The current study was conducted in Enugu East, Sub-county. Location was chosen because schools in Sub-county experience low academic performance, as already evident by low mean scores in Nigeria Certificate of Secondary Examination.

Participants

The Target population was all 33 public secondary schools, 33 principals, 33 heads of guidance and counselling departments and all 7,903 students (Njihia, 2023).

Stratified random sampling was used to select sample size of 16 schools out of 33 schools based on sample size. Simple random sampling was used to select sample size comprised of 381 students, 16 guidance and counselling heads of department and 16 principals, total of 413 respondents.

Instruments

This study made use of two data collection instruments: questionnaires and an interview schedule.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequencies, means, standard deviation and percentages were descriptive statistics used to describe and summarize data. Inferential statistical analysis was done using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the null hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance.

Findings and Discussion

Objective 1: To determine influence of career guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu East, Enugu.

Table 1: Students and HODs Guidance and Counselling Department
Responses on Career Guidance and Counselling Service on Academic Performance

Career Guidance and Counselling Service...	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Mean scores
	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	
1. Assist students in combating career stereotyping ...	191	7	149	6	11	0	9	3	16	0	4.50
2. Inform them of various educational courses ...	163	5	189	8	7	2	14	0	3	1	4.49
3. Included invitation of speakers ..	169	7	173	8	12	0	16	1	6	0	4.40
4. Help them to plan for future careers.	121	7	219	9	15	0	14	0	7	0	4.36
5. Motivated them to honor their educational pursuit ...	141	7	209	8	9	1	11	0	6	0	4.33
6. Assisted students in setting their educational goals.	184	9	101	2	64	4	16	1	11	0	4.15
7. Assisted them in choosing subject combinations ..	68	5	271	10	25	1	11	0	0	0	4.11
8. Assisted students in carrying out assessments..	100	7	176	8	66	0	18	1	16	0	3.87
9. Provided them with information on career opportunities.	351	14	272	14	11	0	47	1	11	1	3.82
Average strength of agreement = 4.225											

Key: S – Students response; T – Teachers (G&C HOD) response

The findings in Table 1 indicate that students strongly agreed that career guidance and counselling services influenced academic performance. From the results of the study, the average point ranged from 3.82 to 4.50.

The statement “career guidance and counselling service include invitation of guest speakers from various organizations to work closely with students, preparing us for world of work, an aspect that motivates us to be focused on academic performance” received a mean score of (4.40). The study suggested that exposure of students to guest speakers from diverse organizations is seen as motivating factor, helping students to better understand real-world applications of their academic pursuits and fostering a proactive approach to their studies. In line with these findings, Ofsted (2019) in his study argued that guest speakers offer students unbiased career advice, experiences of work and contact with volunteers to encourage students to aspire, make good choices and understand what they need to do to reach and succeed in their careers.

The study also found that “career guidance and counselling services helped students to plan for future careers and choose subject combinations, which led to mastering their career choice “received mean score of (4.36). Secondary schools and learning institutions are expected to help students through guidance and

counselling services to help them form their future careers. Career guidance and counselling services encompass all components of activities and services in educational settings, agencies and other organizations that offer counselling and career-related educational programs which help students make a choice of career, organize himself or herself for it, and be ready to join and develop it (Zunker, 2012).

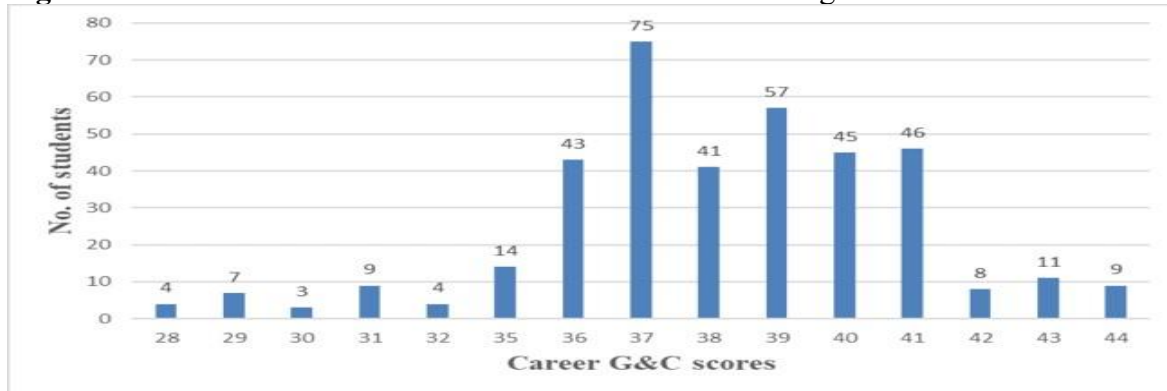
The current study also found that career guidance and counselling services assisted students in setting their educational goals, which received an average mean of (4.15). When the services are provided well in schools, they assist students in reaching optimum educational development. They help students make the right choices as well as make adjustments in relation to courses, curriculum, and school life, which contribute to all-around student development. These findings of the study are supported by Perry, Liu, and Fabian (2010), who argue that career guidance and counselling service develops individual competencies, self-knowledge, and occupational and educational exploration, hence helping students plan for their careers.

The current study further found that “career guidance and counselling services assisted students in choosing subject combinations (subject to take), which will lead them to master the career of their choice” which received a mean of (4.11). According to Dorothy, Colletha and Therecia (2021), secondary schools as learning institutions are expected to assist students through career guidance and counselling services to plan for their future careers and choose subject combinations, which will lead them to master the career of their choice.

The results of the study also showed that there were two statements that received low ratings by students, suggesting the need for improvement. The statement “career guidance and counselling services provide me with information on available career opportunities” received a lower mean score of (3.82). This finding indicated that there might be a perception among students that information provided about career opportunities is not as impactful on their academic motivation as other aspects. This is supported by Hossain and Faisal (2018) who argued that a well-coordinated and comprehensive career guidance and counselling network is essential for increasing intelligent career choices and educational planning.

Likewise, the current study found that “career guidance and counselling service assist me in carrying out assessment and aptitude testing and career interest inventories” received mean score of (3.87). It is work of guidance and counselling teachers to help students in these aspects. This is because when students understand themselves, their abilities and interests, they can put more effort into achieving their aspirations (Dorothy, Colletha and Theresa, 2021).

In the current study, career guidance and counselling service was measured using 9 items that were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). The lowest possible score on the scale was 9 (indicating that a respondent strongly disagreed with all the 9 items), while highest possible score was 45 (indicating that a respondent strongly agreed with all 9 items). The midpoint of the scale was a score of 27, with scores below 27 denoting an overall disagreement with the items, while scores above 27 denoted that respondents had an overall agreement with the items. The overall scores obtained by students on the career guidance and counselling service scale are shown in Figure 1. Figure 1 indicates that students' scores in this study on career guidance and counselling service scale ranged from 28 to 44, with a mean score of 38.01 and a standard deviation of 3.05. The mean score of 38.01 is above midpoint of 27 for the Scale, which means that the majority of the students agreed that career guidance and counselling services helped them to improve their academic performance. The findings above indicate that, on average, students in this study strongly agreed that career guidance and counseling services have positive influence on their academic performance. This is in line with previous studies and literature highlighting significance of practical career guidance and counseling in supporting students' educational and career decisions (Oreware Ongeniyi and Dogun, 2020).

Figure 1: Students' Scores on Career Guidance and Counselling Scale

Mean = 38.01, SD = 3.05

In order to test null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of career guidance and counselling on academic performance of secondary school students.

The researcher used analysis of variance to determine the influence of career guidance and counselling services (independent variable) on academic performance (dependent variable). Analysis of variance was used to ascertain whether the influence of career guidance and counselling service was statistically significant at 0.5 level and its result was presented in Table

Table 2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) For Influence of Career Guidance and Counselling Services on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students

Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square	f-cal f-crit	Sig.
Between Groups	381.134	3	127.045	15.179 3.00	.000
Within Groups	3113.650	372	8.370		
Total	3494.785	375			

According to Table 2, Analysis of variance showed that influence of career guidance and counselling services on academic performance was statistically significant ($f = 15.179$, $p \geq 0.00$); therefore, it was concluded that career guidance and counselling services influenced academic performance of secondary school students. In order to establish both magnitude and direction of difference in this variable, a post-hoc Test-Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMTR) was conducted. The results of DMRT are presented in Table 2.

Table 3: DMRT Comparing the Mean of Influence of Career Guidance and Counselling Service on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students

Performance	No. of students	Career guidance mean score	Std. Dev.
A to B+	98	38.7653	2.87471
B to C+	118	38.5339	2.81535
C to D+	136	37.6471	2.69850
D to E	24	34.6250	4.17875
Total	376	38.0239	3.05277

Findings of the current study in Table 3 showed that students who obtained grades A to B+ and B to C+ had a mean score of 38.7653 and 38.5339, respectively, such that students who performed well in examinations grades A to C+ had benefitted more from career guidance and counselling services than those who reported low grades of C to D+ and D to E who had a mean score of 37.6471 and 34.6250 respectively. Students who scored D to E mean score of 34.6250 significantly differed from other groups. Hence students who scored A

to B+ and those who scored D to E were responsible for the difference found in the ANOVA used to test hypothesis 1. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected, and its alternate form was accepted. Students who reported to have benefitted from career guidance and counselling performed better in examinations than those who obtained lower career guidance and counselling service mean scores.

The findings from interview with the principals showed that majority 15 (93.75%) of the principles reported that career guidance and counselling services helped students to combat career stereotyping which encouraged students to take combinations which led them to career choices depending on ability, trait and interest helping them to work harder for excellent academic performance. Majority, 15(93%) of school principals, reported that career guidance and counselling services assisted students by informing them on various educational and training courses or employment opportunities which inspired them to work harder, leading to improved academic performance. 10 (62.5%) principals explained that with career guidance and counselling services in schools, it has been easy to invite guest speakers to work closely with students preparing them for world of work and motivating them to study harder hence achieving high academic performance so that they would be selected to join career of their choice. 1 (6.25%) of the respondents agreed that career guidance and counselling services helped students plan their future careers, motivating them to work harder to achieve better academic performance. 8(50%) of the principals agreed that career guidance and counselling services assisted their students in choosing subject combinations.

Conclusion

The findings of the study also revealed that career guidance and counselling services demonstrated a significant favorable influence on student's academic performance, with students achieving higher grades benefiting more from these services. The specific aspects highlighted by students, such as combating career stereotypes related to career choices and fostering a focused mindset toward academic performance. Based on findings of the study, following recommendations for research were made: Secondary schools should enhance their career guidance and counselling services by developing initiatives that specifically target combating career stereotyping, providing detailed information on various educational courses, increasing collaboration with organisations and inviting guest speakers.

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