

Counseling Services as Predictors of Academic Achievement of Learners with Physical Impairments in Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Through legal and policy guidelines, the Kenya government and other stakeholders have made efforts to promote academic achievement of all learners regardless of their diversity of disabilities. However, learners with physical impairments (PI) in public primary special schools in Kisumu County still perform poorly in national examinations. The purpose of this study was therefore to investigate the counseling services as predictors of academic achievement of learners with physical impairments in public primary special schools for learners with PI in Kisumu County, Kenya. The study objective was to: establish the relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI. The study used Maslow's theory of Motivation. The study used concurrent triangulation design within mixed methods approaches. The target population was; 2 head teachers of public primary special schools for learners with PI, 45 teachers, 2 school counselors, and 503 learners with PI, a total population of 552 participants. Saturation sampling technique was used for head teachers and counselors, and purposive sampling technique was used for teachers, and learners with PI. Sample size was 2 head teachers, 16 teachers, 2 school counselors, and 150 learners with PI, a total of 170 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaire and interview schedules. Content validity was used for validity, while Cronbach's alpha which recorded a correlation coefficient of .701 was used to ascertain reliability. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient and multiple regression analyses, and presented using frequency tables, graphs and pie charts from which conclusions were made. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The study results indicated that: there was a statistically significant positive relationship ($r = .271$) between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI. It can therefore be concluded from the current study that counseling services are significant predictors of academic achievements of learners with PI in public primary special schools for learners with PI. The study therefore recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) should facilitate adequate counseling services in public primary special schools for learners with PI. The study would benefit; parents, children with PI, schools,

teachers, MoE, curriculum developers, education planners, policy makers and Kenyan government in improving service provision and academic achievements of learners with PI, and would serve as a basis for further research for scholars in the area of education in general.

Keywords: *Counseling Services, Physical Impairments, Academic Achievements*

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989), states that all children and young people have a right to education no matter who they are, regardless of race, gender, or disability. Article 18 (2) of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2003 (6) states that learning institutions shall take into account the special needs of persons with disabilities with respect to entry requirements, pass marks, curriculum, examinations, auxiliary services, use of school facilities, class schedules, Physical Education requirements and other similar considerations (Wango, 2011). It is therefore vital to ensure that due to physical, social or psychological challenges that learners with PI face, they should get counseling services so as to enable them learn comfortably in schools.

For many children with disabilities (CWDs), the kinds of disabilities they experience may require special approaches to education or other accommodations (Brault, 2011) in order to achieve their potential, hence the need for appropriate counseling services to help promote their academic achievement. Children need to meet various physical demands during the school day in order to be successful from both an educational and a social standpoint, and they use important motor skills to move in the halls, sit quietly at a desk, and participate with peers on the playground. However, due to physical impairments, there are several environmental and psychological factors that may affect the academic achievement of learners with PI such as pain, fatigue, and absenteeism; and psychological factors such as motivation, self-concept and socio-emotional problems among others. These need to be identified so as to make necessary modifications to minimize their effects.

Mihaela (2015) contends that, there was a marked lack of qualified personnel in the field of school of guidance and counseling in Romania, and also the role of specialists being substituted by other people without appropriate qualification. In South Africa, Meron (2017) argued that counseling services had positive effect on learners' academic achievements. This brings into the mind whether learners with PI access counseling services to help them cope with their physical and social challenges so as to help them learn better. In Nakuru County, Njeri (2007) argued that teacher counselors had little training in guidance and counseling; poor academic performance among students; and, guidance and counseling has positive impact on academic performance on students. A study carried out by Wachanga (2010) on provision of support services and their impact on socialization and academic participation for learners with physical disabilities in two selected schools in Kisumu East Sub-County, Kenya, revealed that counseling services help build self-esteem of learners with PI and help them overcome social and psychological challenges which are vital in their academic achievement.

Counseling services are vital for learners with PI since they encounter difficulty in coming to terms with their challenges such as social needs like isolation, motivation, self-concept, loss of

confidence in self, poor coordination, over dependence, and social-emotional problems among others, therefore should be guided to acquire social skills necessary for their personality, adjustment and development (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2003). They also need education and it is the duty of the counselor to see that their course of study is helped early enough to make correct choice of subjects, courses and career. Individuals with PI need to be psychologically and emotionally balanced and this need has to be in the light of psychological treatment being received from counseling psychologist.

Based on the challenges faced by learners with physical impairments, their education programmes are expected to be designed in order to help them overcome the effect of their physical impairments and associated difficulties so as to promote their academic achievement. There is therefore need for a coordinated programme that uses the knowledge and training of paraprofessionals such as counselors. These can help promote life skills (Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools, 2015) and for better mental health (Novek, Menek, & Bell, 2013) so as to improve their academic achievement hence reach their potential. Counseling services are vital in developing abilities of learners. It also addresses the academic and developmental needs of learners (Mohammadyari, 2011). It also boosts their self-esteem and sense of accomplishment (Finlan, 2020). With all these in mind, one may wonder whether learners with PI in public primary special schools receive these services. Table 1.1 shows KCPE results for learners with PI for the past five years.

Table 1.1: KCPE Performance of Public Primary Special Schools for Learners with PI.

SCHOOL	COUNTY	YEAR (MSS)					MSS
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
L	Homa-Bay	215.45	200.65	212.65	230.75	194.05	1053.55
M	Kisii	186.02	201.87	197.43	221.93	182.44	989.69
N	Nyamira	183.56	199.39	192.08	218.76	192.06	985.85
O	Kakamega	204.34	216.01	222.32	240.57	199.02	1082.26
P	Kakamega	230.12	234.08	241.67	240.69	241.98	1188.54
Q	Bungoma	214.09	209.00	226.65	243.01	192.45	1052.20
R	Bungoma	213.68	201.41	221.79	242.17	194.11	1073.16
Y	Kisumu	171.35	202.23	185.62	240.68	165.43	965.31
X	Kisumu	182.04	198.03	179.98	220.92	190.26	971.23

Source: Kisumu, Homa-Bay, Kakamega, Nyamira, Kisii, & Bungoma County Offices (2014-2018).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Learners with PI are expected to; operate with ease in the school learning environment, undertake different tasks, work in groups, be actively involved in learning and perform well by passing all their subjects for good academic achievement. They are expected to meet various physical and psychological demands during the school day in order to be successful from both an educational and a social standpoint. Schools are therefore expected to have a friendly learning environment in order to produce learners with good academic achievements. Therefore, investigating what predicts their academic achievement is vital.

Counseling services are according to literature and legal policy guidelines important to learners with PI as far as their academic achievement is concerned. Efforts have been made by the government and stakeholders to provide them to all public primary special schools. However, learners with PI in public primary special schools in Kisumu County continue to perform poorly in national examinations (Table: 1.1). This happens despite having qualified teachers, being given extra time during examinations to compensate for their disabilities and even having Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital nearby which has counselors who can be used to provide counseling services. The study sought to find out why.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate counseling services as predictors of academic achievement of learners with PI. The study objective was to establish the relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI in public primary special schools in Kisumu County.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study used Maslow's theory of motivation which is a hierarchy of needs comprising a 5-tier model of human needs, normally depicted as hierarchical levels. The needs lower down in the hierarchy must be satisfied before an individual can attend to needs higher up. The needs from the bottom are: Physiological needs; Safety needs; Belonging and Love needs; Esteem needs and Self Actualization. Physiological needs are biological requirements for human survival such as food, shelter, clothing, air, drink, sleep and warmth. Other needs are becoming secondary until these needs are met. The need for Safety and Security becomes salient once individual's Physiological needs are satisfied.

After Physiological and Safety needs are satisfied, the third level is Love and Belonging needs. These are social needs which involve feeling of belongingness such as friendship, intimacy, trust and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love, affiliation, and being part of a group such as friends. After individual's Physiological needs, Safety needs, and Love and Belonging needs are satisfied, the individual's Esteem needs become next. Esteem needs are classified into two categories; that is, esteem for oneself (dignity, achievement, mastery, independence); and the desire for reputation or respect from others such as status or prestige. After all the four needs are met, the individual can move to Self-Actualization. The individual realizes personal potential, self fulfilment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. A desire to become everything one is capable of becoming (Maslow, 1970). The use of Maslow's theory of motivation in this study had the justification that it shed light on educational structure by reminding administrators and teachers of learners with PI that learners are less likely to perform at their full potential if their basic needs are unmet, and that they must consider learners needs in their hierarchical order. This theory informed the present study in primary special schools of learners with PI where these schools need to ensure that the needs of learners with PI are met for their academic achievement.

Hence, for learners with PI to get physiological needs, they need counseling services to help them access physiological needs such as accessing; dormitories for sleep; dining halls and canteens for food; water points for drink; shelter; warmth, and fresh air among others with ease. To support safety needs, they need emotional security through the help of a school counselor in order to understand their situation and know how to handle it as this also helps give them freedom from anxiety or fear. To support love and belonging needs, counseling services are vital

to help them accept themselves and each other and to be able to work in groups. To support esteem needs, the services of counselors are crucial to help them accept themselves and have dignity, achievements, mastery and independence. When learners with PI are supported in all these stages noted earlier, they can therefore perform at their fullest potential, that is, Self-Actualization. Learners who are good at different subjects can be used to help their classmates with their work, hence their academic achievement.

2.0 Literature review

School counselors are vital members of education team. They provide counseling services that help learners in the areas of academic achievement, career social emotional development, and ensuring that today's learner becomes the productive well-adjusted adults of tomorrow (American School Counselor Association, 2020).

A research study was carried out on educational counseling and career guidance in Romania by Mihaela (2015) using survey research design on 600 students in final year, and 300 former students who had finished secondary school. The study used questionnaire as data collection tool and found out that, there was a marked lack of qualified personnel in the field of school of guidance and counseling, and also the role of specialists being substituted by other people without appropriate qualification. The previous study was only quantitative in nature which lacked the qualitative dimension hence results could be limited as they provide numerical descriptions rather than detailed narrative and generally provide less elaborate accounts of human perception like in qualitative study. This was captured by the current study by using a mixed method approaches to fill the gaps left by the previous study as far as instrumentation is concerned.

In South Africa, Meron (2017) did a study on the effects of guidance and counseling services in enhancing academic performance of students. Two independent random group study design was used. 60 learners were randomly selected from grade 9 (30 for experimental group and 30 for control group). The results of the study indicated that counseling services had positive effect on learners' academic achievements. The learners had a better reading speed, test preparation, test taking, writing skills and test anxiety management skills. The reviewed study used learners only hence lacked varied opinions from respondents. The current study used headteachers, teachers and counselors, which facilitated acquisition of rich data from varied experiences. Also, in the reviewed study, high school students who were more mature were used while in the current study, pupils who are younger were used.

In Ghana, Tawiah, Alberto and Bossman (2015) conducted a research on impact of guidance and counseling on academic performance in Dormaa Senior High School in Dormaa central municipality of the Brong-Ahafo Region. Pre-test and post-test control group design was applied for the study. Experimental design was used. The sample comprised of 40 students; 20 for experimental and 20 for control group. Interviews were used. The study results revealed that guiding and counseling services have a positive effect on learners' academic achievements. The study recommendation included appointing full time counselors in each school to address the existing teething problems of learners. The previous study had learners only hence lacked varied opinions from respondents. The current study had headteachers, teachers and counselors which facilitated acquisition of rich data from varied experiences. Also, in the reviewed study, older students from high school were used while in the current study, younger learners from primary schools were used.

A research study was conducted by Ocansey and Gyimah (2016) on counseling needs of learners with special educational needs and disabilities in the greater Accra Region of Ghana. Purposive and systematic sampling techniques were used to select 48 pupils and 3 staffs from 3 special schools. Questionnaire and interviews were used as research tools. The study results revealed that pupils had various academic needs and counseling needs. The previous study captured learners with special needs in general while the current study was specific on learners with PI since different disabilities have varied needs. The previous study was carried out in Ghana while the current study was carried out in Kenya with a different education policy. Also, the previous study did not capture the relationship between counseling services and academic achievements of learners with PI in particular that the current study captured.

In Zambia, Mubanga (2014) carried out a research to investigate the role of school guidance and counseling in education for sustainable development in selected secondary schools in Luwingu and Kasama districts. Survey research design was used with a population involving head teachers, school guidance and counselor teachers, Education Quality Standards officers, and secondary school students. Interview schedules and FGDs were used and data was analyzed qualitatively. The results revealed that school guidance and counseling teaching syllabus was not implemented in some institutions due to challenges such as lack of human resource, teaching learning aids, proper job descriptions, for school guiding and counseling teachers and unceremonious positions of both school guidance and counseling teacher and district coordinator. The previous study was qualitative in nature hence lacked the quantitative data which would allow for a broader study involving a greater number of subjects and enhancing the generalization of the results. The current study therefore used mixed methods approaches to fill in the gaps left out in respect to instrumentation.

A research was carried out in Kenya by Irangi (2003) to outline the issues, resources, and themes that should make a frame work for developing guiding and counseling programme for students with special educational needs using empirical design with a population of 229 students with special needs. Personal orientation of students, Shostrom's personal orientation inventory was availed as standardized instruments. The results indicated that some critical elements to make up a frame work for guidance and counseling programmes for students with special educational needs (SEN) came to the fore. The elements and ingredients targeted addressing the factors and conditions that have prevented students with SEN from reaching their potential towards self-actualization. The identified services to compose the programme are expected to help students with SEN to develop holistically and to discover their real self. The previous study was conducted in high schools while the current study was conducted in primary schools. The previous study did not capture the relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI that the current study captured. The previous study used only students with SEN as respondents while the current study included children with PI, head teachers, teachers, and guidance and counselors to gather more varied data on the relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI.

A study conducted by Wamocho (2003) on a framework of guiding and counseling programmes for students with special needs in Kenya used 229 students with physical impairments, visual impairments and hearing impairments and found that counseling services was lacking. The previous study did not capture the relationship between counseling services and academic achievement. The current study captured counseling services in relation to academic achievements of learners with PI.

In Kiambu County Kenya, a study was carried out by Wambui (2015) on effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County. The study targeted 30 public secondary schools, 147 guidance and counseling (GC) teachers in department, with a sample size of 15 schools (555 respondents). Research tools included questionnaire and observation checklist. The study results revealed that the time allotted for GC sessions was too short and inappropriate because sessions were scheduled during lunch break or at the end of the lesson after school at 4.00 pm; GC sessions were not frequent since it was only done when need arose. Only few students sought counseling due to high workload of teachers and students. The previous study did not include the learners who are the consumers of counseling services and who would have expressed their varied opinions as far as effectiveness of guidance and counseling is concerned. The current study therefore included learners to capture their varied opinions on effectiveness of counseling services as far as their academic achievement is concerned since they are the consumers of the services. Also, the previous study was conducted in secondary schools with older learners while the current study was carried out in primary schools with younger learners.

A study was carried out by Salgong (2016) on the role of guidance and counseling in enhancing student discipline in secondary schools in Koibatek Sub-County, Kenya. The study used Alfred Adler (1998) theory of personality and humanistic theory by Albert Bandura (1995) social learning model. The study used descriptive survey design with a target population of 262 students from 23 schools, 23 principals, 23 school counselors, and 227 teachers. Sample size was 8 schools, 8 principals, and 8 school counselors, 24 teachers, and 262 students. Questionnaire and interview schedules were used. The study results revealed that; guidance and counseling has improved academic performance and discipline; computer facilities were inadequate in guidance and counseling; lack of guiding and counseling to students leads to indiscipline in school; lack of trained teacher counselor and too much workload making it difficult for the counselor to succeed in promoting student discipline. The previous study did not capture learners with physical impairments which the current study captured since some of the counseling needs of learners with PI may differ from needs of 'normal' learners due to their disabilities. The previous study did not capture counseling in relation to academic achievements of learners and was conducted in high schools while the current study was conducted in primary schools and was based on relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners.

In Nakuru County, Njeri (2007) conducted a research study on influence of guidance and counseling programme on academic performance of selected public secondary school students in Bahati Division. The study used ex post facto with a population of 1385 form 4 students, 21 teacher counselors, 21 head teachers, and a sample size of 196 students, 10 teacher counselors, and 10 head teachers. Questionnaire was used. The study results revealed that secondary schools differed in the number of guidance and counseling services that they had implemented; teacher counselors had little training in guidance and counseling; the students were aware of role and importance of career counselor in their schools; poor academic performance among students; and, guidance and counseling has positive impact on academic performance on students. The previous study used secondary school students who were older unlike the current study which had primary school pupils as respondents who were younger and were yet to acquire their first academic achievement at primary level. The previous study was quantitative in nature hence lacked qualitative dimension which would allow varied opinions from respondents while the current study used qualitative data which was not used in the previous study and which would help gather more in-depth information for data analysis.

A study was carried out by Gatwa (2014) on impact of guidance and counseling services on students' social and emotional adjustment in public urban and rural secondary schools in Nakuru and UasinGishu Counties in Kenya. It used a descriptive cross-sectional survey research with a target population of form 4 students in 24 schools. Sample size included 336 students, 45 school counselors and 45 school administrators. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used to collect data. The findings of the study indicated that guidance and counseling services in secondary schools had high level of impact on students' social and emotional adjustments. Rural schools indicated a high level of impact of guiding and counseling services. Guidance and counseling help in enhancing positive social and emotional adjustments amongst secondary school students. The previous study was conducted in high schools with older learners while the current study was conducted in primary schools with younger learners. The previous study was based on counseling services in relation to learners' social and emotional adjustments while the current study was based on relationship between counseling services and learners' academic achievement hence the current study was expected to fill the gaps left by the previous study on counseling services in relation to academic achievement of learners with PI.

In Nyandarua County, Kenya, Waititu (2013) did a research on psychosocial challenges facing integrated learners with physical disabilities in selected mainstream secondary schools. The study used mixed methods approaches, probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Questionnaires and interviews were used. The study results indicated that learners with PI suffer low self-esteem and found it very hard to fit in the world of non-disabled learners, and schools lacked qualified teacher counselors. The previous study did not capture counseling services in relation to academic achievements of learners with PI which the current study captured to find out how counseling services predict learners' academic achievements. Also, the previous study was conducted in high schools while the current study was carried out in primary schools.

A research study carried out in Bungoma County by Kituvi (2014) on guiding and counselling practice in relation to academic performance of learners in secondary schools. Descriptive survey design was used. The study population included teachers, learners and Quality Assurance Service Officers in Bungoma County. The study used questionnaires. The study results revealed that guiding and counseling as practiced does not meet required standards of what is desired in academic achievement. The previous study used quantitative data only which lacked a qualitative dimension which could have provided opportunities to participants to express feelings and experiences unlike the current study which used mixed method approaches to fill in the gaps in the previous study as far as instrumentation is concerned.

In Kisumu County Kenya, Odhiambo (2015) did a study on factors influencing provision of guidance and counseling services in mixed day secondary schools in Nyakach District. The study used descriptive survey design with a sample size of 312 students and 72 guiding and counseling teachers. Questionnaire was used. The study results revealed that most counselors are not trained in guiding and counseling (GC); GC departments lack essential resources; students are willing to seek GC services but just a few do seek for GC because of lack of confidentiality; GC teachers' main focus on academics and civic/social GC. The previous study used quantitative data only which lacked a qualitative dimension which could have provided opportunities to participants to express feelings and experiences unlike the current study which used mixed method approaches to fill in the gaps in the previous study in relation to instrumentation.

A case study was carried out by Wachanga (2010) on provision of support services and their impact on socialization and academic participation for learners with PI in two selected schools in Kisumu East Sub-County, Kenya. Adequacy of professional counselors was among the

independent variables. The study was guided by social cognitive theory, with target population of 34 teachers, 177 students and 4 professionals. The instruments were questionnaires, interview guide, focus group discussion and observation checklist, and the study used descriptive statistics. The study findings revealed that the schools lacked professional counselors. Little collaboration between teachers and professionals, professionals had heavy workload, transport challenges, uncooperative parents and financial implications in provision of support services. The previous study covered only schools with learners with PI in Kisumu East Sub-County which may not be generalized to the whole County while the current study captured the special schools of learners with PI in whole County hence covered a wider location.

3.0 Methodology

The study used mixed method approaches which involve conducting research involving collecting, analyzing, merging qualitative and quantitative research, as well as integrating quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2012). It complements the choice of a single design by overcoming the weaknesses of a single design and also addresses a question at different levels hence helpful in designing, validating an instrument and useful when unexpected results arise from a prior study which is also easy to describe and report. The study used triangulation design which is characterized by two or more methods used to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a study. That is, collection of quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and analysis done at the same time (Creswell, 2014). The design was more appropriate since both methods are used to overcome a weakness in using one method with the strengths of another (Cohen & Manion, 2011). The study was carried out in Kisumu County located in the Nyanza area of Western Kenya. The County is divided into seven Sub-Counties, that is; Kisumu West Sub-County, Kisumu East Sub-County, Kisumu Central Sub-County, Muhoroni Sub-County, Seme Sub-County, Nyando Sub-County, and Nyakach Sub-County (Kenya Population Housing Census, 2019). The study was carried out in Kisumu County in public primary special schools for learners with PI in Kisumu County. This is because, as their “normal” counterparts, learners with PI follow the regular curriculum, participate in national examinations and are given more time during national examinations to compensate for their disabilities but have been performing poorly in national examinations as compared to other learners with PI.

The target population was made up of 552 respondents, who comprised of both 2 head teachers in the 2 schools, 45 teachers, 2 counselors and 503 learners with PI (Kisumu County Education Office, 2019). The study used saturation sampling for head teachers and counselors due to their limited number (Walker, 2012). Hence 2 head teachers and 2 counselors were selected. It also used purposive sampling technique for teachers and learners with PI. Personal judgments were used to choose cases that help answer research questions (Guest, Namey & McKenna, 2017). Hence 16 teachers and 150 learners with PI in classes 6, 7, and 8 were purposively selected. The study used questionnaire for learners with PI; and interview guide for: teachers, head teachers and counselors as data collection tools. The instruments were validated using content validity since it ensures that all possible items that should be used in measuring the concept under study are contained hence were more valid (Chiang, 2015). According to Oso and Onen (2013), a reliability value that ranges between 0.6 and above can be considered good enough for the study. Cronbach’s alpha was used with the Cronbach’s alpha values as 0.701. The Cronbach’s alpha suggest that the instruments had adequate reliability for the study. These findings concur with the recommendation by Oso and Onen (2013) that a coefficient of 0.60 and above is of adequate reliability.

The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative techniques to analyze data. Quantitative analysis was facilitated by coding for the closed-ended questions from the questionnaire. The data was converted into numerical codes which represent attributes or measurements of the variables. Only one code was assigned to each response category. This was done by making a code book that enabled the data to be entered into the computer. For instance, the data was organized into percentages according to the categories on the Likert rating scale type responses. The researcher identified the independent, dependent and intervening variables and defined them. The researcher then formatted and analyzed data by use of ratio scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). The data was then tabulated depending on how many strongly agree (5 points), agree (4 points), neutral (3 points), disagree (2 points), and strongly disagree (1 point) and were presented as percentages of the total number of responses. These were then condensed into broader groups of agree for strongly agree and agree; and disagree for strongly disagree and disagree. The scores were summated to measure the respondents' attitude and the total scores represented the respondents' take over the issue. This was done by the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 to produce tables and charts. The findings of the study were presented using frequency tables (Blessler, 2007). Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The qualitative data was derived from interview schedules and analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This helped eliminate unusable data; interpreted ambiguous answers and contradictory data from related questions.

4.0 Findings and Discussions

4.1 Views of Learners with PI on Counseling Services

The study objective was to determine the relationship between counseling services and academic achievements of learners with PI in Kisumu County. This objective was addressed through descriptive statistics which explored the views of the respondents on counseling services, and followed by use of inferential statistics to test the hypothesis on the relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI. In exploring the views of respondents (learners with PI), a nine Likert scaled itemed questionnaire was used. The items whose constructs were related to counseling services for learners with PI were scored using a five-point continuum scale depending on how many strongly agree (5 points), agree (4 points), neutral (3 points), disagree (2 points) and strongly disagree (1 point) and presented as percentages frequencies of responses. The scores were summated to measure the respondents' attitude on counseling services in their schools. Their views were summarized in percentage frequencies as shown in Table 4.1. For qualitative data, phases of thematic analysis were used.

Table 4.1: Views of Learners with PI on Counseling Services

Statement of Opinion	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
I' ve always gone for counseling individually.	58 (39.7%)	49 (33.6%)	3 (2.1%)	20 (13.7%)	16 (11.0%)	2.23	1.38
I usually visit my teacher freely for counseling.	49 (33.6%)	57 (39.0%)	3 (2.1%)	22 (15.1%)	15 (10.3%)	2.29	1.34
Through counseling, I' ve learnt to explore the world around me by figuring out what I want to do in my life.	43 (29.5%)	61 (41.8%)	3 (2.1%)	22 (15.1%)	17 (11.6%)	2.38	1.35
Through the help of a counselor, I' m able to overcome social challenges.	47 (32.2%)	51 (34.9%)	4 (2.7%)	25 (17.1%)	19 (13.0%)	2.44	1.42
A counselor helps me to improve my success in school.	41 (28.1%)	58 (39.7%)	12 (8.2%)	18 (12.3%)	17 (11.6%)	2.40	1.32
A counselor helps me to participate well in classroom activities.	40 (27.4%)	67 (45.9%)	5 (3.4%)	21 (14.4%)	13 (8.9%)	2.32	1.26
A counselor helps me to improve my academic performance.	57 (39.0%)	56 (38.4%)	3 (2.1%)	18 (12.3%)	12 (8.2%)	2.12	1.28
A counselor helps in preparing me to perform well in exams.	55 (37.7%)	57 (39.0%)	3 (2.1%)	18 (12.3%)	13 (8.9%)	2.16	1.29
I' m satisfied with the counseling services that I receive.	56 (38.4%)	58 (39.7%)	4 (2.7%)	16 (11.0%)	12 (8.2%)	2.09	1.24
Mean average response rate on counseling services						2.27	0.35

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree. Source: Survey data (2019)

The finding of the study established that there are generally inadequate counseling services offered to learners with PI in public primary special schools in Kisumu County. This was reflected by an overall mean rating of 2.27 with a standard deviation of 0.35 in scale of 1 to 5. For instance, from Table 4.14, the findings of the study show that many learners don't go for counseling services individually due to lack of adequate counselors or teacher counselors in their schools. This has been confirmed by the discovery that many of the learners with PI in Kisumu County are not able to access counseling services, as was reflected by average mean response rating of 2.23 with a standard deviation of 1.38. In fact, whereas only a small proportion [agreed: 20 (13.7%) and strongly agreed: 16 (11.0%)] of the learners who took part in the survey alluded that they are sometimes able to access counseling services individually, a majority [strongly disagree: 58 (39.7%) and disagree: 49 (33.6%)] of them said they hardly access counseling services individually.

Qualitative findings also support the above statement which shows that the counseling services are not accessible. When head teachers were asked to state whether learners with PI go for counseling individually, one headteacher said:

Guiding and counseling is usually time-tabled for learners with physical impairments....a hired counselor comes to school once a week hence has limited time with learners (Head Teacher 2).

The interview excerpt above shows that most learners with PI are not able to access counseling services whenever they need it. They can only receive it once a week which may not meet all their counseling needs. This conforms to a study by Nyan (2011) which revealed that the counseling services are inadequate. This implies that learners with PI do not get counseling services that meet their esteem needs even though they usually face psychological challenges that these counseling services should address. Counseling services should be available in schools so that learners with PI can access them whenever they are in need.

Equally, the results of the survey show that most learners with PI do not visit teachers freely for counseling, further revealing that there is poor access to counseling services. On whether the learners usually visit their teachers freely for counseling, only 37 (25.4%) of them accepted they occasionally do but a majority of 106 translating to 72.6% of the sampled learners with PI indicated that they rarely visit their teachers freely for counseling. This implies that there is generally low interaction between teachers and learners with PI for the purpose of counseling, which was reflected by a mean of 2.29 with a standard deviation of 1.34.

Qualitative findings also support the above statement which shows that the counseling services are not accessible to learners with PI. The following interview excerpt show teachers' responses when they were asked to say whether learners with PI visit them freely for counselling:

Few learners have visited some teachers who they trust when they have issues...the problem is that no teacher here is trained in counseling...we also do not have a professional counselor to refer them to if need be (Class Teacher 10).

We don't have a professional counselor employed or hired but there is a teacher in charge of counseling.... she is however not trained in counseling. Also, most learners with physical impairments are not aware about counseling services (Class Teacher 8).

The interview excerpt above shows that most learners with PI do not access counseling services due to inadequacy of counselors. This is in agreement with a study by Nyan (2011) which revealed that the counseling services are inadequate. This means that learners with PI who may need counseling services are not able to access them due to lack of professional counselors in schools. Counselors have a role to play in academic achievements of learners with PI but these learners do not enjoy such services due to lack of counselors. There is need for schools to have adequate counseling services to meet learners' psychological needs, esteem needs and academic needs.

On the same token, the findings of the study established that counseling services have not helped learners with PI to learn to explore the world around them by figuring out what they want to do in their lives. This shows that the counseling services have not helped learners with PI due to their inadequacies. This was reflected by a mean response of 2.38 with a standard deviation of 1.35, with almost three quarters 104 (70.6%) of sampled learners with PI indicating that counselors do not help them.

Qualitative findings also support the above statement which shows that due to inadequacies of counseling services they are not helping most learners with PI. Teachers were asked if counseling services have helped learners with PI to learn to explore the world around them by

figuring out what they want to do in their lives. This was shown by the following interview excerpt:

There is no professional counselor in the school. Usually, there is a teacher in charge of counseling, however, it is not done well as the teacher is not trained in counseling and therefore lacks knowledge in counseling (Class teacher 10).

The school has a professional counselor although the time allocated for counseling is not enough to address the issues of most learners (Class Teacher 4).

The interview excerpt shows that the available counseling services in school are not adequate enough such that learners with PI can benefit from them. This is in agreement with a study by Waititu, (2013) which found out that learners with PI suffer low self-esteem due to lack of qualified counselors, and Odhiambo (2015) which found out that most teacher counselors are not trained in counseling. This implies that learners with PI lack skills to explore the world around them hence find it difficult to figure out what they want to do in life. The counseling services should be helpful to learners as far as their academic achievements are concerned as this may help them to self-actualize. Counseling services should be available in schools for learners with PI and counselors should spend more time with these learners.

On whether the learners with PI benefit from counseling services as far as their social challenges are concerned, the results of the survey revealed that counseling services have not helped majority of learners with PI to overcome social challenges. This was reflected by an average mean of 2.44 with a standard deviation of 1.42. While 25 (17.1%) agreed, and 19 (13.0%) strongly agreed that counselors have helped them overcome social challenges, 98 (67.1%) insisted that counselors have not helped them to overcome social challenges.

Qualitative findings from a teacher and a counselor also support the above statement which shows that most learners with PI are not receiving adequate counseling services. This is shown by the following interview excerpt:

Based on the counselor learner ratio and limited time allocated for counseling, it is difficult for most learners with physical impairments to benefit from counseling services since most of them do not meet a counselor whenever they need one (Class teacher 13).

My time with learners with PI in the whole school is limited to only once a week.

It is not easy or even possible for me to cater for individual needs of all learners in school since I am alone and I only visit the school once a week (Counselor 2).

The interview excerpt show that majority of learners with PI do not receive counseling services hence may still be unsure of how to face their social challenges since they do not receive adequate counseling services on the same. This is in agreement with a study by Wambui (2015) who found that time allotted for counseling sessions was too short and that counseling sessions were not frequent. Since most learners with PI do not get adequate counseling services to address their social challenges, they still go on with school programmes as they are with all these social challenges unaddressed. This may have implications on their academic performance. Adequate counseling services are therefore necessary in schools for learners with PI.

The study established that most learners with PI are not assisted by counselors to improve their success in school. This means that counseling services are not adequate and therefore are not as helpful to learners as they should be. This was reflected by average mean response of 2.40 with a standard deviation of 1.32. While only 18 (12.3%) agreed and 17 (11.6%) strongly agreed that

counselors help them to improve their success in school, majority of learners with PI, 99 (67.8) indicated that they are not assisted by counselors to improve in their success in school.

The study findings are also supported by qualitative data. For instance, teachers were asked about their opinions as to whether counselors assist learners with PI to improve their success in class. One teacher responded by saying:

Learners with PI mostly do not get such assistance from counselors but from teachers. The school has no professional counselor....the teacher in charge of counseling is also not trained in counseling. Most learners with PI therefore, rely on teachers for guidance (Class Teacher 5).

The interview excerpts indicate that the counseling services that learners with PI receive are not helpful to majority of learners as far as their success in school is concerned since professional counselors are not available and the counselor has limited time with learners. This is in agreement with a study by Wachianga (2010) which revealed that schools for learners with PI lacked professional counselors. Lack of professional counselors means that learners with PI do not receive services that professional counselors should provide such as helping them towards their success. Guiding learners with PI towards their success is vital. Learners who miss such guidance may not be able to achieve their potential. Schools of learners with PI should therefore have qualified counselors who should spend more time with the learners.

The survey data further established that most learners with PI do not get adequate assistance from counselors to participate well in classroom activities. This was reflected by an average mean response of 2.32 with a standard deviation of 1.26. It emerged that majority; 107 (72.3%) of learners with PI were not being assisted by counselors to participate well in classroom activities.

The following interview excerpts from a teacher and a counselor bear the same testimony:

I don't always have enough time with learners since I'm only allocated one day in a week...therefore such services as giving assistance to learners on how to participate well in classroom activities are given but to only a few learners that I'm able to meet (Counselor 2).

Most learners with PI do not receive adequate guidance and counseling to Participate well in classroom activities due to poor access to counseling services and this may negatively affect their learning (Class Teacher 5).

The interview excerpts indicate that the counseling services that learners with PI receive are not helpful to majority of learners as far as their participation in classroom activities is concerned since only few learners are able to access them. This is in agreement with a study by Wamocho (2003) which found that there was need to make a comprehensive guidance and counseling programmes for learners, and Odhiambo (2015) which found out that most teacher counselors are not adequately trained in counseling. When learners with PI are not guided on how to participate in classroom activities, they may be passively involved in the learning process. Active involvement of learners in classroom activities enhances child centered learning which is beneficial to learners. Appropriate counseling services should therefore be availed to these learners.

The data from the study indicated that most learners with PI do not receive help from school counselors to improve their academic performance. For instance, whereas only small proportion [agreed: 18 (12.3%) and strongly agreed: 12 (8.2%)] of the learners who took part in the survey felt that their teacher counselors have helped them to improve in their academic performance, majority 113 (77.4%) of them felt that their teacher counselors have not helped them to improve

in their academic performance in any way. This was interpreted to mean a low counseling services reflected by average mean response of 2.12 with a standard deviation of 1.28.

On the same note, the results also indicated that most learners with PI are not being prepared by counselors to perform well in the examinations. For instance, only [agreed: 18 (12.3%) and strongly agreed: 13 (8.9%)] of the learners with PI who took part in the survey indicated that their counselors have helped them to prepare well in examinations, while majority 112 (76.7%) of them felt that the counselors have not helped them to prepare well in examinations. This was also interpreted to mean a low counseling services reflected by average mean response of 2.16 with a standard deviation of 1.29. This is due to the fact that counseling services are inadequate and some teachers in charge of counseling lack technical knowhow in counseling, hence are incompetent.

Teachers and counselors were asked how counselors prepare learners with PI to perform well in examinations. The following interview excerpt show their responses:

If only I could have adequate time with the learners, I would be preparing most of them on how to improve in their performance since individuals have unique needs (Counselor 2).

Since there are no professional counselors, learners are generally guided during school assemblies such as on Mondays....it is mostly not done one on one since the available counselor who only comes once a week has limited time with learners (Class Teacher 10).

The interview excerpts indicate that the role of counselors in helping learners with PI in improving their academic performance and preparing them in performing well in examinations is not adequately met. This is in agreement with Salgong (2016) which revealed that lack of counseling services negatively affected academic performance of learners; and Wambui (2015) who found out that time allotted for counseling sessions is too short and that counseling sessions are not frequent for the learners in most of the schools. Equally, this agrees with a study by Pareira and Rekha (2017) which revealed that there is lack of dedicated time for counseling. The available counselor is not able to reach out to all learners who need counseling services as far as academic performance is concerned. Most learners do not receive counseling services. For learners with PI to receive adequate counseling services, schools should employ professional counselors depending on learners' population.

The data from the study also established that the learners with PI are generally not satisfied with the counseling services in their schools. This was reflected by a low average mean response rate of 2.09 with a standard deviation of 1.24, where 56 (38.4%) and 58 (39.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively, that they are satisfied with the counseling services that they receive. Only 28 (19.2%) of the sampled learners were satisfied with the counseling services that they receive in their schools. This finding implies that most learners with PI do not get adequate assistance from counselors to participate well in learning programmes.

Counselors and teachers were asked to say whether counselors provide adequate counseling services in schools of learners with PI. The following were their responses:

Not all learners are benefitting from counseling services due to little time allocated for counseling services (Counselor 2).

We do not have a professional counselor yet. I usually try to do what I can although I'm not trained in counseling (Class Teacher 1).

From the interview excerpts, it is clear that the counseling services offered to learners with PI are not adequate since learners with PI do not access them at the time of need, and some counseling services are provided by a teacher who has no counseling skills or knowledge. This shows that the counseling services in schools for learners with PI do not fully serve their purpose, and this has been attributed to the fact that they are inadequate. This agrees with a study by Waititu (2013) which revealed that schools lacked qualified counselors, and a study by Ocansey and Gyimah (2016) which found that pupils had various counseling needs including social, emotional, physical, health and academic needs. This implies that learners with PI in public primary special schools do not access adequate counseling services in their schools, neither do they fully benefit from counseling services. For learners with PI to benefit from counseling services in schools, there is need for schools to have professional counselors and more time should be allocated for counseling services.

4.2 Hypothesis Testing: Objective 2

To investigate whether there was any significant relationship between use of counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI, the null hypothesis was tested:

H₀₂: *There is no statistically significant relationship between use of counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI in public primary special schools in Kisumu County.*

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed with scores on counseling services as independent variable and academic achievement as dependent variable. The scores of independent variable (counseling services) were computed from frequencies of responses. Mean response across a set of items of Likert scale responses was computed to create a continuous variable, within an open interval of 1 to 5 suitable for the use in parametric methods, as explained by Johnson & Creech (1983) and Sullivan & Artino (2013), where high scale ratings implied high perceived level of counseling services in public special schools of learners with physical impairments. The academic achievement was computed from the mean average scores of the learners in the three exams that were administered to them in third term 2018, first term 2019 and second term 2019.

The significant level (p-value) was set at .05, such that if the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis would be rejected and conclusion reached that a significant difference exists. However, if the p-value is larger than 0.05, it would be concluded that a significant difference does not exist. Table 4.2 shows the SPSS output correlation analysis results.

Table 4.2: Relationship between Counseling Services and Academic Achievement

		Academic Achievement
Counseling Services	Pearson Correlation	.271**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	146

From Table 4.15, it is evident that there was statistically significant positive correlation between counseling services and academic achievement ($n=146$; $r = .271$; $p=.001$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis that “*there is no statistically significant relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI in public primary special schools*” was rejected. Hence, there is enough evidence to conclude that there is statistically significant positive relationship between counseling services and academic achievement among learners with PI, with high level counseling services associated to improved academic achievement and vice-versa. This finding is consistent with a study by Njeri (2007) which revealed that there is a positive relationship between guiding and counseling and academic achievement of learners.

Qualitative findings indicated the need for adequate and access to counseling services as far as academic achievement of learners with PI is concerned. Teachers were asked what they thought about the importance of counseling services in relation to academic achievement of learners with PI. A teacher said:

Counseling services are not accessible to learners with physical impairments at the time of need. This is not good for their mental well-being which is vital for their academic performance (Class Teacher 8).

The teacher is of the opinion that it is vital for learners with physical impairments to access counseling services for their mental well-being. This is in line with a study by Salgong (2016) which revealed that counseling services are linked to academic performance of learners. Without counseling services, learners with PI may not receive adequate help such as being assisted to explore the world around them and figuring out what they want to do with their lives. They also lack guidance on how to participate in classroom activities which are vital for their academic performance. It is important that learners with PI receive adequate counseling services in schools.

Further, to estimate the level of influence of counseling services on academic achievement of learners with PI, a coefficient of determination was computed using regression analysis and the result was as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Model Summary on Regression Analysis of Counseling Services on Academic Achievement of Learners with PI

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.271 ^a	.074	.067		20.2824

a. Predictors: (Constant), Counseling services

The model summary (Table 4.3) reveals that counseling services accounted for 6.7%, as signified by Adjusted $R^2 = .067$, of the variation in academic achievement of learners with physical impairment. This finding implies that variation in the counseling services explains about 7% of the variability in academic achievement of learners with physical impairment in public primary special schools within Kisumu County. This is a fairly sizeable influence on a dependent variable

by a predictor. This conforms to a study by Ocansey and Gyimah (2016) which revealed that counseling needs were related to academic achievement of learners with special needs. Children with PI suffer low self-esteem (Waititu, 2013). It is important that they receive counseling services for their self-esteem needs which is vital for their self-actualization hence academic performance.

Table 4.4 shows the coefficients values of regression model of the influence of counseling services on academic achievement.

Table 4.4: Coefficients-Influence of Counseling Services on Academic Achievement of Learners with PI

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant	154.848	10.998		14.08	.000	133.110	176.586
\` Counselin g services	16.209	4.791	.271	$\hat{3}$.383	.001	6.740	25.679

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

$$Y = \alpha + \beta X + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{Academic Achievement} = 154.848 + 16.209x + \text{error term.}$$

From the model, it is observable that the slope coefficient for counseling services was 16.209, implying that academic achievement of learners with PI in public special primary schools improves by 16.209 units for each one-unit positive change in counseling services, as indicated by B=16.209 (CI=6.740, 25.679), t=3.383, p=001. Similarly, an improvement in counseling services by one standard deviation is associated to improvement of academic achievement by .271 standard deviations (Beta=.271). This conforms to a study by Ndirangu (2007) which found out that guidance and counseling had positive impact on academic achievement of learners. Learners wit PI have social challenges which need the help of a counselor to be overcome, a counselor is also expected to help them achieve their success in school. Without counseling services, all these counseling needs may be compromised. Therefore, learners with PI need to be provided with adequate counseling services.

However, to investigate whether counseling services is a significant predictor to academic achievement among the learners with PI in public primary special schools for learners with PI, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted, in line with the recommendation by Tabachnick & Fidell (2001), as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: ANOVA- Influence of Counseling Services on Academic Achievement of Learners with PI

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4708.869	1	4708.869	11.447	.001 ^b
	Residual	59237.954	144	411.375		
	Total	63946.823	145			

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Counseling services

From the ANOVA output, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the slope of the population regression line is not zero, signifying that counseling services is a significant predictor of academic achievement $F(1, 144) = 11.447, p = .001, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .067$. Therefore, it was concluded that there is statistically significant influence of counseling services on academic achievement among the learners with PI. This implies that learners who enjoy adequate and appropriate counseling services are likely to have better academic achievement.

This finding is in line with a study by Salgong (2016) which revealed that counseling services is connected to academic achievement of learners, and Wamocho (2013) which revealed that there is need to make a comprehensive guidance and counseling programme. These findings imply that counseling services are essential for learners with PI since it helps them in alleviating difficulties they encounter in coming to terms with their challenges such as social needs like isolation, motivation, self-concept, loss of confidence in self, poor coordination, over dependence, and social-emotional problems among others. Hence, learners with PI need to have easily accessible, professional and adequate counseling services.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study sought to investigate the relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI in public primary special schools for learners with PI in Kisumu County Kenya. From the current study findings, it was established that the special schools for learners with PI have inadequate and inaccessible counseling services. It was concluded that; there was a statistically significant positive relationship ($r = .271$) between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI. It can therefore be concluded from the current study that there is a statistically significant relationship between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI and that counseling services are significant predictors of academic achievements of learners with PI in public primary special schools.

5.2 Recommendations

In accordance with the findings that there was a statistically significant positive relationship ($r=.271$) between counseling services and academic achievement of learners with PI in the current study, the following recommendations may be useful as far as academic achievement of learners with PI is concerned: the government and stakeholders should allocate at least one counselor per school to make counseling services more accessible to learners; The counselor should spend more time with learners with PI. This will help more learners to access the services; and, headteachers should organize for teachers to be equipped with counseling knowledge as teacher counselors. This is vital for esteem needs as well as academic achievement of learners with PI.

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