



RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE LINK BETWEEN UNIVERSITY COUNSELLING SERVICES AND STUDENTS' NEEDS

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ABSTRACT

This paper is derived from a study conducted at the University of East Africa, Baraton (UEAB). The study sought to: identify the counselling services that were being offered; establish the counselling services that students needed and determine whether students utilised the services that were being offered. The study involved 627 students and 10 administrators. Data from students and administrators were obtained using questionnaires and interview schedules respectively and analysed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) computer package. Tyler's evaluation model was used to define the parameters of evaluation, the concepts to study and the process and methods needed to extract data. The results revealed that the counselling services were not adequately offered and hence not effective. This implied the university had not recognized the counselling services as an important aspect in the students' lives. The concern of the counselling services should be a responsibility of all involved. It was thus recommended that counselling services be made available, expanded, made accessible and helpful to the students. In addition, a programme of sensitization on the importance of the counselling services should be initiated.

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INTRODUCTION

Counselling enables people achieve better personal adjustment, growth and maturity by learning to use resources and developing and exploiting potentials (Mutie and Ndambuki, 2006). Despite the important contribution guidance and counselling can make to the social, academic and personality development, it does not feature as an important aspect of the curriculum in most African countries (Mwamwenda, 2005). Counselling, as a helping profession, is a concept that underlines the role and function of the counsellor in the society. A helping profession is one in which the members are specially trained and licensed or certified to perform a unique and needed service for fellow human beings. Helping professionals are recognized by the society as the sole providers of the unique and needed services. According to McCully (1969), unlike other animals, human beings have the highest level of communication skills, skills that enable them express thoughts in detail to many others; to teach language to others (even to other animal species at certain levels); to record, send and receive information. These differences not only clearly distinguish each human from every other human, but also multiply the potential of the society and stimulate the advancement of civilizations.

The concept of individual differences provides the rationale for client analysis in the helping professions (Gibson and Mitchell, 2005). Humans have the ability to reason and to gain insight. They are able to make reasoned choices among alternatives and to change. This aptitude for planned individual change is significant in the arenas of individual development and social adjustment (relationships with one's peers). Their ability to understand themselves and act rationally also contributes to the maturing process. From images of the human species, inferences are drawn for counselling and other helping relationships as follows: all people at birth possess the potential for the distinguishing characteristics of the human species; and the environmental conditions the individual experiences from birth onwards may either nourish or suppress their realization (McCully, 1969; p. 134, 135). Counselling, therefore, is expected to enhance the realization of the human potential.

Role of Counselling in Educational Institutions

Nanda (1969) asserts that universities are the organs or agencies of education. They should show a high order of discipline which can be achieved through the provision of counselling services. Orderliness is the most significant prerequisite for the successful implementation of college

programmes. Discipline is essential for helping the child in the growth of individual personality, for giving the feeling of security, a sense of confidence and the knowledge of the boundaries of freedom. Patterson (1977) defines guidance as a term referring to broad area of educational activities and services aimed at assisting individuals to make and to carry out adequate plans and achieve satisfactory adjustments in life. This means that guidance in the school/college setting is a process that is aimed at leading the individual to the achievement of desired life goals. It is meant to equip the individual with knowledge and techniques that will enable him or her to identify and find ways of anticipating and solving problems. According to Mutie and Ndambuki (2006), guidance is considered a life-long process that involves helping individuals both as part of a group and at the personal level. According to Mutie and Ndambuki, students face many difficult situations in life. They have to make wise choices in curricular and other activities, acquire basic skills for optimum achievement and adjustment to peers, teachers and parents. They have to live and share facilities in the institutions with individuals from different economic and social backgrounds. They also have to try to secure adequate financial aid, adjust to heterosexual relationships and decide how to spend their leisure time. Besides, students have to pass their examinations, irrespective of their environment, because the society is very competitive and calls for everybody to excel in examinations for better survival. Other challenges include the careers they will endeavour to pursue and the type of families they will raise in future. As such a systematic way of counselling is necessary, which may be achieved through programmes in the learning institutions. Counselling in schools is seen as a practice that helps learners to move from the early to the mature stage of development. This type of guidance is a prerequisite to effective development of an individual (Engler, 1979). Guidance and counselling is supposed to help the client move towards a greater level of self-acceptance and self-understanding. It should make students aware of their abilities and limitations. Counselling should help the student overcome biased self-perception that can lead to self-destruction. The self-awareness serves as a source of energy and motivation for higher achievement (Mutie and Ndambuki, 1999).

The main purpose of the foregoing study was to find out the provision, utilization and helpfulness of the counselling services and how these helped students in the following areas: information, orientational, vocational, career, personal, educational, social and spiritual services. The study gives greater insights into the existence, nature and service delivery of counselling services in meeting the needs of university students. Such knowledge is relevant to the education practice, educators, curriculum developers and parents because it can help them identify and put in place appropriate strategies which will improve service provision within these units. This will in turn improve the learners' social and individual development in line with the goals of education. Counselling is an important element in institutions of higher learning and is also a useful tool for shaping the character of learners that will lead to the realization of a university's goals. This is why the programmes need to be revitalised in educational institutions. According to Gibson and Mitchell (2005), the guidance and counselling programmes should be formulated to meet the needs of the particular institutions. There is need to have a strong guidance and counselling foundation in Kenya, where

the past will illuminate the future and predict scientific and technological advances that await humankind; where many people will search out the counsel and advice of the trained to understand the development of their potential or the solution to their problems. It is high time that the history of the guidance and counselling is put in order in the African countries.

Types of Counselling

Educational Guidance and Counselling

Mwamwenda (1995) contends that educational guidance and counselling calls for the counsellor to address problems related to school work. It involves educational problems, career-based activities, study skills, sex education and how to approach tests and examinations. It should be borne in mind that many educational problems do not occur in isolation and therefore, the home, school, community and peers could be the cause of such problems. Special guidance has to be provided at crisis points, for example, if a student has difficulty in following certain subjects, lacks concentration or gets poor grades. The student must be helped to explore educational possibilities beyond the present educational level. This includes course, careers, competitive entrance examinations and scholarships.

Career Counselling

Shelton and James (2005) define career development as acquiring the necessary skills and attitudes for successful transition from school to work or post-secondary education and training. In career development, students acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and make informed career decisions. It appears that certain individuals are unsuited to particular occupations due to personality types. Personality, personal preferences, interests and self-concept are interrelated, and each factor has a significant influence on the other. Personal preferences, such as work-related virtues and education goals, have an influence on career decisions. These virtues include respect, prestige, creativity, responsibility and altruism. The students examine the potential career to determine if the important virtues are achieved in the occupation. Therefore for the career planning process to be effective, abilities, interests, values, education and training and specific career requirements have to match. Mutie and Ndambuki assert that the proper career counselling is able to lead the student to decide whether or not to:

1. Proceed with liberal education to a higher level.
2. Enter into vocational training.
3. Enter the labour force.

Psychological counselling

According to Davidoff (1987), students who abuse drugs and alcohol, when caught by teachers and punished, are unrepentant and likely to continue engaging in the same conduct unless they are consistently counselled to change this type of behaviour. Taking in large amounts of alcohol leads to depression in a person. Depressed people are extremely sad and usually full of self-directed guilt. Symptoms often displayed include sadness, feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness, sleeplessness and loss of appetite and sexual

desire, desire to withdraw from other people and change in activity level. Teachers need to be keen to detect such behaviours so as to address the problem quickly. Depressions can arise due to poor performance in class and lack of understanding of their problems by the teachers. This makes the student feel worthless causing depression. Such students might even commit suicide. Carlson (1993) points out that an effective counsellor provides guidance and support to students by handling of their present difficulties. The counsellor should be interested in improving the students' ability to deal with external circumstances that confront them. These circumstances include stress and depression and if not handled well, the situation makes students perform poorly in class and thus unable to deal with life positively in the future. Mutie and Ndambuki (1999) outline that students need counselling in their relationship with others. They need to be guided on social behaviour and relationships, making new friends and becoming leaders in their own groups. Students should be guided on how to relate with their parents and their peers. They add that counselling is also necessary because students have problems related to themselves (personal problems), their parents, friends and teachers. These problems are: lack of friends, loneliness, abuse of substances, religious problems, among others. Students are also faced with problems of difficulty in concentration, learning and recall. They feel tense, anxious and depressed. They need guidance and counselling to overcome these problems. They also need information on sex and HIV/AIDS.

Social Counselling

Personal and social guidance is the process of helping an individual to know how to behave with consideration to other people so as to improve the quality of life in the society. In the course of their development, individuals may encounter a lot of problems; emotional conflicts, anxiety, frustrations, fears, poor self-concept, indecision, alcohol and drug abuse, premature pregnancies, Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemic, delinquency, suicide, inability to set a goal in life, poor interpersonal relationships, dependence on other people, and in general, inability to change their maladaptive behaviour. Seamus (2004) states that teachers are in the business of producing and reproducing knowledge. The teachers also have a duty of transmitting "other knowledge" and these are values and social norms. Teachers have a powerful position to influence social values of students. Teachers have to be good role models because teachers can powerfully transmit their own beliefs during the teaching process. Seamus adds that counselling is aimed at preparing students to meet challenges both in school and at home. Students are to be directed well to be able to adjust well into home environment.

Peer Counselling

Peer counselling involves handling individuals who could be of the same age or different backgrounds but have the same point of interest or share the same needs. It is a method of counselling where the two (counsellor and counselee) see each other as equals regardless of age or status. They have the same feeling and can freely confide in one another. Students can do better with this technique. In a school or learning institution, peer counselling can be carried on: class basis, club basis,

house – Dormitory or Hostel arrangement, Religious movements, such as Christian Union, Youth Christian Service, among others (Lutomia and Sikolia, 2002).

Spiritual Counselling

Collins (1988) states that spiritual counselling attempts to provide encouragement to students who are facing losses, decisions or disappointments in academic matters. Spiritual counselling by teachers or counsellors can help students grow spiritually. Counselling those living with inner conflicts, crippling emotions, and poor performance in class and effects of drugs, helps them improve and stop such problems. Spiritual counselling assists students who are unhappy, due to school challenges and other related life issues, to cope with the situation. Collins further asserts that spiritual counselling assists students to have good relationships with others and also have intimate relationship with God. This further helps them to approach academic issues positively. Spiritual counselling is unique by nature because it sets goals in seeking to help students change behaviour, attitudes, values and perceptions, especially those who are negatively oriented. He adds that spiritual counselling helps students to view the world positively and to have self-worth. This in turn improves their self-esteem in academics. Teachers or counsellors use techniques, such as listening, showing interest and giving direction to students, to enable them feel and thus improve their personality. Teachers as spiritual counsellors are supposed to have qualities, such as honesty, patience, competence and self-knowledge, so that they can be able to win the confidence of the students. Teachers who are not patient cannot be good counsellors. Those who do not keep the secrets of students they counsel are never consulted by students for any help. It is good for counsellors to have wide experiences.

Oriental Counselling

According to Schneider (1977), guidance and counselling personnel in the institutions should focus on: admissions and orientation; individual counselling and advisement; student services; assessment and placement; preserving, transmitting, and enriching the culture; training for leadership, and developing all aspects of the personality.

Educational Objectives of UEAB and the Role of Counselling

The aims of university education at UEAB (University Bulletin, 2008) are as follows: provide a balanced educational programme that gives each student the opportunity to develop spiritually, mentally, physically and socially; to encourage the students to understand, appreciate and adopt a Christian lifestyle and value system; help the student to strive for mental excellence by maintaining a faculty of a well-equipped instructors, developing intellectual curiosity, helping the student to refine mental abilities; assist the student to achieve and maintain physical health by guiding the student to a fuller understanding of healthy living, helping the student to appreciate the dignity of labour, providing appropriate sports activities, providing healthy food and living quarters; prepare the student to become a useful member of the society; equip the student for an active role in the mission of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, service-centred vacations and professions which contribute to the betterment of society, and

lastly, provide adequate facilities and infrastructure for high quality education such as library, resources, laboratories, research facilities, classrooms and buildings, to support the various curricular and syllabi. To achieve all these objectives, expert help from the counselling personnel is needed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The university UEAB was chosen as the location of the study because the researcher is acquainted with the logistics of the area. It is located in the North Nandi District, Kapsabet Division, in the Rift Valley Province, Kenya, East Africa; approximately 50 kilometres from Eldoret town. The study was based on three models: Tyler's goals-oriented/objectives model of evaluation (Tyler, 1949); Nitko's (2001) evaluation model, and Stufflebeam's CIPP checklist (2002). Tyler contends that the curriculum should be organized around objectives and that these objectives should serve as a basis for planning instructions. Objectives would therefore provide the criteria for evaluation. Nitko (2001) defines evaluation as the process of making a value judgement about the worth of a product or performance. In the study, value judgement about the effectiveness of guidance and counselling services has been made on the following areas: information, vocational, orientational, career, peer, personal, educational, social and spiritual services. Nitko further contends that evaluations are the bases for decisions about what course of action should be followed. The CIPP evaluation model is a comprehensive framework for guiding evaluation of programmes, projects, personnel, products, institutions and systems. Corresponding to the letters in the acronym CIPP, this model's core parts are: context, input, process and product evaluation. In general, these parts of an evaluation respectively ask: What needs to be done? How should it be done? Is it being done? Did it succeed? Based on the foregoing study, this paper focuses on whether or not counselling services were provided; whether or not they were utilised by students and administrators, and whether or not these services were helpful to students. The study also applied principles of survey design. School surveys were used to provide a comprehensive study of existing conditions to determine the overall effectiveness of the counselling programme and suggest improvement where necessary. Different respondents were sampled who included students, and administrators at UEAB. This aspect of sampling many respondents to answer the same questions was for the purposes of arriving at proper interpretations. Simple random sampling techniques were used to select 627 out of the total of 2000 students, and 10 out of a total 30 administrators. The total sample size for the study was 637, which was judged as adequate and representative for the study. For data collection, the study made use of questionnaires and oral interview schedules. Questionnaires were administered to elicit the responses from the students. The researcher formulated interview questions for the purposes of gathering data from 10 heads of departments and administrators. The guiding factor in data analysis in this study was done by generating descriptive statistics using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) from which deductions were made on the data obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Provision of Counselling Services

The study sought to establish whether counselling services were offered in the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton. The

corresponding question stated: "What are the counselling services offered at the universities?" The counselling services offered were studied under different areas. These included informational, orientational, vocational, career, educational, personal, peer, spiritual and social counselling.

Provision of Informational Counselling Services

The results show that 23.5% of the students agreed that informational counselling services were offered in their university. This percentage was far below the average. Other areas that scored low percentages in relation to being offered included career counselling (29.3%); occupation counselling (21.7%); making decisions (20.4%) and the nature of the world of work (20.4%). On the overall, 76.5% of the students pointed out that the informational counselling services were not offered in their university. Hence 76.5% of the students were of the opinion that informational counselling services were offered at the university. It is clear that the counselling services offered were not satisfactorily offered. This implies there was a lack of informational counselling services in the university. The conclusion from the study was that informational counselling services were not offered.

Provision of Orientational Counselling Services

The study sought to identify the orientational counselling services offered. The results further reveal that 62.2% of students agreed that orientational services were offered in their university. This means that students were on average satisfied that orientational services were being offered in their university. The frequency of the students who agreed to each statement showed that, in general, the university provided services on different areas that were considered on orientational services. The orientational services offered included introduction of faculty and staff, programmes offered, policies, schedules, time management, relevant subjects and employment prospects. The following areas under orientational services were hence rated as offered by the students: introduction of faculty and staff (68.3%); programmes offered in the university (66.2%); general policies (71.3%); selection of academic counselling services (75.9%); university schedules (71.0%); time management (72.6%); bulletin boards (69.7%); relevant subjects (69.2%); employment prospects (78.3%) and legal and professional factors (19.8%).

Provision of Counselling Services

The study sought to identify the vocational counselling services offered at UEAB. The results showed that 27.7% of the students agreed that vocational counselling services were offered in their university and 72.3% of the students disagreed that vocational services were offered on the different areas considered. This showed that the university did not meet the vocational needs through provision of counselling services, yet they were crucial for the future lives of the students. Further, it implied that the students were not satisfied with the vocational counselling services and that they are not made available. The different areas considered under vocational counselling were as follows: vocational skills ranked number one (25.8%); followed by preparation of a resume and curriculum vitae (27.8%); preparation for interviews (24.2%);

job opportunities and training available (23.8%); preparation for a job (23.4%); legal and professional factors involved in a particular occupation (22.0%); decision-making (21.9%); how to look for a job (21.8%); planning a career (19.2%) and occupational prestige (18.6%). All the areas of vocational counselling services were poorly rated except vocational skills that were averagely rated positively.

Provision of Career Counselling Services

The study also sought to identify the career counselling services offered in the university. The following were the percentages of the students who agreed that counselling services were offered in their university: career talks (26.5%); information (22.8%); education (22.2%); career conferences (18.3%); career clubs (18.5%); preparation for interviews (24.2%); how to look for a job (18.7%); the experience required on a particular job (22.5%); variety of occupations (21.1%) and learning a career (18.5%). The overall percentage of the students who agreed was 22.0%. It was observed that students were not satisfied with career counselling services. This was quite ironical since the career counselling services are crucial to the life of students. This clearly indicated that career counselling services were not assisting students. This was unfortunate since universities are entrusted with the role of developing careers.

Provision of Educational Counselling Services

The study further sought to identify the educational counselling services offered at the university. The data inferred included academic workload (30.5%); problems related to college work (20.3%); career-based activities (20.4%); study skills (24.5%); sex education (18.2%); how to answer questions in examination (18.2%); opportunities for further studies (18.2%); qualifications (24.6%); personal development (23.6%) and vocational preparation training (22.6%). The overall agreement on the student responses was 22.1%. This indicated that few students were satisfied with the educational counselling services. It implied that the university was not keen on providing educational counselling services.

Provision of Peer Counselling Services

The students were asked to respond to the statements whether or not peer counselling services were offered in their university. The frequency and percentages of the students who agreed to each statement showed that, in general, the university did not offer or provide counselling services on these areas. The percentages were as follows: peer relationships (19.5%); making new friends (13.1%); making the right relationships (16.1%); communication skills (24.7%); training peers (16.0%); sharing with others (18.7%); programmes on peer counselling (15.8%); peer counselling skills (14.2%); group counselling (14.8%); being assertive (14.2%) and the overall percentage was 16.9%. These results implied that all the areas of peer counselling were rated as very poor, which further showed the university had very little concern on what went on among students. The study concluded that the students were not satisfied with the peer counselling services offered at their university.

Provision of Personal Counselling Services

The students were asked to respond to the statement whether or not personal counselling services were offered in their university. The following were the percentages of those who agreed to the statement: making decisions (18.7%); Change undesirable attitudes (19.3%); Make the right friendship (17.4%); Sustaining a relationship (15.5%); Integrity (23.4%); honesty (25.0%); self identity (23.3%); self confidence (22.2%); self control (24.2%) and problem solving. All the personal counselling areas were rated poor. The overall agreement was 21.2%. It showed that there were no organized programmes and trained manpower to put them in place. It was, therefore, concluded from the overall results that personal counselling services were not being offered. This raised a serious concern as to whether the university was committed towards the personal welfare of the students.

Provision of Social Guidance Services

The results on the social counselling services were almost uniform on the areas considered. The following show the degree of agreement on the statement whether or not social counselling services were offered: expressing one's own feelings (19.3%); exploring values (17.2%); inculcating positive attitude (20.8%); coping with peers (15.5%); relationship interaction (17.1%) dealing with development crisis (15.3%); dealing with situational crisis (13.2%); coping with loss of loved ones (16.3%); individual and group counselling (15.2%) and adjusting to varying environment (31.3%). The offering of the social guidance services was rated poor. The frequency of students who agreed showed that, in general, the university did not provide social counselling services in the different areas considered. 18.1% agreed that social counselling services were offered, while majority (81.9%) of the students disagreed that the social counselling services were offered.

Provision of Spiritual Guidance

The study also sought to find out whether spiritual counselling services were made available to the students. The following results show the percentages of the students who agreed that spiritual counselling services were provided: value education (68.7%); spiritual guidance (67.3%); good relationship with others (71.1%); intimate relationship with God (70.6%); change of negative behaviour and attitudes (74.1%); qualities of honesty (72.9%); patience (73.5%); competence (75.6%); love (74.6%); prayers (70.0%) and the overall was 71.8%. The rank and the percentage of students agreeing to the promotion of specific counselling areas in the university revealed that spiritual guidance was offered at the university. These results further indicate that the students were satisfied with the spiritual counselling services. This implied that the university was keen on spiritual counselling services. This could be attributed to the fact that the university was founded on the strong Christian principles with its mission being the provision and advancement of holistic Christian quality education for the youth with the aim of equipping them with necessary skills for service for God and humanity.

The Utilization of the Counselling Services

The study sought to ascertain whether counselling services offered at the university by the counselling personnel were utilized by the students.

Utilization of Informational Counselling Services

informational services utilized at the university as agreed by the students: career counselling (18.5%); occupational counselling (18.5%); making decisions (23.5%); nature of the world of work (13.7%); trends in the labour force (18.2%); training and qualifications (23.1%); employment opportunities (22.0%); scholarships/bursaries, grants and loans (23.1%); funds available (15.5%); counselling services (17.9%) and the overall (19.5%). On overall, 80.5% disagreed, meaning that the counselling services were not satisfactory. The percentages of the students who agreed that informational counselling services were utilized were far below average. This implied that students did not get adequate information on the areas considered. It was therefore concluded that informational counselling services were not utilized.

Utilization of Orientational Counselling Services

A similar analysis on the utilization of the counselling services was carried out to ascertain or to determine whether the orientational counselling services were utilized at the university. The responses of the students on their utilization of the orientation counselling services on the different areas considered were as follows: introduction of faculty and staff (81.9%); programmes offered in the university (75.4%); general policies (77.2%); selection of academic counselling (76.6%); schedules (74.2%); time management (73.8%); bulletin boards (77.7%); relevant subjects (73.8%); employment prospects (78.3%); legal and professional factors involved in a particular occupation (18.0%) and the overall was 70.6%. The responses showed that orientational counselling services were utilized by the students. This implied that students were comfortable with the orientational services offered at the university. The study concluded that students utilized the orientational counselling services.

Utilization of Vocational Counselling Services

The study sought to establish whether vocational counselling services were utilized at the university. The responses of students who agreed, in terms of percentages and ranking respectively, were as follows: how to look for a job (18.6%); preparation of a resume and curriculum vitae (20.1); vocational skills (19.5%); job opportunities and training available (20.3%); planning a career (19.1%); occupation prestige (16.6%); preparation for a job (17.1%); decision-making (19.6%); preparation for interview (17.4%); legal and professional factors involved in particular occupation (18.0%) and the overall was 18.6%. The results showed that vocational counselling services in the different areas considered were not fully utilized. The conclusion was that vocational counselling services were not fully utilized.

Utilization of Career Counselling Services

The study further sought to consider the career counselling services utilized at the university. Few students (14.5%) agreed that they utilized the career counselling services. The responses were as follows: career talks (17.2%); information on careers (21.4%); educational talks (25.4%); career conferences (19.1%); career clubs (17.7%); preparation for the interviews (19.8%); how to look for a job (14.5%); the experience required on particular job (18.1%); variety of occupations (17.2%); planning a career (14.5%) and the overall was 18.5%. All areas were rated as poorly utilized. It

utilized. The results on ranking put educational talks first while services on how to look for a job ranked last. One of the national goals of education was to produce citizens with the skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities required to support economy, which requires self-employed manpower and manpower in paid employment. It was therefore implied that the counselling services in universities were not facilitating the achievement of this national goal of education.

Utilization of Educational Counselling Services

The following responses showed percentages of those who agreed to the statement that education counselling service were utilized: academic workload (21.2%); problems related to school work (18.9%); career-based activities (19.6%); study skills (20.0%); sex education (16.3%); how to answer questions in examinations (17.2%); opportunities for further studies (15.5%); qualifications (20.6%); personal development (17.4%); vocational preparation training (14.2%) and the overall was 18.0%. It was, however, observed that students did not utilize the educational counselling services. Educational guidance is crucial since the curriculum is very comprehensive. Students need guidance on proper adjustment, to develop good study habits and to explore educational possibilities beyond the present level (Mutie and Ndambuki, 2006). It was noted that educational guidance services were not fully utilized, as found from the data analysis. The conclusion from such results is that students did not utilize the educational counselling services.

Utilization of Peer Counselling Services

Another area that was considered under the study was the utilization of peer counselling services by the university students. The responses of the students on the different areas considered were as follows: peer relationships (14.0%); making new friends (15.0%); making the right relationships (16.7%); communication skills (21.6%); training of peer (14.4%); sharing with others (19.6%); programme on peer counselling (14.0%); peer counselling skills (14.8%); group counselling (14.8%); being assertive (14.0%) and the overall was 15.9%. It was observed that students did not utilize the peer counselling services. One of the national goals of education is to foster a sense of nationhood and promote national unity. It is the duty of education to help the youth acquire this sense of nationhood by removing conflicts and by promoting positive attitudes of mutual respect (KIE, 1994). The study showed that peer counselling services, which are crucial in fostering national unit, were not utilized.

Utilization of Personal Counselling Services

Another area that was considered under the study was whether or not students utilized the personal counselling services. The responses of the students who agreed that they utilized the personal counselling services were as follows: decision-making (17.8%); change undesirable attitudes (19.65%); making the right friendship (17.9%); sustaining a relationship (16.7%); integrity (20.4%); honesty (21.5%); self-identity (20.4%); self-confidence (19.9%); self-control (21.4%); problem solving-based education (20.3%) and the overall was 19.6%. It was inferred from the percentages that many students did not utilize the personal counselling services. The national goals of education emphasize the need for individual

development and self-fulfilment (KIE, 1994). The results, however, implied that students did not benefit from the personal counselling services.

Utilization of Social Guidance Services

The study sought to answer the question on whether social guidance and counselling services were utilized by the students or not. The responses were as follows: expressing one's own feelings (15.9%); exploring values (15.8%); inculcating positive attitudes (18.6%); coping with peers (14.8%); relationship interaction (16.4%); dealing with developmental crisis (17.5%); dealing with situational crisis (15.7%); coping with loss of loved ones (17.5%); individual and group counselling (11.3%); adjustment to varying environment (11.5%) and on the overall 15.8%. Few students agreed on the utilization while majority were not convinced that the social guidance services were utilized. The national goals of education however emphasize the social aspect.

Utilization of Spiritual Guidance

The study went further to find out whether or not students utilized the spiritual counselling services offered at the university. Their utilization of spiritual counselling services in the different areas were as follows: value education (80.4%); spiritual guidance (77.0%); good relationship with others (74.5%); good relationship with God (78.7%); change of negative behaviour attitude (77.5%); love (78.8%) and prayers (76.2%). These had an overall percentage of 77.7%. It was inferred from the responses that students utilized the spiritual counselling services. The mission statement of the UEAB extracted from the Bulletin 2009 is the provision and advancement of a holistic Christian quality education for the youth with the aim of equipping them with necessary skills for service to God and humanity. The general results on the utilization of counselling services had only 30.5% agreeing that counselling services were utilized. The other 69.5% disagreed, meaning that the services were not adequately utilized by the university students.

The Helpfulness of Counselling Services

The study also sought to find out whether or not counselling services were helpful to the students of UEAB.

Helpfulness of Informational Counselling Services

The responses on the helpfulness of informational counselling were as follows: career counselling (29.0%); occupational counselling (22.5%); making decisions (21.3%); nature of the world of work (22.0%); trends in the labour force (21.9%); training and qualifications (28.1%); employment opportunities (25.1%); scholarship/bursaries, grants and loans (24.1%); funds available (20.0%); counselling services available (31.3%) and the overall (24.6%). It was, therefore, inferred that information counselling services were not helpful to the students. Data analysis indicated that the services were far below the average. This was generally understandable since the students had earlier indicated that information counselling services were neither availed nor utilized by the students.

Helpfulness of Orientational Counselling Services

When the students were asked whether or not the orientational services were helpful to them, majority (66.5%) agreed and

few (33.5%) disagreed. The responses of the students were as follows: introduction of faculty and staff (68.3%); programmes offered in the university (67.7%); general policies (70.7%); selection of academic counselling (73.7%); university schedules (71.9%); time management (75.8%); bulletin boards (69.8%); relevant subjects (72.1%); employment prospects (76.2%) and legal and professional factors involved in a particular occupation (19.9%). Only the legal and provisional factors were rated as poor. It was inferred from the percentages that students agreed that the orientational services offered at their university were helpful, except for the legal and professional factors related to occupational matters.

Helpfulness of Vocational Counselling Services

The study further sought to find out from whether the students benefited from the vocational counselling services and whether they considered such services helpful to them or not. The following were the percentages of the students' responses who agreed: how to look for a job (24.6%); preparation for a resume and curriculum vitae (31.2%); vocational skills (30.1%); job opportunities and training available (24.1%); learning a career (20.0%); occupation prestige (20.2%); preparation for a job (27.8%); making decisions (20.0%); preparation for interview (29.7%); legal and professional factors involved in a particular occupation (22.3%) and the overall (25.2%). It was inferred from the percentages that vocational counselling services were not helpful. Majority (74.80%) disagreed that vocational counselling services were helpful, while few (25.2%) agreed that vocational counselling services were helpful. This implied that students did not benefit from the vocational counselling services.

Helpfulness of Career Counselling Services

The study also sought to find out whether the career counselling services were helpful to the students. The following were the responses of the students who agreed: career talks (28.7%); information in careers (26.2%); educational talks (28.2%); career conferences (20.4%); career clubs (21.2%); preparation for the interviews (27.8%); how to look for a job (25.5%); the experience required on a particular job (24.4%); variety of occupations (22.5%); learning a career (20.6%) and overall (24.6%). It was observed that students did not consider that career services were helpful. Only a few students (24.6%) agreed that career counselling services were helpful, while majority (75.4%) disagreed.

Helpfulness of Educational Counselling Services

The study further sought to investigate the educational counselling services that were helpful to students. The students' responses, in the areas considered, were as follows: academic workload (29.3%); problems related to school work (20.6%); career-based activities (25.0%); study skills (25.3%); sex education (13.9%); how to answer questions in examinations (19.6%); opportunities for further studies (21.4%); qualifications (26.3%); personal development (24.0%); vocational preparation and training (24.9%) and the overall (23.9%). This was below the average, meaning that the services were not helpful. 23.9% students agreed that the educational counselling services were helpful, while 76.1% disagreed. In other words, the students' educational needs

counselling services.

Helpfulness of Peer Counselling Services

The study also sought to establish whether or not peer counselling services were helpful to the students. The following were the results of the responses of the students who agreed that peer counselling services were helpful on the different areas considered: peer relationship (22.2%); making new friends (15.8%); making the right relationships (19.9%); communication skills (29.65); training of peers (22.3%); sharing with others (24.9%); programmes on peer counselling (20.6%); peer counselling skills (19.3%); group counselling (17.7%); being assertive (19.0%) and overall (21.1%). On the overall, students did not consider peer counselling helpful to them, as shown by 78.9% of the students. The peer counselling services did not have an impact, as indicated by the responses from the students; impact being a component that is emphasized on the evaluator's model (Stufflebeam, 1967).

Helpfulness of Personal Counselling Services

The study further investigated on the personal counselling services that were helpful to the students. The responses of the students who agreed that social guidance and counselling services that are helpful were as follows: making decisions (21.4%); change undesirable attitudes (20.0%); making the right friendship (21.3%); sustaining a relationship (18.5%); integrity (25.0%); honesty (26.6%); self-identity (25.4%); self confidence (26.2%); self control (25.2%); problems solving-based education (24.0%) and overall (23.3%). All the areas were rated as poor by the students. Most students (76.7%) disagreed, meaning that the students did not consider personal counselling services helpful; maybe because it was not used in the university. Stufflebeam (1967) asserts that the gains for the beneficiaries must be sustained in the programme for it to be considered effective. However, the above results implied that the students were not satisfied with the personal counselling services that were offered at the university.

Helpfulness of Social Guidance Services

The researcher sought to find out whether or not students considered social guidance and counselling services offered at the university important. These are the responses of the students on the social guidance and counselling services that were helpful: expressing one's own feelings (22.2%); exploring values (21.7%); inculcating positive attitudes (24.6%); coping with peers (20.9%); relationship interaction (20.1%); dealing with developmental crisis (19.0%); dealing with situational crisis (15.0%); coping with loss of loved ones (19.5%); individual and group counselling (19.1%); adjusting to varying environments (18.8%) and overall was 20.1%. Thus all the services were rated as poor. The percentages of the students who agreed were far below the average, meaning that students were not satisfied with the social counselling services offered at the university.

Helpfulness of Spiritual Guidance

It was also important to find out whether or not a student considered spiritual guidance and counselling was helpful to them. The responses of the students who agreed that the services were helpful were as follows: value education (66.5%); spiritual guidance (66.3%); good relationship with

change of negative behaviour and attitude (71.4%); qualities of honesty (68.0%); patience (69.2%); competence (70.3%); love (69.7%); prayers (67.1%) and overall (68.7%). Among the items that were ranked highly, change of negative behaviour and attitude ranked first while spiritual guidance ranked last. It was implied from the percentages that the spiritual counselling services were helpful, which meant that spiritual guidance was offered and that students recognized its importance in their lives.

CONCLUSION

On the provision of counselling services to students in the university, this paper concludes that generally, the counselling services considered above were not adequately offered. Nevertheless, majority of the respondents reported availability of spiritual guidance services. The only two areas that emphasis was laid on are spiritual guidance and orientational services. The university emphasized only on these two services as they were a foundation to the Christian doctrines on which the university was founded. The inference that can be drawn here is that counselling is still an alien subject and something needs to be speedily done. The other objective of the study was to establish the counselling services that were utilized by the students. The data analysis on the utilization of the counselling services indicated that the utilization was not adequate. The students did not seem satisfied with the utilization of the counselling services in the university. The third study objective was to find out the overall effectiveness of counselling services in terms of their helpfulness. Apparently, the counselling services at UEAB have not made a significant impact on the students. On overall, the study established that the guidance and counselling services offered at UEAB were not effective. The results also results implied that most of the counselling services were indeed needed by the students. The implication was that the university had not recognized the counselling services as important an aspect in the students' lives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The concern of the counselling services should be a responsibility of all involved. Therefore, the paper recommends that:

- (i) There is need for adequate provision of the counselling services on the following areas: information, orientation, educational, vocational, career, personal, peer and social counselling services.
- (ii) The university should organize a sensitisation programme to create awareness among the stakeholders on the following counselling services available: information, orientation, educational, vocational, career, personal, peer and social counselling services.
- (iii) The university should constantly evaluate the counselling programme on its proper provision, utilization and usefulness.
- (iv) Spiritual counselling and orientational services should continue to be offered and even be transported to other universities.
- (v) The counselling services offered should be utilized, be made helpful and satisfactory to the students.

ascertain whether it is effective, to be put in place by the counselling department on the following areas: information, orientation, educational, vocational, career, personal, peer and social counselling services.

- (vii) In order for the guidance and counselling department to carry out its duties effectively, the personnel should make the counselling services helpful to the students. This should be done by conducting workshops, seminars, regular executions, open forums and involving specialist and guest speakers.

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