



The Irregularities Watering Down the Implementation of School Guidance Services in Ghana

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges found in the implementation of school guidance services in Ghana. The study was underpinned by pragmatic paradigm where concurrent triangulation mixed method design was used for the study. At the quantitative phase, survey was conducted while multiple case study was also used for the qualitative phase. The total sample for the study was one thousand six hundred and ninety-one (1691) teachers was selected. At the quantitative phase questionnaire were administered to 1679 teachers while 12 headmaster/mistresses were interviewed at the qualitative phase. It emerged that orientation, counselling and information services should be adequately provided in senior high schools to provide students from indiscipline. Moreover, the study revealed that the location of the teacher-counsellor's office should be convenient to ensure privacy and confidentiality which would enable students to patronise guidance service. Again, the finding revealed that there should be a clear national policy on funding, allocation of time and role definition of school counsellors to help them carry their duties. The paper highlights comprehensive overview on issues related to the implementation school guidance services.

Keywords: Guidance services; senior high schools; teacher-counsellors; Ghana; headmasters/mistresses.

1. INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Ghana as a developing country is making efforts to improve its educational system for national development. The implementation of guidance services in senior high schools (SHSs) was part of the strategy to help improve education in the country. Hence, it is expected that the enhancement of guidance services is essential to bring about the desired results in our educational policy. The development of guidance services in schools started in 1960s when the Curriculum Research Development Unit (CRDU) was founded to provide for school health and handicapped education programs [1]. The professionalization of guidance services was experimented with implementing cumulative record cards in Ghanaian schools, but such an attempt failed because the authorities did not know which level of education to start the guidance services [2-4]. The introduction of guidance systems in school, however, came into being in 1976, when Ghana's government issued a policy through a directive issued by the Ghana Education Service (GES) to set up guidance centres in all the country's second-cycle institutions. Based on that directive, the GES instructed the second cycle institutions to establish guidance centres in schools. Such a directive caused the Universities to train school counsellors to serve second cycle institutions [5]. By 1981, about two hundred (200) school counsellors had been trained and been working with GES. The establishment of a counselling psychology degree course in the universities complement the fact that guidance services have come to stay in Ghana [6,7].

Despite the implementation of guidance services student's indiscipline has increased tremendously for the past two decade (Education Management Information System (EMIS) (2019), 2019). For instance, Joy News [8] reported a recent riot between students of the Kumasi Technical Institute and the police, resulting in the hospitalization and detention of 48 students. Again, students in Karaga SHS, Nalerigu SHS and Salaga T. I. Ahmadiya SHS also clashed with school authorities and destroyed property including school dormitories, school buses and bungalows for teachers (Savannah News Report, 2015).

Beside, a study conducted by Asare-Owusu [9] indicates that high rates of examination malpractice leading to the cancellation of examination papers among SHS students affect educational development. A study conducted by Asare-Owusu [9] suggests that high rates of examination malpractices that lead to cancellation of students' examination papers among SHS students affect educational progress. The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) Chief Examiner's Report (2016) indicates that, out of 274,262 students who sat for the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE), 17,866 students were involved in examination malpractices [10-13]. Again, 2017 WASSCE results showed that, out of 525 public senior high schools that registered for the examination, the results of 185 senior high schools' have been withheld pending an investigation into various cases of examination malpractice detected during and after the conduct of the examination. In the same vein, high issues of examination malpractices were recorded among 29,014 SHS students when they were writing recent West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination [14-16]. However, the issues of indiscipline extended to different level because most students insulting the president of Ghana and other high officials for failing to repeat questions during their examination due to covid-19 situation (Dzivenu, 2020). Again, students were found destroying furniture, smashed bowls containing evening meals in the dining hall, attacked invigilators, journalists, demonstrated and issued threats to school authorities for being firm on invigilation during exams (Dzivenu, 2020).

However, a study by Brako [17], describes a general picture of how the guidance services failed grievously because the SHS education was the breeding ground for high unemployment rates, wrong career choices/path, prostitution, money rituals (Sakawa), substance abuse, exam malpractice and teen pregnancy. To confirm the findings of Brako [17], the Education Management Information System (2012 and 2013) report also confirms students' involvement in money ritual, absenteeism and prostitution which are affecting students career trajectories. Owusu [18] revealed that guidance services are not recognize schools and most headmasters/mistresses do not endorse. It was because guidance services are not examinable

course in school. These students acts of indiscipline clearly show that guidance services are not being adequately practiced in SHSs.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose was to investigate the challenges stakeholders of senior high schools' face in the implementation of guidance services.

1.2 Delimitation of the Study

From these assertions, the researchers intended to investigate the factors watering down the implementation of school guidance services in Ghana. The study covered eighteen (18) SHSs within the Northern, Ashanti and Central Regions of Ghana. The teacher-counsellors, headmasters/mistresses were the main participants for the study because they are the direct stakeholders of the school guidance programme. The participants were selected with no recourse to their ethnic, cultural or socio-economic backgrounds. Without a doubt, the selected participants were not a representation of the whole SHSs population in Ghana, but it can be presumed that they share common challenges and barriers with the rest of the SHSs in Ghana.

1.3 Definition of Terms

Counsellor: The person who put guidance activities into practice in school.

Effectiveness: The degree to which school guidance services are well organised and the extent to which student problems are solved.

Evaluation: The qualities or components to determine the worth of guidance services in SHSs.

Guidance Services: These are services put in place by the SHSs to assist students to gain self-understanding, self-acceptance and self-direction.

Irregularities: These are challenges that affect the implementation of guidance programme in senior high school in Ghana.

Stakeholders: They are headmasters/mistresses, teachers, school counsellors who matter in the implementation process of guidance services in school.

1.4 Theoretical Review

The theoretical review for this study anchor on the "Person Centred Theory" by Rogers (1941); "Ecological Theory of Perception" by Gibson (1969) and "X and Y Theory" by McGregor (1960).

1.5 Person Centred Theory

The person-centered approach focuses on the human interaction between counsellor and client. Rogers suggests that his ideals extend beyond the relationship between client and counsellor to include all human interaction. The latest person-centered approach was seen as a tool to help clients explore new and more meaningful personal meanings about themselves and the world, they live in. The theory assumes that human interaction is only possible when certain conditions prevail. Such requirements, according to Corey [19], include the counsellor's demonstration of correct empathic comprehension to students, unconditional positive regard and genuineness. Empathic empathy means that the school counsellor can consider the emotions of a student as if they were their own without getting lost in those feelings.

If teacher-counsellors are open regarding students without hiding behind a professional or personal façade, students might be encouraged to attend counselling sessions. During the counselling session at school, when school counsellors should be able to offer their students acceptance without conveying disapproval of feelings, actions or characteristics and showing willingness to listen carefully without interruption, judgment or advice could help students to know that the counsellor of the school cares for them. Roger notes that growth takes place in an environment of acceptance, warmth, empathy, non-judgment that allows students to explore their thoughts and feelings and solve their own problems [20-22].

A teacher-counsellors lacking these core conditions may deter students from patronizing the guidance services. When a teacher-counsellors expresses these key conditions, students become less guarded and more open to themselves and their environment and can act more socially and constructively. Most students in academia harbour feelings of failure and therefore have low self-esteem [23,24]. Teacher-counsellors should be able to counter the emotions by helping to promote the desire of the

student to hope and believe they are able to overcome the academic failure they are experiencing and even improve their potential. A supportive atmosphere should be provided for the students, and by being polite, caring, professional and responsible, teacher-counsellors should provide space for self-actualization. Teacher-counsellors should also assist students in setting goals and encouraging positive self-recognition after achieving the goals and expectations set that might improve academic success.

1.6 Ecological Theory of Perception (ETP)

According to Karangu and Muola [25], perception theory of the world assumes that people in an environment learn to interpret and respond differently to stimuli. Gibson's Ecological Theory of Perception notes that the organism and its surrounding environment constitute an interacting network, reciprocating each constituent to the other [26]. Organisms generate information about the environment and must tailor their actions to the environment. Reciprocally, the environment provides the organism with "opportunities and resources for action" [27] and with information that specifies those opportunities and resources.

The ecological perception theory of Gibson was more applicable to this study in that it provides adequate explanations of the way; teacher-counsellors and headmasters / mistresses could form their perceptions and respond to guidance services provided in their respective SHSs. It informs students' perception towards patronising these services. If the SHSs have trained teacher-counsellors, adequate funds for guidance activities, well equipped and furnished counselling offices, co-operation and support from teachers and headmasters/mistresses, among others, it could create the enabling environment for counselling to thrive. An improvement in the counselling environment could positively influence students, teacher-counsellors and headmasters/mistresses' behaviour and thoughts about guidance services leading to them developing positive perception and would be more willing to patronise. Furthermore, a better counselling environment could influence teacher-counsellors to be positive minded, motivated and committed to giving their best in the delivery of guidance services.

On the contrary, if the SHSs have no teacher-counsellors with the required training, funds to organize seminars and talks, counselling offices,

coupled with poor teacher-counsellors and headmasters/mistresses' facilities and low cooperation, the atmosphere could not be conducive and suitable for striving for guidance services. This could have a negative impact on students in improving understanding of guidance services and decreased interest in services from students. From the discussion, it is clear that the effectiveness of guidance services in SHSs depends largely on the atmosphere in which students, teacher-counsellors and headmasters / mistresses converge as this could have a positive or negative impact on how they can shape their opinions and expectations and respond to guidance services.

1.7 McGregor's Theory of Human Motivation (X and Y)

The study was driven by the Human Motivation Theory (X and Y) (1960) by Douglas McGregor. McGregor's theory X and Y (1960) clarified the impact of school-based influences on the application of guidance services in the classroom. His argument was based on how people are actively interested in the job group. Theory X claims that work was inherently distasteful to most people, and that most people are not motivated, have little appetite for accountability, prefer to be guided, and need to be manipulated in order to achieve organizational goals. Theory Y, on the other hand, assumes that people are not lazy; rather, if proper encouragement is provided at the workplace, they can be self-directed and imaginative at work.

In a school setting, the theory helps to explain how different stakeholders, particularly teachers-counsellors, might be involved in the achievement of school guidance services. Many teachers-counsellors may be interested maturely in developing and integrating guidance programs efficiently in the classroom. Some teacher-counsellors can regress in behaviour and behave as teacher-counsellors irresponsibly in their positions. It was clear from this theoretical perspective that teacher-counsellors may voluntarily engage in guidance services or fail in a school setting by refusing the full implementation of guidance services. The belief, however, that the involvement of teacher-counsellors in guidance services was directly related to the quality of the school services. The theoretical analysis indicates that inadequate implementation of guidance services in SHSs in Ghana could be linked to the degree to which

teacher-counsellors are allocated time for counselling, his/her personal involvement in guidance activities, and less teaching workload could help teachers-counsellors spend time with students.

In summary, the Person-Centred Theory, Ecological Theory of Perception and Theory of Human Motivation (X and Y) appear to be an effective and efficient review for delivering guidance services in schools. The theories emphasise on the environment and motivation that drives counsellors towards work. Also, the principle also emphasizes the personal relationship between students and teacher-counsellors; the attitude towards students from teacher-counsellors was more important by ensuring good or bad attitudes towards school counselling services. Schools should have a good environment and competent counsellors explaining to students that he / she was a congruent person who respects the feeling of the student warmly and unconditionally. To order to ensure that the student "flourishes," this could sensitively encourage the growth of the whole person (Corey, Corey & Callahan, 2007). In this regard, a thriving student was the one who often takes full advantage of his / her educational experience and achieves personal potential or growth. In addition, advice programmes are aimed at promoting successful healthy human growth and attaining personal potential. Teacher-counsellors should provide a good environment and show a key requirement for fostering the good attitude of students towards SHS guidance services.

2. METHODS

For this analysis, the methodological choice was based on the philosophical position on how to obtain knowledge. Choice of analytical method and frame, among others, direct the design of the study at all times. Pragmatism paradigm takes centre stage of the study. The approach was mixed method approach, where concurrent triangulation design was used for the study. At the quantitative phase, survey was conducted while multiple case study was also used for the qualitative phase. The design enables researcher to continuously collect and interpret both quantitative and qualitative data from different study areas and compare or merge them simultaneously.

The population consisted of all (public and private) senior high schools in Ghana,

students, teacher-counsellors, and headmasters/mistresses. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used. At the first stage Ghana was group into three different sectors, where purposive sampling was used to select one (1) metropolis with the highest cases of students' indiscipline from the metropolis. To attain the quantitative sample, the researchers adopted Gay and Diehl (1992) way for determining sample size for the quantitative data. The researcher sampled 10% of form teachers population from the three-metropolis using random sampling procedure. In all 1679 questionnaire were administer teachers from 18 SHSs within the three (3) metropolis of Ghana. At the qualitative phase, the researchers purposively selected two (2) teacher-counsellors from the three regions and conveniently selected two (2) headmasters/mistresses from the regions. In all there were six (6) teacher-counsellors and six (6) headmasters/mistresses were interview at the qualitative phase.

The following ethical consideration was emphasised before the data collection process begins: The researchers obtains ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before obtaining permission from the Ministry of Education to approach the eighteen (18) SHSs within the Northern, Ashanti and Central region of Ghana. When permission was granted the researchers sought permission from the headmasters/mistresses from various SHSs. After securing consent from the authorities in charge of the SHSs, it was important for participants to give their consent before data collection process begin. The researcher gave participants the liberty to choose to participate or not after the purpose of the study was explained to them. However, in this study, the researcher ensured participants the data that was collected would not be shared with other users. The information obtained would be used for academic purposes. Anonymity would be used to protect participants' 'right to privacy'. In this study, participants were identified with codes rather than by names.

To ensure validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the study. The interview was conducted using language that could be understood by both the researcher and interviewees to avoid misunderstanding. However, three (3) independent raters with key knowledge in administration and analysis of data were given the instruments for a thorough check for flaws and problems in the study. After comparing notes

from independent raters they agreed on 85% of the questions, themes and the findings then we can presume that the work was consistent. Prior to data collection, pilot testing was done in Sekondi-Takoradi and the instrument yielded an overall alpha level of 0.770 which shows that the instrument was reliable. However, the quantitative data was analysis using thematic analysis while mean and standard deviation was used in analysing the quantitative data.

3. RESULTS

This section presents results and discussion for both quantitative and qualitative data. The section started with background information of respondents before analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Table 1 shows demographic background of teachers.

This section presents background information of quantitative respondents. As shown in Table 1, (671, 40.0%) of the respondents were from the Ashanti region. Six hundred and twenty-nine (629) of the respondents representing 37.5% were from the Central Region. Three hundred and seventy-nine (379) respondents representing 22.6% came from Tamale metropolis. The differences in respondents' population accounted for the variation in the total population in their respective metropolis, where the Ashanti region has the highest number teachers. The results confirm the Ministry of Education SHSs National Profile (2017) report which shows that Ashanti Region recorded 149 SHSs, Central Region 96 SHSs and Northern Region 76 SHSs. Again, Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents 1421 (84.6%) were from public senior high schools against 258 (15.4%) private senior high schools that were in the minority. The respondents from public senior high schools out-numbered those from the

private senior high schools because there are many public SHSs in Ghana. Report from Basic Statistics and Planning Parameters for SHSs in Ghana 2016/2017 shows that there are more teachers in public SHSs than private SHSs. Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents 1070 (63.7%) were males as against 609 (36.3%) females who were the minority. The male out-numbered the female because the report from Basic Statistics and Planning Parameters for SHSs in Ghana 2016/2017 confirm the enrolment of more male teachers than female teachers. It was revealed that the majority of the students (895) constituting 53.3% were within the ages of 19-21 years. Five hundred and ninety-seven (597) respondents representing 35.6% are within the ages of 16-18. The ages from 22 and above and 13-15 recorded 167 (9.9%) and 20 (1.2%) respondents respectively.

This section presents qualitative respondents' background information: Gender, Academic qualification and Number of years of practising the counselling profession. On gender, three (3) out of the twelve (12) respondents interviewed were females while nine (9) were males. With regard to the academic qualification of the interviewees, four (4) hold Master of Education (M.ED) degrees, three (3) hold Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degrees and five (5) held Bachelor of Education degrees. With regard to the study of guidance and counselling, all the interviewees confirmed they either hold a degree in guidance and counselling or studied guidance and counselling as a course in the university. Out of 12 respondents interviewed, only two (2) confirmed that they have been practising the profession for six (6) years. The remaining ten (10) had practised guidance and counselling for more than ten (10) years.

Table 1. Statistical analysis of the demographic background of students

S/n	Characteristics	Freq (N)	Per (%)
1	Distribution of respondents into region		
	Northern	379	22.6
	Ashanti	671	40.0
	Central	629	37.5
2	Distribution of respondents into schools		
	Public	1421	84.6
	Private	258	15.4
3	Distribution of gender of respondents		
	Male	1070	63.7
	Female	609	36.3

Source: Field data (2020)

The qualitative data was thematically analysed, likewise, to attribute comments to the headmasters/mistresses and teacher-counsellors, the interview transcripts were assigned some serial codes. For example, Interviewee Headmasters/mistresses from Northern Region were assigned (IHMNR-1 to 2); Interviewee Teacher-Counsellors from Northern Region (ITCNR-3 to 4); Interviewee Headmasters/mistresses from Ashanti Region (IHMAR-5 to 6), Interviewee Teacher-Counsellors from Ashanti Region (ITCAR-7 to 8); Interviewee Headmasters/mistresses from Central Region (IHMCR-9 to 10) and Interviewee Teacher-Counsellors from Central Region (ITCCR-11 to 12).

3.1 Challenges Faced in the Implementation Guidance Services in Schools

This section shows the analysis of data that was relate to the challenges stake holders faced with the implementation of guidance services. (What challenges do school counsellors faced in the implementation of guidance services in senior high schools?).

Table 2 shows that the overall mean and standard deviation score was (M=3.11, SD=0.98) which gives the general picture that respondents have challenges when it comes to the

implementation of guidance services in SHSs. The results indicated that “the location of my school counsellor’s office was not convenient enough to ensure privacy and confidentiality” was identified as the most frequent challenge with score value (M=3.28, SD=0.85). The second statement that respondents identify as the most frequent problem recorded was on “the period for teaching is too much and this affects their ability to help counselling team” (M=3.23, SD=0.95). Again, the Table 2 show that most of the SHSs visited have no counselling units recorded (M=3.14, SD=0.99) and school not provide adequate funds/money for school guidance team to run all their programmes also recorded (M=3.15, SD=0.79). Table 2 further shows that teachers do not help in the organisation and delivery of guidance services in schools. To confirm this, the item recorded (M=3.10, SD=1.00) which shows that programmes organised by the school counsellors are not supported by the teachers. However, the result also shows that school has no professional counsellor/s for students to seek counselling recorded (M=3.09, SD=0.97). On issue schools not incorporating guidance activities into the school timetable recorded (M=3.04, SD=1.05). The mean scores of the analysis indicated that guidance services were leaking which had impact on students’ discipline.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of the challenges faced in the implementation of guidance services from students

Statement	N	Mean	St.D
The location of my school counsellor’s office is not convenient enough to ensure privacy and confidentiality.	1679	3.28	0.85
The period for teaching is too much and this affects his ability to help counselling team.	1679	3.23	0.95
The school does not provide adequate funds/money for my counsellor and the school guidance team to run all their programmes.	1679	3.15	0.79
School not having counselling centres for the students to seek help.	1679	3.14	0.99
The counselling unit/ office is not well-equipped with furniture eg. cabinets, lockers and files.	1679	3.13	1.08
Teachers do not help in the organization and delivery of guidance activities.	1679	3.10	1.00
My school has no professional counsellor/s for students to seek counselling	1679	3.09	0.97
My school has not incorporated guidance programmes into the school timetable.	1679	3.04	1.05
Teachers do not help /participate in the organization and delivery of guidance activities.	1679	3.00	1.03
Counsellors/teachers voice are heard only when a student has a problem.	1679	2.68	1.08

Source: Field data (2020)

With regards to how the leaking of guidance services in senior high schools have had impact on student discipline, IHMAR-6 said that:

We have no funds for guidance services. Unlike examination, culture, sports, national science and mathematics quiz where there are budgetary allocations, guidance services do not have. This makes it difficult for us to finance the programmes of the school counsellor. You have to squeeze or manage a little here, a little there to support the counsellor. I think the government should allocate funds to the schools for guidance and counselling activities or they should allow the school's charge/bill the students to run guidance programmes.

IHMCR-9 added:

In fact, lack of funds to run guidance services makes it difficult to sustain the services in school or plan for programmes in termly bases. Again, funds allocated for other activities like sports, examination and feeding are not enough. Therefore, the schools find it difficult to support the running of guidance services.

Again, IHMNR-2, IHMAR-5 and IHMCR-10 also stressed that the government does not allocate money for guidance and counselling and schools are not allowed to charge/bill students with guidance programmes. Aside, the lack of funds to run guidance services in schools, respondents also highlighted that workload by the teacher-counsellor and lack of time allocated for guidance and counselling in schools as a major setback. ISCAR-7 said that:

I teach social studies in addition to my duty as a school counsellor. Combining teaching with guidance and counselling has become very difficult for me. Sometimes, after teaching I get tired and if students need my services, I am unable to attend to them. I tell you, it is tiresome to combine teaching with counselling (ISCAR-7).

In fact, ITCNR-4, ITCAR-8, ITCCR-11 and ITCCR-12 all stated that combining teaching and counselling is difficult and has affected their effectiveness and efficiencies in guidance services. However, other interviewees commented on the time allotted for guidance services.

There is no time allocated for guidance services. Ok, as a teacher, you want to do your best in your teaching subject and therefore there isn't much time for counselling. The timetable was too loaded and you get exhausted at the end of the day. Although, I came to this school as a guidance coordinator I am now teaching and there is no time allotted for guidance services (ITCCR-11).

On the contrary, ITCCR-12 from the same region stated that,

There is time allotted for guidance services but its comes when fresh students are admitted. But at the mid or second and third terms in school activities about guidance services comes to a standstill because they will tell you there is no money.

Two respondents (ITCNR-4 & ITCAR-8) expressed similar sentiments:

In our school, there is no day set aside for guidance services but it always comes impromptu. You can be called on at assembly at any time of the day, any time of the month that someone is here for guidance activities. They come to talk about HIV/AIDS and career. Just recently, nurses from Tamale Teaching Hospital came to educate girls about breast cancer (ITCNR-4).

Within the year several resource persons and old students visit the school but they come at their own leisure time for programmes. But there is no proper coordination from them and my counselling office. They just tell the headmaster or assistant headmaster they want to organise programme for the students. The most annoying part is that the head informs you we will be receiving some guests just a day or two before the said date (ITCAR-8).

Below are some of the comment a respondent highlighted during the interview on the challenges faced in implementing guidance services in their school.

Students perceive that those with problems are the ones who attend counselling, so if they see you coming from the counselling room, they think you have a problem. Again, where the room is located also dissuades students from attending or coming for counselling. Because it is located between

the administration and staff common room. Students find it difficult to come for counselling because teachers are always around the centre. There is no privacy (ITCAR-7).

Further probing questions were asked concerning respondents' submission about what the headmasters and school counsellors said during the interviews. I asked the School Counsellors: "the Headmasters/mistresses were complaining of lack of funds or availability of money to support guidance services, what do they have to say?"

My brother, I can show you a copy of the student's bill. Please check if there is a portion for speech day ceremony. But I tell you, almost every year we organise speech and prize giving day in school. Please asked them where they get the money from (ITCCR-11).

ITCAR-8 also confirmed this view:

The reason is that; they perceive guidance services have no direct effect or impact on the school. Sorry to say, the school wins no awards when you organise guidance services to students. Again, from last year budget, it was announced that we spent over ₵20,000 Ghana Cedis for the preparation towards the National Science and Maths Quiz. But aside orientation weeks, no guidance programme was organised for the students.

At times, I understand them, because we are not allowed to charge/bill students for guidance and counselling activities, so it becomes difficult to collect money for programmes. But the PTA supported a career programme I organised for the past form 3 students (ITCAR-7).

ITCNR-4 shared his experience:

Mmm!!! It's a lie. So, you mean they said there is no money. I want to share this scenario with you. Please, 2 and 3 students were billed with sports, culture, science and maths quiz and entertainment. First, in terms of sports, we organised inter-house and did not qualify for the inter-school and college sports. Where did the rest of the money go? Again, students paid for science and maths quiz, but we did not qualify for National

Science and Maths Quiz and entertainment is organised once a month so where was the remaining money channelled?

This respondent had the notion that, there is no money, but the headmasters/mistresses have their own interests because students pay for maintenance fees but there are still leakages, broken chairs and tables in schools (ITCNR-3). ITCCR-12 also believes that:

No, I may not blame the school authorities because the government and school authorities do not have interest in guidance activities. Because they started billing students for Science and Mathematics Quiz about seven (7) years ago why not guidance and counselling.

Again, other probing questions were posed to Headmasters/mistresses about the complaints of the school counsellors regarding their work overload and lack of office space to operate as school counsellors. This is what they had to say:

Yes! their complaint is true but it's not only school counsellor who does not have office space. Heads of Department for various courses are supposed to have office space but the school lacks infrastructure. The Get-fund building that could help curb this problem has been abandoned for almost 10 years now (IHMNR-2).

IHMCR-9 also affirmed that: "In our school we have office space for the school counsellor, but the office is not big enough to be called a counselling centre. With respect to counsellors who are teaching, it is part of the directive from the government". Counsellors who are made to teach is not a policy from the headmasters/mistresses but from the government. The counsellors' appointment was not as a full-time. She is supposed to teach that is why her period for teaching in a week is less than 24 hours (IHMNR-1). IHMAR-5 suggests that most of SHS counsellors are not trained or professional counsellors because most of them do not have a master's degree or did not do counselling at the first-degree level. Interviewer: Please sir, how did you appoint your school counsellor. IHMAR-5, the counselling team appointed one member from the group, and I endorsed it. Interviewees highlighted that lack of funds, work overload from the teacher-counsellor, lack of recognition, lack of support from the authorities, insufficient time allocation

for counselling and office space for counsellors to operate were the challenges facing the proper implementation of guidance services in SHSs.

However, these respondents (IHMNR-1, ISCNR-3, ISCNR-4 & ISCCR-11) suggested that the location of their school counselling centre is the cause of downward trend of guidance services in schools. IHMNR-1 asserted:

Where the counsellor's office is located is a problem. In the middle of the classroom block, where there is a long veranda close to the science laboratory. There is always noise, this can distract or distort attention of both the counsellor and counsellee. Again, there is no privacy because when you are talking to other students or those who are walking in-front of the classroom can hear what you are saying.

ISCNR-3 added:

We do not have counselling office so when students come to me, we sit at the staff common room or sit under the mango tree behind the classroom block. This condition we find ourselves in prevents students from coming for regular counselling or seeking information from the guidance and counselling coordinator.

ISCNR-4 believed that:

The location of the counselling office is a problem because the location is not convenient. It is located within the administration block, near to the headmaster's and bursar's office. Naturally, students do not like coming close to administration so coming for counselling at this location becomes a problem for them.

ISCCR-11 said that:

The location of the counselling office is not good for counselling. Because the counsellor's office is located at the administration closed to the senior housemaster's and the two assistant headmasters' office. I perceive this may be the reason why students are not coming for one-on-one counselling.

The other frequent factor that discourages students from patronising guidance services. Respondents suggested that difficult to meet

counsellors in their office, confidentiality, gender and perception students have about who a counsellor should be were the factors discouraging students from patronising guidance services. ISCCR-12 suggested that the workload of school counsellors is too much because combining teaching with counselling activities is difficult and tedious. If you are busy teaching and students need your services, are you going to stop the teaching and attend to him/her. Interviewer's probing question: Students complain that they hardly meet you in the office? Yes, it is true, I have lessons from Monday to Friday and I am not a resident teacher like the senior housemaster and other housemasters. You see, I cannot spend all the time in school; I need to do some part-time classes to support my salary (ISCCR-12). Based on gender differences, students found it difficult to disclose their challenges/problems to counsellors (ISCCR-11).

Interviewer: Are they not the same students you teach in class? Yes, my brother, when it comes to personal matters, the girls feel shy to disclose their issues or challenges to male counsellors or teachers and vice visa because they share the perception that a counsellor should be an older person (ISCCR-11). When students come to the office several times and do not meet you, it puts them off from seeking help and ends up consulting friends for advice (ISCNR-3).

Interviewer: Where do you go when you are not in the office? Either teaching or on that particular day, I have no lesson in school. Interviewer: But counselling is part of your main duty? However, my case is different I teach seven classes within a week and you can imagine (ISCNR-3).

Students found it difficult seeking counselling or disclosing their personal matters to us because we are the cause of students' actions and inactions. For instance, teachers consciously disclose what the old students or previous students' behaviour or action when advising the current students. This prevents the current students from coming or disclosing their personal issues to teachers because they want to protect their self-image (IHMCR-10).

IHMNR-2 also revealed that lack of resources and materials makes most counsellors in schools' handicap to perform their duties, this reason also discourages the teachers-counsellors from doing their work. IHMAR-5 stated that "Most teachers-counsellors do not

have counselling background so implementing activities on guidance services became a problem for them. However, lack the approach to integrated and shared understanding about guidance services to students." IHMAR-6 and ISCCR-12 added that schools have no guidance plan or white paper on how and when organized guidance services in the school.

4. DISCUSSION

The section discusses respondents view on how in spite of the implementation of school guidance services student's indiscipline are still on the increase. The results from both quantitative and qualitative phase was emerged in the discussion section. With reference to the qualitative data, IHMNR-1, ISCCR-3, ISCCR-4 and ISCCR-11 reported that the location of my school counsellor's office was not convenient enough to ensure privacy and confidentiality. This theme also recorded highest mean and standard deviation value of (M=3.28, SD=0.85). This was because the counselling centre/office was close to either the administration block, headmaster's/mistress office or staff common room. Having the centres in the staff room means that students would not feel comfortable to discuss their issues with the school counsellors. Having the centres near the administration also means that the students would associate the school counsellor with the administration and hence they would be reserved in revealing their concerns. Students may not also want to be seen visiting the school counsellor. Karangu and Moula [25] disclose that most of the school counsellors' offices were located next to the staff common room, the vice principal or the principal's office. This can deter students from visiting the counsellors' office. In a similar vein, Setiawan (2006) observes that the location of the counselling office was a major consideration to university students who wish to seek counselling. Anthony and Watkins (2007) add that convenient locations of counselling offices for clients are important. They conclude that buildings, where counselling offices are located are crucial as it can project certain images. The researcher postulates that this negative feeling of students does not augur well for effective guidance services in school. The consequences are that students might not feel comfortable to patronise counselling service. They may feel that their secrets could easily be exposed and so would decline to seek counselling even if they need it.

The workload that affects teachers-counsellors' ability to do the effective counselling because combining teaching and counselling duties become very difficult for them. The expressions from all interviewees indicate that they are not happy with the current status quo where they combine teaching with counselling. They felt that they had been overburdened. If school counsellors are to teach and practice counselling, then counselling could be sacrificed for teaching. This is because they are paid for teaching and not for counselling. Besides, when school counsellor teaches for long hours he/she would be tired. When he/she is tired, he/she would not be physically, mentally, and psychologically prepared to receive and handle distressed clients (students) who require tact, patience, tolerance and expertise in handling. Besides, when school counsellors teach, they would not always be available for students to consult. Maluwa-Band (1998) observes that in developing countries, there are problems of time and workload for school counsellors because of high student-counsellor ratio. Charema [28] argues that teaching workload constitutes a major hindrance to effective counselling in schools as perceived by school counsellors. Similarly, Egbochuku [29] notes that counsellor's workload and teacher-counsellor's roles conflict were identified as barriers in the provision of guidance services to the students. They allude that teaching is the priority and counselling are done on a part-time basis when counsellors combine teaching with counselling.

Lack of funds/money for school counsellors to run all guidance services was identified as the challenges facing the counselling units in schools. To affirm this, the qualitative data showed that majority of the respondents IHMNR-2, IHMAR-5, IHMAR-6, IHMCR-9 and IHMCR-10 were of the view that no funds/money was allocated to run guidance and counselling activities in school. The researcher suggests that inadequate funds mean school counsellors would not get the needed resources to effectively and efficiently organise the required programmes or activities. The lack of funds could also affect the ability of the schools to sponsor their school counsellors to attend capacity building seminars and workshops or sponsor guest speakers for seminars organised by the school counsellors. This challenge encountered in school could affect the effective implementation of guidance services. Supporting this finding, Chireshe [30] reports that guidance and counselling activities are negatively affected by a lack of resources.

Egbochuku [29] also believes that inadequate availability of counselling facilities was due to lack of funds. In the same vein, Nyamwange, Nyakan and Ondima [31] posit that inadequate resources inhibit the provision of guidance services in the school system. Arowolo (2013) concludes that due to the problem of funds, counsellors are not able to purchase counselling materials like inventories and equipment for offices.

Another factor that affects the effective delivery of guidance services was that the SHSs do not have counselling office/units or equipment/facilities to support guidance services. The qualitative findings show that respondents were complaining of lack of office space and equipment to run or support guidance services or activities in school. In support of the findings, educational reforms have advocated the provision of guidance services. A report by the President's Committee on Review of Education reforms in Ghana (2002) recommended:

"...the establishment of guidance units in all senior high schools and for a cluster of schools at the basic level. In all cases, the units should be well equipped and resourced to enable them to function effectively. The objectives of establishing these units are to assist individuals to cope with the physical and emotional changes which take place during the stages of growth and development; to manage the effects of negative peer pressure; understand and respond positively to changing situations and then make appropriate choices" (p. 233).

With this recommendation, a government white paper was issued which indicated the establishment of guidance and counselling units in all senior high schools in the country. Again, a reference to the ecological theory of perception, Gibson (1969) believes that when schools fail to provide counselling office it affects the teachers-counsellors attitude towards counselling.

The next theme that emerged shows that school management was not supporting the delivery of guidance services. In the same vein, (ISCAR-8 & ISCCR-11) all suggested that school authorities do not support the delivery of guidance services but channel their interest and attention to organising speech day and participation in national science and mathematics quiz. If Headmasters/mistresses participate in guidance activities, the students would understand the importance of such activities in schools. Being aware of, and appreciating the importance

of guidance services, means headmasters/mistresses would be more willing to provide funding for guidance activities in schools. Moreover, they would be committed to sponsoring counsellors to attend conferences and in-service training to acquaint themselves with modern trends in counselling. Gathuthi, Wambui and Kimengi (2007) remark that the roles of heads of institutions in the organisation and delivery of guidance services in the school setting cannot be underestimated. They enumerated a number of contributions heads of institutions need to undertake to enhance the successful delivery of guidance services. These include the provision of material resources, ensuring students' awareness, ensuring competency and involving other teachers in the programme. Similarly, Ownio and Odera (2014) identify the main administrative roles of a principal in delivering guidance services in the school include facilitating workshops for Heads of Departments, appointing and motivating counsellors and providing them with necessary facilities and resources for the guidance services. Karangu (2007) supports that principals with a positive attitude towards guidance and counselling are more likely to provide the necessary resources for the programme and sponsor their school counsellors for training, seminars and workshops.

Again, results from the teachers'/counsellors' data suggested that lack of professional counsellors was a major obstacle to the delivery of guidance services in school. In correlation to the students' data "schools have no counsellor for students to seek help" recorded the second lowest score value. IHMAR-5 also confirms that most SHSs in Ghana do not have trained counsellors. Schools that have trained counsellors could pave the way for professional counselling for the benefits of students. The availability of trained counsellors in the schools means students could be assisted to address their personal issues and plan for their career paths in an effective and efficient manner. For example, counsellors can assist students to improve their study skills, test-taking skills and advise students on career pursuits based on their academic strengths, interests and weaknesses. Researchers like Charema [28] and Egbochuku [29] acknowledge that professional training is necessary for effective guidance and counselling. Asamari (2015), contributes to this discourse when he states that the quality of guidance services rendered depends a great deal on the training of the counsellor.

5. CONCLUSION

1. The study concluded that orientation and information services should be effective practice in senior high schools. These services would help provide knowledge of opportunities on educational, social and vocational issues to enable them to make choices to prevent cases of indiscipline.
2. Again, the study concluded that most public and private senior high schools (SHSs) do not have counselling centres/offices. However, the SHSs that have counselling office are not well equipped to support the effective delivery of guidance services. The lack of these facilities discomfort teacher-counsellors which reduce their morale for not being committed to their duties.
3. The study posited that a counsellor should be relieved from some teaching duties so as to reduce their heavy workload. This implies that when school counsellors are exempted from teaching, they would be available all the time for students to consult.
4. Moreover, the study revealed that the location of the teacher-counsellor's office should be convenient to ensure privacy and confidentiality. Convenient location of counselling office would ensure privacy and confidentiality. This would help students to patronise the guidance services in schools.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ministry of Education and Ghana Education should organise workshops and seminars for teacher-counsellors in the regions on how to conduct guidance services in schools frequently to help them understand the rudimentary knowledge and purpose of guidance services.
2. There should be the need for a clear national policy for introducing and developing guidance services in SHSs with adequate funding, allocation of time and role definition of counsellors. Policy makers must come out with a clear national policy that would guide every aspect of guidance service in the schools.
3. An appropriate plan or guideline under which the teacher-counsellors should operate must be well established in the schools. The guideline should be carved out of the national guidelines but must be

tailored to meet the specific needs of the members of each school community. This guideline should also be made aware to students during guidance services to guide teacher-counsellors in executing their duties.

CONSENT AND ETHICAL APPROVAL

The following ethical consideration was emphasised before the data collection process begins: The researchers obtains ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before obtaining permission from the Ministry of Education to approach the eighteen (18) SHSs within the Northern, Ashanti and Central region of Ghana. When permission was granted the researchers sought permission from the headmasters/mistresses from various SHSs. After securing consent from the authorities in charge of the SHSs, it was important for participants to give their consent before data collection process begin.

DISCLAIMER

We declared that no competing interests exist. The products used for this research are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and producers of the products because we do not intend to use these products as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by the producing company rather it was funded by personal efforts of the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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